

Creativity and innovation of Ludruk performing art in Lamongan Regency: A case study of Sendakala Ludruk performing art

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ABSTRACT

Creativity and innovation in ludruk need to be done because this traditional art is already on the verge of extinction. The lack of regeneration of interested young people and changes in people's tastes are the dominant factors causing the extinction of Ludruk. Without creative efforts in packaging ludruk to be relevant to the current context, supported by innovations in the presentation and use of technology, this cultural heritage is at risk of being lost in the next decade. This research aims to find out the creativity and innovation that needs to be done to preserve Ludruk art performances. The research method applied is qualitative. The research location is in the Ludruk Lamongan community. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and focused discussions. The results of the study showed that the creativity carried out by the Sendakala community included intensive practice before the performance; preparation of the manuscript as a guide for conducting dialogues; shortening of the duration of the show; colossal Ludruk performances; and collaboration with other Ludruk communities. Innovations include the dissemination of Ludruk art performances to schools; management improvement where there is a division of duties between stage directors, music directors, and dance directors; the use of technology to support the background of the scene; and the use of publications through social media. The creativity and innovation carried out by the Sendakala group is part of the revitalization effort to preserve Ludruk art performances in Lamongan Regency.

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Introduction

Ludruk is one of the traditional performing arts that developed in East Java, Indonesia. This performing art presents comedy dramas that reflect local wisdom and the daily lives of the people of East Java and in its performances are often accompanied by traditional Javanese music (Hargianto et al., 2016). Ludruk is a folk art that once developed and was popular in almost all areas of East Java Province. The stories presented in Ludruk vary, from folk tales, and history to social criticism, Ludruk not only aims to entertain but also reflects the reality of life in society. This performing art initially developed among the community as a means of entertainment and education (Putri et al., 2024).

However, along with the development of globalization, more and more alternative performing arts and entertainment media have developed that can be chosen by the community (Sugihartati, 2020; Zhang & Dai, 2021). This has caused Ludruk to be gradually ignored by its audience (Sinulingga et al., 2020). In this case, public interest in Ludruk performing art tends to decline. Currently, ludruk performing art is facing the threat of extinction. If left unchecked, it will have an impact on the extinction of Ludruk. For Ludruk performing art to remain sustainable and return as entertainment, which is the choice of the community, creativity and innovation is needed.

One of the areas that have a lot of galleries of ludruk is Lamongan Regency. In Lamongan Regency, ludruk performing art is still popular in the community, as indicated by the many ludruk art performances in the community. However, some ludruk art performances are still conventional, so they are not by the values adopted by the younger generation. In the future, the sustainability of ludruk in Lamongan Regency will be threatened by the shift in values of the younger generation who are more exposed to global popular culture. Therefore, it is important to be creative and innovative in ludruk performing art, so that it can adapt to the demands of the values adopted by the younger generation. However, ludruk art must still be able to pass on local values, history, and cultural identity.

At this time in Lamongan Regency, a young generation community was born that tried to preserve traditional performing arts that are still developing in the community, especially ludruk. The community calls itself Sendakala, an acronym of *Seniman Muda Kabupaten Lamongan* (Young Artists of Lamongan Regency). The community accommodates artists who are generally still young, to be creative in Lamongan Regency. The community is involved in various types of traditional arts in Lamongan Regency, but the most frequently pursued is ludruk. The role of the Sendakala group has received attention from the Government of Lamongan Regency so is often involved in events organized by agencies of the Government of Lamongan Regency.

Based on the explanation, the problems raised in this study are how are the efforts of creativity and innovation carried out by the Sendakala community in Lamongan Regency and what is the relationship between creativity and innovation to the preservation of Ludruk performing arts in Lamongan Regency. The purpose of this research is to contribute the creativity and innovation that needs to be done to preserve Ludruk performing art. A work of art is closely related to creativity. In creating a work of art, artists are required to have creativity so that the work produced is of high quality. Furthermore, Sumardjo explained that the drive for creativity comes from the tradition itself or the community around it. Every artwork is a wealth of tradition or society in the beginning and a creative work in its time. Creative artists are artists who are sensitive to their environment, both cultural traditions and the factual wealth of the environment (Sumardjo, 2000). Furthermore, creativity is the ability that a person must find and create something new, a new way, or a new model that is useful for themselves and society. The new thing does not always have to be something that has never existed before.

