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Living the Community Through Art: The Social Life of *Reboan* in Bale Seni Tepa Slira

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Abstract

This study investigates how a community-based art initiative—*Reboan*, held weekly by Bale Seni Tepa Slira in Banyumas, Indonesia—contributes to the social vitality of its participants. Emerging from grassroots artistic impulses, *Reboan* has evolved into a sustainable practice that bridges performance, learning, and cultural regeneration. Through a qualitative case study grounded in McMillan and Chavis's (1986) theory of sense of community, the research examines how the dimensions of membership, influence, needs fulfillment, and shared emotional connection are manifested in the community's everyday interactions. Data was collected through immersive fieldwork involving observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings highlight *Reboan*'s function not only as a platform for local artistic expression but as a space of belonging, emotional support, and mutual empowerment. As such, *Reboan* exemplifies the transformative potential of community art in cultivating inclusive, participatory, and socially resilient cultural ecosystems.

Keywords: community art, cultural participation, sense of community, social cohesion, local arts practice.

INTRODUCTION

In social life, art functions not only as a form of aesthetic expression but also as a crucial social force. It possesses the capacity to bridge interpersonal relationships, facilitate dialogue across diverse backgrounds, and generate meaningful shared experiences. Participation in artistic activities has been shown to enhance a sense of togetherness, strengthen social bonds, and cultivate egalitarian and inclusive spaces—particularly within communities that emerge organically and operate informally (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016). Within the context of community-based art, creative practices serve not only as outlets for individual expression but also as platforms for social communication, collective learning, and the exchange of cultural values.

Community art also acts as a vehicle for shaping and challenging collective perspectives, while simultaneously reflecting and responding to ongoing social and cultural changes (Shtyrbul, 2023; Stamkou & Keltner, 2020). More than just sites of artistic production, community art spaces are participatory environments where individuals are encouraged to learn, grow, and support one another. These practices contribute to the strengthening of collective identity and the cultivation of a supportive social atmosphere in which each participant feels valued and included (Sherman & Morrissey, 2017). As demonstrated in the case of community murals in Surabaya, such artistic expressions can also function as informal educational media that promote cultural dialogue and critical reflection across diverse social groups (Hartiningrum & Djatiprambudi, 2022). In contemporary societies that increasingly commodify art, community-based initiatives continue to serve as bridges between personal experience and social reality (Luhmann, 2000; Shaidovskaya, 2024). As such, they become vital mechanisms for social transformation, fostering shared experiences, reinforcing identity, and opening pathways for inclusive and sustainable cultural innovation.

Community art often emerges as a living social arena, particularly when practiced through open, inclusive, and participatory modes that are deeply embedded in the rhythms of everyday life. Within the theoretical framework of a sense of community proposed by Mcmillan & Chavis (1986), a sense of belonging is structured around four interrelated dimensions: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. These components offer a lens to understanding community not merely as a collection of shared activities, but as a network of meaningful relationships, reciprocal interactions, and emotionally resonant experiences.

In this context, artistic practice extends beyond the creation of artworks; it becomes a vehicle for reinforcing solidarity, deepening collective identity, and building interconnected social networks. As seen in the case of *Orkes Puisi Sampak Gusuran*, community-based performances can creatively blend poetry, music, and theatrical action to construct meaningful symbolic communication and foster shared cultural experience among audiences and performers alike (Amaliani et al., 2018). Such practices reflect how collaborative artistic actions may function as social rituals that support value exchange, inclusive interaction, and emotional as well as social fulfillment (Hannigan, 2024; Petroniene & Juzeleniene, 2022). Through active participation and ongoing engagement, these spaces also foster trust and openness—enabling dialogue across differences and promoting shared learning and deeper community involvement (Eriksson, 2019; Gonçalves, 2021). Hence, community art becomes a transformative practice where the dimensions of the sense of community theory are actualized through tangible, lived experiences.

