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# Development Strategy of Gedruk Dance in Kuda Kepang Art in Kisaran, Sumatera Utara

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## Abstract

Gedruk dance is one of the traditional Javanese performing arts that accentuates the dancers' stomping. The term Gedruk comes from the word "Gedroek" which means stomping the feet. The dancers' stomping in the show is heard clinking and creates a lively and festive atmosphere. In Kisaran, Gedruk performances are interested in by Javanese and other tribes. Gedruk performance is accompanied by a set of musical instruments consisting of drums, *saron*, *demung*, *bonang*, *kenong*, *angklung*, *selompret* and *gong*. The Gedruk dance is performed at the same time as the kuda kepong show. This art is displayed at family celebrations, circumcisions, weddings and other celebrations. This study identifies strategies to develop Gedruk Dance in kuda kepong show in Kisaran, Sumatera Utara. The ways to develop it which are packaged as attractive as possible, then socialized and introduced to the wider community. This research uses qualitative research methods, data collection uses snowball sampling technique by conducting observations, interviews, and documentation. In data analysis, this study was guided by the data analysis techniques by Spreadly (1997), namely domain analysis, observation analysis and taxonomic analysis. The excitement of clinking the feet of the dancers and performing simultaneous and regular movements with various *buto* masks makes the audience amazed and fascinated. Through research, it is known how to develop the art of the Gedruk dance so that it is interested by Javanese people in Kisaran.

*Keywords:* gedruk; strategy; development; art.

## 1. Introduction

The people of Sumatera Utara are a plural society consisting of various ethnic groups. One of the ethnic groups in this area is Javanese. One of the Javanese arts is *kuda kepong* or *jathilan*. The show contains artistic and magical elements that present spirits characterized by the drunkenness (trance) of the dancers so that they become the main attraction in each of their attractions. Umar Kayam (1981: 59) explains that traditional art is part of the culture of traditional society which contains traits and characteristics that are limited to the environment of one culture. Furthermore, Mohammad Said (1994) said that plantation communities generally come from Java. They come to various plantation areas in Sumatera Utara to bring their culture and customs.

In an effort to develop the *kuda kepong*, the gedruk dance is featured in the show. Gedruk art does not appear independently, but becomes a part of the *kuda kepong* show. According to Anggun (2018: 1) that the art of gedruk originated from Magelang, Central Java, which is known as *Rampak Gedruk Buto*. Furthermore, it spread to various other areas.

Gedruk dance is performed after the *kuda kepong* or *jathil* dancer who dances with the property of a horse has finished dancing as the opening dance. Followed by the gedruk dance, which later the gedruk dancers and the Japanese horse can complement each other when performing attractions or jokes.

The continuity of the life of the gedruk dance in the art of *kuda kepong* in Kisaran, Sumatera Utara, is supported by the community. It can be seen that there are art groups that are still holding performances because the Javanese people respond or are invited to fill various thanksgiving events, circumcisions, weddings, and other events. For this sustainability, of course, need procedures to continue, manage, foster and develop it. This art of kuda kepong has been around for a long time in Sumatera Utara. Edi Sedyawati (1984: 64) Explains that in plantation areas, workers with Javanese cultural backgrounds still maintain the traditions of their areas of origin, including performing art performances. Furthermore, Minarto (2007: 7) explains that jaran kepong (kudang kepong) has three functions in society, namely, rituals, popular exhibitions or festivals, and entertainment or entertainment for mere inner satisfaction.

Where this art and culture originated from *Sunan Kalijaga*, which is in ancient times, *Sunan Kalijaga* brought Islamic religion through cultural arts that existed in Java, so that at that time there was a long dry period for several years they asked the rain to fall. *Sunan Kalijaga* went around the village playing the *kuda kepong* art and at the same time spread the religion of Islam by reciting *sholawat* of the prophet-so that at that time the *kuda kepong* art was played, so the rain fell. ( Thomas Hendriko. 2019. Kuda Kepang: A Case Report of Javanese Culture-Related to trance in Medan, *Journal of Medical Sciences*).

Javanese people in Kisaran develop art from generation to generation from generation to generation. Developing in this hereditary manner is still able to support the existence and continuity of Javanese arts. Apart from lowering it, it also develops by adding other artistic elements to the performance. One of them is the gedruk dance art which is added to the art of *kuda kepang*, so that the art is more varied and adds to the appeal to watch. Apart from the city of Kisaran and Asahan Regency, it also has the Japanese horse art but does not add to the gedruk dance element in it. Javanese artists in Kisaran added gedruk dance to kuda kepang art and developed it. This is quite interesting to be a material for study, so that the reasons for choosing it are known.

