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The Role of Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh as a Cultural Diplomacy Agent in Promoting Indonesian Arts and Culture amid Saudi Vision 2030

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Abstract: Indonesia's rich cultural diversity has become an important asset in strengthening the country's cultural diplomacy abroad. One of the institutions contributing to this effort is Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR), which not only provides education for Indonesian citizens living in Saudi Arabia but also actively promotes Indonesian arts and culture to the wider community. This study aims to examine the role of Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh as an agent of cultural diplomacy in promoting Indonesian arts and culture amid the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030. A qualitative case study approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving school leaders, teachers, students, alumni, and representatives of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Riyadh. The findings reveal that SIR plays a strategic role in introducing Indonesian cultural values through arts education, extracurricular activities, cultural performances, and collaborative events with various stakeholders. These initiatives not only strengthen students' cultural identity and national pride but also enhance Indonesia's image and foster mutual understanding between Indonesian and Saudi communities. Furthermore, the social and cultural transformation encouraged by Saudi Vision 2030 has created broader opportunities for international cultural exchange, enabling SIR to expand its cultural diplomacy activities. Despite facing challenges related to limited resources and the need to adapt to local cultural norms, SIR has demonstrated its capacity to serve as an effective platform for cultural engagement. This study highlights the significant contribution of Indonesian overseas schools in supporting Indonesia's soft power through education and cultural diplomacy.

Keywords: cultural diplomacy; Indonesian arts and culture; Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh; Saudi Vision 2030; Indonesian overseas school

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly interconnected world, culture has become one of the most influential instruments of international relations. Beyond political and economic cooperation, countries are increasingly utilizing cultural diplomacy to strengthen mutual understanding, foster international partnerships, and project a positive national image. Through cultural diplomacy, a nation can introduce its identity, values, traditions, and cultural heritage to foreign societies without relying on coercive approaches. As one of the countries with the richest cultural diversity in the world, Indonesia possesses significant potential to enhance its international presence through cultural promotion and educational exchange.

Indonesia's cultural diversity, reflected in its traditional arts, languages, customs, music, dance, and local wisdom, represents an important component of the country's soft power. These cultural assets not only symbolize national identity but also serve as effective instruments for strengthening Indonesia's diplomatic relations with other countries. Consequently, the Indonesian government has



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continuously encouraged various institutions, both domestic and overseas, to actively participate in promoting Indonesian culture to international audiences. One of these institutions is the Indonesian Overseas School (Sekolah Indonesia Luar Negeri), which plays a dual role as an educational institution and a medium for introducing Indonesian culture abroad.

Among the Indonesian overseas schools, Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR) occupies a unique strategic position. Located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, SIR primarily provides education for Indonesian citizens residing abroad while simultaneously functioning as a platform for cultural exchange. Through various educational programs, cultural performances, traditional dance activities, music, language learning, and participation in international cultural events, the school contributes to introducing Indonesian arts and cultural heritage to local communities and international audiences. These activities demonstrate that educational institutions can extend their role beyond formal education by supporting the country's cultural diplomacy efforts.

The implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 has further expanded opportunities for international cultural engagement in Saudi Arabia. Initiated by the Saudi Arabian government to diversify the country's economy and promote social transformation, Saudi Vision 2030 has encouraged greater openness toward arts, culture, tourism, and international collaboration. This transformation has created a more supportive environment for cultural institutions, foreign communities, and international schools to organize cultural activities that were previously more limited. As a result, Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh has gained broader opportunities to showcase Indonesian cultural heritage through festivals, exhibitions, educational collaborations, and intercultural events involving various stakeholders.

Despite these opportunities, promoting Indonesian culture in a foreign country remains a challenging process. Cultural differences, limited institutional resources, adaptation to local regulations, and differences in social values require careful planning and continuous collaboration between schools, government institutions, and local communities. Therefore, understanding how Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh carries out its role as a cultural diplomacy agent is important for evaluating the contribution of Indonesian overseas schools in strengthening Indonesia's international image and expanding people-to-people relations through education and culture.

Previous studies have widely discussed cultural diplomacy through governmental institutions, embassies, and cultural centers. Likewise, several researchers have examined the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 from economic, political, and tourism perspectives. However, limited attention has been given to the contribution of Indonesian overseas schools as actors of cultural diplomacy, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia's ongoing social transformation. This indicates a research gap regarding how educational institutions abroad integrate cultural promotion into their educational mission while simultaneously supporting Indonesia's diplomatic objectives.

