

## Research Article

# Discovering Multicultural Semarang Through its Urban Landscape: Educational Materials for Non-degree International Program

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**Abstract.**

This paper explores the development of *Discovering Multicultural Semarang Through Its Urban Landscape*, a program designed for non-degree international students at Soegijapranata Catholic University (SCU). The program addresses the demand for educational activities that combine academic learning with cultural learning, using the rich cultural heritage of Semarang, influenced by Javanese, Chinese, Arab, and Dutch cultures. The main objective is to develop tailor-made teaching resources that align with SCU's vision of global engagement while enhancing international students' understanding of Semarang's multicultural environment. Utilizing the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) methodology, the research collects data from the stakeholders through focus group discussions (FGDs), interviews with faculty, staff, and students, and feedback from the current students. The findings show the need to integrate Semarang's history and coastal culture, unique architecture, traditional food and beverages, local arts, and arts performance into the curriculum. Experiential learning activities such as fieldwork and cultural interactions are arranged to enhance exposure to cultural experiences. The program is expected to meet international students' needs and interests. In short, this study highlights the importance of blending the academic programs with the local cultural elements, improving the inclusivity and depth of the learning experience for international students studying at SCU.

**Keywords:** Semarang, multicultural, urban landscape, international program, international students

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The International Affairs and Cooperation Office (IACO) at Soegijapranata Catholic University (SCU) is responsible for creating programs that attract international students. IACO works to promote SCU globally by offering unique opportunities that combine academic learning with cultural experiences. The programs designed by IACO must emphasize the strengths possessed by SCU, such as Indonesian cultures and traditions, especially Semarang culture and traditions that are typical of the north coastal ones. It is expected that the programs with local values make SCU a special place for students from around the world. Other than the local knowledge and experience offered by the

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programs, IACO also supports international students to adjust to life at SCU and ensures they get a positive experience while studying at SCU. Through these efforts, IACO helps SCU become a welcoming and exciting destination for international students. Currently, IACO offers an *Indonesian Jamu* (Indonesian traditional herbal medicine) program for Darmasiswa students—overseas nationals from countries with diplomatic links with Indonesia who receive scholarships to study Indonesian language, art, and culture at Indonesian universities. This program is a ten-month program that combines classroom teachings, laboratory practicums, jamu company visits, and internships with the jamu producers. After several years of running only *Indonesian Jamu*, the university feels the need to develop another non-degree program, with a shorter duration, for international students other than Darmasiswa.

In that line, the program titled *Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape* was developed. The program is a response to several reasons that are interconnected to each other. The first reason came from the writer's participation in the ITS Internationalization Training and Workshop in 2021. During the event, Dr. Maria Anityasari, the Director of Global Partnership ITS International Office who was one of the trainers, emphasized the importance of “uniqueness” in the programs developed by universities for international students. What she meant by uniqueness is that the programs developed are not offered by other universities or institutions. Anityasari's suggestion gave ideas for the development of a program that should focus on the area where SCU is located, Semarang, and its cultural richness. The second reason was Soegijapranata Catholic University's (SCU) initiative to attract international students by creating a non-degree program. This short-term program aims to accommodate international students who want to come to SCU for cultural or short academic exchanges that aim to enhance global engagement and cultural understanding.

The next reason was the inspiration that came from SCU's International Undergraduate Program (IUP), a distinctive undergraduate program that provides English-taught courses and encourages its students to get international exposure. At SCU, IUP program offers a general education course named “Indonesian Tradition and Multi-ethnicity.” The experiences and evaluations in running this class present the idea that there is an opportunity to repackage the topics offered in that class into a compelling short-term program for international students. Another reason arises from discussions with the Faculty of Language and Arts (FLA) at SCU, whose conclusion highlighted the need to develop SCU's BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia for Foreign Speakers) materials by incorporating Semarang's unique history and culture. Lastly, feedback from international

students, particularly those in the Darmasiswa program studying “Indonesian Jamu.” The feedback revealed the students’ desire to have more exposure to the city they live in. All these reasons underline the need to create a program that involves students in learning about Semarang’s multicultural urban landscape.

The development of the program has two objectives. The first one is to create tailor-made educational materials that present the multicultural Semarang, in order to attract international students to SCU. Another objective is to find out the aspects of multiculturalism and inclusive education that international students regard as the most valuable. The foundation of the development is Semarang’s diverse cultural heritage.

