

The Existence of Melayu Riau Gambus Amid the Millennial Generation in Pekanbaru City

Laila Fitriah*, Muhammad Jazuli, Wadiyo Wadiyo, Eko Sugiarto

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: fitriahl@students.unnes.ac.id

Abstract. Looking at the current phenomenon, the influence of foreign culture in millennial period is increasing significantly. In this era, entertainment exposure from social media is rising rapidly which creates direct and indirect marginalized effect on traditional art. Melayu Riau Gambus is one of Melayu society traditional arts characteristic which its development is quite exist among any other traditional arts in Pekanbaru city. This condition is due to the active young generation who constantly creates innovation to gambus art. this research aims to discuss how is the existence of gambus art and what are the innovations done by gambus artist in order to keep its existence and interest of millennial generation. This research used qualitative method, the data are collected by observation, in-depth interview with gambus artist and its aesthete, and documentation that become the supporting data to this writing. Descriptive qualitative analysis is used by the application of social change and art communication theory. The result of this research shows that the innovation of gambus melayu has increasing through its musician regeneration, function development, the changing of show rapporteur, the utilization of digital technology that appeals the millennial generation to strengthen, study and promote melayu riau gambus in international level.

Key words: Existence; Riau Malay Gambus; Millennial Generation

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INTRODUCTION

The current phenomenon in the field illustrates that the swift currents of globalization make traditional arts begin to shake or it is not easy to maintain their existence. With globalization and increasingly sophisticated information technology, there are many choices of entertainment offerings that are more varied and can be more interesting when compared to existing traditional arts. The rapid pace of information and communication technology has become a powerful means of cultural diffusion, as well as more diverse entertainment options for many people. One of the effects is that people are no longer interested in enjoying the various traditional performing arts that existed previously that were close or familiar with their lives.

According to Soedarsono (1991:26) that the most obvious impact of the entry of foreign cultures, especially the West into Indonesia, is the decline in public interest, especially the younger generation, towards something of an ethnic nature. This is due to a very weak understanding of the ins and outs of art itself. This results in the extinction of a traditional art if there is no effort or action to maintain the traditional art that still exists today.

The extinction or marginalization of a traditional art can occur if the people, especially the younger generation, are less concerned and do not have the desire and interest to continue and

develop and preserve the existence of the art. The young generation today is also known as the millennial generation. The millennial generation is a generation born after 1980 to 2000. Growing up in the era of the turn of the century, the lifestyle of the previous generation, namely generation X, is known as the millennial generation or millennium. The term Generation Y began to be used in editorials of major United States newspapers in August 1993.

This generation uses a lot of instant communication technologies such as email, SMS, instant messaging and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. They also like to play online games. 4. Generation Z (1995-2010) Also called iGeneration, net generation or internet generation. They have similarities with generation Y, but they are able to apply all activities at once such as tweeting using a cellphone, browsing with a PC, and listening to music using a headset, whatever they do mostly has to do with cyberspace.

Since childhood they are familiar with technology and are familiar with sophisticated gadgets that indirectly affect their personality (Pertiwi, 2008). Especially since it was introduced to the use of technology. Social life in this generation is very dependent on existing information and communication technology, in this case the most widely used information and communication technology is internet-based

technology.

Therefore, this generation is the generation with the highest level of internet usage today. Very high dependence on the internet causes this millennial generation to prefer to use the internet as a source of information and communication because the internet is more promising for ease of use and speed of access. One of the processes of globalization is the birth of the gadget generation, this term indicates the birth of the millennial generation. Gadgets are "tools" that have a lot of benefits. It is possible that the millennial generation can also introduce their traditional arts to the world.

Seeing the phenomenon that is currently happening, I am interested to see how the existence of Riau Malay Gambus art in the midst of the millennial generation in Pekanbaru City. Therefore, this research is necessary, because I have previously researched the Melayu Riau Gambus: Appreciator Responses in the Perspective of Art Communication. So this research can be related to previous research and the data that has been obtained can help for future research.

