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Multivocality in the Preservation of Macapat Tradition

Irawinne Rizki Wahyu Kusuma [1], I Made Suastra [2], Ras Amanda Gelgel [3], I Nyoman Wardi [4], Agus Iswanto [5]

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Abstract

The influence of globalization has gradually begun to shift the joints of native culture in Indonesia. "Tradition" and "modernity" live face to face even though they are opposites. This phenomenon causes local culture to slowly fade if not evaluated immediately. This research is seen from a cultural studies approach using qualitative research methods, recognizing and valuing the variety of voices within a culture, which makes multivocality essential to cultural studies. Research must be reflexive and can challenge to relinquish power or accept the legitimacy of alternative viewpoints and knowledge systems. Thus, multivocality is emphasized as a diversity of perspectives, and a rejection of a single truth or dominant narrative. This study finds strategies that can be used to realize the preservation of local culture, namely the macapat tradition through: education, tourism, government policy, collaboration, publication and promotion.

1. Introduction

In the current era of globalization, modernity is associated with Western culture, whereas traditional or conventionality is associated with Eastern culture. "Tradition" and "modernity" are generally understood as two terms that have opposing meanings but are always facing each other (Esten, 1992). The increasing development of technology has caused Indonesian culture to be forgotten and abandoned by teenagers (Cahya, 2021). Seeing the reality that Indonesian society currently prefers pop culture which they consider more unique, interesting and practical (Nahak, 2019). This phenomenon will cause local culture to gradually fade due to the lack of the next generation who have an interest in learning and inheriting it.

[1] *Akademi Komunitas Manajemen Perhotelan Indonesia, Badung, Indonesia. Email: winerichie88@gmail.com*
[2] *Udayana University, Denpasar, Indonesia*
[3] *Udayana University, Denpasar, Indonesia*
[4] *Udayana University, Denpasar, Indonesia*
[5] *Badan Riset Inovasi Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia*

Seeing the conditions in this increasingly modern era, the influence of globalization continues to enter without filtering. On the one hand, this has a positive impact because with globalization, Indonesia can still continue to follow developments in the world. However, on the other hand, the influence of globalization has gradually begun to shift the joints of the original culture in Indonesia. The existence of the macapat tradition is at stake especially because of the pop culture that easily enters Indonesia with a large number of enthusiasts. Local culture can be marginalized and quickly forgotten if it is not integrated into ongoing development.

Preserving local culture can also create harmonious relationships between community groups. By understanding and appreciating each other's local culture, good cooperation and tolerance are created. Traditional groups will think that traditions must be upheld and must not be violated, and must even be obeyed in various events and daily life (Ardhini, Ginting, & Dafitra, 2024). However, in the midst of globalization, many changes in people's lives that affect local culture and traditions must follow the market, so that the interest of the next generation to learn and inherit local culture does not decrease.

Various creations that are carried out so that they can be practically accepted in the community must still refer to old traditions or not conflict with current traditions (Permana, 2011). A creation that has been accepted and can be developed has an impact or effect on residents. This needs to be done to prevent conflicts between community groups caused by cultural differences and inappropriate understanding. Preserving local culture is an important step in creating cultural diversity that respects each other and maintains peace in the midst of society. The distinctions between a research manuscript's background and study sections are covered in this page. While the literature review includes a critical analysis of the current literature and the background significance of the study, it also summarizes and evaluates prior research on the topic and research:

a. Multivocality

Multivocality refers to the presence of various voices or expressions in a discourse, narrative, communication, or cultural setting. The term "multivocality" is a mixture of two words: "multi" (many) and "vocality" (voice or expression). The root word denotes a concept rooted in the diversity and cohabitation of different voices, expressing the richness and diversity of perspectives in a particular situation. Darvill (2009) defines multivocality literally as, ‘many voice’. According to Darvill (2009), multivocality is considered an approach to archaeological reasoning, explanation, and comprehension that embraces a high level of relativism and, as a result, promotes the modern expression of several, concurrent discourses or narratives.