Semarang itself is well-known for its unique blend of Javanese, Chinese, Arab, and Dutch influences, which create a unique cultural landscape [1]. This rich cultural heritage offers opportunities for international students to immerse themselves in Semarang’s diverse history, cultural traditions, festivals, and cuisines. Semarang’s inclusivity covers a wide range of areas such as social customs, religious practices, cultural practices, and lifestyles, creating an environment conducive to cultural learning [2–4]. For the students, studying in an inclusive and diverse setting like Semarang fosters the development of interpersonal and intercultural skills necessary to succeed in today’s globalized world [5]. Moreover, as Semarang provides international students with opportunities to participate in community events, cultural exchanges, and volunteer work, their learning experiences not only enhance students’ academic achievement but also improve their understanding of and connection to the local society [6]. Such a multicultural and inclusive city is ideal for providing transformative educational experiences that fulfill the aspirations of global learners.

The aim of this paper is to outline the development and implementation of the program *Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape* at Soegijapranata Catholic University (SCU). The paper presents a structured framework for program development using the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) methodology. This technique ensures ongoing improvement through input from stakeholders, which in this case are IACO staff, Faculty of Language and Arts (FLA) staff, BIPA teachers, FLA Dean, IUP teachers and students, international students, and Darmasiswa students. This paper showcases the significance of involving stakeholders in developing a program that answers the needs of international students by incorporating the perspectives of the teachers, students, and faculty. By combining academic learning with cultural immersion, this program helps to promote SCU’s global engagement, thus attracting more international students. In terms of SCU’s BIPA, this program contributes to improving

BIPA materials that incorporate language learning and multicultural education. This program also highlights the importance of cultural education which integrates local cultural heritage as part of a broader Indonesian culture and practices into the learning materials for international students. This paper is expected to offer valuable insights for institutions targeting to develop programs for international students.

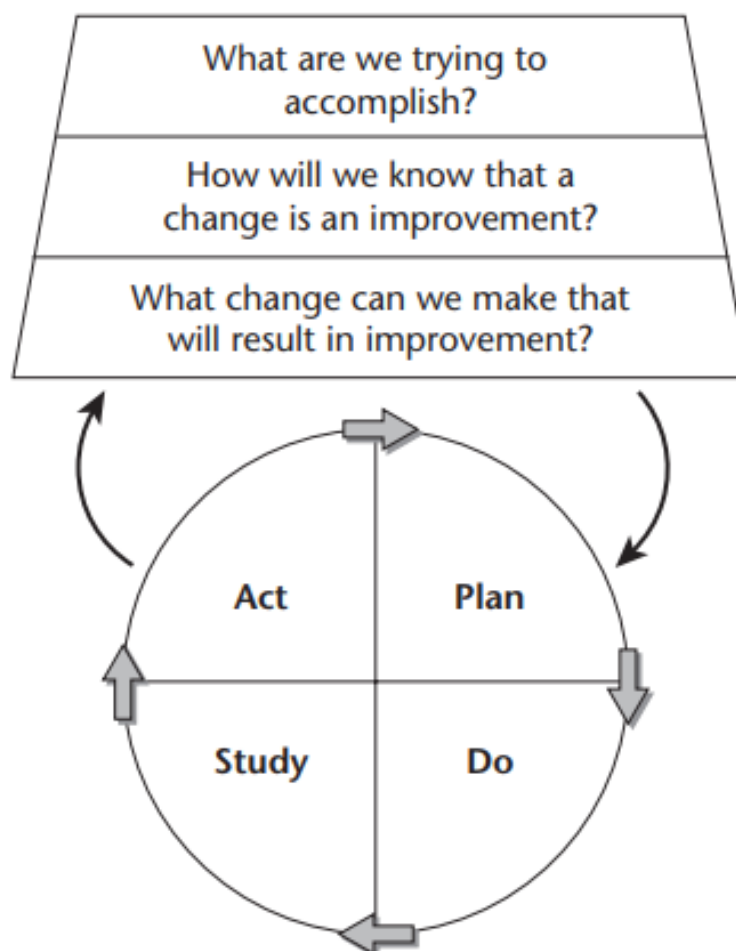
## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study applies the primary framework of PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) method, commonly referred to as the Deming Cycle [7]. The PDSA cycle was originally proposed by W. Edwards Deming and is well-recognized for its methodical approach to problem-solving and iterative improvement in a various field, such as organizational development and education [8]. The method provides an organized and structured process to plan, implement, evaluate, and improve a program.

PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) is the development of a process called PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) which was first presented by Walter Shewhart and then made popular by W. Edwards Deming [7,8]. The PDSA and PDCA cycles are iterative frameworks used for continuous improvement, but the emphasis and application are different. Both approaches start with the “Plan” phase which involves setting the objectives and designing a plan action; followed by the “Do” phase, which requires the implementation of the plan; and end with the “Act” phase, where adjustments are made based on findings. The difference is in the third phase. While the PDCA process has “Check,” the PDSA has “Study.”

