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Sanskrit Language Education for the Community: A Strategic Collaboration between UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation

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Abstract: This community service program aims to enhance Sanskrit literacy among the general public through a strategic collaboration between UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation. Sanskrit, as the classical language of Hinduism, carries profound historical, philosophical, and spiritual value; however, its mastery remains limited to academic circles. This initiative is designed to open access to Sanskrit learning for the wider community through participatory methods, a thematic approach based on *śloka* texts, and the use of digital technology. Participants came from diverse age groups and educational backgrounds, demonstrating high enthusiasm for the materials and methods taught. The main impact of the program is seen in the improvement of participants' abilities to read, write, and understand simple Sanskrit texts, as well as a growing awareness of *dharma* values and Hindu cultural heritage. Challenges such as limited study time and varying levels of participant comprehension were overcome through a modular approach and intensive mentoring. This program demonstrates that classical language education can serve as a sustainable medium for strengthening the community's spiritual and cultural identity.

Keywords: Sanskrit language, community service, Hindu education, strategic collaboration

I. Introduction

Sanskrit is one of the world's oldest languages and plays a vital role in the development of knowledge, philosophy, and spirituality throughout South and Southeast Asia, including Indonesia. Within the intellectual traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and even the early development of Ayurvedic medicine, Sanskrit served as a rich and symbolic medium of transmission. Nonetheless, today it is regarded as a classical language, with its use largely confined to academic or religious spaces (Pollock, 2006).

In Indonesia, Sanskrit has deep historical roots dating back to Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms such as Tarumanagara, Srivijaya, and Majapahit. Important inscriptions employed Sanskrit language and script as official media, reflecting its elite and sacred function within religious and governmental systems. However, in modern times, Sanskrit education in Indonesia has not extended much beyond religious and academic settings (Zoetmulder, 1994).

As a higher education institution focused on Hindu religious studies, UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa holds a strategic responsibility in preserving the intellectual traditions of Hinduism, including Sanskrit language and literature. One such commitment is reflected in community service programs that utilize Sanskrit literacy as a tool for inclusive and interdisciplinary public education.

In this context, the collaboration between UHN Sugriwa and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation represents a concrete example of synergy between higher education and civil society organizations. The foundation, which focuses on the preservation of Sanskrit language and literature, provides human resources and teaching methodologies that help bridge classical knowledge with contemporary societal needs.

This community service program in the form of Sanskrit instruction aims not only to teach linguistic skills but also to awaken cultural and spiritual awareness embedded in classical texts. Sanskrit is not merely taught as a system of sounds or grammar, but as a vehicle for understanding *dharma*, local wisdom, and harmony with the universe (Bhatt, 1989).

This non-formal, community-based education also creates space for people of all ages and backgrounds to access an intellectual heritage that has long been perceived as exclusive. Through participatory approaches, teaching is delivered in the form of workshops, online classes, and in-person sessions that are open and applicable.

This service activity is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of a collaborative model in teaching classical languages to the public. Moreover, it seeks to answer fundamental questions regarding how community engagement in Sanskrit literacy programs can influence perceptions of Hindu cultural heritage. In the broader context of digital transformation and information technology

disruption, classical language instruction requires a new adaptive approach. The collaboration between UHN Sugriwa and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation demonstrates that culturally rooted education can synergize with digital innovation to reach wider communities (Kapoor, 2021).

This initiative not only provides direct instruction to the public but also evaluates the dynamics of the relationship between academic institutions and cultural communities in preserving language heritage. It stands as evidence that community service is not merely a fulfillment of the *tridharma* obligation, but a tangible expression of *dharma yātrā*—a sacred journey to uphold the timeless values of Nusantara's cultural legacy.