The elements may have existed before, but the individual finds a new combination, a new relationship, or a new construction that has a different quality from the previous state (Gilson, 2024; Glăveanu, 2020; Sumanto, 2005). Creativity is the ability to initiate something unique, new, and useful as well as can be associated with any activity (Amabile, 1996). Therefore, creativity does not only serve as too to produce varied and innovative language expressions, but also serves as a strategic one in creating engaging and effective processes (Sufanti et al., 2025). In this case, creativity is identified with things related to art. Creativity is categorized as an integral part of the creation of a work of art (Amabile & Mueller, 2024; Sawyer & Henriksen, 2024). Thus, in the end, creativity will lead to a product of a work of art. Regarding traditional art, the cultural identity of a nation can be represented by its traditional art. The existence of traditional art can be maintained through various efforts. In addition to implementing a hereditary inheritance system, it can also be done by carrying out creativity and innovation with a touch that comes from outside. Creativity and innovation are needed by almost all traditional arts to be able to maintain the existence of the art. To survive in the era of globalization, the method used by artists is to carry out creativity and innovation (Tjaturrini, 2018).

An innovation is introducing new ways or methods from input to output, so that it will produce changes that are visible with success in the social and economic fields (Kholifah et al., 2021). The idea that is considered new is determined by a person's reaction. If something is seen as something new by someone, then that is what is called innovation (Rogers, 2003). Innovation in the context of preserving traditional arts is an effort to adapt the form of performing arts to the demands of the times. This is done because traditional performing arts must be able to adapt to the times (Rokhim, 2018).

The concept of revitalization was first put forward by Anthony F. C. Wallace (1956). According to him, revitalization is the revitalization movement is defined as a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture. Revitalization is thus, from a cultural standpoint, a special kind of culture change phenomenon including the persons involved in the process of

revitalization must perceive their culture, or some major areas of it, as a system (whether accurately or not) (Agus et al., 2021). They must feel that this cultural system is unsatisfactory; and they must innovate not merely discrete items, but a new cultural system, specifying new relationships as well as, in some cases, new traits.

Based on the concept, the revitalization movement can be interpreted as a deliberate, organized, and conscious effort by members of society to build a more satisfying culture. Therefore, from a cultural perspective, revitalization is a special kind of cultural change phenomenon, where people involved in the revitalization process must understand their culture, or some major parts of it, as a system (either accurately or not) (Geertz & Mahasin, 1983); they must feel that this cultural system is unsatisfactory; and they must innovate not only on different things, but also on a new cultural system, which determines new relationships, and (in some cases) new properties. Revitalization is an effort to vitalize or revive something whose existence still has meaning so that its existence needs to be maintained and developed. Related to performing arts, several factors influence the life and death of performing art, such as political changes, economic problems, changes in the tastes of the audience, and the challenge of competing with other forms of performing arts (Soedarsono et al., 2010).

Revitalization needs to be carried out as one of the development efforts with several activities, including excavation, reconstruction, reinterpretation, and actualization of performing arts (Bing et al., 2024). The goal is to revive, preserve, actualize, and make a performing art more valuable. Thus, revitalization is an effort to preserve, revive, or strengthen things that are considered important, which include all elements of culture (Widyastuti, 2012). Preservation is an activity that is carried out continuously, directed, and integrated to achieve certain goals, showing the continuity of something permanent and sustainable but is dynamic, flexible, and selective (Widjaja, 1986). Preserving local culture is important to maintain artistic and traditional values with dynamic adaptation to changing conditions (Ranjabar, 2006). Furthermore, cultural preservation is a large system that involves the community and must be carried out collectively, not individually (Triwardani & Rochayanti, 2014). Preservation requires a basis supported by internal and external factors and are carried out with a strategy based on local needs. Cultural preservation can be done with three steps: understanding, collective planning, and developing creativity. Alwasilah (2006) highlighted the importance of internal capacity, local capacity, and self-reliance in cultural preservation, as well as the need for support from various parties to actively participate in preservation efforts.