In PDCA, the “Check” phase focuses on the verification of the outcomes. It aims to find out whether the outcomes meet the standards. This phase includes monitoring and measuring performance against the standards determined earlier. This approach often emphasizes process adherence and quality control. In contrast, in PDSA, the “Study” phase comprises a more comprehensive examination, putting the emphasis on reflection and understanding why certain outcomes occurred. PDSA is more exploratory and adaptive since it places a priority on learning from the outcomes to direct the next step of the process.

PDCA and PDSA are commonly used in different fields. PDCA is more frequently applied in industries with rigid standards, such as manufacturing, where efficiency and consistency are important. On the other hand, PDSA is applied more often in



**Figure 1:** PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) Cycle.

education, healthcare, and research, where the understanding of the process and its result is significant for innovation and contextual adjustments. Thus, while PDCA is oriented toward standardization and quality assurance, PDSA is more focused on learning, experimentation, and iterative improvement.

Since materials about Semarang and its multicultural society already exist, instead of starting from the "Plan" phase, this study begins with the "Study" phase. The "Study" phase focuses on evaluating the existing course materials. This step includes gathering inputs collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and interviews with the staff, teachers, faculty members, and students, as well as feedback on the written survey from the students. After the "Study" phase, the "Act" phase is done. The phase involves improving and adjusting the existing materials based on the evaluation results, in order to ensure that the materials developed truly present the multicultural society of Semarang as well as meet the expectations and needs of international students. The

next process is the “Plan” phase, which involves identifying the objectives, target market, cost, and promotion; developing educational materials on multicultural Semarang and its urban landscape in the form of modules and related activities; preparing the needed resources and facilities; and making assessment and evaluation tools. The final step is the “Do” phase, where the proposed plans are implemented in a short-term program targeting international students.

The PDSA method enables a dynamic and flexible research approach that promotes continuous improvement and ensures that the educational materials remain engaging and relevant. By using this approach, the study hopes to develop a curriculum that meets the academic and experiential requirements of international students while at the same time presenting the cultural diversity of Semarang.

In collecting feedback and inputs from the stakeholders about the existing program and the potential program to develop, the research used qualitative method instruments, such as FGD, interviews, and written feedback. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and interviews are frequently used research instruments in qualitative research design due to their capacity to offer deep, detailed insights into participants’ experiences, perceptions, and opinions [9]. FGDs involve a facilitated group discussion where participants express their opinions on a specific topic, thus enabling the researcher to observe group dynamics and obtain different viewpoints on that topic. This method is particularly useful to find out the social norms, collective beliefs, and interactions in a community. Interviews, on the other hand, are typically conducted one-on-one [10]. Interviews offer a comprehensive understanding of individual experiences and perspectives. Interviews come in several types: structured, semi-structured, or unstructured, depending on the objectives. In qualitative studies, FGDs and interviews are valuable to gather information that cannot be obtained through quantitative methods. These two instruments complement each other, with FGDs offering a more general perspective and interviews providing an in-depth understanding of a specific topic. In collecting the data, both instruments use open-ended questions that allow the participants to explain, elaborate, and contextualize the data.

Written feedback is another research instrument used in qualitative research as it offers participants the opportunity to reflect on their experience in writing [11]. Given that this method is not in-person, it is expected to capture more details and personal responses from the participants. Written feedback can take various forms, such as open-ended survey responses or reflective journals [12]. The feedback allows researchers to gather data from a larger number of participants. Compared to verbal methods like

FGDs or interviews, written feedback, which often comes in the form of a survey or questionnaire, is more structured and personal so that the participants can do it at their own pace without any influence from the interviewers or other people in the FGD [13]. In combination with FGDs and interviews, written feedback improves the depth of the data collected.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. STUDY Phase of PDSA

##### 3.1.1. Evaluation of Existing Materials

As part of the “Study” phase in the PDSA cycle, the initial process in developing the program, *Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape*, was the evaluation of the existing materials. The aim of the evaluation is to identify relevant content and to adjust the existing materials, as well as to improve the materials to fit the objectives of the planned program. The first existing material is the BIPA Supplement, a collection of readings about Semarang accompanied by worksheets designed to measure the students’ comprehension of the readings and improve their Indonesian language skills. Written in simple Indonesian, the supplement serves as a companion to the BIPA Module. While the BIPA Module focuses on general Indonesian language learning, the BIPA Supplement focuses on Semarang’s history and culture, that is influenced by its northern coast of Java identity. The purpose of the supplement is to create a unique aspect of Indonesian language teaching at SCU, which highlights Semarang’s local context—an aspect that sets it apart from other BIPA programs in Indonesia. The BIPA supplement includes ten topics, they are:

