

Balinese Art Studios: The Learning Process of Art and Culture to Support Sustainable Tourism

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Abstract

Purpose: A lot of perspectives have been discussed about Bali and this paper will discuss it from the angle of the learning process of art and culture in the Balinese art studios in Gianyar Regency.

Research methods: The research was conducted on the months of July and August 2019. Qualitative data was obtained during the research because the method of data collection was interviewing the owner of the dance studio.

Results and discussions: One of the A's in tourism is attraction and Bali have a strong attraction for tourists both domestic and foreign tourists. The art and culture is the breath of tourism in the island of Bali, which is based on the Hindu religion. The resources for these art and culture are nurtured in several forms, which one of them is through sanggar or studios, which is a non-formal education institution for learning Balinese art and culture. Various types of art and culture and developed and nurtured in these studios, such as performing arts, fine arts, and local wisdoms. The tourism industry has given positive and negative impacts for Balinese art and culture, depends on how one may argue if seen through different perspectives. Performing arts have flourished in terms of daily performances taken places in hotels and designated performance theaters. The types which can be easily watched are the music and dance of Bali.

Conclusion: Tourism in this sense is not a direct aspect but, in the future, has a direct impact: providing culture resources for performances in tourism objects and destinations. This as a part of social sustainability, also the *sanggars*, is a part of the sustainable tourism family.

Keywords: *Balinese art studio, art and culture, sustainable tourism*

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INTRODUCTION

Bali as a small island is limited in natural resources but can be proud that it has a rich culture. Its strengths in arts and culture is used as the platform of the Balinese policies regarding tourism policy (Udayana, 2017; Roth and Sedana, 2015; Pitana, 2010). This can be seen in the Bali Provincial Regulation Number 2 year 2012 about Bali Cultural Tourism (Genta dan Sarjana, 2016). Cultural tourism that is owned by Bali is very different from that of other regions

so that there are peculiarities owned and are the main reason for the government's consideration in making regulations.

The implementation of this regulation can be seen visually in the everyday life of the Balinese people and especially those involved in the tourism industries. The Balinese culture is the foundation of visual representation of the Balinese culture (Picard, 1996, 2008) thus we can witness these in the form of architecture of tourism objects and destinations; the physical appearance of the staffs working in tourism industry, ie. costume of guides, hotel staffs, and tourism officials in tourism objects; and the feeling of that Balinese culture that can be experienced by the greetings and gestures made by the tourism community (Astuti *et al*, 2018).

The product of any culture can be visible and/ or invisible. The visible products are those that can be sensed by your senses directly. An example is the architecture, handy crafts, and music and dance. Those that are invisible are the values that are practiced daily by the Balinese people. Such values include *Catur Paramita* (Astuti *et al*, 2018) and the Tri Hita Karana, a harmony and balance between religious, social, and the environment (Windia & Dewi, 2007; Pitana, 2010; Adi *et al*, 2015; Purana, 2016; Ardika, 2017; Mudana *et al.*, 2018; Ginaya, 2018; Dewi *et al.*, 2018, Astuti *et al*, 2018).

The image of Bali as a destination known because of its culture has shaped the island as a destination of unique attractions. The understanding of image as a pull factor in decision making of tourism destinations can be seen from the quote from Gallarza, Saura, and Garcia in Pitana and Gayatri (2005: 65) which states that "... *image are more important than tangible resources, all because perceptions, rather than reality are what motivate consumers to act or not to act*". The impact of good brand image can bring more tourists to Bali and this is what seems to be the objective of the Balinese government.

The existence of tourism has made changes in the function and meaning of art in Bali, which in this case will discuss the Balinese dance. In the past, people learned to dance in order to be able to perform in temples. But nowadays, besides the previous reason, people who study dance are able to get financial rewards if they appear in tourism activities (Barker *et al*, 2006; Picard, 1996).

Gianyar Regency is well known to have big potentials in various forms of art for tourism, one of them is dance (Picard, 1997). There are more than several villages in the regency which have been known to produce dancers, such as Ubud, Singapadu, Bona, and Sukawati. These villages have had dancers for generations thus making them well-known as places of rich potentials in Balinese dancers.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. This definition clearly states that while ensuring that the needs of the tourists and the host region are met, the urge to keep whatever it is being offered and consumed today must be able to be served also in the future. The UNWTO also says that rather than being a type of product, it is an ethos that underpins all tourism activities. The objective of sustainable tourism is to retain the economic and social advantages of tourism development while reducing or mitigating any undesirable impacts on the natural, historic, cultural or social environment.

Sustainable tourism has three aspects, which are environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social sustainability. The *sanggar* as an informal art and culture institution can be part of the social sustainability, and in the future can also be part of the economic sustainability. In this paper, the existence of dance studios in Gianyar Regency are discussed and how the learning process is conducted. Children being the main participants in the activities in the *sanggar* or dance studio, will also be mentioned accordingly. Art and culture being an important part in the social sustainability element will be the main spotlight in this article.