Method of Writing

The writing method used in this community service article adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, emphasizing narrative descriptions of the processes, strategies, and outcomes of the Sanskrit language teaching activities conducted collaboratively between UHN Sugriwa and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation. This article is based on empirical data collected during the implementation of the program. The method was chosen to provide a comprehensive and in-depth overview of the dynamics of the service activities, including interactions between facilitators and participants, encountered challenges, and the impact of the program on public understanding of the Sanskrit language.

The author was directly involved in the training and teaching sessions, observing classroom dynamics, instructional methods employed, and participant responses. Observations were carried out during both online and in-person sessions. To strengthen the contextual and theoretical foundation, this article refers to literature on classical language education, cultural preservation, and literacy-based community service models. Academic references are also used to understand the urgency of Sanskrit education in the modern context (Pollock, 2006; Bhatt, 1989).

II. Discussion

2.1 Rationale for the Collaborative Sanskrit Learning Service Program

Saṁskṛta (Sanskrit) is not merely a linguistic heritage but the very essence of culture, philosophy, and spirituality that has shaped the foundation of Hindu civilization and the broader Nusantara cultural sphere. As the language of sacred texts such as the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavadgītā*, and various *śāstras*, Sanskrit holds profound epistemological and axial value in cultivating human character, ethics, and worldview (Pollock, 2006). Therefore, making this language accessible to the general public is a strategic step toward fostering spiritual intelligence grounded in cultural heritage.

In the midst of rapid globalization and cultural homogenization, preserving classical languages like Sanskrit becomes vital for safeguarding diversity and maintaining local identity roots. This program is part of an effort to revitalize intangible cultural heritage, as emphasized by UNESCO in its global priorities for the preservation of minority and classical languages (UNESCO, 2017). "Sanskrit is not a dead language—it is dormant in modern society, waiting to be reawakened by meaningful pedagogy" (Deshpande, 2012, p. 50).

Indonesia has strong historical ties to Sanskrit dating back to the 4th century CE, as evidenced by hundreds of inscriptions and religious texts such as *Arjunawiwāha*, *Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa*, *Gaṇapati Tattva*, *Ślokāntara*, *Vedaparikrama*, *Sārasamuccaya*, *Vratiśāsana*, *Negarakertāgama*, among many others written in this language. However, Sanskrit literacy among the general public today is severely limited—even among practicing Hindus. This is what makes the collaborative initiative between UHN Sugriwa and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation both relevant and urgent.

The program also supports the reinforcement of Hindu values at the grassroots level, not only through ritual practice but also through literacy and deep understanding of *śāstra* texts. This aligns with the *Tridharma* mission of higher education institutions, particularly the community service aspect, which emphasizes knowledge transfer and sociocultural transformation based on local wisdom. In addition, learning Sanskrit brings significant cognitive benefits. Linguistic studies show that studying classical languages like Sanskrit enhances logical structure, memory, and analytical skills due to its highly precise and complex grammatical system (Staal, 1988). "The grammatical system of Sanskrit, especially as taught through Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, offers one of the most sophisticated linguistic models in human civilization" (Staal, 1988, p. 9).

In the digital era, Sanskrit learning has also expanded in form—through online classes, interactive modules, and educational social media. This program utilizes such media to effectively reach cross-generational and cross-regional communities, establishing it as an educationally driven social movement (Kapoor, 2021). Finally, the collaboration between UHN Sugriwa as an academic institution

and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation as a cultural organization strengthens the synergy between formal knowledge systems and civil society initiatives. Such a model is essential for expanding an inclusive, sustainable, and value-based learning ecosystem. Thus, this program is significant not merely for teaching a language, but as a medium to reconnect tradition, consciousness, and social transformation within modern Indonesian society.