- Topic 1: Semarang (Semarang)
- Topic 2: *Kehidupan Masyarakat Semarang* (Semarang People’s Daily Life)
- Topic 3: *Ikatan Keluarga* (Family Ties)
- Topic 4: *Nasi Kuning* (Yellow Rice)
- Topic 5: *Kota Lama Semarang* (Semarang Old Town)
- Topic 6: *Aktivitas Harian Nelayan Tambak Lorok* (The Daily Activities of Tambak Lorok’s Fishermen)

- Topic 7: *Memancing* (Fishing)
- Topic 8: *Sifat Orang Pesisir* (Coastal People's Characteristics)
- Topic 9: *Klenteng Sam Poo Kong* (The Chinese Temple of Sam Poo Kong)
- Topic 10: *Tradisi Dugderan* (Dugderan Tradition)

These topics offer a basis to learn about Semarang's unique history and culture as a northern coastal area. In the supplement, the students are introduced to Semarang and its history and cultures presented in a descriptive narrative. From the analysis, the areas that can be potentially developed for the new program are designing hands-on activities, interactive learning, and deeper exploration of cultural interaction.

The second existing material is the materials used in the Indonesian Tradition and Multi-ethnicity course, a general education (Gen Ed) course offered at the IUP (International Undergraduate Program) of SCU. In the course description, it is written that this course is designed to provide opportunities for the students to learn about different ethnicities and multi-cultures in Indonesia. It is expected that the course allows the students to understand the differences and develop respect and appreciation for cultural diversity. The students are also expected to understand the importance of preserving their unique cultural and ethnic heritage. While the course primarily focuses on Indonesian tradition and multi-ethnicity, it also includes sections that explore Semarang and its multicultural society.

The course contains seven topics. They are:

- Topic 1: Semarang History and Multi-ethnicity (Semarang City Walk)
- Topic 2: Indonesian Local Language (Sumba)
- Topic 3: Folksong
- Topic 4: Batik in Semarang
- Topic 5: Architecture—Traditional Design
- Topic 6: Indonesian Food and Beverages
- Topic 7: Traditional Community and the Environment

This course, in general, introduces students to Indonesia's cultural diversity, including the unique aspects of Semarang. However, some topics, like the Indonesian Local



Language (Sumba), have no direct relevance to Semarang. For the new program, the areas that can be expanded should include the materials that are focused on Semarang, for example, Semarang's language uniqueness and Semarang's traditional costumes.

The evaluation revealed that although both materials offer insightful viewpoints into Semarang's culture, there are potential areas that can be developed for the new program. For the BIPA supplement, topics like "*Kehidupan Masyarakat Semarang* (Semarang People's Daily Life)" and "*Aktivitas Harian Nelayan Tambak Lorok* (The Daily Activities of Tambak Lorok's Fishermen)" could be expanded in the new program's materials with fieldwork activities such as community outreach or interviews with local residents. Similarly, some of the IUP courses could be applied in the new program by including more content about Semarang, such as traditions that are only found in Semarang's multicultural society.

Integrating experiential learning into material development can also benefit the new program. For example, designing activities like cooking classes to make "*Nasi Kuning*," heritage walks in Kota Lama Semarang (Semarang Old Town), and batik-making workshops could create a more engaging learning atmosphere. Implementing these expansions is expected to meet the needs of international students.

### 3.1.2. Results and Analysis of FGD, Interviews, and Written Feedback

After the evaluation of the existing materials, the next step was to collect data from the stakeholders by conducting FGDs, interviews, and students' written feedback. The results of the FGD with the International Affairs and Cooperation Office (IACO) staff, Faculty of Language and Arts (FLA) members, and BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing) teachers emphasized important aspects that needed to be taken into consideration when creating the new program, *Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape*. The participants of the FGD suggested the need to focus on Semarang's pesisiran (coastal) culture, which is the basis of the city's identity. The participants also put forward the ideas to highlight the existing mixture of Javanese, Chinese, Arab, and Dutch in Semarang. They believed that the unique cultural perspective is considered crucial in providing international students with an authentic and thorough understanding of Semarang's multicultural environment.

