# THE PRESERVATION OF THE TRADITIONAL PERFORMING ARTS' SACRED PLACE

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explains the management of "Bharata" reputation, an Icon of classic, legendary, theatrical; traditional performing arts of Indonesia. Puppet has noble values in terms of moral education and philosophy of life; and "Bharata" becomes the "sacred" place for the preservation of the noble values of the puppet. "Bharata" is an institution that manages sustainable reputation and have to defend against the onslaught of competition from other institutions as a tourism destination. "Bharata" is a picture of a long journey and process of proving the majesty of traditional culture that owned by Indonesia. This study used post positivist paradigm. The nature of the study was descriptive and the selected approach was qualitative with in-depth interviews and observation for collecting data. Narrative analysis was used to analyze this study. The aim of this study has reviewed the reputation management of "Bharata" in its struggle of facing the globalization. The reputation management of "Bharata" is the results of coordination and socialization process within the institution; it is achieved through cooperation of each department by communication power.

**Keywords:** action of institution, institution identity, institution performance, institution reputation, traditional performing arts

## **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini menjelaskan tentang tata kelola dan/ atau pengelolaan atas reputasi "Bharata;" sebuah ikon klasik, dan legendaris dari dunia seni pertunjukan tradisional Indonesia. Cerita wayang sendiri memiliki nilai-nilai luhur dalam hal pendidikan moral dan filosofi hidup, dan "Bharata" menjadi tempat dan wadah yang sakral untuk pelestarian nilai-nilai luhur wayang. "Bharata" merupakan institusi yang mengelola reputasinya secara berkelanjutan dan harus bertahan melawan gempuran persaingan dari institusi lain sebagai tujuan wisata budaya. "Bharata" adalah gambaran dari perjalanan panjang dan proses pembuktia keagungan budaya tradisional yang dimiliki oleh Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan paradigma post positivis. Sifat penelitian deskriptif dan pendekatan yang dipilih adalah kualitatif dengan wawancara mendalam dan observasi untuk mengumpulkan data. Analisis naratif digunakan untuk menganalisis penelitian ini. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah menggambarkan pengelolaan reputasi "Bharata" dalam perjuangan menghadapi globalisasi. Manajemen reputasi "Bharata" adalah hasil dari koordinasi dan proses sosialisasi dalam institusi, yang dicapai melalui kerjasama departemen dengan didukung oleh kekuatan komunikasi.

Kata kunci: tindakan institusi, identitas institusi, kinerja institusi, reputasi institusi, drama pertunjukan tradisional

## **INTRODUCTION**

The performance of traditional human puppet show is one of the performing arts which remain victorious in the middle of great pressure of the globalization. Human puppet is a type of classical Javanese dance theatrical performance with themes taken from episodes of Ramayana or Mahabharata. The spectators of this traditional performing art would recognize the figures from the dresses and accessories that they wear, which are different between kings, gods, *ksatria*, *begawan*, princesses and commanders.

There is a group of human puppets called Bharata - an abbreviation of Sanskrit language: Bhava Raga Tala. Bhava means expression; Raga means melody; and Tala means rhythm. In javanese language Bhava Raga Tala becomes Bhawa Rasa Tala. Bhawa means singing; Rasa means soulful; and Tala means the nest of the bees which full of honey. Bharata means the soulful singing which as sweet as honey. The duration of human puppet performances is ussually shorter than the wayang kulit does. The puppeteer of human puppet has a much lighter job compare to the puppeteer of wayang kulit, because the figures in human puppet make the conversation among themselves. The uniqueness of the puppet is every puppeteer (in human puppet and wayang kulit) doing Suluk, a prelude of opening explanations with a special standard voice and some narration.

