

Preserving Sentani Folklore to Promote Creative Economy in Jayapura, Papua

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Sentani tribe Papua is famous for folklore heritages. Unfortunately, those heritages are not recognised by the people, especially the young ones. Besides, Sentani economic life is threatened and needed to be helped. This paper aims at exploring and offering alternative ways of preserving Sentani cultural heritages by focussing on traditional proverbs and bark paintings and use them as economic assets. Data of proverbs and bark paintings were collected through observation, interviews, transcription, and translation from tribal chiefs, elderly people, bark painters in East, Central, and West Sentani. This writing adopted socio-cultural and socio-economic approaches. The result proposes that by infusing cultural heritages in the forms of arts as media of supporting the creative economy, they can be recognised and appreciated by Sentani young generation and other people in a wider context. The strategy signifies both in socialising Sentani cultural heritages and improving Sentani economic life at once.

Key words: *Folklore, cultural heritages, preservation, creative economy*

Introduction

Sentani tribe is one of the hundreds of tribes in Papua living along the lakeside and on the islands of Lake Sentani, Jayapura Regency, Papua spreading from the east to the west. While enjoying the natural beauty of the lake and its consumable resources, Sentani people are also enriched with folklores: verbal, partly verbal, and nonverbal ones, namely folktales (myth, legends, fables, and fairy tales), oral poems (*helaehili*, *ehabla*, *helaehelae*, and *helaehuba*), folksongs, traditional proverbs, traditional dances, bark painting (*malo*), carving (*ohomo*), and traditional architecture (Yektiningtyas & Modouw, 2017). Unfortunately, those cultural heritages are not recognised by most of the young generation of Sentani. Only remained people of the old generation in rural areas, including some *ondofolo/khote* (tribal chiefs), still recognise

and practice them in their daily life activities. There are some reasons as the background of this life orientation change, such as technology, modernisation, and heterogeneous community (cf. Ozlem, 2018). For example, among others, folktales telling that flourished in the past has been replaced by TV, gadgets, and modern games; Indonesian and Papuan Malay, instead of Sentani language, is used as a means of daily communication due to the presence of other tribes from outside of Sentani; modern dances are frequently performed instead of the traditional ones; oral poems are not sung anymore due to the extinction of the singers, and traditional proverbs are not used anymore together with the decrease of Sentani language use as the tool of communication. Being aware of such various types of folklores, this paper only focuses on traditional proverbs and bark paintings (*malo*) due to the fact that (1) Sentani people want to relearn their traditional proverbs and (2) bark paintings are still produced and sold in Asei Island.

Our regular observation shows that Sentani people's economy does not move fast in this modern era for two main reasons: lack of trading skills and lack of land availability. Most people still depend on their traditional livelihood, i.e. fishing, gardening, and sago pounding. After putting aside their household consumption portion, some people also sell fish, garden products, and sago flour in the traditional markets. But, nowadays the trade is tightly competitive so, to some extent, they cannot compete with people from outside of Sentani who understand the principles of trading. Hendambo and Puraro (2018-personal communication/pers. com.) strengthened that such a lack of modern trading skills is related to the barter system of Sentani people in the past to meet their life's need. They exchanged good for good, without having money system like nowadays. Rubin (2003) calls that the barter system as one of the characteristics of folk economics practised by untrained individuals who do not yet understand about trade and have no training to improve welfare by utilising trading opportunities. Thus in the modern era, Sentani people now have to learn the current trading skills to help them work hard to compete with traders who come from outside of Sentani. Besides, it is also noteworthy that Sentani people do not have vast land anymore for gardening since it had been sold out to the government for infrastructural reasons like constructing roads, schools, and other public buildings. Some landowners also sold their piece of land to people from outside of Sentani (Awoitaw, 2017 for housings, hotels, stores, etc. A man of culture and a public figure of Sentani (Ibo, 2019-pers.com.) highlighted that the phenomena of land selling from the 1980s to 2000s was ironical since the people could not well manage a big amount of money they received from the buyers. Sadly, they did not have financial assistance from the government on how to manage the money for a family business and a clan business. As a consequence, they finished the money instantly. So, financially, they did not have benefits from it to sustain their daily life. They even faced different obstacles: they could not do gardening freely anymore due to the lack of land for agricultural purposes.