Based on this gap, this study aims to analyze the role of Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh as an agent of cultural diplomacy in promoting Indonesian arts and culture amid the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030. Specifically, the study explores the cultural programs

implemented by the school, examines their contribution to strengthening Indonesia's cultural image abroad, and identifies the opportunities and challenges encountered in carrying out cultural diplomacy within the evolving socio-cultural environment of Saudi Arabia. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on cultural diplomacy, international education, and the strategic role of Indonesian overseas schools in enhancing Indonesia's soft power through education and cultural engagement.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR) as an agent of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Saudi Arabia. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on exploring participants' experiences, perceptions, and institutional practices related to cultural promotion rather than measuring variables quantitatively. The case study design enabled the researcher to examine the phenomenon within its real-life context and to understand how cultural diplomacy is implemented through educational activities at Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh.

The research was conducted at Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This site was selected because SIR is one of Indonesia's overseas educational institutions that actively integrates Indonesian arts and cultural programs into its educational activities while serving as a bridge between Indonesian and Saudi communities. The implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 also provides a unique context for examining the development of cultural diplomacy through education.

Data were collected using three complementary techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the school principal, teachers, students, alumni, and representatives of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Riyadh who were directly involved in cultural activities organized by the school. Participant observation was carried out during various cultural events and educational programs to understand how Indonesian arts and culture were introduced and performed. In addition, relevant documents, including school reports, activity documentation, official publications, and institutional records, were analyzed to complement and validate the information obtained through interviews and observations.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data condensation stage, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were carefully reviewed and organized according to the research objectives. The categorized data were then presented systematically to identify recurring themes and relationships among the findings. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the patterns that emerged throughout the analysis process.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied source triangulation and technique triangulation. Information obtained from different participants was compared and cross-checked with observational findings and documentary evidence. This

triangulation process enhanced the credibility and consistency of the research findings while minimizing potential bias throughout the study.

In addition, the researcher maintained careful documentation throughout the research process, including interview recordings, field notes, observation records, and documentary evidence. These materials served as an audit trail that enhanced the transparency and dependability of the study. Ethical considerations were also observed by obtaining participants' consent before data collection, ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining confidentiality, and using the collected information solely for academic purposes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh as a Cultural Diplomacy Institution

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Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR) serves not only as an educational institution for Indonesian citizens living in Saudi Arabia but also as an important platform for preserving and promoting Indonesian cultural identity abroad. Established to provide formal education based on the Indonesian national curriculum, SIR has gradually expanded its role beyond academic instruction by integrating cultural preservation into its educational mission. As the only Indonesian government school in Riyadh, SIR functions as a strategic institution that strengthens national identity among Indonesian students while simultaneously introducing Indonesian culture to the international community.

The findings indicate that cultural values are embedded in both the school's vision and its educational activities. In addition to pursuing academic excellence, SIR encourages students to appreciate and preserve Indonesian cultural heritage through continuous participation in cultural programs. Since the students grow up in a multicultural environment outside Indonesia, maintaining cultural identity becomes an essential component of their educational experience. Consequently, cultural education is implemented not merely as an extracurricular activity but as an integral part of character building and national identity development.



Figure 1. The performance from students of Indonesian school of Riyadh in Festival Janadriyah Saudi Arabia

The study further reveals that SIR conducts various cultural activities, including traditional dance performances, traditional music, Indonesian Independence Day celebrations, cultural festivals, and collaborative events involving the Indonesian community and local society in Riyadh. These activities provide students with opportunities to learn Indonesian traditions while simultaneously presenting Indonesia's cultural diversity to broader audiences. Through these programs, students become familiar with regional dances, traditional costumes, national songs, traditional musical instruments, local cuisines, and cultural values representing Indonesia's multicultural heritage.

Interview, observation, and documentation data consistently demonstrate that SIR plays a significant role in promoting Indonesian culture in Saudi Arabia. This contribution extends beyond classroom learning and involves teachers, students, parents, alumni, and members of the Indonesian diaspora. Cultural promotion is implemented through art education, school cultural programs, national celebrations, collaborations with external institutions, and participation in public cultural events. These activities collectively strengthen SIR's position as an educational institution that actively contributes to Indonesia's cultural diplomacy.

