



The Forgotten Wau: Preserving the Tradition

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Abstract. Traditional games in Malaysia hold a special place in the country's rich cultural heritage. These games are not only a source of entertainment but also a reflection of Malaysia's diverse ethnic backgrounds and traditions. However, in today's era, traditional games are increasingly marginalized by society. Due to this, the purpose of this study is to preserve the information and knowledge of traditional games in Malaysia-WAU by analyzing the rules, history, and cultural significance of the game. The findings will be used to revive the traditional game by adapting innovation and creativity that suit contemporary tastes to ensure that WAU continues to be enjoyed by current and future generations.

Keywords: Traditional Game, Wau, Preserve, Revive.

1 Introduction

Malaysia is a country rich in both art and culture accumulated from the richness of the Malaysian society's culture in the primeval times. Traditional games are the go-to activities for those kids who live in rural areas as that is they find leisure with this and use it to bond with one another. Sadly, traditional games seem to be fading away from the interest of the millennials. The changes in time or the modern era have made traditional games almost forgotten. The kids of today known as the millennials do not play these games anymore because their way of growing up has been tremendously changed because of rapid technological development. Globalization, migration, demographic and societal changes are some of the factors contributing to this trend. Preserving information and knowledge about traditional games is important to make sure our Malaysian traditional games and sports are not forgotten.

2 Literature Review

2.1 History of Wau

Wau is a traditional game that uses wind power as the main force that allows it to fly. In Malaysia, 14 different types of Wau vary in various aspects. Wau is made using natural materials. This is to preserve the artistic value of the Wau itself and to set the best flying rate of the Wau, which is as high as 90° from the ground level. The

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personality of this Wau talks about the life, manners, and customs in Malaysian society. Each Wau design must follow its manners and customs to suit each message that wants to be conveyed [1].

The existence of kites can be associated with several main factors in the world. Among the factors that influence the existence of kites are geography or natural factors of an area, mythological and religious beliefs, warfare, local culture and art, air art, technology, and tools for recreation. Each country has at least more than one connection based on the existence of Wau. For example, Japan, the existence of kites in Japan is said to have started with the development of Buddhism there and the advancement of paper technology at that time. In addition, kites in Japan are used as a deterrent to ward off evil spirits and increase agricultural output [2].

Kites that originated in Asia are likely to have come from China about 3000 years ago and then spread to the rest of Asia, including Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and India. But this statement cannot be stated so clearly because kites were used in 1066 as a sign for war in Hasting by European countries. The existence of kites can be associated with several things, namely religious ritual processes, air sports, warfare, and art in the air [3]. The existence of kites can be concluded based on natural factors, religious and mythological beliefs, warfare, culture, technology and local art, air art, and recreation.

There are some conflicting opinions that prove the history of the existence of the name Wau, or the term given to this Malaysian kite. One opinion says that the name Wau comes from the sound of the Wau bow that produces the sound ‘woow’, ‘woow’ when the Wau flies. This opinion, however, is denied by Wayne Hasking in his book “Kites of Malaysia” (1992) who says that the word Wau comes from Dutch, and it refers to a large bird found in Southeast Asia that is called ‘Wouw’ in Dutch [4].

This game is one of the hobbies of populations in rural areas, especially for the states in the Northwest of Kedah, Perlis, and Kelantan. Kite game has become a tradition of the game after the harvest. They play Wau to relieve tired after working in the fields. They also feel happy while playing and see each other up there in some places, and their district will hold an annual festival and the most beautiful kite competition between districts.

2.2 Impact of Globalization and Modernization on Traditional Wau in Malaysia

Traditional games such as Wau are a leisure activity that is very popular among the Malay community, Wau has been loved by the Malay community on the East Coast for the past five centuries. Wau is played not only for entertainment purposes but is also contested especially by farmers after harvesting rice [5].

As one of the Malay arts, the position of Wau is more or less as important as other traditional games. But every old one will experience a phase where it is forgotten. Therefore, there will be issues arising about this game [5].

