

## **PRESERVING JAVANESE CULTURAL WISDOM THROUGH POP MUSIC: A LYRIC ANALYSIS OF NDARBOY GENK'S SONGS**

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**Abstracts:** This study investigates the role of contemporary Javanese pop music in preserving and transmitting Javanese cultural wisdom, focusing on the works of Ndarboy Genk, a prominent figure in the Javanese modern music scene. The research analyzed the lyrical content of 25 songs written and performed by Ndarboy Genk, including widely recognized tracks such as Wong Sepele, Balungan Kere, Anak Lanang, and Koyo Jogja Istimewa. Using qualitative content analysis supported by theories of cultural preservation and popular discourse, the study examined how traditional Javanese values were embedded and communicated through his lyrics. The findings revealed that Ndarboy Genk's songs encapsulated a wide range of local wisdom values that reflect Javanese culture's philosophical and ethical dimensions. These included *nrimo* (acceptance), *sabar* (patience), *andhap asor* (humility), *teguh ati* (emotional resilience), *tresna sejati* (true love), *setya* (loyalty), *eling lan waspada* (mindfulness and caution), and *kesederhanaan* (simplicity). His lyrics effectively transmit these values to listeners, particularly younger generations through emotionally resonant storytelling and culturally nuanced expressions. Despite the modern and often urban musical style, Ndarboy Genk's works serve a deeper cultural purpose. The study argues that his music functions not only as entertainment, but as a cultural vehicle that sustains and recontextualizes Javanese identity in the face of contemporary social change. This research highlights the potential of popular music as a medium for cultural education and the preservation of intangible local heritage in modern Indonesia.

**Key words:** Javanese culture, Ndarboy Genk, Javanese Pop music, lyric analysis, local identity

### **Introduction**

In today's rapidly evolving society, traditional cultural values are increasingly challenged by the forces of globalization, digital media, and modern lifestyles. As modernity accelerates, particularly among younger generations, longstanding local wisdom and inherited moral philosophies are often marginalized, reinterpreted, or even forgotten (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). This cultural shift threatens the preservation of traditional wisdom, particularly among younger generations more exposed to globalized content than their own cultural heritage. In Indonesia, a nation known for its rich cultural diversity, preserving local wisdom, especially from ethnic traditions such as Javanese, is a cultural necessity and a form of identity resilience. Javanese culture, with its long-standing philosophical values such as *nrimo* (acceptance), *sabar* (patience), *andhap asor* (humility), and *tresna sejati* (true love) (Achmad, 2017). These values, once tightly interwoven with everyday practices, rituals, and interpersonal relationships, are

increasingly viewed as irrelevant or outdated in the face of individualism, consumerism, and digital culture. Nevertheless, culture is not static. As traditional forms recede from formal education and public rituals, new cultural mediums have emerged, offering alternative pathways for cultural expression and preservation.

In this context, contemporary music has emerged as a powerful medium for cultural expression and transmission. Music has long served as one of the most powerful and enduring forms of cultural expression (Rehfeldt et al., 2021). Across civilizations, it functions not only as entertainment but also as a living archive of collective memory, values, identity, and resistance. As a cultural artifact, music reflects the worldview of a society, encapsulating social norms, emotional landscapes, and philosophical insights within lyrical and sonic frameworks. In addition, music acts as a communicative medium that transcends generations, allowing traditional values to be transmitted, reinterpreted, and preserved, particularly in societies undergoing rapid modernization and globalization (Jiayang Li & Su, 2024).

