



Aesthetic interaction and cultural education in Rejang Asta Dala Dance, Ubud

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Abstract. The Rejang Asta Dala dance, as a sacred dance in Ubud, functions not only within religious rituals but also as a medium of cultural education that transmits symbolic values and cultural meanings within its supporting community. However, contemporary practices indicate a shift in orientation toward technical and visual aspects, potentially reducing philosophical depth and the sacred character of the dance. This study aims to analyze aesthetic interactions in the process of transmitting symbolic values and cultural meanings in the Rejang Asta Dala dance. The research employs a qualitative approach using ethnographic methods, including participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation study. Data analysis is conducted through hermeneutic and semiotic perspectives. The findings reveal that the aesthetic elements of the dance, namely movement, spatial orientation, costume, and music (gamelan), function as a symbolic system that encodes Balinese Hindu cosmology, such as Asta Dala, Dewata Nawa Sanga, and Tri Hita

Karana. Cultural education takes place through a hermeneutic cycle involving embodied experience in ritual practice (*ngayah*), intergenerational reflection, and mediation by the customary community (*banjar*), thereby shaping reflective and agentic cultural subjects. Despite its effectiveness, the sustainability of this dance's educational function faces challenges from tourism and modernization, necessitating efforts to safeguard the integrity of ritual contexts and the community's role as guardian of meaning.

Introduction

Traditional Balinese performing arts are deeply rooted in the religious system and social structure of Balinese society (Ananta et al., 2025; Geertz, 2004; Hendra, 2025). Dance occupies a central position, serving as an integral part of Balinese Hindu religious practice while also embodying spiritual values, ethical principles, and cosmological perspectives (Wahyuni, 2025; Wiyani, 2024). In ritual practice, dance is presented as an expression of *bhakti* toward divine forces and as a means of maintaining harmonious relations between humans, nature, and the transcendent realm. For this reason, Balinese dance cannot be understood merely as artistic expression, but rather as a representation of value systems and beliefs that are actively sustained within the supporting community (Putra & Astuti, 2025; Utamia, 2024). The relationship between aesthetics and symbolic meaning constitutes a defining characteristic of sacred dance in Bali. Aesthetic elements such as movement, expression, costume, musical accompaniment, and performance space function as symbols that convey religious and philosophical messages. Aesthetics in sacred dance operates as

a cultural language that links visual experience with spiritual understanding (Picard, 2011; Utamia & Indrawan, 2024). Based on this understanding, the aesthetic experience in Balinese dance is integrative, uniting sensibility, meaning, and religious devotion within a coherent cultural practice.

One form of sacred dance that plays a significant role in Balinese Hindu ritual life is the Rejang dance. This dance is positioned as a *tari wali*, performed in temples as part of the *yadnya* ritual cycle (Astari & Sugiarta, 2020; Pratama, Jazuli, Adnyana, & Cahyono, 2022; Ruastiti et al., 2026). Traditionally, Rejang dance serves as a medium of reverence toward the deities and as a symbol of purity and sincerity among devotees (Erawati & Gunawan, 2025; Murniti, 2023). However, developments in the performance practice of Rejang dance reveal notable changes. Among the various forms of *rerejangan* that have developed, Rejang Asta Dala, which continues to be practiced in the Ubud area, exhibits distinctive characteristics that remain strongly bound to ritual structures and the local belief system. This dance embodies cosmological symbolism related to the concepts of Asta Dala, Dewata Nawa Sanga, and the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana. Each aesthetic component of Rejang Asta Dala, whether movement, structure, spatial orientation, or costume color, represents the idea of cosmic balance and harmonious relations among spiritual, social, and environmental elements. Through these symbols, the dance serves as a medium for articulating the philosophical values and cultural identity of the Ubud community.



Image 1. Rejang Asta Dala Dance

The existence of Rejang Asta Dala in the life of the Ubud community cannot be separated from an ongoing process of value transmission. The inheritance of this dance does not stop at the mastery of movement techniques, but also includes the internalization of spiritual values, attitudes of devotion, and collective awareness formed through participation in rituals, the practice of *ngayah*, and guidance from customary leaders.

This situation highlights challenges in the transmission of cultural values, particularly among younger generations. When the understanding of dance is oriented primarily toward form and performance, the function of Rejang Asta Dala as a medium of cultural education is at risk of being narrowed. In fact, this dance plays a strategic role in instilling spiritual values, communal solidarity, and awareness of local cultural identity (Widana et al., 2023). Therefore, a study is required that positions dance aesthetics as part of the mechanism of value transmission, rather than merely as a visual outcome of performance.