The performance of the gedruk dance in the art of kuda kepang, which is equipped with dancers wearing special clothes, rattles on the feet and wearing a *buto* (giant) mask, which has a sinister character, is a spectacle that is in demand by Javanese and other ethnic groups in Kisaran. This art originated in Central Java and has spread or been brought to Sumatera Utara. In particular the area of this art range was developing and its performances were in demand. The anger and agility of *buto* (the giant) played by the dancers must be portrayed in front of the audience.

Seeing the gedruk dance in the kuda kepang performance being accepted and in demand among the Javanese and other general public in Kisaran, it is necessary to see how artists develop it and strategies to face competition with other entertainment arts. Paying attention to public tastes is an important thing so that traditional arts are still in demand. This is an effort to maintain the existence of traditional arts in the midst of global life. Kayam (1981: 5) Art is one of the elements that support culture, thus art must be understood in the situation of the community who enjoys it.

In the course of an art performance, the quality of the players and the selection of the characters played will contribute to making the show liked by the public. So that artists must see the development of trend attractions that are currently popular with the community. To achieve the success of a Gedruk dance performance, there are several elements that must be considered, namely the performance material, aesthetics, the music that is played. Apart from that, managing members and getting to know the situation of the community at the venue for the performance to be held so that how to develop the Gedruk art can be successful.

The love for maintaining the arts or culture of the ancestors, among others, is carried out with a kinship system, this makes commercial value alone does not occur. They formed an art group not only because of the rewards they would receive, but rather to love and help others who needed art in a family celebration event for the Javanese people. Even so, efforts to develop art to be known and attractive to the Javanese people in particular and the general public are still being pursued. Seeing this condition, a strategy to develop art is very necessary in order to fulfill the interests of society and art groups can survive and increase artistic and economic values. From this description, it will be seen the strategy to develop the Gedruk dance in the art of kuda kepang that is displayed in the middle of the Javanese community in Kisaran, Sumatera Utara.

## 2. Method

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach. Data collection comes from primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data obtained through interviews and observations with the aim of gathering information about the art of Gedruk. Spradley (1997) argues that qualitative research is more appropriate to use in cultural / behavioral research in social situations, namely efforts to reveal the behavior and actions of people in various social situations in society. Collecting data using snowball sampling technique by making observations, interviews, and documentation.

This research will also be equipped with a camera and recording device to avoid misinterpretation and document the implementation of research in the field. The selection of informants was based on the informants' knowledge of the socio-cultural development of the local community, artists, existing art groups Gedruk, and players. Secondary data, such as a description of the areas in Kisaran, Sumatera Utara, the activities of the artists, and group activities, are obtained from government agencies and other art groups.

Perform domain analysis, namely determining between parts and parts with a whole such as how the basis for the performance and how it is developed. In addition, a focused observation analysis will be carried out to identify efforts to find strategies to develop gedruk art and the situation of its supporting communities that occur in the research area. Then, taxonomic analysis is looking for relationships between components and component analysis, finding related components of the social situation under study.

## 3. Result and Discussion

Kisaran is the capital of Asahan District which is located in North Sumatra Province. Kisaran consists of two Districts: Kota Kisaran Barat and Kota Kisaran Timur which consists of twenty seven sub-district and an area of 3,732  $km^2$ . The tribe that is in Kisaran. The ethnic groups that inhabit the area include the Malays, Batak, Javanese, Minangkabau, Aceh, Chinese and others.

The diversity of arts is found in Kisaran, each ethnic group living their ethnic arts, including Javanese art, one of which is the gedruk dance which is featured in the kuda kepang show. This gedruk dance has been performed colossally, a combination of several kuda kepang groups in Asahan District in 2019. At the event, the arts and culture of each ethnic group were held at the 4<sup>th</sup> PSBD of Asahan District.

