

Narrative Sound as Cinematic Language: Dol in the Construction of Character Education Based on the Ki Hajar Dewantara Trilogy in Bengkulu

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Abstract

Traditional musical instruments possess philosophical, historical, and social values that can reveal past civilizations and serve as a medium for cultural communication (Mufarizuddin, 2022; Agustinus, 2024). In Bengkulu, the Dol serves as a symbol of cultural identity and the primary instrument in the Tabot ritual. It also contains educational elements such as mathematics, physics, and character building. This study analyzes the implementation of Ki Hajar Dewantara's Educational Trilogy—Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha, Ing Madya Mangun Karsa, Tut Wuri Handayani—in preserving Dol as a cultural heritage. The research method employed a descriptive qualitative approach with literature analysis and the integration of quotations and empirical findings from various studies on organology, ethnomathematics, and character education. The results indicate that Dol can serve as a medium for character formation for the younger generation through role models of preservation, creative empowerment in the production process, and mentoring in musical practice. Dol preservation also faces challenges such as a lack of promotional media and the threat of a breakdown in the transmission of playing techniques. This study confirms that local culture-based education has strategic potential for revitalizing traditional musical instruments while strengthening students' character.

Keywords: Dol Bengkulu, Ki Hajar Dewantara's Educational Trilogy, traditional musical instruments, character, Tabot.



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Introduction

Traditional musical instruments are cultural objects that hold deep aesthetic and philosophical value. "Traditional musical instruments are cultural art objects that can be enjoyed and studied today... they have rich philosophical value... revealing the civilizations of the past" ((Mufarizuddin, 2022).)Traditional music also functions not only as entertainment, but also as a medium of communication and preservation of cultural values (Agustinus, 2024). Therefore, the preservation of traditional musical instruments is important to maintain the continuity of a community's identity. Bengkulu has a distinctive musical instrument called Dol, which plays a central role in the Tabot ritual. Dol is seen as a symbol of local identity. "Dol is a traditional musical instrument unique to Bengkulu that plays a central role in the Tabot religious ritual, which is a symbol of local heritage and identity" (Saldia et al., 2025). In addition, Dol is always paired with Tassa and has a specific physical structure: Dol is tube-shaped, while Tassa resembles a tambourine (Elen et al., 2024). Historically, Dol was originally made from coconut stumps and was not perfectly round in shape. As the craftsmen's skills improved, its shape became neater and more symmetrical (Alhafira & Wimbrayardi, 2025). Modern

innovations have also emerged, such as Dol Boya, which uses net floats and retains goat skin as the membrane (Alhafira & Wimbrayardi, 2025). In addition to its cultural value, the manufacture of traditional musical instruments

a. Traditional Musical Instruments: Definition and Philosophical Value

Traditional musical instruments have philosophical value that reflects past civilisations (Mufarizuddin, 2022). Traditional music serves as entertainment, communication, and cultural preservation (Agustinus, 2024). The threat of extinction may occur if the knowledge of manufacturing and playing techniques is not passed down (Agustinus, 2024).

b. Dol as the Cultural Identity of Bengkulu

Dol is an instrument inherent in the Tabot ritual and the identity of the Bengkulu community (Saldia et al., 2025). Dol is always paired with Tassa, with a distinctive tubular shape (Elen et al., 2024). Historically, Dol has undergone evolution in form and material (Alhafira & Wimbrayardi, 2025). Modern innovations such as Dol Boya demonstrate cultural adaptation to new materials.

c. Integration of Science and Mathematics in Traditional Musical Instruments

The manufacture of traditional musical instruments involves physical concepts such as force, energy, pressure, and sound waves (Sriwahyuni, 2024). Dol contains elements of ethnomathematics such as tube geometry and rhythmic patterns (Saldia et al., 2025). This context can enrich the learning of science and mathematics in a contextual manner.

d. Ki Hajar Dewantara's Trilogy of Education

Ki Hajar Dewantara's trilogy consists of:

- 1) Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha (setting an example),
- 2) Ing Madya Mangun Karsa (building enthusiasm from within),
- 3) Tut Wuri Handayani (providing encouragement/guidance from behind).

This trilogy aims to shape character through habit formation, example, and empowerment.

Methods

The research used a descriptive qualitative approach with the following techniques: 1) Document/literature analysis, which involved examining quotations and academic sources related to traditional musical instruments, Dol, organology, ethnomathematics, and character education; 2) Comparative analysis, which compares the cultural functions, physical/mathematical elements, and manufacturing process of Dol; 3) Interpretative analysis, which connects the literature findings with the concepts of Ki Hajar Dewantara's Trilogy.

Results and Discussions

1. Results

Dol music plays a dual and significant role in Bengkulu City society, rooted in ritual functions and evolving into social functions. Historically, the Dol ensemble, consisting of Dol, Tassa, and Seruling instruments, was first introduced by Indian Muslims who came with the British colonial government when they built Malborough Fort (Dianingasih, 2019). The Dol instrument itself is classified as a membranophone, whose sound vibrations originate from a thin membrane or animal skin. Its main function is to accompany and complement the traditional Tabot ceremony (Dianingasih, 2019). The functions of Dol music, based on Alan P. Merriam's theory, are grouped into four: Symbolic Function, Cultural Continuity Function, Musical Entertainment Function, and Social Institution Validation Function. Specifically in the Social Institution Validation Function, there is a dualism in the role of Dol: in Tabot rituals, Dol music is considered sacred, while in wedding ceremonies, this music is used more as a medium of entertainment (Dianingasih, 2019).

