

Introducing Cultural Heritage through Malay Tanjak Making Practices at Sentul Guidance Studio, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Abstract: Malay tanjak making training at Sentul Guidance Studio Kuala Lumpur aims to preserve Malay cultural heritage and increase the cultural literacy of early childhood students living abroad, especially Indonesian children in Malaysia. This activity is also part of the International Community Service Program (KKN) of Jam'iyah Mahmudiyah Langkat Institute students. The method used in this activity is a qualitative descriptive one that uses direct observation. The implementation of the activity involved two main stages: socialization and introduction of the Malay tanjak, as well as the direct practice of making tanjak. The results of the activity showed that this training succeeded in increasing the participants' understanding of Malay culture as well as their skills in making tanjak. In addition to providing cultural education, the activity can build a sense of pride in ancestral cultural heritage. Participants showed high enthusiasm in following all stages of the training, and some even took the initiative to develop these skills further. Thus, this activity made a positive contribution to the preservation of and strengthening Malay cultural identity among the overseas young generation.

Keywords: Training, Malay Tanjak, International KKN

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Introduction

The ability to recognize the nation's own culture is a key to addressing global cultural diversity. Intercultural , according to Rivas' explanation is communication between individuals or people from different cultural backgrounds. The ability to understand culture will play an important role in increasing students' meta-cognitive competence in the future ([Putriana, 2023](#)). As part of the educational aspect, cultural literacy skills can be applied to early childhood students through games. Students must possess cultural literacy skills to absorb various sources of information on global cultural diversity. Something that children absorb the most in learning is what is around them or who is the individual they are closest to them ([Asti Widiastuti et al., 2023](#)).

Education is a right for every Indonesian child , including those who follow their parents to work in Malaysia as migrants. Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) , including the Sentul Kuala Lumpur Malaysia area, has a strategic role and is at the forefront of educational diplomacy in Malaysia in the context of developing Indonesian human resources (HR) based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Efforts to equalize the right to education for school-age children in the midst of cultural diversity and socioeconomic limitations are the basis for the formation of learning centers (SB) ([Djumadi et al., 2023](#)). On the other hand, the availability of supporting facilities for the implementation of the learning process and teachers , as well as caregivers of learning studios, is far from adequate and meets the standards of an institution organizing the basic education unit level ([Akmal, 2015](#)). The conditions of the school environment in many learning center locations are not quite different, including those in the Sentul Kuala Lumpur learning center (SB).

One form of cultural heritage with high historical and philosophical value is the Malay tanjak, a traditional head covering that symbolizes nobility, wisdom , and courage ([Azmi et al., 2020](#)). However, with the changing times, understanding and skills for making and wearing tanjaks are diminishing. Therefore, efforts are needed to reintroduce this cultural heritage to the community , especially through hands-on training that involves the practice of tanjak making ([Budi Setyaningrum, 2018](#)).

Malay tanjak -making training is not only an effort to preserve tradition but also a medium of education and cultural understanding for the younger generation. This activity is important for building public awareness of Malay cultural values that are rich in symbolic meaning ([Mubarat et al., 2024](#)). Sanggar Bimbingan Sentul Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is a cultural learning center that plays a strategic role in reintroducing the tradition of tanjak to the wider community, especially among the younger generation and the overseas Malay community.

This training was conducted as part of the International KKN activities of Jam'iyah Mahmudiyah Langkat Institute students. Students' international community service activities form an integral part of Lecturers' international community services. These two programs are presented as solutions to help children who live anywhere (including outside the country of Indonesia) and from any circle obtain their rights in the field of education along with the development of their age. KKN is an educational process that allows students to experience real-life social life in the community and directly recognize and solve problems. KKN is essentially a civic activity conducted to apply the knowledge gained while at university ([Rahmawati et al., 2023](#)). KKN is a means to gain experience, increase knowledge, apply knowledge in the community, and train responsible and discipline. In the introduction of culture, especially regional culture, KKN and PKM are important iconic activities in various layers of society with diversity ([Syardiansah, 2019](#)).

Tanjak-making training is an effective method for introducing and preserving Malay cultural heritage. This training not only teaches technical skills on folding and assembling tanjak but also provides an understanding of the history and philosophy behind each fold and types of tanjak used on various occasions (Saputra et al., 2023). Thus, this training can be an educational tool that contributes to rebuilding cultural awareness among the community, especially the younger generation of overseas Malaysia.

