

음악 교육의 탈식민화를 위한 비공식 교육 모델로서의 Trunthung 음악: 문화적 맥락 속 실천

Trunthung Music as an Informal Educational Model for Decolonizing Music Education: A Case Study in Cultural Context

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Abstract This study aims to consider Trunthung music as a manifestation of decolonization in music education, emphasizing cultural experience and community engagement. For decades, Indonesia's music education curriculum has been largely shaped by Western music theory, reflecting the lasting influence of colonial hegemony in both formal and informal learning contexts. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, data were collected through direct observation of Trunthung music practices in the community around the slopes of Mount Merbabu, Magelang Regency, as well as interviews with key cultural figures such as Sutanto Mendut, Handoko Warangan, and Singgih Gejayan. The findings suggest that community-based learning through Trunthung music nurtures not only musical skills but also a strong sense of local identity and cultural awareness. This decolonial approach places local traditions at the center of music education, prioritizing lived experience and collective artistic expression over standardized theoretical frameworks.

Key words: trunthung music, decolonization, music education, cultural experience, community-based learning

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초록 본 연구는 음악 교육에서 탈식민화의 한 형태로서 트룬퐁 음악을 고찰하고자 한다. 트룬퐁 음악은 문화적 경험과 공동체의 참여를 중심으로 이루어지는 지역 전통 예술로, 인도네시아 음악 교육에서 서구 중심의 이론과 체계에 의해 간과되어 왔다. 본 연구는 현상학적 질적 연구 방법을 기반으로, 마젤랑군 메르바부산 기슭 지역 공동체 내 트룬퐁 음악 활동에 대한 현장 관찰과 함께, 예술가 수탄토 멘돛, 한도코 외랑안, 상기 기자얀 등 주요 문화 인물들과의 면담을 통해 자료를 수집하였다. 연구 결과, 트룬퐁 음악은 지역 문화를 보존하고 공동체 정체성을 강화하는 데 기여하며, 음악 교육이 단순한 이론 전달을 넘어서 살아있는 문화적 실천의 장이 될 수 있음을 보여준다. 이러한 탈식민적 접근은 지역 지식과 예술 표현을 교육의 핵심 요소로 재조명함으로써, 기존의 서구 중심적 교육 패러다임에 대한 대안을 제시한다.

주제어: 트룬퐁 음악, 탈식민화, 음악 교육, 문화적 경험, 공동체 기반 학습

I . Introduction

Music education in Indonesia faces a fundamental tension between globalized teaching models and the nation's own diverse cultural heritage. Despite the richness of Indonesia's traditional music, formal education systems continue to prioritize Western classical frameworks, which often leads to a marginalization of local musical expressions. This dominance of Western theory characterized by rigid structures, notation-based instruction, and standardized assessments creates a perception that valid music education must conform to imported standards. Such an approach overlooks the richness of local practices, which are rooted in oral transmission, communal experience, and cultural values. While scholars have pointed to the persistence of colonial influence in curricula (Nautiyal et al., 2025), it is crucial to critically question whose knowledge is valued in our classrooms and why. Reclaiming local music traditions, such as Trunthung, offers not only an educational alternative but also a pathway toward cultural empowerment and curriculum decolonization.

Awareness of the need to decolonize music education has grown significantly in recent decades (Rosabal-Coto, 2022). Decolonization involves challenging the dominance of Western-centric paradigms and recognizing the value of local cultures, traditions, and knowledge systems. In music education, this means advancing a more culturally grounded and equitable approach one that centers on local cultural values and musical practices relevant to specific community contexts. Such an approach expands the boundaries of education beyond formal classrooms, acknowledging informal and community-based settings where learning occurs through lived experiences and participatory engagement (Wafa, 2020).

The effort to decolonize music education in Indonesia can be seen in the phenomenon of

Trunthung music in Magelang, Central Java. Trunthung music is a form of traditional music that has developed in local communities (Sinaga & Sinaga, 2021; Sinaga, 2016). This music is not based on notation or formal theory, but rather emphasizes shared musical experiences, imitation, and direct teaching from one generation to the next. Trunthung music also reflects unique local values such as togetherness, cooperation, and openness, which are conveyed through rich local symbolism and idioms.