One of the important recommendations from the participants of the FGD was to modify the existing BIPA modules by including more materials on Semarang's history and cultural heritage. The teachers particularly suggested adding materials about Semarang's

cultural practices, Semarang's historical landmarks, and Semarang's significant position as a multicultural city. By adding those materials, the students will not only learn the Indonesian language but also experience the cultural atmosphere of Semarang. In short, the participants highlighted the need to make the modules of language learning more attractive and engaging for international students.

Another significant recommendation coming from the FGD was the suggestion to include fieldwork in the BIPA materials. The fieldwork will give the students the opportunity to experience Semarang's cultural landscape by themselves. They can visit the iconic areas of the city, such as Kota Lama Semarang (Semarang Old Town) and Tay Kak Sie Chinese Temple in the Chinatown of Semarang, as well as Masjid Agung Kauman (Kauman Great Mosque), and get involved in the cultural activities. The participants of the FGDs added that during the fieldwork, the students could be introduced to Semarang's traditional food and beverages, such as *lumpia* and *wedang tahu*, and attend traditional performances like *Semarangan* dances. This combination of classroom learning and hands-on experiences is aimed at providing a better understanding of Semarang's multicultural society.

The interviews conducted with IACO staff, BIPA teachers, and the Faculty of Language and Arts (FLA) Dean provided more or less similar suggestions. The interviewees highlighted the idea that socio-cultural exposure that is specially designed as an integrated part of Indonesian language teaching is important for international students. The interviewees emphasized the need to design a program that is not only restricted to language competence but also facilitates students to get a deeper understanding of Semarang's unique multicultural society.

One interviewee suggested including fieldwork activities that are offered in the existing program for SCU's international students, *Indonesian Jamu*. Only this time, instead of focusing on *Jamu* production and its ingredients, the program should highlight *Jamu*'s historical and cultural significance. The process of making *jamu* should not only introduce students to Indonesian, especially Semarang people's, traditional health practices, but also serve as a way to understand Semarang's daily life and local knowledge. This kind of activity fits with the main objective of giving the students authentic cultural experiences.

Another suggestion from the interviewee was to include the history and development of Kota Lama Semarang (Semarang Old Town) in the program. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site candidate, Kota Lama Semarang provides fascinating proof of Semarang's

colonial past and its transformation into a vibrant tourist destination. The interconnect- edness of Kota Lama Semarang with its surrounding areas of Semarang Chinatown and Semarang's Kampung Melayu (Malay Kampong) provides an opportunity to explore the architecture and historical landmarks of each area which will provide students with a better understanding of the city's multicultural heritage. Other than exploring Kota Lama Semarang and its surrounding area, one interviewee also suggested including the learning of unique Semarang traditions, such as the *warak ngendog* icon, and associating it with the explanation of the icon as cultural symbolism of Semarang's multicultural society.

Additionally, visiting temples (*candi*) around Semarang, which are mostly Hindu tem- ples, was proposed by one interviewee as a way to introduce students to Semarang's religious and cultural diversity. However, the interviewee underscored the importance of maintaining the program's focus on Semarang's history and culture. The interviewee said that activities or content related to the inland regions of Java, such as Solo or Yogyakarta, no matter how well-known they are internationally, were considered unnecessary for this program. The interviewee once again reminded that the main objective of this program is to showcase Semarang's multicultural identity.

Other data were collected through written feedback from Darmasiswa students. Since the data most closely reflected their experiences, it offered insightful information on multiple aspects of Semarang's culture and urban environment. In their feedback, most Darmasiswa students recited the attractiveness of the city walk to the historical and cultural areas of Kota Lama Semarang with its Dutch colonial buildings, Pecinan (China- town), Pekojan, and Kauman, which are Arab settlements, and Kampung Melayu, where the native people of Semarang live. The activity gave an opportunity for the students to experience various cultural influences—Javanese, Chinese, Arab, and Dutch—that have shaped Semarang. The students described their experiences as impressive and unforgettable. They appreciated the opportunity to enjoy the architectural heritage and the diverse cultures and learn the histories of these areas.

Another feedback that stood out was the Darmasiswa students' hands-on experience of cooking Indonesian traditional cuisine. Students found this activity practical and fascinating. They said that the cooking class not only introduced them to Indonesian cuisine but also taught them about the local ingredients and their names. This activity enriched them with an understanding of Indonesian culture while at the same time offering them the opportunity to develop their practical skills that can be shared later on after they leave Indonesia.