Enjoying the show of Bharata means watching and having the cultural tourism at the same time. This Javanese traditional performance art is full of life philosophy, that could be the provision as well as a guide in life. The pattern of human puppet performance begins with court audience, followed by a battle between a warrior and giants, who lead by Butha Cakil. The warrior wins the battle by killing Butha Cakil, it's symbolizing that every good efforts would successfully finished after eliminating the obstacles. Other Lessons from human puppet performance are: (1) Morality. The honesty, kindness, and truth should win against evil. (2) Human has to choose what to do in accordance with they own belief; It is reflecting the life. (3) Life Purification; and The needs of every single person to live in wealthy – healthy – peaceful – secured society with surrounded by the blessing of God Almighty.

Bharata is an institution where the masters or experts of traditional Indonesian dance performs. To perform as one of the character in the story of the human puppet, the performers not only have to show their expert skill in dancing, but also have to *nembang*, animate and role the character that is played. Established in 1963 under the name of Panca Murti, but due to the time pressure and the difficulties the group then disbanded and rejoined as Bharata on June 5, 1972, under the Local Government of DKI Jakarta. 40 years is way Bharata facing the world and the challenges of globalization which solid binding in it.

The human puppet of Bharata was integrated with its building. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the mega city that became the center of government, economy – the capital city of Indonesia, standing tall a building called "Gedung Wayang Orang Bharata." This is a newly renovated building, clean and fully air-conditioned. It is equipped with clean western toilets. The stage has good lightings and sound systems for the enjoyment of the spectators. The capacity of this building is 255 seats. It consists of VIP: 6 rows A to F of 15 (90 seats) ticket price IDR50.000. 1st class: 6 rows A to G of 15 (120 seats) ticket price IDR40.000. Balcony: 3 rows A to C of 15 (45 seats) ticket price IDR30.000 (Balcony seats are recommended for people who prefer to have unobstructed viewing). The spectators have to book the ticket and the seats that they like in advance to avoid disappointment, because the tickets are sold at the rate of 80% for every performance especially for VIP tickets which are nearly always sold out many days before the show date.

Human Puppet has noble values in terms of moral education and philosophy of life; Bharata has the duty to not only becomes the sacred place for the preservation of the noble values of the puppet, but also as an icon of classic, legendary, theatrical; traditional performing arts of Indonesia. Referring to its age (40 years old), the reputation management of Bharata becomes very essential. Bharata had to defend the good name and superior quality that they have, in order to be able to face the globalization. Various facilities have been provided by Bharata; it begins from renovate the building to the provision of running text board in Bahasa Indonesia on the stage; so that the spectators could understand the story in the Javanese, scene by scene. In struggling to maintain their existence in the midst of waves of globalization, Bharata was not ignored, but unfortunately not being considered as a precious heritage. Bharata had to face various problems. Existing problems should be addressed and resolved as good as possible, without override the identity and character of Bharata as a cultural icon. Bharata as an icon of cultural preservation is improving continuously, therefore the people could be proud of it. Bharata is an institution that manages sustainable reputation and must defend against the onslaught of competition from other institutions as a tourism destination. Bharata is a picture of a long journey and processes in proving the majesty of traditional culture that owned by Indonesia.

Based on the problems above, the questions of this research are: (1) How is the effort of the Bharata management in managing the reputation of Bharata - The Sacred Place of Traditional Performing Arts' Preservation? (2) What are the obstacles that can disrupt the reputation of Bharata management?

#### **METHOD**

The paradigm of this research is post positivism. Epistemologically, Denzin and Guba said that the relationship between the observer to the object under study cannot be separated. The flow of post-positivist is believed that the subject is not likely to reach or see the truth, if the observer stands in the background without being directly involved with the object. According to Guba prediction and control remains a goal of Postpositivism. Postpositivism found that is impossible to get the truth from reality when the researcher made the distance to reality or not involved directly with reality. The relationship between researchers with reality must be interactive, it is necessary to use the principle of triangulation is the use of a variety of methods, data sources, and others.

The approach of this study is a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative research methodology is a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words written or spoken of the people and behaviors that can be observed. According to Sugiyono (2009), qualitative research method is a method of research that is based on the philosophy. Post positivism is used to examine the condition of the natural objects, where the researcher is a key instrument, data collection techniques performed triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasizes the significance of the generalization.

