

BESFEST: The Preservation of Besutan Jombang Arts as Characters Building of Generation Z

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ABSTRACT

The negative influence of globalization in Indonesia has led to moral values decrease of generation Z. Therefore, character-based education is needed to improve the character of generation Z. One of the local arts that have high moral values is Besutan. Besutan art is a native art from Jombang which is the pioneer of Ludruk. Besutan art is an art that contains moral values that can improve generation Z. However, along with the times, Besutan art has decreased in its existence. Based on the problems that occurred, this study aims to determine the values of Besutan art in building the character of Generation Z and understand the importance of implementing BESFEST as a revitalization of Besutan art. The research method used is qualitative through literature studies from journal articles, trusted websites and interviews conducted online and offline. From the results of the literature study and interviews, it was found that generation Z experienced the decrease in moral values due to the influence of globalization. Another finding is that Besutan art has decreased in existence due to the lack of Besutan art performances in regional events and the change in art from Besutan to Ludruk. BESFEST can become a revitalization medium and become a government policy regarding Besutan arts as well as efforts to improve the character of Generation Z.

Keywords: Besutan; Generation Z; Character building; Virtual reality

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization comes to Indonesia with both positive and negative impacts toward Gen Z. One of the negative effects of globalization toward Gen Z is the declining in moral values. According to Ikhwan Lutfi in Mulyaningsih [1], most of the younger generation are currently having issues with etiquette such as politeness, working behavior, ideas or passion, and idealism. This is supported by the increased percentage of children criminal cases that were filed and adjudicated by the District Court of Jombang in 2019 with a 29% increasement compared to the previous year [2]. Furthermore, the cases of teenagers who commit immoral action and drug abuse in Jombang [3] demonstrate that Gen Z's moral values have decreased. Although these cases have been handled by the authorities, it is likely that there are other cases which could impair the moral values of Gen Z in Jombang.

This is unfortunate that the condition arose while the government is trying to promote education for the national children's character growth. Therefore, to improve the fundamental character of Gen Z, local culture-based education embedded with positive character values is needed. One of the local artworks with a high moral value is Besutan Art. Besutan is a form of art originating from Jombang that evolved from Lerok Art (a term that refers to players who wear white and thick powder makeup) and became the pioneers of Ludruk Art [4]. Ludruk and Besutan are theatrical arts in the form of drama performances that were inspired by the stories of local people. Besutan isn't similar to Ludruk. Besutan is primarily concerned with the folk stories of the Jombang during the Dutch colonial period. In addition, another distinction

between Besutan and Ludruk is the players. Besutan consists of four main players, namely Besut, Rusmini, Man Gondo, and Sumo Gambar, while in Ludruk there are many players.

Nevertheless, in the globalization era, Besutan is fading in existence. According to Roziqin (2021), the group of Besutan only appears in certain sub-districts such as Kabuh, Gudo, and Ploso. The fading existence of Besutan needs to be a concern since it has a high moral value [5]. There are life values in Besutan that could be taken to create a personality with well character morality. An effort to preserve Besutan has been made by the Jombang Government by presenting Besutan at the Jombang “*Cultural Heritage Fest*” event in 2019 [6]. Furthermore, stakeholders are also making efforts by creating storybooks with Besutan characters [7] and producing Besutan documentary films [8]. However, these efforts are considered less significant in reviving Besutan.

Therefore, the strategy of preserving Besutan through BESFEST can be a medium for character growth as well as preservation of Besutan based on virtual reality performance. Through the BESFEST art preservation strategy, users may watch Besutan performances effortlessly and comfortably on their multiple devices and can understand the moral values contained in Besutan. The researchers hope that with the emergence of the Besutan preservation strategy idea through BESFEST, Besutan will be able to regain existence and be applicable as a medium for Gen Z character education, especially Gen Z in Jombang.