Accordingly, this research is to explore alternative assets that can be used by Sentani people to develop their economy since they cannot depend on their land, forest, and the lake anymore to support their life's need. Interestingly, in Asei Island (East Sentani), the authors observe that while doing limited gardening and fishing activities, some people also work on bark painting (*malo*) as a commodity for sale. They produce and sell the paintings, mostly on the island in a conventional way, to the interested customers. According to Ohee (59 years), Kaigere (65 years) as painters and Pepuho (61 years) a native Asei woman, some domestic and foreign tourists come to the island and buy the paintings.

Based on our observation from 2015 to 2018 in Asei Island, it is noted that the young generation did not participate a lot in the painting activities. Specifically, the teenagers were not involved in such artistic but commercial activities. They were even ignorant. Only some married young women put aside their time to do the paintings to support their home economy. Back in 2008, the non-Sentani traders saw this *malo* as a cultural commodity that could generate money, so they produced some fake bark paintings to sell in an art market in Jayapura (Ongge, 2016-pers.com.). This phenomenon cannot be allowed to happen again in this present time since as one of the Sentani cultural heritages, *malo* reflects the identity of Sentani people. From a piece of a *malo*, one can learn about history, cosmology, mythology, philosophy, socio-culture or even local wisdom such as hard work, cooperation, persistence, patience, respects, and love. So, for preventing outsiders from producing fake bark paintings in future and also due to its cultural significance and meaning, *malo* should be preserved and revitalised. An initiative to help young generation in learning and to practise their ancestors' heritage is urgently needed (Hani, 2012). Shehada (2020), in the same line, also highlighted the importance of preserving cultural heritages as the identity and continuation of the future generation.

This paper aims at offering alternative ways of preserving and socialising Sentani traditional proverbs and bark paintings in more modern ways. Through these ways, the young generation who tend to think up to date and move faster are motivated and encouraged to go back to their identity and help people produce different kinds of bark paintings to attract buyers (cf. Idris, et al., 2016). This is an initiative to use Sentani's cultural heritage as assets to support their economy as well. Similarly, Wells (2006) sees that the tradition in the past remain valuable at present and can be used as economic opportunities, i.e. tradition in the form of objects, arts, and performance. She highlights the possibilities of capitalising cultural heritage products as the balance of preservation and economic development (cf. Grobar, 2019).

Review of Literature

Sentani people have traditional proverbs that flourished richly in the past. There are at least four kinds of proverbs circulated among society (Yektingtyas-Modouw & Mawene, 2018; Yektingtyas-Modouw, 2017). Firstly, **true proverbs**, i.e. "*alu ya konsemi no nakambu*

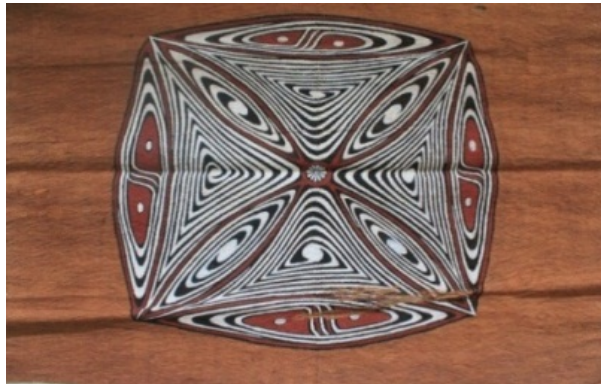
wauguaw” to describe that problems/temptations faced by a person will make him/her stronger in life. Secondly, **proverbial phrase**, i.e. “*a bang faeu bang, kum bang melali bang*” to illustrate a very silent person. Thirdly, a **proverbial comparison** that is usually preceded by “like” and “as”, i.e. “*o male ha male waneng ruwele honale*” to metaphorise a very sick tribal chief. Fourthly is a **proverb like the expression** that is used to insult and retort and wisecrack, i.e. “*ebe ere felensande*” (an upside-down pot) to criticise a woman who does not provide food at home. Those kinds of proverbs in the past were used by tribal chiefs in their speech in front of social or traditional gatherings, parents/grandparents in their advice to their children/grandchildren. They used proverbs not only to give ornaments to their speech or talks but also to strengthen their purposes since some of the proverbs were also closely related to either mythology or philosophy. Proverbs were also used as a medium to educate and build character, i.e. hard work, cooperation, discipline, persistence, patience, loyalty, honesty, respects, and environmental conservation (Hani’ah, et al. 2019; Dikul & Kiting, 2019; Asri, 2018; Udu, 2018; Yektiningtyas-Modouw, 2017; Santyaningtyas & Noor, 2016). Unfortunately, those proverbs are not recognised by most Sentani people, especially the young generation. They do not even know the existence of the traditional proverbs. The similar phenomena also happen in other places in Indonesia, i.e. Central Jawa (Sarman 2017; Utami dan Supriyanto 2015), Yogyakarta (Asri, 2018), Buton in Southeast Sulawesi (Udu 2018), and Kerinci in West Sumatera (Wulandari & Hadiyanto 2018).

