

EMPOWERING INDONESIAN DANCE PERFORMER IN CONTRIBUTING TO CREATIVE ECONOMY PROGRAM

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Abstract

The city of Solo is very well known as the city of culture with various numbers of arts performed and developed in this city. Regarding this, the government attempts to contribute to the creative economy program to increase the standard of living of its citizens and facilitate them to generate their income from their creative skills in art. Therefore, this paper presents the results of the study of empowering dance performers in contributing to creative economy programs and some factors affecting the empowerment process. The descriptive qualitative with grounded research was employed as a research design of this study by utilizing three research instruments, namely observation, interviews with the manager and dance performers, and document analysis to support the results of the interview and observation. The participants of this study are a manager and a group of dance performers from one dance studio in Solo, Indonesia. The data were analysed by referring to the principles of the creative economy and the theory of empowerment art performers. The results of the study reveal that the manager and the dance performers work separately in conducting the dance performance. The manager does not provide sufficient information about the events, goals of the performance, and the number of the salary that they will receive from their performance. The dance performers only dance based on the instruction of the manager and they fulfil their interest in dance art performance and following the entertainment purposes, without considering the economic aspects that they will gain to support their daily lives. Several factors influence the empowerment of dancers, such as the awareness of managers and dancers in generating income from their talents. The dance performers should change their mindset from dancing for entertainment purposes to dancing for commercial purposes. By doing so, the dance performers will be able to support their daily needs and increase the quality of their life.

Key Words: Creative Economy, Empowerment, Indonesian Dance Performers

Abstrak

Kota Solo sudah lama dikenal sebagai kota budaya dengan beragam karya seni yang ditampilkan dan dikembangkan di kota tersebut. Berkenaan dengan pendapat tersebut, pemerintah berupaya untuk berkontribusi terhadap program ekonomi kreatif untuk meningkatkan kualitas hidup masyarakatnya dan memfasilitasi mereka untuk menghasilkan pendapatan sesuai dengan keterampilan mereka dalam bidang seni. Oleh sebab itu, artikel ini menampilkan hasil penelitian terkait dengan pemberdayaan seniman tari dalam berkontribusi terhadap program ekonomi kreatif dan beberapa faktor yang mempengaruhi proses pemberdayaan tersebut. Penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan melalui penelitian dasar digunakan sebagai desain dengan menggunakan tiga instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data,

diantaranya adalah observasi, wawancara dengan manajer dan seniman tari, serta analisis dokumen untuk mendukung data yang diperoleh dari observasi dan wawancara. Partisipan dari penelitian ini adalah seorang manajer dan sekelompok seniman tari dari sanggar tari yang berada di Kota Solo, Indonesia. Data yang terkumpul kemudian dianalisis dengan mengacu pada prinsip-prinsip ekonomi kreatif dan teori pemberdayaan seniman tari. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa manajer dan seniman tari bekerja secara terpisah dalam melakukan pentas. Manajer tari tidak memberikan informasi yang lengkap tentang kegiatan, tujuan dari pentas tersebut, dan jumlah upah yang akan mereka terima dari pertunjukan tersebut. Seniman tari hanya melakukan kegiatan pertunjukan berdasarkan instruksi yang diberikan oleh manajer dan mereka hanya memenuhi rasa ketertarikan mereka terhadap seni tari dan tujuan hiburan semata, tanpa mempertimbangkan aspek ekonomi yang akan mereka peroleh untuk menunjang kebutuhan hidup mereka sehari-hari. Terdapat beberapa faktor yang dapat mempengaruhi pemberdayaan seniman tari tersebut, seperti kesadaran manajer dan seniman tari dalam menghasilkan pendapatan mereka berdasarkan bakat yang dimiliki. Seniman tari juga harus mengubah pola pikir mereka dari menari untuk tujuan hiburan menjadi menari untuk tujuan ekonomi. Dengan demikian, seniman tari dapat menopang kebutuhan hidup mereka dan meningkatkan kualitas hidupnya.

