

Jati Natana Dance: Basic Lessons in Various Dance Groups for Beginner Students at the Galih Murti Studio in Ciwidey

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Article Info

Article history:

Received: 20 June 2026

Publish: 4 July 2026

Keywords:

Basic Dance Learning;

Tari Jati Natana; Case Study;

Nonformal Dance Education;

Sundanese Dance.

Abstract

Based on conditions observed during the learning process in the dance studio, many beginner students still experience difficulties in understanding and performing basic dance techniques accurately. These difficulties are reflected in students' limited ability to distinguish movement quality, eye focus, use of energy, and movement characteristics found in various dance genres. In addition, students often experience confusion in understanding the differences between masculine and feminine movement characteristics because the instructional materials provided focus more on memorizing movement sequences than on understanding the fundamental concepts of dance movement. This study aims to describe the concept, learning process, and effectiveness of Tari Jati Natana as a basic dance technique learning material for beginners at Galih Murti Dance Studio, Ciwidey. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with dance instructors, and documentation of the learning process. The research subjects were the instructor and beginner dance studio members who participated in basic dance classes. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data display, and interactive conclusion drawing. The results showed that Tari Jati Natana was designed as a basic dance technique learning material that integrates the Wayang, Keurseus, Folk, and Creative Dance genres within a gradual learning structure. The learning process includes warm-up activities, introduction to basic techniques, movement sequence practice, and evaluation. The implementation of this material was proven to improve body coordination, musicality, balance, understanding of masculine and feminine movement characteristics, and participants' readiness to learn more complex dance forms. Therefore, Tari Jati Natana is effectively used as a basic dance technique learning material for beginners in a non-formal dance education setting.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learning dance at the beginner level is a fundamental phase in developing technical readiness, musicality, body coordination, and understanding of movement characteristics. The initial stage of dance learning plays a strategic role because it provides a foundation for students before learning more complex dance forms. Without systematic mastery of basic techniques, the dance learning process has the potential to result in skill gaps, technical errors, and limited understanding of movement aesthetics at a more advanced stage. Therefore, learning basic dance requires systematic materials so that students have technical readiness before learning more complex dance forms, both in formal and non-

formal educational environments, such as art studios. This is in line with Soedarsono's opinion that basic dance learning serves as a foundation for developing technique, feeling, and expression before students learn more complex dance forms (Soedarsono, 2002, p. 18).

In general, dance learning in dance studios is still oriented towards mastering the repertoire of performing dances. Students often immediately learn a particular dance form without going through a comprehensive stage of strengthening basic techniques. This condition actually makes students quick to respond and able to memorize the basic movement sequences, but do not yet understand the principles of technique, character, and roots of the dance family being studied. Dance families are used to group various types of dances to make them easier to understand, learn, and analyze based on their characteristics. This is reinforced by Tati Narawati (2005), "Sundanese dance developed in several traditional groups that have different movement characteristics, functions, and aesthetics. These groups are known as dance families, such as the Wayang Dance family, Keurseus, Rakyat, and Kreasi Baru." The results of initial observations conducted at the Galih Murti Ciwidey Studio showed that most beginner students did not have an understanding of the Sundanese dance family, even though they had studied several dance repertoires. This phenomenon indicates that basic dance learning that integrates an understanding of dance families is still rarely applied in studio learning practices. This condition is in line with Jazuli's opinion, which states that art learning often gets caught up in mastering performance products without first understanding the basic processes and concepts (Jazuli, 2016:54).

On the other hand, the development of dance education demonstrates the need for a more systematic, contextual, and movement-based learning approach. However, research specifically developing basic dance materials based on the integration of Sundanese dance groups is still limited, especially in the context of non-formal dance education. According to Sumaryono, dance education needs to develop a contextual learning approach so that students can understand the cultural meaning behind movement (Sumaryono, 2011:73).

Some practitioners argue that directly learning dance repertoire can increase student motivation because they can immediately demonstrate their learning outcomes. However, other approaches emphasize that mastery of basic techniques should be a priority before learning dance forms. These differing views indicate the need for research examining the effectiveness of basic dance materials as a learning medium for beginner students. According to Murgiyanto, dance learning should begin with strengthening basic techniques so that students have physical readiness and aesthetic understanding before learning dance forms (Murgiyanto, 2004:27).

Furthermore, Sundanese dance instruction has unique characteristics that emphasize the differences in male and female movement. Introducing movement characteristics from a basic level can help students develop body awareness, movement quality, and better dance interpretation. This is in line with Narawati's opinion, which states that the character of movement in Sundanese dance is an aesthetic identity that needs to be introduced from the early stages of learning (Narawati, 2003:65).