The first emerging issue is the Marginalized Traditional Game factor in which the data was found from reference [6]. Wau is often played in open village areas, so it is considered a light activity that can bring people closer together. Competitions are also held, where each unique kite shape is judged on its pattern, color, and ability to fly.

Many people now live in cities, so it is difficult for them to live in a place where they can play traditional games. From this, the study can state that there is a problem that arises in this study that there is no suitable area to play.

Not only that, this Wau game will look magnificent in the air when successfully raised and flown [6]. The problem that can be highlighted based on this study is Wau making which requires skill makes it marginalized. From here we can see that this game has its techniques, manufacturing methods, and players. Currently, the community is not exposed to the way of playing for certain reasons. So not many of us are smart and can play Wau. Because of this, Wau is considered an outdated game.

The way of playing Wau which requires expertise is also one of the problems that researchers found from related issues. There are not many people who are good at playing Wau, especially at this time, this is due to the difficulty of how to play Wau. To play Wau, the player needs to control the movement wisely and know how to handle the Wau well so that the Wau looks great when it is raised in the air. One of the proofs is the ability to fly Wau more in the elderly because they are more skilled and efficient in handling Wau. The difficulty in playing Wau has made Wau looked down upon and out of date by some people, especially young people today.

Another issue that arises about traditional Wau games is the transformation of Traditional Games in Malaysia. It has evolved since the day it was played, not only made from a new material but also comes with multi-function characteristics. As time passes, modern elements have been included in Malaysian traditional games. The Wau-making process is quite complex, and it requires a high level of skill. Not everyone has the talent to make a Wau, and for those who are skilled, it takes a long time and costs a lot. Preparing a Wau starts with finding a frame, drawing, coloring, and decorating. To make the frame, the necessary tree trunks should be taken from the thorn bamboo tree. Because Wau makers are rare, some choose to buy ready-made Wau. But the relatively expensive price makes other modern games more attractive to the public.

Not just that, the way Wau is made has also been different from the real way of making it, which is using bamboo. The making of Wau has been innovated so that it is easier and easier to find [5]. The variety of Wau designs and types has also made Wau an outdated and trivial game. This is because when the type and design are different, some of them take the easy way of not recognizing it. Not only that, the variety of Wau types has also made Wau difficult to make so they prefer to make Wau a simpler design.

For general knowledge, Wau has its uniqueness which is the difference in every shape and pattern in Wau. Wau of different shapes and appearances become the symbol of each state. Not only that, each Wau has its meaning and has a story behind each design. That is why the transformation of Traditional Games in Malaysia is an issue why this Wau game has been marginalized in modern times. This is because every era there will be design changes that happen to Wau. This design change on Wau makes Wau look complicated for the new generation to know so they take the easy way of not knowing about the game of Wau [5].

Mobile Gadgets Among Teens Makes Traditional Games Forgotten is an issue that is often and hotly discussed. This issue can be proven when there are video game competitions that are willing to be organized up to the international level while the traditional games of our country are being forgotten more and more [5]. The new

generation today prefers video games, arcades, board games, or extreme sports activities such as soccer/futsal, hill climbing, joining the gym, and badminton. This makes the community forget about the existence of traditional games in this country and increasingly leaves Wau behind.

If observed, every year there will be the organization of video game competitions such as Mobile Legend, PUBG, and DotA because the younger generation prefers such games to activities that require physical energy. The younger generation also prefers simple games. Not only that, but the younger generation also, especially children, are less exposed to traditional games because they are more familiar with gadgets at an early age. The younger generation lacks knowledge about traditional games and the fun they promise, so they choose not to play.

Although various more exclusive games are designed nowadays, Wau should not be forgotten arbitrarily. It is not just a traditional game, but also a valuable asset due to its status as the cultural heritage of Malaysians.

3 Methodology

This is a research process that was developed by the researcher to facilitate the research (Fig. 1). Literature, journals, and theses were reviewed to gather information on Wau. Then, the criteria of suitable areas to fly the Wau, the process of making the Wau, and the correct way to play the Wau were analyzed.