Based on this perspective, this research examines aesthetic interactions in the process of transmitting symbolic values, cultural meanings, and cultural education within the Rejang Asta Dala dance in Ubud, Bali. The study focuses on the relationship between the aesthetic structure of the dance and ritual practices, the role of customary communities, and intergenerational transmission mechanisms as part of an informal and sustainable process of cultural education. Through this approach, the research aims to explain the role of the Rejang Asta Dala dance as a medium of cultural education that contributes to the preservation of spiritual and cultural values and the formation of cultural identity among the Ubud community amid ongoing social change.

Method

Research Method and Design

This study employs a qualitative, ethnographic approach to examine the Rejang Asta Dala Dance as a medium of cultural education through aesthetic interactions in the process of transmitting symbolic values and cultural meanings in Ubud, Bali. A qualitative approach is adopted because the study seeks to understand the meanings, values, and cultural processes embedded in sacred dance practices as experienced and interpreted by the supporting community. An ethnographic research design is used to capture lived experiences, cultural practices, and social interactions that accompany the presence of Rejang Asta Dala within the ritual life of the Ubud community (Mahadewi & Maheswari, 2025). Through the researcher's direct involvement in the field, ethnography enables in-depth observation of the relationships between the aesthetic structure of the dance, its ritual functions, and the processes of cultural education that take place through mechanisms of intergenerational transmission within the social and religious life of the community (Putra & Astuti, 2025; Spradley & Elizabeth, 2007; Syarif, 2025).

Focus and Participants

The focus of the study is directed toward several key aspects: (1) the aesthetic structure of the Rejang Asta Dala Dance; (2) aesthetic interactions occurring within ritual contexts and rehearsal processes as spaces for cultural learning; (3) the intergenerational transmission of symbolic values and cultural meanings through dance practice; and (4) the role of the Rejang Asta Dala Dance as a medium of cultural education. Research data consists of primary and secondary sources. Primary data are obtained from informants directly involved in the practice and preservation of Rejang Asta Dala, including dancers, customary leaders, temple priests, artists, cultural practitioners, and members of the Ubud community. Secondary data are derived from literature reviews, archival documents, palm-leaf manuscripts (*lontar*), historical records, audiovisual documentation, and scholarly publications relevant to the research object.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques include participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Participant observation is conducted during ritual performances and rehearsals to understand aesthetic interaction in its natural setting. In-depth interviews are used to explore informants' experiences, understandings, and interpretations of the symbolic meanings and cultural values embedded in Rejang Asta Dala. Document analysis is employed to strengthen and complement field data by examining written and visual sources (Achjar et al., 2023; Rukajat, 2018; Zahroh et al., 2025).

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is carried out using descriptive qualitative analysis, supported by hermeneutic and semiotic approaches. The hermeneutic approach is applied to interpret meanings embedded in ritual practices and the dance's aesthetic expressions, while the semiotic approach is used to examine symbols manifested in movement, color, spatial orientation, and ritual attributes (Faizah

et al., 2025; Sitharesmi, n.d.; Wiyani, 2024). Through this analytical process, the study seeks to reveal how aesthetic interactions in the Rejang Asta Dala Dance function as a mechanism for cultural education in the sustainable transmission of symbolic values and cultural meanings within the Ubud community.