METHODS

The research method used in this study is a form of qualitative research with a phenomenological approach which later results from the data obtained from the field by conducting observations and in-depth interviews with several informants who understand and are competent with the problems studied (Miles et al, 2013; Rohidi, 2013). 2011). All problems are identified, discussed, and studied in depth. After that, explanations and descriptions of matters relating to the phenomenon of existing problems can be obtained. Document data collection techniques are carried out to obtain second-hand information obtained from very private records and contain confidentiality (Rohendi Rohidi, 2011, p. 206).

The research location chosen is in Pekanbaru City, Riau, because there are many communities and associations of Riau Malay Gambus artists who are relatively young and are actively developing or making Gambus musical works in the presentation of their works. In-depth interviews were conducted with Gambus artists and Gambus figures or arts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Art is a part of culture that is created from the mind and human mind which is full of aesthetics.

Basically humans are happy with beauty so that art can be created from the human soul and mind. The content of art is a model set that acts selectively used by the supporting community to be creative and appreciate in order to meet their aesthetic needs, the device is very simple for that (Rohidi, 2000:115). Art can change form from time to time due to the influence of various aspects that affect and human needs.

Traditional art is art that is born, grows and develops in a society which is then passed down or passed on continuously from generation to generation (Jazuli, 2008: 71). Traditional art is art that is passed down orally without any written evidence, so this art is easily forgotten or lost because there is no written evidence. To maintain traditional arts, proper inheritance and regeneration patterns are needed so that these arts can survive and develop.

In every society, art comes in various forms and specific expressions. The specificity of art forms and expressions occurs because of the conditions and developments of the socio-cultural environment in which the arts appear (Sedyawati, 1991). Supported by Wallace's opinion, Suparlan (1987) concludes that art forms are related to culturally patterned social configurations, meaning that in every society there are certain specific ways of patterning various aspects of life, including art, according to culture.

Riau Province as an area inhabited by the Malay cultural community is located on a trade route, so it is not surprising that the Malay community gets the most cultural influence from various nations, such as from China, India, Arabia, and Portugal, as well as from various ethnic groups in Indonesia. The archipelago such as the Minang, Batak, Bugis, Banjarese, Acehese, Javanese, and other tribes. The presence of the above nations, especially the Arabs, Persians and Gujarats in trading and spreading Islam to the archipelago, especially the Riau area, has also left an Islamic-inspired art form that still has its mark on the lives of the people of Riau. (Rio Eka P, 2016: 19).

One of the arts in Riau is Gambus Melayu which is still developing in several areas of Riau, such as in Siak Sri Indrapura, Bengkalis, Penyengat Island and Pekanbaru. Gambus is a type of traditional Indonesian musical instrument that is played by picking. Initially in Melayu Riau Gambus were mostly owned by families as home music, played individually without being accompanied by other instruments, as entertainment that led to a religious sense,

propaganda media, and entertainment, especially for fishermen on boats while waiting for the fishing rod or *rewai* to be eaten by the fish. In these songs, poems and rhymes are composed that contain the values of Islamic teachings. This is what originally became the main soul and spirit in the character of the Gambus music game. (Research Ministry of Education and Culture Riau: 107).

Melayu Riau Gambus is a means of communication for the introduction of Islam in the past. The Riau Malay community knows Islam from the Arabs and Persians, they preach using the *Al'ud* musical instrument or also known as the gambus. After experiencing the development and modification of *al'ud* in Riau, it is known as Gambus Selodang. Gambus Selodang art has developed to this day in the midst of the millennial generation. Gambus art has proven to be able to become a medium in establishing a communication in the midst of society (L.Fitriah, 2021: 34).

Communication media is a means used to produce, reproduce, distribute, disseminate and convey information (Suranto, 2005). In this case Gambus art can be a medium of communication in many ways, such as the introduction of Islam, where Gambus was used as a means of *da'wah* in the past. Communication comes from the Latin, namely communication which comes from the word *communis* which means the same meaning. To make it easier to understand the meaning of communication. Harold Laswell said that the way to explain the meaning of communication is to answer the question who says what in the which channel to whom with effect.

