

HOLISTIC LINGUISTICS INTEGRATION IN THE REVITALIZATION OF WARA' DANCE: INNOVATIONS FOR CREATIVE ECONOMY DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM PACKAGES IN THE TALAUD ISLANDS REGENCY

Integrasi Linguistik Holistik dalam Revitalisasi Tarian Wara': Inovasi Pengembangan Ekonomi Kreatif dan Paket Wisata di Kabupaten Kepulauan Talaud

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How to Cite: James Edward Lalira, (2025). Holistic Linguistics Integration in the Revitalization of Wara' Dance: Innovations for Creative Economy Development and Tourism Packages in the Talaud Islands Regency doi: **10.36526/js.v3i2.6125**

Received : 17-08-2025

Revised : 07-09-2025

Accepted: 08-10-2025

Keywords:

Holistic Linguistics,
Dance Revitalization,
Creative Economy,
Tourism Package,
Talaud Islands Regency

Abstract

This study explores the revitalization of Wara' dance in the Talaud Islands Regency through a holistic linguistic approach, aiming to transform it into a dynamic cultural tourism product and a driver of the local creative economy. For over three decades, Wara' dance has experienced stagnation, perceived as outdated and disconnected from contemporary audiences, leading to declining community participation and diminished economic returns. To address this, the research employs a qualitative method with holistic discourse analysis, integrating linguistic, anthropological, and cultural studies perspectives. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, participatory observation, and analysis of archival and linguistic materials in Arangkaa Village, the historical site of King Larenggam's resistance. The findings reveal that the dance's verbal elements are minimal, relying on a few ritual phrases. However, rich cultural meanings are embedded in local language, toponyms like "Arangkaa" (meaning "charcoal"), and customary utterances from rituals such as Manaroho Raho. These elements were systematically analyzed and reinterpreted to innovate choreography, costumes, music, and narrative structure. A new thematic concept, "From Resistance to Revival," was developed, enhancing the dance's storytelling capacity and emotional depth. Community participation was central, ensuring cultural authenticity and social acceptance of the changes. The study concludes that a linguistically grounded, participatory approach enables meaningful revitalization, transforming Wara' dance from a static tradition into a living, relevant art form. Furthermore, the proposed cultural tourism package demonstrates significant potential for generating sustainable income for performers and the local community, positioning the dance as a catalyst for both cultural preservation and economic empowerment in a remote island region.

INTRODUCTION

Wara' dance is an intangible cultural heritage that reflects the identity of the people of Talaud Islands Regency. As a meaningful form of artistic expression, this dance originated from historical narratives, local wisdom, and deep-rooted belief systems. However, over the past three decades, the dance has experienced clear stagnation, marked by declining community participation and disinterest

among the younger generation. This condition is exacerbated by the dominance of global culture, which is more dynamic and easily accessible through digital media. Consequently, the Wara' dance is perceived as outdated and disconnected from contemporary aesthetic sensibilities. Tourist interest has also waned as the performance no longer offers a fresh or engaging experience. However, the potential of Wara' dance as a tourism attraction remains significant if managed innovatively. Therefore, its revitalisation is not merely a cultural necessity but also an urgent economic imperative.

The declining interest in Wara' dance directly affects the local creative economy of the area. Artists who depend on traditional performances face reduced income due to infrequent shows and limited sponsorship. Art communities struggle to sustain generational continuity as youth are increasingly drawn to modern forms of entertainment. In the context of tourism, the lack of authentic and compelling cultural attractions places Talaud at a competitive disadvantage compared to other destinations in Eastern Indonesia. Limited innovation in dance presentations prevents them from meeting the expectations of contemporary tourists. This situation further deepens the region's reliance on conventional economic sectors that are vulnerable to market fluctuations. In contrast, a culture-based creative economy can be highly resilient when appropriately managed. Hence, a transformation that addresses both the core meaning and expressive form of dance is essential.