Kata kunci: *Ekonomi Kreatif, Pemberdayaan, Seniman Tari Indonesia*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, the city of Solo has been known as a city of culture by presenting a number of performing arts, starting from puppet art, music (traditional and contemporary Javanese), dance, and drama. To realize the objectives of the government programs, some artists respond seriously through developing their respective artistic potentials, specifically their ability in producing creative-economy oriented arts. It means that the creative economy aims to empower artists to gain their professional awards as an effort to increase their economic level. The artists view this phenomenon as a challenge since they have to prepare themselves professionally according to the demands of today's fans.

Dance performance as one of the potential commodities and assets of Solo might be optimally integrated into several creative economic activities. Artists, either individually or in group, should have awareness embedded in a dance studio with an understanding that their skills may create professional jobs to support their financial needs. Career development in dance performance should follow the needs of customers to encourage the artists to select the performing art model that suits their tastes and market demands, such as traditional dance, contemporary, or even a combination of them. Dance performers view this market opportunities and initiate them to produce various works of art since they have a target market and financial needs to sustain their own lives. In addition, the involvement of vendors and financial supporters may develop the artists' potential to meet the needs of business markets and highly competitive global economic activities.

However, such situations have not been found in the real-life context. Bahren (2017) in Ridwan and Surya (2018) comments that art performers only demonstrate their work because of their hobbies, entertainment purposes, and dedication to the art. They do not yet have access to how their potential can be developed based on the creative economy to generate income and meet their financial needs. Consequently, from year to year, they always perform the same thing and do not improve anything on the stage. While in the global world, this talent is possibly to be well optimized to provide access to financial rewards that support global economic activities.

The involvement of managers in Surakarta also plays an important role in realizing the empowerment of artists. Some studies related to the development of potential creative economy – based artists have been done by several researchers. Tyas (2019) states that the potential of art is marketable as a financial commodity in order to support the lives of artists. They do not merely work to fulfil their arts soul, but they are free to generate income and develop their art skills. This is supported by Supriyanto (2012) who underlines the role of artists in the economic world is very crucial – they are the asset that cannot be domesticated by everyone else and should be trained to help the country's economic growth. In the study, artists are not fully aware that their skills in dancing have a higher selling power since they only follow the instructions from their managers who does not understand how to promote themselves.

Those preliminary studies unfortunately have not revealed how dance performers can maximize and explore their potential by following the creative business principles to generate income for them. Meanwhile, the studies investigating the demands of free market in dance performance are required to conduct considering several reasons: (1) the artists or dance performers will have a mindset of how their potential and skills can be transformed as a professional job even if they have to go through a dance studio; (2) the need to identify several factors that play an important role in the realization of the empowerment of artists based on the creative economy. Therefore, this study seeks to provide input on how to empower their skills to meet the demands of the creative economy so that dance will become a professional job that generates income for the artists. In addition, the results of this study become a reference for the Solo government in evaluating their program, particularly empowering the dance performers and make them as reliable resource in gaining financial rewards to support their lives well.

METHOD

This study employed descriptive qualitative method with grounded study as a research design. This is due to the aims of this study to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within natural setting. The investigated phenomenon is economy creative program in Indonesia to empower dance performers. Holistic inquiry involves collection of in-depth and detailed data which are rich in content and involve multiple sources of information including direct observation, participant observation, interviews, audio-visual material, documents, reports and physical artefacts. The multiple sources information provides the wide array of information needed to provide an in-depth picture.

Regarding the data collection done in this study, it utilized three research instruments, namely field observation, interview, and documentation. Observations were conducted several times by looking closely to the selected dance studio while the dance performers doing their works. It aims to gain the data related to the strategy and roles of the managers, dance performers, and other parties involved. Interviews aimed to support the data collected from the observations and obtain direct opinions from the dance performers and managers regarding the promotion, working procedures, and strategies in empowering the dance performers. Meanwhile, documentation analysed some documents analysed some documents related to the dance performance, including brochure, pamphlet, assessment sheets, and rundown of the program. These three research instruments were completing each other to answer the formulated research questions. The collected data were then analysed based on the principles of empowering dance performers and the theory of economy creative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Referring to the results of analysis from the three instruments, some results can be drawn in this study. Dance performers so far do not know how to optimize their talents in performing arts by orienting to the economic activities. It can be seen from the observation results revealing that the dance performance is simply started by the instructions given by the managers to the dance performers to prepare themselves for a dance performance in a particular area. The dance manager does not provide detailed information about where the performance is held, the purpose of the event, and the numbers of wages that the dance performers will receive. Considering this phenomenon, dance performers only accept the instructions and conduct them according to standard operational procedures without thinking critically and follow-up questions about the money they will get from the event. During the event, the dance performers optimally perform their dance moves and show the best performance. As the show have finished, the dance performers and managers go back to the studio and received money based on the manager's decision without any negotiation regarding the amount of money they received. The manager also does not feedback about their performances and some comments from the audiences related to their performance. This kind of managerial process is actually imbalance since the manager does not do her job professionally and the dance performers do not get their rights properly.