The Jati Natana Dance was developed in 2021 and is still used as a basic learning material for beginner students at the Galih Murti Studio in Ciwidey. Based on these conditions, the novelty of the Jati Natana Dance lies in the integration of four Sundanese dance groups: Wayang, Keurseus, Rakyat, and Kreasi Baru, as well as the introduction of male and female movement characters in one basic learning material for beginner students. The development of this dance was motivated by the need for learning materials that not only train body techniques but also introduce the diversity of movement characters in the Sundanese dance tradition from an early stage. This integrative approach is in line with the

idea of arts education that emphasizes the integration of technique, expression, and cultural understanding (Eisner, 2002, p. 80).

Sanggar Galih Murti Ciwidey is a non-formal arts education institution that has an important role in developing the younger generation in the field of Sundanese traditional arts. It was founded and has been active in developing Sundanese traditional arts since 1988. This studio focuses on learning traditional dance, music, and theater for various age groups.

In its implementation, Sanggar Galih Murti organizes various arts activities which include Sundanese traditional music, dance, and theater with a fairly diverse number of members from various age groups, so that it requires systematic and gradual basic learning materials.

This study aims to examine the Jati Natana Dance as a basic dance learning medium for beginner students at the Galih Murti Ciwidey Studio. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) describe the concept and structure of the Jati Natana Dance as basic learning material, (2) analyze the integration of Sundanese dance groups in learning materials, and (3) examine the role of the Jati Natana Dance in supporting the dance learning process for beginner students.

Thus, this research is expected to enrich the development of a basic dance learning model based on the integration of Sundanese dance groups in non-formal arts education. Furthermore, the results are expected to serve as a reference for dance education practitioners in developing more comprehensive learning materials for beginner students.

2. METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design that aims to deeply understand the process, structure, and understanding of the learning process of the Jati Natana Dance as a basic dance learning medium for beginner students at the Galih Murti Studio in Ciwidey. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research emphasizes understanding learning phenomena contextually and naturally through direct interaction with research subjects in a real learning environment. Creswell emphasizes that qualitative research is an approach that seeks to understand the meaning constructed by participants towards a phenomenon in its natural context, thus enabling researchers to gain a deep understanding of the process being studied (Creswell, 2021, p. 8). This approach is considered relevant to studying dance learning practices that occur naturally in the studio environment as a non-formal educational space.

A case study design was used because the research focuses on one specific context, namely the practice of learning the Jati Natana Dance at a studio with a unique learning program. Yin explains that case studies are an appropriate research strategy for examining contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly visible (Yin, 2018, p. 15). Thus, the case study design allows for an in-depth exploration of the processes, experiences, and meanings that emerge in the Jati Natana Dance learning activities at the Galih Murti Ciwidey Studio.

The research was conducted at the Galih Murti Ciwidey Studio, which actively implements the Jati Natana Dance as a basic learning material for its beginner members, consisting of 60 students aged 5-12 years. In this study, the researcher was the choreographer of the Jati Natana Dance, who developed the learning materials, but did not act as trainers in the learning process, because to minimize subjectivity, the data collection and interpretation process was carried out through data triangulation and member checks with research informants. The learning implementation was carried out by two studio trainers, namely Windy and Pertiwi, who were the main informants of the research. In

addition, studio members who attended the basic dance class became research participants because they experienced the Jati Natana Dance learning process directly.

Research was conducted on May 5, May 11, and May 19, 2026, to directly observe the learning process taking place in the basic dance class. In-depth interviews with the trainers were conducted on March 30, 2026, to obtain an overview of the development of members' abilities in cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and social aspects. During the research period, observations were conducted at several learning sessions to obtain consistent data regarding the practice process, the responses of the dance group members, and the development of movement skills. The research procedure began with initial observations of the dance learning conditions in the group, followed by the development of research instruments in the form of observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation formats. The next stage was data collection through field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation of learning activities. Data analysis was then carried out, leading to the preparation of a research report.

Data collection was conducted through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted by directly observing the Jati Natana Dance learning process with a focus on the learning structure, the delivery of material by the trainer, the responses of beginner studio members, the process of practicing various male and female movements, and the interaction between the trainer and studio members during the learning process. Interviews were conducted to obtain information regarding the concept of creating the Jati Natana Dance, the objectives of basic dance learning, the benefits of the material for beginner members, and the obstacles faced in the learning process from the perspective of the trainer and studio members. Documentation was used to strengthen the research data through the collection of photos, videos of the practice process, learning notes, and archives of studio activities.

