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THE EXISTENCE OF BANGSAWAN THEATRE IN RIAU PROVINCE

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Abstract: Bangsawan Theatre or Teater Bangsawan is a Malay cultural tradition performed to tell stories of historical events, tell the story of the sultanate or share cultural values derived from Malay kingdoms. Adapted to the phenomenon of modern cultural change, Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota presents Teater Bangsawan which has experienced artistic innovation while maintaining its characteristics. This study aims to analyze the existence of Teater Bangsawan at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota Riau Province and explore what kind of cultural values expressed in this drama. The method used in this study is qualitative with descriptive analysis. Data was collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and field notes. The results showed that Teater Bangsawan sustainability has four aspects, namely continuous adjustment, community involvement, actor regeneration, and maintenance of performance conventions. Cultural Malay values are conveyed through story, dialog, costumes used, stage design, musical accompaniment, and others. In this way, Teater Bangsawan offers amusement while simultaneously carrying forward and fortifying Malay cultural heritage for generations to come.

Keywords: *Teater Bangsawan, Cultural Values, Cultural Heritage, Existence, Traditional Theatre*

1. INTRODUCTION

Art is a form of human creative expression that conveys the emotions of its creator through various forms. These forms are diverse, including music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and many others. The existence or persistence of art within society has become an interesting subject of study. As time progresses, art continues to evolve, and many changes occur in relation to its established conventions. Sumardjo & Sumarjo (2000:4) states that art is an expression of feelings embodied in a medium that can be seen, heard, or both seen and heard. In other words, art reflects the inner world of the artist, encompassing emotions, intuition, thoughts, and ideas. This perspective indicates that art is the result of human creativity and sensibility, expressed through artistic forms that can be seen, heard, and experienced by audiences.

Theatre as a performing art is one of the artistic forms that is closely intertwined with the traditions and customs of society. According to Putu Wijaya, theatre is not merely a dramatic performance enacted by actors, but also a performance imbued with sacred, spiritual, and religious dimensions. This view continues with the focus on the traditional elements where performances combine singing, dancing, and interludes (Abdillah, 2008).

Teater Bangsawan is one of the traditional theatre forms that has long existed and developed in Riau, alongside Mendu, Mamanda, Randai Kuantan, and Makyong. Its historical development is closely linked to the history of trade across the Malay Peninsula and Temasek during the nineteenth century. Indian traders who traveled through the



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region introduced a form of folk entertainment known as *Indra Sabor*, which is widely regarded as the precursor of Teater Bangsawan (Amanariza, 1993). Teater Bangsawan is recognized as a traditional theatre form that flourished across the Malay cultural sphere, including Sumatra, West Kalimantan, and the Bangka Belitung Islands. It is characterized by stories centered on kings and royal courts, the absence of written scripts, and performances that are stylistic, improvisational, and highly visual. Its dialogues combine everyday language with literary expressions, songs, and dance performances. Traditionally, each performance begins with a *jampi serapah* ritual, reflecting the belief that supernatural forces contribute to the success of the performance (Darmawi, 2004). Since the 1990s, however, Teater Bangsawan has become increasingly rare in public performances. Rapid social change, limited regeneration of performers, and declining public interest in traditional theatre have all contributed to the weakening of its existence, particularly in Sumatra, one of the principal regions where this theatrical tradition developed (Muhammad Rezza Akmal, *Mengangkat Kisah Klasik di Teater Bangsawan*, TV One, 2023).

In Riau, one cultural organization that still organizes and performs Teater Bangsawan is the Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota. The organization presents such theatrical show as an effort to preserve cultural values in the region. The group has become an interesting case in this research as this organization has been successful in capturing the public's attention to the art and also actively attracts the next generation of audiences. In every performance, the organization preserves the traditional convention of Teater Bangsawan, ie costume, language, and style of performance, and at the same time it innovates by putting forward a more sophisticated set, costumes, improvisations in their playing that reflect current issues. This contemporary presentation has become known as *Teater Bangsawan Muda* (Young Teater Bangsawan).

With the above introduction, this study attempts to investigate the presence of Teater Bangsawan in Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota in Riau Province. Further, the study intends to analyze the cultural values reflected in its presentation.