2. METHOD

This research was carried out using a blended technique that combines online and offline methods. Offline research is carried out in Jombang by direct observation that maintains appropriate health protocols. In addition, to conduct online research uses virtual meetings such as Zoom Meeting, Google Meet, and WhatsApp. The researchers applied qualitative data collection methods with the Spradley model ethnographic approach to elaborate findings concerning culture and its general characteristics, both material and abstract. The primary data of this research is the results of observation and in-depth interviews with the Jombang humanists, Head of Culture Division at the Department of Education and Culture of Jombang. Moreover, observations and interviews with 41 Gen Z in Jombang were selected based on their economic level, age, and residency. The secondary data was collected from literature reviews through journals and academic papers related to the topic using Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and other sources. The researcher uses primary and secondary data sources to identify factors that cause the crisis of Besutan existence and examines the character of Gen Z in Jombang. The data was collected between June to September of 2021. The data were obtained and analyzed using the Spradley ethnographic data analysis technique. The data analysis was carried out in order to conclude in the form of predictions based on scientific evidence.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Besutan Art Existences

Existence is defined as the totality of existent things. The meaning of existence has an impact on our presence or absence. This existence should be "given" to us by other people as the response of others around us exhibit our presence or existence [9]. Cultural existence is regulated by verse 32, paragraph 1 UUD 1945. This is supported by the existence of one of the key responsibilities and roles by the Jombang Government in the field of cultural preservation that has been carried out.

Besutan in Jombang has been accepted as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by the central government, and a copy has been given by the Governor of East Java to the Head of the Department of Education and Culture of Jombang in 2020. As the patron of Besutan among

society, the General Election Commission (KPU) of Jombang has made characters of Besut and Rusmini as the mascot for the 2018 Jombang Regional Election. In addition, there are other Jombang Government programs such as Seni Masuk Sekolah (a program that makes art as one of the subject that must be studied at the elementary school level), workshops and seminars, posted on the official YouTube account of Jombang Arts and Culture Government (@terasbudaya), and Jombang Berkadang program (Jombang with Character and Competitiveness). However, Besutan has not been included yet in the Seni Masuk Sekolah curriculum. Even on the official YouTube channel, Besutan has yet to be seen, and the Jombang Berkadang program does not prioritize the ideas of art and culture despite the fact that each village receives 20 million rupiah in cultural defense funds each year. Regardless of the local government's preservation, there is no Besutan group enlisted in the official Jombang art database. This is due to the fact that Besutan does not exist as an independent form of art, but is frequently featured in Ludruk as the result of stronger public desire for Ludruk, which is the extension of Besutan.

Gen Z is the majority age group in Jombang. Gen Z is also an essential age group because this generation serves as the succession and heir to the nation's arts, especially Besutan. The generation Z knowledge about Besutan is can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Generation Z Knowledge about Besutan

Middle Adolescent (15-17)	The majority of the informants did not know about Besutan, but wanted to preserve Besutan art.
Late Adolescent (18-21)	The knowledge about Besutan art is low. In most cases, informants often see/watch, but did not know that what they see is Besutan.

Based on Table 1, the majority of Gen Z admits that they are unaware of Besutan due to the absence of learning material in formal education that mentions Besutan, particularly because Besutan artists are no longer able to consistently present Besutan at youth shows, preventing Gen Z from knowing and enjoying this art.

In the midst of the pandemic, artists are one of the community groups that have been heavily affected. According to Data Koalisi Indonesia, 234 art events were canceled because of pandemics, affecting 14,720 employees [10]. The same thing happens at Jombang's art ground. One of the art grounds that also does Besutan is Sanggar Budhi Wijaya. In normal conditions before the pandemic, this art ground received up to 120 shows each year, but during the pandemic the art ground did not perform at all. Nevertheless, Sanggar Budhi Wijaya continues to work through the YouTube platform @BudhiWijaya TV.

Generally, Besutan is played by four characters, namely Besut, Rusmini, Sumo Gambar, and Man Gondo. Besut is a character who is a hard worker, humorous, clever, and brave. Rusmini's character is loyal and she also has a beautiful face. Meanwhile, Sumo Gambar's character is portrayed as the one who is chasing love of Rusmini, while Man Gondo, Rusmini's uncle, is attracted by Sumo Gambar's wealth. He help Man Gondo on his way to approaching Rusmini. Besutan's play is closely related to the story of the fight during the independence era since it emerged in Indonesia's pre-independence period. However, as time passes, Besutan's staging plays have begun to adapt to the circumstances by introducing issues that are relevant to everyday life. Through these Besutan characters, Gen Z that is currently facing a moral crisis could take lessons. The characters of Besut and Rusmini can be used to strengthen the character of Gen Z, who are hard workers, humorous, clever, brave, and loyal.