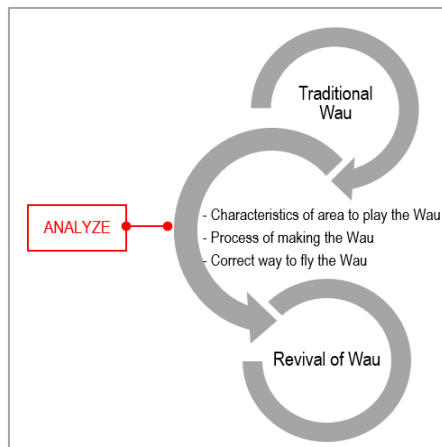


Fig. 1. Research Plan

4 Findings

4.1 Characteristics of Area to Play the Wau

The suitable area to play Wau should focus on the wind factor, the width of an area, and the height so that Wau can be flown well without any interference from other

things. Indeed, in the city, there are still many areas suitable for playing Wau. Suitable areas to play Wau in cities need Open Areas, Wide Areas, away from electricity sources, and an area that has the element of flying Wau well, which is wind. Here are some examples of places in the cities that have characteristics of the area to play Wau. Fig. 2-5 shows the places in the city that are suitable to play the Wau.



Fig. 2. Characteristics and suitable places to play Wau in the city



Fig. 3. Characteristics and suitable places to play Wau in the city



Fig. 4. Characteristics and suitable places to play Wau in the city



Fig. 5. Characteristics and suitable places to play Wau in the city

4.2 Process of making the Wau

There are four processes of making Wau. The first process is to find bamboo. To produce quality Wau, raw materials such as bamboo are carefully selected. Therefore, there is a taboo in bamboo selection and felling. After that, the bamboo will be stored for at least a year before cutting and after that, the process of making the frame and making the ground will be done. Fig. 6 shows the process of finding bamboo to make a Wau.









<p>1.</p> 	<p>Bamboo is first selected to get medium old so that it does not break easily.</p>	<p>5.</p> 	<p>Bamboo splits are separated according to the need to either make wings or spines.</p>
<p>2.</p> 	<p>The bamboo is first measured to the desired size before it is cut.</p>	<p>6.</p> 	<p>The bamboo split is next washed from the bamboo book.</p>
<p>3.</p> 	<p>The bamboo is first measured to the desired size before it is cut.</p>	<p>7.</p> 	<p>The spine is divided according to the desired size and fits the wings.</p>
<p>4.</p> 	<p>The bamboo is carefully split so that it is the same size and easy to sharpen.</p>	<p>8.</p> 	<p>Preparation of the spine so that it is more perfect between the head and the tail</p>

Fig. 6. Process of finding the bamboo

The next process is to make a frame. Fig. 7 shows the process of making a frame of Wau.









<p>9.</p> 	<p>The wings must be the same length between left and right</p>	<p>13.</p> 	<p>The part of the wing that has been cut is weighed with a finger or the tip of a knife so that it weighs equally between the left and the right.</p>
<p>10.</p> 	<p>The wing bamboo that has been scraped in advance is measured into two parts of equal length.</p>	<p>14.</p> 	<p>The bamboo blade in the tail is also twisted before it is tied together with the spine.</p>
<p>11.</p> 	<p>The wings are first shaved with a sharp knife to get a smoother and easier to twist bamboo blade.</p>	<p>15.</p> 	<p>The bamboo blade in the tail is formed together with the backbone first before it is tied with thread or string.</p>
<p>12.</p> 	<p>From time to time the wings are twisted to get the perfect shape.</p>	<p>16.</p> 	<p>Preparation and bonding of the wings with the tail.</p>

Fig. 7. Process of making the frame

The subsequent process is to paste the frame. Fig. 8 shows the process of making the Wau which is to paste a frame.

