

# Dance Art Programs for Inmates in Jantho Penitentiary Institutio

Nadra Akbar Manalu<sup>1,\*</sup>, Fentisari Desti Sucipto<sup>2</sup>, Tria Ocktarizka<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dance Study Program, Department of Performing Arts, Institute of Arts and Culture, Aceh, Indonesia*

<sup>2</sup> *Visual Communication Design Study Program*

<sup>3</sup> *Karawitan Music Study Program*

\* *Corresponding author. Email: nadramanalu@gmail.com*

## ABSTRACT

Dance Art has an important role in our lives; it is used as media for expression, communication, creative thinking, and talent development. The dance practice is also considered important as efforts to improve independence and positive things for the inmates. The inmates during the training period were preoccupied by various activities, both religious and arts activities. This is a process of character building to become a better human being so that the inmates will no longer do activities or things that break the law. The aim of this study is to conduct an effort carried out through dance training, both in the form of training methods and the dance training process. The coaching activities invited prisoners to experience and witness the regional art demonstration, i.e. Rapa'i Geleng dance developed with a sense of local dance movement, creativity process (choreographer) and accompaniment songs. The researchers used a qualitative method with a descriptive, verification, and grounded research formats. Rapa'i geleng is one of the Acehnese art traditions in the southern region. The movements of the Rapa'i geleng dance describe togetherness, solidarity, cooperation, and uniformity within the scope of Acehnese society. The performance was accompanied by a poetry delivered by a sheikh with the intention of conveying social, missionary endeavor, and cultural messages. Furthermore, the dance was performed in front of the inmates to motivate them to continue working in positive terms.

Keywords: dance performance, Rapa'i geleng, inmate coaching

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Dr. Sahardjo in Suyanto "everyone is a human being and therefore must be treated as one, including inmates. Inmates are those who have gone astray, but still, they should not be overtly treated as criminals. Instead, they should feel that they are seen and treated as human beings"[1]. Regarding this matter, it has been argued that everyone was born well. However, as a person grows, he would develop certain characteristics that sometimes differ from his childhood trait. In line with this argument, people are believed to be given innate ability and strength as God's blessings. These innate ability and strength, according to Desmond Morris, is called 'Taxophilic Urge'. 'Taxophilic urge' is a human's innate ability and strength to sort out, separate, classify, categorize, differentiate, and compare, all of which enable them to be critical, analytical, and creative [2]. Apart from their innate ability and strength, humans also have the potential to experience symptoms of psychological distress caused by external factors such as the surrounding environment. Inmates tend to experience psychological symptoms such as depressive ones. This tendency is caused by, among others, the closed and isolated condition of the Correctional Institution as their environment. Stress or psychological pressure is a state of an

individual forced to adapt to different environments [3]. Some people experience depression as a result of their failure to adjust to the environment. Those who cannot adjust to their surroundings display extreme sadness, disappointment, and despair which affect their physiological and psychological functions.

According to Matarasso, several studies suggest that art programs positively affect and provide benefits for inmates [4]. Some of the benefits include helping inmates to regain their dignity, self-esteem and increase self-confidence. Arts activities also provide opportunities for inmates with artistic talent to reconnect to the community [5] [6] [7]. Efforts to reconnect inmates to the surrounding community can be achieved through art exhibitions and arts performances [8].

This is a challenge for researchers from the Indonesian Cultural Arts Institute in Aceh, to conduct a study on the effects of arts programs on inmates' behavior and attitudes in the local Penitentiary. The authors specifically examined the effects of 'Rapa'i Geleng Dance' training for inmates at Jantho Penitentiary Institution. Dance training is expected to be able to change inmates' behavior and attitudes. Therefore, when inmates are released from the prisons, they will have better behavior and attitudes and be accepted by the community. This effort is also made to prevent former convicts from repeating the same mistakes.

## 2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- Analyzing the Rapa'i Geleng dance training process for the inmates at Jantho Penitentiary Institution.
- Describing the results of the dance training results for inmates at Jantho Penitentiary Institution.

## 3. METHOD

This study employed a non-experimental research design with the Ex Post Facto design or casual comparative research. According to Gay in Emzir, this type of research is treated as descriptive research [9]. This method was considered to be beneficial in identifying the effect of a certain variable on another variable by looking for the possibility of a causal variable. The independent variable of this study was "dance training" and the dependent variable was the "inmates". After determining the two main variables, a supporting variable or a casual variable was determined (Rapa'i Geleng dance). After all variables were determined, the process of Rapa'i Geleng dance training was assessed to find out the changes in inmates' behavior and attitudes.

The Data were collected after the completion of the dance training. The researcher analyzed the Rapa'i Geleng dance training process. The steps of the research consisted of problem identification, data categorization, collection, analysis, and interpretation.

The research was conducted at Jantho Penitentiary Institution, in Aceh Besar, Indonesia for 6 months (from July to December 2018). The population was all inmates in this prison. 11 male inmates were selected as the research participants on the condition that the research process was under the Penitentiary procedures. Only male inmates were selected because Rapa'i Geleng dance is a traditional dance for men.

