

Developing The 'Langkah Silang Tepuk' Model Through Interpretive Structure Modeling In Zapin Malaysia Dance For Preschool Children

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Abstract

The unique cultural heritage of our country needs to be appreciated and revealed at an early stage, especially at the preschool level. Among them is a traditional dance full of body movements performed softly accompanied by music. Dance and movement is one of the new approaches that can promote the balanced development of children from cognitive, physical, emotional, and social aspects in a more meaningful way. This study aims to develop a model of the Cross Clap Step in Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children using Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM). The objective of this study is to identify movement elements in the Langkah Silang Tepuk steps found in the Malaysian zapin dance. The data of this study was analysed using the Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) approach. A total of 9 experts in the field of early childhood education and dance experts were involved in identifying and confirming the relevant elements for preschool students in the Langkah Silang Tepuk step in zapin Malaysia dance. The ISM approach is applied to develop a model and map the relationship between the elements identified in the Tap "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model of the Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children. This study can also identify elements of creative movement in Malaysian zapin dance based on the experience and knowledge of selected experts. The results of the study have reached a consensus that the movements in the Malaysian zapin dance can be done creatively through three steps based on a model developed based on the skills and mastery of the teacher. The implications of the study show that teachers need to be creative in teaching zapin dance by diversifying the steps to attract children to learn the dance of zapin Malaysia.

Keywords: Model, Langkah Silang Tepuk, Zapin Malaysia, Preschooler

Introduction

Teaching traditional dance to preschoolers is a great opportunity to introduce them to different cultures, encourage physical coordination, foster creativity, and develop social skills. Traditional dance has cultural significance and can help children connect with their heritage while celebrating diversity (Lykesas, 2018). Traditional dance is not just a body movement but also contains a deep meaning and talks about the history, beliefs, values, and identity of a culture. Introducing the culture and finesse of dance at the preschool level is in line with the objective contained in the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (2017), which is to appreciate and be sensitive to the culture of Malaysian society. This stated objective can be referred to through the Pillar of Humanity learning standard, which is to recognise cultural heritage. Therefore, early exposure to cultural heritage, such as traditional dances, needs to be introduced to preserve Malay heritage. Tradition is a heritage that has been preserved for a long time in the community. Therefore, the knowledge of the tradition needs to be passed down to the new generation (Chatzihidioglou et al., 2018).

One of the efforts to expand cultural heritage education is to improve the existing curriculum system in schools (Mutiara et al., 2021). Planning a comprehensive curriculum that includes various traditional dances from various cultures is important. Children not only know their own culture but also the culture of other communities living in Malaysia. Therefore, creating a welcoming environment is important, with a safe and inviting space that incorporates musical instruments and culturally relevant music. Choosing age-appropriate dances with simple steps allows preschoolers to easily understand the movements and gradually develop their skills.

Mastering the dance will be easier for children if it starts with a demonstration of the dance moves, followed by breaking the movement into simple steps. Visual aids and positive reinforcement help children understand and imitate dance steps. Music plays an important role, with appropriate and rhythmic songs accompanying the dance, helping to synchronise the movements. Props such as scarves or ribbons can enhance the engagement and sensory experience.

This study aims to develop a cross "*Langkah Silang Tepuk*" model in Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children by using the Interpretive Structural Model (ISM). This approach was first introduced by J. Warfield in 1975 to analyse the complexity of the system and to find solutions to complex problems involving many factors and to interact (Ilyas et al., 2008). The ISM methodology is a learning process where a set of elements is structured into a comprehensive model system. ISM helps in determining the order and purpose of the complex relationships between elements in the system (Pfohl et.al., 2011).

Literature Review

The way of life in the Malay community, which is rich with politeness, can be translated through the soft movement in dance, which is a symbol of the beauty of traditional art. However, traditional dance has lost its place in the hearts of our society when the impact of the phenomenon of 'cultural globalisation' occurs (Razali et al., 2016), which is capable of submerging indigenous culture. The richness of Malay culture must be introduced to young children in early childhood education so that they will be able to properly preserve it in the future (Sri et al., 2020). This concern needs to be given attention so that the culture of the Malay community from the aspect of dance does not disappear just like that and is not only practised to perform certain prestigious occasions. Traditional dance is a type of movement art that contains body movements that have elements of beauty. Movement is one aspect of

development that children need to achieve. Often, aspects of movement in preschool focus more on fine motor and gross motor movements. To master this skill, preschool teachers focus more on this skill achieved through game activities. Elements in the dance movement itself can help children achieve gross motor and fine motor skills through the movements that need to be done in dance. One of the activities that can stimulate gross motor skills is learning the art of dance (Apri & Sri, 2021). Dance movements also indirectly apply creative movements. For example, finger movements in dance can strengthen children's fine motor skills. The steps in the dance itself can indirectly strengthen children's gross motor skills. Dance activities can also be used as an activity in teaching and learning motor skills at an early stage in line to give birth to active children and overcome the problem of obesity (Dyment & Coleman, 2012).

