

The Caci Dance as an art-based communication in instilling collective cultural values

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How to Cite This Article: Parani, R., et al. (2025). The Caci Dance as an art-based communication in instilling collective cultural values. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 9(3). doi: 10.25139/jsk.v9i3.9942

Received: 12-03-2025, Revision: 14-05-2025, Acceptance: 31-05-2025, Published: 29-11-2025

Abstract The Caci Dance culture from East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, is a cultural performing art and is basically a form of war dance performed by the younger generation based on the principles of brotherhood and mutual respect as a form of gratitude. The purpose of this research is to analyse how the Caci Dance as a form of art-based communication instills the meaning of collective cultural values for the Manggarai people in Flores. This research uses a qualitative approach and ethnographic methods. Primary data was obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews with several stakeholders such as traditional village heads, religious leaders and the government. The findings from this study are that Caci dance as a performance art also has an entertainment function in addition to conveying social messages. In the Caci Dance, the message to be conveyed, apart from providing entertainment through dance and musical performances, is also related to moral encouragement to pay more attention to sustainable efforts in preserving the Earth we inhabit. On the other hand, the Caci Dance depicts the cultural values of collectivity held by the Manggarai community which can also describe the characteristics of the community. The collective values believed by the Manggarai community as their characteristics are the values of unity and mutual respect which are also seen from the process of involvement as an effort to preserve the Caci Dance.

Keywords: Caci Dance; cultural values; Manggarai; performing art; preserving the earth

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a highly diverse nation. This is evident in the high number of ethnic groups in Indonesia, reaching 1,340 ethnicities with 715 regional languages and 670 traditional dances representing 38 provinces in Indonesia (Azra, 2023). These demonstrate cultural wealth and potentials that make Indonesia different from other nations.

One of Indonesia's most prominent cultural potentials is performance arts, which is part of intangible cultural wealth. Performance arts are defined (Murgiyanto, 2016) as a performance with artistic value, presented in front of an audience, and requiring other supporting elements such as: a message to be conveyed, the delivery process and space and time. The performances of artistic value include music, dance and theatre, which are usually used to convey social messages to their audiences.

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The function of performance arts is not only to entertain, but also as a channel for conveying messages in the form of criticism or moral messages as well as education. Communication, as a process of conveying messages, plays an important role in performance arts, because it makes the delivery of messages more interesting, involves feelings and makes it easy to understand. The role of communication in conveying messages through performance arts is clearly emphasised by Lesen et al. (2016), stating that art is an effective tool for conveying messages, especially to raise awareness and participation from the audience. Two forms of performance arts that are widely used to convey messages are drama and dance. Dance performance art has a different appeal from drama art, especially in conveying messages, because it requires a deeper interpretation process, uses rituals and is more attractive.

The content of the message to be conveyed in performance arts can take the form of criticism or social and moral/educational messages. This is confirmed by Andri, (2016) who emphasised that performance arts, especially traditional performance arts, are more focused on celebrating an event, conveying social messages and also moral messages. Thus, performance arts, whether in the form of music, theatre or dance, can be used as a medium of communication in conveying messages.

One of the dance performance arts that can be used to convey messages and also to strengthen cultural identity is the Caci dance. This dance originates from Manggarai Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, and is also one of the dances that is often performed in front of tourists, both international and domestic, who visit the Labuan Bajo tourist destination. The dance, unlike other dances in Indonesia, does not only show beauty and aesthetics, but also shows scenes of violence.



Figure 1. Preparation of Caci Dance Performance
(source: Researchers Documentation, 2024)

Caci is a form of war dance that showcases martial skill (See Figure 1), in a dance form between two fighters, where one person holds a whip (called larik) and the other holds a shield (called nggiling) and a parrying bundle of sticks (called koret). The attractions displayed are highly violent because one party tries to hurt the other by using a whip, and the other party tries to avoid his blows using the shield and koret, so it is highly likely that one party is injured in the process.