Research on ludruk performing arts has been featured in several articles. Nur Ramadani and colleagues, for example, in their article titled "Portrait of Ludruk Rukun Budaya as the Center of Creative Industry for Performing Arts in Probolinggo Regency," convey that the creativity and innovation carried out by Ludruk Rukun Budaya from Probolinggo Regency are achieved thru collaboration between artists, art enthusiasts, entrepreneurs, and the government (Ramadani et al., 2023).

Following that, Rahmadani and colleagues in their article titled "The History of Ludruk Irama Baru Art from Sidoarjo Regency 2014-2019" convey that the way the Ludruk Irama Baru group from Sidoarjo Regency strives to maintain its existence is by engaging in creativity and innovation in the following forms: maintaining a balance between quality and creativity in each performance; continuously innovating in marketing or promotion and presentation of performances tailored to market needs in a regular and directed manner; and utilizing social media to support the preservation efforts of ludruk (Rahmadani et al., 2023).

Febriyanti Mardityasari and Autar Abdillah, in their article titled "Management and Creative Process of Ludruk Luntas in the Play Dendam Genderuwo Kali Rungkut," present the results of their research on the Ludruk LUNTAS group (an abbreviation for Ludruk Nom-Noman Tjap Arek Suroboyo). In the performance play, the creativity demonstrated by the LUNTAS group involved preparation by forming committees, planning, organizing, mobilizing, and supervising (Mardityasari & Abdillah, 2022).

Method

This research is qualitative which begins with an idea that is stated in a research question. The research question will later determine the method of data collection and how to analyze it. Qualitative methods are dynamic because they are always open to changes, additions, and replacements during the analysis process (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009).

As qualitative research, the research focuses on revitalization efforts of ludruk performing art in Lamongan Regency carried out by the Sendakala community and supported by the Government of Lamongan Regency. The case study of the research is one of the ludruk groups that has carried out quite a lot of revitalization and received support from the Government of Lamongan Regency, namely Sendakala.

Data collection techniques in this study include observation, interviews, and focus group discussions, and strengthened by literature studies. Furthermore, the data that has been successfully collected is analysed to be able to understand and draw conclusions from the research (Gill et al., 2008). Observation is conducted as an initial step to see the facts about the ludruk performance art in Lamongan, and to understand the patterns of creativity and innovation carried out. The observation helps in identifying what aspects can be developed or eliminated to create creativity and innovation to maintain the value and meaning of traditional performing art. Furthermore, in-depth interview techniques are conducted with sources, such as the Head of the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency and Sendakala artist figures to obtain data on activities carried out by the ludruk community, which involved elements of the government of Lamongan Regency. Data collection instruments include observation guides, interview guides, and tools such as video cameras, photo cameras, and sound recorders to record data. In addition to observation, interviews, and focus group discussions, a literature study is also conducted to enrich the data.

The data that has been collected is then analyzed. In the data analysis activity, three stages are used: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification. Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing on simplification, abstraction, and transformation of raw data that emerges from field notes. Reduced data will provide a more specific description and make it easier for researchers to collect further data and find additional data if needed.

After the data is reduced, the next step of analysis is data presentation. Data presentation is a collection of structured information that provides the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action. Data presentation can be done in the form of narrative descriptions, charts, relationships between categories and flowcharts. Presenting data in this form makes it easier for researchers to understand what is happening. The last step is to draw conclusions based on the findings and verify the data. Drawing conclusions or verification is an effort to find or understand the meaning, regularity, patterns, explanations, causal flows or propositions (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

Results and Discussion

Description of Ludruk Sendakala Community

In Lamongan Regency, several ludruk groups registered at *Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Lamongan* (the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency), namely: Mekar Budaya at Sidokumpul Village, Sambeng District; Wahyu Budoyo at Wateswinangun Village, Sambeng District; Dika Indra at Mendogo Village, Ngimbang District; Kembang Sore at Sendang Rejo Village, Ngimbang District; Wedha Wijaya at Mendogo Village, Ngimbang District; Candra Wijaya at Sidorejo Village, Sugio District; and Sendakala at Dradahblumbang, Kedungpring District. In addition to ludruk, there are also other traditional arts that registered at the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency, including: jaran jenggo, jaran kepeng, reog, sandur, kentrung, dance art studios, campursari, karawitan, patrol, wayang kulit, modern qosidah, dangdut orchestras, barongsai, and jidhor (*Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Lamongan*, 2021).