According to Wenger (1998), community art can be understood as a form of communities of practice—spaces in which shared actions and sustained interaction produce collective identity and promote social learning. Artistic activities in this framework

serve not only as creative expressions but also as social mechanisms that nurture mutual understanding, emotional investment, and solidarity among participants. Matarasso (1997) similarly views community-based art as a strategic medium to foster social change, enhance civic engagement, and support inclusive cohesion. Collaborative practices, whether in the form of co-created performances, murals, or locally-based narrative project—have been shown to enhance emotional well-being, strengthen group bonds, and cultivate a shared sense of belonging (Spiegel et al., 2018).

Recent studies also highlight the role of community art as a vital cultural infrastructure that addresses marginalization, unequal access, and the erosion of local identity in the face of globalization. Participatory art spaces serve as empowering platforms for marginalized communities, offering opportunities to reclaim identity and engage in cultural practices often excluded from mainstream systems (Cardoso, 2024; Thulin et al., 2022). Accordingly, community art operates not only as a mode of aesthetic expression but also as a practical tool for social learning, empowerment, and inclusive grassroots transformation.

However, academic attention to community art in Indonesia's non-urban areas remains limited, despite the presence of vibrant and socially significant practices in regions such as Banyumas. Most existing studies on community-based art in Indonesia have centered on urban creative hubs like Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Bandung (Mahendrapati, 2018; Pratiwi et al., 2023), often highlighting structured programs, institutional support, or heritage-based preservation efforts. For instance, traditional performance forms such as classical Javanese dance at the Mangkunegaran Palace (Malarsih, 2007) or the revival of Karinding music in West Java (Asiyah & Musahwi, 2018) have received notable scholarly attention.

Yet, artistic communities in rural or semi-rural areas often function within different logics—marked by informal structures, participatory dynamics, and hybrid forms of tradition and innovation. As Nirwanto et al. (2021) illustrate in their study of Brendung art in Sarwodadi, Pemalang, such communities frequently engage in adaptive practices that negotiate between cultural preservation and the need for creative development. These locally grounded transformations underscore the importance of examining how grassroots initiatives respond to changing cultural landscapes without the scaffolding of formal institutions. Despite their richness, these practices remain underexplored in national academic discourse, signaling the need for further research on how informal, evolving art communities thrive beyond metropolitan centers.

This study seeks to fill that gap by offering a close examination of *Reboan*, a weekly community arts initiative hosted by Bale Seni Tepa Slira in Banyumas, Central Java. Unlike formal or heritage-based community arts groups, *Reboan* emerged organically from the needs of its members for creative expression, social bonding, and shared reflection. It represents a contemporary mode of artistic gathering that is informal, inclusive, and evolving—standing in contrast to state-sponsored cultural programs or strictly traditional performance practices. While programs like *Creative Communities* have demonstrated how participatory arts promote development in rural Indonesia (Amy, 2017), few academic works have engaged with the lived experiences and performative logics of ongoing grassroots initiatives that are neither institutionalized nor directly heritage-based.

Moreover, *Reboan* offers a rare case where performance functions as both artistic expression and a living social infrastructure. It not only provides space for performance but sustains everyday interactions, collective learning, and mutual support. This dual role—as aesthetic activity and cultural lifeline—makes it a particularly rich site for inquiry. By framing this case within the theoretical lens of *sense of community* (Mcmillan & Chavis, 1986), this article brings fresh insight into how

community-based arts foster belonging, reciprocity, and emotional connection outside formal structures and beyond urban centers.

Through field-based observation and engagement with participants, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how informal community art practices like *Reboan* respond to social realities in non-urban Indonesia. It offers an empirically grounded alternative to narratives that privilege formal art education, institutionalized heritage, or urban innovation. Ultimately, the article expands the discourse on community arts by foregrounding the lived strategies of cultural resilience, social expression, and collaborative meaning-making found in peripheral, yet profoundly creative, local contexts.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of how the *Reboan* initiative at Bale Seni Tepa Slira provides tangible benefits to the local arts community in Banyumas. A qualitative case study was chosen for its capacity to explore meaning, lived experience, and relational dynamics in a contextual and participatory manner within community-based arts practices.