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, as it was designed as field research to describe the existence of Teater Bangsawan performances at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota in Riau Province. Qualitative research is an inquiry strategy that emphasizes the exploration of meanings, understandings, characteristics, concepts, symptoms, symbols, and descriptions of phenomena in their natural and holistic contexts (Sugiyono, 2023). The object of this study was Teater Bangsawan at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota, located in Pekanbaru City, Riau Province. The research focused on examining the existence of Teater Bangsawan within Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota as one of the few cultural institutions that continues to preserve and perform this traditional theatre in Riau Province.

The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through field observations and interviews with the Head of Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota, representatives of the Riau Provincial Department of Culture, Teater Bangsawan actors, performers, and cultural observers in Riau (Sugiyono, 2023). Secondary

data were obtained from books, undergraduate theses, scholarly articles, performance documentation, the institution's archives, and documentation published through the official social media platforms of Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota. Data were collected using observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. Observations were conducted directly during rehearsals and live performances of Teater Bangsawan, as well as indirectly through photographs, videos, and archival performance records. Both structured and unstructured interviews were carried out to obtain information regarding the historical background, performance form, performance structure, existence, and cultural values of Teater Bangsawan. Documentation served as supporting data in the form of photographs, videos, performance archives, and other documents relevant to the study (Sugiyono, 2023).

After the data had been collected, they were analyzed through the stages of pre-field analysis, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, following the analytical framework proposed by Moleong (2014). Data reduction involved selecting and focusing on information relevant to the research objectives. The data were then presented descriptively to facilitate interpretation before drawing conclusions. The trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation (Sugiyono, 2023). Source triangulation was carried out by examining the data obtained from different informants, whereas technique triangulation was done by comparing the findings of observation, interview and documentation from one source.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota was established on 23 May 2018 by a group of young artists who were alumni of Sanggar Latah Tuah at Sultan Syarif Kasim State Islamic University of Riau. Based on an interview with Muhammad Rezza Akmal, the establishment of the cultural institution was driven by the founders' concern over the declining public interest, particularly among younger generations, in traditional Malay performing arts. After completing their involvement in university-based artistic activities, the alumni initiated the formation of an independent cultural institution that could sustain artistic practices while serving as a center for the preservation of Malay cultural heritage. Beyond organizing performances, Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota actively promotes public awareness of the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage through training programs, creative workshops, cultural discussions, and the continuous production of Teater Bangsawan. As a result, the institution has evolved into a cultural preservation center that not only maintains the performance tradition of Teater Bangsawan but also facilitates the intergenerational transmission of Malay cultural knowledge.

Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota has consistently produced a series of Teater Bangsawan performances that narrate the history of the Siak Sultanate. These productions include *Secarik Sirih* (2019), *Tengku Mahkota* (2019), *Tengku Mahkota Seri Buntan* (2022), and *Peternaka: Mangkat Dijulang* (2025). All performances were initiated by Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota and presented to the people of Riau with the aim of preserving and disseminating the historical and

cultural messages embedded in these stories. The performances have received enthusiastic public responses, as reflected in the large audiences that consistently filled the Anjung Seni Idrus Tintin Performing Arts Hall during each production. For Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota, the continuity of these productions serves not only as an indicator of its ongoing artistic activities but also as a tangible commitment to preserving Teater Bangsawan, ensuring that this traditional theatre remains visible, relevant, and accessible to the wider community.



Figure 1. Posters of Teater Bangsawan Performances Produced by Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota (2019–2025).

Teater Bangsawan is one of the traditional Malay performing arts that developed across the Malay Peninsula and the coastal regions of Sumatra in the late nineteenth century. Based on an interview with Muhammad Rezza Akmal, Head of Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota, conducted on 9 October 2024, Teater Bangsawan is believed to have been introduced to the Malay world through theatrical troupes brought by Persian merchants from Penang before subsequently spreading to various regions, including Riau Province. During its golden era, Teater Bangsawan was widely performed in royal courts as well as among local communities, presenting stories of heroism, palace life, legends, and the history of the Malay sultanates. Beyond serving as a form of entertainment, these performances functioned as a medium for transmitting moral values, customary traditions, and Malay cultural identity to the public. However, the rapid growth of modern entertainment media, changing patterns of public consumption, and the declining regeneration of performers have contributed to a significant decrease in the frequency of Teater Bangsawan performances over the past few decades. This situation has prompted various preservation initiatives undertaken by cultural communities in Riau Province, one of which is led by Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota.