Over time, Dol has transformed from sacred music into a broad cultural identity of Bengkulu. In the context of the Symbolic Function, Dol serves as a ceremonial medium, for example, it is played as a sign of respect or a welcome greeting when receiving important guests

(Dianingasih, 2019). To ensure the Function of Cultural Continuity, the aim is for Dol music to become a tradition that is passed down from generation to generation and not forgotten, which is realised through extracurricular activities in schools and art studios (Dianingasih, 2019). This transformation shows that Dol, although it remains sacred in the Tabot ritual, has become a medium of entertainment and identity. The most important role of Dol music itself is as the cultural identity of Bengkulu (Dianingasih, 2019). This development makes Dol music very important not only in terms of culture but also in the social life of Bengkulu City.

2. Discussions

a. Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha: Role Models in the Preservation of Dol



Figure 1. telusuri.id

The role models of traditional leaders, Dol craftsmen, and Tabot artists are the main foundation. Dol craftsmen who maintain the authenticity of the materials and manufacturing techniques serve as role models for cultural preservation. The evolution of Dol from a 'tempang' coconut stump to a more symmetrical tube shape shows the craftsmen's dedication to maintaining quality (Alhafira & Wimbrayardi, 2025). Exemplary behaviour is also evident in the Tabot community, which maintains Dol as a sacred ritual instrument, providing young people with a tangible example of how culture is preserved.

b. Ing Madya Mangun Karsa: Empowering the Younger Generation Through Dol

Dol has the potential to be a creative and contextual learning medium. Mathematical elements such as tube geometry and rhythmic patterns (Saldia et al., 2025), as well as physical elements in the manufacture of musical instruments (Sriwahyuni, 2024), provide opportunities for teachers to integrate Dol into STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) learning.

Empowerment can also be achieved through Dol Boya-making workshops, given that modern materials are easier to find, enabling students to be creative.

c. Tut Wuri Handayani: Guidance in Practising and Creating

In the context of preservation, guidance is needed so that the younger generation can understand Dol playing techniques and their philosophical meaning. The lack of promotion (Syam & Hidayah, 2020) requires educators and communities to guide the younger generation through extracurricular activities, school festivals, and collaborations with the Tabot community.

Guidance not only preserves skills but also shapes character traits such as:

- Discipline,
- Cooperation,
- Social responsibility,
- Love for local culture.

d. Challenges in Preserving Dol and Educational Solutions, The biggest challenges are:

The lack of promotional media (Syam & Hidayah, 2020), and the disruption of the chain of inheritance of playing and crafting techniques (Agustinus, 2024).

Ki Hajar Dewantara's trilogy offers solutions through:

- Cultural role models from senior Dol artists (Ing Ngarsa),
- Innovative empowerment through school projects (Ing Madya),

- Continuous mentoring through community-school collaboration (Tut Wuri).

Conclusion

The dol, a traditional musical instrument unique to Bengkulu, holds a strategic position in the cultural life of the community because it embodies interrelated historical, philosophical, social, and educational values. Its role is not limited to being a ritual instrument in the Tabot ceremony, but has evolved into a symbol of cultural identity that represents the continuity and dynamics of Bengkulu's culture. The transformation of Dol's function from the sacred realm to the social and educational realm shows that this instrument has cultural flexibility that allows it to survive amid changing times. This makes Dol not just a traditional artefact, but also a powerful pedagogical instrument that has the potential to support character building and cultural literacy among the younger generation.

The implementation of Ki Hajar Dewantara's Trilogy of Education in the preservation of Dol has proven to provide a systematic and character-building-oriented educational framework. Through the principle of Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha, traditional leaders, Dol craftsmen, and Tabot artists serve as role models in preserving the authenticity of the manufacturing techniques and cultural values contained therein. This exemplary role is important as a foundation for instilling cultural integrity, commitment to preservation, and historical awareness in the next generation.

The principle of Ing Madya Mangun Karsa is evident in the empowerment of the younger generation in various creative and educational activities, including the integration of Dol in STEAM-based contextual learning. The ethnomathematical values, physical concepts, and organological structure of Dol allow this instrument to be used as an interdisciplinary learning medium relevant to modern educational needs. This approach not only improves students' academic competence but also strengthens their engagement with local culture through direct experience and collaborative practice. Meanwhile, the principle of Tut Wuri Handayani emphasises the importance of continuous guidance in the process of passing on playing techniques, understanding rituals, and appreciating the symbolic meaning of Dol. Guidance from educators, art communities, and craftsmen is an effective mechanism in ensuring the transfer of cultural knowledge in its entirety. Through this process, values such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and concern for cultural heritage can be instilled systematically and continuously.

However, the preservation of Dol still faces challenges, including a lack of promotional media, low levels of youth involvement, and the risk of a break in the chain of transmission of manufacturing and playing techniques. This condition is in line with the national issue regarding the vulnerability of the sustainability of traditional musical instruments in various regions. Therefore, a local culture-based educational approach needs to be strengthened through collaborative policies between educational institutions, the Tabot cultural community, craftsmen, and local governments to create an integrated preservation ecosystem. Overall, this study confirms that Dol has great potential as a medium for character building, interdisciplinary learning, and a means of revitalising local culture. The implementation of Ki Hajar Dewantara's Trilogy provides a conceptual and practical foundation for strengthening these preservation efforts. With the commitment and synergy of various stakeholders, Dol can continue to be preserved as an integral part of the identity of the Bengkulu community and remain relevant to future generations.

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