From this, it can be seen that traditional arts are active in the area. The government and local artists jointly promote and maintain the life or sustainability of traditional arts. At that time, there were fourteen ethnic arts that were displayed, namely: Malay Ethnic, Pak-Pak Ethnic, Karo Ethnic, Toba Batak Ethnic, Simalungun Ethnic, Javanese Ethnic, Nias Ethnic, Acehese Ethnic, Tabagsel Ethnic, Minangkabau Ethnic, Banjar Ethnic, Sundanese Ethnic, Chinese and Indians. Advancing all ethnicities is useful so that the crisis of identity against the younger generation can be overcome. The next generation knows and wants to preserve the traditional arts of the community.

In general, in Sumatera Utara, the art of kuda kepeng performance displays a dance where the dancer is riding a horse like a horse warrior and in the show there is an element of trance called *mabok* (trance) so that it can perform attractions outside of the usual habits such as eating glass, rice, flowers, coals and others. In Kisaran there are about forty horse groups that have Gedruk dance in their performance.

Trances of them still exist particularly on Bali and in the culturally kindred Eastern part of the Island of Java (T. Darmadji. *Kude Kepang- A Javanese Tranceplay*. SAGE Journal). The life of the arts is because the Javanese people feel the importance of continuing the cultural culture of their ancestors. To continue this art, it is necessary to create an atmosphere of novelty or variety so that people are more happy to enjoy it. Because the art of kuda kepeng is used as an entertaining performance at a salvation event held or invited by a family, especially those with Javanese ethnicity.

The gedruk dance originally originated from the city of Magelang and expanded to a number of areas in Central Java such as Yogyakarta and Semarang. In its place of origin it is called the Rampak Gedruk Buto dance. Rampak is interpreted in unison: gedruk means pounding, buto is a giant. It is called the Rampak Gedruk Buto dance, which means that the dance depicts the simultaneous movement of the dancer's footsteps which depicts the anger of the giant or buto. However, in Kisaran it is called the Gedruk dance. Gedruk dance which uses a Buto mask.

Previously, the Japanese horse art performed without the Gedruk dance, collaborated with the Gedruk and Kuda Kepang dance starting in Kisaran around 2015. The group led by Mr. Poniran started combining Kuda Kepang with Gedruk Dance. This happened when he returned to Java, namely to Central Java, he watched the Gedruk dance. The idea arose to collaborate the Gedruk dance into the art of kuda kepeng. This is done to create a new passion or other atmosphere from the Braided Horse show. Starting with only two buto masks and two sets of Gedruk dance clothes. The performance of the Gedruk dance in the show won much praise and support from the audience. Every order to perform the kuda kepeng is always asked for a gedruk dance which they call the Gedrukan. Starting from this, the Gedruk dance was developed and in demand.

Indirectly there has been the development of the Gedruk dance in the kuda kepeng show. Likewise, the development of kuda kepeng has occurred by adding elements of the Gedruk dance. Why should Gedruk dance be played in the kuda kepeng show? Kuda Kepang prioritizes the element of trance in the show. Gedruk dancers prioritize the elements of excitement and eeriness of the masks they wear. By combining these two things, it is able to make the audience fascinated and cheer in the gore and courage of the dancers by stomping the jingling of their feet. The audience seemed bewitched in awe.

The order for the kuda kepeng show, which includes the Gedruk dance, is generally Javanese. Orderers usually invite performances at circumcision events, weddings, thanksgiving, commemoration of Indonesian Independence Day, and other events. Orderers invite Gedruk performances to enliven events that have a celebration. The customer always tells the leader of the kuda kepeng group to perform the Gedruk dance in his performance. So it is not the usual kuda kepeng show where there is no Gedruk dance in it. Orders for the show came from the people of Kisaran, a suburb as well as outside Kisaran and outside Asahan District. Performances were mostly invited from regions with Javanese ethnicity. The performance is highly anticipated by the community, besides being entertainment, the event can bring them together to stay in touch. The presence of public performances becomes joyful or joyful because the atmosphere is crowded with the jingling excitement of the Gedruk dancers stomping their feet, plus the creepiness of the buto mask that is worn can fascinate the public. Not making it a scary thing, it just makes it the thing he has been waiting for.

Gedruk shows can be done day or night. The village atmosphere which is quiet becomes crowded and festive with the show. The lively atmosphere became even more festive with the arrival of drink and food sellers at the venue.

### 3.1. The Show Equipment

Performance equipment consists of a set of gamelan instruments consisting of kendang, saron, demung, kenong, bonang, and gong. The dancers wear special clothes coupled with horses and buto masks. Offerings or offerings in the form of flowers and drinks are provided before the show.