The naming of this dance is also inseparable from the intended message to be conveyed. The name Caci comes from two words, namely: 'ca', which means 'one' and the word 'ci', which means 'test'. The combination of the two words thus means 'a test to realise unity, brotherhood and friendship' (Welianto, 2021) This dance is usually performed at weddings, thanksgiving or celebrations. According to Adiakurnia and Nursastri. (2018) there are three types of Caci dance, namely: Caci Randang Uma for harvest thanksgiving, Caci Lontong Golo as a form of gratitude for health, and Caci Randang Weri Leka for the inauguration of a village. Whatever the type of Caci dance, they are basically a form of war dance performed by young people based on the principles of brotherhood and mutual respect as a manifestation of gratitude. As a medium of communication in conveying messages, Caci plays an important role, especially in

conveying messages of harmony and peace to the people of Manggarai Regency. Harmony is important for the people of NTT because of the ethnic and religious diversity in this province. Based on the Ministry of Religion's report, NTT won an award as the winner of the highest religious harmony index in 2023 (Neonnub, 2023) One of the keys to creating this harmony is the contribution of various elements that continue to keep their commitment to maintain harmony (Lawudin, 2024). One of the efforts made to keep reminding people about the importance of unity and brotherhood is through joint artistic activities, namely: through the Caci dance performance.

The rationale for this research is because until now there has been no study that links art-based communication as an effort to instil the value of brotherhood. Previous studies have focused more on elevating and integrating cultural arts with values related to religious messages and organizational-based communication contexts, such as that conducted by Al Bachtiar (2023) titled: Pencak Silat as a Media for Da'wah (Study on the Pencak Silat Organisation of the Persaudaraan Setia Hati Terate Rayon Sumur Dewa, Bengkulu City). In addition, there is also research conducted by Pratiwi et al. (2024) titled: The Role of the Majapahid Nusantara Association in Preserving Javanese Cultural Values (Organisational Communication Perspective). On the other hand, so far, research on the Caci dance has only been limited to its relevance as a tourist attraction such as Jampi et al. (2019), The Value of Caci Dance Culture in the Manggarai Community, Manggarai Regency and also Antonius (2021), Communication Message Behind the Caci Dance Art, Greater Manggarai, NTT. However, these studies did not focus on the meaning of the dance and the message to maintain collectivity in the Manggarai community. Therefore, researchers want to fill the gap in literature that has not been studied previously regarding links art-based communication as an effort to instil the value of brotherhood, especially in the context of Caci Dance Culture.

One of the areas in West Manggarai Regency that still preserves the Caci dance is the Compang To'e Melo Cultural Village in Liang Ndara Village. The head of Liang Ndara village, Karolus Vitalis, has a Caci dance studio led by an elder named Yoseph. Based on the population data of Liang Ndara village in August 2024, this village is inhabited by 1311 persons with a composition of 650 men and 661 women, most of whom are Catholic (1099), Muslims (209) and Protestant Christians (3) with farming as their primary livelihood. The Caci dance studio is called Sanggar Compang To'e.

Liang Ndara village was chosen as the research location because the Caci dance has become part of a tourist attraction that is openly performed to visiting tourists. Research conducted by Astuti et al. (2022) stated that the Compang To'e Studio is able to coordinate cultural attractions from the residents of Kampung Melo to tourists, manage aspects of tourism and culture that are not limited to being actors on stage, but also in the managerial perspective based on the principles of family and social obligations. In addition, the Compang To'e studio not only performs the Caci dance, but also makes welcoming rituals, performs traditional dances, and sells traditional Manggarai clothing/fabrics.

The development and preservation of culture, especially related to the Caci dance and its rituals carried out in Liang Ndara, Melo village, makes this location highly appropriate as a research location. Caci dance depicts the characteristics of the Manggarai people, which are closely related to masculinity and courage. It is also shown through a dance that contains violence in the form of 'war'. Interestingly, Caci dance also depicts brotherhood and unity. This is what drives this research because it is driven not only to describe efforts to preserve artistic culture but also to express the meaning of the message conveyed by Caci dance related to the formation of a sense of collectivity. This is interesting, related to the process of conveying messages carried out through dance performances. The research question of this study is: How does the Caci dance, as a form of art-based communication, instil the meaning of collective cultural values for the Manggarai society, in Flores?. This research is included in the study of the field of communication science, especially that related to the context of cultural communication because it is also related to how culture, which in this case is depicted through the art of caci dance, can become a medium used to convey messages of social collectivity to the community in Manggarai, East Nusa Tenggara.