Bark painting (*malo*) historically was Sentani traditional clothes (Howard, 2000) (Picture 1) that was then transformed as artwork (Picture 2) that expressed their socio-cultural life. In the past, *malo* was painted only by men in a secluded place. They believed that bark painting was a sacred activity (Ohee, 2018 & Ongge, 2015-pers com.). But now women mostly do the paintings and men find the bark, mostly from *khombouw* tree (*ficus variagata*) to be processed as a canvas to paint on (Ohee and Pepuho, 2018-pers.com; Hermkens, 2007). In Sentani language, *malo* (eastern Sentani dialect) or *maro* in central and western Sentani dialect means “cloth”. Since bark painting is only produced in Asei Island and its surrounding in East Sentani, the word “*malo*” is then applied in this paper.

Picture 1. Malo as traditional clothes
(Wirz, 1932)



Picture 2. Malo as a bark painting (Doc. Personal Collection-2018)



In the past, there were some long unique processes in creating *malo*. To get the tree barks, some men did rituals before cutting trees down and planted new trees to replace the old ones. This Sentani people's ecological awareness is seen through the motifs of *malo*, i.e. fauna (Picture 3: fish), flora (Picture 4: sago leaves), and water symbolising the nature that has to be sustainably conserved.

Picture 3. Picture 4. Samples of bark paintings with motifs of fish, eel, starfish, and sago leaves (Doc. Personal Collection-2018)



Each tribal chief has specific motifs of bark painting that cannot be possessed by common people, but common people's motifs can be possessed by tribal chiefs. Specific motifs are related to each clan's totem and sacred legends, for example, bat for Wally clan and crocodile for Modouw clan. Common people's motifs portray nature: environment, flora, and fauna (Ongge, 2018-pers.com.).

There are some definitions of "creative economy". Howkins (2002) defined it as "the creation of value as a result of idea". To him, "creative economy deals with the people's creativity in developing ideas ... and use it to support economy". To Newbiggin (2012), the term "creative



industries” was used prior to the term of “creative economy”. It is an economic concept based on creative assets to generate people’s economic growth and development. Its sources may come from various creativities, i.e. cultural heritages in the forms of dances, music, play performance, or even handicrafts (Grobar, 2019; Idris, 2016; Szmelter, 2013; Wells, 2006). It is also interesting to note a concluding remark of a United Nation survey (2008) about the creative economy that is said as an “interface between creativity, culture, economics and technology ... to generate income and to promote social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development”. In Indonesia, according to the Department of Trade of Republic of Indonesia (2008), when people cannot only depend their economy on the agricultural and industrial sectors, the concept of creative economy was actively pushed. This activity intensifies information and creativities of human resources in economic activities.