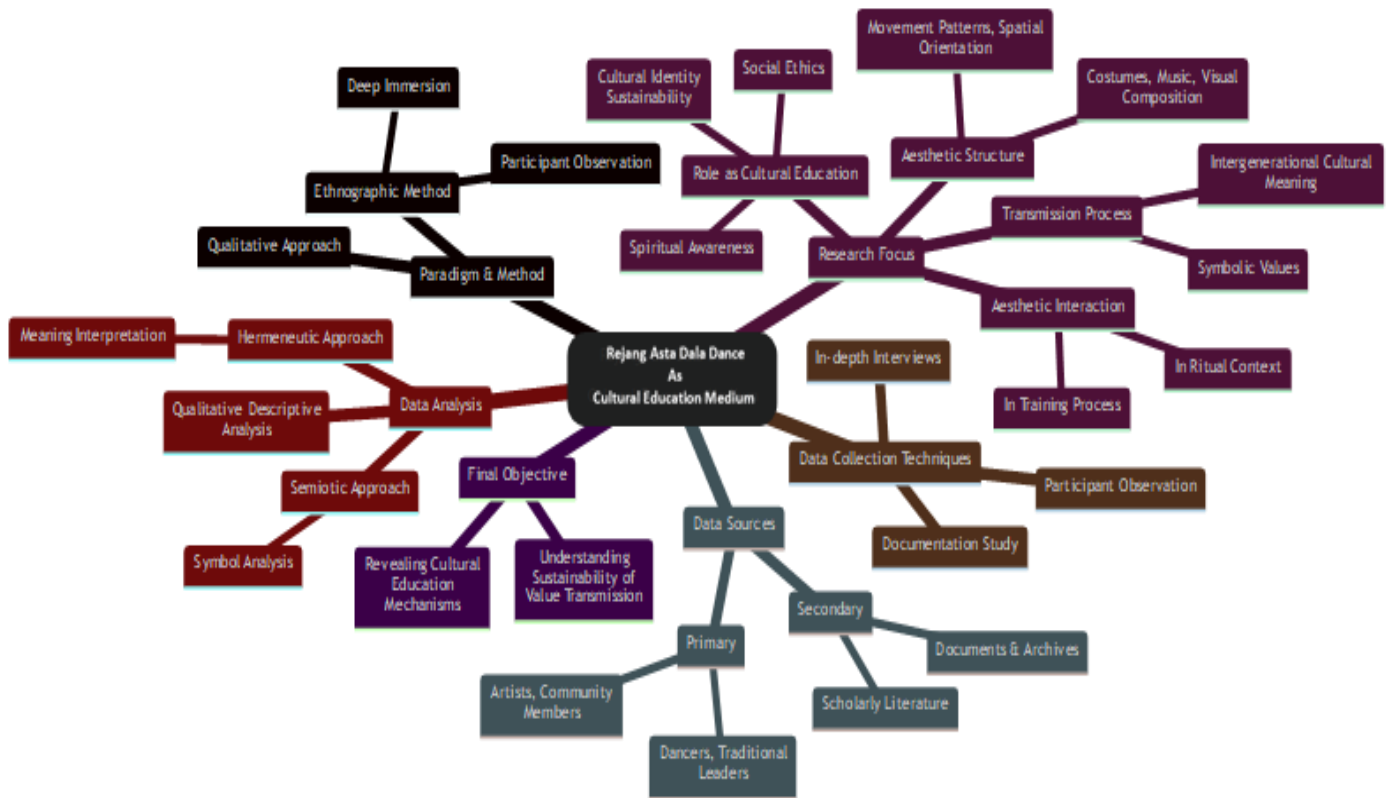


Image 2. Radial diagram of research mindmap

Results and Discussion

Aesthetic Interaction of the Rejang Asta Dala Dance in Traditional Ceremonies

The findings indicate that the aesthetics of the Rejang Asta Dala dance do not function as autonomous artistic elements but are fully integrated into the ritual structure of the Ubud community. The repetitive, rhythmic, and non-demonstrative movement patterns suggest that the beauty of this dance is not understood as an expression of individual artistry, but as a collective manifestation of spiritual devotion. Movements performed synchronously and continuously emphasize the principle of communal solidarity (*menyama braya*) and negate personal dominance, positioning the dancers' bodies as media of offering rather than as subjects of spectacle. Aesthetic interaction in this dance is constructed through a harmonious relationship between the dancers' bodies, the sacred temple space, the musical accompaniment, and ritual time as determined by customary and religious norms.

The spatial orientation of the dancers' movements, which follows the Asta Dala concept, demonstrates a direct connection between the dance's aesthetic structure and Balinese Hindu cosmology. Movements oriented toward the eight cardinal directions signify the presence of *Dewata Nawa Sanga*, guardians of cosmic balance. Formation patterns that radiate outward and face multiple directions function not merely as visual composition but as symbols of the interconnectedness between the sacred center and the entirety of the cosmos. In this context, aesthetics operates as a symbolic system that mediates relationships among humans, nature, and

the transcendent realm (Citrawan et al., 2024). The beauty of the dance is thus not measured solely by visual order or formal harmony, but by *taksu*, a sense of spiritual vitality arising from the alignment of movement, space, and ritual intention.

Aesthetic interaction is also strongly evident in the use of costume and color. The attire of the Rejang Asta Dala dance reflects the chromatic diversity of *Devata Nawa Sanga*, aligned with the respective cardinal directions of each deity. Each costume color represents a specific symbolic force of the directional deities, rendering colors such as white, yellow, red, green, and dark blue not merely decorative but cosmologically meaningful. White and yellow signify purity, enlightenment, and divinity; red symbolizes energy, courage, and vitality; while green and dark blue evoke natural balance, serenity, and cosmic stability. The harmony between costume colors and spatial orientation reinforces the visual representation of the *Devata Nawa Sanga* concept within ritual practice. Consequently, the dancers' bodies function as living symbols that visualize cosmic order through the integration of movement, space, and color. The use of uniform yet symbolically rich head ornaments further affirms the dancers' status as sacred figures within the ritual context. Modest, elegant costumes that do not emphasize bodily individuality reflect ethical values of propriety and purity, thereby strengthening the dance's function as an act of offering.