The research subjects consist of individuals actively involved in the *Reboan* activities. They include the community founders and organizers, performers, technical crew, MCs, and regular participants. These subjects were selected based on their level of involvement and diversity of roles to capture a holistic representation of the community's social dynamics. The study was conducted at Teras Z Corner, located near the *Alun-Alun* (Town Square) in Banyumas District, Banyumas Regency. This site serves as the primary venue for *Reboan* performances as well as a vibrant social space for community interaction.

Data was collected using three complementary techniques. First, the researcher conducted participant observation by attending several *Reboan* sessions. This allowed for direct observation of the atmosphere, social interactions among community members, and the emergence of local cultural symbols throughout the event. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants such as community organizers, performers, technicians, and active participants. These interviews aimed to explore personal experiences, motivations, and the values perceived through their involvement. Third, the researcher gathered documentation including photographs, videos, social media posts, and program archives to strengthen the contextual understanding of the community's dynamics.

Data analysis was carried out thematically and reflexively, emphasizing interpretive depth and contextual coherence. Manual coding was used to identify patterns of meaning across the collected data. The process began with open coding to generate preliminary categories, followed by axial coding to identify thematic relationships and build conceptual clusters. These themes were organized using a matrix system to ensure consistency and clarity during interpretation. No qualitative data analysis software (e.g., NVivo or Atlas.ti) was used; instead, analytic rigor was maintained through systematic memo writing, iterative reading, and cross-referencing between observation notes, interviews, and documentation.

Intersubjectivity was addressed through two key strategies. First, the researcher maintained reflexive field notes and analytic memos to track evolving interpretations and reduce personal bias. Second, informal peer debriefings with a fellow researcher familiar with qualitative methodology were conducted to test the coherence and validity of emerging themes. This process helped ensure that the analysis remained grounded in the lived experiences of participants rather than the researcher's assumptions.

The analytical framework of this research is guided by the theory of a sense of community, which explains individuals'

attachment to a community through four core dimensions: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. These dimensions were used as analytical lenses to examine how *Reboan* generates social, emotional, and functional benefits for its members. Within this framework, the value of *Reboan* is understood not merely as an individual outcome but as a collective product of social relationships formed through creative and participatory processes.

To ensure the validity of the findings, the researcher employed triangulation across both methods—participant observation, interviews, and documentation—and sources, involving informants from diverse backgrounds and roles. Data validation was also carried out through open discussions and follow-up clarifications with informants to ensure that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected the perspectives and lived experiences of the community members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The *Reboan* initiative, organized by Bale Seni Tepa Slira in Banyumas, represents a grassroots community arts practice born out of a collective desire to create a space for free, open, and locally rooted expression. First initiated in early 2023 as an informal platform to channel creative restlessness amid everyday routines, *Reboan* has since evolved into a sustainable form of community art—characterized by regular weekly performances and the increasing involvement of community members from diverse backgrounds.

Every Wednesday evening, this initiative offers not only a stage for artistic performance but also a vibrant social space where artists and residents gather, interact, and forge meaningful social connections. What began as a spontaneous, enjoyment-oriented activity has developed into a dynamic arts ecosystem that fosters collaborative work, mutual growth, and tangible benefits—socially, emotionally, and culturally—for those engaged in it.

This section of the article focuses specifically on the social value of *Reboan*, analyzed through the lens of the *sense of community* theory proposed by Mcmillan & Chavis (1986). This framework identifies four essential elements in cultivating and maintaining a sense of belonging within a community: (1) Membership, or the sense of inclusion and identification with the group; (2) Influence, or the reciprocal impact members have on the community and vice versa; (3) Integration and Fulfillment of Needs, referring to the community's ability to meet individual and collective needs; and (4) Shared Emotional Connection, which emerges through meaningful shared experiences.