Communication as a process of delivering messages plays an important role in performance arts because it makes the delivery of messages more interesting, involving feelings and easy to understand. This statement is reinforced by the opinion of Lesen et al. (2016) who

said that, "the arts can deeply engage people by focusing on the affective domain of learning (i.e., engagement, attitude, or emotion) rather than on the cognitive domain (i.e., understanding, comprehension, or application)". This confirms that communication does play an important role in performance arts, especially to create 'closeness' with the audience because it can involve the feelings of the audience.

Understanding the content of the message conveyed in performance arts does not only depend on the performance media but is also closely related to the closeness of the interaction built between the artist and the audience. According to Sandström (2010), "There is a dialogue between the artist and the audience that is powerful and ideas which are the fundamental of performance art influence people, therefore, the art world of performance is important in constructing a social world". The closeness of the relationship is instrumental in influencing the depth of understanding.

Performance arts have the freedom to convey cultural messages that can be used as a basis for assessing the cultural messages conveyed. Goldberg. (2001) emphasised that delivering messages through performance arts is an 'open-ended medium' in which both content and interaction have no limits to be conveyed to the audience and gives rise to a feedback process in terms of understanding and assessment from the audience. This is also supported by Bauman. (1975) who emphasised that, "it offers to the participants a special enhancement of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction which binds the audience to the performer in a way that is specific to performance as a mode of communication". Thus, performance arts emphasise interactive communication to engage its audience so that the message can be conveyed.

The reception of messages related to performance arts can vary depending on the interpretation of the audience. However, in general, the audience hopes for something that can meet their needs. Daigle and Rouleau (2010); Kurtz, (2023); Zolberg (2010, 2015) try to identify several expectations that arise from performance arts including: intellectual challenge, aesthetic stimulation, moral instruction, emotional experiences, or entertainment. Thus, the existence of performance arts, in addition to being entertaining, can also share various messages related to morals, intellectuals and emotions.

Through performance arts, an artist can convey various messages according to their goals and interests. This provides an opportunity for artists to challenge, explore and control the audience's understanding and the desired situation (Sandstrom, 2010). In addition, a work of art can be said to have the quality to be shown to the audience if it is able to be a medium for conveying messages with an effective communication process and in accordance with principles, lifestyles, and provide a place for expression from the surrounding community (Greco, 2025; Hanif, M., & Maruti, 2024; Khan, 2018; Mahsan, 2021; Rusu, 2017; Tabuena, 2022; Wankhede, 2024). In this way, artists have power and play an important role in regulating the process of conveying messages.

The use of performance arts as a medium in conveying messages must consider various factors to be well-received by the audience. Finnegan (2014), emphasised that in the process of conveying messages in performance arts, several things related to communication through music and the objects used must be considered. This is inseparable from the use of symbols and sounds that can strengthen the meaning in conveying messages. Symbols are important because they use of symbols can represent certain meanings. In other words, the message to be conveyed in performance arts must be a form of interpretation not only in the performance but also in the entire complement and support of the performance as a unity in understanding. Understanding the overall meaning conveyed through performance arts as a cultural value is important because not only is the performance understood, but also the culture of the community. This shows that through performance arts we can see culture as a collective and not individual unity. According to Hofstede (2001) a collective culture has goals related to the interests of the community; therefore every action must prioritise the interests of the community over the individual. This is also reinforced by Kaur and Noman. (2015) who emphasise that collective culture applies to a very 'strict' society because there are high expectations for members of society to agree with the values, norms and roles that exist in society. Therefore, collective cultural values highly prioritise obedience and compliance from members of society. Likewise, the manifestation of collective culture in the performance arts must show the values of unity and obedience.

The communication model (See Figure 2) used in the performance arts, especially in the performance arts, requires interpretation as feedback to be able to understand the message conveyed. According to Navickaitė (2021), the communication process that occurs in the performance arts is no different from that which occurs in everyday life where the sender of the message is the creator and artist, while the recipient of the message is a person who is interested in art/audience. Meanwhile, the message to be conveyed in a performance art comes from the idea/interest of the art creator, which is manifested through a work of art and its supporters, which are then interpreted by the audience. So, communication based on art places great emphasis on the interpretation of the message conveyed.