Through the integration of these elements, the aesthetics of the Rejang Asta Dala dance function as a cultural language that conveys philosophical and religious meanings nonverbally. The aesthetic interactions produced not only generate visual beauty but also serve as a medium of cultural education, continuously transmitting cosmological values, spiritual awareness, and social ethics to the supporting community.

Transmission of Symbolic Values through Aesthetic Dance Practices

The transmission of symbolic values in the Rejang Asta Dala dance occurs through latent, contextual learning mechanisms, deeply rooted in ritual practice and the social structure of the Ubud community. This process is not organized through a formal, structured educational system, but rather through the direct involvement of younger generations in ritual cycles, collective rehearsals, and the repeated practice of *ngayah*. In this context, dance learning becomes an integral part of cultural socialization, through which individuals come to understand values, norms, and meanings by actively participating in communal life. The dancers' aesthetic experience functions as the primary medium for the transmission of value. The body is not merely an instrument for reproducing movement, but a site for the internalization of symbolic and spiritual values. Through repetitive rhythmic movements, alignment with musical accompaniment, and adherence to ritual conduct, values such as sincerity (*lascarya*), discipline, patience, and collective responsibility are gradually and deeply cultivated. This learning process is embodied in nature, whereby cultural knowledge is not only intellectually comprehended, but also directly felt and experienced through the body and affect.

Interview findings reveal that dancers' understanding of the meanings of the Rejang Asta Dala dance develops in parallel with the intensity of their engagement in ritual practice. Verbal explanations provided by customary leaders or senior dancers serve primarily as an introduction; deeper understanding emerges from the lived experience of dancing within sacred spaces. The temple atmosphere, the scent of incense, the rhythms of the gamelan, and the sense of togetherness among dancers create a learning environment rich in symbolic meaning. Within this space, aesthetics function not merely as visual expression, but as a spiritual experience that shapes awareness of one's position within the cosmic order and the customary community. Aesthetic interaction among movement, music, space, and ritual time creates a cultural learning space that is reflective and transformative (Darmawan, 2025a; Pratama, Jazuli, Adnyana, Cahyono, et al., 2022; Wicaksandita & Wicaksana, 2025). Cultural values are transmitted not through explicit instruction

or performative assessment, but through exemplarity, repetition, and lived engagement, allowing values to be internalized naturally without coercion or indoctrination. In this sense, dance aesthetics function as a pedagogical medium that integrates affective, spiritual, and social dimensions of learning.

Nevertheless, this study also identifies dynamics and challenges in the transmission of symbolic value. Such conditions can lead to a narrowing of meaning, whereby dance is understood as an object of spectacle rather than as a medium of cultural education (Apriyanti et al., 2024; Ekawati, 2024; Syahrir, 2021). Therefore, the sustainability of the symbolic meanings of the Rejang Asta Dala dance depends on maintaining a balance between technical mastery and the deepening of philosophical and spiritual understanding. The roles of senior dancers, customary leaders, and the customary community are crucial as guardians of value orientation in the transmission process. They function not only as instructors of technique but also as mediators of meaning, cultivating awareness of the dance's sacred and educational functions.

By sustaining aesthetic practice as a space of interaction between artistic experience and cultural meaning, the Rejang Asta Dala dance can continue to function as a living and relevant medium for the transmission of symbolic values. In this context, dance serves not only as a means of preserving tradition but also as a form of sustainable cultural education that shapes the character, spirituality, and cultural identity of future generations of the Ubud community amid ongoing social and cultural change.

Rejang Asta Dala Dance as a Medium of Cultural Education

The findings of this study indicate that the Rejang Asta Dala dance serves a function that extends beyond ritual artistic expression, playing a significant role in the process of cultural education that shapes spiritual awareness, social ethics, and the cultural identity of the Ubud community. This educational function is not implemented through a formal educational system characterized by written curricula or standardized instructional structures, but rather through community-based learning patterns embedded in religious practices, customary systems, and the dynamics of social life. In this context, dance practice operates as a cultural pedagogical space in which cultural values are produced, internalized, and reproduced through direct engagement in ritual experiences (Hidajat, 2025; Martha, 2025; Pratama et al., 2024).

Individual involvement, particularly that of younger generations, in the Rejang Asta Dala dance is directed not only toward mastering movement structures and ritual conduct but also toward developing an understanding of one's position within cosmic, social, and religious orders. This awareness emerges through aesthetic experiences that integrate the body, sacred space, and ritual time into a unified cultural praxis. The dancer's body functions as a learning medium through which cosmological values such as balance, harmony, and cosmic order are embedded through lived practice. Such learning processes demonstrate that value internalization does not occur solely within the cognitive domain, but also encompasses embodied, affective, and spiritual dimensions (Widana & Purnadewi, 2023).