17.		How to make ties for Wau frame parts.	21.		The work of raking ibus leaves to make humming or kite bows.
18.		The tail is wrapped and shaped to be as curved as desired.	22.		Inas, which is the end of the buzzing Wau used to tie and pull the ibus leaves so that they become tense to get a good and loud sound.
19.		The almost finished part of Wau.	23.		Some finished kite bow blades (humming). Usually this bow will be attached to the kite's neck.
20.		The work of tying the frame of the moon kite, which is the wings, spine and tail.	24.		The Wau is weighed first before being raised so that the head and wings are of equal weight. This is to prevent the Wau from spinning.

Fig. 8. Process to paste the Wau's frame

Next is the last step which is making the pattern and installing the leads, which is the finishing for the process of making Wau. Fig. 9 shows the process of making Wau which is to make the pattern and install the leads.







25.		Perfect preparation of the Wau's lead (the thread tied around the neck and waist of the Wau) is essential before a Wau is flown. This will affect the position of the Wau so that it flies well.	29.		The wau that has been completed is tied to the keel.
26.		Kite frame patching process is done using colored paper. Color paper should be appropriate.	30.		Wau will be tried to fly into the air. The balance of the kite's wings, tail and tip will be a kite that flies perfectly and floats in the air.
27.		Pattern completion pasted on colored paper and then affixed to the body kite.			
28.		The last process is to make the Wau string helm. There are 2 types of rope reins called 'teraju' which are 'teraju dua' and 'teraju tiga'. After installing the rope reins, the Wau is fully complete.			

Fig. 9. Process of making the pattern and installing the leads


4.3 Correct way to fly the Wau

The process of analyzing the correct way to fly the Wau involved three directions: 1) elements required to fly a Wau; 2) number of players needed in one game; and 3) steps to fly a Wau. The analysis and findings are shown below.

Elements required to fly a Wau. The element of flying in the Wau game is very important to raise the Wau or fly the Wau. Without these elements, Wau may be difficult or unable to fly well. Fig. 10 shows the list of elements required for Wau to be flown successfully.

3 elements that affect the rise of the Wau


- Wind Pressure**
Wind exists in many forms and stages with stored speed and energy
When the wind pressure on the surface of the kite gets stronger, then the ability to go higher increases.
- Gravitational pull**
Gravity is the attractive force that acts between particles that have mass. Gravity determines the weight of an object from its mass.
Gravitational pull is the force that pulls the kite down.
- Drag force**
The drag force is present everywhere around us. Drag forces appear whenever there is motion in air or water or in any other fluid.
The kite will move backwards when the surface of the kite gets high pressure. This will create drag.



Source : <http://ikfolio-chamainehee.blogspot.com/2009/10/wau.html>

Fig. 10. Elements required to fly a Wau

Numbers of players needed in one game. Based on the research, most of the time, the Wau was played by 2 people (Figure 11).



1. NUMBER OF PLAYER IN ONE GAME.

- Normally the "Wau" will be played by two people, which will hold a "Wau" and another called an interpreter who holds the rope bridge.
Source : <http://amalasyikinde5b.blogspot.com/2014/08/how-to-play-wau.html>
- a Wau is usually flown by two people at a time. One person will hold the Wau while the other person called the 'juru anjung' or the controller will hold the rope. The juru anjung will pull the strings for a short period of time until the Wau is successfully flown.
Source : <http://amalasyikinde5b.blogspot.com/2014/08/how-to-play-wau.html>
- Permainan ini tidak menetapkan jumlah pemain dalam permainan ini. Lebih ramai pemain lebih menyeronokkan.
-Wau has various sizes until some are very large, therefore to be played by only two players is a little difficult.
-Wau games are contested in public, therefore in a Wau match many people will participate and there will also be supporters.
Source : <http://traditionalsports.blogspot.com/2014/05/wau.html>

Fig. 11. Number of players needed to fly the Wau

Steps to Fly a Wau. The steps to play Wau must be known in the right way so that Wau can be flown successfully. A wrong step or poor playing skills may result in Wau being difficult or impossible to raise. The use of one rope allows this kite to be easily flown and controlled. There are two ways to launch or raise a kite: short-distance launch and long-distance launch. The rope used is a rope.