Qualitative research design construct is continuously adapted to the reality of the field. So, do not use a design that has been developed in a rigorous and rigid, so it cannot be changed anymore. It is caused by several things. First, it is inconceivable earlier about multiple realities in the field, and second, it cannot be predicted in advance what will change because it will take place in the interaction between researchers and reality; third, different value systems regarding the relationship in a way that cannot be predicted. This descriptive study will attempt to describe or depict on reputation management of Bharata in their way to make Bharata as the sacred place of traditional performing art preservation. The research is located in Building One Bharata Wayang, Jl. Kalilio 15 - Senen, Central Jakarta 10410, Indonesia.

## **Primary Data**

Primary research requires data or information from the first source, commonly referred as respondents. Data or information obtained through written questionnaire or oral interview using: (1) In-depth interviews. According Bungin (in Hamidi, 2007) in-depth interview is a process to obtain the information for research purposes by way of face to face questioning by the interviewer or the interviewee's informant, with or without the use of an interview guide, where the interviewer and the informant involved in the social life of a relatively long time. Iinterview method used in this study were interviews, where the author conducted verbal communication with the source data directly, without intermediaries. (b) Observation, a method of data collection conducted by researchers to observe or record an event with direct testimony. Researchers can typically as a participant or observer in an event or object that is being examined.

## **Secondary Data**

Secondary research uses material source as a means to obtain data or information to answer the problems examined. In addition to using interviews and observations, the secondary data is supported by documentation. Documentation is a method of collecting data by taking the data from the original document. The original documents can include images, tables, checklists and documentary.

A qualitative study using in-depth interviews, is closely related to research sources or informants. According to Moleong (2007), informants are individuals who used to provide information about the situation and condition of research background. The informants have to understand a lot of information about the situations and conditions of the research background. Informants are obliged to voluntarily join the team with the values, attitudes, structures, and culture that supports the research background. In this study, informants had quite crucial position in the governing and managing the reputation of Bharata. Informants are individuals who are fully responsible for the planning of the implementation in the field monitoring. There are two informants of Bharata, the first is the head of management unit of Wayang Orang Bharata (TSW) building. This unit head is coordinating the tasks and functions of the unit manager (in this case, including corporate governance and reputation management of Bharata-related physical facilities). Second is the head of group of Wayang Orang Bharata (MMA). This unit head is competent to answer and give data of Bharata.

The data analysis techniques used in qualitative research is inductive data analysis. Inductive analysis is used for several reasons. First, more inductive process can find multiple realities in the data contained. Second, in order to create a more inductive analysis, researcher-respondent relationship becomes explicit, it is visible and accountable. Third, such analysis can outline the full background and can make decisions about whether to transfer or not to another background. Fourth, more inductive analysis can find along the sharpening effect of relationships. Fifth, the analysis can calculate the values explicitly as part of the analytic structure.

Data analysis is the process of arranging the data order, organizing it into a pattern, categorizing and describing the basic unit. The process distinguishes interpretation, provides significant meaning to the results of the analysis, explains the pattern description, and finds the relationship between the dimensions of the description. Bogdan and Taylor (in Moleong, 2007), defines data analysis as a detailed process of formal effort to find a theme and formulate working hypotheses (ideas) as suggested by the data in an effort to provide assistance to the theme and it's working hypothesis. The process of data analysis began by reviewing all available data from various sources, namely interviews, observations on field notes, personal papers, official documents, images, photographs, etc.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Gill (2010) said that the characteristics of corporate storytelling make it an excellent medium for an organisation to connect with employees on a more personal level and can aid in the valuable information retention to build employee engagement. Staffs who are more engaged with, and have a deep trust for their employer, are more likely to feel buoyant about their work and conduct themselves in a constructive manner. This may lead employees to become a reputation champions for the organization through the way they engage with their external stakeholders.

Fombrun and Rindova (Cited in Hamidi, 2007) identifies corporate reputation along five dimensions, concluding that reputations are: (a) Historically rooted. (b) Of concern to internal and toexternal stakeholders. (c) Based on past actions and achievement. (d) Assessed on the benefits accrued by individual stakeholder groups. (e) Used to position the company in terms of both its competitors and its business environment.