2.2 Teaching Methods

The teaching methods implemented in this community service program were designed to be interactive, participatory, and contextual, aiming to accommodate participants from various backgrounds—both beginners and those with foundational knowledge of Sanskrit (*Saṁskṛta*). The instructional strategy combined classical and modern approaches to ensure that the teaching of Sanskrit was not only intellectually accessible but also resonated with the cultural and spiritual dimensions of the participants.

a. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach

Although Sanskrit is a classical language and is traditionally taught through texts, this program adopted the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to present Sanskrit as a functional tool for basic everyday communication. Participants were encouraged to engage in dialogues using simple expressions such as greetings, self-introductions, and naming everyday objects. The goal was to revive Sanskrit as a *living language*, rather than treating it solely as a scriptural language (Deshpande, 2012) "Teaching Sanskrit as a spoken language renews its relevance and strengthens the connection between heritage and everyday experience" (Deshpande, 2012, p. 47).

b. Bhāṣā-kriyā Method (Language through Practice)

Instruction was not limited to lectures but was carried out using an active, hands-on approach: chanting *ślokas* (verses), sentence construction, translating simple texts, and engaging in paired dialogue practice. This *learn-by-doing* technique encouraged participants to build a personal and emotional connection with Sanskrit vocabulary and grammatical structure (Rajan, 2016). "Learning by chanting and doing is the traditional pedagogical essence of Sanskrit education" (Rajan, 2016, p. 89).

Figure 1
The Teacher Demonstrates by Speaking Direct Sentences

In the figure, the teacher is shown employing a teaching approach that emphasizes active participation, such as chanting *ślokas*, constructing sentences, translating simple texts, and practicing paired dialogues. This reflects a learn-by-doing method that proves effective in teaching classical languages like *Saṁskṛta*. This technique not only facilitates cognitive linguistic knowledge transfer but also fosters emotional experience and personal engagement with the material. In this way, vocabulary and grammatical structures are not learned abstractly, but brought to life through direct practice and meaningful interaction. The activity makes the learning

process more dynamic, evokes a sense of ownership over the language, and cultivates spiritual intimacy with the sacred texts being studied.

c. Text-Convergence Method

In advanced sessions, participants were guided to read and understand excerpts from simple texts such as *Subhāṣita*, *Hitopadeśa*, and popular mantras. This approach helped them connect grammatical structures with philosophical meanings and the ethical values embedded in Hindu tradition. The strategy aligns with the concept of text convergence, which integrates linguistic learning with spiritual understanding (Pollock, 2006).

d. Utilization of Digital Media

The program also utilized digital technology as part of the learning method, including the use of interactive presentation slides, educational videos, and applications for learning the Devanāgarī script. Online classes via Zoom and Google Meet enabled participation from various regions. This approach reflects the spirit of 21st-century education, which blends tradition with technology (Kapoor, 2021). "The future of Sanskrit education lies in hybrid learning that retains the *śruti* tradition while integrating digital tools" (Kapoor, 2021, p. 62).

e. Adaptive Guru-Śiṣya Method

The learning activities also drew inspiration from the classical *guru-śiṣya paramparā* model, adapted to the needs of modern society. The relationship between teacher and learner was developed within an inclusive, respectful, and collaborative atmosphere. This model fosters a learning environment that supports value transformation, rather than merely transferring knowledge (Bhatt, 1989).

2.3 Participants

This community service program focused on Sanskrit education was attended by participants from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, profession, and motivation for learning. The composition of the participants reflects the program's openness and inclusivity, which was specifically designed to reach a broad community beyond academic institutions.

a. Number and Origins of Participants

The number of participants varied by location, with some classes reaching up to 45 people. Participants came from various regions in Bali, including Denpasar, Gianyar, Bangli, Klungkung, and Karangasem. In addition to participants from Bali, there were also attendees from outside the region—such as Lombok, Malang, Yogyakarta, and Jakarta—who joined both online and in-person sessions. The hybrid learning system (face-to-face and online) enabled engagement from across geographical boundaries.

b. Age Categories and Educational Backgrounds

Approximately 35% of participants were high school students and university students, particularly those studying Hindu religion, philosophy, and literature at UHN Sugriwa and other institutions such as STAH Jawa Dwipa, IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram, and STIKIP Amlapura. Around 45% were adult Hindu practitioners from *pasraman* communities, temple caretakers (*pemangku*), temple management personnel, and the general public interested in culture and spirituality. The remaining 20% consisted of Hindu religion teachers, *pemangku*, *jero mangku*, and lecturers seeking to deepen their understanding of sacred texts in their original language.