One aspect that has been largely overlooked in the revitalisation of the Wara' dance is its linguistic dimension. The language in dance extends beyond lyrics or spoken narratives; it encompasses a rich system of symbols, movements, and rhythms that form nonverbal communication. The local wisdom embedded in Talaud language, toponyms, and customary utterances holds significant potential as a foundation for dance innovation. A holistic integration of linguistic elements can open pathways for reinterpreting the dance's meaning and aesthetics without compromising its cultural significance. This approach enables transformation grounded in authentic values rather than mere modernisation driven by trends. Consequently, the Wara' dance can become more dynamic, relevant, and appealing to both youth and tourists. Such innovations also have the potential to generate unique and sustainable cultural tourism packages. Ultimately, this revitalisation would not only preserve an art form but also strengthen local identity and economic resilience of the community.

Various studies have been conducted to address the decline of traditional arts in different regions of the world. Widyastutieningrum (2024) examined the revitalisation of Mangkunegaran-style dance through an ethnochoreological approach, emphasising its performance form and social function. Yanuartuti and Winarko (2019) explored the Jatidhuwur mask dance as a means of reintroducing local cultural values. Cenabre and Galindon (2023) conducted a documentary study on the indigenous dances of the Applai tribe in the Northern Philippines, focusing on cultural education. Prima et al., (2020) analysed the revitalisation of the Tandhakan Wedok dance using anthropological and ethnographic methods. These studies highlight the importance of multidisciplinary approaches to dance preservation. However, most remain confined to aesthetic, social, and historical aspects without systematically linking linguistic elements to holistic dance transformation.

Other research, such as Sari's (2019) study on Balota dance in Solok, emphasises the cultural values embedded within the performance. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with in-depth observations and interviews. While it successfully uncovered local values, it did not engage with linguistic aspects as tools for transforming art. Hou, (2025) discussed the relationship between dance and cultural identity in the context of globalisation, focusing on the digital archiving of dance forms. This study highlights the role of technology in preservation but does not explore how linguistic meaning can be integrated into choreography. Afolaranmi (2024) viewed dance as a tool for cultural revitalisation and peacebuilding. While socially relevant, it does not focus on linguistic dimensions or the creative economy. These studies offer valuable insights but fail to address the need for language-based and locally grounded innovation.

In contrast, linguistic studies on Talaud culture have advanced, albeit independently of dance practice. J. Lalira, (2013), (2016); J. E. Lalira, (2017), (2020), (2022), (2023), (2025); J. E. Lalira et al., (2022), (2024) has published extensively on the Talaud language, covering areas such as morphophonemics, syntax, toponyms, and customary speech. His work reveals that the Talaud

language is rich in symbols and meanings that are deeply tied to the environment and traditions. Iroth and Wote (2023) and Sasioba et al. (2022) analysed Mane'e speech as a form of local wisdom in agricultural practice. Maruf and Setyawan (2025) studied syntactic functions in Manaroho Raho traditional ritual texts. However, these linguistic findings have never been applied to the development of traditional dances. Linguistic narratives can serve as a foundation for meaningful new choreography. Elements such as language rhythm, sentence structure, and cultural metaphors can be transformed into movement patterns or musical compositions. This presents a significant opportunity for innovation that remains firmly rooted in the local identity.

Several studies have demonstrated the economic potential of cultural revitalisation. Brida et al., (2020), Ren et al., (2019), and Li et al., (2018) have proven the positive relationship between cultural tourism and economic growth. Comerio and Strozzi (2019) emphasised the importance of attraction quality in drawing tourists. Putro et al., (2023) showed that introducing new dance works can strengthen festivals and tourism appeal. However, these studies tend to focus on managerial and marketing aspects rather than on the creative process of artistic transformation. None have linked linguistically based dance development to the creation of tourism packages. However, integrating cultural meaning, artistic expression, and tourist experiences can produce more authentic and high-value offerings. Therefore, a holistic approach that combines linguistics, art, and the creative economy is urgently required.

