

THE FORMATION OF INDONESIA'S NATION BRANDING THROUGH PENCAK SILAT AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

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Pencak Silat, a UNESCO-recognized Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, has functioned as both a nation branding tool and an instrument of cultural diplomacy. Nevertheless, strengthening its role in shaping Indonesia's global image requires further in depth examination. This study analyzes the development of Pencak Silat as Indonesia's nation branding using a framework of nation branding elements. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the research examines four dimensions of Pencak Silat: self-defense, sport, art, and mental-spiritual aspects. The findings reveal that visual elements including traditional attire, weaponry, distinctive movements, musical accompaniment, and promotional media serve as primary differentiators in forming Indonesia's nation brand identity. Additional elements contributing to Pencak Silat's effectiveness as nation branding include multi-stakeholder collaboration, message consistency, cross-sectoral integration, public support, and structured branding strategies. The author argues that Pencak Silat represents a powerful soft power asset that reinforces the narrative of Indonesia as a nation with profound and valuable cultural heritage. The study concludes that nation branding constitutes a complex, holistic, and long-term process requiring engagement from all stakeholders. The strategic and sustainable utilization of Pencak Silat in cultural diplomacy is essential for strengthening Indonesia's nation branding on the global stage.

Keywords: Cultural Diplomacy, Indonesia, Nation Branding, Pencak Silat, Soft Power

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