In the Indonesian context, music plays a central role in maintaining and expressing cultural identity, especially amid the nation's vast ethnic and linguistic diversity. Among the Javanese people, Indonesia's largest ethnic group, traditional values have historically been communicated through folklore, ritual, and song (Hermansyah et al., 2024). However, with the decline of oral traditions and the rise of digital consumer culture, these cultural values risk being forgotten or diluted. It is within this context that popular music becomes increasingly important as a vehicle for cultural preservation. While pop music is often associated with Westernized aesthetics and commercial interests, it also offers a platform for artists to reinterpret and communicate traditional values in modern forms (Ismail & Loo, 2023). One notable figure in the contemporary Javanese music scene is Ndarboy Genk, an artist known for blending modern pop and dangdut styles with lyrical content rooted in Javanese social realities and emotional narratives. His songs, which are widely popular among young listeners, subtly encode and transmit Javanese cultural values through stories of love, hardship, humility, and emotional strength.

This study seeks to explore how Ndarboy Genk's lyrics function as a medium for preserving Javanese cultural wisdom within a contemporary musical framework. By

analyzing the content of selected songs, the research investigates how traditional values are represented, recontextualized, and made relevant to today's audiences. The findings aim to contribute to broader discussions on cultural preservation, media discourse, and the evolving role of popular music in sustaining local identities. Therefore, based on the background explained above, this study investigated three research questions:

1. What Javanese values are represented in Ndarboy Genk's lyrics?
2. How are these values communicated through modern pop music?
3. What is the cultural significance of these representations for young listeners?

### ***Literature reviews***

#### ***Traditional Values and Cultural Wisdom in Javanese Society***

Javanese culture is rich in philosophical and moral teachings that have been passed down through generations. These teachings, often referred to as *kearifan lokal* (local wisdom), are expressed through proverbs, rituals, arts, and everyday behaviors. Values such as *nrimo* (acceptance of fate), *sabar* (patience), *andhap asor* (humility), *setya* (loyalty), *eling lan waspada* (awareness and caution), and *tresna sejati* (true love) form the core of Javanese ethical thought (Achmad, 2017; Rachmatullah, 2011). These values guide social behavior and promote harmony, emotional restraint, and spiritual introspection.

However, scholars have noted a gradual decline in the public visibility and application of these values in modern Indonesian society (Taufikurrahman, 2022; Uswatun Kasanah et al., 2022). The increasing influence of Western ideals, consumerism, and digital culture has led to what some consider a fragmentation of traditional ethics, particularly among youth in urban environments. Traditional wisdom is often viewed as incompatible with modern success, progress, and individuality. Therefore, new cultural forms are needed to reframe and reintroduce local values in contemporary settings.

#### ***Popular Music as a Medium for Cultural Transmission***

Popular music has long served as both a reflection of and response to social change. Beyond entertainment, music can convey ideologies, articulate emotional experiences,

and shape cultural narratives (Abebe, 2021). In the Indonesian context, genres like dangdut, campursari, and pop Jawa have historically carried moral messages, societal critiques, and cultural identity (Kurnianto et al., 2021). Recent studies have highlighted the growing trend of musicians embedding traditional cultural values into modern formats to appeal to younger audiences (Fauzan, 2025; Putiatytska et al., 2024) . These songs often use local languages, regional aesthetics, and emotional realism to establish cultural continuity in a relatable form. By incorporating traditional themes into accessible and widely consumed musical formats, artists contribute to a dynamic process of cultural preservation and transformation.

#### *Javanese Pop and the Role of Ndarboy Genk*

Ndarboy Genk represents a new generation of Javanese pop musicians who bridge tradition and modernity. His music blends the emotional depth of campursari with modern pop and digital aesthetics, targeting younger listeners while retaining strong Javanese identity markers. Written mostly in the Javanese language, his lyrics often deal with themes of heartbreak, patience, humility, and inner strength, values deeply rooted in traditional Javanese ethics. While little academic research has been published specifically on Ndarboy Genk, his rising popularity and lyrical content suggest an intentional effort to maintain cultural relevance through music. This approach resonates with similar findings from studies on Gesang and other artists who have revitalized local wisdom through contemporary formats (Syaifudin, 2023).