To ensure that Teater Bangsawan remains relevant in contemporary society, Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota has

introduced various innovations that allow the tradition to adapt to changing times without compromising its cultural identity. These innovations are not intended to alter the fundamental conventions of Teater Bangsawan but rather to enhance its appeal to contemporary audiences while preserving the distinctive characteristics of the Malay theatrical tradition. This commitment is reflected in the continued use of the Malay language, the preservation of the traditional performance structure, narratives derived from the history of the Malay sultanates, and the cultural values that remain central to every production. Therefore, the existence of Teater Bangsawan at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota is demonstrated not only through the continuity of its performances but also through the community's ability to develop adaptive forms of presentation while safeguarding the cultural values that have been passed down from generation to generation.

The continued existence of Teater Bangsawan at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota is closely linked to the institution's ability to preserve the core traditions of Malay theatre while adapting its performances to the evolving landscape of contemporary performing arts. Each production is developed through a carefully planned process that includes script development, casting, rehearsals, artistic design, and stage performance. These elements are integrated into a cohesive production that not only enhances the visual appeal of the performance but also preserves the defining characteristics of Teater Bangsawan as a traditional Malay theatrical art form.

Every Teater Bangsawan performance begins with the *Tablo*, an opening sequence that introduces the main characters to the audience. According to an interview with Alidrus, the actors enter the stage one by one, accompanied by a traditional Malay overture specially composed by the performance musicians. The introductory dialogues immediately reveal the personality and role of each character, allowing the audience to become familiar with the dramatic roles before the story unfolds. Following the *Tablo*, the performance continues with the *Hitam Putih* scene, a traditional Malay martial arts performance depicting a symbolic battle between two warriors representing opposing forces: the black side symbolizing evil and the white side symbolizing virtue. The performers wear traditional Malay warrior attire known as *baju pangsi*. Before the main narrative begins, the performance includes the *Bomo* ritual, a ceremonial invocation intended to seek permission and blessings from the Malay ancestors for the performance. During this ritual, incense is burned and placed at the four corners of the stage by *Pak Cik*, a respected elder within the community, while prayers for safety and invocations in the Malay language are recited.



Figure 2. Tablo (left) and the *Hitam Putih* (Black-and-White) Battle Scene (right).

Following the opening sequence, the performance transitions into the main narrative, which typically centers on the history of the Malay sultanates. This section generally lasts between 1-1,5 hours and presents the core storyline of the performance. While the production incorporates creative and theatrical elements, its historical substance is carefully preserved, enabling the performance to function not only as a form of entertainment but also as a medium for cultural education. Since the productions predominantly portray the history of the Siak Sri Indrapura Sultanate, several principal characters consistently appear across different performances. These characters and their respective dramatic functions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Principal Characters and Their Dramatic Functions in the Teater Bangsawan Performance

Character	Dramatic Functions
King (Raja)	Central figure and ruler of the Malay kingdom. Represents leadership, authority, wisdom, courage, and responsibility in governing the kingdom.
Queen (Permaisuri)	The king's companion who symbolizes dignity, elegance, loyalty, and emotional support while maintaining the honor of the royal family.
Prince (Pangeran)	Heir to the throne whose role varies depending on the storyline, particularly in narratives concerning royal succession or political conflict.
Datuk Laksamana	Commander of the royal forces responsible for military affairs, security, and strategic advice to the king.
Datuk Penasihat	Senior royal advisor who provides wisdom and recommendations in decision-making and governance.
Bujang and Inang	Comic servants who connect the stage with the audience through humor, spontaneous interaction, and the delivery of important messages while easing dramatic tension.
Commoners (Rakyat)	Supporting characters representing ordinary people whose presence illustrates social hierarchy and public responses to royal policies.