Image 3. Performance of the Rejang Asta Dala Dance during a Traditional Ceremony at the Temple

The sustainability of the educational function of the Rejang Asta Dala dance is strongly influenced by the role of customary communities and ritual leaders as the principal agents of cultural value transmission. They serve as guardians of symbolic legitimacy and as mediators of meaning within ritual practice. The transmission process takes place through exemplarity, ritual performance supervision, and intensive, recurring intergenerational interactions. Customary leaders not only ensure conformity to ritual norms but also cultivate a philosophical understanding of movement meanings, spatial orientation, and color symbolism among dancers. This learning pattern is dialogical and reflective, as cultural knowledge is constructed through shared practice and collective experience. Based on these findings, the Rejang Asta Dala dance can be positioned as an ethnopedagogical practice that situates local culture as a primary source of knowledge and educational values. Dance aesthetics function as a pedagogical medium that simultaneously integrates cognitive, affective, social, and spiritual dimensions. Cultural knowledge is conveyed not as abstract concepts detached from context, but through situational and meaningful aesthetic experiences, reflecting the holistic character of cultural education in traditional societies (Anto et al., 2024).

Within the broader scope of cultural education, the Rejang Asta Dala dance demonstrates the potential of traditional performing arts as a means of character formation and the reinforcement of cultural identity. Values such as sincerity (*lascarya*), ritual discipline, communal solidarity, and the ethic of *ngayah* are internalized through collective and sustained dance practice. Dance aesthetics serve as a medium for meaning-making, enabling individuals to understand and embody the spiritual values and principles of harmony central to Balinese life (Darmawan, 2025b; Hendra, 2025; Semarabawa, 2022). Traditional performing arts, therefore, should not be viewed merely as objects of cultural preservation, but as alternative, contextual, and adaptive systems of cultural education (Nurazza et al., 2025; Restian et al., 2022). In the context of globalization, which often promotes cultural homogenization and performative orientations, this dance practice provides a space for articulating local values and collective awareness. Cultural education enacted through dance enables younger generations to build a reflective relationship with tradition, ensuring that cultural transmission extends beyond the reproduction of form to encompass the understanding of underlying meanings and values.

The preservation of the Rejang Asta Dala dance, therefore, should be understood as a comprehensive strategy of cultural education. The dance functions as a learning medium that contributes to character formation, the strengthening of cultural identity, and the sustained cultivation of spiritual and social awareness. Within this framework, the Rejang Asta Dala dance offers a contextual, participatory, and reflective model of culture-based education that is highly relevant to the discourse on cultural and arts education in Indonesia.