Kendang in the music game plays the role of controlling the rhythm, controlling the speed, starting and inviting the rhythm to stop. The Kendang used in the show is always characterized by the Gambuh (handler) every *Kliwon Friday night*, by being treated with the aroma of burnt incense. This meant respect and served as a link so that the spirits would continue to join Gambuh. Kendang is considered the place or home of spirits. The kendang in the show can be a medium for the coming and going of spirits. Currently, Kendang is not routinely required like that, although in performances Kendang is still used as a medium where spirits come and go by burning incense near them. This is because it is only during the show that the spirits are brought in. After the performance at Kendang there are no more spirits. Spirits are released freely wherever they want. Furthermore, Heristina (2018):

explains that the meaning of Javanese art performances that are displayed has begun to shift or change its meaning.

Saron, Demung, Bonang are musical instruments that carry a melody, while Gong is a colotomic musical instrument which is a barrier or rhythm amplifier. Bonang musical instrument is a round shape that is smaller than a gong and has a *pencu* (protrusion) that is placed or arranged on a wooden shelf. Sound it with a bat made of wood.

Supporting equipment for horse-braided dancers is a horse made of woven bamboo skin that resembles a horse, used as a dancing property. In the show the dancer is ridden like a soldier on a horse.

Gedruk dancer's equipment is a mask whose name is the Buto mask which is taken from the name of the giant buto. The Gedruk dancers in the show wear costumes consisting of clothes, *sayak*, *sampur*, and *kerincing* from masks. There are different shapes and colours for the masks. There are nine buto masks owned by the Mawar Sari group. The masks that vary in colour and shape are not named individually, but overall the masks used are named Buto masks. The Buto mask has an evil, sinister and cruel character.

In the performance of Gedruk in kuda kepeng, the group in Kisaran did not present a complete story theme. More displays are shown more to strong and dynamic gestures. The Buto mask forms include the following image.



Fig 1. The Buto mask is being worn by the dancer

### 3.2. The Show of Gedruk Dance

The Gedruk dance performance is the third part in the sequence of the kuda kepeng art performance. The show starts with the preparation of offerings and the preparation of the venue for the arrangement of the musical instruments. The dishes provided consist of young coconut, banana, rice cone one tray, red chilies that are skewered using a stick that is placed on a tumpeng, one red onion that is skewered with a stick stuck on top of a tumpeng, one garlic fruit that is pierced using a stick and plugged in. in tumpeng, one brown sugar (one circle), ten chicken eggs, one bucket of water mixed with flowers, and incense, and Duyung stamp perfume.

The offering is a gift or gift for spirits. According to Gambuh, every spirit has a request for "food", if it is presented in the Braided Horse show. The dishes mentioned above will be eaten according to the desires of the respective spirits. Fragrant oil is useful as to facilitate or facilitate the spirits to be removed from the dancer's body. Meanwhile, the incense that is burned during the performance is placed in small incense sticks to summon spirits to get to know the venue where the event is held. The fragrance that comes from the smoke of incense is a symbol of the intermediary between Gambuh and spirits.

The next preparation is to arrange the gamelan or musical instrument equipment in the show, which can be arranged on a page covered with a mat, or can also be arranged on a stage. Horses are arranged standing in front of the incense. To start the program of burning incense by Gambuh in front of the horses, then all musical instruments are oiled by Gambuh with mermaid oil which is believed to be not wronged by people (not harassed or mystically disturbed). Apart from this, it is believed that the sound of the gamelan being played will sound loud or pleasant to people.

The show begins with the opening stage, which plays the gending Giro. At this second stage the dancer members get ready to dress and be decorated to become dancers. After the dancers go out to the field or the performance venue, Giro's gending game is stopped and replaced with Jathilan's gending. At this time the Jathil dance is performed for approximately ten minutes. After the Kuda Kepang dance was finished, the music that was played was replaced with the Blendrong Gangsaran song. It is at this third stage that the Gedruk dance is performed, starting with the dancer entering the field in a marching motion. The dance formations are as shown below.



Fig 2. Formations Lining Up in Gedruk Dance

After entering the field, the dancers move in a circle to get to the marching formation and continue to line up in rows of three or two. During the field, the dancers continued to stomp their left and right legs while shaking, the rumbling sound of the dancers' feet sounded boisterous. Another formation from the one they displayed by moving their body back and forth repeatedly while stomping their feet so that the rattling sound could still be heard. About twelve minutes the music starts to slow down and stop, the dancer sits squatting down, the dancer takes off the mask and then Gambuh collects all the masks. This is done because later in the dance, the dancer can be possessed by a spirit that can lose consciousness and make attractive movements so that the mask is not damaged, besides this if the dancer wants to eat and drink the offerings provided are not hindered.