Theorists argue that multivocality emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusivity in conversation while challenging the dominance of a particular story or point of view. According to Spivak (1999), it is crucial to reflect underrepresented voices in academic and cultural discourse, especially those of subaltern groups, in order to prevent the continuation of unequal power dynamics. Multiple interpretations of media texts and cultural representations are possible, according to Hall's argument (1997:24), which also highlights the dynamic interplay between various audiences and voices in the meaning-making process. This research is seen from a cultural studies approach, so multivocality is essential to cultural studies because it acknowledges and values the variety of voices within a culture, allowing for a more complex comprehension of identities and cultural occurrences. Multivocality gives rise to and/or positions plurality, contradiction, ambiguity, and ambivalence (Buzzanell, 2017).

Multivocality, which refers to the diversity of voices and views, is very much in line with the basic principles of postmodernism. Multivocality supports a more fluid and decentralized conception of truth and meaning by accepting the fragmentation of voices and dismantling big narratives, which is consistent with postmodernism. Postmodernism itself emphasizes multivocality, diversity of perspectives, and rejection of a single truth or dominant narrative. In this way, multivocality becomes a form of recognition of the diversity of voices, identities, and experiences that are often marginalized by more centralistic or singular views.

Postmodernism emphasizes that truth is relative and diverse, and always connected to a particular social and cultural context. This opens up space for local or minority voices to be heard and accepted as part of a broader understanding of reality. Multivocality thus supports this diversity by allowing multiple perspectives to interact and emerge without one voice overpowering the others.

In communication, multivocality can refer to the way messages can be interpreted differently by different audiences. Thus, multivocality is a concept that highlights the richness of meaning and perspective in language and communication, providing a way to understand and analyze how we interact with texts and messages in different contexts.

Multivocality, which refers to the diversity of voices or views, is very much in line with the principles of deconstruction. Deconstruction, pioneered by Jacques Derrida, focuses on dismantling structures of language and meaning that are considered fixed or fixed. In order to destabilize authoritative readings, multivocality challenges fixed meanings and hierarchies, allowing for the coexistence of different interpretations and views inside a text. This is in line with deconstruction. Deconstruction emphasizes that meaning is always open and context-dependent, while multivocality describes the multiple voices that emerge within a system.

Deconstruction invites us to consider how dominant forces or single narratives can ignore marginalized voices, making multivocality part of the deconstruction process itself. This concept allows for a broader interpretation, where multiple perspectives can dialogue and clash with each other, creating more complex and dynamic understandings. But multivocality also destabilizes in a variety of ways.

In certain instances, multivocality provides a mechanism wherein different interpretations, numerous identities and roles, and varied participant viewpoints surface and become apparent for examination and addition to study and involvement. To demonstrate voice and multivocality, scholars have struggled to portray their own positionality as well as the lives and experiences of others. Researchers use ambivalence, ambiguity, contestation, tension, contradiction, and dialogical reconstruction (both/and) to describe multivocality in order to celebrate pluralistic discourse and texts.

By demonstrating how various voices interact in a discussion, researchers employ multivocality to make some voices temporarily dominant and others background. There are chances to present various readings and voices through discourse and interaction analysis, poststructural critique, and narrative. These are some ways that multivocality challenges meaning, reality, identity, space, and singular interpretation; multivocality offers rich experiential insights.

Multivocality is a concept that attempts to democratize this research process. Debates about power and voice and civil rights activists. Multivocal research must embed collaboration into all stages of the research process, from question formation to dissemination. Research must be reflexive and able to challenge the relinquishment of power or the legitimacy of alternative viewpoints and knowledge systems. Open dialogue and critical reflection are key to multivocal research. Case studies such as the existence of the macapat tradition highlight the challenges in using this method in practice. Critics of the multivocal method have noted the dangers of ignoring or failing to address unequal power relations, or empowering those who are marginalized. Cronin (1996) shows the previous understanding of power that viewed it substantively—embedded in, exercised by, and against— the idea of relational power as a result of the subject-to-subject network of relations. The way power is used and the issues that arise when examining how power is used are likewise affected by this change.

b. Preservation

Preserving the nation's cultural heritage is of course very important as a protection effort. The government must implement policies that lead to efforts to preserve national culture, one of which is by making regulations in preservation efforts. Preservation is described as a dynamic endeavor to uphold the existence of Cultural Heritage and its value through its development, utilization, and protection in Law Number 5 of 2017 about the Advancement of Culture.

