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Dolanan Song As A Medium Of Art Expression And Children's Social Relations

Wadiyo ^{1*}, Slamet Haryono², Joko Wiyoso³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Negeri Semarang

Abstract: Nowadays, new creations of children's *dolanan* songs are becoming increasingly rare. What arises and develops are adult songs in the form of the music industry accompanied by *dangdut koplo*. The research aims to reconstruct how the *dolanan songs*, which still exist, are used as a form of artistic expression and as a medium for children's social relationships. The research method applied is descriptive qualitative. The research location is Semarang, conducted in several schools that teach the *dolanan* songs. Data collection techniques used in this research are observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The data validity technique uses triangulation by matching data from observations, interviews, and study documentation. The data analysis technique uses an interactive analysis flow. The study results show that first, the *dolanan* songs, which are used as an art facilitator at school, can be used by children to express art under teacher guidance and can be used as a means of social relations between students facilitated by the teacher. *Dolanan songs* are recommended to continue to be used as an educational medium for children through formal education. It is hoped that children's artistic expressions will be channelled and can be used as a medium for children's social relations through art according to the children's souls.

Keywords: *dolanan* songs, social relations, artistic expression, children's education

Corresponding Author:

wadiyo@mail.unnes.ac.id

Author Biodata:

Universitas Negeri Semarang

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INTRODUCTION

Dolanan song as a means of artistic expression and children's social relations seems to be understood by everyone. However, the *dolanan* songs that exist now are different to the past. What is conveyed here is a traditional Javanese children's song. The Javanese people were originally an agrarian society. In the beginning, society was still very traditional, in the sense that they were not as familiar with technology as they are today. In Javanese society, children who live agricultural life wake up early and have breakfast, then continue to help the old people in farming and raising livestock. Meanwhile, the small kids are carried by their mother or their family

members to play in their environment. It is not uncommon for young children to be carried or told to play on their own under supervision while their parents are working.

The world of children since childhood in the Javanese society at that time was indeed the case. The lives of the general public from morning to evening are all farming and raising livestock, although some are doing traditional trading. The existence of traditional trade always adjusts the conditions of the socio-cultural life of the agrarian society with the pattern of life of the majority of the people as farmers. The life of a farmer as stated earlier is to get up early, have breakfast and continue to work. Sometimes they don't even have breakfast first, so they go straight to work on their farms or gardening and/or taking care of their livestock. The afternoon is always a break to eat, which after a short break, returns to work again until the afternoon. So it continues in everyday life.

After dinner time is time for all the family to rest, and mingle with the whole family. It is also a habit, after dinner, the children play together with their neighbours using traditional community games and sing happily together. The songs that are sung are also songs or children's songs that are in accordance with the child's nature. It is obtained from parents and the environment which is taught in passing and from generation to generation. It seems that the only entertainment for the lives of traditional Javanese children in the past was like that. For parents who do art, which is usually at night, it also affects the nuances of the children's art. In the future, children in the arts will also be like parents and the community in general.

The rapid pace of technology today has had a major impact on changes in human behaviour, including changes in children's artistic behaviour (Yadav, Chakraborty, & Mittal, 2022). In the past, children's world used to be playing with friends in nature. Now, children are mostly playing with their gadgets. According to Cvano (2013) in Fathimah & Wantah (2022), what is understood by gadgets are small electronic devices that have special functions. One of the things that distinguish gadgets from other electronic devices is the element of novelty. That is, from day to day gadgets always appear by presenting the latest technology that makes human life more practical. What is seen as gadgets in real terms include smartphones, as well as netbooks or a combination of computers such as notebooks and the internet.

One of the famous and most attractive features of the gadget is the internet. Children who are already become a student can easily find any information for school assignments on the internet. The internet also makes students easier to find friends through the networking sites such as *Facebook*, *Twitter* or other social media. The gadget provides positive impacts on the students, but of course along with the negative impacts (Weisberg et al., 2009; Sarwar, M., & Soomro, 2013; Zulkifli, Novianti, & Garzi, 2021). The negative side of the gadget is it reduces the quality of face-to-face interaction. Children who in traditional society usually do art together with friends of the same age in their environment, are currently hard to find anymore. The *dolanan* song that used to be used every evening in the courtyard of the house when the moon was bright with friends, now such a phenomenon no longer exists.