As the Darmasiswa students chose SCU as a place to do their study because SCU offers the Indonesia Jamu Program, so learning to make *jamu* (traditional Indonesian herbal medicine) from scratch also gave a strong impression on the students. They said that they enjoyed the sessions of making jamu because it allowed them to learn about Indonesia's local ingredients related to health traditions. Preparing *jamu* from raw ingredients was an effective way to learn the importance of natural remedies and local health traditions in Indonesian society. The students found the process both educational and enjoyable. Overall, the feedback emphasized the attractiveness of blending hands-on experiences with classroom teaching as they provide international students with opportunities to enrich their knowledge and have memorable experiences during their studies.

In addition to providing recommendations and suggestions, several potential challenges that the program might encounter were brought up by interviewees, FGD participants, and students' written feedback. The challenges mentioned include language barriers, limited prior knowledge, and the complexity of certain topics. First, language can be a major challenge. Since the program combines the teaching of Indonesian language and Semarang culture, those who have weak Indonesian language proficiency may find it challenging to really engage with the materials about Semarang culture. Second, students' lack of prior knowledge of Indonesian history, particularly Semarang, may hamper students' comprehension in understanding the materials. For instance, international students who do not know that Semarang was once a commercial hub that attracted traders from countries like China, India, the Middle East, or Europe—those who eventually chose to stay and live in Semarang—may find it challenging to comprehend why Semarang has become home to people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Lastly, the complexity of certain cultural topics may pose additional challenges. For example, themes with local cultural references, like the names and meanings of Semarang traditional dance movements, can be difficult to understand without a sufficient cultural background. These potential challenges show the importance of scaffolding and support in delivering the materials effectively.

The FGD, interviews, and feedback presented in the above discussion belong to the "Study" phase of the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycle in the development of the program titled *Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape*. This phase focuses on gathering and analyzing qualitative data to evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the proposed program. To summarize, during the "Study" phase, the FGD with IACO staff, FLA faculty, and BIPA teachers revealed a need to focus on

Semarang *pesisiran* (coastal) culture. Suggestions included modifying BIPA modules to emphasize *Semarangan* cultures and integrating fieldwork such as exploring Semarang historical and cultural areas, traditional food and beverages, and traditional art performances, into BIPA teaching. Moreover, interviews with the stakeholders emphasized the importance of socio-cultural exposure for students, especially those learning the Indonesian language. The interviewees suggested blending the existing classroom teaching with fieldwork, especially for *jamu* producers to learn how to make *jamu*, to Kota Lama Semarang to explore its history and development, and art performance groups to learn about Semarang's traditional performances. The fieldwork excludes inland areas like Solo or Yogyakarta. Additional suggestions were taken from the feedback from Darmasiswa students. Almost similar to the suggestions provided by the participants of the FGDs and the interviewees, Darmasiswa students emphasized the importance of experiential learning, such as city walks to historic areas of Semarang, cooking traditional cuisine, and making *jamu* from raw ingredients. The Darmasiswa students' appreciation of these activities proves their significance.

By synthesizing the data found, the "Study" phase provides insights that will guide the designing of the new program that will meet the interests and expectations of the stakeholders and potential international students.

### 3.2. ACT Phase of PDSA

The ACT phase is the phase where the adjustments or improvements are implemented based on the findings in the "Study" phase. Based on the findings, there are four main focuses of multicultural urban Semarang that have been chosen for further development. They are the history and culture of Semarang society, architecture in Semarang, traditional food and beverages in Semarang, and arts and art performances in Semarang.

The focus on history and society is chosen due to Semarang's rich and long history, spanning from the pre-Dutch colonial era to the present day. This historical background of Semarang gives opportunities for students to explore and learn about the transformation of the city as well as its function as a cultural and economic hub in Indonesia. Another focus is the architecture in Semarang, which represents the unique blend of architectural styles, showing its multicultural origins. The architectural landscape of Semarang shows a harmonious mix of Javanese, European (Dutch Colonial), Chinese, and Arab styles, presenting the various cultural influences in Semarang. Next, traditional

food and beverages are decided to become another focus due to Semarang's rich culinary legacy. Local food such as *lumpia*, *wingko babat*, *wedang tahu*, *bandeng presto*, and *tahu pong* represent a mixture of several cultural traditions that connect to Semarang's multicultural identity. Lastly, arts and art performances are chosen based on the fact that Semarang has numerous traditions, including *Semarangan Batik*, *Pencak Silat* (Martial Arts), *Gambang Semarang*, *Warak Ngendog*, and *Dugderan*. These traditions present the cultural richness of Semarang that provides opportunities for the participants of the program to interact and have experiential learning. Together, these four focuses represent the core of multicultural Semarang and provide the program participants with comprehensive education.