The communication model of performance arts as a form of communication requires a creative process. The creative process is a form of art communication concept related to form and interpretation according to cultural context. According to Chervinska (2020); Lin (2025); Taşkıran (2019), art communication is a way of communicating between art and its audience through artistic language for scientific understanding.

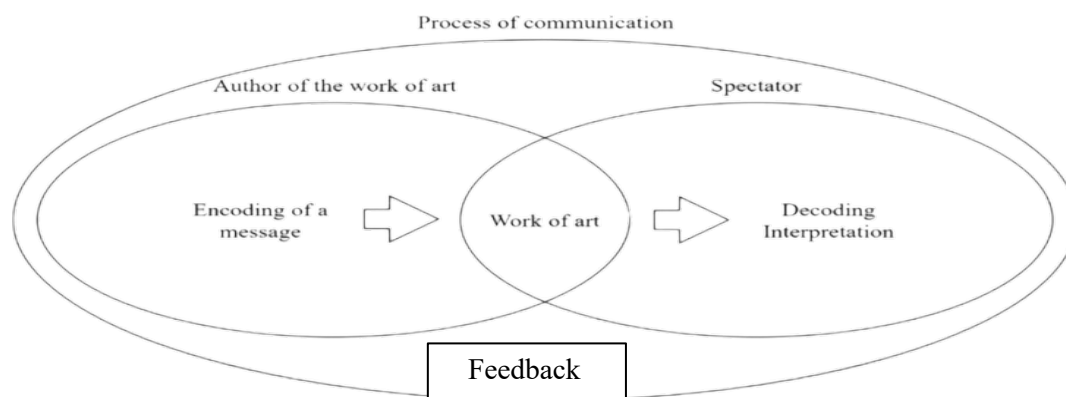


Figure 2. The process of communication in performing art
(source: Navickaite, 2021)

This communication process is seen as reciprocal and will give rise to collaborative work between artists and their audience to form a new perspective on communication in performance arts (Dowell & Weitkamp, 2012; Schechner, 2017). Therefore, performance arts is a form of art communication that contains messages with various supporting elements that can be used to build collectivity between members of society.

METHODOLOGY

The approach used in this study is qualitative. This approach is explained by Creswell and Poth. (2023) as a form of research approach used to explore and gain an understanding of the meaning of various social problems and phenomena obtained from several individuals or groups of people and make a sense of their experiences to understand the social reality of individuals. The qualitative approach in this study is also supported by the use of the ethnographic method. Creswell (2014) defines the method as follows, "ethnographic designs are qualitative research procedures for describing, analysing, and interpreting a culture-sharing group's shared patterns of behaviour, beliefs, and language that develop over time" (2014, p. 462). This method aims to gain an understanding of how the way of thinking, acting, and communicating of a group of individuals is formed through prevailing cultural values. This view is also reinforced by Noy (2017), who assessed that in the field of communication science, the ethnographic method can be applied to gain an understanding of cultural dimensions, daily interactions, and communication as a practice formed through mediated rituals. Therefore, this approach and method is used by the researcher to support the qualitative approach in this study because it focuses on seeing and analysing how the collective cultural values of the community in the Manggarai area, East Nusa Tenggara are formed through communication messages conveyed using the Caci dance performance art.

The data collection process and field observation in this study is located in Sanggar Compang To'e, Melo Cultural Village, Manggarai, East Nusa Tenggara. The data collected in this study were divided into two data sources, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data

in this study were obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews and direct observations in the field. Semi-structured in-depth interviews in this study were conducted with several informants who had a deep connection and knowledge related to the history, meaning, and implementation process of the Caci dance. In this study, four informants were identified who were directly involved, including: Karolus as the key informant, being the head of Melo village, Yoseph as a traditional leader of Melo village, Ino as an additional informant, acting both as a traditional leader and a Catholic religious leader in the area, and Raisa as an additional informant from the West Manggarai Tourism Office.

The data obtained in this study were then analysed using the open coding technique. The open coding technique is a stage in which the researcher conducts analysis by obtaining categories of information that refer to the results of research findings (Creswell, 2014). In order to obtain these categories of information, the researcher carried out several stages, such as copying and reducing data first and then coding the data used to analyse the results of the research findings. The researcher also classified data to facilitate the data analysis process. Through this data analysis technique, the researcher could describe how the Caci dance can instil collective cultural values in the Manggarai, Flores, community through a communication process based on performance arts.