Reputation is a crucial aspect that is worth fighting for, managed and maintained by each institution so that the institution remains strong in the eyes of the public. According to Balmer and Greyser (2003), Reputation institution is how to manage the affairs of an institution with respect to all of its constituents; it is concentrated in the identity or character of the institution. Identity restricts the actions taken by the institution, how they make decisions, treat employees, and react to the crisis. The identity is the backbone of a reputation, and he describes the kind of relationship that built between public institutions with their most important, namely: constituents, employees, customers, investors and local communities.

In a word, a condition, and/or situations, reputation is difficult to define, because the complexity of interpreting or defining a reputation, then the Balmer and Greyser divide it into six points of view. First is the economic field corner. From the economic side, the reputation is defined as the perception held by outsiders against the company. The customer or the user or the user company can only "see" the outer shell of a company, instead of a manager who was located in the company can see the originality and the overall condition of the company. Sometimes, a company whose reputation was not obtrusive or lacking in character in a positive sense will be willing to pay an individual a popular and well-known for having a good reputation. So the good reputation of the individual can influence the company's credibility in the eyes of the public.

The second is a strategic view. In terms of strategy, reputation is defined as a hard thing to be imitated or duplicated, because it comes from the unique reputation-owned internal uniqueness of an institution. However, it must be remembered and heeded, that the institution must continue to pay attention to any restrictions or mobility refers to the movement of his reputation which is also owned and made by competitors or other parties. Whatever our reputation is, there will be those who can imitate reputation. Although imitate or emulate a reputation is not easy, but still there is always the possibility of that kind of wide open.

Third, the marketing point of view. In marketing, reputation is seen as the brand image of an institution. In this context, reputation is the result of the process of digesting the information that produces its own image in the mind of an individual or a person. Equity a brand created an awareness of the integrity of the identity of a brand and also its marketing program.

Fourth, the organizational view. In view of the organization, the reputation grew from the experience of the workers. Reputation background is created by a strong organizational culture and supported by the corporate identity. Institutional culture affects perceptions and motivation of managers, while the identity of the institution will affect how the manager will react and interpret the conditions and situations that occur in their environment. Identity and culture are two inter-related.

Identity gives an idea of the primacy of (core), permanence, and features typical of an institution that produces a particular interpretation which is then transmitted and distributed among the managers, where the interpretation is used to handle or face the external environment or institutions.

Fifth, the sociological view. In a sociological perspective, reputation assessed as an indicator of the legitimacy. Reputation is an assessment relative to expectations and norms in the institutional field. Many parties are involved and intertwined in the process of building a reputation.

Sixth, the accounting view. In accounting perspective, reputation is seen as an asset that is not visible but can be measured. According to the shrinkage of view of accounting, financial based measurement is considered better assessing a reputation.

#### The Economic View

From the economic perspective, the reputation is defined as the perception held by outsiders to a corporation (Myers and Majluf; Ross; Stigler; cited in Balmer and Greyser, 2003). The customer or the user company can only 'see' the outer shell of a company, instead of a manager who was located in the company can see the originality and the overall condition of the company. Sometimes, a company whose reputation was not obtrusive or lacking in character in a positive sense, will be willing to pay an individual a popular and well-known for having a good reputation. So the good reputation of the individual can influence the company's credibility in the eyes of the public.

Bharata always do introspection and improvement. Things are assessed or taken lightly by many people was always seen as a great thing. This is done merely to anticipate that happening. As a traditional and classical performing arts, Bharatais very blessed to have fanatic fans. The fans is that according to the narrative informants turn into embers that always lit the traditional performing arts Bharata. It is located in the nation's capital, Jakarta, where all the tribes melted into one, making it one bidder particularly nostalgic for those coming from Central Java and Jogjakarta. Various methods adopted by Bharata, for the sake of the spectators, started from renovating the buildings and other facilities that comforts the spectators, until the alloy variations of dance movements. Musical accompaniment is always different in every appearance for keeping the fans not to be bored. Although it is as well recognized by the informant that the Traditional Performing Arts is identical to the senior citizen. Regeneration is not easy; especially if we combine it with the flogging of globalization. Keep the young generation to continue Bharata, without the slightest diminish the quality of Bharata itself.