Aesthetic–Educational Interaction Model in the Rejang Asta Dala Dance

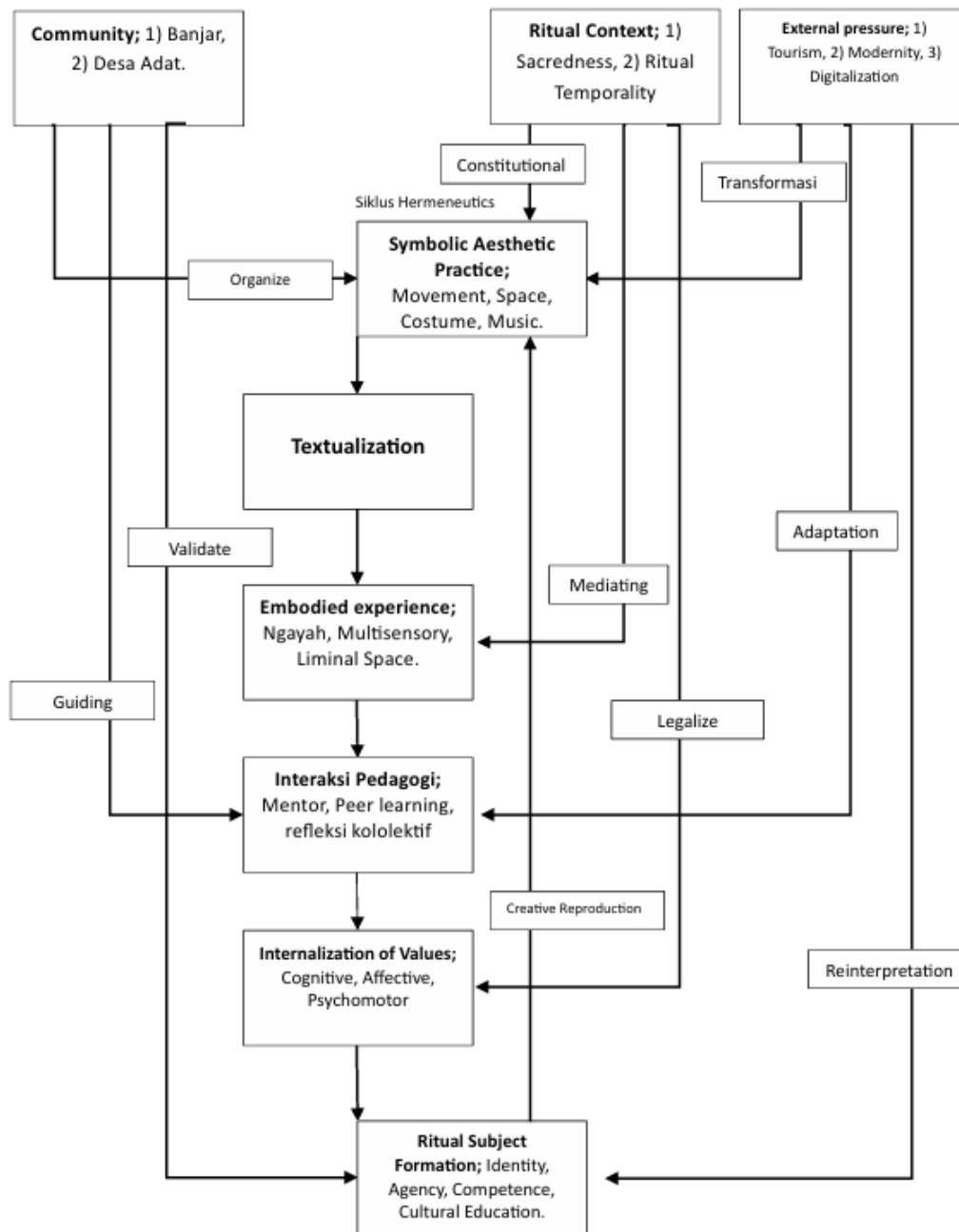


Image 4. Dynamic Model of Aesthetic-Educational Interaction in the Rejang Asta Dala Dance in Ubud, Bali.

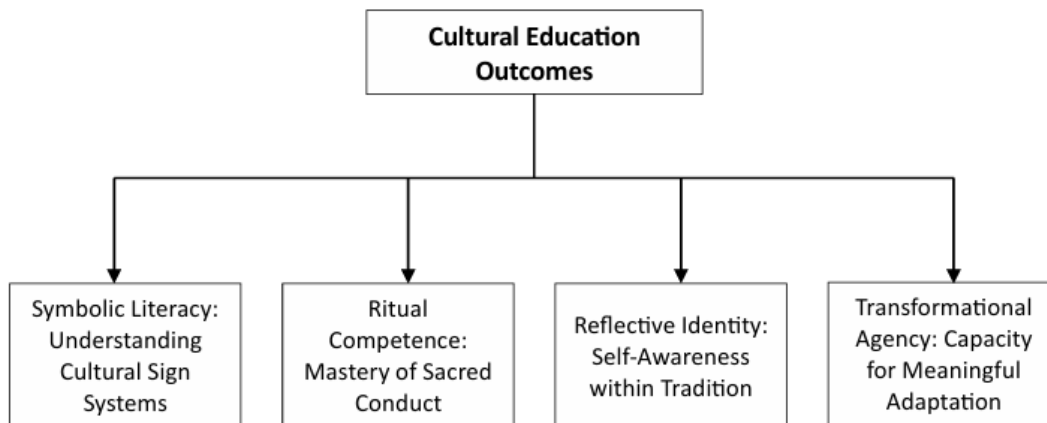


Image 5. Outcomes of Cultural Education in the Rejang Asta Dala Dance in Ubud, Bali.