In the current digital era, traditional culture is increasingly being recontextualized through social media, online platforms, and global entertainment systems. While this presents challenges, it also offers cultural expression and revival opportunities. Music that carries indigenous values and uses local languages is vital in maintaining cultural memory and identity (Good et al., 2021). By circulating on platforms like YouTube and Spotify, Ndarboy Genk's music reaches wide audiences and contributes to the visibility of Javanese language and values in a digital landscape. His success demonstrates that cultural preservation need not rely solely on traditional institutions, it can be sustained through popular cultural practices that adapt to modern tastes.

#### *Underlying theories*

This study is grounded in two main interrelated theoretical perspectives that illuminate the role of popular music in the preservation and transmission of cultural values, particularly within the context of Javanese society. The following theories provide the conceptual foundation for analyzing how Ndarboy Genk's songs function as a medium for sustaining Javanese cultural wisdom. First, cultural transmission theory posits that cultural values, beliefs, and practices are passed down from one generation to the next through various forms of communication, both formal and informal (Cavallili-Sforza & Feldman, 1981). In the context of this research, song lyrics serve as a vehicle for the intergenerational transmission of Javanese wisdom (*kearifan lokal*), allowing traditional values such as *nrimo*, *sabar*, and *gotong royong* to be communicated in ways that are accessible and relevant to contemporary youth. This theory underscores the importance of everyday cultural products, like music, in maintaining cultural continuity, especially in the face of modernization and globalization.

Second is popular culture theory. As articulated by scholars such as Storey (2021) and Strinati (2004), it emphasizes the role of mass-mediated cultural forms in shaping collective and individual identities. Music, as a key component of popular culture, not only reflects but also constructs social realities and identities. In the Javanese context, the use of vernacular language, local metaphors, and traditional values in pop music reinforces a sense of belonging and cultural pride among listeners. This theoretical lens helps explain how Ndarboy Genk's music contributes to the ongoing negotiation of Javanese identity in a rapidly changing society.

### **Research method**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach using lyric analysis as the primary method to examine how Javanese cultural wisdom is represented in the songs of Ndarboy Genk. Qualitative research is appropriate for this study because it enables the exploration of meanings, values, and cultural messages embedded within song lyrics, particularly those that reflect philosophical and emotional aspects of Javanese tradition (Simeonova & Galliers, 2023). The research is rooted in cultural discourse analysis and draws from elements of semiotics and content analysis, with an emphasis on how

language, metaphor, and narrative structure are used to communicate traditional values through music.

The primary data for this research consists of song lyrics written and performed by Ndarboy Genk. A purposive sampling technique was used to select songs that explicitly or implicitly reference emotional, social, or philosophical themes consistent with Javanese cultural values. A total of 25 songs were selected for analysis, including both popular and culturally rich tracks (as seen in Table 1). These songs were chosen for their emotional depth, use of the Javanese language, and lyrical references to values such as patience, acceptance, humility, and loyalty. Lyrics were collected from official YouTube video captions, digital music platforms (e.g., Spotify, Joox), and verified lyric websites. When necessary, informal translations were conducted from Javanese to Bahasa Indonesia to ensure interpretative clarity.

The data were analysed following these stages: 1) *Textual Reading and Thematic Coding*. Each song was closely read and analyzed in this stage to identify recurring themes and keywords related to Javanese values. Key expressions or metaphors were noted and interpreted in light of Javanese philosophy. 2) *Identification of Cultural Values*. The identified themes were then mapped onto known frameworks of Javanese cultural wisdom such as nrimo ing pandum, sabar, andhap asor, eling lan waspada, and tresna sejati. This step involved interpreting lyrics at the literal level and symbolically. The last stage was 3) *Contextual and Discourse Analysis*. The values found in the lyrics were then contextualized within broader social narratives, such as love, heartbreak, poverty, or resilience and analyzed for how they reflect or reinforce cultural ideals in modern Javanese society. Throughout this process, the researcher had maintained reflexivity by considering both linguistic and cultural nuance and ensuring that interpretation aligned with the Javanese cultural context.