Figure 2
Hindu Priests (*Pemangku/Pinandita*) as Training Participants

An example of participant engagement comes from the *pemangku* (Balinese Hindu priests), who showed exceptional enthusiasm for the program. As ritual officiants and spiritual leaders in Balinese customary communities, they have a direct need to understand *Saṁskṛta* texts that serve as the basis for Hindu mantras. Many of them had previously only mastered phonetic recitation passed down through generations, without a deep understanding of the meaning behind each *śloka* or mantra chanted.

This training provided them with the opportunity to comprehend fundamental aspects of *Saṁskṛta* language, such as *sandhi* (phonetic conjunctions), verbal roots (*dhātu*), and word-by-word translations (*anvaya*). This enriched the quality of their delivery during rituals and religious discourses. They expressed that being able to understand mantras directly added deeper spiritual meaning and a greater sense of responsibility to their religious services.

c. Participants' Motivation

Participants were motivated by various factors, including:

1. A desire to understand sacred texts authentically, especially the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Ṛgveda*, and daily mantras;
2. A commitment to preserving cultural heritage and strengthening the identity of Nusantara Hindus;
3. A wish to enhance personal and professional competence, particularly among Hindu religion teachers and *pemangku* who frequently use *Saṁskṛta* in ceremonies;
4. Academic curiosity about classical languages, especially among students of philosophy and philology.

One participant, Krisna Tri Prasetya, a Hindu religion teacher, shared:

> "Until now, we've only been reading translations. But after joining this class, I can read ślokas directly with deeper understanding." (Interview, June 12, 2025)

This interview reflects a significant transformation in the Sanskrit learning experience reported by participants after attending the class. Previously, their understanding of sacred Hindu texts was limited to translations, which often missed the original nuances. However, through foundational training in *Saṁskṛta*, participants began to directly access sacred verses in their original form. This demonstrates that the learning process is not merely technical or linguistic but also deepens philosophical and spiritual understanding.

The statement also illustrates the success of this educational program in fostering a more authentic form of religious literacy. When one is able to read source texts directly with grammatical and contextual comprehension, one no longer remains a passive recipient

of knowledge, but becomes an active interpreter. This is crucial in Hindu tradition, where *svādhyāya*—reading and contemplating sacred texts—is an integral aspect of religious practice. Thus, Sanskrit learning functions as a vital bridge to revive a personal and direct relationship with Hindu intellectual and spiritual heritage.

d. Initial Proficiency Levels

Most participants were beginners, unfamiliar with basic *Saṁskṛta* grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), the Devanāgarī script, and only acquainted with mantra pronunciation. Therefore, the program began at a foundational level (Level A), covering: Introduction to Devanāgarī alphabet, basic sentence structures, everyday vocabulary, and exercises in reading and interpreting simple *ślokas*. However, there were also some intermediate-level participants who had prior exposure to Sanskrit basics. They were provided with additional materials, including verb morphology (*dhātu*), noun declensions, and reading of short texts such as *Subhāṣita* and *Hitopadeśa*.

e. Participation and Enthusiasm

Throughout the program, participants demonstrated high enthusiasm. They actively asked questions, repeated *śloka* reading exercises, and engaged in quizzes and pair practices. Some even formed independent study groups outside of the formal sessions, indicating a transformative level of engagement. Attendance remained consistent, with an average of 85% attendance across sessions. At the end of the program, participants completed evaluations and gave testimonials, most of which expressed satisfaction and a strong hope that the classes would continue to intermediate and advanced levels.

f. Initial Impact on Participants

The initial impacts of the program included: Increased confidence in reading and understanding sacred texts; Broadened insights into the relationship between language and spirituality; The emergence of community-based Sanskrit learning groups initiated by alumni. With an inclusive, practical, and spiritually grounded approach, the program demonstrated that classical language education can be well-received and appreciated by the wider public when delivered in a contextual and participatory format.