Guided by these four dimensions, the following discussion explores how *Reboan* generates benefits for its artists and participants, and how the social experiences and values that emerge through this practice reflect a vibrant model of connectedness, solidarity, and belonging within a living, community-based arts ecosystem.

Membership: Belonging and Collective Identity

A defining feature of a thriving community arts initiative is the emergence of a strong sense of membership or belonging among its participants. At Bale Seni Tepa Slira, this sense grows through inclusive and open interaction. *Reboan* offers a space where anyone can participate—as performers, production crew, or simply as audience members—without requiring prior expertise. Even individuals with no formal artistic background are welcomed, as the community values growth as something to be nurtured together. As emphasized by Moncos and Dimas, anyone who expresses a willingness to learn will be embraced.

This culture of openness reinforces a model of membership grounded in active participation, transforming *Reboan* into a flexible space for informal learning. Studies show that in community art settings, learning often emerges not through formal instruction, but through shared experiences, social

interaction, and hands-on engagement (Blatt-Gross, 2023; Lawton, 2019). Such participatory environments are effective in fostering a sense of belonging and strengthening group identity (Furtado & Payne, 2022; Wintner, 2025). At Bale Seni Tepa Slira, members gain experience in public speaking, stage design, event planning, and decoration through direct involvement in a supportive atmosphere. This structure creates a safe space to experiment, make mistakes, and grow together.

The community's ethical foundation is rooted in the philosophy of *tepa slira*, a local value emphasizing empathy, mutual respect, and acceptance of difference. In practice, this is reflected in the fluidity of roles and the absence of rigid hierarchies: an MC may assist with stage setup, while a concept designer might help with venue decoration. Research confirms that value-based approaches like this effectively promote egalitarian relationships and strengthen social cohesion (Jondar et al., 2022; Siregar et al., 2023; Widiana, 2023).

Collective identity as *wong Banyumas* (Banyumas people) is also expressed culturally and performatively, especially through language. The use of *Banyumasan*, the local dialect, in everyday conversation and stage performances serves both as an identity marker and an emotional bridge that fosters intimacy. It is the dominant language in the community, while Indonesian is used primarily in formal times, such as welcoming guests from outside. Research suggests that local languages like *Banyumasan* enhance communal bonding and serve as a symbolic resistance to the stigma often associated with regional dialects (Fatmahwati et al., 2024; Pawestri, 2019; Sutrisno et al., 2024).

Membership within this community is not understood as administrative status, but as a social process that builds belonging. Members feel present, appreciated, and free to express themselves. According to Koo & Song (2024), membership in community arts is forged through shared experiences and emotionally meaningful relationships. Artistic practice becomes a reflective space where individuals co-construct identity and negotiate the meaning of life in collective ways.

In this relational and supportive environment, *Reboan* becomes more than just an arts activity, it becomes a second home for many of its members. The process of becoming a member is not simply about showing up or performing but about growing within a mutually sustaining social network. In this ecosystem, every individual is given space to develop and to feel part of something greater than themselves.

Influence: Reciprocal Agency and Participatory Governance

Within Mcmillan & Chavis's (1986) sense of community framework, influence refers to a reciprocal relationship between individuals and their community, where members are not only shaped by the collective but also have space to exert their own impact. This form of influence is not defined by formal structures or hierarchical authority but emerges through active participation and the recognition of individual voices within communal dynamics.

The *Reboan* practice at Bale Seni Tepa Slira exemplifies this concept in action. The community operates without rigid organizational structures or formal institutional status. Decision-making unfolds organically through casual conversations, social gatherings, or spontaneous discussions after performances. There are no scheduled meetings or official forums; yet collective agreements emerge through shared understandings, mutual trust, and collective responsibility.