This research uses the concept of local spirituality from Walter Mignolo, who states that the concept of feeling and experience is the spirituality of Eastern people, which contrasts with Western music that is rigid with its notation (Mignolo, 2021). Community-based music education, as seen in Trunthung music, provides an interesting alternative to Western-based music education. This reflects that education can not only be conducted formally in schools or institutions but can also occur in community spaces with a more natural and contextual approach. Trunthung music serves as a means of transmitting local knowledge and cultural values, as well as building community identity through informal education. In this way, Trunthung music not only functions as a form of entertainment but also as an effective educational medium for preserving and maintaining local values (Allen & Dawe, 2015).

Several previous studies have discussed decolonizing music education from various perspectives. McConnachie and Boudina (2021) argue that musical ideals shaped by European standards and perpetuated through colonial influence require critical reevaluation to make room for Indigenous musical traditions in educational frameworks. Their development of an African instrumental music course at Rhodes University highlights the importance of integrating local musical practices into curricula to foster culturally grounded educators capable of engaging with diverse musical traditions. Madyaningrum (2024) examines decolonization within the context of community psychology in higher education in Indonesia, critiquing the patronizing approaches often employed in community-based research that undermine autonomy and local knowledge.

The novelty of this research shows that Trunthung music education plays an important role in informal music education based on cultural experiences and community. This differs from the Western approach, which focuses on theory; Trunthung music emphasizes evidence-based learning, where knowledge is transmitted through direct practice and authentic musical experiences. This reflects the process of decolonizing music education, where local communities reclaim authority over their own music learning process, without having to conform to the rules and formal standards brought by the legacy of colonialism.

This research aims to illustrate how Trunthung music functions as an effective medium for

informal education and embodies decolonization efforts within the context of music education in Indonesia (Mukherjee, 2021; Park, 2024; Rosabal-Coto, 2022). Trunthung offers a model for community-centered music education that is culturally grounded, contextually relevant, and responsive to the needs of local communities, while simultaneously challenging the dominance of Western paradigms in music education.

II. Literature Review

1. Decolonization in music education

The concept of decolonization in music education is rooted in efforts to challenge and dismantle the dominance of Western cultural paradigms within educational systems, including in Indonesia (Gunara et al., 2024; Khairunnisa et al., 2024; Rosabal-Coto, 2022). Western music education traditionally emphasizes theoretical rigor, notation-based instruction, and technical proficiency rooted in European classical traditions. This has resulted in a hierarchical valuation of knowledge, where local musical traditions are often seen as informal, less valid, or even irrelevant in formal education settings (Daubney et al., 2018).

Recent scholarship argues for a shift in perspective that embraces local musical knowledge and pedagogical practices as equally legitimate (Rosabal-Coto, 2022; Vallejo, 2019). In this view, decolonization is not simply about curriculum reform, but about transforming the epistemological foundations of music education. In contexts such as Indonesia, where many traditional musical forms are transmitted through lived, embodied experience, this shift is both timely and necessary (Louchakova-Schwartz et al., 2021).

2. Community-based informal music education

One avenue for enacting decolonization in practice is through community-based informal education. Informal music learning typically takes place outside formal institutions, relying on experience-driven, socially embedded methods (Gunara et al., 2024). Such education foregrounds participation, oral transmission, and cultural immersion characteristics often found in traditional Indonesian communities.

In this setting, learning emerges from observation, imitation, and engagement with daily

musical practices, rather than through textbooks or formal assessments (Kurniawati, 2024). This approach empowers communities to preserve and transmit local cultural values in authentic ways, in contrast to top-down, teacher-centered formal methods. In the case of Trunthung music, children and youth learn in an organic setting, developing both technical skills and cultural understanding through collective participation.

3. Trunthung music as a media for decolonial pedagogy

Trunthung music, a traditional performance art from Magelang, Central Java, is characterized by its unique blend of percussion instruments and body movements. The ensemble typically includes instruments such as *trunthung*, *bende*, *bass drum*, and other homemade percussive tools constructed from natural materials. Performances are usually held during community festivals, rituals, and cultural processions associated with the *Lima Gunung* movement, which emphasizes rural identity and resistance to cultural homogenization.