Research Method

This study conducted socialization activities through the provision of materials and the practice of making handicrafts for children. This event was held on March 11, 2025, at Sentul Guidance Studio Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The method used to fulfill the activities of the Real Work Lecture (KKN) at the Jam'iyah Mahmudiyah Langkat Institute is a qualitative descriptive method in which data collection techniques are carried out during direct observation.

The aim of this paper is to provide a scientific forum on handicrafts and introduce the cultural heritage of Indonesian children visiting other countries. The subjects of data and the source of this article are the students and students of the Sentul Guidance Studio, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, a total of 45 students, as well as other sources that come from several references such as books, articles, or journal writing.

Results and Discussion

Training on introducing cultural heritage through the practice of making Malay tanoak at Sanggar Guidance Sentul, Kuala Lumpur has been well implemented. This training introduces Indonesian cultural heritage and provides participants with a deeper understanding of the history, philosophy, and techniques of making Malay tanjak. In this training, participants not only gained theoretical knowledge but also directly practiced the skills of making tanjak with the guidance of instructors ([Juswandi et al., 2022](#)).

This activity involved participants from various backgrounds, especially children and teenagers who are members of the Sentul Guidance Studio, Malaysia. The implementation of the activity was divided into two main stages: the socialization session and the provision of materials, and the practical session of making tanjak ([Satriadi et al., 2022](#)). Through this training, participants not only gained new insights into Malay cultural heritage but also gained hands-on experience in creating cultural products that have high historical value.

Stage 1: Socialization and Introduction of Malay Tanjak

In the first stage, the participants were given information on Malay tanjak, starting from its origin and historical development to its function in various aspects of Malay life. The speaker explained that tanjak is not just a head covering but has a symbolic value that reflects a person's identity, social status, and nobility.

In addition, the participants were also introduced to different types of tanjak based on region and use. For example, Tanjak Helang Menyusur Angin, which symbolizes courage and leadership, and Tanjak Dendam Tak Sudah, which is usually used in certain traditional ceremonies. By understanding these differences, participants can better appreciate the meaning contained in each type of tanjak ([Ulfa et al., 2023](#)).

The presenters also used various visual media such as pictures, video documentation, and original tanjak examples to provide clearer presentations to the participants. Some participants seemed very enthusiastic when they saw examples of tanjak that had been used by famous Malay figures, such as Hang Tuah and Sultan Mahmud.

The interactive discussions conducted in this session also showed that the participants understood the important role of tanjak in Malay culture. Some even shared stories from their parents or grandparents who still use tanjak in traditional festivals. In this session, participants are increasingly aware that cultural heritage such as tanjak is not just a part of the past but remains relevant today.



Figure 1. Tanjak introduction to students at Sentul Guidance Studio, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Stage 2: Malay Tanjak Making Practice

After understanding the theory and history of tanjak, the participants were instructed to make their own tanjak. This practice session followed several systematic steps prepared by the instructor. Before starting the practice, participants were given the materials needed to make tanjak, such as Malay-patterned wrapping paper as a practice medium, before using the original fabric.

The instructor explained that the use of paper as a starting material aims to help participants understand the basic folding techniques first, before moving on to more rigid fabrics such as songket or silk. The steps to make tanjak are as follows:

1. Using Malay-style wrapping paper to understand the basic pattern before using traditional fabrics.



Picture 2 Malay Motif Wrapping Paper

2. The right end is folded toward the left part to form a square, which is the main basis in forming a tanjak.

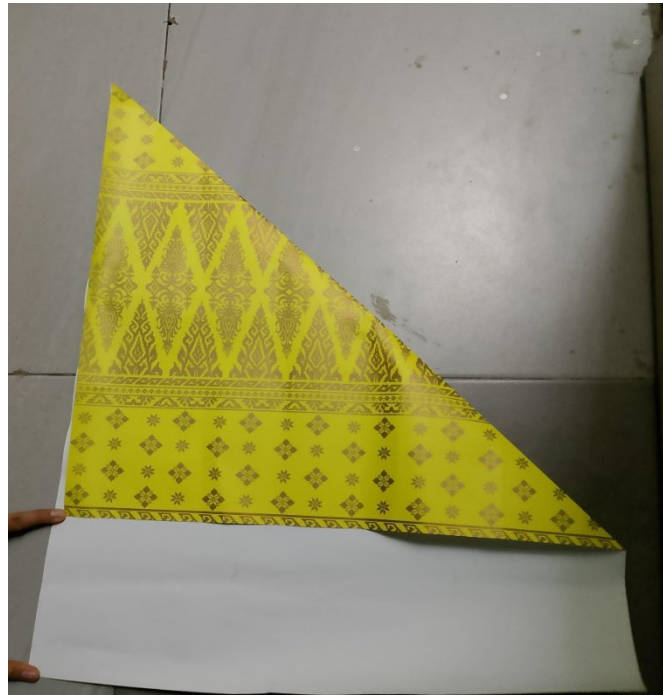


Figure 3. Folding the right end of the wrapping paper

3. Continuing the folding process to form a triangle, which will become the main structure of the tanjak.



Picture 4 Making process

4. Form the tanjak by folding the bottom up, according to the folding pattern commonly used in traditional tanjak making.

5. Smoothing the folds and ensuring that the tanjak shape remains firm; the tanjak can be worn properly and comfortably.

Each participant was given the opportunity to try independently under the guidance of an instructor. Some participants seemed to have difficulty aligning the folds to make them look neat, but they patiently followed the directions and kept trying until they succeeded.

In this session, participants were also given the freedom to explore their creativity, for example , by trying different variations of the tanjak shape. Some participants even combined different colors and patterns to create unique tanjak designs. This activity not only taught technical skills but also encouraged participants to appreciate art and esthetics in Malay culture.

After all participants had completed their tanjak-making practice, an evaluation and reflection session on their experience during the training was held. In the session, participants shared their opinions on the challenges and difficulties they faced as well as what they learned from this activity.

Most participants revealed that they had previously thought of tanjak only as an accessory to traditional clothing, without knowing the philosophy behind it. However, they became more aware of the importance of preserving Malay cultural heritage after attending this training.

In addition, many participants stated that the process of making tanjak was more difficult than they had imagined. They realized that this skill requires precision, patience , , and constant practice. Some participants expressed a desire to learn other cultural skills such as batik, songlet weaving, and making traditional Malay accessories.

From the instructor's perspective, this activity also provided insights into how a more interactive and hands-on approach could improve participants' understanding of traditional culture. Instructors noted that practice-based learning methods are more effective than just providing theory , especially in introducing skills that require hand dexterity ([Grasopa & Kencana, 2024](#)).

Through this training, participants not only gained new knowledge but also experienced a transformation in their perception of cultural heritage. They became more appreciative of tradition and realized that preserving culture should not be done by the older generation alone but also by the younger generation.



Figure 5. Students of Sentul Guidance Studio Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia using their work

The success of this activity can be seen in the participants' increasing interest in learning and preserving Malay culture. Some participants expressed their desire to wear tanjak in formal events or cultural gatherings as a form of pride in their identity.

The training succeeded in raising the participants' awareness of the Malay cultural heritage while providing new skills that they can continue to develop. With this type of activity, it is hoped that the younger generation will increasingly appreciate their own culture and contribute to maintaining its sustainability in the future.

Conclusions

The Malay tanjak-making training at Sanggar Bimbingan Sentul, Kuala Lumpur, has provided participants with in-depth insights into the history, philosophy, and techniques of tanjak-making. Through socialization and hands-on sessions, participants not only understood the symbolic meaning of tanjak in Malay culture but also gained technical skills in the making process. Participants' enthusiasm was evident from their interest in trying different types of folds and exploring unique designs, demonstrating that practice-based learning methods are more effective in introducing cultural heritage.

The participants increased their awareness of the importance of preserving Malay culture. They realized that tanjak is not just an accessory; it has historical value that needs to be preserved by the younger generation. In addition, this activity also built a sense of pride in their own cultural identity, which was reflected in the desire of some participants to wear tanjak on formal occasions. With activities like this, it is hoped that cultural preservation efforts will continue and inspire younger people to recognize and protect their cultural heritage.

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