Although numerous studies on dance revitalisation exist, most focus on aesthetics, social functions, or digital archiving without delving into meaning through language. Linguistic studies on Talaud culture have progressed but have not been applied to the transformation of dance. Research on the creative economy and tourism has failed to incorporate linguistic aspects as a source of innovation. Consequently, no systematic strategy currently unites local wisdom, artistic expression, and economic value. This gap leads to superficial and unsustainable revitalisation efforts in the field. No existing approach explicitly uses holistic linguistics as the foundation for choreography. Language is central to cultural identity and can serve as a powerful tool for transformation. Therefore, research is needed to bridge the gap between linguistic studies, performance art and creative economic development.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of holistic linguistics as the foundation for revitalising Wara' dance. Unlike previous aesthetic or anthropological approaches, this study employs discourse and ethnolinguistic analyses to extract meaning from language, customary speech, and toponyms for choreographic development. Dance transformation is not intuitive but is grounded in authentic linguistic structures and symbols. This method enables a deep reinterpretation without losing cultural authenticity. Furthermore, the revitalised dance will be packaged as measurable and sustainable cultural tourism products. Such an innovation has never been implemented in traditional Indonesian dance studies. Thus, this study offers a new model that can be replicated in other regions. Its contribution is not only academic but also practical for cultural preservation and for local economic empowerment.

This study aims to develop a revitalisation strategy for the Wara' dance by integrating local wisdom through a holistic linguistic approach. The primary focus is on exploring how language structures, customary utterances, and toponyms can be transformed into innovative choreographic elements. The transformed dance will then be developed into cultural tourism packages that appeal to both domestic and international visitors. The goal is to enhance the attractiveness of the Wara' dance as both a symbol of identity and an economic asset. In doing so, performers and local communities can gain economic benefits from the performances and cultural tourism. This study also aims to create a sustainable and participatory revitalisation model. A qualitative approach with discourse analysis will be used to ensure depth of meaning and cultural authenticity of the data. Overall, this study seeks to demonstrate that linguistics is not merely a theoretical discipline but an effective tool for social and economic transformation.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach centred on holistic discourse analysis in linguistics, aiming to uncover the deep cultural meanings and values embedded within the Wara' dance tradition in

the Talaud Islands Regency, Indonesia. The research design is interactive and exploratory, enabling the researcher to capture the social, historical, and linguistic complexities inherent to dance. Fieldwork was conducted in Arangkaa Village, Gemeh District, which is recognised as the historical site of King Larenggam's resistance against Dutch colonial forces on 23 July 1893. This location was deliberately chosen for its profound historical and cultural significance, offering an authentic context for understanding the origins and evolution of the dance. This methodological approach facilitates an in-depth examination of the interconnections between historical events, artistic expression, and local community identity. Data were gathered using a complementary combination of methods, including observation, interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and document analysis. The diversity of these methods ensures rich and nuanced data, aligning with the methodological standards of high-quality qualitative research in reputable journals. The design was systematically structured to ensure the validity and meaningfulness of the research findings.

The research population included Wara' dance performers, customary leaders, local community members, and local governance stakeholders involved in cultural preservation. A purposive sample of 15 dancers was selected to represent both older and younger generations, allowing for intergenerational perspectives on the meaning and development of the dance. Cultural elders and practitioners were chosen based on their expertise and direct involvement in traditional rituals and performance practices. This sampling technique ensured the inclusion of key informants who actively contributed to the transmission of cultural knowledge. Local community participation is emphasised through a participatory approach, positioning community members not merely as research subjects but as collaborative partners in the recovery of cultural knowledge. The selection process was conducted transparently and documented thoroughly to uphold the ethical principles of research. The diverse backgrounds of the informants provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics, challenges, and opportunities of cultural preservation. This strategy supports the creation of a revitalisation model that is inclusive and sustainable.

Data were collected using four primary methods: in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), participatory observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with dancers and customary leaders to explore their personal experiences, historical narratives, and interpretations of the cultural values conveyed through the dance. FGDs engaged multiple stakeholders, including village officials and cultural practitioners, to identify the challenges and opportunities in developing the dance as a cultural product. Participatory observation was conducted during rehearsals and performances, enabling the researcher to directly observe the movement dynamics, performer interactions, and performance contexts. Secondary data were gathered from colonial archives, local literature, and cultural documentation to strengthen the historical framework. A discourse corpus was constructed from song lyrics, oral narratives, toponyms, and customary utterances, serving as the foundation for in-depth linguistic analysis. All data were collected ethically, with written consent and strict adherence to the principles of local wisdom and cultural sensitivity. This process was designed to foster trust, transparency, and mutual respect between researchers and the community.