In the interview, the manager claimed that the number of salaries that will be received is not an important point to be delivered to the dance performers. Their main job is showing the best performance as they have trained previously and they are the only one actor on the stage – any business beyond the stage is not their responsibility. So far, the manager also admitted that the dance performers never ask the number of moneys that they will received and they are very comfortable with that. The results from the interview with the dance performers also show that they only follow the instructions given by the manager without any further questions. They do not realize that the talent they possess might generating income to support their daily lives. The dance performers acknowledged that they do not have any idea about the creative economy program as proposed by the government of Indonesia. Economy creative so far is a concept that should be carefully understood by the manager and they do not have opportunity to explore further how to participate in this program. The following statement shows the acknowledgement of the dance performers related to the economy creative:

“We do not know what economy creative is. What we know is only dance...dance...and dance. We only perform what we are supposed to perform and it does not relate to the economic things. Maybe our manager knows well about it...”

Further, the dance performers also mentioned that they only dance for the sake of fulfil their interest to the art performance and it is a part of being an artist. They never think about the strategy in improving their performance and how to earn money from their talent. When they have a financial problem, especially in supporting their daily needs, they simply ask their manager to borrow the money and pay it through the set of performances in the future. They never negotiate with the manager how to generate bigger income and promote their performance in the bigger events (national or International events) so they will get more salary from their works. The main thing that always bear in their mind is about the composition of the movements and the agendas that will be attended by them in the next several months.

This is in contrast with the principle of creative economy as stated by Romarina (2016) who claims that creative economy consists of intellectual and cultural elements which are developed through potential studies, both by the managers and actors in improving the quality of the products to be produced. From this case, the manager and dance performers work separately without any collaboration in enhancing their art skills and their income. The manager should guide the dance performers how to optimize their

talent and lead them to the bigger events in order to generate income and improve the quality of their dancing. According to Aziz (2017), the creative economy program may contribute up to 7.1% to the national GDP and able to engage 12 million workers as well as raise the country's foreign exchange earnings by 5.8% if all the parties work collaboratively to reach their goals. The creative economy program obliges creative groups to be able to explore their creative ideas and products based on intellectual power, cultural arts, technology, and the demands arise on the basis of community needs.

Moreover, there are also some factor influencing the empowerment of dance performance in contributing the creative economy program. First, both of the dance performers and manager should aware about their talent and opportunity in proposing them in bigger events. The manager should be supportive in encouraging the dance performers to generate their income by speaking honestly about the number of the salary that they will receive, the information of the events, and providing them with feedback to improve their quality in dancing. Second, the dance performers have to change their mindset from dancing for entertainment purposes to dancing for economy creative-based purposes. By doing so, they will not only dance for the sake of their own happiness, but they will get salary to support their daily needs and motivate them to perform better in the future.

CONCLUSION

Considering Solo as the city of culture, the government provides more opportunity for the citizens to contribute to the economy creative program through the number of arts, starting from music, puppet show, and dance. The program requires them to promote their best performance in some prestigious events, either nationally or Internationally, to help them generate their income. However, some facts revealed that the number of dance performers do not really understand the concept and they did not get this opportunity very well due to some reasons. First, the managers and the dance performers work separately in conducting dance performances since the manager does not provide clear information about the events that they will attend, the goals of the events, and the number of salary that the dance performers will receive from their works. Second, the dance performers do not have idea about the concept of creative economy because they only work for the sake of their interest and entertainment purposes. In order to help them contribute in this program, the manager should be supportive in providing sufficient information and knowledge to the dance performers of how to generate their income from their talents and keep improving their skills in dancing. By doing so, the dance performers will be able to live independently and support their daily needs by promoting their skills and they will be motivated in improving themselves.

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