After the mask is collected, the music continues and the dancer continues the dance. The Gedruk dance continues for about fifteen to twenty minutes without stopping. Seeing this, the dancer must have a strong enough stamina because they wear a mask that is quite hot, the clothes are rather thick and there are hundreds of rattles on the legs which also seem quite heavy.

The audience is always present to watch the show, welcoming them enthusiastically and happily. The scary and clattering faces that sounded by the dancers' stomping made the show memorable as dashing and festive and tense. Even though the face of the masked dancer is scary, this show is very popular. Able to create a joyful and tense atmosphere. This atmosphere is very popular with the audience. This atmosphere is what the audience has been waiting for.

The spectators are always busy watching the show if the kuda kepong group performs the Gedruk dance in the show. Spectators watch it standing around the field and can also sit close to the musicians. Wherever the audience can find a place to sit or stand around the venue except in the middle of the performance field.

### 3.3. Development Strategy of Gedruk dance in Kuda Kepang art in Kisaran.

People in Kisaran and Sumatera Utara have deep known the art of kuda kepong, which is synonymous with drunkenness or trance in the show and after that they can do unusual things such as eating glass, flowers, rice, coconut and so on. Furthermore Heristina (1917: 290) explained that during this drunkenness the dancers performed acrobatics and jokes in their development, so that the show was in demand.

The Gedruk dance that was added to the kuda kepong show seemed to be able to further increase the interest of the audience or the public to watch the show or invite it to a celebration event or a crowd in the community. The Gedruk dance is able to give a new colour to the traditional arts of the Javanese people in Kisaran. The show is still being carried out to fill various Javanese traditional events. This art has become a folk entertainment that can fill various celebrations in the local community and outside the region.

Currently, the Gedruk dance is collaborated with the kuda kepong show, to the knowledge of new writers in the Asahan district, namely Kisaran. From the source, it was stated that there were 40 groups of horse braids in this area which performed the Gedruk dance. Once at the Vth PSBP festival in 2019 the Gedruk dance was performed colossally by up to two hundred people wearing buto masks.

The marketing strategy is disseminated by introducing it through online media to increase public appreciation of the Gedruk show. If the public knows or knows the art, it becomes familiar with the dish that is being watched or is familiar, this will make it easier for the public to accept. Through the spectacle that can be seen from the online media, people also want to watch it live. Gedruk performances in Kisaran have appeared in several places including being considered in the Meranti, Rawang, Suka Maju, Taman Sari, Sidokeno, Suka Makmur, Pondok Kopi, Gitar Batu, Sidodadi, Pulobandring, Bunut Barat, Sidomukti, Sei Ranggung, Seisilau, Gerak Tani area, Pulo Mandi, Ambalutu, Sionggang, Mandoge, Semegol, Piasaulu, Puluh Raja, Damuli, Aekloba, Air Batu, Sei piring, Sei dadap, Sei kamah, Simpang Empat, Hessa, Sentang, Air Joman, Solo Laut, Bendang. Outside the range include of Tanjung Balai, Rantau Prapat, Gunung Tua, Sidempuan, Kota Pinang, Bagan Batu, Sikampak, Dalu-Dalu, A Jamu, Ujung Tanjung, Pekan Baru, Kerinci, Duri, Dumai, Batu Bara, Lima Puluh, Simalungun, Tebing Tinggi, Medan, Pangkalan

Brandan, Langkat and Aceh.

Suggestion or comments from the public or supporters in the comments column make the group able to fix the show and further improve the quality of the show or also more often inform the show as expected by the community. Linsay (2006: 3) explains that traditional art is less closely related to the market, more closely related to the social context. This in society or also by artists is not merely a performance to achieve economic value, but also a relationship and a sense of brotherhood among Javanese.

The guidance carried out was related to improving performances in dancing procedures or interacting with the audience to create a joyous atmosphere. Training is carried out regularly while improving the quality of performances or dance movements to make them compact. The training schedule for dancers and musicians is once a week, some two or three times a week. For the beginner group, usually the schedule and training days are getting more and more routine. For those who are advanced practice can be done if there will be a call for a show. But there are also those who are skilled always come to train the beginners. Development is also carried out through regular training and performing improvements. Through practice, additional ways of interacting with the audience in the show are carried out.