After deciding on these four key areas to focus on, they are then translated into activities. Through extensive meetings and discussions, the fieldwork activities that will support the implementation of experiential learning are designed. The first activity planned is a city walk, where students explore cultural and historical areas in Semarang, including Kota Lama (Semarang Old Town), Pekojan and Kauman (the Arab settlement), Pecinan (Chinatown), and Kampung Melayu (the Malay settlement). Using worksheets to guide the exploration of the city, the students learn about the history of these areas while at the same time observing the daily lives of the different communities living there. This activity aims to foster an understanding of the history of Semarang society. The second activity focuses on architecture. During this activity, students learn the unique architectural styles of Kota Lama, Pekojan and Kauman, Pecinan, and Kampung Melayu. They explore the influences of Dutch colonial, Chinese, Arab, and Javanese architectural styles in the buildings located in those areas, getting insights into how Semarang's diverse heritage is reflected in various architectural styles. The third activity focuses on local food and beverages. Through this activity, the students are introduced to popular food and beverages of Semarang, such as *lumpia*, *bandeng presto*, *wingko babat*, and *wedang tahu*, which present a mix of Dutch colonial, Chinese, Arab, and Javanese culinaries. During the activity, the students not only taste the food but also actively participate in the cooking class, where they learn how to prepare traditional foods. The activity aims to enhance the students' appreciation of Semarang's cuisine. The fourth activity centers on arts and art performances. In this activity, the students are given the opportunity to join a Batik-making workshop where they learn to make *Semarangan batik*. They will also learn traditional dances from the Semarang dance troupe. These hands-on experiences are expected to connect the students with the art heritage of Semarang and improve their comprehension of Semarang's cultural diversity.

Blending historical, architectural, culinary, and arts, the activities designed are aimed at creating a unique and engaging learning experience about Semarang and its multi-cultural society for international students.

### 3.3. PLAN Phase of PDSA

The “Plan” phase in the PDSA cycle is a critical stage that involves, among many, the identification of goals, the establishment of objectives, and the development of a strategy to achieve the objectives. For the development of the *Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape* program, the “Plan” phase was divided into four stages.

#### 3.3.1. Defining Objectives, Target Market, Cost, and Promotion

The first step consists of the action to define the program’s objectives, identify the target audience, calculate costs, and plan the promotional strategies. In this step, conducting market research is very essential to determine the program’s potential participants, their background and motivation, and their country of origin. Additionally, field surveys are done to find out the suitable locations for the proposed activities, including the location to do the exploration, the place to do the workshops, and even the accommodation. Then, the cost of the program is calculated based on these activities and the necessary logistics. For the promotion, different methods of promotion are chosen such as printed materials, social media campaigns, or video promotions in order to reach the target audience.

#### 3.3.2. Developing Modules and Their Activities

The next step in the “Plan” phase is to prepare a module containing the materials and planned activities based on the already determined four focuses. The module consists of:

1. History and Society of Semarang. The topic is designed to help the students learn about the history of Semarang, including its people. While learning about this topic, the students are directed to do fieldwork of exploring Semarang by doing a city walk in Kota Lama Semarang, Pekojan and Kauman, Pecinan, and Kampung Melayu and observe the daily life of the community living in the areas.

2. Architecture of Semarang. The topic is designed to guide students in learning about the diverse architectural styles—Javanese, Dutch Colonial, Chinese, and Arab—of Semarang by personally visiting the buildings in the aforementioned areas.
3. Traditional Food and Beverages. The topic is designed to give opportunities for the students to taste and learn to cook Semarang traditional cuisine, such as *lumpia*, *bandeng presto*, and *wedang tahu* which represent the mixture of various culinary traditions.
4. Arts and Art Performances. This topic is designed to teach the students to make Semarang batik, play gamelan, and perform Semarang traditional dances.

### 3.3.3. Preparing Resources and Facilities

In this step, preparing the facilities and resources is essential. As IACO cannot provide all facilities and resources independently, it establishes partnerships with Kota Lama Heritage Council, local art performance groups, and local culinary specialists to facilitate the process. IACO also arranges suitable accommodations and other logistics for the activities, especially fieldwork activities. The collaborations with the partners ensure the effectiveness of running the program.