Movement in dance can foster moral values and discipline in children (Sansom, 2009). The movement and order of each step in traditional dance indirectly train children's discipline, and the movements strengthen the children's memory because they have to remember every movement that needs to be done according to the rhythm of the music. According to Riyaningsih et al (2018), the formation of student character, including the values of tolerance, discipline, creativity, honesty, responsibility, and cooperation, can be positively influenced by learning traditional dance.

According to Wallerstedt et al (2009), movement in dance can help to promote the improvement of children's health through exercises that involve physical movement. In creative movement, children will be stimulated and respond physically in their own way, and each movement will improve through practice (Tsompanaki, 2019). In addition, when dance is taught to children, it tends to have high self-discipline apart from the context of social science and culture (Zihronie, 2016). Traditional dance is a combination of physical activity, social interaction, and personal and emotional expression. All these elements form a holistic experience that gives pleasure to individuals and increases their motivation to participate. Also, every step and position in the dance requires a good sense of balance, as many steps require the use of the soles of the feet (Loukia & Dimitris, 2021) . Therefore, traditional dance can be an interesting alternative for young children to improve their balance.

However, changes in dance with time have caused the presence of external dance elements that do not fit with the culture of our society and have also caused concern when traditional dance is increasingly unknown to the younger generation. Parents and teachers themselves often expose children at a young age to songs from the West and dances that are not compatible with Malaysian culture. For example, children are often heard in songs with movements, such as "Baby Shark Dance", "Sleepy Mummy", and others, which have a great influence on the world of music and children's movements. At the preschool level, teaching and learning activities also incorporate modern songs because most children easily memorise new songs. These songs are used either in physical activities or as material in teaching and learning. Therefore, the influence of outside culture needs to be minimised through activities that are expressed through education in early childhood. One way to educate is to introduce traditional dance to this young generation (farhana & Joko, 2023)

Early education teachers also mostly do not have skills in teaching traditional dance. Based on observations, when there are events that require children's participation, dance can be used as performance material because it is easy and can be taught based on videos such as "YouTube". Therefore, teachers need to be exposed to the skills of teaching traditional dance based on creative movements so that they can practice with children so that this art continues to be appreciated and becomes a heritage that does not fade. Based on the

highlights of the study, there is a need to develop a “Langkah Silang Tepuk” model in the Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children by identifying the elements in the “Langkah Silang Tepuk” Model in the Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children and developing the model by using Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM).

Methodology

In principle, this study uses the ISM approach to get the agreement of the appointed panel to reach a consensus in identifying the relationship between the elements in the “Langkah Silang Tepuk” of the Malaysian zapin dance. The Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) approach is an analysis method used to study and explain the relationship between various elements in a complex system (Mohd & NurulRabihah, 2020). In ISM, these elements are identified and analysed to understand their hierarchical structure and the interactions between them. The steps in ISM include identifying relevant elements, determining the relationships between these elements, creating an interpretive matrix, developing an interpretive model, and interpretive analysis. Using this method, ISM helps to graphically describe the relationships that exist between elements in a system, making it easier to understand the structure and influence between them.

Panel of Study Experts

In this study, ISM was used to help a panel of experts reach a consensus on the relationship between elements in developing a cross-step model of clapping in Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children. Seven experts have been identified based on their expertise in Early Childhood Education and dance. They were invited to collaborate in an online workshop facilitated by the researcher to develop the model.