Social media is part of a way to introduce it to the public. The show is also made live streaming via Facebook, so that people who cannot attend the show directly can watch it via cellular phone media. Dissemination or introducing it to the wider community can increase public appreciation of the show. They call it to have fans. If the public knows and is familiar with the Gedruk dance performance, the show is easier to accept. So that the news will spread from mouth to mouth or through communication in the Facebook or Whatsapp group or Instagram. In addition to this, the kuda kepeng group will always announce the schedule for the performance. So that the audience who wants to attend to watch the schedule knows.

Efforts to maintain and maintain the arts were pursued by collaborating with other types of Javanese art so that there was renewal so that there was a new attraction. However, his horse-braided art was not replaced but was given additional elements. From this, the art of the Gedruk dance can be developed or introduced to the wider community. It seems that developing this Gedruk dance is a unique thing, because the masks that are so scary can be used as entertainment. Not a scary thing. This of course happens because the packaging of the show includes jokes or other entertainment.

The colours, the masks, and the various shapes, do not mean just being scary. But the audience saw the horror and excitement of the clinking sound to be amazed to the display, that there are scary giants in life, but these giants can be conquered. Salamun Kaulam (2012: 135) explains that the art of Jaranan (kuda kepeng) is experiencing a shift in value. In a performance activity, it is no longer solely for ritual and sacred acts, but in its activities there are efforts to add to the elements of activities that are entertainment in nature.

The performance of the Gedruk dance in the kuda kepeng art in order to survive, in addition to tidying up or improving the way the plays in their performances add to the appeal by increasing the number of masks used. More Gedruk dancers wore a special set of clothes for the dancer to add to the excitement. Furthermore Heristina (2020: 337) explains that group management in adding or fixing performance material is important to meet the tastes of the public or audience.

The way to procure special clothes for Gedruk dancers is also not an easy thing because the price of a set of clothes is quite expensive, currently around two million to three million five hundred thousand rupiah. This price is quite expensive according to the group leaders based on the economic conditions of their daily life. For the joy of a show, it is not enough with just one or two sets of special clothes for the Gedruk dancers. For the excitement of the show, at least six sets. Even so, the enthusiasm of the group leaders and other group members to start developing the art of Gedruk in the group starts with only one or two pieces first.

This procurement was also assisted by Mr. Poniran, who is considered to be the supervisor of the Gedruk group in Kisaran by helping to facilitate the procurement of the clothes by paying him installments or paying for the special clothes. All groups in the Kisaran or Asahan District areas are currently buying the special clothes for the Gedruk dancers from Mr. Poniran. This system of guidance makes the kuda kepeng group in Asahan District, Sumatera Utara already have forty groups that have Gedruk dancers and can perform them. The amount owned by each group varies according to the financial situation of the group.

The enthusiasm for developing the Gedruk dance in the Japanese horse art was increased because by performing the Gedruk dance, the funding for the group increased, the market price for the customer also increased. If at least so far, if the response or order to play the group is paid for one million and three hundred rupiah, it has increased to one million eight hundred thousand rupiah. The more Gedruk dancers that must be performed in a show, the subscribers will increase the price to be paid. If eight Gedruk dancers are shown, it can be paid around three million rupiah. However, these traditional arts are carried out not solely on economic values that are pursued or sought. Negotiations or bonds of brotherhood and friendship can make the price paid by the buyer can change to be cheaper or decrease.

According to the group leaders and players, the main thing has been emphasized by the coaches that the main thing is to foster and preserve Javanese arts and culture in the midst of people's lives, to maintain the values of the ancestral culture and culture of the Indonesian people. Coaching and thought assistance provided by the local government and the leadership of the DPD Pujakesuma, the movement of Indonesian traditional arts to grow and develop.

Another way to develop this Gedruk art is to create a new group or to revive a group of kuda kepong that has been closed to be continued by their descendants or their closest friends. They do this by encouraging their descendants to want to continue the existing arts. In line with this, Heristina (2017: 291) explains that the Javanese people are still in their generation continuing their ancestral traditional arts by recruiting new players.