Participation in Trunthung is inclusive and intergenerational, involving not only adult performers but also children and youths from the surrounding villages. Musical knowledge is transmitted informally through observation, imitation, and direct participation, often facilitated by senior community artists or through communal workshops at the *Padepokan Wargo Budoyo*. The learning process emphasizes experience, communal bonding, and cultural values, rather than formal notation or technique.



[Figure 1] The role of trunthung music performances in cultural ceremonies

This tradition shows that community-led musical practices act as informal educational spaces, where people learn not only musical techniques but also absorb cultural identity and shared social values. These practices support decolonizing music education by promoting learning rooted in local culture and lived experiences (Rosabal-Coto, 2022).

Decolonial theory emphasizes the need to revalue indigenous knowledge systems, particularly those grounded in oral and communal traditions (Mignolo, 2021; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Trunthung music, which has evolved as part of agrarian rituals in the Magelang region, represents a rich site for exploring these ideas in practice. Rather than conforming to Western theoretical standards, Trunthung is taught and preserved through embodied learning, spontaneous collaboration, and intergenerational transmission.

This model of music education enables local communities to reclaim agency over their cultural expressions. It also challenges the assumption that formalized instruction is the only legitimate path to musical competence (Mukherjee, 2021). The pedagogical strength of Trunthung lies in its rootedness: it blends performance with cultural memory, spiritual meaning, and communal values. As Sinaga (2021) notes, this oral tradition fosters learning that is both experiential and identity-affirming.

Efforts to decolonize music education are not unique to Indonesia. In South Africa, the Ubuntu model has emphasized community and relationality as key educational values (Lucius & Morrow, 2017), while in Latin America, the Nueva Canción movement used music as a form of resistance and identity formation (Madrid, 2011). These global cases echo the Trunthung experience in their emphasis on oral transmission, cultural empowerment, and music as a socio-political tool. However, what sets Trunthung apart is its integration of musicality with everyday life, especially through practices on the slopes of Mount Merbabu. Unlike top-down educational reforms, Trunthung emerges from within the community, offering a grassroots model for culturally relevant education that is both participatory and sustainable.

Together, these perspectives support the need for alternative, decolonized models of music education that recognize and elevate the value of local traditions. Trunthung music, situated in the cultural landscape of Magelang, offers a compelling case for how indigenous practices can contribute to curriculum transformation and educational equity.

III. Method

1. Research design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore the transmission of Trunthung music as a form of decolonized community-based music education. The research was conducted within the Trunthung music community located on the slopes of Mount Merbabu, Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia. The participants comprised five key informants, including senior artists, community leaders, and young learners who were actively engaged in the Trunthung tradition. These individuals were selected through purposive sampling, based on their central roles in sustaining and transmitting Trunthung music practices. Data were collected through several procedures: participant observation during music practices and performances, in-depth interviews with notable figures such as Sutanto Mendut, Handoko Warangan, and Singgih Gejayan, as well as documentation review of video archives and community-based educational materials. All collected data were analyzed using phenomenological analysis techniques, emphasizing emergent themes related to cultural experience, the transmission of local knowledge, and the embodiment of decolonial values in music education (Creswell, 2016).

This aligns with the aim of exploring Trunthung music as a form of informal music education within the local community of Magelang. Husserl's emphasis on uncovering the essence of phenomena through subjective experiences provides a valuable framework for capturing the cultural and educational significance embedded in Trunthung music practices. Using a phenomenological approach, the researcher can uncover how members of the Trunthung music community interpret their musical activities, what values are transmitted through these practices, and how this music functions as an educational tool in the local socio-cultural context. Phenomenological studies are highly relevant for exploring subjective experiences and cultural meanings that cannot be measured quantitatively but can be understood through in-depth interpretation.

While this research adopts a phenomenological lens focusing on the lived experiences and meaning-making processes within Trunthung music education, it does not include quantitative measurements or experimental evaluations. The choice of methodology is aligned with the study's aim to foreground indigenous knowledge systems and subjective pedagogical values rather than standardized learning outcomes.