In this regard, although today's world of children has changed, as human nature, children have no exception to the need for artistic expression. Expression of art can change time and place according to existing conditions. Likewise, children according to their nature as social beings also

still need to interact with peers and anyone else (Hartup, 1999; Denham, 2007). The problem raised here is how can the surviving *dolanan* songs be used as a means of artistic expression and used as a means of social relations for children in the changing world of children's lives.

Discussion

Talking about art cannot be separated from talking about artistic expression. Talking about social relations will not be separated from talking about forms of social relations. This paper will discuss how the surviving *dolanan* song is used as a means of artistic expression and is used as a means of social relations for children in the changing world of children's lives. In general, art can be understood as a form of social action that uses art media. Art is a form of social expression and cultural expression of society (Becker, 2014). The beginning of the discussion of this problem is to understand what expression is and what is meant by artistic expression. After that, we will talk about social relations as a form of social action for children who use art media.

Art Expression

An expression can be understood as the disclosure or process of conveying something, expressing one's intentions, or feelings (Campbell & Campbell, 2007). In another sense, an expression also has the meaning of a person's view or facial expression that shows someone's feelings. Such an expression refers to something that shows someone's feelings (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001). Expressing feelings can be done in various ways, the simplest of course is by showing facial expressions. According to Ekman (1999) and Russell (1994), facial expressions or mimics are the results of one or more movements or positions of muscles on the face. Facial expressions are a form of nonverbal communication and can convey the emotional state of a person to the observer.

Expression, in its use, is increasingly widespread in the world of art. The process of creating a work of art is also associated with the process of a person expressing his emotions or feelings (Robinson, 2004; Tan & Ferguson, 2014). The delivery of these feelings will be realized through the media of art. For example, the medium of music is sound; art media are line, plane and colour. The medium of dance is motion and maybe sound, besides that sometimes there is also a story. However, understanding expression, in general, is the disclosure or process of expressing intentions, ideas, and feelings. It is in line with Lomas (2016) who stated that the expression of art is an expression of the feelings of the performers of the arts which is a special feeling that can build values and attitudes. The emergence of this feeling is usually triggered by the interaction of artists with the surrounding environment.

Expression in music can be understood as the process of expressing feelings or emotions in the process of creating musical works of art and or in musical performance (Krumhansl, 2002). Music creation is an expression of thoughts and feelings contained in a musical work, while the nature of music is related to how the musical work is presented in the context. What is discussed

here is how the art of *dolanan* song is used as a means of children's artistic expression. As stated earlier, it is now rare to use *dolanan* songs as a means of performing arts at home in the community.

The only *dolanan* song that is used as a means of performing arts is in schools because in public schools local arts are developed. Local art can be used for learning art and culture but can also be used to build a classroom atmosphere and so on. In fact, in the field, through formal schools, the art of using the *dolanan* song can be implemented. Yes, even though the feel of a formal school with the feel at home or in the community when playing with friends is very different. When the *dolanan* song is given at school, children are "forced to be able to sing". The nuances of playing using the song are almost non-existent. That's because what is required is that children can sing. Children's fun is limited by formality.

Conditions like this make it as if the *dolanan* song is no longer important for children. Children can play with their world without having to use the *dolanan* song media. Why is this child's Dolanan song still being developed and/or used as a teaching medium or teaching material in public schools? That is because even if children cannot play using the *dolanan* song, the *dolanan* song is full of educational meaning. It not only serves to inculcate knowledge but there is also an element of behavioural guidance that is very much needed by children. for example, the Tembang *Menthok-menthok* and *Iilir-ilir*". Here are the lyrics of the song.

Mentok-menthok

Menthok-menthok tak kandani

Mung lakumu angisin-isini

Ambok aja ngetok ana kandang wae

Enak-enak ngorok ora nyambut gawe

Menthok-menthok mung lakumu

Megal megal gawe guyu

English translation:

Hey geese, let me tell you (advise)

Your behaviour is so embarrassing

You just hide in the cage

Just sleeping and not working

Hey geese, look at your behavior

Swinging hips left to right, makes me laugh

This song is a parable to teach good behavior to many people. Bad behavior is not necessary. It is depicted using a duck named *Menthok* whose path is indeed difficult and or not agile. The other example is the song entitled *Iilir-ilir*.