Initially the spectators of Bharata are the middle to lower class. The performers are identical to the senior citizens. However, recently, the spectators of Bharata are those that come from the upper middle class, the officials and former officials. Bharata realizes this, it is not an easy task to change the perception of the traditional performing arts which is identical to the senior citizens. But all things are not quite right should be clarified, since the beginning of Bharata was a performing art, the place in which there are figures that feels and recognizes its responsibility as a preserver of culture. Bharata makes one of its members as a spokeperson, according to Bharata it was enough to represent to the society of the reputation and quality of Bharata. Everything comes from within, especially if it is related to the perception of the reputation of an institution. Ideally, it is the reforms and the establishment and strengthening of the affirmed, and then people could see it from the outside, because it is reflected in attitudes, behaviors, and actions.

## The Strategic View

In terms of strategy, reputation is defined as a hard thing to be imitated or duplicated, because it comes from the unique reputation-owned internal uniqueness of an institution (Dutton and Dukerich; Freeman; cited in Balmer and Greyser, 2003). On the other hand, it must be remembered and heeded, that the institution must continue to pay attention to any restrictions or mobility refers to the

movement of his reputation which is also owned and made by competitors or other parties. No matter how good our reputation is, there will always be people who can imitate our reputation. Although imitate or emulate a reputation is not an easy task to do, but there is always the widely open possibility.

Bharata as the sacred place of traditional performing art preservation is a place that became keepers and developers of traditional Indonesian culture, in its 40 years old, Bharata is mature enough for an institution and an icon. The prerequisite to be a performer of Bharata is not only expert in javanese traditional dancing, but also expertise in *nembang*; singing songs in native Javanese language which accompanimented by traditional Javanese orchestra. In addition, because the show is not the same as a puppet dancing and singing in the Java language, before going to the stage, the performers of human puppet need a long and various training, to make the whole performance perfect, because every performer should animate his role as certain figure. Being a puppet or puppet show particular is not easy, not just memorized dialogue, and dance movements but also animate a puppet, it was the quality that is most emphasized.

Performing regularly every Saturday night is a strategy of Bharata in showing off their skills. The aesthetic reasons why human puppet performances is held in the evening is because the beauty of the make-up and costumes and the performers are Jewelries of the shiniest in the night. Performances every Saturday night is a showcase for every player, and a storefront on Bharata's reputation as a sacred place that is not subject exposed to the era, but it debuted as maintaining quality is spectacular.

The human puppet show used native javanese language, but to assist and facilitate the domestic audience who are less fluent in Java, the building managements hanging a running text board in Indonesian language above the stage, while for foreign audiences, the building managements provided a guide to assist along the performances.

# The Marketing View

In marketing, reputation is seen as the brand image of an institution. In this context, reputation is the result of the process of digesting the information that produces its own image in the mind of an individual or a person (Lippman; cited in Balmer and Greyser, 2003). Equity is a "brand" created in an awareness of the integrity of the identity of a "brand" and also its marketing program. Bharata is known not only for its appearance and treats their performer grandeur but also the location of the building where the performance shown. Many people knew it from the words of mouth. Bharata is actually not only performing at the Bharata, but also in many places, and in collaboration with many stakeholders; despite their individual, but still carry and use a big name behind Bharata. It has indirectly become a very positive marketing tool and is effective for the survival of the reputation and glory of Bharata.

Bharata building, may be used by anyone other than the puppet group Bharata himself, just not much to know about it. The people who will use Bharata building have to be the people who concern or carry the traditional performing art, as long as it carries the traditional art, they will be well received by the Bharata. One that really nice is the presence of *Wayang Tunas* amongs Bharata. Those who spread the word about the young puppet Bharata. They Inform their existence in the traditional art scene to their peers and it makes Bharata now gets filled with the faces of teenagers and young people in Jakarta.