Ludruk performing art groups in Lamongan Regency can currently be said to be in a state of suspended animation, due to the lack of requests for performances from the community. However, there is one ludruk group that has just been born and still exists, namely Sendakala. The name Sendakala is an acronym of *Seniman Muda Kabupaten Lamongan* (Young Artists of Lamongan Regency). The group is involved in various types of traditional performing arts, such as traditional dance, *karawitan* (Javanese traditional music), and *wayang kulit* (shadow puppets). However, the traditional performing art that is most often pursued is ludruk.

Sendakala group was established in 2021, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic caused many young artists who were studying at art institutes in other cities (such as Yogyakarta and Surakarta) back home to Lamongan. In Lamongan, they met each other and finally agreed to create a performing arts group, which was later named Sendakala. The number of communities that have joined the group is currently 30 people, consisting of art teachers and students of the art institute. The idea of establishing the Sendakala group is to be able to unite the different perceptions of various art communities regarding the perception of the performing arts that they are engaged in. Thus, the Sendakala group accommodates young artists to be creative in performing art in Lamongan Regency.

The place to gather and practice is in two locations, namely at a workshop in Kedungpring District and the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency. In this case, the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency is committed to providing its auditorium as a place to practice several types of performing arts, including the ludruk performing art from the Sendakala group. The success of the Sendakala group in getting a place for practice in the auditorium cannot be separated from their initiative to lobby the officials of the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency to get the facility.

According to data from the Office of Tourism and Culture, before Sendakala was born, there were six ludruk groups whose members were old artists, so their performances were still conventional. Their communities are generally in the southern part of Lamongan Regency (Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Lamongan, 2021). However, of the several ludruk communities, only two groups still exist, namely: Wahyu Budaya in Sambeng District and Dika Indra in Lambeng District. Because it is located near the border with Mojokerto and Jombang Regencies, many of their players are not from Lamongan Regency but come from the two regencies. Even though it is in a state of suspended animation, the ludruk workshop still has ludruk art equipment.

In recruiting members, the Sendakala Performing Arts group is open. This resulted in personnel from other performing art groups also joining. The way to recruit is by providing various positive stimuli and enticements. The stimuli and enticements are to introduce the members of Sendakala as young artists of the same age as them. In addition, this community also uses social media to introduce the Sendakala group to the public. This community also announces the acceptance of new members to senior high schools/vocational schools around Lamongan Regency, to invite any students who want to join the Sendakala group.

After many people have registered as members, a selection needs to be carried out. In choosing and selecting new members, the Sendakala group holds an open casting. Open casting is an audition that is open to anyone interested in trying a particular role. Open casting usually attracts more players than scheduled auditions because it is open to candidates who do not have agents. Casting is the process of selecting actors, dancers, singers, or supporting actors to get a role in a performing arts production (Hawkins & Dibia, 2003; Nabila, 2023).

The artists in Sendakala do not depend on performing arts for their livelihood, because they have other permanent jobs, especially as teachers of art. Because they have permanent jobs, the Sendakala group has many networks from other performing arts communities to support Sendakala activities, including theater, karawitan, and *pencak silat* (traditional martial art).

Creativity in Ludruk Sendakala Art Performance

The preservation of traditional arts is supported by three elements, namely performing arts practitioners, community, and government. To be preserved, performing arts practitioners must always be creative and innovative, so that they can present performing arts that are interesting and in demand by the community. The government will also consider them to appear at events organized by government agencies or institutions that cooperate with the government. The community who are interested in performing arts with creativities and innovations will appreciate it by watching, responding, or providing financial support and facilities for the performing arts. The government acts to protect, foster, provide financial support, and provide facilities for the group of performing arts to perform.