2. Research site and participants

This research focuses on the Trunthung music community located in the Magelang region of Central Java. The location was chosen due to the strong cultural heritage of Trunthung music in this region, which continues to be actively practiced by the local population. The participants in this study consist of Trunthung musicians, cultural figures, local educators, and community members involved in the musical activities. Additionally, community leaders and elders with in-depth knowledge of the history and development of Trunthung music will also be included as key informants to provide a richer and more comprehensive perspective.

This study involved six participants, consisting of three senior Trunthung artists, two cultural community leaders, and one music teacher who has engaged with Trunthung pedagogy. The participants ranged in age from 35 to 68 years, with four male and two female participants. Their educational backgrounds varied from primary education to bachelor's degrees, and all had more than 10 years of experience in practicing or teaching Trunthung music.

The selection was conducted using purposive sampling, based on the criteria that the participants (1) have significant experience in Trunthung music, (2) play an active role in the transmission of Trunthung traditions, and (3) are recognized by the community as cultural resource persons.

Ethical considerations were taken into account by obtaining informed consent from all participants before conducting the interviews. They were informed of the study's aims and their right to withdraw at any time. All interviews were conducted with the participants' permission, and pseudonyms were used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

3. Data collection techniques

The data of this study were collected using several techniques, including participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis.

1) Participatory observation

The researchers directly engaged in the activities of the Trunthung music community, including attending rehearsals, performances, and traditional events where Trunthung music was played. An observation checklist was used as an instrument to systematically record activities, interactions,

and contextual details related to the learning process and the integration of local values in musical practices. The observation checklist included the following components:

<Table 1> Summary of participatory observation in trunthung music practices

Category	Subcategories / Observational focus
Musical instruments	Types of instruments: Trunthung, Kendang, Bende, other percussion instruments
Performer dynamics	Roles of performers Interactions during rehearsal and performance
Transmission methods	Informal transmission: imitation, mentoring, peer learning
Cultural values	Gotong royong (mutual cooperation) Humility Ritual context
Performance context	Types of events: rehearsals, public performances, traditional ceremonies
Audience & Environment	Audience engagement Physical and social environment of performances

2) In-depth interviews

Interviews were conducted with members of the Trunthung music community, including performers, teachers, cultural figures, and observers. These interviews were semi-structured, using an interview guide that allowed informants to speak freely and in-depth about their experiences with Trunthung music. Examples of interview questions included:

<Table 2> Summary of in-depth interview themes and guiding questions

Questions
1. How did you first learn to play Trunthung music?
2. What role does Trunthung music play in community rituals or daily life?
3. How is musical knowledge transmitted from older to younger generations?
4. What values or life lessons do you think are taught through Trunthung?
5. How do you see the future of Trunthung in your community and in schools?

3) Document analysis

The researcher gathered secondary data from various sources, including local archives, historical documentation of Trunthung music, performance records, and articles or books related

to Trunthung music and informal music education. This document analysis helped to provide a broader historical and cultural context, as well as reinforce the findings from the observations and interviews.

4. Data analysis technique

This study employed thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework, which includes: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. This approach enabled the researchers to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns related to how Trunthung music is transmitted, the cultural values embedded in its practice, and the community's role in informal music education.

The analytical process began with the transcription of interviews and observation field notes, followed by initial (open) coding to capture recurring ideas and categories. These were then clustered into broader thematic categories, such as knowledge transmission models, symbolic communication patterns, and community-led learning practices. Data from documents, interviews, and observations were triangulated to enhance reliability and ensure the findings were grounded in multiple sources.

The coding process was guided by Saldana's (2021) qualitative coding techniques, which helped in organizing codes into meaningful patterns. The analysis also drew upon Cultural Transmission Theory to examine how musical knowledge is passed intergenerationally, and Walter Mignolo's (2009) decolonial framework to interpret the data within the context of resisting dominant Western paradigms and reviving indigenous epistemologies.