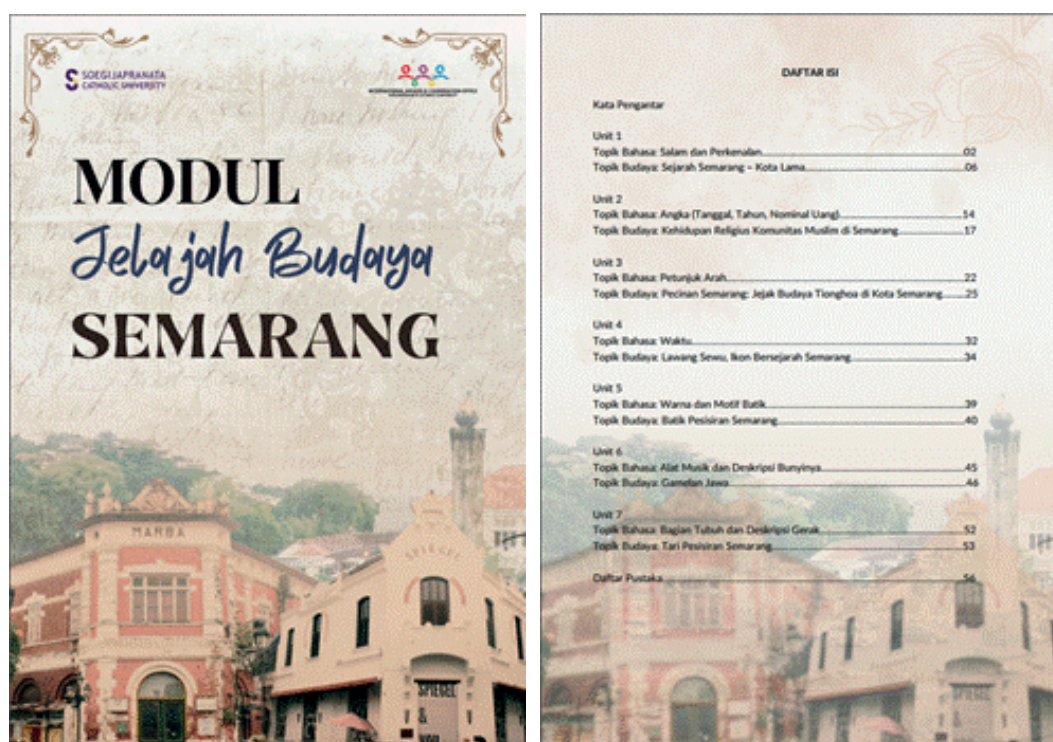
### 3.3.4. Developing Assessment and Evaluation Tools

The last part of the “Plan” phase is the preparation of the procedures to do the assessment and evaluation. The procedures are designed to assess the learning outcomes of the students and the effectiveness of the program. The assessments can be in the form of student presentations based on their observations and analyses of their experiences. Evaluations can be done by collecting feedback through questionnaires to measure the satisfaction level of the students’ experiences. The feedback from the evaluation can provide insight into areas that need improvement. It can also provide suggestions for running the program in the future. This structured “Plan” phase guarantees a comprehensive, well-prepared foundation for the program.



### 3.4. DO Phase of PDSA

The “Do” phase in the cycle of PDSA is when the proposed materials for international students are developed and piloted in a short-term program. During the “Do” phase, the proposed multicultural materials were turned into an initial module called Jelajah Budaya Semarang (Exploring the Culture of Semarang). This program integrates cultural elements about Semarang’s multicultural society with BIPA education.



**Figure 2:** Jelajah Budaya Semarang Module.

By introducing international students to the city’s diverse identity through topics like history, architecture, art performances, and community life, the students will study the language and immerse themselves in the local cultures. Despite the completion of the materials, the short-term program has not yet been piloted. Currently, IACO is promoting the program to partner universities with the target of receiving the first group of participants as early as 2026. In order to assess and improve the program in the upcoming “Study” and “Act” phases, the input and results from this pilot will be crucial.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the program Discovering Multicultural Semarang through Its Urban Landscape represents an important development in enhancing the educational and cultural

experiences of international students at Soegijapranata Catholic University. Using the findings from a comprehensive evaluation of the existing materials and the suggestions given by the stakeholders, the program incorporates Semarang's multicultural society and its diverse culture into its curriculum. In running the program, the students are involved in not only classroom teaching but also fieldwork, which aims to provide students with experiential learning. The program is focused on four areas: Semarang's history and culture, its unique architectural styles, traditional food and beverages, and arts and art performances. These areas are chosen to provide students with a thorough understanding of Semarang's rich culture.

By using the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) approach, the program has remained adaptable and responsive to the needs of participants, fostering SCU's standing as a center for the study of multicultural Semarang. By doing city walks, architectural explorations, culinary activities, and chances to participate in traditional arts, the program enhances students' knowledge of Indonesian culture and builds stronger ties with the local community. As this project develops, it has the potential to become a model for similar initiatives. For the future development of the program, continuous evaluations and improvements as well as increased collaborations and outreach should be done.

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