As conveyed by Sumanto, what is meant by creativity is the ability to find and create something new, so in Ludruk performing art, the creativity can be seen in things related to the appearance of the performing arts, such as storylines, collaboration with other arts, collaboration among the accompanying gamelan and other musical instruments, adaptation of the player's costumes, and others. The creativity carried out by the Sendakala group in performing ludruk is as follows.

Intensive Practices Before Performance

In conventional ludruk groups, the artists generally do not practice intensively. They only meet once to be given an outline of the story of the play to be performed, while the dialogue in the performance is based on the improvisation of the artists. This causes uncontrolled dialogues to occur when performing on stage, such as rude and pornographic jokes, abuse and inappropriate words, dialogue that deviates from the story, and so on. To avoid these things, every time the Sendakala group is going to perform, they prepare and practice several times first. Practice for each performance is done on average five times before the performance.

In a ludruk performance, the artists are divided into three groups, namely *pengrawit* (gamelan players), dancers, and *peraga* (artists of ludruk). As a group with members spread throughout Lamongan Regency, their houses are far apart. There are even members whose houses are 40 kilometers from the downtown of Lamongan. Thus, the distance among members' residences becomes an obstacle in training. To overcome the distance constraint, during the practice, *peraga*, dancers, and *pengrawit* are done separately. They practice individually in a predetermined place, then before the performance, a joint practice is carried out to synchronize each other, which is called *tempuk gending*. Thus, intensive practice up to an average of five times before the performance causes the performance of the ludruk performing art that they present to be livelier and more focused according to the play.

Script Preparation as a Guide Script in Performance

The artists who join the Sendakala group generally have a background in theater education, either obtained in college or school. This causes them to have the ability to write scripts and choose actors. The

artists of Sendakala cannot improvise in dialogue if no written script is used as a guide. By using a written script, the artists in dialogue also cannot improvise excessively outside the context of the script. The use of a written script as a guide allows the artists to insert dialogues with conceptual contemporary topics, such as *pinjaman online* or *pinjol* (online loans), online games, and others. In addition, they can also throw out conceptual jokes. Thus, the use of a written script makes the performing art of ludruk that they perform more conceptual and focused.

Shorten Duration of the Performance

The duration of conventional ludruk performances is generally for all night long. For most people today, especially the young generation, the very long duration of the performance is considered boring, so they are not interested in watching ludruk. To overcome this, the Sendakala ludruk performance only lasts about two hours. The first hour is for *bedaya* and *remo* dance performances, and the next hour is for the story performance.

In the ludruk play performance, the scene that is waiting for the audience is the jokes or comedies. Because the duration of the story in ludruk Sendakala is only one hour, the joke scenes are included as part of the play story. With a shorter performance duration, the time used for the joke scenes becomes shorter. Thus, they only throw out jokes according to the concept that has been made. This at least minimizes them from using inappropriate joke material, such as pornographic jokes or physically bullying their opponent artists.

Colossal Ludruk Performance

According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language), colossal means something that is made on a large scale or extraordinary (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, 2016). Regarding performing arts, according to Rudlofuddin Jindan, colossal drama is a drama that tells stories of struggle, war, or the history of past kingdoms. In colossal drama, the number of artists also reaches tens to hundreds of people. The goal of colossal drama is to appear dramatic and the audience can capture the message that is being conveyed in the performance (Jindan, 2021).

The colossal ludruk performance that was once performed by the Sendakala group was on March 28, 2021, taking place in the yard of the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency. This colossal ludruk performance was held to commemorate World Theater Day 2021. The story was titled *Sarep Tambak Oso*, which tells the story of a wise thief named Sarip who dared to oppose and fight against the arbitrariness of the Dutch East Indies Colonial Government (Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Lamongan, 2021).