To enhance validity and credibility, source triangulation was conducted by cross-checking accounts from various informants, while method triangulation integrated findings from participatory observations, interviews, and document reviews. Additionally, member checking was applied by presenting preliminary findings to selected informants to validate interpretations and obtain feedback (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

All procedures in this study adhered to qualitative research ethics. Informed consent was obtained from each participant after a clear explanation of the study's aims and benefits. The confidentiality of informants requesting anonymity was respected, and data were used solely for scholarly purposes, ensuring the integrity and dignity of the Trunthung community remained protected.

IV. Results

1. Transmission of informal education through trunthung music

Trunthung music is an important part of informal education in the Magelang community. It is not taught through written materials or music theory. Instead, people learn it through direct experience. This kind of learning happens naturally in the community, especially in art studios like Padepokan Wargo Budoyo Gejayan. Children and teenagers often come to these spaces to join in the activities, even without formal invitations. To better understand how musical knowledge is transmitted within the Trunthung community, the following flowchart visualizes the stages of informal learning that occur in this cultural context. This diagram highlights how community members, especially children and youth, engage in a continuous cycle of observation, imitation, and participation. It also emphasizes the role of senior musicians, communal settings, and experience-based learning environment.



[Figure 2] Informal learning flow of trunthung music: A visual representation of the learning steps within the community, emphasizing observation, imitation, and hands-on participation

The first stage in learning Trunthung music is listening and observing. Young learners sit near the group and watch the older players rehearse or perform. They pay close attention to the sound patterns, the interaction between instruments, and the body movements of the performers. For example, they observe how the kentongan is struck in a rhythmic cycle, how bamboo tubes are tapped in alternation, and how plastic buckets are used to create a deep, resonant beat. These observations help the learners to become familiar with the flow and structure of the music.

The next stage is participation through imitation. Learners begin to join in by mimicking simple

rhythms. At first, they may clap their hands or tap their thighs to follow the beat. Later, they are given basic instruments, such as a small *Trunthung* or a plastic container. They try to copy the rhythm patterns played by older members. A senior player may sit beside them, demonstrating hand positions and striking techniques. This form of imitation does not involve verbal instruction. Instead, it relies on repeated exposure and hands-on experience.

As the learner gains confidence, they enter the practice and repetition phase. In this stage, they rehearse regularly with the group. During these sessions, senior members will give non-verbal cues, such as nodding, eye contact, or hand gestures, to guide the new players. Mistakes are corrected gently through demonstration. For example, if a player misses a beat, the leader might repeat the phrase and wait for the learner to catch up. Over time, learners develop muscle memory and internalize the rhythm without needing written notation.

The fourth stage is integration and adaptation. Learners are now able to participate in full ensemble rehearsals and performances. They begin to understand the structure of *Trunthung* music, including its call-and-response patterns, dynamic shifts, and tempo changes. They also start to adapt their playing style to blend with the group. In this stage, creativity is encouraged. Learners might add small variations or experiment with rhythmic fills, as long as they respect the overall flow of the music.

Beyond technical skill, learners also absorb cultural values and social meaning. They learn about the symbolic function of each instrument, the context of the performance, and the purpose of *Trunthung* in local rituals. For instance, *Trunthung* is often performed during community gatherings, harvest celebrations, or village clean-up events (*bersih desa*). Through participation, learners begin to understand that the music carries messages of unity, cooperation, and respect for local traditions. As stated by Handoko Warangan during an interview, “We don’t teach *Trunthung* with theories. The children just come, observe, and eventually they join the rhythm. That’s how we pass it on.” This quote illustrates the community’s organic learning process, which contrasts sharply with formal, theory-based approaches.

Trunthung also involves non-verbal communication. Players respond to each other through tempo changes, dynamics, and rhythms. These interactions build musical awareness and group sensitivity. As seen in Figure 3, *Trunthung* music is difficult to write in notation. Yet, its players can understand and perform it well. Their knowledge comes from experience, not from books.

This informal method keeps the tradition alive. It teaches music, culture, and identity. It shows that local, experience-based education is valid. It doesn’t need to follow Western models to be meaningful. *Trunthung* music is not just a form of art. It is a symbol of local wisdom,

independence, and resistance. It teaches the next generation how to preserve their roots through sound, rhythm, and community.

