

## Investigating students' understanding and cultural competence towards traditional sporting games using ANOVA statistic in higher education: A case study

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### Abstract:

Traditional sporting games are a part of cultural heritage that needs to be constantly preserved. Various efforts are made for the preservation of traditional sporting games, one of which is by incorporating them into the educational curriculum. The involvement of traditional sporting games in the educational curriculum needs to be assessed for its effectiveness so that it can be used as an evaluation tool to enhance the quality of teaching and achieve the set learning objectives. This study aims to test the effectiveness of traditional sport education at the undergraduate level in the Department of Sport Education at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The study focused on two variables: students' level of understanding of traditional sports and student's cultural awareness. The results showed that the level of understanding of students from four different cohorts falls into the "good" category, with the 2019 batch scoring  $34.28 \pm 6.4$ , the 2020 batch scoring  $35.53 \pm 6.4$ , the 2021 batch scoring  $34.70 \pm 6.7$ , and the 2022 batch scoring  $33.32 \pm 7.5$ . Meanwhile, in terms of cultural awareness, the overall level of cultural awareness among the four different batch is rated as "fair," with the 2019 batch scoring  $25.59 \pm 9.6$ , the 2020 batch scoring  $28.92 \pm 9.3$ , the 2021 batch scoring  $25.39 \pm 8.4$ , and the 2022 batch scoring  $24.68 \pm 10.4$ . The ANOVA analysis concluded that there was no significant difference in the average scores among the four groups in this study for the two variables mentioned above ( $p > 0.05$ ), even though the 2022 batch has never taken traditional sports courses, and the 2019 batch has passed three years since they took traditional sports courses. This indicated that there was no significant impact of traditional sports courses on the level of understanding and cultural awareness among students in the department. In conclusion, there is a need for the revitalization of content and teaching strategies so that traditional sports courses can be used to promote a better understanding of traditional sports and cultural awareness among students.

**Keywords:** traditional sporting games, level of understanding, cultural awareness, undergraduate student

### Introduction

In today's interconnected world, where globalization and cultural diversity are defining characteristics, fostering cultural awareness and cross-cultural competence has become a paramount educational goal (Olcoñ et al., 2020). Higher education institutions, as stewards of knowledge and social development, are increasingly recognizing the importance of preparing students not only academically but also culturally for the complex challenges of a globalized society. Nowadays, students are likely to encounter people from different cultures, whether in their local communities or through international interactions (Hartanto et al., 2021). Having cultural awareness prepares them to navigate diverse cultural environments effectively. Through cultural awareness, social life in the community will become better. For Indonesian, it is crucial for them to have a high level of cultural awareness. From a national perspective, cultural awareness will be able to maintain the unity and integrity of the nation amid the high diversity in society, including differences in religion, ethnicity, race, and language (Lukito, 2022). From an international perspective, good cultural awareness will enable Indonesia to build good relations with other nations (Fitriani, 2021). In the sociological context of society, good cultural awareness will enable Indonesians to engage in a broader international social circle with a spirit of understanding and tolerance towards the culture and beliefs of others. This will undoubtedly increase the opportunities for the Indonesian community to actively participate in international activities. For example, in tourism activities, as a favorite tourist destination worldwide, the Indonesian community can apply cultural awareness values to help

promote Indonesian tourism by understanding the preferences and needs of foreign tourists and ensuring a positive experience for them (Irawan et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important for the entire Indonesian community, especially the younger generation, to sharpen their cultural awareness. One promising avenue for achieving this objective is the integration of traditional sporting games into higher education curricula especially in sports education program. Traditional sporting games can not only be utilized as a means for physical fitness and well-being but also for the purpose of developing socio-emotional competence, cultural preservation and strengthening diversity values (Rahayu & Fasikhah, 2021; Suherman et al., 2019).