Expert	Qualifications	Expertise	Experience (Years)
P1	Doctorate	Dance	15
P2	Doctorate	Early Childhood Education	10
P3	Master	Early Childhood Education	10
P4	Master	Early Childhood Education	8
P5	Master	Dance	7
P6	Degree	Early Childhood Education	6
P7	Degree	Dance	5

Data Analysis

The data in this study was analysed using the ISM approach. ISM software, i.e. Star Concept, was used to develop and design models based on the agreement of selected experts. Data collection through the ISM approach began by identifying variables related to the problem of the research. Then, determined the relationship of contextually relevant elements and then a panel of experts made decisions to form a structural model called ISM. Among the limitations of using the ISM methodology, the contextual relationship between the elements is dependent on the knowledge, expertise, and experience of a panel of experts involved in the field of early childhood education and children's zapin dance.

Findings

The research findings in this study are explained based on three main steps in developing the model "*Langkah Silang Tepuk*" in Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children.

Step 1

An expert group of 7 people consisting of 4 preschool teachers and 3 dance teachers who have more than 5 years of experience in their respective fields. This group of experts has identified and listed the movement elements in the cross-clap step for the Malaysian zapin dance. The findings of this study were then screened and shortlisted by a group of experts selected through the 'Group brainstorming' technique against the selected elements. As a result, the expert group reached a consensus that only the movement elements stated in Table 1 were selected to develop the Model of "*Langkah Silang Tepuk*" in the Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children.

LANGKAH SILANG TEPUK		
Elemen Utama	No	Elements
Local (Start)	01	The right foot opens to the right side, and the left foot is on the spot, AND the right hand opens to the right side, and the left hand is on the side of the waist.
	02	The left foot opens to the left side, and the right foot is on the spot, AND the left hand opens to the left side, and the right hand is on the side of the waist.
Silang Tepuk (Front)	03	The right foot and left foot step forward, and both hands swing forward
	04	The right leg is lifted slightly, and the right hand pats the thigh of the left leg and then pats the left hand.
Silang Tepuk (Back)	05	The right leg and left leg turn back, and both hands swing forward
	06	The right leg is lifted slightly, and the right hand pats the thigh of the left leg and then pats the left hand.
Local (End)	07	The right foot opens to the right side, and the left foot is on the spot, AND the right hand opens to the right side, and the left hand is on the side of the waist.
	08	The left foot opens to the left side, and the right foot is on the spot, AND the left hand opens to the left side, and the right hand is on the side of the waist.

Step 2

The design and development of the "*Langkah Silang Tepuk*" Model in Malaysian zapin dance among preschool children through the ISM approach by using the Star Concept-ISM application formed with the agreement of experts as in Figure 1.

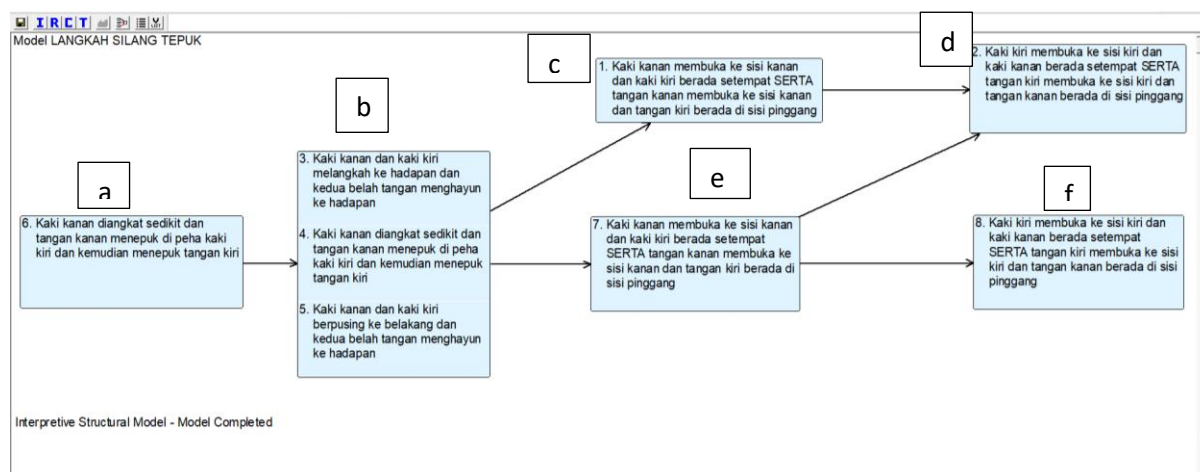


Figure 1. Zapin Malaysia “Langkah Silang Tepuk” Model

Findings show that the movement in the cross-clap step can be carried out according to the path shown in Figure 1. The movement of this cross-clap step can be mastered through 3 paths as follows;

- Route 1: a-b- c- d
- Route 2: a-b-e – d
- Route 3: a- b-e-f

Step 3

Finally, the Malaysian zapin dance “Langkah Silang Tepuk” Model among preschool children was presented to a group of experts to examine and check the appropriateness of each movement in the “Langkah Silang Tepuk” step or not to implement modifications on the model according to the expert's opinion. Therefore, the expert group has reached a consensus to accept the model presented without any modification after discussing and arguing every relationship between the elements involved by the expert group, as shown in Figure 1.