Tickets to watch Bharata is quite affordable and has multiple levels, but it is not expensive when compared to the privileges shown holistically treat and perfect. Bharata was the majority of the numbers of audience, officials and former officials, but it has been increasingly shifted, Bharata are universal and for all people. Bharata did not classify the audience into certain categories. Both new and old audiences are treated equally good, equally close, and both are considered as a part of the

family of Bharata, so Bharata's reputation as an icon of cultural preservation, and tourism destinations among all ages could be described perfectly.

## The Organizational View

From the organizational perspective, the reputation grew from the experience of the workers in it. Reputation background by a strong organizational culture and supported by the corporate identity. Institutional culture affects perceptions and motivation of managers (Barney, Dutton and Penner; cited in Balmer and Greyser, 2003), while the identity of the institution will affect how managers react and interpret the conditions and situations that occur in their environment (Dutton and Dukerich; Meyer; in Balmer and Greyser, 2003). Identity and culture are two inter-related. Identity gives an idea of the primacy of core, permanence, and typical features of an institution that produces a particular interpretation which is then transmitted and distributed among the managers, where the interpretation is used to handle or face the external environment or institutions.

Although there is good coordination and communication, nonetheless all negligence occurred. In the event of negligence or violations perpetrated by internal parties, the Bharata will deliver it in person, verbally, and very clear. External communication is also very close and well maintained. If there is a loyal audience that is not present, then the manager will get in touch in a variety of ways, calling them and asking them the reasons of their absence, making the audience feel cared for. The same is done to the performer and staff. All of this is done to maintain the quality and good reputation of Bharata.

## The Sociological View

In a sociological perspective, reputation assessed as an indicator of the legitimacy (Granovetter; White; cited in Balmer and Greyser, 2003). Reputation is an assessment relative to expectations and norms in the institutional field. Many parties are involved and intertwined in the process of building a reputation. Bharata is an integral unit, as a group of puppets, and also as a building or physical structure. All of each other, all complement each other, all mutual. Management between the players and the staff of the building have no differencies. Carrying and uphold the values of openness and kinship and recognize the importance of coordination and communication for every thing, started from small to large cases, the reputation and quality of Bharata is maintained. From a sociological viewpoint, the reputation established by many, and the more powerful when the closer cooperation. All is well integrated and unified in Bharata. Kinship, sense of responsibility, and a sense of belonging to bind all those involved in the body Bharata. Maintaining coordination and communication is what will show on the external parties that the quality was formed and nurtured, and strengthened from the inside out. Coordination, cooperation, and communication was very good in the internal area to be much help when Bharata had to deal with external parties with different causes and reasons.

# The Accounting View

In the perspective of accounting, reputation is seen as an asset that is not visible but can be measured (Barney; Rindova; Fombrun; inBalmer and Greyser, 2003). Measurements based on financial deemed better assess a reputation. In what sense is that Bharata financially shows an increase or even a decrease, judging from the number of tickets purchased and accumulated number of visitors per period. Although from an accounting point of view, in terms of financial reputation, Bharata did not measure its performance financially. Bharata sees success in accounting side from the audience whether they enjoy their performances to finish. If the audience sitting quietly since the curtain opened until closed, clapping, and smiling happily after watching the puppet show, then that is the success of a show. So, satisfaction has also been proven precision.

## **CONCLUSION**

Reputations are the external reflection of a company's internal identity. It is from the outcome of sense-making by employees about the company's role in society. Reputations derive from multiple but related images of firms among all of a firm's stakeholders, and inform about their overall attractiveness to employees, consumers, investors, and local communities. A corporate reputation gauges a firm's relative standing both internally with employees and externally with its stakeholders, in both its competitive and institutional environments. Bharata as a sacred place for the preservation of traditional cultural performing arts, to manage its reputation as a cultural icon and tourist destinations in a way to maintain the quality they already possess and develop their skills with a wide range of variations. Bharata is not subject to globalization. Bharata is coloring globalization in its own way.

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