**Table 1 Coaching programs**

No	Month/ Week	Learning Material	Teaching Method
1.	July-August	Physical Exercise' s	physical and mental health training
2.	October	Insights into Aceh's culture to develop character	Inmate character building
3.	November-December	Dance Training for inmates	Training
4.	The first and second weeks of December	Dance performance and analysis of dance art programs for inmates	Guiding and assisting inmates during the dance training, supporting the dance performance and supporting character building through local culture

The method used in character development in this study are as follows:

### 3.1 Self-Rediscovery

Coaches were aware that inmates had limited access to the world and it would affect their mental state. The character building method provided opportunities for inmates to strengthen their mental states through cultural knowledge transfer

### 3.2 Dance Move Training.

- This method was used when the inmates performed the traditional dance for audiences. This method was expected to improve inmates' self-confidence. It should be noted that the inmates involved in this program did not necessarily have an artistic background. Hence, the coaches continuously accompanied and guided the inmates throughout the performances.
- The methods were designed by the lecturers of the Institute of Arts and Culture, Aceh. The method was determined by considering the psychological and social conditions of the inmates. Inmates should not be marginalized. They should be assisted to improve their living conditions. This program was beneficial not only for inmates but also for the coaches and other related parties. Inmates might commit offenses, however, they were not disgraces that should be kept in the dark.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The rationale for arts programs as a means to change inmates' behavior and attitudes is:

- Art is a medium to learn culture
- Art as human skills could provide satisfying stimulation to aesthetic experiences.
- Art could cultivate one's body, sense, and feeling
- Art could sharpen one's mental state and one's character
- Art could unite people in terms of cooperation, peace and beauty.
- Rapa'i Geleng dance was selected based on the following reasons:

### 4.1 Lyrics

The song lyrics accompanied the Rapa'i Geleng dance is full of Islamic values. The lyrics are the embodiment of dawah. The lyrics are as follows:

*"Lam ya talem qatutha  
halmuzlaqal aba'da  
wama tasa aba'as  
lam fi mada zamani  
wama tasa aba'as  
lam fi mada zamani.  
Nabi hantom neumelumpo,  
malam uroe seulama lama  
meusemeungeut nabi pih tan  
barang jan sepanjang masa"*

*Seleum:*

*Salam'alaikum hai payong negeri  
saleum kamoebri keu kaom lingka.  
Karena saleum nabi keun sunat*

*jaroe ta meumat tanda mulia  
Lailah haillallah  
Seuramoe mekah Aceh mulia  
Dile Aceh beuhe ngon meugah  
Masa pemerintahaniskandar muda  
Dile kon Aceh nyo beuhe ngon megah  
Masa perintah iskandar muda  
Geutanyo Aceh beuhe ngon megah  
Dalam sejarah yoh raja raja  
Geujak poh kape meuhambo darah  
Seramoe mekah bek roh gop cuca  
Geujak let kaphe mehamboe darah  
Seramoe mekah bek roh gop cuca*

The lyrics above tell about the characteristics of Prophet Muhammad and the heroic story of the Aceh Kingdom in the past. Through these lyrics, the inmates learned about the true Islamic character. They should follow the exemplary conduct of the Prophet Muhammad. Meanwhile, the parts about the heroic story of the past Aceh warriors could instill the fighting spirit in the inmates and teach them how to be a good citizen.

Besides the commonly used song lyrics, Rapa'i Geleng Dance can also be accompanied by poems that are appropriate to the current situation or event. In this program, the Rapa'i Geleng Dance was accompanied by verses talking about the Indonesian Independence Day.

*Tanggal 17 bak buleun 8 kemerdekaan Indonesia,  
si merah putih di ek u manyang,  
bendera Jepang di tron u donya,  
si merah putih di ek u manyang  
bendera Jepang di tron u donya  
Merdeka ... merdeka Indonesia merdeka  
17 beulan 8 bak ujung tiang di ek bendera,  
pedoman penghayatan pengalaman Pancasila.*

The verses above tell about people's love for their country. These verses were expected to instill nationalism in inmates.

#### 4.2 Dance Move

The dance move of Rapa'i Geleng Dance represents unity. It was expected that by doing this choreography, inmates would develop a sense of unity and cooperation among them.

The dance moves of Rapa'i Geleng could be categorized as follows:

- *Likok adab*
- *Likok Salam*
- *Likok Top Pade*
- *Lok weng*
- *Likok Ayon*
- *Likok sare*
- *Buka dua*
- *Likok dua*

#### 4.2.1 Description of the Dance Training (Rapa'i Geleng Dance)

Figure 1 shows the preparation before the dance training. The inmates involved in this program were very enthusiastic. Their enthusiasm shows that this program was well received and was conducted according to the plan. The inmates also displayed enthusiasm in other program steps as shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4.



**Figure 1.** Arranging the floor dance pattern; this arrangement was expected to develop cooperation, discipline, and sharpen memory during the dance training.



**Figure 2.** The dance move and song; it aimed to introduce Aceh culture to the inmates as a form of character building through local content.



**Figure 3.** The Rapa'i Geleng dance move training



**Figure 4.** The dancing and singing process

The analysis suggests that the research results are considered to have met the writer's expectations. This is marked by the improvement in inmates' mental and spiritual states, as well as their personality. The improvement in inmates' personality could be seen in the disciplined ways the inmates demonstrated during the training and coaching process and their performances in front of the audiences. Cooperation and kinship were also encouraged during the training process. There was high enthusiasm for developing inmates' better behavior.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The findings and discussion of this study suggest that:

- The arts programs for inmates of Jantho Penitentiary Institution have met the researchers' expectations. The programs positively influenced the inmates marked by improvement in inmates' character, mental state, discipline, cooperation, and kinship.
- Prisons should not be a place that puts psychological pressure on the people living inside. To meet this expectation, prisons should provide programs that help inmates strengthen their morals and character.
- This program helps inmates to rediscover that they are human beings that should be respected and treated equally.
- This program also establishes the cooperation between the Institute of Arts and Culture, Aceh and Jantho Penitentiary Institution.

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