

Interest and Preferences of the Cairo International Community toward Traditional Indonesian Sports Based on International Cooperation of STKIP Modern Ngawi

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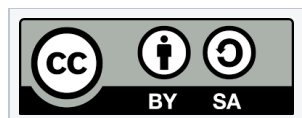
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ABSTRAK

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Olahraga tradisional Indonesia merupakan warisan budaya takbenda yang kaya dan memiliki potensi besar untuk diplomasi budaya. Namun, pelestarian dan promosinya melalui komunitas diaspora transnasional masih belum banyak dieksplorasi dalam literatur manajemen olahraga internasional. Penelitian ini menyelidiki minat, preferensi, motivasi, dan hambatan diaspora Indonesia serta komunitas internasional yang berafiliasi di Kairo terhadap olahraga tradisional Indonesia. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam konteks program kerja sama internasional antara STKIP Modern Ngawi dan Sekolah Indonesia Cairo (SIC). Desain survei potong lintang (cross-sectional) digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dengan data yang dikumpulkan dari 53 responden yang berafiliasi dengan program bilateral tersebut. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa 79,2% responden menyatakan minat yang tinggi ($M = 4,21$; $SD = 0,77$), dengan Lari Balok (77,4%) dan Egrang (62,3%) sebagai olahraga yang paling diminati. Pelestarian budaya (75,5%) muncul sebagai faktor motivasi yang dominan, memperkuat peran olahraga tradisional dalam memperkuat identitas budaya di luar negeri. Sementara itu, keterbatasan peralatan (67,9%) dan ruang bermain yang terbatas (56,6%) menjadi hambatan struktural utama. Hasil ini memberikan bukti empiris mengenai kelayakan olahraga tradisional Indonesia sebagai instrumen diplomasi olahraga yang digerakkan oleh diaspora, serta menyoroti perlunya dukungan institusional dalam mengatasi kendala infrastruktur..

Kata Kunci : olahraga tradisional Indonesia, diplomasi olahraga, preservasi budaya, minat komunitas.

ABSTRACT

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Traditional Indonesian sports represent a rich intangible cultural heritage that holds significant potential for cultural diplomacy. However, their preservation and promotion through transnational diaspora communities remain underexplored in international sport management literature. This study investigates the interests, preferences, motivations, and barriers of the Indonesian diaspora and affiliated international communities in Cairo toward traditional Indonesian sports. The research was conducted within the context of an international cooperation program between STKIP Modern Ngawi and the Sekolah Indonesia Cairo (SIC). A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected from 53 respondents affiliated with the bilateral program. Findings indicate that 79.2% of respondents expressed high interest ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.77$), with Lari Balok (77.4%) and Egrang (62.3%) as the most preferred sports. Cultural preservation (75.5%) emerged as the dominant motivational factor, reinforcing the role of traditional sports in strengthening cultural identity abroad. Meanwhile, equipment scarcity (67.9%) and limited playing space (56.6%) constituted the primary structural barriers. These results provide empirical evidence for the viability of traditional Indonesian sports as instruments of diaspora-led sports diplomacy and highlight the need for institutional support in addressing infrastructural constraints.

Keywords : *traditional Indonesian sports, sports diplomacy, cultural preservation, community interest, Cairo, cooperation*

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INTRODUCTION

The globalization of sport has been recognized as a vehicle for cross-cultural exchange, soft power projection, and diplomatic engagement (Nye, 2004; Grix & Houlihan, 2014). While dominant forms of sport—particularly Olympic and commercially mediated sports—have received substantial scholarly attention, indigenous and traditional sports from developing countries remain largely understudied in the international sport management literature (Chappelet, 2008; Strange et al., 2020).

Indonesia boasts a rich repertoire of traditional sports, collectively referred to as "traditional sports," reflecting centuries of indigenous physical culture. These include Pencak Silat (recognized by UNESCO, 2003), Egrang (stilts), Lari Balok (beam running), Dagongan (bamboo pushing), Hadang (territorial line-blocking), and Terompah Panjang (long sandals). Despite their documented cultural and pedagogical value (Hidayat, 2018; Kusuma & Widodo, 2021), these sports are largely confined to domestic physical education curricula. Their acceptance and potential adoption by transnational diaspora communities—particularly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region—represents an underexplored research frontier.

STKIP Modern Ngawi, a sports education college in East Java, established a formal international collaboration program with the Indonesian School of Cairo (SIC) in 2026, integrating demonstrations and instruction of traditional Indonesian sports as a central component. The program attracts participants from Cairo's international community, creating a unique empirical context in which non-Indonesian audiences first encounter traditional Indonesian sports within a structured educational framework.