## **Finding and discussion**

### ***Javanese values are represented in Ndarboy Genk's lyrics***

The content analysis of 25 songs by Ndarboy Genk reveals a rich tapestry of Javanese cultural values embedded within contemporary popular music. The analysis identified several core values consistently represented across the song lyrics, including

*nrimo* (acceptance), *sabar* (patience), *ikhlas* (sincerity), *tepo seliro* (empathy), *setya* (loyalty), *gotong royong* (cooperation), *unggah-ungguh* (politeness), and *tanggung jawab* (responsibility). These values are central to Javanese philosophy and serve as guiding principles for social interaction and personal conduct (Achmad, 2017; Rachmatullah, 2011).

The most frequently occurring values were *nrimo*, *teguh ati*, *sabar*, *tresna sejati*, *setya*, and *sumeleh*, which appeared in more than half of the songs analyzed. For example, in "Wong Sepele" and "Balungan Kere," the character in the song accept their social status and hardships with humility and patience, reflecting the Javanese ideal of accepting one's fate without complaint. Similarly, songs such as "Gusti Kulo Angkat Tangan" and "Kalah Awu" emphasize surrender to divine will and the importance of letting go, further illustrating the value of *nrimo*.

Other songs, such as "Ngawi Nagih Janji" and "Tak Kan Berpisah," highlight the importance of *setya* (loyalty) and *tresna sejati* (true love), while "Koyo Jogja Istimewa" and "Indonesia Barokah" foreground collective values such as *gotong royong* and *rukun* (harmony), underscoring the communal orientation of Javanese society.

**Table 1. Javanese cultural representation in Ndarboy Genk's songs**

Song title	Theme	General story	Javanese cultures represented
Wong Sepele	Being underestimated, staying humble	Tells the story of someone who is considered trivial, but remains patient and steadfast	<i>Nrimo, sabar, andhap asor, teguh ati</i>
Balungan Kere	Poverty and dignity	Tells the story of someone from a poor family who continues to struggle to live	<i>Nrimo, usaha lan donga, kesederhanaan, teguh ati</i>
Baik Baik Saja	Letting go and wishing well	Even though he is heartbroken, he still prays for his ex to be okay.	<i>Andhap asor, tepo seliro, sumeleh</i>
Lintang Sewengi	Brief love that leaves deep memory	About love that is only for a short time but leaves a deep impression.	<i>Setya, tresna sejati, eling lan waspada</i>

Ojo Nangis	Encouragement after heartbreak	Advice to stay strong and not cry even though you are hurt or fail in love	<i>Teguh ati, sumeleh, eling lan waspada</i>
Gusti Kulo Angkat Tangan	Surrender to God	Expression of total surrender to God after many trials in life.	<i>Sumeleh, nrimo ing pandum, pasrah</i>
Kalah Awu	Accepting loss emotionally		<i>Nrimo, Teguh Ati, Sabar</i>
Mendung Tanpo Udan	Longing in unfulfilled love	Describes a mood full of longing and hope that never arrives.	<i>Sabar, nrimo, tepo seliro</i>
Aku Sing Ndue Ati	Unacknowledged love	An expression of someone who has the sincerest love even though he is not chosen.	<i>Sabar, tresna sejati, setya, nrimo</i>
Tibo Mburi	Staying loyal after abandonment	The love story of someone who is always loyal even though he is finally left.	<i>Setya, tresna sejati, nrimo, sabar</i>
Kadung Jeru	Too deep in love	Describes feelings that have fallen in love but are not appreciated.	<i>Tresna sejati, andhap asor, teguh ati</i>
Manut Dalane	Following God's path	Invites to follow the path that has been determined by God.	<i>Manut, nrimo ing pandum, pasrah</i>
Iki Ati Dudu Boto	Emotional sensitivity	Rejects the assumption that the heart can be formed arbitrarily, invites to understand feelings.	<i>Ngerti rasa, eling, empati, kesederhanaan</i>
Koyo Jogja Istimewa	Local pride and beauty	Praise for Jogja as a special, romantic, and memorable place.	<i>Rasa tresna tanah kelairan, rukun, bangga budaya</i>
Sinal Tresno	Uncertain love	About uncertain love, waiting for a reply that is never clear.	<i>Teguh ati, nrimo, eling lan waspada</i>
Rungokno Aku	Plea for attention and understanding	Invites someone to listen and understand the feelings of the heart.	<i>Ngerti rasa, tresna sejati, empati</i>