Traditional sporting games, deeply rooted in the historical and cultural tapestry of societies, represent a unique repository of cultural knowledge, values, and practices (Kamid et al., 2022). These games, passed down through generations, offer a captivating window into the diverse worldviews and traditions of different cultural groups. As such, they present an untapped resource for educators and institutions seeking to enrich their students' cultural understanding and appreciation (Dewi et al., 2020). Traditional sporting games offer various benefits, especially in the context of Physical Education (PE) contributing to both individual and community well-being (Colon-Calvo et al., 2022). As a product of culture, engaging in traditional sporting games helps preserve cultural heritage, fostering a sense of identity and continuity within communities. In addition, given the nature of the game which rich in physical motion, traditional sporting games could contribute to the overall health and well-being of individuals (Charles et al., 2017; Dewi et al., 2020). These games often involve movements that improve cardiovascular health, endurance, flexibility, and coordination. This makes traditional sporting games strategically positioned to be taught in schools. Through education in schools, the younger generation will gain knowledge about culture and cultivate an early active lifestyle by regularly participating in sports. The habit of exercising regularly is important to instill from an early age, considering the high rates of obesity among children worldwide, which poses a threat to health and a decline in the quality of life (Abarca-Gómez et al., 2017). However, despite the potential benefits of traditional sporting games, they have faced challenges in remaining relevant in modern educational contexts. The rapid urbanization, technological advancements, and global proliferation of mainstream sports have, in many cases, marginalized these traditional games (Prabucki, 2022; Rahmawati et al., 2020). This has led to a diminishing awareness and participation, particularly among the younger generation. Nevertheless, there exists a compelling case for their revitalization and incorporation into higher education as a tool for fostering cultural awareness. So far, there have been several studies examining traditional sporting games that have developed in Indonesia (Dewi et al., 2020; Hartanto et al., 2021; Rahayu & Fasikhah, 2021; Rahmawati et al., 2020). Some traditional sporting games considered quite popular in Indonesia include Gobak Sodor and Egrang (Irmansyah et al., 2020; Widiati et al., 2020). However, among the studies found, there is still limited research on traditional sporting games conducted in higher education institutions, especially in the Department of Physical Education (Kamid et al., 2022; Rahmawati et al., 2020). Therefore, this research aims to complement the investigation of traditional sporting games at higher education institutions, particularly in the Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) program, serving as the educator for physical education teachers who will later teach traditional sporting games in primary and secondary schools.

In this research, a case study was conducted to determine the impact of students' participation in the traditional sport course on their level of understanding of traditional sports and their level of cultural awareness. While existing studies have explored the preservation and documentation of traditional sporting games as cultural heritage, there is a notable lack of empirical research addressing the active utilization of these games in the higher education context to enhance cultural understanding. Two hypotheses were proposed in this study: *First*, (1) the level of students' understanding of traditional sports will increase with their participation in the traditional sports course, and *second*, (2) the level of cultural awareness will increase with their participation in the traditional sports course.

## Materials & methods

### *Research Design*

This quantitative research employed a descriptive research design to examine the level of understanding of traditional sports and cultural awareness among students in the Sport Education Department.

### *Participants*

The research sample was selected by using the cluster sampling technique, which four clusters represent four different academic cohorts within the Sport Education Department. A total of 145 students were randomly selected from these clusters, with the following breakdown: 29 students from the 2019 cohort, 36 students from the 2020 cohort, 33 students from the 2021 cohort, and 47 students from the 2022 cohort. Notably, each cohort's involvement in traditional sports curricular activities varies: the 2019 cohort participated three years ago, the 2020 cohort two years ago, the 2021 cohort one year ago, and the 2022 cohort has not participated yet.

### *Data Collection*

The data for this research were collected by using online questionnaires distributed to all selected participants. Two types of Likert-scale questionnaires were employed, each with five response options ranging from "strongly disagree" with a score of 1 to "strongly agree" with a score of 5.

The first questionnaire was designed to measure the students' level of understanding of traditional sports, comprising 12 statements across four dimensions: understanding, knowledge, importance of traditional sports, and participation in traditional sports. The questionnaire's validity was assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), resulting in a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO-MSA) value of .873 and factor loadings ( $p > 0.50$ ) for all statements except for statements 2, 7, and 10, where  $p < 0.50$ , leading to their exclusion from the valid questionnaire statement list. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for this questionnaire was  $\alpha = 0.760$ , indicating its suitability for use in the research.