This research is a descriptive-exploratory study of the outcomes of the collaborative program. Specifically, the research examines the level of community interest, sport preferences, motivational factors, and structural barriers related to traditional Indonesian sports among Cairo-based participants. The research objectives are: (1) to assess the level of participant interest, (2) to identify traditional sport preferences, (3) to examine motivational factors, (4) to identify structural barriers, and (5) to evaluate the perceived relevance of traditional sports in the modern era.

METHOD

This study used a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to examine the interests, preferences, motivations, and barriers of Cairo's international community toward traditional Indonesian sports. The descriptive-quantitative approach aligns with the research's exploratory

objectives and is a well-established methodological practice for mapping new research areas (Gravetter & Forzano, 2018).

Population and Sample

The target population was all individuals participating in the STKIP Modern Ngawi–SIC international collaboration program in 2026. A total sampling strategy was employed, where all 60 eligible program participants were invited to complete the survey instrument. A total of 56 responses were received, yielding an initial response rate of 93.3%. After data screening, 3 responses were excluded due to incomplete data submissions, resulting in a final analytical sample of 53 valid responses ($N = 53$).

The respondents comprised 32 males (60.4%) and 21 females (39.6%). The participants' ages ranged from 15 to 22 years ($M = 18.4$, $SD = 2.1$). Given the school-based context of the program, participants under the age of 18 provided digital assent, while formal informed consent was secured from their parents or legal guardians prior to data collection. To ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of all respondents, no individual identifying information—including names, specific institutional affiliations, or personal details—was retained in the analytical dataset.

Furthermore, a descriptive subgroup analysis was conducted to examine gender-based differences in perceived barriers, contextualizing the findings within the broader literature on sports participation in the MENA region (Al-Ansari et al., 2019). While both genders predominantly cited equipment scarcity as a major barrier, female participants reported "limited playing space" at a proportionally higher rate than their male counterparts (71.4% of females vs. 46.8% of males). This finding supports existing literature suggesting that spatial and infrastructural constraints often disproportionately affect female sports participation in Middle Eastern contexts.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using a structured online survey instrument developed specifically for this study and administered via Google Forms. The instrument consisted of 12 items organized into four thematic sections: (a) demographic information, (b) sport exposure and preferences, (c) motivation and interest, and (d) barriers to participation. The items measuring interest, motivation, and perceived relevance used a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree/not interested at all; 5 = strongly agree/very interested), consistent with established practice in sport participation research (Ajzen, 1991). Internal consistency was assessed

exclusively for the Likert-type items using Cronbach's alpha on a per-scale basis. The 'interest and participation intention' scale demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .82$), as did the 'perceived relevance' scale ($\alpha = .76$), both exceeding the acceptable threshold (Nunnally, 1978). Categorical and multiple-choice items measuring specific sport preferences and barriers were appropriately excluded from the alpha calculation. Content validity was established through a panel review by three PJKR STKIP Modern Ngawi lecturers.

Data Collection Procedures

Ethics approval was obtained from the STKIP Modern Ngawi Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection. All respondents provided informed consent through an opening statement on the survey platform. Participation was completely voluntary, and respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The survey was distributed electronically from April 30 to May 4, 2026, immediately after the formal program activities concluded.

Data analysis

Data analysis used descriptive statistical methods. Likert scale variables were summarized using frequency distribution, mean (M), and standard deviation (SD). Categorical and multiple-choice items were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions. All computations were performed using Microsoft Excel 365. Open-ended responses were analyzed using basic thematic coding.

RESULTS

Clarity of Material Presentation

Thirty respondents (56.6%) gave the highest rating of 'very clear', and 13 (24.5%) gave it 'clear'. Nine respondents (17.0%) chose the neutral midpoint, and one (1.9%) gave it 'very unclear'. The mean clarity score was 4.34 (SD = 0.90), with 81.1% of respondents giving it a score of 4 or above (see Table 1

Tabel 1. Assessment of Material Clarity by Respondents (N = 53)

Score	Category	n	%
5	Very clear	30	56.6%
4	Clear	13	24.5%
3	Neutral	9	17.0%

Score	Category	n	%
2	Unclear	0	0.0%
1	Very unclear	1	1.9%
	Total	53	100.0%

Note. M = 4.34, SD = 0.90.

Traditional Sports Preferences

Lari Balok (beam running) was the most popular sport, chosen by 41 respondents (77.4%), followed by Egrang (stilts) (62.3%) and Dagongan (bamboo pushing) (37.7%). Terompah Panjang (long sandals), Hadang, and Gobak Sodor (territorial line-blocking) received significantly lower preferences (see Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency of Preferences for Traditional Indonesian Sports (N = 53, multiple choice)

Sport	n	%
Lari Balok	41	77.4%
Egrang	33	62.3%
Dagongan	20	37.7%
Terompah Panjang	8	15.1%
Hadang	5	9.4%
Gobak Sodor	3	5.7%

Note: Percentages exceed 100% due to the multiple answer format.