Diagram Description:

Main Arrow Directions (Core Process Circulation)

A → B (Aesthetic Practice → Cosmological Textualization) a) Mechanism: Cultural encoding the transformation of aesthetic elements into a meaningful system of signs, b) Process: Materialization of abstract philosophical concepts into accessible sensory forms, c) Concrete example: Circular hand movements are not merely visually pleasing but are encoded as symbols of a mandala or cosmic cycle

B → C (Textualization → Embodied Experience) a) Mechanism: Decoding through participation, translation of the sign system through physical and sensory engagement, b) Process: Transformation from intellectual understanding into direct bodily experience, c) Concrete example: The conceptual understanding of *Asta Dala* is experienced through bodily placement toward the eight cardinal directions within the performance space

C → D (Embodied Experience → Pedagogical Interaction) a) Mechanism: Articulation of experience – personal experiences are expressed, shared, and collectively reflected upon, b) Process: Dialogue between subjective experience and the community's interpretive framework, c) Concrete example: Post-rehearsal discussions between senior and junior dancers regarding the "feeling" (*rasa*) or lived experience of dancing in the temple

D → E (Pedagogical Interaction → Value Internalization) a) Mechanism: Consolidation of understanding – external knowledge is integrated into the individual's cognitive–affective structure, b) Process: A shift from "knowing that" to "knowing how," and ultimately to "becoming part of oneself", c) Concrete example: Dancers do not merely memorize that the color white symbolizes purity, but spontaneously feel it inappropriate to dance with an impure state of mind

E → F (Value Internalization → Formation of the Cultural Subject) a) Mechanism: Subjectivation internalized values become the foundation for identity formation and agency, b) Process: Transformation from a "passive learner" into an "active cultural agent" with critical awareness, c) Concrete example: Young dancers who have undergone a prolonged process not only perform the dance competently, but also feel responsible for preserving and developing the tradition

F → A (Subject Formation → Aesthetic Practice) a) Mechanism: Creative reproduction, the formed cultural subject reintegrates newly acquired understanding into practice, b) Process: A hermeneutic cycle in which deepened understanding generates practices richer in meaning, c) Concrete example: Senior dancers who have become teachers do not merely demonstrate movements, but are able to explain the philosophical meaning of each detail to their students

Intervention Arrows (Formative Factors)

G → A (Ritual Context → Aesthetic Practice) a) Relationship: Constitutive, the ritual context provides the normative and structural framework for aesthetic practice, b) Influence: Determines boundaries of what is permitted or prohibited, appropriate or inappropriate, in artistic expression, c) Implication: Without ritual context, aesthetic elements lose their sacred meaning and become secular performances

G → C (Ritual Context → Embodied Experience) a) Relationship: Mediating the sacredness of ritual space and time mediates the quality of the learning experience, b) Influence: Enhances intensity, focus, and meaning through a sacred atmosphere, c) Implication: Dancing in a temple during a ceremony differs qualitatively from rehearsing in a *Bale Banjar*.

G → E (Ritual Context → Value Internalization) a) Relationship: Legitimizing, the ritual context provides authority and legitimacy to internalized values, b) Influence: Values learned in ritual settings are perceived as more valid and binding than those learned outside ritual, c) Implication: Value internalization through ritual generates deeper commitment than formal learning

H → A (Community of Practice → Aesthetic Practice) a) Relationship: Organizing, the community provides social and logistical structures for aesthetic practice, b) Influence: Determines schedules, resource allocation, and performance quality standards, c) Implication: Without *banjar* organization, dance practice loses the institutional framework supporting its sustainability

H → D (Community of Practice → Pedagogical Interaction) a) Relationship: Guiding, more experienced community members guide the learning process of younger generations, b) Influence: Ensures accuracy in knowledge transmission and provides correction and validation, c) Implication: The quality of teacher-student relationships within the community determines learning effectiveness

H → F (Community of Practice → Subject Formation) a) Relationship: Validating, the community provides social recognition of formed identities and competencies, b) Influence: Community recognition affirms one's status as a "legitimate cultural agent", c) Implication: Without community validation, cultural identity formation remains incomplete

I → A (External Pressures → Aesthetic Practice) a) Relationship: Transformative, external pressures compel adaptation and modification of aesthetic practices, b) Influence: Shape changes in technique, duration, or presentation to meet external expectations, c) Implication: Tourism may introduce spectacular elements that previously did not exist

I → D (External Pressures → Pedagogical Interaction) a) Relationship: Adaptive learning methods and content are adjusted to new realities, b) Influence: Older generations must find new ways to explain the relevance of tradition to younger generations living in different contexts, c) Implication: Learning may begin to include critical discussions on responding to tourism

I → F (External Pressures → Subject Formation) a) Relationship: Reinterpretative, cultural identity and agency must be continuously renegotiated in response to change, b) Influence: Shapes cultural subjects who are more reflective and critical of their position in a changing world, c) Implication: Identity is no longer taken for granted, but must be actively maintained and defended

Output Arrows (Process Outcomes)

J → K, L, M, N (Educational Outcomes → Four Competencies) a) Relationship: Differentiation, complex processes generate multiple, complementary competencies, b) Influence: Produces multidimensional cultural agents capable of understanding, performing, embodying, and developing tradition, c) Implication: The success of cultural education is measured by the balanced achievement of these four competencies

This study demonstrates that the Rejang Asta Dala dance functions as a complex, dynamic, and sustainable non-formal system of cultural education. Learning within this system does not occur through linear or verbal instructional mechanisms, but through direct participant engagement in aesthetic and ritual practice that forms a hermeneutic cycle of meaning. Education begins with active participation in the aesthetic elements of the dance, including movement, spatial orientation, costume, and musical accompaniment, which are inherently constructed and encoded with Balinese Hindu philosophical values such as the concepts of Asta Dala and *Tri Hita Karana*. These elements serve not merely as artistic components but also as symbolic media through which cosmological perspectives and the community's collective ethical principles are transmitted.