Discussion

Zapin, a traditional dance form in Malaysia, holds cultural and social importance. Preschool years mark a critical stage in a child's development, where exposure to cultural elements like dance can significantly impact their holistic growth. The 'Langkah Silang Tepuk' Model, when integrated into zapin Malaysia dance education for preschoolers, offers a structured approach to teaching, ensuring a deeper understanding and engagement with this cultural art form. The 'Langkah Silang Tepuk' Model is a proposed educational framework that combines movement patterns in a structured sequence. Its development through Interpretive Structure Modeling (ISM) involves breaking down the dance into elemental components, creating an organised framework for preschool children to comprehend and learn zapin Malaysia dance systematically.

Introducing zapin Malaysia dance through the 'Langkah Silang Tepuk' Model aids in preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of Malaysia. Traditional dance is a way for people to show their desire for beauty through their cultural background or system (Rahmawati et al., 2020). It ensures that the younger generation appreciates and understands this traditional art form from an early age, fostering a sense of pride and identity.

The integration of zapin Malaysia through the "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model offers a multitude of benefits for preschoolers. It promotes physical development by enhancing motor

skills, coordination, and balance through dance movements. Furthermore, it cultivates cognitive abilities by stimulating memory, creativity, and problem-solving skills as children learn the sequences and meanings behind the dance steps. Moreover, this model contributes significantly to the social and emotional development of preschoolers. Engaging in cultural activities fosters a sense of community and cooperation among children. It encourages teamwork, communication, and respect for one another's differences, thereby nurturing empathy and emotional intelligence.

The "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model holds immense potential, but certain challenges may arise. These could include resistance to change in traditional educational paradigms, resource limitations for training educators in the art form, and the need for continued support from educational institutions and policymakers to integrate such models into the curriculum effectively.

Teaching dance, especially utilising the "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model in zapin Malaysia for preschool children, requires a unique skill set from educators. Teachers should be skilled in breaking down complex dance steps into simpler, age-appropriate movements that align with the children's motor skills and comprehension levels. This model integrates various aspects of learning, including motor skills, cognitive development, cultural understanding, and social-emotional growth. It provides a holistic approach that supports the overall development of children. Teaching through the "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model not only improves attention and concentration but also nurtures creativity and imagination. Children explore their creative capabilities through movement, music, and cultural expression, further enhancing their cognitive and expressive faculties.

Additionally, mastering dance steps within this model fosters personal growth, boosting children's confidence and self-esteem as they overcome challenges and achieve milestones in their learning journey. Dancing, as a motoric exercise, is similarly comparable to sports. Dancing practice should follow the same principles as sports activities. The major objective of the exercise is to investigate and develop the notion of practice by integrating practical experience and the scientific method so that training practice can be precise, fast, effective, and efficient (Diah, 2017)

It enables educators to create dynamic and effective learning experiences, fostering a deeper connection between education, cultural heritage, and the overall growth and enrichment of young learners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of the "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model through ISM in zapin Malaysia dance for preschool children represents a pioneering approach to early childhood education. By merging cultural heritage with educational practices, this model enriches the learning experiences of preschoolers, fostering not only their academic growth but also nurturing a deeper appreciation for Malaysia's diverse cultural heritage. Implementing and further refining such innovative models can pave the way for a more culturally inclusive and comprehensive educational landscape.

The amalgamation of culture and education within the "Langkah Silang Tepuk" Model underscores its transformative potential. Its successful implementation not only augments academic growth but also cultivates a broader perspective on cultural diversity. Through this model, preschoolers not only learn the intricacies of zapin Malaysia dance but also develop a deep respect for their heritage and that of others. This innovative educational approach lays the groundwork for a more culturally sensitive and integrated educational landscape. Further

refinement and widespread adoption of such models hold the promise of shaping a generation that appreciates, celebrates, and preserves cultural heritage while embracing a global perspective, fostering a more harmonious and culturally enriched society.

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