In preserving the macapat tradition, the identity and character of a community group can be maintained. Local culture is a reflection of the history, local wisdom, and identity of a region. By preserving local culture, a community group can feel proud and appreciate their own uniqueness. A strong identity and self-identity will provide a sense of belonging and a sense of pride to members of the community group. Without preserving local culture, the identity and self-identity of a community group can be eroded and lost.

Preserving local culture also has benefits in the field of tourism. A rich and authentic local culture can be an attraction for tourists who want to experience its beauty and uniqueness. This can provide additional income and boost the local economy. In addition, by developing local culture-based tourism, the younger generation will be more interested in learning and preserving their own culture, while enriching their knowledge of other cultures.

c. Macapat Tradition

Tradition is the equality of ideas or entities that originate from the past but are still preserved to this day (Stzompka, 2011, p. 70). Traditional arts that grow and develop in a locality are supported by a community that is bound by agreed customary rules, and have been passed down from generation to generation. According to Ramadhanti & Ayundasari (2021), the meaning contained in the Macapat Song itself has a deep meaning and is very much related to human life.

Macapatan Yogyakarta is a tradition of singing songs during the New Java era. This tradition took place in the special region of Yogyakarta, at first macapat was only for the royal family, but then the tradition of singing this song was followed by the palace servants until finally it became known to the wider community and even a special macapat school was established for the community in the 1960s (Lien, 2018). So that the chanting of this macapat tradition is very sacred.

The macapat tradition refers to all aspects of life including language, customs, art, music, traditional clothing, developed in the Yogyakarta area. In the era of rapidly developing globalization, local culture is very vulnerable to being influenced and displaced by incoming foreign cultures. Therefore, it is important for every individual, community group, and government to actively preserve their local culture. The macapat tradition also has valuable values and knowledge. The philosophy of macapat teaches that human life is a journey that has certain stages. Each phase has its own challenges and lessons. Through this understanding, Javanese people are invited to live their lives wisely, accept each phase of life with an open heart, and always prepare themselves for the next phase.

Macapat is also often used to convey moral and ethical teachings. Each song usually contains wise messages that can be used as guidelines in living life. Macapat contains values and norms that have been accepted and respected by the local community. These values include mutual respect, mutual cooperation, solidarity, concern for the environment, and many more. For example, the Sinom song often contains advice for young people to study hard and maintain their behavior, while Dhandhanggula is often used to convey spiritual teachings. Knowledge of local culture also includes local wisdom in dealing with various challenges and changes in everyday life. By preserving local culture, this knowledge and values can be preserved and passed on to future generations.

2. Materials and Methods

Bryman (2012:36) defines qualitative research methods as research strategies that stress words over quantitative data collection and interpretation. According to Blaikie (2000), the most important part of the research process is data collection procedures, namely how data is gathered and transformed (obtained and altered) for analysis. Qualitative research methodology includes observations (both semi-structured and unstructured), group interviews, and document content analysis (Blaikie, 2000). This study critically examined the problem of multivocality in maintaining

the Macapat heritage using qualitative data gathered from primary and secondary sources. Informants and the field were the direct sources of the original data.

On the other hand, secondary data sources included books from the library, publications that presented the study's offline and online findings, and websites that were relevant to the subject matter. The previously mentioned criteria were used to carefully choose the informants. Documentation, in-depth interviews, and observation were used to gather the data. The main focus of data collection was the researcher, who was assisted by an interview guide that contained standard questions that were then refined through discussions with informants. Among the assistive devices were a notebook, stationery, a camera, and a phone. The data were assessed interactively, including data reduction, data presentation, conclusion withdrawal, verification, and interpretation (Miles and Huberman, 1992).

3. Results and Discussions

The study found several strategies in realizing the preservation of local culture of the macapat tradition Education, Tourism, Government policy, Collaboration, and Publication and promotion. The following is an explanation of the results obtained in the field;

Preservation of local culture through education

Preservation of local culture in the midst of globalization is a significant challenge for countries with diverse cultural richness, including Indonesia. On the one hand, globalization offers opportunities to promote local culture on the international stage, but on the other hand, there is a threat of cultural homogenization that can threaten the preservation of local traditions and identities. One of the local cultures and traditions is the macapat culture and tradition in Java. The following are some strategies that have been carried out in the multivocality of preserving the macapat tradition in Yogyakarta and the need for active participation from various parties, both individuals, society, and government.