Level of Interest and Intention of Participation

The distribution of interest was predominantly positive: 22 respondents (41.5%) reported being 'very interested', 20 (37.7%) 'interested', and 11 (20.8%) 'quite interested'. No respondents reported low interest (M = 4.21; SD = 0.77). A total of 79.2% of respondents expressed high interest (scores 4–5) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Respondents' Level of Interest in Traditional Sports (N = 53)

Score	Category	n	%	Cumulative
5	Very interested	22	41.5%	41.5%
4	Interested	20	37.7%	79.2%

Score	Category	n	%	Cumulative
3	Quite interested	11	20.8%	100.0%
2	Less interested	0	0.0%	100.0%
1	Not interested	0	0.0%	100.0%
	Total	53	100.0%	

Note. M = 4.21, SD = 0.77.

Perception of Relevance in the Modern Era

73.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that traditional sports remain relevant in the modern era (M = 3.98; SD = 0.93). Only 5.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed (see Table 4).

Table 4. Perception of the Relevance of Traditional Sports in the Modern Era (N = 53)

Score	Category	n	%
5	Strongly agree	17	32.1%
4	Agree	22	41.5%
3	Neutral	11	20.8%
2	Don't agree	2	3.8%
1	Strongly disagree	1	1.9%
	Total	53	100.0%

Note. M = 3.98, SD = 0.93.

Motivational Factors

Cultural preservation emerged as the dominant motivating factor, with 75.5% of respondents indicating a desire to help preserve Indonesian culture abroad and 52.8% seeking to preserve Indonesian culture generally. This finding directly reflects the respondents' demographic profile as an expatriate and student diaspora community residing in Cairo, where traditional cultural artifacts serve as vital symbolic anchors for maintaining national identity. Unlike mainstream sports driven primarily by physical fitness or social affiliation—as evidenced by the lower endorsement for building social connections (26.4%)—engagement with traditional sports in this setting is deeply rooted in heritage preservation and cultural duty. Consequently, introducing traditional Indonesian sports within this bilateral educational

cooperation framework acts as an effective mechanism for invoking shared cultural memory and reinforcing national identity among diaspora members abroad.

Cultural preservation was the dominant motivating factor, with 75.5% of respondents aiming to 'help preserve Indonesian culture abroad' and 52.8% expressing a general desire to 'preserve Indonesian culture'. This finding strongly aligns with the respondents' demographic profile as Indonesian diaspora, for whom these traditional sports serve as a vital mechanism for maintaining national identity and cultural heritage in a foreign context. This was followed by the aesthetic and functional novelty of the sports, perceived as 'unique and different from modern sports' (62.3%), and the desire to build social connections (26.4%). All motivational data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Motivational Factors of Interest in Traditional Sports (N = 53)

Motivational Factors	n	%
Helping preserve Indonesian culture abroad	40	75.5%
Unique and different from modern sports	33	62.3%
Want to preserve Indonesian culture	28	52.8%
Building cooperation and social connections	14	26.4%
Looking for alternative sports besides the mainstream	10	18.9%
Fun and trains teamwork	8	15.1%
Demonstrates unique physical abilities	5	9.4%

Note: Percentages exceed 100% due to the multiple answer format.

Barriers to Participation

Limited equipment was the primary barrier identified by 67.9% of respondents, followed by limited space (56.6%), lack of playmates (17.0%), and lack of instructors (9.4%) (see Table 6). This hierarchy of barriers indicates that the constraints are structural-material, not attitudinal.

Table 6. Main Barriers to Participation in Traditional Indonesian Sports (N = 53)

Obstacle	n	%
Equipment limitations (stilts, blocks, etc.)	36	67.9%
Limited space or playing field	30	56.6%
No friends to play with	9	17.0%
Lack of instructors or trainers	5	9.4%

Note: Percentages exceed 100% due to the multiple answer format.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that traditional Indonesian sports have garnered genuine, widespread, and consistent interest among Cairo's international community participating in the STKIP Modern Ngawi–SIC collaborative program. With 79.2% of respondents stating high interest, cultural preservation as the dominant motivation, and structural and surmountable material infrastructure as the obstacles, these findings establish a strong empirical basis for the feasibility of traditional Indonesian sports as an instrument of institution-based South–South sports diplomacy.

Theoretically, this study provides three key contributions: (1) to the best of our knowledge, initial empirical insights into the reception of Indonesian traditional sports within an educational diaspora network in the MENA region; (2) empirical evidence for a micro-sports diplomacy model driven by higher education institutions; and (3) an extension of cultural preservation as a primary motivational driver for expatriate communities engaging in heritage sports. Practically, STKIP Modern Ngawi is recommended to establish a Traditional Sports Diplomacy Unit, develop equipment production and loan programs, and integrate an international sports diplomacy practicum component into the PJKR curriculum. Further research with larger probabilistic samples and longitudinal designs is needed to strengthen the external validity of these findings.

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