The research also identifies three interrelated institutional roles performed by SIR. First, the school acts as a **facilitator** by providing students with facilities, opportunities, and learning environments to study and practice Indonesian arts and culture. Second, SIR functions as an **organizer** by planning and implementing cultural performances and educational programs both within and outside the school. Third, the institution serves as a **representation of Indonesia** in Saudi Arabia, where every cultural performance reflects Indonesian national identity and contributes to building a positive image of Indonesia among international audiences. These complementary roles demonstrate that SIR functions as more than a formal educational institution; it also operates as an active cultural diplomacy institution representing Indonesia overseas.

Overall, the findings suggest that SIR has successfully integrated educational objectives with cultural diplomacy. Through continuous cultural activities and active student participation, the school not only preserves Indonesian cultural heritage among the younger generation living abroad but also strengthens Indonesia's cultural presence within Saudi Arabia. This institutional role illustrates how overseas Indonesian schools can contribute to public diplomacy by using education and cultural performance as effective instruments of international cultural engagement.

3.2 Cultural Promotion Programs Implemented by Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh

The findings of this study reveal that Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR) implements a variety of cultural promotion programs as part of its educational mission and Indonesia's broader cultural diplomacy efforts. Rather than presenting culture only during ceremonial occasions, SIR incorporates Indonesian cultural values into both curricular and extracurricular activities, allowing students to experience and preserve their cultural heritage while introducing it to international audiences. These programs reflect the school's

commitment to maintaining Indonesian identity among students living abroad and strengthening Indonesia's cultural presence in Saudi Arabia.

One of the most prominent cultural programs organized by SIR is traditional dance education. Students are regularly trained to perform various Indonesian traditional dances representing different provinces, including Javanese, Balinese, Sumatran, and other regional dances. These performances are not merely artistic presentations but also serve as educational media through which students learn the historical background, philosophical meanings, costumes, music, and cultural values embedded in each dance. Teachers guide students throughout the preparation process, ensuring that every performance accurately reflects the authenticity of Indonesian cultural traditions. As a result, students develop a stronger appreciation of their cultural heritage while simultaneously acting as young cultural ambassadors representing Indonesia abroad.



Figure 2. The performance from students of Indonesian school of Riyadh

In addition to traditional dance, SIR actively promotes Indonesian music and performing arts through school performances and cultural exhibitions. Students participate in musical performances featuring Indonesian traditional songs and, whenever possible, traditional musical instruments. These performances provide audiences with opportunities to experience Indonesia's artistic diversity and reinforce the message that Indonesian culture encompasses not only visual traditions but also a rich musical heritage. The integration of music and dance in school events creates a more comprehensive cultural presentation and enhances audience engagement during cultural exchange activities.

The study also found that national celebrations constitute an important component of the school's cultural promotion strategy. Annual events commemorating Indonesia's Independence Day are organized not only as patriotic ceremonies but also as cultural festivals showcasing Indonesian traditions. During these celebrations, students

wear traditional costumes from different regions of Indonesia, perform regional dances, present traditional music, display local culinary products, and introduce Indonesia's cultural diversity to invited guests, including members of the Indonesian community and representatives from local institutions. These activities transform national commemorations into opportunities for public cultural diplomacy by presenting Indonesia's multicultural identity to international audiences.

Beyond activities conducted within the school environment, SIR actively participates in cultural festivals and public events organized in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI Riyadh) and other Indonesian community organizations. Through these collaborations, students perform Indonesian cultural arts at international exhibitions, cultural festivals, diplomatic receptions, and community events attended by Saudi citizens, expatriates, and foreign diplomats. Such participation extends the school's role beyond formal education and demonstrates how educational institutions can contribute directly to Indonesia's public diplomacy. By engaging with diverse audiences, SIR helps introduce Indonesia as a country rich in cultural diversity, tolerance, and artistic traditions.

Another important finding concerns the integration of cultural education into students' daily learning experiences. Rather than limiting cultural promotion to annual events, teachers consistently incorporate Indonesian cultural values into classroom activities and extracurricular programs. Students are encouraged to understand the cultural significance of traditional arts, local wisdom, national history, and social values while developing a sense of responsibility for preserving Indonesian heritage. This continuous exposure allows cultural identity to become part of students' everyday educational experiences rather than being treated as an occasional ceremonial activity.