In Sentani context, underlining UN remarks on the creative economy as a balance of generating people’s economy as well as promoting social inclusion, cultural diversities, and human development, this paper intends to explore Sentani cultural heritages focussing on traditional proverbs and bark paintings to be used as assets of people’s economy (Grobar, 2019; Inocian, et.al, 2019; Guilherme, 2017; Wells, 2006). Actually, Sentani people, especially those who live in Asei, due to the limited natural resources, have started their creative economy in the 1980s. Ongge, a senior bark painter (2018-pers.com.) explained that at that time, some people created bark paintings and sold them. Since the price was high, only some people could afford, especially some foreigners who came to the island. When the Festival of Lake Sentani firstly initiated in 2008, more painters were trained and given place to exhibit and sell the paintings. The initiative firstly aimed at motivating Sentani people to create alternative economic opportunities. But unfortunately, it did not work well. They were still trapped doing the traditional selling system and did not help them much economically. They actually think about how to sell bark paintings at a more friendly price, so they can generate money and promote their cultural heritage as well. From Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in 2019 attended by some tribal chiefs, social leaders, parents, bark painters, representative teachers and representative young generation, they did not mind to transform bark paintings and infuse traditional proverbs in various objects of arts selectively. It means that the sacred motifs related to their myth cannot be touched. They agree to select common paintings and proverbs to be used as the economic transformation to develop their economic creative as well as promote their heritage and educate people about socio-cultural values.

Data and Method

This paper is a further development of two previous studies, “Sentani Local Wisdom as Revealed in *Malo* and *Ohomo*” funded by PNBP (*Penerimaan Negara Bukan Pajak* – Non-Tax State Revenue) Universitas Cenderawasih 2009/2010 and “The Importance of Revitalizing Traditional Proverbs of Sentani, Papua” funded by the Government of Jayapura Regency

(2018). The continuation of these studies is regarded as important to bring more impacts on society optimally. The data of traditional proverbs were collected in East, Central, and West Sentani. While data of bark painting were collected from Asei Island, Kampung Harapan, and Kleublouw considering that only people in those areas still produce the paintings. All data gathered from the informants, i.e. tribal chiefs (*ondofolo/khote/akhona*), public figures, elderly people, male and female bark painters in 2017-2018 were via close observation, interviews, transcription, and translation. This research adopts socio-cultural approaches dealing with the facts that folklore is closely related to texture, text and context in Sentani socio-culture (Hesaraki, 2014; Dundes, 1980). This research also uses socio-economic approach since it relates to Sentani people's economic activities. FGD with informants, local governments, representatives of Department of Education and Culture of Jayapura Regency, and representative teachers of Junior and Senior High Schools in Jayapura Regency was held to recheck and discuss the translation of traditional proverbs, the motifs and meanings of bark paintings, the possibilities of infusing them at schools, their opinion about the preservation, dissemination of traditional proverbs and bark paintings, and their use and transformation as economic assets.

Discussion

Our observation on Sentani culture from 2008 to 2018 proves that only limited people, usually the old ones knew some limited proverbs, but they rarely use them in the communication. Such a phenomenon cannot be ignored since traditional proverbs of Sentani are parts of cultural heritages that are too valuable to be extinct. From a discussion with some Sentani people that consists of tribal chiefs, public figures, bark painters, elderly people, parents, teachers, and young generation, they agree that traditional proverbs should be revitalised, disseminated, and practised. Similarly, our research result also shows that even though bark paintings are still produced in Asei Island, but it is noteworthy that some painters, especially the young ones, do not know the meaning of the paintings they have made. They only copied the motifs from the ancestors' or other people's paintings without knowing the symbol, history, mythology, philosophy, socio-culture, and social-wisdom reflected in these motifs. As commodities, these bark paintings are not displayed on an appropriate selling place. They are just laid on the ground in the yard and let people look at them (Pictures 5 & 6). People do not make much money from this kind of selling system. Sadly, outside of Asei Island, it is found some fake *malo* sold in an art market in Jayapura. These wrongdoing activities do not only destroy the socio-cultural and historical values beyond the process of creating *malo*, but they also ruin Sentani people's economy.