The researcher also used the data source triangulation technique to ensure the extent to which the research results presented were able to reflect the actual reality in the field. Data source triangulation in this case refers to the use of various data sources to verify that the research findings are consistent and reliable (Creswell, 2014). Data source triangulation in this study was carried out on information shared by several different informants to gain an understanding and perspective related to the Caci dance performance art and its relationship to collective cultural values for the Manggarai community, Flores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Caci dance performance arts as a form of communication

Communication can be done through multiple message delivery processes. One form of communication channel that can be used for the message delivery process is through performance arts. This argument is also confirmed by Yuniar (2021) that performance arts can be used as an approach to convey certain messages that are packaged as entertainment to touch the hearts of the audience. The communication process that occurs in performance arts is not much different from what happens in everyday life, involving the sender of the message, who is also the creator and artist while the recipient of the message is a person interested in art or called the audience (Navickaitė 2021). The difference occurs in the delivery mechanism, where performance arts have an entertaining element for the audience because they are part of the arts.

One of the entertaining elements that often supports performance arts is the support of music as an integral element. This is confirmed by Finnegan (2014), emphasising that in the process of delivering messages in performance arts, musical elements must be included as an entertaining component and the use of unique symbols makes it easier to convey messages. Research conducted by Fabryka-Protska et al. (2024); Protska et al. (2024); Wijaya and Wongsodikromo (2024) also shows research findings that strengthen this argument where a set of Gamelan musical instruments are also used in the Reog Ponorogo performance arts originating from Java Island used as accompaniment to arouse enthusiasm and authority as a symbol of the Singa Barong figure who is depicted as a figure who has strong authority, magical powers, and tiger-shaped head. Therefore, symbols are important because the use of symbols can represent certain meanings. So, in other words, performance arts as a medium for conveying messages is a combination of various elements such as music and symbols related to the social and cultural meanings of the related community.

Caci dance as a performance art also has an entertainment function in addition to conveying social messages. The entertainment elements that can be found in the Caci dance are a combination of the musical instruments used and the complementary dances. This was expressed by Yoseph, the traditional leader of Melo village who explained that:

Generally, the main musical instruments used are gong (dongka Mbako), drum (Kasao) and small drum (Gendang Loe), all of which function to create a distinctive rhythm and tone used

to accompany traditional Manggarai songs: Taki Ta and Tatung (Yoseph, personal communication, 16 September 2024).

This music and songs are supporting elements that form a unity in the Caci dance performance art. In the tourism sector itself, music actually has a very important role in attracting the attention of visitors and become one of the main potentials that can develop tourism in Indonesia with all its diversity (Hutabarat, 2022; Parama et al., 2024). In line with this, the first findings in this study also show that this music and songs have a function to provide encouragement and spur the adrenaline of the two fighters to stay enthusiastic.

Meanwhile, the Caci dance itself, which is a war dance, is performed by four persons divided into two groups, where both groups fight each other using fighting equipment that is unique to the Caci dance. Karolus, the head of Melo village, explained the equipment used, namely:

The main equipment is Larik, which is similar to a whip used by the attacking group, while Toda is a round shield used by the defending group to protect and also Koret, a parrying stick in a semicircular shape resembling a crescent moon (Karolus, personal communication, 16 September 2024).



Figure 3. The two groups fight in several rounds in the Caci Dance Performance Art (source: Researcher Documentation and kompas.id, 2024)

These three main equipments are primarily used in the fight in the Caci dance. The two groups fight in several rounds and take turns as the attacking and defending groups (See Figure 3). Every fighter who plays the Caci dance is an adult (over 21 years old), has a good physique and experience. The rules of the fight are: only striking above the waist (it is prohibited to attack below the waist), the attacking group is only allowed to attack/hit once using a whip (larik) and if it hits the opponent's waist and above, the fighter is declared the winner and the wound obtained due to the whip is considered as a symbol of masculinity. The defending group tries to use a round shield (toda) and a parrying shield (koret). The combat is accompanied by songs from traditional musical instruments played by women.