Iya Makasih	Sarcastic rejection	Expressing gratitude, even in difficult situations or after being hurt	<i>Unggah-ungguh, tepo seliro</i>
Ambyar Mak Pyar	Emotional chaos after breakup	Describes a heart that is shattered by love, but still tries to recover and move forward	<i>Sabar, Sumeleh, Teguh Ati</i>
Tak Kan Berpisah	Eternal love promise	A promise of loyalty and never parting from a loved one	<i>Setya, tresna sejati, janji</i>
Salah Pilih	Wrong choice in love	Realizing a wrong choice in love or life, and accepting the consequences	<i>Eling, nrimo, ikhlas</i>
Ngawi Nagih Janji	Broken promise	Reminding someone to keep their promise, especially in love	<i>Janji, setya, tanggung jawab</i>
Anak Lanang	A man's responsibility	About being a responsible man, taking care of family and loved ones	<i>Tanggung jawab, ngemong, tepo seliro</i>
Wong Perantauan	Struggles of migrant workers	The struggles and loneliness of living far from home, but remaining strong and independent	<i>Mandiri, Nrimo, Teguh Ati, Usaha lan Donga sabar</i>
Modal Percoyo	Faith, effort, resilience	Trust is the foundation of a relationship; without it, love cannot survive	<i>Percoyo, Teguh Ati, Sumeleh</i>
Indonesia Barokah	Hope for national unity and blessings	A song of hope and prayer for Indonesia to be blessed, united, and harmonious	<i>Gotong royong, rukun, nasionalisme</i>

The embedding of these values in popular music is particularly significant for young listeners, who are often at the crossroads of tradition and modernity. By presenting Javanese values in a modern, relatable format, Ndarboy Genk bridges generational gaps and ensures the continued relevance of local wisdom. This is especially important in the

context of globalization, where traditional values may be at risk of erosion (Taufikurrahman, 2022; Uswatun Kasanah et al., 2022).

For youth, the songs offer entertainment and guidance for navigating personal and social challenges. Themes of resilience, responsibility, and loyalty, such as those found in “Anak Lanang,” “Ngawi Nagih Janji,” and “Tak Kan Berpisah” provide positive role models and reinforce the importance of character and integrity. The findings support the argument that popular music can function as a powerful medium for cultural transmission and identity formation (Bennett, 2017). Ndarboy Genk’s use of the Javanese language, local idioms, and culturally resonant themes not only preserves linguistic and cultural heritage but also makes these values accessible and appealing to a broad audience. Furthermore, the emotional narratives in the songs, ranging from heartbreak and longing to hope and pride, allow listeners to connect with the values on a personal level. This emotional resonance enhances the internalization of cultural norms and strengthens the sense of belonging to a shared cultural community.

### ***Ndarboy Genk’s strategies to communicate Javanese values through Modern Pop Music***

In communicating the Javanese values to the young generation of Javanese people, Ndarboygenk used several strategies, such as:

#### **1. Use of Vernacular Language (Javanese)**

Ndarboy Genk understood that language is central to cultural identity. By consistently using Javanese in his lyrics, Ndarboy Genk reinforces the local context and creates a sense of emotional intimacy for listeners. This linguistic choice signals cultural rootedness and preserves the expressive richness of Javanese terms such as: *Nrimo* (acceptance), *Sabar* (patience), *Andhap asor* (humility), *Setya* (loyalty), and *Tresna sejati* (true love). For example, in “Wong Sepele,” he speaks from the perspective of someone who is overlooked and undervalued yet chooses *nrimo* and *humility* instead of revenge or bitterness.