Data analysis was conducted in four stages: linguistic, contextual, meaning interpretation, and creative economic assessment. Linguistic analysis examined language structures, vocabulary, and phrases from a cultural data bank to identify symbolic patterns and local values within the dance narrative. The contextual analysis explored the socio-historical and cultural factors influencing the dance's transformation and decline. Meaning interpretation involves synthesising data to generate innovative dance elements, such as movements, costumes, musical accompaniment, and performance themes, that authentically reflect local wisdom. This interpretive process spanned one full week and involved a multidisciplinary research team to ensure analytical rigor and depth of the analysis. Insights from the first three stages informed the creative economic analysis, which was led by an economist within the research team. The final stage assessed the dance's potential as a tourism attraction and designed measurable, sustainable cultural tourism packages. Marketing strategies and skills training programs were developed to economically empower the performers. This holistic approach ensures that

dance revitalisation preserves cultural heritage and generates tangible socio-economic benefits for the community.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

A. Linguistic and Contextual Findings in Wara' Dance

An analysis of verbal narratives within the Wara' dance reveals that the use of language is highly limited and primarily ritualised. Phrases such as "Addatta su marambe, imbe su sambaendatu" are recited as dancers assume a combat-ready stance, accompanied by intense war-like movements. This expression functions as both a gesture of respect and a warning for arriving guests. Subsequently, the command "mangapi u pasiare, sangkawirru" is declared to clear the path for visitors. However, the linguistic structure within the performance remains static, with minimal variation and no interactive dialogue between dancers. This finding indicates that dance emphasises physical expression over verbal communication. There is significant potential for development through the introduction of collective dialogue to strengthen the depth of the narrative. For instance, words like "porro" (to sever) and "dissa" (to strike) could be incorporated as synchronised shouts to intensify the performance's atmosphere.

Within the domain of culturally significant vocabulary, several phrases reflecting the heroic spirit of the Talaud people have been identified, such as the powerful oral narrative "We would rather become dust than submit to the white-skinned people", which originated from the resistance event in Arangkaa. This statement is not merely rhetorical but a profound expression of dignity and defiance toward the colonialist. Its integration into dance can provide a deeper emotional experience for the audience. Another phrase, "Better to become charcoal in our own land than be colonized by the Dutch", underscores the community's deep connection to their ancestral land. Both expressions embody the values of courage, resilience, and love for one's country. Incorporating these phrases into the dance's narrative can enrich its historical content and allow the performance to serve as a medium for cultural education.

The toponym of Arangkaa Village is a key finding in understanding the foundational meaning of the dance. The name Arangkaa, meaning "charcoal" or "ash", is not merely a geographical designation but a powerful symbol of resistance to colonialism. The community's choice to become ash on their own soil rather than live under colonisation gives the name profound significance. This toponym serves as a strong narrative foundation, where every element of the dance can be linked to the place's symbolic significance. In terms of performance, toponyms can be used as an opening narrative to provide historical context. For example, an introductory narration could explain the origin of the name and its connection to Larenggam's resistance to colonialism. Utilising toponymy in dance opens opportunities to deepen symbolic meaning and reinforces the interconnectedness between culture, space and community identity.

The customary utterances from the Manaroho Raho ceremony are rich in metaphors that can be transformed into choreography. One example is the expression of humility by the host when welcoming guests, which can be embodied through gentle movements. The metaphor "cracked earth" was interpreted as rhythmic foot-stomping, symbolising social tension and external threats. The metaphor of the "unextinguished fire" became the basis for intense, repetitive hand movements, representing an enduring spirit of resistance even under pressure. These findings indicate that customary speech is not merely a communicative tool but a rich symbolic system. The potential to transform verbal expressions into physical movements opens pathways for authentic and meaningful choreography innovation.

B. Dance Reconstruction and Social Dynamics of Performers

The historical narrative of King Larenggam's resistance forms the basis for developing new dance scenes. Interviews with traditional elders revealed that King Larenggam was summoned three times to board a Dutch ship but refused to do so each time. This act of refusal has never been explicitly portrayed in the performance, despite being central to the dance history. In the proposed choreography, the three refusals are represented in three distinct movement stages: first, a vigilant stance; second, a

backward step with a rejecting hand gesture; and third, an upright posture with a raised sword. This sequence is the climax of the performance, demonstrating the community's unwavering resolve to survive. Reviving this historical narrative makes the dance more meaningful and educational, reinforcing its role as a medium for preserving collective memory.