The image displays a musical score for a traditional ensemble. The top section includes staves for Simbal, Bedhug, Bass Drum, Trunthung, Bendhe Dasar, and Bendhe Genep. The bottom section, starting with a measure number '6', includes staves for Cym., T. D., B. D., and three Percussion (Perc.) parts. The notation is complex, featuring various rhythmic values, rests, and articulation marks across multiple staves.

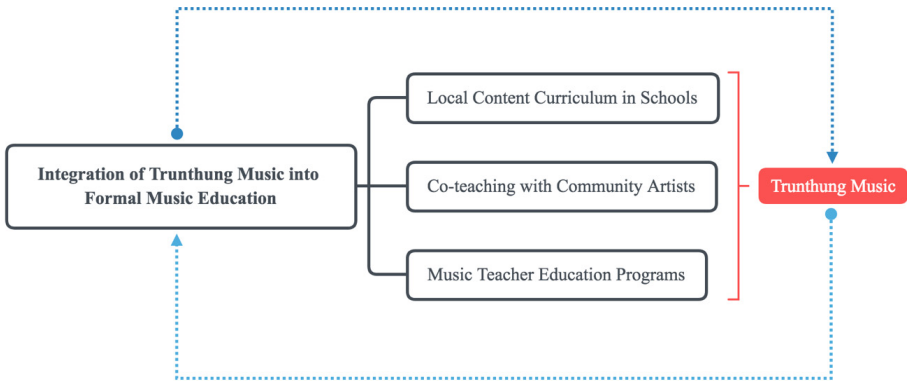
[Figure 3] The complexity of transcription of trunthung music patterns in notation

2. Bridging informal and formal music education: Practical implications

To bridge the gap between community-based musical traditions and institutional learning, it is essential to explore ways in which Trunthung music education can be meaningfully integrated into formal school settings. One viable approach is embedding Trunthung as part of the local content (muatan lokal) curriculum in primary and secondary education. This integration can be

supported through collaborative pedagogical models involving both school music teachers and Trunthung practitioners, enabling students to engage in hands-on cultural experiences and contextual music learning.

This approach involves collaborative teaching between local Trunthung musicians and school music teachers, allowing students to experience music learning through hands-on, culturally rooted practices. In these settings, students learn through oral transmission, imitation, embodied practice, and group performance, reflecting the informal, participatory learning style of Trunthung. These methods enrich the school curriculum by offering alternative, culturally meaningful music education that differs from standardized, notation-based models.



[Figure 4] A flowchart diagram of trunthung music integration into formal education systems

At the university level, music teacher education programs can incorporate Trunthung as a case study in modules on indigenous pedagogies, decolonial curriculum design, and non-notational music learning. Project-based learning that involves working with local communities can encourage interdisciplinary studies on themes such as identity, social values, environment, and regional heritage. Observations from the Trunthung community reveal that musical learning naturally emerges through social interaction and participation, not formal instruction. Children learn by observing, imitating, and engaging directly in musical practices, which fosters creativity, emotional expression, and a strong sense of belonging. This contrasts with formal education's focus on results and assessments.

Trunthung music also reflects the cultural life of the Magelang community, rooted in oral traditions, agricultural rituals, and values such as cooperation (*gotong royong*), humility, and

respect. These values are embedded in musical performance, making Trunthung a powerful tool for cultural transmission and identity formation.

More broadly, Trunthung represents resistance to the dominance of Western classical models in education. It promotes local knowledge systems and encourages a pluralistic view of what music education can be. In this context, decolonizing the music curriculum means embracing diverse musical traditions and ways of learning, not merely replacing one tradition with another. Ultimately, integrating Trunthung into formal education is more than adding new content. It calls for rethinking educational values, methods, and definitions of musical knowledge. It also offers insights for global music education efforts, aligning with international movements that support diversity, inclusion, and culturally sustaining pedagogies.

In conclusion, Trunthung provides a meaningful model for connecting informal, community-based learning with formal education. Its inclusion in schools and universities helps promote cultural identity, community engagement, and a broader understanding of music education worldwide.