The steps to play Wau were three steps, which are the technique of raising a short distance Wau, controlling the Wau, and the technique of lowering Wau. Fig. 12 below will explain the way of flying a Wau in three steps.

The technique of raising a short distance Wau	Controlling Wau	The technique of lowering Wau
<p>This technique is suitable for small and light Wau. Only one person is needed to launch this technique. The player stands with his back to the wind. One hand of the player will hold the body of the Wau and face the wind. The other hand holds the rope loop. The Wau is released slowly until the Wau rises high into the air.</p>	<p>The wind is not blowing so the player has to control the flight of the Wau. Controlling the flight of the Wau is important to prevent the Wau from falling to the ground or to prevent the Wau string from breaking.</p> <p>There are two possible wind gusts, which are weak wind and strong wind. When the wind is weak, the player must wind the Wau string so that the Wau does not fall to the ground.</p>	<p>Lowering a Wau requires two players, one pulling the rope and the other winding the rope.</p> <p>The rope puller is the person who pulls the Wau rope while the rope winder is the person who winds the Wau rope that has been pulled by the rope puller. The Wau game is a match to decide the opponent's Wau string. This requires speed, concentration and high skill. This part of the kite string is coated with fine glass shards.</p>

Source : <http://kfolio-charmainehee.blogspot.com/2008/10/wau.html>

Fig. 12. Steps of flying a Wau

Findings for the first research question on what suitable areas are to play Wau, especially in cities. Researchers have found that the Wau game can still be maintained in the city because there are still suitable places to play in the city. Findings for the second research question on what the process of model-making Wau is show that the manufacturing process of Wau is complicated and requires a lot of time and energy to produce it. The findings for the third question about the correct way to play Wau show that the Wau game needs to be played by anyone, but the game technique needs to be learned and has its skills and techniques.

5 Discussion

The overall objectives of this study, the results of the evaluation study on Preserving Information and knowledge about Wau to Promote the Value of Traditional Games in Malaysia are:

1. Wau has been swallowed up by the current era and is increasingly being forgotten.
2. It can be concluded that society is aware of this problem, but they do not have the best solution because many new games have been created.
3. Research also found that the design and art of Wau should be maintained because Wau is still known for its design.
4. Research found that society is currently more interested in games that are played in a more modern way.
5. The art of playing Wau still has some who continue it but not many.

6 Conclusions & Recommendations

This research will provide a new insight into the traditional Malaysian game of Wau. Wau's dignity will also be raised immediately by raising this traditional game again. Through this research, the community will be more aware of the traditional Malaysian

game of Wau which has been largely forgotten especially in this modern era. People can also relearn the legacy of this traditional game that has been abandoned for a long time. In addition, the analysis presented in this study will convey valuable information for future research that will examine the uniqueness of Wau. Furthermore, the detailed presentation of the Wau game in this research can be a source for further studies to innovate current strategies used in various industries in Malaysia.

This study provides recommendations to the entire community, educational institutions, and the authorities throughout Malaysia.

1. The community should have a keen interest in knowing and trying to learn the Malaysian traditional game of Wau so that it is not swallowed up by time.
2. Educational institutions should raise the art of traditional Wau games in every educational institution so that each generation can recognize and even continue this Wau game. The young generation needs to have a love for the country and an interest in the country's treasures so that this game will continue to be recognized by the whole of Malaysia.
3. It is also recommended that family institutions play an important role in monitoring and controlling their children to learn and improve knowledge about traditional games in Malaysia. They should remember that traditional games are a very big art in a country and are among the resources to attract tourists to our country, as well as increase the country's income.

Recommendations for future studies are recommended to other researchers that when they take traditional games in Malaysia as a research topic they should also focus on other factors and dimensions. Also, researchers who will conduct research in the future should focus on the main issues related to this traditional game.

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