This colossal ludruk performance required a lot of budgets, so all costs for its performance were fully borne by the Government of Lamongan Regency. This included facilitating the performance venue in the yard of the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency. The ludruk performance was called colossal because it involved hundreds of artists and cultural figures in Lamongan Regency. Even the head of Lamongan Regency, Yuhronur Efendi, also participated as a player in the colossal ludruk performance (Sudjarwo, 2021).

For the colossal ludruk performance, the ludruk managed not only artists and cultural figures but also school students, especially students who took extracurricular theater. The consideration is that they already have the basics of theater, so they are mentally ready to be involved in the performance. In this case, many Sendakala artists work as art teachers in schools. They were asked to involve students in the colossal ludruk performance. The vocational high school students involved were those who took the subject of extracurricular theater. If the practice for a regular ludruk performance is around five times, but for a colossal performance, practice can be done up to 15 times. This is because in a colossal ludruk performance, careful planning is needed so that the ludruk performance can run as expected.

Collaboration with Other Ludruk Communities

The Sendakala group also often borrows artists from other ludruk groups. For example, in the southern part of Lamongan Regency, many artists have talent of ludruk, but because of the demands of life, they do not pursue ludruk to meet their needs. However, because many artists have talent in playing ludruk, the Sendakala group recruits them to play a role, either as *peraga*, *pengrawit*, or dancers (Mulyani, 2016). In the Northern Lamongan, the socio-cultural environment is indeed religious of Islam. So, finding potential artists is relatively difficult. Meanwhile, in Southern Lamongan the socio-cultural environment is *abangan*, so it is easier to find potential artists.

Innovation

Innovation is the ability to create something new to support the appearance of ludruk performing art. These innovations include stage design, lighting design, dissemination of ludruk performing art to schools, media for publication, etc. The innovations carried out by the Sendakala group include:

a. Dissemination of Ludruk Performing Art to Schools

Some of the members of the Sendakala group are art teachers. This causes the Sendakala group to have a network of schools. This is utilized by the Sendakala group also to provide training in ludruk performing art to the art teachers in schools. The activity is supported by the Office of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency, which is trying to create synergy with the Office of Education. So, the content of ludruk can be introduced through education at schools, so that there will be regeneration of ludruk artists in the future.

b. Improvement of Ludruk Performance Management: Division of Tasks among Director, Music Arranger, and Dance Arranger

In conventional ludruk groups, the task of organizing *peraga*, *pengrawit* (*gamelan* players), and dancers rests on only one person, namely the leader of ludruk group. This causes the leader to not be able to focus on handling the preparation of the ludruk performance. In the production of the performance in the Sendakala ludruk, there is a division of tasks between the director who organizes the artists, the *gamelan* arranger, and the dance arranger. The director is responsible for compiling the script and arranging the roles of the ludruk players. The *gamelan* arranger is responsible for arranging the *gamelan* that will be used to accompany the ludruk performance. The dance arranger is responsible for arranging the dances that will be performed in intervals of the ludruk performances. During the practice of the performers, the *gamelan* arranger is also present so that he knows the storyline. So that he can arrange the appropriate *gamelan* to accompany the ludruk scene.

In addition to the director, *gamelan* arranger, and dance arranger, some serve as coordinators of supporting performances, such as costume and make-up design, and stage design. With this division of tasks, the Sendakala ludruk has implemented semi-modern management. This is different from conventional ludruk, where all these tasks are focused on the leader of the group.

c. Development of Stage Background Technology

In conventional ludruk performances, to depict the location in the scene, paintings are used on hanging screens. For example, paintings of palace meeting rooms, forests, villages, and so on. In the Sendakala ludruk, the background no longer uses paintings on hanging screens but uses a white screen highlighted with an in-focus instrument. Every time a scene changes, the white screen is highlighted with in-focus with large photos that match the background of the scene being played. For example, a scene from the palace to the forest, then the photo depicting the background of the palace is replaced with a photo with a forest background. By using photos highlighted with in-focus, the ludruk performance becomes more lively compared to using a hanging screen as its background.

d. Publication Through Social Media

Innovation is not only carried out in the Sendakala performance management and performance technology but also in publication. The Sendakala group has a YouTube channel and Instagram to display Sendakala performances. In this case, the YouTube channel is only a means to document the performance, as well as to publish the work of the Sendakala community. Not a means to make money profit through YouTube. Recording on YouTube is usually for documentation of long-duration live performances. Meanwhile, Instagram is used as a publication medium with images and narratives that tell the performance activities carried out by the Sendakala group.