The implementation of these cultural programs has generated several positive outcomes. First, students develop stronger cultural awareness and national identity despite living outside Indonesia for extended periods. Second, the programs foster intercultural interaction by providing Saudi communities and international audiences with opportunities to experience Indonesian culture directly. Third, collaboration between SIR, the Indonesian Embassy, parents, alumni, and members of the Indonesian diaspora has strengthened institutional networks that support cultural promotion activities. These collaborative efforts indicate that cultural diplomacy is not solely the responsibility of government institutions but also relies on active participation from educational institutions and civil society.

The findings further demonstrate that SIR's cultural promotion programs align with the concept of cultural diplomacy through education. By combining formal education with artistic performances, intercultural communication, and community engagement, the school creates opportunities for Indonesian culture to be appreciated by international audiences in a non-political and inclusive manner. Instead of relying on official diplomatic channels, SIR adopts a people-to-people approach in which students become the primary actors of cultural exchange. This approach not only enhances Indonesia's image abroad but also strengthens mutual understanding between Indonesian and Saudi communities through shared cultural experiences.

Overall, the findings indicate that the cultural promotion programs implemented by Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh have become an integral part of Indonesia's cultural diplomacy strategy in Saudi Arabia. Through continuous educational activities, artistic performances, institutional collaboration, and community participation, SIR successfully transforms cultural education into a practical instrument for promoting Indonesian identity and strengthening international cultural relations. These programs demonstrate that Indonesian overseas schools possess significant potential to contribute to Indonesia's soft power by fostering cross-cultural understanding and sustaining national identity among Indonesian citizens living abroad.

3.3 Strategies Used to Promote Indonesian Culture

The findings demonstrate that Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR) employs several interconnected strategies to promote Indonesian arts and culture in Saudi Arabia. Rather than relying solely on cultural performances, the school adopts an educational and community-based approach that integrates cultural preservation into everyday learning activities while strengthening cooperation with various stakeholders. These strategies enable SIR to function as an effective institution for cultural diplomacy by combining education, artistic expression, and intercultural engagement.

One of the primary strategies identified in this study is the integration of Indonesian culture into the educational process. Cultural learning is not treated as an isolated extracurricular activity but is embedded within the school's educational environment. Students are introduced to Indonesian traditions, national values, regional diversity, and local wisdom through classroom instruction, extracurricular programs, and practical artistic activities. This approach allows students to understand the meaning of Indonesian culture while simultaneously developing a strong sense of national identity despite living outside their home country. By continuously engaging with Indonesian cultural practices, students become active participants in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage to future generations.



Figure 3. The Performance jaranan dor joko soroh

Another important strategy involves the use of traditional performing arts as a medium of cultural communication. The research found that SIR regularly prepares students to perform Indonesian traditional dances, music, and other artistic performances during school events and public cultural festivals. These performances are carefully designed to represent Indonesia's cultural diversity while communicating messages of unity, tolerance, and mutual respect. Rather than functioning merely as entertainment, the performances serve as a form of non-verbal communication that enables international audiences to appreciate Indonesian culture directly through artistic experiences. Consequently, performing arts become an effective instrument for strengthening Indonesia's cultural image in Saudi Arabia.

The study also highlights the importance of institutional collaboration as a key strategy in implementing cultural diplomacy. SIR works closely with the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI Riyadh), Indonesian community organizations, parents, alumni, and various local partners in organizing cultural programs. This collaboration expands the scale and impact of cultural promotion activities by allowing the school to participate in diplomatic receptions, cultural festivals, educational exhibitions, and community celebrations attended by diverse audiences. Through these partnerships, cultural promotion becomes a shared responsibility among educational institutions, diplomatic representatives, and Indonesian communities living abroad. Such collaboration also strengthens institutional support for the continuity of cultural programs and increases public awareness of Indonesian cultural heritage.

Furthermore, SIR adopts a participatory strategy by actively involving students as the main actors in cultural diplomacy. Instead of positioning students solely as learners, the school encourages them to become cultural representatives who directly introduce Indonesian traditions to international audiences. Students participate in planning cultural performances, practicing traditional dances and music, wearing regional costumes, and interacting with visitors during cultural events. This participatory approach not only enhances students' confidence and intercultural communication skills but also creates meaningful people-to-people interactions between Indonesian and Saudi communities. The findings suggest that involving students directly in cultural promotion increases the authenticity of cultural exchange while fostering a deeper appreciation of Indonesia's cultural diversity among foreign audiences.