Generation Z Characters

Gen Z, also called i Generation, Net Generation or Internet Generation, refers to people who were born between 1995-2010. The result of population census conducted by Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) in 2010 shows that the majority of Indonesia's population, that is 27,94%, is Gen Z. It can be inferred that Gen Z has a crucial role and would have a significant effect on the development of Indonesia today and further in the future [12]. Generation Z was born during the rapid growth of IT (Information Technology).

Researchers divide Generation Z in Jombang into two categories based on their age and economic level that can be seen in Table 2. In the age category, it is divided once again into two sub-categories, that is teenagers around 15-17 years old and late teenagers around 18-21 years old, whereas based on the economic level, the Gen Z was divided into three subcategories, they are low, middle, and high economic level.

Table 2. Generation Z Characters Based on Age and Economic Levels

Middle Adolescent	Low Economic Levels	A total of 14.6% of the informants have the character of being less responsible, lazy, lacking discipline, and having low knowledge of nationalism.
	Medium Economic Levels	A total of 22% of the informants have a sufficiently responsible character, are quite easy to direct, are sufficiently disciplined, and have low knowledge of nationalism.
	High Economic Levels	A total of 12% of the informants have a character that is less responsible, easy to direct, disciplined, and has low knowledge of nationalism.
Late Adolescent	Low Economic Levels	A total of 17% of the informants have a character that is quite responsible, easy to direct, disciplined, and has sufficient knowledge of nationalism.
	Medium Economic Levels	A total of 14.6% of the informants have a responsible character, are easy to be directed and invited to communicate, are quite disciplined, and have sufficient knowledge of nationalism.
	High Economic Levels	A total of 19.5% of the informants have a responsible character, are easy to be directed and invited to communicate, are disciplined, and have sufficient knowledge of nationalism.

From the Table 2, the conclusion that can be drawn is that the majority of the Gen Z as source person, have the character and manner that should be improved. This condition is not

only due to the range of age and economic level, but the whole teenager, regardless of their age and economic gap, shows the same attitude of disreputable character.

The art of Besutan is now on the lowest existential point due to various onslaught of digital technology which gain more popularity among Gen Z. Directly proportional with the condition of Besutan, Gen Z also undergoes moral and character degradation in which both need to be helped through exclusive education so that a positive character of Gen Z could be developed. In line with that, Besutan could be used as a medium to build the character of Gen Z through digital media as it contains valuable and positive impact for character growth.

The Concept of BESFEST

Virtual Reality is defined as an environment powered by computer, three-dimensional, and interactive [13]. These environments can be models of the real world or imaginary world. A survey conducted by Swedish telecommunications equipment manufacturer, Ericson, points out that 5G and Virtual Reality services will become the trends of technology starting from 2019. It urges researchers to develop BESFEST as a medium to preserve Besutan. BESFEST used web-based virtual reality. The advantage of BESFEST is that it could be instructional and educational media for Gen Z. Hopefully, they could learn about the art of Besutan that continues to be alienated among Gen Z. Without any preservative action, the extinction of Besutan is only seconds away. The model of BESFEST used virtual museum design. The museum will be filled with the collection of Besutan such as clothes used by the characters on stage, the paintings and pictures of the characters, as well as the stage performance that raises the story about the Gen Z morality in these modern days. The aim is to help the morale degradation under today's circumstances. The BESFEST only requires the internet within the gadget so the Gen Z from low economic level will still be able to have access to BESFEST.

Commissioning BESFEST

The relevance concerning art and culture has often been forgotten by society. The challenge of preserving arts is getting tougher over time. Globalization and westernization make the condition worse. It brings a lot of changes in the pattern of society's life. The most significant impact could be felt in Besutan art. To optimize the preservation of the Besutan, all parties, including the government, non-government organization, and the community should go hand-in-hand to address the issues.

Cultural existence in Indonesia is regulated in Article 32, paragraph 1 UUD 1945. This was reinforced by the main tasks and functions of the district government of Jombang in the cultural preservation field, so that it could be carried out as it is right now. The existence of Besutan in Jombang is fading. No recording of the Besutan training ground in the education authorities is proof that Besutan's preservation has not been optimized enough. Even though the government has created a program of *Teras Budaya* that introduces art and culture into school, there are still a lot of Gen Z who are not aware of Besutan that originates from Jombang. As the stakeholder who is also responsible for this, the district government of Jombang needs to support the development of local culture and help to innovate the local culture so that it could be more sustainable in the new era.