Figure 4. A combination of movement arts displayed through fighting, accompanied by traditional music, in the Caci Dance performed by the Manggarai Society.

Source: Researcher Documentation & travel.kompas.com (2024)

The combination of movement art performed through a form of fighting accompanied by traditional music, according to Navickaitė (2021), is a work of art that functions as a medium in bringing together the message that the artist wants to convey with the interpretation received by the audience and is expected to influence. This is confirmed by Sandstrom (2010, p. 1), "There is a dialog between the artist and the audience that is powerful and ideas which are the fundamental of performance art influence people; therefore, the art world of performance is important in constructing a social world" (See Figure 4).

In addition, a dance art whose movement is based on choreography cannot be separated from musical accompaniment which will make its appearance visually more interesting and synchronized with the music which will add entertainment and performance value for the audience (Caldwell, 2023; Rustiyanti et al., 2024) The use of appropriate works of art can help in the interpretation process and this will affect the interpretation process so that the message delivery process can be done properly.

The use of performance arts in conveying messages is different when compared to direct message delivery because the delivery process through art media is highly subjective. Goldberg (2001) emphasised that the delivery of messages through performance arts is an 'open-ended medium' in which both the content and the interaction have no limits to be delivered to the audience and also gives rise to a feedback process in terms of understanding and assessment from the audience. This is also supported by Bauman (1975, p. 305) who emphasised that, "it offers to the participants a special enhancement of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction which binds the audience to the performer in a way that is specific to performance as a mode of communication." Thus, the interpretation process obtained is also subjective and can be feedback which depends on the knowledge and experience of the audience.

The second findings of this research show that Caci dance as a performance art certainly has artistic value through the combination of traditional musical instruments played with movements and symbols used in the martial dance. This is clearly seen from the explanation put forward by Yoseph, the traditional leader of Melo village that:

In fact, the Caci dance where the dancer/fighter uses *toda* and *koret* to protect himself, symbolizes the Earth trying to protect itself from attacks by the other dancer/fighter who uses the *larik* to injure it. In short, the message to be conveyed is our efforts to protect the Earth from all kinds of attacks that try to damage it (Yoseph, personal communication, 16-September 2024).

In the Caci dance, the message to be conveyed, apart from providing entertainment through dance performances, is also related to moral encouragement to pay more attention to sustainable efforts in preserving the Earth we inhabit. Therefore, our third finding of this study shows that the Caci dance performance is usually performed as a form of thanksgiving celebration which aims to communicate a message to the audience about the importance of maintaining the integrity of the world both in socio-cultural dimensions and also the environment against 'attacks' from outside parties that have the potential to destroy the social and cultural cohesion of the Manggarai community.

Caci dance performance arts as a medium for introducing and maintaining Manggarai culture

The existence of Caci dance as part of the Manggarai culture is very important because it has become not only a performance art but also a form of ceremonial art that is often performed in celebrations such as weddings, harvests and other thanksgiving celebrations. Basically, these celebrations are the embodiment of collective values that are the basis for maintaining integrity in society. Caci dance is considered to be able to build engagement between members of society because it has sacred values that are the basis for the formation of cultural values that exist in society. Lesen et al. (2016) affirm how art performances can convey messages related to efforts to build engagement with their audiences. In the context of the Manggarai community, Caci dance can be used to build closeness through messages that are conveyed that can strengthen collective cultural values.

The fourth research finding shows that the equipment used in the Caci dance performance art have meanings, the *toda* (round shield) depicting the earth; *koret* as a depiction of protection,

while the weapon used by the opponent in the form of larik (whip) depicts the threats. These do not only give a message to the audience as an effort to protect the earth from hostile attacks but also gives a deeper meaning to the Manggarai community related to various hopes and challenges. This is also emphasized by Zolberg (1990), Daigle & Rouleau (2010) and Kurtz (2023) who tried to identify the values conveyed in the performance arts such as: intellectual challenge, aesthetic stimulation and moral instruction. All of these values appear in the Caci dance and are specifically conveyed to the Manggarai community.