#### **2. Emotional Realism and Everyday Narratives**

Rather than abstract moral preaching, Ndarboy Genk embeds values within relatable emotional experiences such as heartbreak, betrayal, longing, economic hardship, which makes the wisdom feel lived rather than imposed. In “Balungan Kere” (Poor Bones), the theme of sabar and perseverance is communicated through the narrative of economic struggle, where the protagonist remains hopeful despite poverty. In “Tibo Mburi” (Left Behind), the lyrics reflect setya and tresna sejati, showing unconditional love even when abandoned. This grounded emotional realism allows values to emerge naturally from life stories rather than appearing as didactic moral lessons.

### 3. Symbolism and Metaphor

Ndarboy Genk often uses poetic metaphor to express complex emotions and values. This aligns with traditional Javanese aesthetic forms like tembang macapat, where messages are delivered subtly. In “Mendung Tanpo Udan” (Cloudy Without Rain), the cloud is a metaphor for emotional tension or grief that never finds release, reflecting *eling lan waspada* (awareness and emotional control). In “Iki Ati Dudu Boto” (This Heart Isn’t Brick), he challenges emotional numbness, highlighting the Javanese value of *ngerti rasa*, empathy and emotional sensitivity.

### 4. Juxtaposition of Traditional Ethics with Modern Sound

Ndarboy Genk’s instrumentation blends modern pop and rock styles with dangdut and campursari rhythms, creating a hybrid musical identity. This musical style mirrors his lyrical mission: to express timeless wisdom through modern formats. Songs like “Koyo Jogja Istimewa” use upbeat rhythms to celebrate regional pride, hospitality, and harmony (*rukun*) in an urban Javanese context. The integration of electric guitar solos, synths, and digital beats with Javanese lyrics makes the songs culturally rooted yet stylistically relevant.

### 5. Accessibility via Digital Platforms

His use of YouTube, Spotify, TikTok, and social media amplifies the cultural reach of his messages. Comments and audience interpretations often reveal how listeners internalize values like: *Nrimo ing pandum* (accepting one’s fate in love), *Andhap asor* (choosing humility over retaliation), *Teguh ati* (emotional endurance amid hardship).

Ndarboy's ability to repackage cultural wisdom as emotionally resonant pop content allows him to reach listeners who might otherwise disengage from formal cultural education or traditional art forms.

### ***Cultural Significance for Young Listeners***

The representation of Javanese values in Ndarboy Genk's songs carries profound cultural significance for young listeners, particularly in the context of rapid social change and globalization. This study's findings highlight several keyways in which these musical representations impact youth identity, behavior, and cultural continuity.

#### **1. Reconnection with Cultural Roots in a Modern Form**

Ndarboy Genk's music serves as a bridge between tradition and modernity, embedding core Javanese values such as *nrimo* (acceptance), *sabar* (patience), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *gotong-royong* (cooperation) within contemporary musical forms. This approach allows young listeners, who are often immersed in globalized, individualistic cultures, to reconnect with their cultural roots in a format that feels relevant and accessible. As Nurhasanah et al. (2021) notes, popular culture can be a powerful vehicle for the transmission of local wisdom (*kearifan lokal*), especially when traditional teachings are adapted to modern sensibilities. By hearing these values in the music they enjoy, youth are reminded of the philosophical and ethical foundations of their heritage.

#### **2. Reinforcement of Identity**

Hearing familiar values and language in popular music helps reinforce a sense of Javanese identity and pride. This is especially important for youth who may be navigating questions of self and belonging in a rapidly changing society. Songs like "Koyo Jogja Istimewa" and "Indonesia Barokah" foster regional and national pride, encouraging young people to appreciate their heritage. Moreover, the use of Javanese language and values in popular music reinforces a sense of identity and pride among young listeners. In a rapidly changing society where questions of self and belonging are increasingly complex, songs like "Koyo Jogja Istimewa" and "Indonesia Barokah" foster both regional and national pride. This reinforcement of identity is crucial for youth navigating the

pressures of modernization and cultural homogenization (Fauzan, 2025). The affirmation of Javanese identity through music strengthens individual self-esteem and contributes to the resilience of cultural communities.