In addition, cultural awareness was measured using the Multicultural Awareness Scale (MAS) developed by Awang-Rozaimie et al., (2012). This instrument consisted of 10 statements with a five-point response scale. The questionnaire demonstrated a high level of reliability ( $\alpha = 0.760$ ) and validity (factor loading;  $p > 0.50$ ).

#### *Statistical Analysis*

The collected data were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine whether there were significant differences in the mean scores among the sample groups concerning the level of understanding of traditional sports and cultural awareness. ANOVA was chosen as the statistical method for comparing multiple group means in this research.

### **Results**

#### *Student's level of understanding on traditional sporting games*

The level of understanding was measured using the first instrument consisting of 9 statements with 5 response options. The provided statements were related to the definition of traditional sports, game rules, and subject's level of participation on traditional sporting games. Through an online questionnaire filled out by the subjects, the results obtained are presented in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Descriptive statistics of student's level of understanding across batch

Batch	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
2019	29	34.28	6.4	19	45
2020	36	35.53	6.4	17	45
2021	33	34.70	6.7	18	45
2022	47	33.32	7.5	14	45

From the table above, it can be seen that the mean values for the four groups range from 33 to 36. It is noted that the 2020 cohort had the highest mean value at 35.53, while the lowest mean value was found in the 2022 cohort at 33.32. The maximum score on this questionnaire was 45, which means that, on average, the students' level of understanding of traditional sports falls into the "good" category.

Before hypothesis testing, the data were tested for normality and homogeneity, and the results showed that the data were normally distributed and homogeneous. Furthermore, through the inferential statistics using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) method with one factor, it was found that the difference in mean values among the four groups is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). This result indicated that the difference in mean values for the level of understanding of traditional sports among the four cohorts was not statistically significant.

Tabel 2. Score classification of instrument 1

Value	Classification
0-9	Very poor
10-18	Poor
18-27	Fair
28-36	Good
37-45	Very good

#### *Student's cultural awareness*

Cultural awareness is one of the variables in this research. This variable was measured using the Multicultural Awareness Scale (MAS), which was adapted from a similar study conducted previously by Awang-Rozaimie et al., (2012). Scoring on this instrument was based on the responses to each of the 10 statements provided, with 5 response options for each statement. According to the scoring guidelines for this instrument, the lower the score obtained, the better the subject is considered to have cultural competence. Descriptive data for this variable can be seen in Table 3.

Tabel 3. Descriptive statistics of student's cultural competence across batch

Batch	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
2019	29	25.59	9.6	10	48
2020	36	28.92	9.3	13	48
2021	33	25.39	8.4	11	50
2022	47	24.68	10.4	10	50

The table above indicates the level of multicultural awareness possessed by students from the four cohorts. The mean values range from 24 to 29, with the 2020 cohort had the highest mean score at 28.92, while the lowest mean score was recorded for the 2022 cohort at 24.68. Based on the scoring guidelines, it was found that the mean scores obtained by all groups indicated that the level of cultural awareness for all cohorts falls into the "fair" category.

Tabel 4. Score classification of instrument 2

Value	Classification
41-50	Very poor
31-40	Poor
21-30	Fair
11-20	Good
0-10	Very good

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine whether there was any significance in the mean differences among the groups. Prior to hypothesis testing, tests for normality and homogeneity indicated that the data were normally distributed and homogenous. Subsequently, a One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in the means obtained by each group. The results showed that there was no significant difference among the four groups, with a significance value exceeding 0.50. This means that the level of cultural awareness among all groups is statistically considered the same, and there is no significant difference. In general, all subjects from the four groups were deemed to have a level of cultural awareness in the "fair" category.