The role of Wara' dance in community identity is profoundly significant and inherently communal in nature. The community perceives the dance not merely as entertainment but as a ritual that connects them to their ancestors. Several informants noted that many villagers died during the resistance, and the dance serves as a tribute to their sacrifice. In the modern context, dance remains a unifying tool during traditional celebrations and important guest visits. The community feels a deep sense of pride when the dance is performed, viewing it as proof of its continued survival. The spirit of "we are still here, we still stand" is palpable in every performance. The dance has become a symbol of cultural resilience in the face of globalisation. The community's emotional attachment to the dance form is the foundation for legitimising revitalisation.

The social dynamics within the dance community reveal a clear leadership pattern. A kakian (dance leader) serves as the central figure responsible for coordinating, transmitting knowledge, and training dancers. Knowledge is passed down orally and through direct practice, without formal written documentation. The older generation remains the primary reference for preserving authentic dance. However, tensions exist between older and younger performers regarding innovation. The younger generation desires a more dynamic and engaging performance for contemporary audiences, whereas the elders emphasise maintaining the original form as an act of respect to the art. Despite these differences, both groups agree that the dance form must remain alive and relevant to the community.

Relationships among performers are built through regular rehearsals and shared beliefs in the values represented by dance. The rehearsal process functions as a social space that strengthens these bonds. Synchronised dance movements reflect solidarity and unity within a group. There is no competition among performers, only harmonious collaboration. Trust in the kakian is the primary factor in maintaining group cohesiveness. Intergenerational discussions frequently occur to find common ground in dance development. Although differing viewpoints exist, open communication enables a healthy adaptation process to take place. This community exemplifies a living model of cultural transmission that is dynamic and responsive to changes.

C. Dance Innovation, Community Participation, and Economic Potential

The reconstruction of dance elements has yielded innovative proposals deeply rooted in local wisdom. The word "porro" (to sever) is embodied in a swift sword-slashing movement, followed by a dominant stance of the performer. The concept of "refusing to bow down" is represented through an upright posture, a head held high, and firm and deliberate steps. The resistance scene is divided into three acts: threat, refusal, and symbolic victory. Each act features distinct movement patterns and rhythms, making the performance narrative-driven and engaging. The new choreography was designed to be more accessible to contemporary audiences. This innovation does not erase the essence of dance but clarifies its narrative. Such a transformation addresses the need for performance that is relevant and authentic. The dancers expressed enthusiasm for these proposals, noting that dance felt more meaningful.

In terms of costumes, deviations from the original symbolism were identified, such as the use of pink, a colour not representative of bravery. Based on the FGD input, more appropriate colours are blood red and black, symbolising courage and mourning. Accessories such as seashells, whale teeth, wild boar tusks, and feathers of the sampiri bird, a native Talaud species, were proposed as alternatives. These items carry symbolic meanings in local beliefs and enhance the visual presentation. Integrating traditional accessories also increases the dance's aesthetic and cultural authenticity. Regarding music, the current monotonous rhythm is proposed to be replaced by dynamic patterns. The rhythm is adjusted to match the narrative: slow for threats, fast for conflict, and steady for closure. These changes make the performance more dramatic and emotionally engaging for the audience to watch.

The performance theme is proposed to shift from mere welcoming to an epic narrative titled "From Resistance to Revival." This theme illustrates the community's journey from the colonial era to the modern age. Messages of cultural resilience and economic empowerment are the core of this new narrative. This proposal is supported by a transformation map comparing the old and new dance elements, including movements, costumes, music, and storylines. This map serves as a guide for dancers to understand and accept the proposed changes. The majority of FGD participants responded positively, with comments such as "more interesting to watch." A consensus was reached that innovation should be evolutionary and respectful of the dance's core meaning.

Feedback from local authorities indicates their readiness to support the dance as a tourism product. The village and district heads expressed the availability of initial funding from village funds for training and promotion purposes. They recommended conducting performances at least twice a month and promoting them on social media. FGD participants suggested constructing a semi-permanent stage at the historical site of Arangkaa. Collaboration with local tourism stakeholders is essential. Market opportunities exist for cultural tourists from North Sulawesi and overseas. The main barriers are limited infrastructure and restricted transportation facilities. The proposed solutions are participatory and community-based.