### 3. Guidance for Social Behavior

The values represented in these songs, such as empathy (*tépo seliro*), responsibility (*tanggung jawab*), and harmony (*rukun*), provide practical guidance for social interaction. These messages can shape attitudes toward relationships, conflict resolution, and community involvement for young listeners, promoting positive social behavior. Ndarboy Genk's lyrics provide practical guidance for social interaction, promoting values such as empathy (*tépo seliro*), responsibility (*tanggung jawab*), and harmony (*rukun*). These messages offer young listeners models for positive social behavior, influencing attitudes toward relationships, conflict resolution, and community involvement. As Achmad (2017) observes, Javanese values are not merely abstract ideals but serve as everyday principles for living harmoniously within society. By internalizing these values through music, youth are better equipped to navigate social challenges and contribute to communal well-being.

### 4. Emotional Resilience

Themes of acceptance, patience, and sincerity in facing adversity (e.g., heartbreak, failure, or being underestimated) offer emotional support and coping strategies. This can help young people develop resilience and a healthy outlook on life's challenges, in line with Javanese teachings on *nrimo ing pandum* (accepting one's fate). The recurring themes of acceptance, patience, and sincerity in the face of adversity, whether heartbreak, failure, or being underestimated, provide young listeners with emotional support and coping strategies. Songs that reflect *nrimo ing pandum* (accepting one's fate) encourage resilience and a healthy outlook on life's inevitable challenges. This emotional guidance is particularly valuable in a period of life marked by uncertainty and transition. The music thus functions not only as entertainment but also as a source of psychological strength and encouragement.

### 5. Encouragement of Local Language Use

The use of Javanese language in song lyrics, including informal dialects and poetic expressions, helps normalize and revitalize local languages among younger generations. Many urban youth are gradually shifting toward Bahasa Indonesia or English in daily conversation; thus, exposure to expressive Javanese through music keeps the language culturally alive. This action promotes language pride and prevents linguistic erosion in an era of dominant global languages. The consistent use of Javanese language, including informal dialects and poetic expressions, in Ndarboy Genk's lyrics plays a vital role in normalizing and revitalizing local language use among youth. In an era where Bahasa Indonesia and English increasingly dominate urban and digital communication, the presence of expressive Javanese in popular music helps prevent linguistic erosion and fosters language pride. This aligns with broader efforts to sustain linguistic diversity and cultural heritage in the face of globalization (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). By making Javanese language "cool" and relevant, Ndarboy Genk contributes to its ongoing vitality among younger generations.

## **Conclusions**

The representation of Javanese values in Ndarboy Genk's lyrics highlights the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity in Indonesian popular culture. It demonstrates that local wisdom can be effectively adapted and sustained through creative expression, even as society undergoes rapid change. For educators, cultural practitioners, and policymakers, these findings underscore the potential of popular music as a tool for cultural preservation and youth engagement. Moreover, the strategies employed by Ndarboy Genk highlight the potential of popular music as a vehicle for cultural transmission and identity formation among youth. By integrating vernacular language, emotional storytelling, metaphor, musical hybridity, and digital accessibility, he demonstrates that traditional values can be effectively communicated in meaningful and engaging ways for the younger generation. This approach preserves Javanese cultural heritage and revitalizes it, ensuring its continued relevance in a rapidly changing world. Finally, the cultural significance of Ndarboy Genk's music for young listeners extends beyond mere entertainment. By embedding Javanese values in accessible, emotionally resonant, and linguistically authentic forms, his songs play a crucial role in cultural

transmission, identity formation, and socialization. This demonstrates the potential of popular music as a dynamic tool for sustaining and revitalizing local wisdom in contemporary society.

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