The notion of BESFEST should be one of the innovations that pass into the government policy in interest to make it more acceptable and feasible for the people. Furthermore, the support of the government becomes crucial as they will become the front end that guarantees the progress and sustainability of the art and local culture.

On the other hand, as the pandemic strikes, artists are the one group that significantly impacted. According to Data Koalisi Indonesia, there are 234 art events that were canceled due to the pandemic, as it also affected 14.720 employees. Similar issues also happened in Jombang, in which Sanggar Budhi Wijaya suffered. It is one of many that used to perform

Besutan at their base. In the midst of the pandemic, all the elements of community should think creatively in order to survive. Sanggar Budhi Wijaya is able to act fast and adaptive toward digitalization as they come up with the idea to make podcasts and online performances published on Youtube. In accordance with these concepts, the idea of virtual reality in BESFEST could feature and facilitate the ongoing digitalization to increase the exposure received by the society. The condition of artists that came from a lot of diverse backgrounds even have been ready to adapt with the digital world. It indicates that the notion of BESFEST is highly probable to be adapted by broader artists that it could be used as the right alternative media for the source of income conducting the Besutan performance during the pandemic.

To increase the awareness of art in Jombang, the Government funds around Rp.20.000.000 each year to every village in order to preserve the arts. Furthermore, the community in Jombang also has "Berbagi Seni " as the activities unit that aims to introduce both arts and small and medium enterprise (SMEs) to gain more recognition. The government also has tried to do regeneration that collaborates with Sanggar Budhi Wijaya. This effort was taken to introduce and raise the awareness of youth toward Besutan. However, the effect still has not significantly affected people in a larger perspective. To address the issue, the program of BESFEST is arranged and created to fit with Gen Z. This notion will help to be the alternative of Besutan preservation and empowerment that enables regeneration. Gen Z will be invited to have a sight, watch, and imitate the value delivered by Besutan through BESFEST. In the end, not only will it conserve Besutan, but also will help the character building of Gen Z.

BESFEST program as an effort to preserve Besutan needs to gain synergetic support from the District government of Jombang, activists, and community, especially generation Z. Not only accelerate the BESFEST, other solutive measurements should be taken, such as prospering the art ground of Besutan. Full support on each activity would help to increase the awareness and educate the Gen z about Besutan. Regeneration on Gen z would become the most effective solution to prevent its extinction that could be started right away.

The technology trends that bring the development of virtual reality would go into waste if humans do not use it to serve its purpose and potential. Virtual reality succeeds in providing a three-dimensional environment in an interactive manner so that it becomes the best platform to present the component that needs the best audio-visual, like art performance. Pandemic pushes artists to keep getting creative using the digital media in order to keep existing through various circumstances. The declining popularity of Besutan is really unfortunate since it is actually one of the best arts that teach morality and positive character to children. With great delivery via technology, it would be the best media to address the moral degradation of Jombang's Gen z in this dynamic era. Gen z familiarity with technology will easily comprehend the digitalization and virtuality concept the BELFEST offer right to their hands. Hopefully, BELFEST will be one of the most effective solutions to accommodate Gen z so they will actively participate in preserving Besutan art while also imitating the positive values it brings for the character growth.

4. CONCLUSION

The effect of globalization and westernization has faded the popularity of Besutan within the community. It should get serious consideration since Besutan contains the values that teach children positive morality, character building, and enrich social learning. Furthermore, the moral degradation of Jombang's Gen Z should be taken into account. Many of them still lack nationalism, discipline, responsibility, and knowledge about the local culture that teaches moral wisdom. This condition urges adaptability of local culture based-education.

BESFEST, as a media to help the character building of the children, try to address these cultural crisis using the concept of virtual reality performance that would be an effective way to raise children's awareness of Besutan. Through BESFEST, Gen Z will be more educated and aware of the local culture and the wisdom it teaches as it will run effectively to revitalize the art itself. The rapid growth of technology should serve as media that teach to be more critical, strategic, and boost knowledge for the children.

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