Discussion

The results of previous research on creativity and innovation such as from Vehar (2020) and West & Richter (2024) generally do not show a difference in understanding between creativity and innovation. From this research, it can be found that creativity is the ability of artists to discover and create something new related to the performance of ludruk art. Based on the results of observations and interviews, several examples that have been found include the development of "storylines," "collaboration with other types of performing arts," and "adaptation of costumes for the performers." As for innovation based on in-depth studies, it can be formulated as the ability to discover and create something new to "support the creativity" of ludruk performances. Referred to as "supporting creativity" because innovation is outside the context of developing ludruk performing arts activities, but it indirectly influences the success of preserving ludruk performing arts. Examples of innovation from this research include the dissemination of ludruk performances to students in schools, improvements in stage and lighting design, the use of digital media for publicity, and so on. In relation to this, previous research generally does not clearly distinguish between the concepts of creativity and innovation. Both are considered part of "adding and creating something new."

In this case, the findings of this research are intended to describe in detail based on empirical results in the field about the differences between creativity and innovation. Nevertheless, the goal is the same, namely the preservation of the ludruk performing arts.

Intensive practice before the performance, writing a script as a guide for dialogue, shortening the duration of the performance to only about two hours, colossal ludruk performances involving hundreds of artists and cultural figures, and collaboration with other ludruk communities, are forms of creativity carried

out by the Sendakala group. As conveyed by Sumanto, the creativity carried out by the Sendakala group is not something completely new, a new way, or a new model, but has been done before by other ludruk groups. Other ludruk groups also practice, although not as intensively as up to five times as the Ludruk Sendakala group. They also prepare an outline of the story to be performed, although not accompanied by the preparation of a script to guide the dialogue. They have also collaborated with artists from other ludruk groups, especially famous ludruk artists, to follow the market demand of the audience.

The creativity carried out by the Sendakala ludruk artists, which includes intensive practice, writing scripts, shortening the duration of the performance, performing ludruk colossally, and collaborating with other ludruk groups are new combinations and new constructions, as conveyed by Sumanto, resulting in a more interesting ludruk performance than before. Traditional ludruk performing arts are one of the cultural identities of the people of Lamongan Regency. This is by what was conveyed by Dyah Tjaturrini, that the cultural identity of a nation can be represented by the traditional arts they have (Tjaturrini, 2018). This is what causes the artists in the Sendakala group to try to carry out the creativity as mentioned above, to maintain the existence of these arts, especially in facing the era of globalization.

The innovations carried out by the Sendakala group include the dissemination of ludruk to schools, the improvement of ludruk performance management, the development of technology for stage backgrounds, and the publication of the Sendakala ludruk performances through social media. These innovations have resulted in the Sendakala ludruk group often receiving responses, so that socially it is increasingly well-known and famous to the public, and economically it can obtain financial benefits that are felt by members of the group. This is conveyed by Kholifah et al. that innovation is an act of introducing new ways or methods so that it will produce changes that appear successful in the social and economic fields (Kholifah et al., 2021).

As conveyed by Nur Rokhim, in the context of preserving traditional arts, innovation is carried out as an effort to adapt the form of performing arts to the demands and adapt to the development of the times (Rokhim, 2018). So, the Sendakala group carries out innovations as mentioned above. The creativity and innovation carried out by the Sendakala group towards ludruk performing art aims to revitalize ludruk. This is what was conveyed by Soedarsono et al., that revitalization is an effort to revive ludruk art because its existence still has meaning in society, so it needs to be preserved and developed (Soedarsono et al., 2010). The fading interest of the community in ludruk art is more due to changes in public tastes towards artistic entertainment than other problems, such as political and economic changes that have occurred in East Java. This findings are in line to the previous studies done by Indrayuda & Amirul (2022) and Rachmasari & Permatasari (2020).