Another strategy identified in the study is the organization of cultural events during national commemorations and international celebrations. Annual celebrations such as Indonesia's Independence Day, school cultural festivals, and collaborative events organized with KBRI Riyadh provide strategic opportunities to showcase Indonesian arts, traditional clothing, regional cuisine, music, and dance performances. These events attract not only members of the Indonesian diaspora but also Saudi citizens, expatriates, and representatives of foreign institutions. As a result, cultural festivals become effective public spaces where Indonesia's national identity can be introduced in an inclusive and engaging manner. The implementation of these events reflects the school's ability to transform national celebrations into platforms for international cultural exchange.

The research further indicates that SIR emphasizes cultural continuity rather than one-time promotional activities. Cultural education is implemented throughout the academic year through regular training, extracurricular activities, and continuous student participation in artistic programs. This long-term approach enables students to gradually develop cultural competence while ensuring that cultural promotion remains sustainable. Instead of depending on occasional performances, the school creates an educational environment in which Indonesian culture becomes an integral part of students' daily experiences. This strategy contributes to maintaining Indonesian identity among students living overseas while ensuring the continuity of Indonesia's cultural diplomacy efforts.

The implementation of these strategies has produced several positive outcomes. The findings reveal that students demonstrate stronger awareness of Indonesian cultural values and greater confidence in representing their country during international events. At the institutional level, SIR has strengthened its reputation as an Indonesian overseas school that not only delivers formal education but also contributes to Indonesia's soft power through cultural diplomacy. Meanwhile, collaboration with diplomatic institutions and local communities has expanded opportunities for intercultural dialogue and enhanced Indonesia's positive image within Saudi society. These outcomes indicate that educational institutions can become strategic actors in supporting diplomatic objectives through sustainable cultural engagement.

Overall, the findings suggest that the success of SIR's cultural promotion strategy lies in its ability to integrate education, artistic performance, institutional collaboration, and community participation into a coherent framework of cultural diplomacy. Rather than promoting culture through isolated events, the school has developed a comprehensive approach that emphasizes continuous learning, active participation, and intercultural interaction. This strategy demonstrates that Indonesian overseas schools can serve as effective instruments of cultural diplomacy by fostering mutual understanding, strengthening Indonesia's international image, and preserving national identity among Indonesian citizens living abroad.

3.4 The Impact of Saudi Vision 2030

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of **Saudi Vision 2030** has significantly influenced the environment in which Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR) carries out its cultural diplomacy activities. The transformation initiated by the Saudi Arabian government has encouraged greater openness toward cultural diversity, international cooperation, and public cultural events. As a result, educational institutions such as SIR have gained broader opportunities to introduce Indonesian arts and culture through various educational and cultural programs. The findings suggest that this policy transformation has created a more supportive environment for intercultural dialogue and cultural exchange between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

One of the most significant impacts identified in this study is the increasing availability of public platforms for cultural expression. Prior to the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030, opportunities to organize international cultural events were relatively limited due to the country's

conservative social and cultural environment. However, the government's commitment to promoting arts, tourism, and cultural industries has encouraged the organization of various cultural festivals, exhibitions, educational events, and international collaborations. This transformation has enabled Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh to participate more actively in cultural programs organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI Riyadh), Indonesian community organizations, and local institutions. Through these activities, Indonesian traditional dances, music, traditional costumes, and other cultural performances have become increasingly visible to Saudi society and international audiences.

The study also found that Saudi Vision 2030 has strengthened opportunities for intercultural communication. Cultural events organized by SIR no longer involve only members of the Indonesian diaspora but also attract Saudi citizens, expatriates, students from different nationalities, and representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions. This broader audience allows Indonesian culture to be introduced in a more inclusive setting where cultural interaction occurs naturally through artistic performances and educational activities. Such interactions contribute to mutual understanding between Indonesian and Saudi communities while reducing cultural barriers through direct people-to-people engagement. The findings demonstrate that education and cultural activities have become effective channels for building international relationships beyond formal diplomatic mechanisms.