Picture 5. Picture 6. Conventional traditional bark painting selling system in Asei Island (Doc. Personal Collection, 2018)



Referring to both problems, we propose that one of the effective ways in teaching and disseminating traditional proverbs and bark paintings in Jayapura Regency is via education in a formal, informal, and nonformal way. Formally, the teaching of traditional proverbs and bark paintings can be infused in some subjects in Junior and Senior High Schools, i.e. language, arts, and culture. In this case, Indonesian and English subjects can become media where traditional proverbs are introduced through language teaching at school. For example, a teacher can use a traditional proverb saying “*hu jokho erele*” (god is watching) and students are asked to discuss or write the myth of Sentani people about their belief in god(s) and their values on honesty. Seeing the fact that traditional proverbs are not recognised by especially the young ones, this kind of discussion will attract the students to (re)learn their ancestor’s heritage and apply them in their life. For teaching arts and culture a teacher can use a bark painting to encourage students to learn about history and myth beyond the bark painting, the procedure of making bark painting, various motifs commonly used in bark paintings, and the meaning of each motif. Thus, narrative, descriptive and procedural texts can also be taught from a bark painting. The idea of teaching both proverbs and paintings embedded in relevant school subjects is in line with the core of Indonesian Curriculum 2013 that encourages students to learn about their socio-culture and respect their social and natural environment as well as proud of the national identity and inheritance (Yektiningtyas, 2017; cf. Shehada, 2020). This also agrees to the decree of the Regent of Jayapura Regency 2017 about the integration of tradition and culture in teaching-learning process in schools (Early Childhood Education, Primary Schools, Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools). The decree considers the importance of teaching tradition and culture in schools since nowadays young generation lose their root and ignore their cultural heritages. In practice, Sari Yepese, Novita Monim, and Sara Klemens, English teachers of Primary, Junior and Senior High Schools in Sentani (2019-pers.com.) said that the way of infusing proverbs and bark paintings in teaching-learning processes created a motivating, challenging, and active class (Yektiningtyas, 2017; cf. Zuhdi and Nurhadi, 2019). The students were reported enthusiastic in the process of learning since they actually have

heard and seen the objects, but they have been ignorant. The learning process motivated them to relearn their ancestors' heritages to Dikul and Kiting (2019), Pourkalhor and Esfandiari, (2017), Lazar (2002), the students' enthusiasm, motivation, and attention in learning the cultural heritages due to the "emotional ties" between the students and the subjects. The learning may be developed in other subjects, i.e. Art and Culture where they are asked to transform the traditional proverbs in various ways and make their own bark paintings using tree bark as the conventional canvas or on alternative objects. They can create "mini bark paintings" (Picture 7) that can be used as bookmarks or multipurpose cards. Besides, since students are good in digital technology, they can transform traditional proverbs and bark paintings by printing them on some objects like a bag (Picture 8) and pouch (Picture 9) that can be used as school utensils (cf. Chan, et al. 2018; Hidayat & Asmara, 2017; Idris, 2016).

Picture 7. Mini bark paintings as bookmarks (Doc. Personal Collection, 2018)



Picture 8. Goody bag (Doc. Personal Collection, 2018)



Picture 9. Pouch (Doc. Personal Collection, 2018)



By producing such school utensils with bark paintings and traditional proverbs printed on it, students are motivated and encouraged to develop their entrepreneurship. The creativity can be used as cultural promotion as well as media of creative economy (Grobar, 2019, Inocian, et al. 2019; Masunah, 2017; cf. Guilherme, 2017).

Informally, the family is the first teacher to teach attitudes, values, behaviours, self-reliance, responsibility, obedience, dominance, social skills, aggression, loyalty, sex roles, age roles, and the like (Pfeifer, 2013; Abu-Rabia & Yaari, 2012; Samovar & Porter 2003). In this sense, Sentani parents must play an important role to teach traditional proverbs and bark paintings to their children at home. In doing so, verbal and non-verbal communications must become a vital media of interaction between parents and children. From the non-verbal communication perspective, home is one of the 'cultural spaces' or 'the context that forms our identity, that is, where we grow up and where we live' (Martin and Nakayama 2013; Pfeifer, 2013). Children often model their own lives on the ways things were done in their childhood homes. In other words, home is the immediate cultural context where children acquire their first language and learn about their culture. Sadly, our research shows that parents do not do enough at home. As a consequence, the current teenagers (age 11+ or junior and senior high school students) do not