## Discussion

### *Student's level of understanding on traditional sporting games*

Traditional sports have always been an integral part of local cultures. Indonesia, as a country rich in cultural diversity, is also home to a variety of traditional sports that have been played from generation to generation (Damayani et al., 2019). However, the forces of modernization, limited playing spaces, and a lack of support from teachers, parents, and society have led the children today to refrain from engaging in traditional sports. A plethora of more popular sports options for young people now poses a threat to the existence of traditional sports amidst the modern civilization we live in today. Through this research, it was found that students in the Sport Education Department at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta still have a good understanding of traditional sports in Indonesia. This can be seen from their average level of knowledge, which generally falls within the "good" category. Further analysis was conducted to examine the significance of differences in students' understanding among four different cohorts in this study. These three cohorts have distinct characteristics when it comes to traditional sports. Only the 2022 batch in this study that has not experienced traditional sports courses in the Sport Education Department, while the other three cohorts have had experiences in such courses. Despite these differing characteristics, the results of the ANOVA statistical analysis indicate that there is no significant difference among these four groups. This implies that the cohort characteristics do not have an influence on the students' level of understanding. In summary, this research reveals that students in the Sports Education Department at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta still possess a commendable understanding of traditional sports in Indonesia. Interestingly, despite their diverse characteristics, the different cohorts do not exhibit significant differences in their level of understanding. This suggests that the cohort's specific characteristics do not significantly impact students' comprehension of traditional sports.

These results stand in contrast to the hypothesis stated in this study, which posited that the experience of taking traditional sports courses would contribute to a higher level of understanding of traditional sports among students. Through statistical data, it is evident that all four cohorts generally have a good level of understanding, even though the 2022 cohort has not participated in traditional sports courses. There are several possible explanations for this phenomenon. Firstly, the majority of students in the 2022 cohort came from Javanese backgrounds (96%), while a small percentage was from non-Javanese ethnic backgrounds (4%). This suggests that traditional sports are still known and practiced within the Javanese ethnic community, possibly contributing to the cohort's overall understanding. Secondly, the incorporation of traditional sports into previous levels of education may play a role (Alcaraz-Muñoz et al., 2020). Currently, some senior high schools included traditional sports as part of their physical education curriculum. While not all schools have adopted this approach, it was possible that the study sample had exposure to traditional sports through their participation in physical education programs at earlier stages of education. Thirdly, extensive promotion by the government played a significant role. The Indonesian government, particularly the Ministry of Youth and Sports (*Kemenpora*), has been actively promoting traditional sports as part of the nation's sports culture. Presently, there is a national-level association dedicated to traditional sports called the Indonesian Community Sport Committee (*Komite Olahraga Masyarakat Indonesia* or *KORMI*). Through *Kemenpora* and *KORMI*, various traditional sports tournaments are organized at different levels, ranging from district (*Forkab*) and provincial (*Forda*) to

national (*Fornas*) competitions (*Kemenpora*, 2023). The vigorous promotion, talent scouting, and athlete development initiatives across regions may underlie the students' knowledge of traditional sports. All in all, the findings contradict the initial hypothesis, revealing that students across all cohorts generally possess a commendable understanding of traditional sports. Several factors, including cultural background, prior educational exposure, and government promotion, may collectively contribute to this consistent level of knowledge among the students, even in the absence of formal coursework in traditional sports for one cohort.

#### *Student's cultural awareness*

Cultural awareness refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and appreciate the cultural differences and similarities that exist between people from diverse backgrounds (Kaihlani et al., 2019; Wu & Miller, 2021). It involves being conscious of the various cultural norms, values, beliefs, customs, traditions, and practices that shape the way individuals and groups perceive and interact with the world (Garzón-Díaz, 2021). The data in this study indicated that the average level of cultural awareness among students falls into the "fair" category. Furthermore, the differences in scores between groups were statistically non-significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), meaning there was no significant difference in the level of cultural awareness between junior and senior students, whether they have taken traditional sports courses or not. Cultural awareness can be cultivated more easily if individuals are regularly exposed to communities with different cultural backgrounds. Interacting with people from different ethnic backgrounds can provide valuable lessons on the importance of mutual respect and respect for others' cultures.