The steps that have been taken to preserve local culture in the era of globalization are by raising awareness among the public about the importance of maintaining and appreciating local culture. This is done by the government in various ways, for example through education. The importance of preserving local culture is instilled early on in formal and non-formal education, such as social campaigns, festivals, seminars, public discussions, or even through mass media. By increasing public awareness, it is hoped that they will be able to appreciate and pay attention to local culture as part of their identity.

This effort is considered very effective in preserving local culture that involves education in schools. Including lessons on language, history, and local culture in the formal education curriculum. In Yogyakarta as the location of the research, it was found that teaching traditional languages and arts has become part of formal and non-formal education including regional languages, namely Javanese. The use of regional languages at home and at school is an important effort to preserve endangered languages.

In addition, extracurricular activities in schools also focus on traditional arts such as traditional karawitan music and macapat songs as one part. Extracurricular activities allow students to learn directly about their local culture. The material taught about local cultural heritage in the curriculum and extracurricular activities can help the younger generation understand and appreciate their cultural identity. Therefore, programs such as language festivals, regional language speech competitions, or traditional art performances are always held periodically, so that they can help maintain the continuity of local culture and traditions.

Integration of local culture through sustainable tourism

Integrating Local Culture into Tour Packages is also considered to be one of the strategies in developing sustainable tourism after education. Culture-based tourism is an effective way that is managed sustainably to preserve local traditions. Tourism programs that introduce tourists to the daily lives of local communities, including involvement in traditional activities such as cooking traditional dishes, learning regional songs or dances, and even making regional handicrafts such as batik, ikat weaving, or wood carvings, can increase awareness, appreciation and demand for local products and culture. However, it can be seen that in several sensitive cultural destinations, such as temples and historical sites, the number of visitors must be limited to avoid physical damage and degradation of cultural values. This tourism model emphasizes the quality of the tourism experience rather than the quantity of visitors.

On the other hand, the development of sustainable tourism in Yogyakarta is very thick with local cultural attractions. This can be an effective way to preserve culture in the era of globalization. By developing local cultural tourism, the community is actively involved in maintaining their own culture. This can be done by holding cultural festivals, workshops, or cultural tours for tourists. Tourists not only get to know Borobudur Temple or Prambanan Temple, but they can also learn the macapat tradition at the macapat school provided by the Yogyakarta Palace. In addition, the development of local cultural tourism can also provide economic benefits for local communities, so that they have an incentive to maintain and preserve their culture.

Sustainable tourism development also introduces cultural festivals that are an important means to promote and preserve local traditions, as well as attracting the interest of people both domestically and abroad. Some examples of cultural festivals that preserve local traditions in Indonesia include: Teras Malioboro which showcases traditional Yogyakarta culture, is an annual event held to showcase various Javanese arts and cultures, ranging from traditional dances, gamelan performances, to macapat. In 2024 a cultural celebration was again held by the Yogyakarta City Cultural Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*) on Tuesday Wage, May 7, 2024, a special art performance, presented by the Yogyakarta City Cultural Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*), located at the Embung Giwangan Cultural Park.

Macapat Senja is a celebration that presents the noble spirit of Yogyakarta's young people to preserve the traditional art of macapat amidst the ever-rolling current of modernization. Along with the strains of the song, we feel the presence of the grandeur of the intellectual heritage of our ancestors enriched with the touch of genius of Yogyakarta's young people. In their hands, macapat songs are not songs of the past, but reflections of life, which brilliantly capture the essence of the modern era. The beauty and power of macapat culture provide a stage for the creativity and innovation of Yogyakarta's young people.

Macapat Senja is mostly filled by the younger generation to embrace their active role in maintaining the sustainability of macapat art culture. They are pioneers, excavators, and successors, who carry the flag of the greatness of our culture into a brilliant future. Together, we follow in the footsteps of our ancestors, making new notes in the history of our culture. The 2024 Macapat Senja event organized by the Yogyakarta City Cultural Service (*Kundha Kabudayan*) reflects a struggle to ground knowledge and develop culture. Macapat Senja involves young artists who preserve the macapat culture in Yogyakarta. This year is the third year of the Macapat Senja event since 2022 at Teras Malioboro 2, 2023 at Ndalem Pujokusuman and 2024 at Taman Budaya Embung Giwangan.