Laswell shows that communication includes several elements, namely communicators, media messages, communicants and effects (Effendy, 2011). Some of these elements have interrelated and interdependent relationships with each other so that they can determine the success of a communication. There are several elements that can be a supporting factor in communication, namely: 1. Sender (communicator) element that

conveys a message to a person or a number of people. 2. Encoding is a process of transferring thoughts into symbols. 3. Message (message) a set of symbols that have meaning conveyed by the communicator. 4. Media is a communication channel where the message goes from the communicator to the communicant. 5. Decoding is the process when the communicator conveys the meaning of the symbol determined by the communicant. 6. Receiver is the communicant who receives messages from the communicator. 7. Response is a response or reaction from the communicant after receiving the message. 8. Feedback is a feedback received by the communicator from the communicant. 9. Noise is an unplanned disturbance that occurs during the communication process and causes the communication to receive a different message from the communicator (Effendy, 2011).

The existence of gambus art that has survived to this day cannot be separated from the existence of good communication or response from the community, especially the response of the millennial generation which can affect the existence of Gambus art itself. One of the responses from the millennial generation is that there are many modern music communities or groups that appear and develop their works by combining Gambus musical instruments in their performances.

One of the music groups that are currently trending and famous in Pekanbaru City is Riau Rhythm Chambers Indonesia. This musical group has traveled and performed art performances in several countries in the cultural diplomacy program such as Spain, Portugal, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, France, Italy, so that with the achievements they have gained the attention of the millennial generation to get to know and learn traditional music even deeper. This is evidenced by the number of musical bands using gambus in their compositions or in their performances. This means that the Riau Rhythm Chambers Indonesia group has succeeded in becoming a sender or communicator in a traditional art.



Figure 1. Riau Rhythm Chambers Indonesia at the performs.

Furthermore, the existence of local culture has a great opportunity to form a new cultural identity, by making various innovation efforts (Ruastiti, 2020). In an effort to maintain the existence and develop traditional arts according to the demands of the times, traditional artists continue to strive to innovate. The first is the regeneration of players, in this case the Riau Rhythm Chambers Indonesia group is one proof of the existence of successors of gambus artists who are packaged in the form of modern performances so that they can be accepted by the millennial generation. In this music group also involved players or artists who are categorized into the millennial generation.

Both innovations are in terms of content or repertoire that is delivered. Previously or at the time of the emergence of the gambus, the gambus was used to convey messages or as a means of da'wah in the spread of Islam. Currently gambus can be collaborated with other instruments and become more attractive to be displayed among the millennial generation. Third, there are innovations in terms of packaging and performance channels from the gambus. Following technological developments, Riau Rhythm has been packaged in the form of CD recordings which are stored in MP4 files, then through television broadcasts and digital channels through the Youtube channel so that it can be watched by many people around the world as long as there is an internet network.

With the innovations carried out by Riau Rhythm Chambers Indonesia and several artists from the millennial generation, the existence of

Melayu Riau Gambus is maintained. Even today, the millennial generation in Riau, especially in Pekanbaru City, are proud to learn and play Melayu Riau Gambus at certain events. Both from school to university level. Melayu Riau Gambus is still loved and has a place in the hearts of fans and connoisseurs.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that artists and appreciators have a big enough role. From the perspective of art communication, this can create a unique and interesting concept of art, both from the perspective of traditional artists and millennial artists. The inheritance process carried out by traditional artists provides a separate response from millennial artists. This is a common thread with Islamic nuances that are still strong and still exist in Melayu Riau Gambus even though it has been developed by millennial artists or the next generation in a modern performance.

In terms of efforts to preserve or maintain existence, innovation is needed for a traditional art that must compete with the many modern arts that enter to survive and have a place among the millennial generation. There are innovations that have occurred, namely (1) regeneration of players by involving the millennial generation, (2) the form of presentation or repertoire displayed (3) the use of digital technology in the packaging and marketing process of the show. This innovation in Melayu Riau Gambus identifies that this art still exists and is able to keep up with the times.

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