The successful presentation of each production is strongly influenced by the directing process and actor training conducted prior to the performance. Production begins with the selection and development of the script. According to Muhammad Rezza Akmal, the director first curates potential scripts before refining and developing them collaboratively with the production team. Once the characters required for the production have been identified, an open casting process is organized, allowing members of the public to participate as part of the institution's commitment to regenerating Teater Bangsawan performers. The selection process considers several criteria, including emotional suitability for the role, stage presence, physical appearance, and the ability to deliver dialogue convincingly. Following the casting process, the director assigns the selected actors to their respective roles before they begin a structured rehearsal period. This process includes script reading, character development, dialogue practice, blocking, property handling, and full dress rehearsals, ensuring that every performer is well prepared before the production is presented to the audience.



Figure 3. Queen's Court Scene in *Peterakna: Mangkat Dijulang*.

Music constitutes a fundamental element in shaping the dramatic flow of Teater Bangsawan performances. The musical composition is carefully arranged to follow the progression of the narrative, ensuring that each scene is supported by an appropriate atmosphere. The accompaniment is performed live using traditional Malay instruments, including the *gambus*, *rebana*, *rebab*, accordion, gong, violin, *marwas*, and guitar, with modern instruments such as the piano and drums incorporated selectively to meet specific dramatic requirements. Beyond accompanying dialogue, the music serves multiple dramaturgical functions, including signaling scene transitions, creating dramatic tension, reinforcing emotional intensity, and enhancing the overall theatrical atmosphere.

In addition to the narrative and musical components, the artistic design has undergone substantial development in Teater Bangsawan performances at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota. Based on an interview with Bang Midun, an actor and member of the production team, the institution has adopted a more realistic stage presentation through the use of royal thrones, palace courtyards, elaborate stage scenery, and lighting designs tailored to the dramatic requirements of each scene. These artistic enhancements are intended to provide audiences with a more immersive visual experience while fostering a vivid imagination of life in the traditional Malay sultanates. The artistic elements of Teater Bangsawan at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota comprise four main components: stage design, makeup and costumes, theatrical properties, and lighting design.



Figure 4. Stage design

As described previously, the stage design of Teater Bangsawan at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota recreates the grandeur of a traditional Malay royal court. The stage features a palace courtyard, a royal throne constructed from plywood and decorated with hand-painted Malay carvings, and a centrally positioned chandelier framed by gold-colored drapery. Flowing curtains extending from the top of the stage to the floor further enhance the majestic atmosphere of the Malay sultanate. The stage floor is covered with luxurious carpets inspired by royal interiors, while the king's throne is elevated on a black platform to emphasize the monarch's superior status within the royal hierarchy. Together, these visual elements have become a distinctive characteristic of Teater Bangsawan performances at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota.

Makeup and costumes also play a vital role in defining the identity of each character. Every role is distinguished by its own costume design, color scheme, *tanjak* (traditional Malay headdress), accessories, and stage properties, allowing audiences to recognize the social status and identity of each character even before any dialogue is delivered. The details of the makeup and costume design for each character are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Costumes and Makeup Characteristics of Teater Bangsawan Characters

Character	Costume and Makeup Characteristics
King	Gold-colored <i>baju kurung</i> or <i>baju pesak</i> , Malay <i>songket</i> , royal <i>tanjak</i> or crown, jeweled <i>keris</i> , gold belt; dignified royal makeup.
Queen (Permaisuri)	Long <i>baju kurung</i> or kebaya, patterned Malay <i>songket</i> , small crown or traditional hair ornaments, gold jewelry, matching shawl; elegant natural makeup.
Bujang	<i>Baju kurung</i> , Malay <i>songket</i> , matching trousers, folded <i>tanjak</i> , <i>keris</i> at the waist; brown costume representing court attendants.
Inang	Kebaya, Malay <i>songket</i> , traditional bun or headscarf, draped shawl; light green costume with modest feminine makeup.
Datuk Laksamana	Black <i>baju kurung</i> , <i>songket</i> , trousers, ceremonial <i>tanjak</i> , front-positioned <i>keris</i> , diagonal sash, metallic belt; authoritative makeup emphasizing leadership.
Datuk Penasihat	<i>Baju kurung</i> , <i>songket</i> , ceremonial <i>tanjak</i> , <i>keris</i> ; dark red costume symbolizing wisdom and seniority.