The continuation of existing art groups means that the musical instruments that are already owned are not a shame. The format of its appearance can be adjusted to the development of society and what is needed by the community to enjoy it or according to its function in an event. According to Usman Pelly (1994: 162) that culture is dynamic and changing, only the speed of change is different.

Currently, young leaders have been found for a group of kuda kepong which has the Gedruk dance in it. In the past, it was rare for the leader of a group to be young, usually around the age of forty and above. But currently developments in group leadership have occurred. This younger one developed to group management. For coaches, gambuh and musicians are always accompanied by seniors. If the young ones are capable, this group can be released. Coaching is carried out by holding meetings between groups to provide input towards improvements or even to routinely practice so that the players are fit to appear in front of the audience. No matter how many kuda kepong groups exist, they do not become unhealthy competition, but instead become a means to promote and preserve the Indonesian nation's cultural arts in general and especially Javanese ethnic traditional arts.

The understanding of continuing traditional arts by artists or the Javanese community is still embedded, so that this traditional art group is still often invited to various celebration events. They realize that art is part of showing identity. Maintaining this uniqueness is not an easy thing. Because people's lives are influenced by globalization factors which are inseparable from economic value and effectiveness. The existence of this traditional art becomes visible in the community. To maintain it, it needs to be cared for and its attractiveness gouged. Art becomes meaningful and meaningful when it is sought after and gets a response from the audience or gets appreciation from the community. The creativity of the artists is very much needed, but do not violate the symbolic principles of the arts. Furthermore, Budiono (1984: 127) The development of modern science and technology is so fast that it affects the Javanese way of life in continuing the traditions of their ancestors. The appreciation of the symbolic and religious meaning has changed, which was previously carried out on an inner basis, now it is more rational and its symbolic power has changed meaning, but is only a symbol of identity.

For this reason, the addition of knowledge and understanding of the importance of activating the cultural arts of the local community must be encouraged or fostered. So that the arts that are developed are still functional in the community. In line with this, Sardono (2016: 3) arts that originate from local cultural products are facing the challenges of the times, partly because the spirit of modernization is spreading in all parts of the world. The religious space contained in the arts is increasingly underdeveloped. Art is packaged without leading to the cultural process of the community and weakening the culture itself, eventually being eliminated.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Gedruk dance in the kuda kepong show in Kisaran around the year of 2015. This was the first time raised by the Mawar Sari Group, led by Poniran. Over time, other kuda kepong groups added the Gedruk dance to the kuda kepong art performance. The dancers' masks and equipment were purchased from Java by Mr. Poniran, while the other groups bought them from the father. Currently, there are about forty Japanese horse art groups that add Gedruk dance to their performances. In Kisaran, a mass braided horse dance has been held, featuring Gedruk, about two hundred Gedruk dancers performing simultaneously. This shows that the art is in demand by the Javanese and other people in Kisaran. This art is not only developing in Kisaran but also in various areas of Asahan District.

The strategy to develop this Gedruk dance by buying or having buto masks of various shapes and colourful hair on the buto masks also adds to the attraction and excitement of the atmosphere. This development is inseparable from the way the coaches or group leaders are managed in advancing the arts they foster. Mutual cooperation between groups is emphasized. This is seen as complementing each other's players or borrowing or renting equipment owned by other groups. Well maintained communication between fellow players and group leaders as well as between groups makes it easier to develop or maintain progress and the existence of this art in society.

Make it easy to procure or buy a complete set of Gedruk dancers' clothes by paying in installments when there is an order or those who think that this adds to the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of the group leaders wanting to have several pieces of clothing so that they can perform the Gedruk dance in the Kuda Kepong show in their group. The Assistance Fund obtained from the local government which is given regularly once a year also means that there is an initial fund to buy special clothes for Gedruk dancers starting from one or two sets, so that many Japanese horse groups have added to the attractiveness of the show or made the show lively. This has created a new attraction for the traditional arts of the Javanese people in Kisaran.

Increasing the attractiveness of performances is something that the art group continues to do, such as correcting dance movements, solidarity in dancing, enthusiasm and attractiveness to the audience in order to keep the public's interest. The public's interest can be seen from the large number of spectators who attend every show. Among other things, because of the ease of conveying information through the communication media WhatsApp group, Instagram and Facebook. So that the news can spread

quickly. Media technology plays a role in conveying information and can be a learning medium for artists in developing aesthetic values in dancing and more attractive attractions by seeing performances in groups in Java and tailored to the needs and circumstances of the local community.

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