Participation in this practice is not passive or merely reproductive but dialogical, involving an encounter between the individual horizon of understanding shaped by contemporary experience and the horizon of meaning embedded in intergenerational tradition. Through embodied engagement in ritual service or ngayah, abstract values are not conveyed conceptually, but experienced multisensorially, internalized through the body, and interpreted through lived practice. This experiential process is reinforced through collective reflection facilitated by elders, intergenerational interaction, and informal discourse within the community. As a result, an educational cycle emerges in which practice leads to experience, experience to reflection, and reflection back to practice, enabling the gradual and repeated deepening of symbolic understanding. Each performance is therefore not perceived as a static repetition of the past, but as a productive space for reinterpretation in which cultural values are continuously negotiated and rearticulated in response to changing social conditions (Suryaningsih et al., 2025).

This mechanism of cultural education contributes to the formation of reflective cultural subjects who possess agential capacity (Hasibuan et al., 2025). The participatory and dialogical nature of the process is oriented not solely toward producing technically proficient dancers, but toward individuals who develop symbolic literacy to interpret the meanings embedded in aesthetic forms, ritual competence to engage ethically in sacred practice, and critical awareness of their position within the continuum of tradition. The primary outcome of this process is the development of transformational capacity, understood as the ability not only to perform tradition, but also to interpret, negotiate, and adapt it creatively and responsibly. In this sense, the Rejang Asta Dala dance functions as a medium for cultivating dynamic cultural resilience, in which authenticity is not defined by immutability, but by the capacity to regenerate meaning so that tradition remains relevant and vital.

The effectiveness of this model of cultural education is strongly dependent on the sustainability of its supporting ecosystem. At the same time, the banjar community structure, which is both hierarchical and collegial, offers a social framework for the transmission of knowledge, the legitimation of competence, and collective support for learning processes. Nevertheless, this

ecosystem is increasingly challenged by external pressures, particularly tourism and modernization, which carry the risk of reducing the pedagogical complexity of the Rejang Asta Dala dance. The most significant risk is a shift from participatory and reflective pedagogy toward a technical and instrumental mode of training, in which the dance is reduced to a performative commodity for tourist consumption rather than a medium for the internalization of community cosmology and ethics. For this reason, the sustainability of the Rejang Asta Dala dance as a medium of cultural education requires collective commitment to safeguarding ritual spaces as the primary locus of learning, as well as the creative capacity of the community to integrate deeper philosophical engagement into evolving training practices, ensuring that aesthetics continue to function as a bridge toward deeper cultural understanding rather than as an end in itself.

Conclusion

Based on ethnographic analysis, this study affirms that the Rejang Asta Dala dance in Ubud, Bali, functions not merely as an expression of ritual art but also as a non-formal system of cultural education integrated within the ritual, social, and cosmological structures of the supporting community. The aesthetic elements of the dance, including movement, spatial organization, costume, and music, operate as a symbolic language that encodes Balinese Hindu philosophical values such as Asta Dala, Dewata Nawa Sanga, and Tri Hita Karana. Consequently, every aspect of the performance serves as a medium for transmitting spiritual values, social ethics, and cosmological worldviews. The process of cultural education unfolds through participatory and reflective learning mechanisms that are circular in nature. Learning does not rely on linear verbal instruction, but on direct involvement in the practice of *ngayah*, embodied experience within ritual contexts, and intergenerational dialogue mediated by elders and customary communities. This pattern of aesthetic educational interaction enables the holistic internalization of cultural values across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, while shaping reflective and agentic cultural subjects. Therefore, the preservation of the Rejang Asta Dala dance must be positioned as a cultural education strategy oriented toward meaning-making rather than mere conservation of form. Its sustainability depends on safeguarding ritual contexts as primary learning spaces, strengthening the role of customary communities as guardians of meaning, and integrating deeper philosophical engagement into training processes. Within this framework, the Rejang Asta Dala dance contributes to the formation of dynamic cultural resilience through the contextual and sustainable regeneration of traditional meaning.

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