2.4 Impact of the Learning Program on Participants

This community service program has brought various positive impacts to participants, both cognitively, affectively, and in terms of social-spiritual development. Although non-formal and inclusive in nature, the Sanskrit language learning—delivered through communicative and contextual approaches—has successfully driven tangible changes in participants' understanding, attitudes, and cultural engagement.

a. Improved Linguistic and Cultural Literacy

Participants demonstrated enhanced comprehension of fundamental Sanskrit structures, ranging from the Devanāgarī alphabet and verb conjugation to the ability to read and understand simple *ślokas*. This impact was verified through quiz evaluations and reading practice conducted throughout the learning sessions. One participant, Dwi Handayani, shared:

> "Previously, I only knew the sounds of mantras. Now, I understand their meanings and how to construct sentences in Sanskrit." (Participant testimonial, face-to-face class, 2025)

This testimonial reflects a deep transformation in the way participants perceive and internalize the Sanskrit language. Formerly, mantras were regarded merely as sacred sound patterns with unclear meaning. However, after participating in the face-to-face sessions, learners began to grasp the grammatical structure and meaning behind each word and sentence. This indicates that the learning process not only enhanced linguistic competence but also opened a pathway toward more authentic spiritual understanding. When someone understands how a sentence is formed in Sanskrit, they become not just a reciter of mantras, but also an active interpreter of the sacred messages embedded within Hindu tradition.

Figure 3
The teacher introducing Devanāgarī script to participants

This linguistic skill forms an essential foundation for Hindus to directly access sacred texts such as the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Manusmṛti*, and *Subhāṣita*. It supports Bhatt's (1989) assertion that understanding the original language of religious texts deepens both spiritual insight and philosophical interpretation. "Understanding the language of the *śāstra* is crucial to grasping its philosophy—translation alone is never enough." (Bhatt, 1989, p. 22)

b. Personal Spiritual Transformation

Many participants reported experiencing inner and spiritual transformation after understanding the literal meaning of daily mantras they regularly recited. This knowledge created a deeper connection between ritual practice and the meaning of *dharma*. Ditha Yulianasari expressed:

> "Mantras I used to recite from memory, I now say with awareness. There's a new vibration when I know the meaning." (Participant interview, June 12, 2025)

This statement reflects a shift from mechanical memorization to conscious recitation. Previously, participants relied solely on rote memory without grasping the deeper meaning behind the mantras. However, with newfound understanding of the structure and significance of these mantras, their spiritual experience was transformed. Recitation became more meaningful, accompanied by a stronger inner resonance due to the engagement of both mind and spirit. This reinforces the idea that semantic understanding of *Saṁskṛta* not only enriches knowledge but also intensifies direct religious experience. According to Staal (1988), *Saṁskṛta* is not just a medium of communication but also a performative language—an utterance that shapes spiritual reality through its vibration and meaning.

c. Increased Confidence and Cultural Identity

Participants from backgrounds such as religious teachers, *pemangku* (Hindu priests), and students showed increased confidence in explaining Hindu concepts to the public. They felt more equipped and authoritative when conveying teachings based on original texts, rather than relying on popular translations. One participant, Krisna Tri Prasetya, also a teacher, stated:

> "This class made me more fluent in explaining texts to my students. I can now cite and explain ślokas directly." (*Interview, June 16, 2025*)