In this study, the researcher acted as the primary instrument (human instrument), directly collecting and analyzing data. Supporting instruments used included observation guides, interview guides, a voice recorder, a camera, and field notes. Data analysis was conducted using an interactive analysis model through a gradual process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Miles and Huberman state that qualitative data analysis proceeds interactively and continuously until data saturation is reached (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 12). Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation techniques, and member checking was conducted with informants to ensure the data interpretations matched the participants' experiences.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sanggar Galih Murti is a non-formal arts education institution that plays an important role in preserving Sundanese traditional arts. This studio was founded in 1988 under the name Giri Lawungan and was updated to Sanggar Galih Murti in 2008 and obtained legal status in 2015. The studio focuses on fostering Sundanese traditional music, dance, and theater with the vision of preserving, developing, and marketing traditional arts sustainably. In the field of dance, the studio has active members divided into three age groups, namely 20 people aged 7–10 years, 15 people aged 11–15 years, and 10 people aged 16 years and above. This condition shows that Sanggar Galih Murti has an active and sustainable learning environment, making it a relevant context for research on basic dance learning.

The results of the study indicate that learning Jati Natana Dance shows progress towards improving the basic dance skills of beginner students at the Galih Murti Studio in

Ciwidey. The learning model that integrates four Sundanese dance groups is structured progressively from traditional techniques to creative exploration, allowing students to gradually understand the structure of dance knowledge. This gradual approach shows a tendency for students to be able to build physical readiness, musicality, and aesthetic sensitivity from the early stages of learning.

The Jati Natana dance itself was created in 2021 as a basic dance lesson for non-academic groups or studios. The dance continued to be developed until 2022 and is currently used as a basic lesson at the Galih Murti Ciwidey Studio.



Figure 1. New student training process for the Jati Natana dance

The development of this dance was motivated by the need for learning materials that could introduce basic dance techniques while providing an understanding of the movement characteristics of boys and girls from the early stages of learning. The dance structure was developed in stages, integrating four Sundanese dance groups: Wayang, Keurseus, Rakyat, and Kreasi Baru.



Figure 2. Movement of the Wayang group in the Jati Natana dance

The learning phase, which begins with the Wayang dance group, demonstrates the challenges encountered during the research process for students, particularly in mastering tempo and movement power. The dashing character of the Monggawa and the fast-paced musical accompaniment demand strong body coordination and high concentration. In the initial phase of training, some students experienced difficulty maintaining a stable rhythm and quality of movement power. However, through repeated practice, improvements in tempo stability and movement power control were observed. This condition aligns with McCutchen's opinion that "dance learning in the early stages emphasizes imitation, repetition, and the development of motor coordination as the basis for dance skills" (McCutchen, 2006, p. 42). Repetition of movements helps students build motor memory so that body coordination and tempo accuracy develop gradually.

The transition to lungguh and ladak characters demonstrates a more refined and controlled change in movement quality. Students begin to adapt their body expressions to different movement characteristics. At this stage, there is an increase in body

awareness and aesthetic sensitivity. Students no longer simply imitate movement forms, but begin to understand the changes seen in the use of more controlled energy, a more stable tempo, and the ability to distinguish between subtle and dynamic movement characteristics and the inherent expressive qualities of each movement type. This demonstrates that dance learning can integrate physical and emotional aspects simultaneously in the learning process.

At the Keurseus dance group stage, students' development is increasingly visible in their ability to understand the dynamics of movement energy. Students begin to recognize the differences in the characters of halus, lungguh, ladak, and monggawaan. This development shows that students are not only developing in the psychomotor aspect, but also in the cognitive and affective aspects. Smith-Autard emphasized that "dance education should develop from mastery of technique to artistic expression and creativity" (Smith-Autard, 2002, p. 58). The findings of this study show that learning Jati Natana Dance has pushed students towards a deeper stage of artistic understanding.

Entering the folk-dance group, student engagement increased significantly. The communicative, rhythmic, and dynamic nature of the movements gave students greater confidence in expressing themselves. Movement mastery at this stage progressed more quickly than in previous stages.



Figure 3. Movement of the People's Group in the Jati Natana Dance

The close association of folk movement with everyday activities makes it easier for students to spontaneously grasp rhythm and movement expression. This has been shown to facilitate the learning process. This demonstrates that a familiar cultural context can accelerate the internalization of arts learning materials.