In the 2024 event, the Yogyakarta City Culture Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*) collaborated with the Macapath Project community. Together, they mobilize the talents of young artists who love macapat from various communities, including: members of the Macapath Project, the Yogyakarta City Literature Champion Community, Pamulangan Sekar Macapat Kridhamardawa Kraton Yogyakarta, Pamulangan Dalang Anak Disbud Yogyakarta City, and Pamulangan Sekar Macapat Puro Pakualaman.

The concept of the Macapat Senja performance is open to the wider community, free of charge. The audience was presented with songs in the concept of panembrama with the song Kinanthi Gandamastuti followed by the songs Sekar Mijil Wedharingtyas, Sekar Asmarandana, and the song Gugur Gunung accompanied by dance choreography and gamelan music. The event closed with the release of fish in Embung Giwangan as a symbol of efforts to preserve and sustain the noble tradition.

In addition to the twilight macapat at the Embung Giwangan Cultural Park, Yogyakarta, on Thursday-Friday (May 16-17, 2024) a macapat festival entitled Macapat Rikat Rakit Raket 2024 was also held. The artists involved were the Macapat Association from 14 kemantren throughout the city of Yogyakarta, Pamulangan Macapat Kridhamardawa Kraton Yogyakarta, Pamulangan Macapat Puro Pakualaman, and the Macapath Project Community. Unlike the twilight macapat, this festival was dominated by the elder macapat group. However, innovation in the presentation of macapat art continues to be carried out by the Yogyakarta City Culture Office so that it remains relevant to the times. This is done by integrating modern elements into traditional performances, so that macapat art remains attractive to various groups of people. Macapat art with gamelan accompaniment, and also dance performances from the Sanggar Cendhik Art Dance choreographed by dance artist Agung Cendik.

The Macapat Senja Festival has attracted international tourists and is an effective way to maintain local traditions while introducing culture to the outside world. In addition to strengthening local cultural identity, the Macapat Senja Festival also attracts international tourists and raises awareness of the importance of preserving culture. The Macapat Senja Festival not only involves the local community, but also attracts tourists to watch cultural performances rich in Javanese symbolism. That is a brief description of the existence of local culture in Indonesia (Kusuma, 2020).

Here the role of the government is very much needed in preserving local culture in the era of globalization. They need to create policies that support the development and preservation of local culture, such as providing incentives to people who are active in preserving it. In addition, the government can also integrate learning about local culture into the formal education curriculum, so that the younger generation can get to know, appreciate, and preserve local culture from an early age.

Government policies in preserving local culture

Laws and Government Policies play an important role in preserving local culture. The policy that supports the preservation of local culture is the Law on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Indonesian government has registered many intangible cultural heritages with UNESCO, such as batik, wayang, keris, and angklung. This international recognition provides an impetus to preserve and promote these cultures at the national and global levels. The government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, often establishes cultural centers in various regions to support training and preservation of traditional arts and provide assistance to local cultural communities.

Innovation in the presentation of macapat art continues to be carried out by the Yogyakarta City Culture Office to remain relevant to the times. This is done by integrating modern elements into traditional performances, so that macapat art remains attractive to various groups of people. Starting from its role as a meeting space, discussion of artistic ideas, to becoming a space for the maturation of Indonesian fine arts. Like a limitless universe, artists can express 'feelings' and limitless creativity in Yogyakarta, a place that has a unique social and cultural culture, and of course like coffee plants, these cultures and cultures penetrate and contribute to 'color' in fine arts.

Looking closely at Yogyakarta, we can see the ideas, concepts, and 'colors' of artists who have various backgrounds, ranging from age, education, social status, to their respective homelands. Togetherness, the word is also considered to have a lot of influence on the flow of fine art in

Yogyakarta. Although in Yogyakarta there are many galleries and communities spread out, the characteristics of togetherness are really thick.