Another important impact highlighted by the research is the increased institutional collaboration made possible by the changing socio-cultural climate in Saudi Arabia. The findings reveal that SIR has expanded its cooperation with KBRI Riyadh, Indonesian community organizations, parents, alumni, and local partners in organizing cultural activities. These collaborative efforts have enhanced the quality and sustainability of cultural promotion programs while increasing public participation in Indonesian cultural events. Rather than functioning independently, SIR operates within a collaborative network that strengthens Indonesia's cultural diplomacy through education, community engagement, and institutional partnerships. This collaborative model enables the school to maximize available resources and broaden the reach of its cultural promotion initiatives.

The findings further indicate that Saudi Vision 2030 has contributed to strengthening students' confidence in representing Indonesia through cultural performances. The more open cultural environment has encouraged students to participate in public events where they perform traditional dances, introduce Indonesian customs, and interact directly with audiences from different cultural backgrounds. These experiences allow students to develop intercultural communication skills while fostering a stronger appreciation of their own cultural identity. Consequently, students become active participants in Indonesia's cultural diplomacy rather than passive recipients of cultural education. This outcome reflects the successful integration of educational objectives with Indonesia's broader efforts to enhance its international cultural presence.

Despite these positive developments, the study also identifies several challenges that accompany the implementation of cultural diplomacy within the context of Saudi Vision 2030. Although the government's reforms have expanded opportunities for cultural

activities, educational institutions are still required to respect local cultural values, religious norms, and administrative regulations when organizing public events. Consequently, SIR carefully adapts its cultural programs to ensure that Indonesian traditions are presented respectfully while remaining compatible with the local socio-cultural environment. This adaptive strategy demonstrates that successful cultural diplomacy depends not only on cultural promotion itself but also on sensitivity to the cultural context of the host country.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Saudi Vision 2030 has served as an important enabling factor in strengthening Indonesia's cultural diplomacy through Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh. Rather than changing the school's fundamental mission, the policy transformation has expanded opportunities for cultural interaction, institutional collaboration, and public engagement. These developments have allowed SIR to carry out cultural promotion activities more effectively while reinforcing its role as an educational institution that contributes to Indonesia's soft power abroad. The study therefore suggests that national policy reforms in host countries can significantly influence the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy implemented by overseas educational institutions, particularly when education, culture, and community participation are integrated within a collaborative framework.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that **Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh (SIR)** plays a significant role as an educational institution and an agent of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Saudi Arabia. Beyond providing formal education for Indonesian students living abroad, SIR actively promotes Indonesian arts and culture through educational programs, traditional performances, cultural festivals, and collaborative activities with the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI Riyadh), the Indonesian diaspora, and local communities. These initiatives enable the school to preserve Indonesian cultural identity among students while simultaneously introducing Indonesia's rich cultural heritage to international audiences.

The findings further reveal that SIR adopts a comprehensive strategy for cultural promotion by integrating cultural education into the school curriculum, organizing regular artistic performances, encouraging students' active participation, and strengthening institutional collaboration with various stakeholders. Rather than functioning solely as a place of learning, the school has become a platform for intercultural dialogue where education and culture complement one another in supporting Indonesia's public diplomacy. Through continuous cultural engagement, students not only develop a stronger sense of national identity but also become active representatives of Indonesian culture in the international community.

The implementation of **Saudi Vision 2030** has also contributed positively to the effectiveness of SIR's cultural diplomacy activities. The government's cultural and social reforms have created broader opportunities for international cultural exchange, allowing the school to participate more actively in public cultural events and collaborative programs. At the same time, SIR has demonstrated its ability to adapt Indonesian cultural promotion to the socio-cultural context of Saudi Arabia while respecting local values and regulations. This adaptive

approach has strengthened intercultural understanding and enhanced Indonesia's positive image within Saudi society.

Overall, this study highlights that Indonesian overseas schools can serve as strategic actors in advancing Indonesia's soft power through education and cultural diplomacy. The experience of Sekolah Indonesia Riyadh illustrates that educational institutions are capable of fostering cultural preservation, strengthening international cultural relations, and promoting mutual understanding between nations. These findings contribute to the growing discussion on cultural diplomacy by demonstrating how educational institutions can complement formal diplomatic efforts through sustainable cultural engagement and people-to-people interaction.

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