Each member exerts influence in proportion to their skills and capacities. Artistic direction often flows through Dimas, while technical aspects such as stage setup or lighting are naturally coordinated by Hesa, Jebi, and Bayong, who brings relevant expertise. These roles are not formally assigned but arise from a shared sense of respect and social cohesion. Studies affirm that communities grounded in trust and mutual recognition tend to foster higher levels of participation and stronger social

bonds (Cheng & Guo, 2015; Veress et al., 2023; Zhou, 2022).

Decision-making in this context does not stem from official authority but grows out of casual, everyday interactions that facilitate fluid idea exchange. These informal spaces enhance inclusivity and cultivate a more adaptive, responsive communal ecosystem (Herron & Mendiwelso-Bendek, 2018; Liddo & Concilio, 2017). It is precisely within these relaxed settings that the community discovers democratic and culturally resonant ways of organizing itself.

Bale Seni Tepa Slira's openness to newcomers also reflects this reciprocal model of influence. Anyone interested, even without a background in the arts, is welcomed and given space to learn and participate. This is not simply knowledge transmission from the experienced to the novice, but a two-way exchange between individuals and the community. Such dynamics are known to foster social cohesion, expand networks, and renew communities through fresh contributions (Baban & Rygiel, 2020; Gil & Parnther, 2024; Rajamaki & Mikkola, 2020).

In this context, influence is a simultaneous process: the community offers a space to grow, while individuals bring new perspectives that enrich collective practice. New members not only learn from the community but also help revitalize it through the ideas, styles, and energy they contribute (Pichon et al., 2024; Sonke et al., 2025).

Significantly, influence in *Reboan* also operates through emotional and normative dimensions. A notable example is the community's shared stance against political party intervention in their events. Though unwritten, this position emerges from an ethical and emotional consensus built over time through shared experiences and a strong sense of ownership. While the group welcomes educational discussions such as election literacy, it deliberately avoids partisan collaborations or transactional engagements.

This illustrates that influence in the community is not merely interpersonal or

functional, it is also moral and affective. Collective emotions and shared values form the foundation for maintaining cultural direction and strengthening internal solidarity (Kashima et al., 2019). In *Reboan*'s case, decisions do not rely on top-down leadership but rather arise from the community's collective responsibility to protect the integrity of its social space.

Ultimately, influence in *Reboan* is not determined by formal leadership, but by how the community is co-constructed through egalitarian and participatory relationships. Decisions typically emerge from informal interactions, not hierarchical directives—and this is precisely what keeps the community vibrant. Such a model of grassroots governance demonstrates that community art not only produces creative outputs, but also cultivates democratic, sustainable ways of organizing collective life (Bublitz et al., 2019; Lee, 2021; Oliveiro, 2024). Hence, the influence within *Reboan* underscores how artistic communities can sustain themselves not through rigid systems, but through flexible social networks rooted in trust, openness, and active participation.

Integration and Fulfillment of Needs: Space for Growth and Mutual Support

The *Reboan* initiative at Bale Seni Tepa Slira illustrates how community arts practice can function as a space for fulfilling a wide range of needs, emotional, social, and functional. Within this community, art is not merely a medium of expression but also a vehicle for learning, growing together, building networks, and finding meaning in everyday life. Participation in *Reboan* allows members to experiment, expand their capacities, and find a safe space to express their identities honestly and equitably. As observed by Goodman-Casanova et al. (2023) and Sonke et al. (2025), such community arts initiatives enhance emotional well-being and foster mutually supportive social networks.

Reboan also provides an open learning environment for anyone, including those without prior experience in the performing arts.

Learning unfolds informally, through direct participation in a supportive atmosphere—free from academic pressures or formal evaluation systems. Individuals are encouraged to try new things, make mistakes, and grow alongside others. This approach reflects the essence of community art as a space for empowerment, not just artistic production (Burton & McDonald, 2021; Zamiri & Esmaeili, 2024). Active involvement in artistic practice not only enhances technical skills and confidence but also nurtures collective identity and a sense of belonging (Burnard et al., 2017; Virkkula, 2016).