This testimony highlights the real impact of *Saṁskṛta* learning on participants' pedagogical competencies, particularly in the context of religious or philosophical education. The ability to cite and interpret *ślokas* directly empowered participants to present teachings with greater authenticity and authority. It reflects an increase in both confidence and intellectual legitimacy, as they no longer depend on third-party translations. Mastery of source texts in *Saṁskṛta* allows for more precise, contextual, and faithful

interpretations—vital for preserving doctrinal purity and ensuring quality in spiritual education. This affirms Pollock's (2006) findings that mastery of source languages strengthens cultural identity within modern society.

d. Strengthening the Role of UHN and the Foundation in Community Empowerment

From an institutional perspective, this program has successfully strengthened the role of UHN Sugriwa and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation as pioneers of cultural literacy rooted in local values and Hindu spirituality. Through its community service approach, both institutions not only transferred knowledge but also cultivated emotional and intellectual connections with participants. The participatory and contextual learning approach made *Saṁskṛta* feel less foreign or elitist and instead become a living part of the cultural identity of the Hindu community.

This created a dialogical and meaningful learning space, where modern knowledge and traditional wisdom could mutually enrich one another. Beyond their roles as educational and cultural institutions, the campus and foundation are now seen by participants as living spiritual and cultural centers. They are not merely learning, but undergoing personal transformation through direct engagement with sacred texts and deep linguistic practice. Trust in the institutions has also increased, as both are viewed as effective bridges between the academic and the spiritual worlds. In this way, the program not only produces language learners but also builds a more aware, connected, and empowered community—one that is capable of preserving and developing the Hindu cultural heritage sustainably.

2.5 Challenges in the Implementation of the Community Service Program

Although the program has had a positive impact in preserving and reintroducing the Saṁskṛta (Sanskrit) language to the broader community, its implementation has faced several notable challenges that require careful analysis and strategic solutions:

1. Limited Prior Knowledge of Participants. The majority of participants come from non-philosophical or non-religious backgrounds, and therefore possess minimal initial knowledge of the Devanāgarī script and Saṁskṛta phonetic pronunciation. This slows down the learning process in the early stages and demands a pedagogical approach that is both simplified and adaptive (Deshpande, 2017).
2. Lack of Discipline and Consistency. Since participants are members of the general public (not regular students), one major challenge is inconsistent attendance, primarily due to work obligations or family responsibilities. This disrupts the continuity of learning and reduces the overall effectiveness in mastering the material (Bhatt & Joshi, 2021).
3. Fear of Linguistic Complexity. Many participants initially experience fear or intimidation, perceiving Saṁskṛta as a difficult language, especially in its grammatical aspects. This psychological barrier must be addressed through a humanistic and motivational approach by the facilitators (Houben, 1996).
4. Diverse Age Groups. Participants come from a wide range of age groups—teenagers, adults, and elderly individuals—posing a challenge in material delivery, as learning pace and styles vary greatly. Facilitators are required to differentiate instructional methods within the same forum (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).
5. Shortage of Specialized Saṁskṛta Instructors. The limited number of instructors proficient in both linguistic and philosophical aspects of Saṁskṛta places a significant teaching burden on one or two core facilitators. This may jeopardize the sustainability and consistency of material delivery.
6. Funding Constraints. As this is a community service-based program offered free of charge, there are challenges related to providing meals, transportation, and other logistical needs. Thus, inter-institutional collaboration becomes crucial to address these financial limitations.
7. Limited Access to Supporting Literature. Not all participants have access to foundational texts such as *Saṁskṛta Bhāṣā Praveśaḥ*, *Laghu Siddhānta Kaumudī*, or other primary sources. As a result, participant understanding tends to be oral and heavily reliant on the facilitator's explanations, rather than independent study.
8. Stigma of Elitist Language. There exists a perception among some members of the public that studying Saṁskṛta is only relevant for religious leaders or Hindu scholars. This stereotype hinders efforts to mainstream Saṁskṛta as a classical language that is universal and accessible to all (Pollock, 2006).