The fifth research finding shows that two of the values that is considered to have strength as a collective cultural value are unity and mutual respect. The importance of these two values was explained by a Catholic religious leader, also a traditional leader, Ino, who said:

Caci dance is performed by scores of groups spread across almost all villages in Manggarai and every year a competition is always held. Although this is a war dance, the participants who come from villages in Manggarai consider this as a form of annual meeting that must be attended to strengthen a sense of attachment or a sense of unity. The main objective is not winning, but a sense of attachment/unity that strengthens society. We respect each other (Ino, personal communication, 21 September 2024).

Thus, it is clear that there is no sense of revenge, even though there is a possibility of physically harming each other, but the dancers respect each other and uphold the value of unity as a foundation in the formation of collective cultural values. In this performance, it is depicted that the Manggarai community will provide resistance to any party, both outside and inside, that wants to change the social and cultural values that apply in society. This message is depicted in the dance played by the two people who fight in the dance. Kaur and Noman (2015) emphasised that the collective cultural values that apply to society are very 'strict' because there are high expectations for members of society to agree with the values, norms and roles that exist in society. Mutual respect and unity are collective cultural values that are very strong and have high expectations and apply to the Manggarai community. According to Zolberg, (2005, 2015), these values are also a moral instruction that binds every member of society. Therefore, collective cultural values highly value the awareness and obedience of members of society. Likewise, the manifestation of collective culture in the performance arts must show the values of unity and mutual respect.

The sixth research finding shows that collective cultural values, especially concerning the value of unity, are also seen from the sense of responsibility of the Manggarai community, independently to preserve the Caci dance because this dance is considered a symbol of courage and pride of the community. For the Manggarai community, the Caci dance is not only an entertainment dance art supporting tourism but also a symbol of unity in maintaining the integrity of society, especially in facing external influences, and even manifested in a fight to maintain 'self-respect'. Therefore, the process of preserving this dance involves many dance studios and schools teaching and performing this dance in various big celebrations. This can be seen from the Manggarai Tourism Office, represented by Raisa:

Efforts to preserve the Caci dance come from the awareness of the Manggarai community who consider this dance to be a cultural heritage of the Manggarai region and only exist in the regency. Therefore, in order to preserve it, the Caci dance studios work together with tour operators/tourist agents to be able to "sell" this dance through tour packages to foreign and local tourists. We from the Manggarai Tourism Office only provide supervision and regulation. Indeed, the Manggarai community has a sense of unity and even though there is competition between each studio, they still respect each other so that there is never any conflict (Raisa, personal communication, 20 September 2024).

From this statement, the Manggarai people have a strong sense of collectivity, especially in introducing and maintaining their culture. This is also emphasised by the view expressed by Abdillah et al. (2024) that the development of tourism in Labuan Bajo cannot be separated from the role of religious leaders (especially Catholic leaders as the majority religion) who always emphasize the importance of maintaining existing diversity and always see what the community needs so that it gets a positive impact along with the increasing development of tourism there. Susanti and Sjachro. (2019) also stated that the process of preserving cultural heritage such as

dance, music, and certain rituals is important to maintain the identity of a community in the area and provides economic benefits because it is one of the tourism potentials that can be introduced to the wider community.