Economic simulation indicates revenue potential from the "Wara' Tour + Local Culture" package. Priced at IDR 150,000 per person, the package included a dance performance, an educational session, and a traditional accessory-making activity. With two performances per month and an average of 50 visitors per session, the monthly income could reach IDR 15 million. This figure is significantly higher than the sporadic earnings dancers currently receive. Funds would be distributed equally, with a portion allocated for development. The interviews revealed the dancers' willingness to undergo training for the new choreography. Many expressed interest in becoming cultural tour guides and narrating history in person. They are also open to digital marketing training opportunities. These findings indicate that dancers are prepared to become independent actors in the creative economy.

Discussion

A. Holistic Linguistics as the Foundation for Cultural Revitalization

The finding regarding the limited use of language in Wara' dance opens a profound space for reflection on the relationship between verbal expression and cultural performances. The dance's heavy reliance on physical expression without strong verbal narratives reveals a gap in meaning transmission for contemporary audiences. In today's global context, where viewers expect clear and accessible storytelling, dance relying solely on movement without dialogue risks being perceived as ambiguous. Therefore, developing a collective dialogue based on local vocabulary, such as "porro" and "dissa" is not merely an aesthetic innovation but a communicative necessity. Integrating lexicons imbued with resistance can strengthen the dance's dramaturgical depth, making it more relatable to younger generations. This approach aligns with the principles of holistic linguistics, which views language as a meaning system that is deeply intertwined with culture. Thus, revitalisation does not just renew the form; it deepens the content. This transformation demonstrates that traditional dance can become an effective communication medium when it is consciously developed and grounded in cultural data.

The use of heroic phrases such as "We would rather become dust" carries symbolic implications far beyond their verbal function. These expressions are not merely emotional utterances but collective identity statements rooted in the historical experiences of the Talaud people. When integrated into performance, they serve as a bridge between the past and present, and between ancestors and descendants. This discussion reveals that dance is not only an art form but also a living archive of collective memory. Selecting authentic phrases can evoke local empathy and pride, elements often missing in dances focused solely on movement. By incorporating genuine oral narratives, the performance transcends mere entertainment to become a cultural guide. This process illustrates how linguistics can serve as a bridge between heritage and the contemporary. Successful revitalisation lies in preserving core meanings while presenting them in relevant and accessible ways.

The toponym of Arangkaa Village is not merely a geographical label, but a powerful cultural metaphor. This discussion shows that place is not just a backdrop but a central actor in the cultural narrative. Using toponymy as a narrative foundation allows dance to become a vivid and emotionally resonant medium for historical education. In cultural preservation, this method is more effective than verbal storytelling alone. When audiences understand that a place's name reflects resistance to colonisation, they do not merely see movements; they witness a philosophy of life. This aligns with the cultural concept of a sense of place, where identity is shaped by human-space relationships. Integrating toponymy into the dance structure demonstrates that revitalisation must be contextual, not decontextualised, and that the dance is a living tradition. This proves that authentic cultural innovation must grow from local roots and not be imported from outside.

Metaphors in customary speech, such as “cracked earth” and “unextinguished fire”, reveal that local language is not just a communication tool but a complex symbolic system. This finding indicates that the Talaud community has long used language for artistic expression. Transforming metaphors into movement is not destruction but a meaningful reinterpretation. Stomping the ground is not merely choreography; it embodies social tension once conveyed through speech. This approach shows that dance revitalisation need not be invented from scratch but can reactivate existing symbolic systems. This reflects the structured local wisdom that is ready for transmission. Thus, dance is a living, dynamic medium rooted in the community's cosmology. This discussion affirms that the strength of traditional dance lies in its ability to convey cultural complexity through profound, nonverbal forms.