Collaboration with the macapat community

The local art community plays an important role in maintaining the continuity of cultural traditions. They can act as guardians of tradition and agents of change in introducing new innovations without destroying the essence of culture. The macapat community facilitated by the Yogyakarta palace is led by the famous macapat literary artist, KMT Projo Suwasana, who is a servant of the Yogyakarta Palace. Macapat classes are held under a banyan tree right next to the Yogyakarta Sonobudaya Museum. In addition, there are still other communities that use coffee shops as gathering points to practice macapat.

The macapat art groups Paku Alaman and Omah Macapat have provided training to children and teenagers on the macapat tradition. This ensures that future generations continue to maintain and respect their cultural heritage. In many cases, traditional performing arts are being abandoned due to lack of interest. However, several Macapat art groups are trying to revitalize these arts by aligning them with modern tastes, for example by integrating technology such as modern lighting and sound into their performances.

Preserving macapat culture is a shared task that requires collaboration from all parties. Therefore, the Yogyakarta City Cultural Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*) is working together with various macapat associations, art communities, and macapat pamulangan to continue to encourage and support these preservation efforts. In the context of globalization, collaboration with the international community can also help preserve local culture. "The collaboration between the Yogyakarta City Cultural Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*) and the Macapat Project community is a symbol of harmonious synergy to maintain the bond between history and the present, between tradition and innovation. Together, we move forward, voicing the beauty of our ancestral heritage, towards the peak of unlimited creativity."

Cultural exchange programs can also be implemented between Indonesia and other countries, either in the form of art exhibitions, cultural conferences, or art performances, which are considered to be able to increase global appreciation of Indonesian culture and open up opportunities for creative collaboration. Recognition by international institutions such as UNESCO for Indonesian cultural sites or traditions helps strengthen the value of local culture in the eyes of the world. This also serves as a trigger for the Indonesian people themselves to increasingly appreciate and preserve their culture.

Publication and promotion of culture through technology

Publication and promotion of local culture through mass media and technology must be carried out actively. In addition, collaboration between various parties, such as cultural communities, educational institutions, and the government, in efforts to preserve local culture is very important to maintain the sustainability of local culture and identity in the midst of this era of globalization. Documentation of local culture is very important to preserve it in the era of globalization. Local culture is often passed down orally or through daily practices that are vulnerable to being lost over time. Therefore, documentation efforts need to be made through writing, photos, videos, or audio recordings.

Museums and libraries can develop digital collections containing information about artifacts, manuscripts, and local cultural history. In this way, knowledge about local culture can be accessed by the public globally, and cultural heritage can be preserved for future generations. With these documents, local culture can continue to be studied and known by future generations. The macapat

tradition becomes a hybrid product that can open up space to accept pluralism and multiculturalism, appreciate differences, and expand the reach of knowledge and understanding of a complex world (Kusuma, 2025).

Radio Suara Kenanga is also an option in spreading the macapat tradition which is very popular with macapat lovers. Digital technology and the internet can be utilized to promote local culture in the midst of globalization. A new culture where media preserves creative potential will be created by technology (Kusuma, 2019). Some steps that can be taken are through platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, or TikTok, local culture can be promoted more widely. The Macapat tradition has been spread by content creators who introduce the characteristics of Javanese culture, thus helping to increase awareness and interest in local cultural heritage.

4. Conclusion

Cases that take place in the preservation of *Macapat* in Yogyakarta can provide an illustration that collaboration between government, academics, society, and community in the arrangement of *Macapat* cultural heritage is very important. Various preservation programs run by the government are discourses presented in the midst of society. Where the government's power to regulate has limited the space for people to move with all their activities. Understanding the cultural processes that operate on this psychological level may help us to transcend their power and build a more flexible identity while being aware of the never-ending dynamics of identity formation.

However, preservation programs cannot be free from political content. The government has begun to think about this condition to create a discourse that pays more attention to the interests of the community. The process of synergy, collaboration and communication between interested parties can be the beginning of efforts to preserve *Macapat* more effectively. Likewise, legal regulations that are implemented such as government regulations on intangible cultural heritage, need to be created as a means to limit efforts to divide, and of course must be implemented by every society, community, artist including the government itself.

Finally, promoting cultural heritage in historical environments and stimulating positive contributions of cultural heritage can be done for society, while all stakeholders, particularly public authorities and the business sector, can help to facilitate the absorption and application of research results, as well as the distribution of these research results to a wider audience.

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