V. Discussion

Trunthung music is uniquely distinguished by its integration of rhythmic foot-stomping (reminiscent of agricultural labor), theatrical movement, and vocalizations that express both personal and communal affect. Unlike many other traditional Indonesian musics that are often tied to ritual or courtly traditions (e.g., gamelan in Yogyakarta or Balinese kebyar), Trunthung emerges from grassroots agrarian culture and functions as both artistic expression and social commentary. This makes it a compelling model for informal and embodied musical learning.

Decolonization of music education is an important step toward creating a more inclusive and equitable education system. The word *inclusive* here means that music education should be open to all cultural expressions, respect diversity, and provide equal opportunities for different traditions to be part of the learning process. In Indonesia, both formal and informal music education have long been dominated by Western standards, often neglecting local traditions that are rich in cultural values (Rosabal-Coto, 2022). In this context, Trunthung music from Magelang serves as a clear example of how decolonization can be implemented. Through practices rooted in local experience, Trunthung offers an alternative learning model that is more culturally relevant and community-centered. This supports Daubney's (Daubney, 2018, p. 28) idea that:

Local Spirituality strengthens the concept that sense and experience are the spirituality of the East, which differs from Western music that is rigid with its notation.

This statement reinforces the idea that community-based music learning challenges the assumption that only Western-style music education represents high quality. The findings of this study demonstrate that local musical practices are not only relevant, but also effective in cultivating musical skills and fostering deeper cultural awareness. Decolonization does not imply a rejection of Western knowledge; rather, it advocates for the recognition and integration of local knowledge as an equally valid component of the educational process (Nautiyal et al., 2025). Consequently, music education in Indonesia must adopt more flexible and culturally responsive approaches that acknowledge and celebrate the rich diversity of musical traditions throughout the nation.

To further illustrate the contrast between Western music education and the informal pedagogical practices of Trunthung, the following table outlines key differences in pedagogical philosophy, epistemology, and learning models:

<Table 3> Comparison between western music education and trunthung music education

Aspect	Western music education	Trunthung music education
Learning mode	Formal, institutionalized, curriculum-based	Informal, community-based, experience-driven
Transmission of knowledge	Through notation, textbooks, and structured instruction	Oral-aural transmission, embodied knowledge, intergenerational learning
Role of the teacher	Central authority, often with hierarchical teacher-student structure	Facilitator or elder artist; learning occurs through observation and imitation
Assessment	Standardized tests, grading, and performance evaluations	Non-standardized; based on participation, feeling (<i>rasa</i>), and community trust
Epistemology	Eurocentric, technical, theoretical	Local, intuitive, relational
Purpose of learning	Skill mastery, individual achievement, formal certification	Cultural preservation, social bonding, spiritual or expressive experience

This comparison highlights how Trunthung music education embodies a decolonial pedagogical model that resists formalization and privileges local ways of knowing rooted in community and sensory engagement (*rasa*).

The central role of the community in sustainable music education is clearly evident in the case of Trunthung music from Magelang. This local tradition demonstrates how communities

can serve as key agents in preserving and advancing music education (Mapana & Campbell, 2023; Raykin & Kariasa, 2024; Schiavio et al., 2019). Hakim (2015) also emphasizes the significance of communities as integral components of the broader arts ecosystem. One of the community's primary strengths lies in its ability to foster welcoming and participatory learning environments, where individuals of all backgrounds are encouraged to engage actively. This not only enriches the educational process but also strengthens social bonds among its members (Schiavio et al., 2019).

Community-based music education allows learning to take place naturally, adjusting to the learners' needs and abilities. In contrast, as Khairunnisa (2024) points out, formal music education is often rigid and follows standardized formats. In the Trunthung community, the freedom to choose what and how to learn has led to a more adaptable and relevant approach. This supports the sustainability of local music traditions, even as they face pressures from globalization. The Trunthung model also highlights the values of cooperation, solidarity, and shared responsibility in protecting cultural heritage. One important point is that this local context-based education acts as a form of resistance to the cultural standardization often found in formal education. Trunthung music is more than a performance. it is a tool for passing down cultural knowledge and identity. Learning music in this way helps students see music as deeply connected to their social, cultural, and historical lives (Silva et al., 2023).