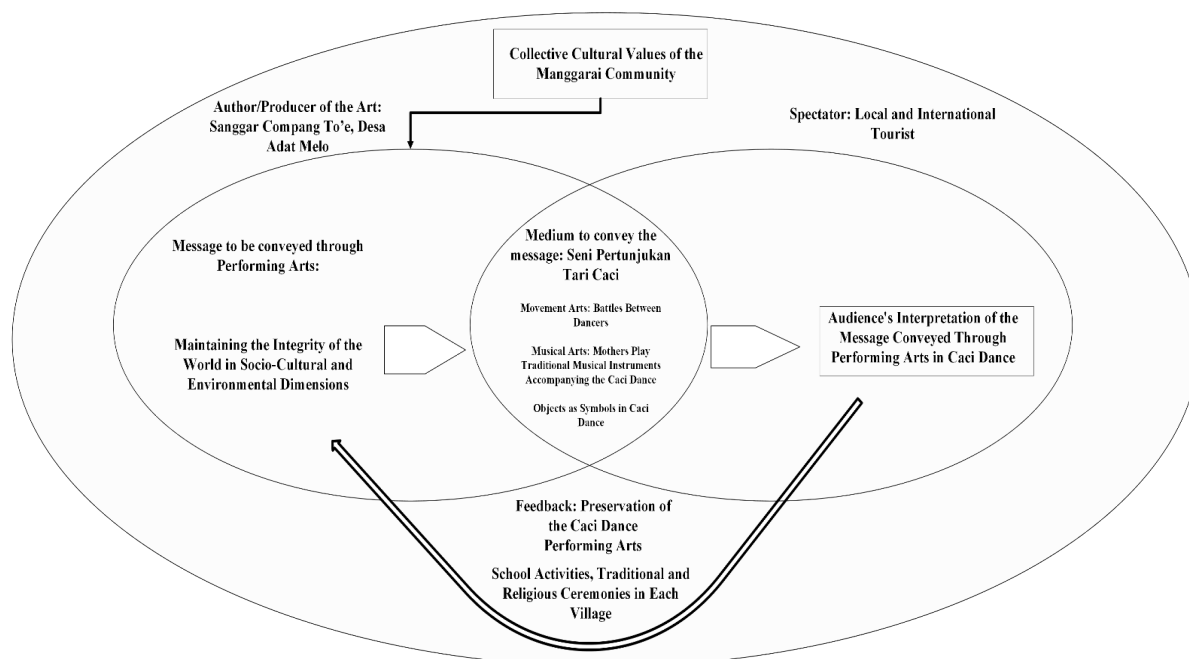


Figure 5. Model of Instilling Collective Cultural Values Messages Through Caci Dance for the Manggarai Society, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia (source: Researchers, 2024)

In addition, Hofstede (2001) also stated that the purpose of collective culture is related to the interests of the community, therefore every action must prioritise the interests of the community rather than the individual. Our last finding of this research were also explained by one of the informants, Ino (Ino, personal communication, 21 September 2024), as a Catholic religious leader and also a traditional leader of Manggarai Society, explained that the Caci dance performance art as part of the culture of the Manggarai people, contains high collectivity values, especially to form values of unity and mutual respect, and is also supported by terminology in the Manggarai language which is known as: *"muku ca pu'u neka woleng curup, teu ca ambo neka woleng lako"* (See also Figure 5). This term also strengthens the implementation of the values of the Third Principle of Pancasila in the lives of the people of East Manggarai by prioritising the spirit of unity, harmony between tribes, and the preservation of local cultural traditions (Bernardino et al., 2024).

Performance arts, as part of culture play an important role not only in providing entertainment but also in conveying moral messages. Caci is one form of Manggarai community art that is often performed to tourists visiting Manggarai, where this dance has a lot of values that are not only artistic but also as a means of conveying moral messages. Caci dance describes the characteristics of Manggarai society because it contains collective values that are believed to be able to strengthen unity and foster mutual respect among members of society.

CONCLUSION

Art as part of culture, especially dance, in addition to being used for entertainment, can also be used to convey messages and one of them is the Caci dance, which is the pride of the Manggarai community. As a war dance, the Caci dance shows many scenes of violence and can often cause injuries due to being hit by a larik (whip) from an opponent's attack while the party being attacked will try to defend themselves by using the toda (round shield) and koret (parrying stick). The fight depicted through the Caci dance is indeed full of violence; however, the message that is to be conveyed through the fight and the use of equipment in the dance is to maintain the integrity of the earth from 'attacks' from outside parties that have the potential to destroy the

social and cultural cohesion of the Manggarai community. This is the message that is trying to be conveyed to the audience with the hope that the audience can interpret this message.

In addition to conveying messages, the Caci dance depicts the cultural values of collectivity held by the Manggarai community which can also describe the characteristics of the community. The collective values known as: "*muku ca pu'u neka woleng curup, teu ca ambo neka woleng lako*" believed by the Manggarai society as their characteristics, are the values of unity and mutual respect, which are also seen from the process of involvement as an effort to preserve the Caci dance and participate in implementing the values of the third principle of Pancasila related to the values of unity, oneness, and promoting national unity through messages conveyed in the art of Caci Dance. Thus, the Caci dance can be used as a medium in conveying messages as well as a place to recognise the characteristics of the Manggarai community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (LPPM/CRCD) Universitas Pelita Harapan for the research grant based on the research contract number: 097/LPPM-UPH/VII/2024.

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