Prince (Pangeran)	<i>Baju kurung, songket, trousers, keris, ceremonial tanjak</i> ; dark blue costume reflecting royal succession.
Commoners (Rakyat)	Simple <i>baju kurung</i> , trousers, <i>songket</i> , plain <i>tanjak</i> ; female commoners wear a simple kebaya; dark green costumes with modest makeup.



Figure 5. Lighting Design

The visual quality of the performance is further enhanced through the use of a variety of stage properties, including royal thrones, ceremonial tables, the queen's chair, *keris* (traditional Malay daggers), and royal crowns, all of which are carefully selected to support the narrative. These properties function not only as artistic complements but also as important visual representations of life within the Malay sultanate, enabling audiences to better understand the context of each scene. Lighting design further reinforces the dramatic presentation by directing the audience's attention to specific actions, distinguishing between daytime and nighttime settings, and emphasizing shifts in mood and emotion throughout the performance. Three types of lighting are employed in Teater Bangsawan productions: halogen lights provide the primary stage illumination, colored PAR lights create dramatic atmospheres by adjusting lighting to reflect changes in time, weather, and emotional intensity, and crystal chandeliers serve as artistic elements symbolizing the grandeur of the royal palace. The entire lighting system is operated by a dedicated lighting crew using a lighting mixer to ensure seamless transitions throughout the performance.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the existence of Bangsawan Theatre at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota cannot be understood merely as the presence of an active performing arts group that continues to organize theatrical performances. Beyond its physical continuity, existence refers to the ability of an art form to continuously adapt to social changes while preserving the cultural identity that serves as its foundation. This perspective corresponds with the concept of existence proposed by Abidin (2007), who explains that

existence is a dynamic process of *becoming* that continuously develops depending on an entity's ability to actualize its inherent potential. Therefore, the sustainability of an art form should not only be assessed through the continuation of performances but also through its capacity to respond to the changing conditions of society. This argument is further supported by Maulana (2011), who states that existence represents the tangible characteristics that distinguish one entity from another. Within the context of this research, such distinctiveness can be observed through Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota's consistent efforts to preserve the characteristics of Bangsawan Theatre as a traditional Malay theatrical form while simultaneously introducing artistic innovations to maintain its relevance among contemporary audiences. These findings demonstrate that cultural preservation does not necessarily require maintaining traditional forms in their entirety; rather, it involves a process of adaptation that protects cultural values and identity as the core elements of the performance.

This adaptive feature is in accordance with the description of Bangsawan Theatre by Darmawi (2004) who state that the presentation of Bangsawan Theatre is a traditional performing art which displays a visual-stage presentation of the story of the kingdom, hikayat, legends and Malay history and retainence of unique features of the language, costumes, music and values of the culture of the palace. The results show that Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota still holds these features as their main identity of Bangsawan presentation but enjoy improved presentation by having better artistic elements, lighting design and setting, stage layout and a more modern management of production. This situation reflects how modernization does not always lead to the leaching away of its traditional value, but vice versa, it can be a method to facilitate the society's acceptance of traditional arts. From this, it can be seen that, the innovation does not change the main identity of Bangsawan Theatre, yet it is a process of re-casting culture which enable the Malay cultural value to be kept relevant and meaningful to today's society.

The continuity of Bangsawan Theatre identified in this study also highlights the significant role of artistic communities as key actors in cultural preservation. The findings demonstrate that Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota does not merely organize regular performances but also develops a regeneration system through open casting, actor training, and community involvement in the production process. This strategy indicates that cultural preservation is no longer solely dependent on genealogical transmission but has evolved into an open learning process accessible to broader society. This finding strengthens Hijazi (2020) research, which emphasizes the important role of artistic communities in maintaining the existence of traditional theatre. However, this study further reveals that the role of communities extends beyond organizing performances; they also function as spaces for cultural education, regeneration, and innovation. Meanwhile, compared with Oktaviani (2018) research, which focuses on the historical development of Bangsawan Theatre in Pemulutan Induk District, this study provides a different perspective by positioning existence as the outcome of interaction between traditional preservation and adaptability toward social development. Thus, the sustainability of Bangsawan Theatre is not solely determined by its historical legacy but also by the ability of cultural communities to

manage traditions so that they continue to serve a meaningful function within modern society.