Trunthung serves as a bridge for passing on values and identity from one generation to the next. Through its lyrics, melodies, and shared practices, the tradition teaches cultural values to young people. This learning takes place informally through observation, active participation, and lived experience within the community. Such experiential learning goes beyond technical skills; it helps learners understand the meaning behind the music. This process also highlights the importance of intergenerational learning. Older generations act as guardians and teachers of tradition. This is reinforced by Matsunobu & Bresler, who state that:

Interactions between generations play a crucial role in strengthening cultural continuity, serving as a bridge that connects the past with the present. This intergenerational exchange ensures that local values and traditions are preserved and maintained, even as societies undergo rapid and transformative social changes (Matsunobu & Bresler, 2019, p. 78).

Referring to the statement, Trunthung music not only preserves cultural heritage but also adapts local traditions to remain relevant to the ever-changing times.

Unlike Western music education which often emphasizes notation literacy, institutional hierarchy, and technical proficiency measured through standardized evaluation, Trunthung music education is fundamentally participatory, oral, and community-driven. Knowledge transmission occurs through lived experience, intergenerational interaction, and direct immersion in performance contexts, rather than through formal curricula. This model aligns with decolonial pedagogical principles that prioritize local epistemologies, relational learning, and socio-cultural immersion.

The findings of this study have important implications for formal music education in Indonesia. The Trunthung community shows that formal systems should be more open to community-based and culturally relevant approaches. The current music curriculum, which mostly focuses on Western theory and techniques, should include local music traditions as part of the learning process. Sinaga (2021) argues that this will make learning more relevant and meaningful for students from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, the flexible nature of Trunthung's approach allows for more creativity, innovation, and student participation. Formal education can learn from this by creating spaces where learners have a voice in shaping their own learning journey. In this way, schools and universities can become places not only for passing on knowledge, but also for building creativity and cultural skills.

Decolonizing music education is not just about restoring marginalized identities. It is about recognizing that many valid ways of teaching and learning exist (Mignolo, 2021; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Trunthung music teaches us that every community has its own way of passing on knowledge and values that are important to them.

Recognizing multiple approaches to education is essential for creating a system that is both equitable and culturally responsive. It ensures that all learners feel valued and that their lived experiences are acknowledged. This recognition also contributes to the development of educational systems that are more attuned to the cultural contexts of diverse communities (Camelia & Suryandari, 2021). In this light, decolonizing music education is not about rejecting difference, but about embracing diversity as a vital source of educational strength. Trunthung music exemplifies how local traditions can maintain relevance in the modern world when given the space to evolve. Through community-led educational practices, such traditions can adapt dynamically while remaining rooted in their cultural origins.

1. Limitations

This study is centered on a single community-based arts group, Padepokan Wargo Budoyo

in Magelang, which serves as a living hub of Trunthung practice. Therefore, the findings are not intended to be generalized across Indonesia's diverse music education landscape. Rather, the study seeks to offer a situated example of how local, culturally embedded pedagogies can inform broader discourses on decolonizing music education. Future research may consider comparative studies involving multiple traditional music communities across regions.

This study does not include long-term tracking of learners' musical development or quantitative assessments of educational outcomes. Future studies are encouraged to adopt longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to evaluate how sustained participation in Trunthung music may shape musical competence, community engagement, and cultural identity over time.

VI. Conclusion

This research highlights that the transmission process of Trunthung music at Padepokan Wargo Budoyo, Magelang, serves as a tangible example of the decolonization of music education, offering learning practices grounded in lived experiences and local cultural contexts. Trunthung music challenges the dominance of Western standards by promoting an educational model that is flexible, adaptive, and deeply rooted in community-based traditions.

Music education in Indonesia should become more culturally responsive, acknowledging and valuing local knowledge systems rather than adhering to a singular, homogenized global standard. Formal institutions can learn from community-driven models like Trunthung by incorporating local traditions into the curriculum, thereby creating a more relevant and meaningful educational experience for students from diverse cultural backgrounds. To support this transformation, government bodies and educational institutions must increase awareness of the value of community-based music education and actively assist local communities in preserving and evolving their musical heritage.

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