Social integration is also fostered through everyday interactions that, while informal, are deeply meaningful. There are no official forums or rigid organizational hierarchies; instead, decision-making and idea-sharing take place in casual settings, chatting at food stalls, gathering after rehearsals, or simply hanging out. Such informal spaces strengthen interpersonal bonds and act as adaptive, contextual mechanisms for community governance. As noted by Slagter et al. (2024) and Terry & Townley (2019), these close social encounters help individuals feel valued, increase participation, and generate collective consensus without formal authority.

Beyond learning and social connection, *Reboan* offers concrete functional benefits. Several members who began as stagehands, sound technicians, or decorators are now involved in external art projects. The skills they have developed or showcased through *Reboan* have become assets in forming partnerships with educational institutions, local government, or private organizations. This echoes findings by Patel (2024) and Song et al. (2024), who argue that community art not only nurtures creativity but also enables economic empowerment and professional access for its participants.

There are also indirect economic benefits felt by local vendors around the performance site. Food and beverage sellers near Teras Z Corner report increased income every Wednesday evening when *Reboan* is held. This supports the findings of Forte & Paola (2019), which highlight how community arts can stimulate local economies and reinforce social ecosystems through the movement and gathering of people.

Equally important, *Reboan* facilitates a wide range of individual needs and motivations. Some attend to pursue a hobby, others to learn technical skills, expand social networks, or simply unwind from daily routines. All these needs are welcomed within an inclusive, egalitarian, and supportive environment. In this sense, *Reboan* reflects the transformative and adaptive nature of community art. As noted by Bublitz et al. (2019) and Matos (2024), participatory art spaces encourage cross-background collaboration and interdependent relationships that reinforce social cohesion.

Overall, the dimension of integration and fulfillment of needs within *Reboan* demonstrates that this community not only builds strong social relations but also offers meaningful opportunities for personal growth and real-world impact. *Reboan* provides a space where members can develop personally, socially, and professionally. It affirms that community art is not only a vehicle for aesthetic expression, but also a source of substantial benefits that sustain daily life and social solidarity. *Reboan* is a living ecosystem, a place to learn, meet, grow, and share—deeply relevant to the challenges of the times and the human need for meaningful communal space.

Shared Emotional Connection: A Community Bound by Emotion

One of the most powerful aspects of *Reboan* at Bale Seni Tepa Slira lies in the presence of strong emotional bonds among its members. Within the sense of a community framework, the dimension of shared emotional connection refers to a sense of relatedness that emerges from shared experiences—whether through active participation, engagement in creative processes, or recurring interpersonal interactions. At *Reboan*, this connection develops organically in everyday moments:

setting up the stage, performing together, or chatting informally after the event.

The welcoming and egalitarian atmosphere leads many participants to see *Reboan* as a second home. In this space, there is no pressure to perform perfectly or conform to formal standards. Honesty in expression, spontaneity, and unconditional support are central values that foster psychological safety and emotional attachment. Newcomers, for example, are met with encouragement and applause regardless of experience, generating a strong sense of acceptance from the very beginning.

The concept of an *affective atmosphere* helps explain how emotional proximity is sustained through collective interaction and shared space (Blatt-Gross, 2016; Michels & Steyaert, 2017). Research also suggests that egalitarian community art spaces like *Reboan* are effective in reducing performance anxiety, strengthening social solidarity, and fostering self-confidence (Blatt-Gross, 2016; Falcon, 2023).

A key element reinforcing this emotional bond is the use of Banyumasan, the regional dialect of Banyumas. This language functions not only as a tool of communication but also as a symbol of closeness and a marker of collective identity. As noted by Moncos, speaking Banyumasan helps dissolve barriers and creates an immediate sense of familiarity—even for newcomers. In community settings, the use of local language has been shown to strengthen belonging, solidarity, and cultural cohesion (Hoerudin, 2024; Pennycook, 2010).