The new creation stage is the phase that demonstrates the most significant results of the entire learning process. In this stage, students are given the opportunity to explore and develop movement independently based on their learning experiences from the four dance groups they have studied.



Figure 4. New creative forms in the Jati Natana movement.

The observation results show that most students can develop form movements, perform simple improvisations, and determine the use of movement energy according to the

character they develop creatively and show courage in making artistic decisions. Eisner stated that "art education plays an important role in developing imagination, expression, and reflective thinking skills of students" (Eisner, 2002, p. 70). This finding shows that learning Jati Natana Dance not only builds technical skills, but also students' creative thinking skills.

The Jati Natana dance also strengthens students' movement skills, particularly in areas of strength, assertiveness, and courage. The inclusion of local cultural elements makes learning more contextual and relevant to the students' environment. Furthermore, the learning process demonstrates the interconnectedness of cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and social aspects, developing in an integrated manner.

No	Aspect	Skill Indicators
1	<i>Cognitive</i>	Understanding the sequence of various dance movements, understanding tempo and musical accompaniment, understanding simple floor patterns, and remembering the structure of dance parts.
2	<i>Psychomotor</i>	Accuracy in performing various basic movements, Coordination of hand and foot movements, Flexibility and balance of the body, and accuracy in following the tempo
3	<i>Affective</i>	Enthusiasm in following exercises, Discipline and responsibility, Self-confidence when dancing, Ability to express movement.
4	<i>Social</i>	Cooperation in groups, Ability to follow formations, mutual respect among participants, Solidarity in performance

Observations show that these four aspects develop gradually as the dance sections change. Each dance group contributes to a different learning experience, creating a comprehensive learning experience. This development is more clearly seen in the following analysis of the dance section flow. The data demonstrates that student development occurs not only in movement technique but also in discipline, self-confidence, and social skills throughout the training process.

Dance Group	Motion & Character Description	Learning objectives	Observation Results
Puppet	<i>Sit down.</i> (Gagahan) Son/Daughter <i>Sitting</i> (Fine) <i>Ladakh</i> (a little fast and agile)	Train strength, body coordination, tempo accuracy, sensitivity, and body control.	At the beginning of practice, students have difficulty maintaining tempo and energy, but after repeated practice, flexibility and expression increase.
After	<i>Smooth, Sitting, Ladakh Monggawa.</i>	Understanding the dynamics of kinetic energy	Students begin to understand character, not just imitate it.

People	Communicative, Rhythmic, dynamic.	Increase motivation and self-confidence	Faster movement mastery, increased engagement.
New Creation	Development of independent movement	Train creativity and exploration	Students can combine movements independently

Based on the research results, it appears that the Sundanese dance-based learning model has a significant impact on the development of beginner students' abilities. The learning stages, which begin with a dashing character and progress to creative exploration, have proven effective in developing physical readiness, character understanding, and courage to express oneself.

The development of students' abilities shows a pattern consistent with process-based arts learning theory, namely imitation, understanding, and creation. In the initial stages, students focus on mastering basic techniques. Next, they begin to understand the characteristics of movement and the differences in energy qualities. In the final stage, students are able to conduct independent creative explorations.

Overall, the Jati Natana Dance can be considered effective as a basic dance learning model for beginners. The gradual approach from tradition to new creations has been proven to improve students' understanding of dance structure, mastery of basic techniques, and creative exploration skills. These findings indicate that an integrative learning model based on the Sundanese dance family is relevant for application in dance education in studios and non-formal educational settings.

4. CONCLUSION

Learning Jati Natana Dance has been proven to contribute significantly to the development of basic dance skills of beginner members at the Galih Murti Studio in Ciwidey. The learning structure, which integrates Wayang, Keurseus, Rakyat, and Kreasi Baru dance groups, gradually develops body coordination, musicality, balance, understanding of movement characteristics, and members' readiness to learn more complex dance material. The repetitive and progressive training process also shows an increase in abilities in the cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and social aspects in an integrated manner.

Overall, Jati Natana Dance can be said to show potential as a basic dance learning model, as basic dance learning material in the context of non-formal arts education. The learning approach that starts from strengthening traditional techniques to creative exploration is proven to be able to increase self-confidence, creativity, and member involvement in the learning process. The findings of this study indicate that the basic dance learning model based on the integration of Sundanese dance groups is relevant to be applied in training activities in studios as an effort to preserve and develop traditional dance arts.

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