Out of the 145 samples included in this study, only 6% or 9 individuals identified themselves as non-Javanese ethnicity. With such a small percentage of non-Javanese students, it is likely that the social environment of the students tends to be homogeneous, with Javanese culture dominating. As a result, the level of cultural awareness among students was only at a "fair" level. This condition can be improved through interventions in teaching activities that incorporate diversity values. The majority of Javanese students need to be introduced, through campus learning activities, to the fact that Indonesia has various ethnic groups and diverse cultures. Only by having good cultural awareness can students build the quality and competitiveness needed in the current era of globalization. Pragmatically, this can serve as an asset to increase their chances of obtaining good employment. Nowadays, many jobs involve interactions with people from different backgrounds (Alraiq et al., 2021; Drame et al., 2021; Ličen et al., 2021). By the good cultural awareness, students can easily adapt to a diverse cultural working environment, thus enhancing their professional career prospects (Gorbaneva & Shramko, 2022).

Cultural awareness should be a concern among educators so that they can design diversity-oriented learning content. In this study, there was no significant difference in the level of cultural awareness between the group that had taken traditional sports courses and the group that had not. This is unfortunate because traditional sports can essentially serve as a means of cultural education that introduces the diversity of Indonesian culture through traditional sports activities. Traditional sporting games can also optimize education holistic goal to not only develop knowledge of the student but also building culture-based character education (Narimo et al., 2019). Although this study was limited to a pre-experimental design with an intact-group comparison approach, the results provided a basis for improving the quality of teaching in traditional sports courses to emphasize other cultural aspects in academic activities. Through this approach, students will learn about diversity that is not only beneficial for their individual quality but also for the purpose of national unity (Fitri et al., 2020; Retnasari & Hidayat, 2018; Suwoko, 2022).

A suggestion for further research in examining the role of traditional sports in increasing cultural awareness is to conduct research involving pre-test and post-test data. Comparing pre-test and post-test scores would provide a better data quality than just measuring at the end of the treatment. It would also be better if the research were conducted among groups of students with diverse ethnic backgrounds to provide insights into diversity at the level of social interaction.

#### **Conclusions**

This research highlights two important aspects: students' level of understanding of traditional sporting games and students' cultural awareness. In the first variable, it is concluded that students, on average, have a good level of understanding of traditional sports. Meanwhile, in the second variable, it is concluded that students' cultural awareness falls within the "fair" category, regardless of whether they have participated in traditional sports courses or not. This research underscores the significance of two pivotal aspects: students' comprehension of traditional sporting games and their cultural awareness. On the one hand, the findings indicated an overall commendable level of understanding among students regarding traditional sports. This implies a positive reception and assimilation of knowledge related to these games, reflecting a promising foundation for the preservation and promotion of traditional sporting heritage. On the other hand, the examination of students' cultural awareness revealed a consistent "fair" categorization, irrespective of their engagement with traditional sports courses. This signals a noteworthy area for improvement in fostering a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity and boosting social skill through learning games with peers. It also indicated by Hartanto et al., (2021) that students engaging in traditional games showed better social behaviour. Based on these findings, this research

underscores the importance of cultivating cultural awareness in the younger generation, especially among students. Efforts to enhance cultural awareness can be achieved, in part, by implementing culturally oriented education. Traditional sport courses, in fact, provide an ideal means to promote cultural awareness. This is because through traditional sports, students can be taught to appreciate the diversity of cultures beyond their own and develop the ability to empathize and show respect for other cultures. By this foundation, it is hoped that students can develop the capacity to compete effectively in the global job market and contribute to the unity of the nation. The outcomes of this research indicated the need for a revitalization of the objectives and teaching strategies for traditional sports within higher education institutions. To improve student's cultural awareness, it is essential not only to teach the rules of the games but also to emphasize the cultural values embedded within each traditional sport. Educators especially in higher education PETE can utilize the study's results to tailor their teaching methods to enhance students' understanding and cultural competence regarding traditional sporting games.

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