The use of holistic linguistics in Wara' dance revitalisation shows that a multidisciplinary approach is essential. Without linguistic, toponymic, and customary speech analyses, dance innovation risks becoming superficial and meaningless. This discussion reveals that linguistics is not separate from art but is at its core of cultural expression. When language, movement, and place are systematically integrated, the result is a dance that is complete and meaningful. This approach challenges the assumption that traditional dance must remain static to be considered authentic. Instead, authenticity lies in fidelity to values, not in form. Revitalisation based on holistic linguistics strengthens authenticity by drawing meaning from the source. This model can be replicated for other traditional Indonesian art forms. Thus, this study not only addresses a local issue but also offers a broader theoretical framework.

B. Social Dynamics and Relevance of Dance in the Modern Context

The finding that King Larenggam's resistance narrative has never been explicitly portrayed in dance reveals a gap between history and artistic expression. This discussion shows that many traditional dances lose relevance by failing to retell history in a lively, engaging way. Representing the three refusals as a choreographic sequence is not mere dramatisation; it is the recovery of forgotten memory. Reviving this narrative allows dance to function as a medium for reconstructing collective identity. This is crucial in societies that are vulnerable to global cultural influences. When youth witness this scene, they do not just see dance; they see ancestral resilience. This process strengthens the sense of belonging and self-worth within the Talaud community. Thus, revitalisation is not merely about art but about cultural resilience. This approach shows that dance can be an effective tool in cultural pedagogy.

The role of Wara' dance as a symbol of unity and ancestral honour shows that traditional art has deep social functions. This discussion confirms that dance is not just a cultural product but a unifying process that transcends boundaries. When the community expresses pride and declares that “we still stand”, they renew their social contract with their ancestors. The dance becomes a ritual space where collective identity is reinforced by active participation. In the modern context marked by increasing social fragmentation, this function is vital. Revitalising dance is not just about preserving form; it strengthens social networks that are beginning to fray. When the dance is performed, the community does not just dance—they gather, converse, and remember together. This is a tangible and measurable form of social capital. Thus, dance becomes an empowerment tool that extends beyond the economic sector of the society.

The clear leadership structure, with the kakian as the leader, shows that the dance community has a strong internal system. This discussion reveals that cultural preservation cannot be externally imposed and must be community-driven. The kakian's role as a guardian of authenticity and training

coordinator reflects a sustainable model of knowledge transmission. The tension between the older and younger generations is not a weakness but a sign of healthy dynamism. Conflicts over innovation open up essential spaces for dialogue and adaptation. This discussion shows that successful revitalisation must accommodate generational differences and not suppress them. Consensus reached through dialogue represents a genuine cultural democracy. This model demonstrates that cultural transformation must be participatory and not authoritarian.

The relationships among dancers, built through regular rehearsals, show that dance is a social practice and not just a performance. This discussion reveals that the greatest value of dance lies in the process and not the final product. Rehearsals are spaces for character building, cooperation, and solidarity. Synchronised movements are not just about aesthetics; they symbolise the unity being cultivated. In the context of the creative economy, this aspect is often overlooked; however, the social capital formed during rehearsals is the primary foundation for sustainability. When dancers trust each other, they are better prepared to face change and challenges. Thus, revitalisation focused only on performance, without attention to the process, is fragile. This discussion emphasises that cultural preservation must consider relational and psychosocial dimensions. A living dance is born from a cohesive community.

The finding of intergenerational tension is a bright spot in the revitalisation process. This discussion shows that conflict is not a threat but an opportunity for growth and development. The younger generation's desire for a more dynamic dance does not reject tradition but wishes for relevance. The older generation's insistence on preserving the original form is not conservatism but a commitment to value. Dialogue between them becomes a bridge that enables sustainable transformation. The evolutionary approach agreed upon in the FGDs reflects the community's maturity in managing change. This is a real example of a living culture, where tradition is not buried in the past but is revived in the present. This discussion shows that successful revitalisation depends on a community's ability to negotiate change. Thus, the Wara' dance is not just a heritage; it is also a laboratory for cultural democracy.

C. Dance Innovation as a Driver of Creative Economy and Tourism

Reconstructing choreography based on linguistics and history shows that cultural innovation must be rooted in local values rather than global trends. This challenges the assumption that traditional dance must be "Westernized" or excessively commercialised to attract tourists. In contrast, what makes dance compelling is its authenticity, provided it is presented in a narrative and accessible way. The three-act structure (threat, refusal, and victory) demonstrates how modern dramaturgy can be integrated without sacrificing local meaning. This approach shows that traditional dance can become a competitive cultural product when it is professionally packaged. Thus, revitalisation is not just preservation; it is also a cultural marketing strategy. A meaningful and well-structured dance is easier to promote to domestic and international tourists. This proves that authenticity and professionalism are not mutually exclusive concepts.