Reboan's emotional resonance is also evident during periods when the event has been temporarily paused. Loyal participants often express their longing on social media, indicating that *Reboan* has become an important emotional fixture in their weekly lives. For some members who live away from Banyumas, *Reboan* even becomes a reason to return—rekindling relationships and reconnecting with the local community. This affirms that community arts initiatives like *Reboan* are not just performance spaces, but also *spaces of return*—places that are missed, remembered, and deeply woven into daily emotional life.

The emotional connection at *Reboan* is further strengthened by the shared experience of growing together. Members have witnessed firsthand the transformation of *Reboan* from a modest initiative using borrowed equipment into a more organized and dynamic weekly event. This gradual development fosters pride and a collective identity, as each step forward is the result of sustained collective effort and mutual trust. As Farias (2016) and Bowe et al. (2021) observe, co-creating a community over time builds bonding social capital, increases psychosocial well-being, and reinforces group cohesion.

These cumulative experiences—from performing and learning together to missing each other's presence—form the basis of a deeply rooted shared emotional connection. Values such as loyalty, kinship, and belonging do not arise from external prescriptions but from lived, embodied, and emotionally resonant practices. This enhances the sense of ownership, reinforces collective identity, and contributes to the organic sustainability of the community (Gilkey, 2019; Kashaka, 2024).

Ultimately, *Reboan* demonstrates how community art can cultivate emotional connections that go beyond artistic expression—fostering solidarity, care, and a sense of shared life. Within this space, art becomes a means of being seen, being heard, and growing as part of something greater than oneself.

Findings from the *Reboan* community arts practice at Bale Seni Tepa Slira reveal that the event is not merely a venue for artistic performance, but a vibrant social space that sustains and nurtures its community. Through the lens of a sense of community, the four core dimensions—membership, mutual influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection—manifest clearly in the community's everyday life. Open membership fosters a sense of belonging and egalitarian interaction; mutual influence is cultivated through functional, participatory decision-

making; needs are fulfilled collectively through shared learning, social networking, and access to opportunities; while emotional connection emerges from repeated experiences of togetherness, forming bonds that extend beyond surface-level interaction.

Reboan demonstrates that community art is not only a vehicle for expression, but also a social mechanism that responds to real community needs—both symbolic and practical. In the face of limited formal spaces and the growing threat of cultural homogenization, *Reboan* stands as a powerful example of how the arts can build communities that are inclusive, resilient, and deeply meaningful.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that *Reboan*, as practiced at Bale Seni Tepa Slira, represents a successful form of community-based art that provides tangible benefits for its members. More than a performance space, *Reboan* functions as a collective arena that brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds in an open and meaningful shared practice. Guided by McMillan and Chavis's theory of sense of community, the research finds that all four core dimensions—membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection—are actively embodied and mutually reinforcing within the community. Membership is inclusive and flexible, allowing individuals to participate according to their interests and capacities. Mutual influence is fostered through egalitarian relationships and open communication in decision-making processes. Fulfillment of needs is reflected in the availability of spaces for learning, creative expression, social support, and access to economic opportunities. Meanwhile, shared emotional connection grows from repeated collective experiences, fostering a sense of connectedness that strengthens both social bonds and collective identity. In this way, *Reboan* stands as a living example of community art that sustains—

serving as a cultural practice that enables growth, mutual empowerment, and the preservation of local social and cultural values through participation and solidarity.

Moreover, the *Reboan* initiative offers a transferable model for developing inclusive, sustainable community-based art practices in other rural or semi-urban contexts. Its open format, participatory structure, and informal leadership demonstrate that impactful cultural initiatives can emerge outside institutional frameworks. This adaptability has already manifested in the emergence of *Euforia Space* in Cilacap—an initiative inspired by *Reboan*, which began in August 2024 and adopted a similar rotating, grassroots performance model. Such replication highlights the relevance and resonance of *Reboan* beyond its original locale. Policymakers, cultural workers, and educators can draw on this model to support locally-rooted creative practices that promote collective well-being, cultural continuity, and social innovation at the community level.

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