Therefore, the creativity and innovation carried out aim to preserve one of the elements of local culture owned by the people of Lamongan Regency. As conveyed by Ranjabar (2006) the preservation of local culture is important to maintain artistic and traditional values with dynamic adaptation to changing conditions. In this case, the creativities and innovations carried out are forms of dynamic adaptation to overcome changes in socio-cultural conditions in society.

Figure 1 shows the role of the Sendakala group's creativity and innovations in preserving Ludruk performing arts. Creativities and Innovations support the preservation of Ludruk performing arts.

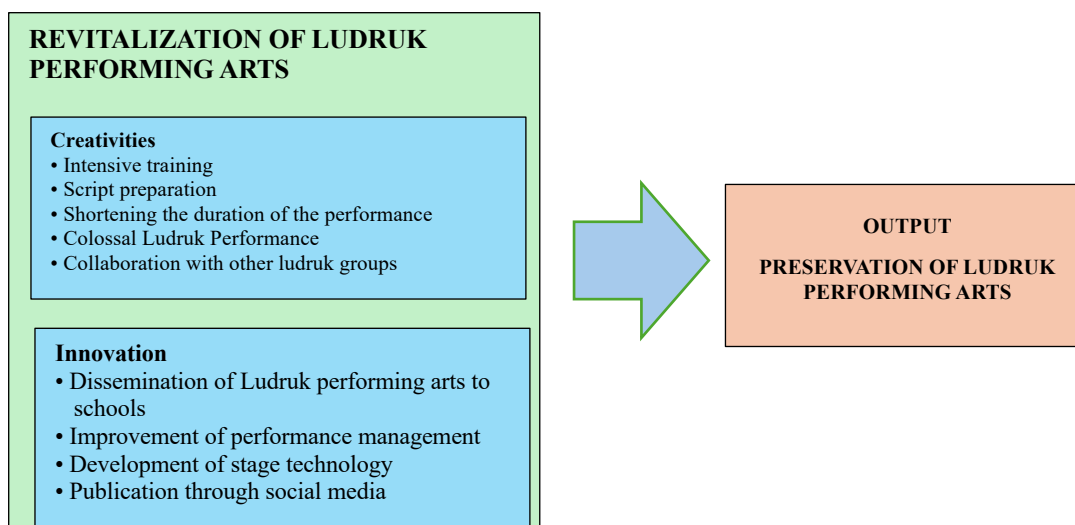


Fig. 1. Creativities and Innovations to Support the Preservation of Ludruk Performing Arts

Conclusion

Ludruk is a traditional performing art that once flourished and gained popularity in East Java; however, with the rapid growth of alternative performing arts and modern entertainment media, it is gradually being neglected by audiences, posing a serious threat to its sustainability. In response to this condition, a youth-based group named Sendakala emerged in Lamongan Regency in 2021, consisting of members from diverse backgrounds such as teachers, artists, and students, who are committed to preserving ludruk. The group demonstrates creativity through intensive rehearsals, structured script development as a guide for dialogue, shortening performance duration to approximately two hours, organizing large-scale (colossal) performances involving hundreds of artists and cultural figures, and collaborating with other ludruk groups to broaden audience appeal. In addition, Sendakala introduces innovations by disseminating ludruk to schools to support artist regeneration, improving management through clear task division among stage directors, gamelan arrangers, and dance coordinators, utilizing multimedia tools such as projectors to enhance stage backgrounds, and maximizing digital promotion through social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. These creative and innovative efforts represent a strategic form of revitalization aimed at preserving ludruk as a valuable cultural heritage of the Lamongan community.

Declarations

- Author contribution** : Budiana Setiawan was responsible for the entire research project. He also led the writing of the manuscript and collaborated with the second author. Wiwiek Afifah, Sedyono, and Welly Suryandoko participated in the data collection, transcription, and analysis. Slamet Wibowo and Heru Setyono revised the manuscript. All authors approved the final manuscript.
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- Ethics Approval** : This study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of Badan Riset Inovasi Nasional, approval number: IPSH 01 532046812892 Year 2024. All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection.
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