Changes in costumes and the use of traditional accessories reveal that aesthetic choices directly impact audience perception. This discussion shows that colour and visual symbols are powerful non-verbal languages. The use of meaningless pink indicates a degradation of symbolism, while blood red and black restore heroic dimensions. Accessories such as whale teeth and sampiri bird feathers are not mere decorations; they are meaningful visual identities. Enhancing visual presentation makes dance more aesthetically engaging without losing authenticity. This is a wise form of innovation: renewing the form while remaining faithful to the meaning. In tourism, strong visual appeal is crucial for audience engagement and virality on social media. This discussion shows that small details in costumes can significantly impact the dance's attractiveness.

The theme "From Resistance to Revival" shows that dance can be a medium for a grand narrative of community transformation. This discussion reveals that the theme not only strengthens historical depth but also opens up space for contemporary messages about empowerment and economic revival. By linking the past and the future, dance becomes an inspirational tool, not just nostalgia. This theme also makes it easier to package the dance as a structured cultural tourism product. Tourists do

not just watch; they follow an emotional and historical journey. This enhances the experience value of performance. This discussion shows that a strong narrative is key to transforming dance from a simple attraction to a cultural destination. Thus, dance becomes not an accessory but the centrepiece of the local tourism.

Support from local authorities shows that cultural revitalisation can be a part of regional development. This discussion reveals that the readiness of village and district leaders to provide funding and infrastructure indicates that culture is recognised as an economic asset. Building a semi-permanent stage at a historical site is a strategic investment that combines historical value with economic function. Collaboration with local tourism actors also demonstrates potential cross-sector synergies. However, this discussion also reminds us that institutional support must be sustained and not short-term. The government must view dance not as seasonal entertainment but as a long-term strategic asset. Thus, successful revitalisation depends not only on the community but also on supportive policies.

The economic potential of the "Wara' Tour + Local Culture" package's economic potential shows that cultural preservation and economic improvement are not separate goals. This discussion reveals that income simulations demonstrate that dance can become a real livelihood for performers. The dancers' readiness to become cultural tour guides is a strong indicator that they are prepared to shift from being passive artists to active economic actors. Training in digital marketing and performance management is crucial for ensuring sustainability. Thus, dance revitalisation is not just about art; it is about economic justice and empowerment. This discussion affirms that culture-based creative economies can be a solution for marginalised regions. Wara' dance is not just a heritage it is also a pathway to economic independence and the revival of local identity.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully demonstrates that the integration of holistic linguistics is key to the sustainable and meaningful revitalisation of the Wara' dance. This approach, which combines the analysis of language, toponymy, and customary speech, effectively uncovers profound meanings that were previously hidden within the dance's expression. The findings indicate that innovation does not require altering the essence but rather involves representing local values in a more narrative and relevant manner for contemporary generations. The proposed transformation of choreography, costumes, and performance themes is rooted in cultural foundations, thus preserving authenticity while enhancing its appeal. Community involvement through FGDs and the active participation of performers ensure that the revitalisation process is inclusive and recognised by the community. Consequently, the Wara' dance is not merely restored as an art form but is reinvigorated as a dynamic symbol of identity. This outcome confirms that local wisdom serves as a powerful source of innovation when systematically managed.

The revitalisation of the Wara' dance also proves to have significant potential for developing the local creative economy and tourism. The proposed cultural tourism package based on dance opens real opportunities for performers to achieve sustainable income. The community's readiness and the support of local stakeholders reflect social maturity in accepting culturally grounded change. The model developed in this study not only addresses the stagnation of the art form but also offers an economic solution that benefits the local population. A dance that was once performed sporadically can now become a structured and professional cultural attraction. With a holistic approach that unites linguistics, culture, and economics, this study makes a tangible contribution to the preservation of cultural heritage in island communities. This effort serves as a concrete example of how traditional art can drive self-reliance and revive local identity.

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