Iilir ilir

Lir ilir lir ilir tandure wus sumilir

Tak ijo royo-royo tak senggub temanten anyar

Bocah angon penekno blimbing kuwi

Lunyu-lunyu peneken kanggo masuh dodot ira

Dodot ira kumitir bedah ing pinggir

Dondomono jrumatono kanggo seba mengko sore

Mumpung gede rembuulane

Mumpung jembar kalangane

Ya surako surak hayo.

Lir-ilir, lir-ilir*

The seeds are blossoming**

So rich and green, just like newlyweds.

Shepherd boy, shepherd boy, please climb up that starfruit tree,

It is slippery, but please climb it, (I need the fruit) to wash (my) clothes

My clothing, my clothing is torn down the side

(I need to) mend it quickly to go to the (king's) court this evening

While the moon is bright, while many people gather,

Let's cheer together. Cheers! Hooray!

Child Social Relations

What is seen as a social relationship is a relationship with one another among human beings. The world of children is free but it needs the direction of etiquette and culture. Children need knowledge and behavioural guidance so that in the future they can grow into perfect human beings. Through art, moral messages can be conveyed which are expected to be provisions in living life in society (Halstead & Taylor, 2000; Tappan & Brown, 1989). There are a lot of moral messages in children's songs, but sometimes children understand it after they grow up and or their thinking maturity has arrived. Children are more accepting of what they are from what they see and hear. Not what the message implies.

Reflected from the above examples in the song *Menthok-mentok*, the children actually understood that *menthok* means duck and the song is about human behaviour that should not be lazy or should not do bad things to others. Moreover, Ilir-ilir songs have a deeper message about life, of course, children only understand the message of the song as it is. Actually, according to Chodjim (2003) and Khaelani (2014), the Ilir-ilir song is widely understood as teaching of human behavior that must always do good in life, while there is still a chance. Humans will eventually face the Creator. In facing the Khaliq, humans must carry the fruit of good behavior while living life.

The teachings of knowledge and behavior through local arts are felt to be increasingly needed in the development of this unstoppable era of progress. This nation is very rich in local arts, especially those related to songs or songs that almost all regions have. Regional art or folk songs are cultural expressions and social expressions of the people who own them. Everything always contains knowledge or noble teachings that reflect the social and cultural values of the people who own it (Kayam, 1981; Liliweri, 2011; Saddhono and Pramestuti, 2017). For this reason, it is necessary to preserve and uphold its existence, which is not only so that the art does not become extinct but more than that so that the values of knowledge and or the teachings contained in it do not become extinct.

The rapid flow of popular culture as well as the arrival of market arts that dominate the world of industrial art, which in this context is industrial music, sometimes makes us all complacent. If the government through its formal and non-formal education channels does not emphasize the importance of preserving local arts, likely, our local arts such as Javanese *gendhing* and Javanese songs or children's songs will become extinct. This does not mean that market music is not useful for the development of the nation's character, but it must be able to sort out which market music is useful for the mental interests of the nation.

It is ironic indeed when we talk about social relations through art or children's play songs today compared to the past. In the past, when people were still in a simple life, they used this *dolanan* song with joy and/or joy with their peers in their environment. Currently, the *dolanan* song is for formal school lessons. The psychological impact on children who receive formal *dolanan* song lessons from school and children who receive lessons from their families and communities is certainly very different. Even if it is said that art lessons at school are also a medium for social

relations but have a very different meaning from art which is taught from generation to generation as a form of cultural inheritance.

CONCLUSION

Expression of art is a universal human need from children to the elderly. The difference in the conditions of the times causes the art pattern to be also different. Art freely as a form of cultural inheritance is difficult to replace with art lessons which are currently widely obtained from formal school lessons. Art as a cultural inheritance has more free and natural social relations, while art as a formal lesson through school is more of an introduction to a culture that is not expressed naturally. For this reason, it seems that for the sake of children's art world life, so as not to lose their world of playing with artists like the play song, it is necessary to revive the nuances of artistic life in a society that is in accordance with the nature of children's lives.

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