In addition to revealing preservation strategies, this study demonstrates that Bangsawan Theatre functions as a medium for transmitting Malay cultural values. According to Koentjaraningrat (1990), culture encompasses the entire system of ideas, actions, and human creations that are learned and inherited within society. This concept is clearly reflected in Bangsawan Theatre, as the performance does not merely present cultural artifacts through costumes, properties, or music, but also represents the value systems that shape Malay social life. These values are expressed through storytelling approaches, respect toward leadership, principles of deliberation, loyalty, justice, and the relationship between Malay society and Islamic values as the foundation of social life. Therefore, Bangsawan Theatre serves as a social space where cultural transmission occurs through aesthetic experiences rather than solely through verbal communication of information.

This perspective is further reinforced by Koentjaraningrat (1990), who distinguishes cultural values from material manifestations of culture. In Bangsawan Theatre performances, both dimensions are presented simultaneously. The material dimension is represented through the use of *baju kurung*, *songket*, *tanjak*, *keris*, Malay royal ornaments, traditional musical instruments, and stage designs depicting palace environments. Meanwhile, the non-material dimension is reflected through the use of classical Malay language, *pantun* (traditional Malay poetry), *syair* (narrative poetry), etiquette, and social relationships among characters that represent Malay worldview and values. With the combination of these two different dimensions, it can be found that performance of Bangsawan is not only to display the symbols of culture and as a visual production but also are able to create the meaning of that symbols. As a result, the audiences not only can witness how the Malay culture was taken place in the performance but they also decipher the meaning behind each cultural elements.

This function aligns with Murgiyanto (2015) perspective, which states that performing arts serve as a medium of cultural expression that conveys life values to society. Susetyo (2007) further explains that performing arts function as a means of disseminating cultural values that continuously develop alongside the communities that support them. This perspective implies us that the function of Bangsawan Theatre at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota is not merely an entertainment medium but also a feature of culture communication linking between past and present social life, including the royal story that is presented in the performance as a reintroduction of local history and the language, music, and art performances that are a cultural experience which is more understood by the people. This particular result show us that the performing arts have an educational function as the bridge between culture keeping process and today society.

The findings of this study also complement Rahayu (2015) research, which states that the sustainability of traditional arts is influenced by their ability to maintain cultural identity amid changing times. While her study illustrates how Terbang Bandung Dance maintains its existence through the preservation of performance forms, this research demonstrates that Bangsawan Theatre sustains its identity through the integration of traditional preservation, community regeneration, and artistic innovation. The main contribution of this

study lies in demonstrating that the existence of traditional performing arts is not determined solely by the frequency of performances, but by their ability to transform performances into spaces for cultural value transmission that remain relevant to society. Therefore, Bangsawan Theatre at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota can be understood as a form of living cultural heritage that not only preserves traditional theatrical forms but also continuously reproduces Malay cultural identity through adaptation, cultural education, and sustained community participation

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, this study identifies two main aspects: the existence of Bangsawan Theatre and the cultural values embodied in its performances at Rumah Budaya Tengku Mahkota, Riau Province. The existence of Bangsawan Theatre is demonstrated through its innovative approach to performance development, which combines traditional Malay characteristics with modern artistic elements. These innovations can be observed in the visual presentation, script development, music, makeup and costume design, as well as stage arrangement, creating a more contemporary and visually engaging performance compared to its earlier forms.

Bangsawan Theatre's embrace of classical Malay dialogue, traditional ethnic costumes, authentic Malay musical scores, and stage settings mirroring Malay architecture clearly demonstrates its commitment to preserving and showcasing Malay cultural values. This implies that Bangsawan Theatre functions as a means of preserving Malay cultural values and identity.

As an intangible cultural heritage officially recognized by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), Bangsawan Theatre is expected to remain a cultural medium that preserves Malay values through continuous and meaningful performances. The sustainability of Bangsawan Theatre is essential in strengthening public appreciation of Malay culture while encouraging younger generations to continue the preservation of Indonesia's cultural heritage.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1 conceived the study, conducted the research, collected and analyzed the data, interpreted the findings, and prepared the manuscript. Author 2 supervised the research process, provided academic guidance and critical feedback throughout the study, and reviewed and revised the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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