have enough proficiency on their language so they do not understand the hidden meaning behind the proverbs (Yepese, Monim, & Klemens, 2019-pers.com). They also do not recognise other folklores, including *malo* and the embedded meaning on motifs. Thus, as a way out for this current sad situation is that the parents should cooperate with school teachers, particularly Indonesian, English teachers, and also Arts and Culture teachers, as mentioned above. Apart from teaching students in the classroom as done by some teachers, it is also deemed necessary for teachers to give students some assignments regarding the traditional proverbs and the motifs in *malo* so, the students are motivated to learn side by side with their parents to complete these assignments. While improving the current condition, for the future generation, we encourage all parents to speak Sentani language at home so their children can acquire the language from childhood. The authors are aware that some parents are multilingual due to intermarriage. However, they are also encouraged to use their languages so their children can have ‘simultaneous bilingualism before the age of 3’, and they do not show stress in learning it (Paul and Gosse, 2018; Zembrzusi, 2018). This is in line with the government language slogan which says: “Prioritize Indonesian and Preserve Native (Local) Language”. By knowing the Sentani language very well, it is easy for children to understand the implicit meaning behind their traditional proverbs when they become junior and senior high school students (age 11+). Psychologically, these ages are at ‘formal operation stage’ (Piaget, 1936) so when they know their native language very well they potentially already have “the ability to think abstractly about language, to conceptualize linguistic generalisations, to mentally manipulate abstract linguistic categories” (Dulay, 1982). In other words, they can easily formulise rules and concepts behind their traditional proverbs when their school teachers ask them to elaborate on the meanings.

Meanwhile, for introducing *malo* to children, we propose that each household should have some kinds of *malo* with different motifs at home to display on the walls as decorations either in the living room or in the dining room. By seeing different types of motifs on the walls each time their children from 18 to 24 months who are at ‘object permanence development of sensorimotor stage’ (Piaget, 1936) can copy these images into their mind because they already can form mental representations of objects. When they grow up through the cognitive development stages of ‘preoperational’ (from age 2 to age 7) and ‘concrete’ (from age 7 to age 11) they can be easily interested in doing any works on relevant *malo* activities. This is the critical cognitive development period whereby parents can allow them to involve by guidance to work on *malo*. For example, children can start to colour the motifs of *malo* then later they can be permitted to draw the motifs by retrieving the images they have already kept in mind. By doing so, they are gradually building a sense of Sentani artistic works, self-reliance and social skills. They are also gaining a sense of financial responsibility for family daily needs when they are involved in producing the *malo* for commercial purposes. Another further socialisation of *malo* in this critical period is that the parents can work together with Sunday school teachers at local church to prepare patterns of *malo* on paper as creative works for

children to colour (colouring activities) and/or to cut and paste (cutting and pasting activities). Overall, home or family plays an important role as a cultural locus whereby parents can help their current and future children understand that traditional proverbs and bark paintings are parts of the whole archives of history which are not only forms of preserving culture but also tools of sharing culture. By grasping this insight, these young people can be motivated to combine both cultural aspects to create some promising commercial-based artefacts. These innovative products are not only for sale to support their family financial needs, but they also help to preserve and share the culture in different creative forms.

Nonformally, introducing traditional proverbs and bark paintings can be executed in some communal agencies, like customary schools and art houses. Origenes Monim (2018-pers.com.), the head of Hobong customary school in Ifale, Central Sentani, and Theo Yepese (2019-pers.com.) as the head of Honong art and dance studio in Waena, East Sentani said that they also have responsibility to teach the young generation about Sentani's cultural heritages like Sentani language, oral poems, traditional proverbs and bark paintings through their art programs. But, from our interview with some young people, it is found that they are not really interested in learning their ancestor's heritage. To them, it is an "old fashioned" activity while looking modern is what they are searching for. This research finds that by combining something "old fashioned" like what they have said with a bit of advanced technological touch, it will be interesting for these young people. For example, they can learn painting in a conventional way while learning to know the historical, mythological, and socio-cultural values beyond this artefact. Having artistic skills and local knowledge they can transform their own painting in different objects. Similarly, from a traditional proverb saying *hu jokho erele* (god/the sun is watching), they can learn about the myth of Sentani people about their belief in gods and also the significance of the proverbs about honesty since god is always watching everybody's deeds and talks. Then, they can transform the proverbs and *malo* in a more modern way, like printing it on a T-shirt (Picture 10) or on a multipurpose box (Picture 11) as follows:

Picture 10. A bark painting and a proverb on a T-Shirt (Doc. Personal Collection, 2018)



Picture 11. A multipurpose box with a bark painting and a proverb (Doc. Personal Collection, 2018)



Those goods with traditional proverbs and bark paintings are not only easier to be acknowledged by the people but also remind them to do good deeds. Analogically, bark painting printed on the T-shirt will remind the users and other people about the cultural heritages of Sentani people. Those goods hopefully attract people to learn, love, appreciate more and socialise them to others. People can also use them as economic assets, and therefore young people are encouraged to create more objects transformation from their ancestors' tradition (cf. Inocian, et al., 2019; Boccella and Salerno, 2016). This paper does not intend to change the system of the traditional way of producing and selling bark paintings being done at the moment on Asei Island. Instead, the paper wants to enrich and motivate Sentani people, especially the young generation, to be involved in their heritage activities as a part of cultural preservation based on their modern era thoughts. Besides socialising Sentani cultural heritages and the values beyond in alternative ways, the infusion also brings significances to motivate and promote the creative economy for Sentani people. Seeing the slow movement of bark painting selling on Asei Island at the moment and seeing the fast and competitive movement of the global economy, this strategy may be able to help them economically. This can help some jobless young generation. They are potential and creative. They need help to sharpen their creativity. They need to be motivated and encouraged to utilise things around them, including their heritages. This infusion signifies both ways: motivating young generation to be involved in relearning, preserving and socialising their culture and introducing it to other people from outside of Sentani. Hopefully, this initiative answers the old generation's worry about the reality showing that young generation seemingly ignores their culture. For implementing this research's results, both Hobong Customary School and Honong Art House must become pioneers to infuse these ideas into their programs. By doing so, they will not only help the current and future generation understand their culture, but at the same time, they will

also build these young people's business intuition. A group of young mothers on Asei Island can also cooperate with these two institutions to help the young people understand *malo* by facilitating them to do painting as part of their learning process.

In short, the families, schools, and communal agents are the learning institutions that can work hand in hand to guide these young people to appreciate their own culture. However, culture is subject to change. In the past, the motifs were only printed on barks, but now they can be printed on different objects with different sizes. In the past, the colour was a mixture of local substances, but now manufactured ink can be used to print. Now, the proverbs and the motifs are no longer old-fashion words and images, but their symmetric combination will become a commodity that can generate money for the owners of the motifs, that is, the current and future young generation. Therefore, the roles of these institutions must be supported by everyone who loves Sentani culture. These institutions will eventually lead these young people to embrace both the past and the current life experiences as their standing base to show their existence in this modern era through their innovative artistic works that potentially have promising financial benefits.

Conclusion

Sentani people are rich with cultural heritage. On the one hand, they have traditional proverbs and bark paintings (*malo*) that are not recognised by most people of Sentani and also ignored by young ones. These are even seen as "old fashioned" arts. The proverbs and bark paintings with the socio-cultural values are too valuable to be extinct. Thus, revitalisation of both heritages via formal, informal, and nonformal education is important and urgently needed. On the other hand, the people's economy needs to be helped too. Dealing with modern-era challenges, this paper initiates how to infuse traditional proverbs and bark paintings to some daily use goods and use them as economic assets to improve their economy. Their presence on these handy goods does not only become socio-cultural reminders for Sentani people and dissemination of these cultural heritages with values embedded in them to other people, but also they can be used as media of promoting Sentani creative economy. By having this infusion, it is hoped that (1) young generation of Sentani are motivated to (re)learn and preserve their heritage by participating in local communal art agents, (2) the initiative can be used as media to introduce the heritages to other community outside of Sentani people, (3) the traditional proverbs can be used as materials to teach the local language that is almost extinct, (4) the infusion can support the creative economy of Sentani people specifically and Jayapura people generally. Active response from the local government and local community institutions is needed to save the heritages from extinction and to avoid Sentani young generation from losing their cultural roots.

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