2.6 Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

The following strategies were employed to address the challenges encountered in the implementation of the *Sanskrit Language Education for the Community* program—A Strategic Collaboration between UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation:

1. Gradually Improving Basic Sanskrit Literacy. A tiered curriculum was developed, starting from the introduction of script and basic phonetics, before progressing to grammar and syntax (Sharma, 2009). Animated videos and learning applications such as *Learn Sanskrit* were used to stimulate understanding (Deshpande, 2015).

2. Adapting Methods to Local Contexts. Adult learning methods were applied by relating content to participants' real-life experiences (Knowles, 1984). Sanskrit texts relevant to Balinese local culture—such as mantras, ślokas, or religious lontars—were integrated into the lessons.

3. Enhancing Infrastructure and Resources. Free e-books, online dictionaries, and access to platforms such as *sanskritdictionary.com* or *Sanskrit Library* were provided (Joshi, 2012). Collaborative efforts were made to procure collections of classical Sanskrit texts for rotating borrowing systems.

4. Motivating and Facilitating Community Participation. Participants were encouraged to understand that learning Sanskrit provides access to sacred Hindu texts such as the *Bhagavadgītā* and *Ṛgveda* (Radhakrishnan, 2007). Official recognition through certificates and opportunities for further study were also offered.

5. Maintaining Program Continuity and Sustainability. Independent study groups were formed to continue learning even after the main program concluded. Alumni were trained to become instructors, thereby expanding the program's reach.

The strategies designed in this collaborative initiative between UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation reflect a comprehensive and adaptive approach to overcoming the challenges of Sanskrit language education at the community level. By beginning with foundational literacy and gradually progressing to more complex grammatical aspects—as advocated by Sharma (2009)—the program builds a solid learning base. The use of digital learning tools such as animated videos and apps is a strategic move to engage younger, visually-oriented, and digitally-native generations (Deshpande, 2015).

Furthermore, the integration of local content—such as Balinese *lontars* and familiar ślokas from traditional Hindu practices—makes the learning process more contextual and meaningful, aligned with Knowles' (1984) principles of andragogy. The provision of digital resources and community incentives enhances the appeal and accessibility of the program. E-books, online dictionaries, and circulating collections of classical texts help minimize logistical and material constraints.

Raising awareness of Sanskrit's role as a gateway to sacred Hindu teachings and providing certificates and further study opportunities also serve as powerful motivational tools. The commitment to program sustainability is demonstrated through the formation of self-organized study groups and the training of alumni as instructors. This ensures the program's transformation from a short-term project into an enduring educational movement capable of expanding spiritual and cultural literacy within the broader community.

III. Conclusion

This community service program demonstrates the importance of synergy between higher education institutions and community-based foundations in grounding the Sanskrit language as part of the spiritual and cultural literacy of Hindu society. Through the strategic collaboration between UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar and the Dvipāntara Saṁskṛtam Foundation, the initiative not only taught the linguistic aspects of Sanskrit but also instilled religious and philosophical values embedded in classical texts.

The structured and participatory approach proved that people from diverse backgrounds showed strong enthusiasm to learn this ancestral language. The program positively impacted participants' intellectual and spiritual capacities. The use of adaptive teaching methods, digital technologies, and contextual approaches to Sanskrit texts made the program both relevant and applicable. Participants not only learned the language structure but also became familiar with ethical teachings and *dharma* contained in selected ślokas. This demonstrates that classical language education can serve as a medium for inclusive social and spiritual transformation when properly designed.

This initiative serves as a tangible example of humanities-based community service that meets contemporary needs. Through institutional collaboration, relevant methodology, and a spirit of cultural preservation, the program succeeded in moving Sanskrit from academic spaces into the public sphere. Moving forward, such models can be replicated in other regions, guided by the spirit of community, local wisdom, and the vision of sustaining Indonesia's spiritual heritage.

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