RESEARCH METHODS

The rich potential that Gianyar Regency has in Balinese art and culture, has encouraged the establishment of art studios all around the regency, several of them being focused on Balinese dance. With numerous studios scattered around Gianyar Regency, it is necessary to select a few as the source for this article. To limit the discussion in this article, we will use Sanggar Paripurna in Bona Village, Blahbatuh and Sanggar Lokananta in Singapadu Village, Sukawati as the sample. There is no exact terminology for the word *sanggar* thus in this article the closest word to describe *sanggar* is studio; which we will use continuously until the end of this paper.

The research was conducted on the months of July and August 2019. Qualitative data was obtained during the research because the method of data collection was interviewing the owner of the dance studio. Interview guidelines were previously prepared to have a structured interview. As the interview continues and answers given, other questions emerged as to obtain other related information for the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The object for this article is Sanggar Paripurna in Bona Village, Blahbatuh and Sanggar Lokananta in Singapadu Village, Sukawati. These two dance studios were purposely selected based on their achievements, such as number of students, triumph in various dance contests, their involvement in preserving Balinese dance, and popularity among Balinese parents. Participation in the activities of the dance studio is needed to understand clearly about the vision and mission of the dance studio (McIntosh, 2006). I have visually participated in the dance practices in the dance studio with the owner/ organizer as well as the children/ participants, in which to obtain a much easier approach to retrieve data.

Sanggar Paripurna was established by I Made Sidja, a multi-talented artist from the village of Bona, Blahbatuh in 1990. The purpose of establishing this studio was to be the center of preservation, development, and creation of arts. There are various form of arts that can be found in this studio, such as performing arts, theater, puppetery, and the art of making offerings. As I Made Sidja grew older, the studio was then continued to flourish under the leadership of his fourth child, I Made Sidia.

Sanggar Paripurna at the moment has a large student body and supporters of around 400 people. Its weekly activity includes the learning process of children learning about Balinese art and culture, especially Balinese dance. Young children come to study dance which starts of as a hobby; as a mean to kill time. It is also motivated by the possibility of them to dance in temple ceremonies. The feeling to be able to dance in a temple ceremony usually comes from the parents, which urges their children to learn Balinese dance. There is some pride of the parents if having their child as a performer in the temple.

This studio since its establishment has grown into an ecosystem of performers which accommodates young to old performers for their performance. Sanggar Paripurna is one of a few studios that have a daily and weekly performance for tourism.

Sanggar Lokananta in Singapadu Village, Sukawati is another *sanggar* that is actively nurturing young talents in Balinese Dance. It has more than 100 students currently, and hundreds of alumni's. This *sanggar* was first established as a place to distribute the hobby of I Wayan Sutirtha, its owner and founder, when he was still studying Balinese dance at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Denpasar. The *sanggar* was also formed to accommodate the children around the neighborhood to have a place to study dance and Balinese culture.

The existence of Sanggar Lokananta in the following years flourished because of its consistency in teaching children and producing skilled dancer that are able to compete in various competitions in Gianyar, Denpasar, Badung, and Tabanan. These four regions currently has consistently hold competitions that children of various ages can participate in. Because of the quality if dancers it produced, parents outside of the neighborhood is attracted to educate their children in this *sanggar*.

Sanggar Lokananta currently only teaches children to dance, even though it occasionally participates in several festivals in Bali. In previous years it also performed for tourism activities, mainly in the South of Bali such as Nusa Dua and Kuta. The demand and terms from the festival officials sometimes is not beneficial to the children such as performing at night, the distance of the venue from the homes of the children, and other terms that the *sanggar* must adhere in order to perform according to the official's request.

Currently these two *sanggars* have a weekly schedule in educating its students, twice a week. The learning process of Balinese dance in the *sanggars* is strict but also it adjusts to the capability of its students. The *sanggar* will divide the students according to its age or its dance capability. Then it will be determined what kind of dance that is suitable to be learned for that group. Basic dance movements are always taught in the beginning of the lesson, to give a warm up and also to perfect every movements of the basic dance techniques. The basic movements and techniques is very important to be mastered in order to be able to master any Balinese dance.

A teacher or teachers will then teach each group in turns or separate each group to teach them separately. In each group, a specific dance is taught and is usually practiced for several months, with the schedule for learning being twice a week. This method of teaching Balinese dance can be seen in almost every *sanggar* in Bali and suitable for the teachers and students.

While practicing the dance, values contained in the dance are also implicitly and explicitly mentioned. The students are motivated by the teachers using stories of the importance of Balinese dance to the Balinese people and culture, such as used in temple ceremonies in their villages. Encouraging words are also conveyed to the students to maintain their spirit to study Balinese dance.

Younger children are taught Balinese dance as a means to introduce Balinese art and culture, nothing mentioned or motivated to perform in tourism performances. Older children which understand tourism, especially those from tourism villages such as Sukawati and Ubud, are explained the benefits of Balinese dance in the perspective of tourism.

Learning the Balinese dance by children and Balinese people for tourism is never the main factor to study it, but it is explained by the teachers as well as parents the benefits of studying it for tourism. Yes it will benefit economically but it is more strongly emphasized that the preservation and development of Balinese art and culture is way more important.

CONCLUSION

The art and culture in Bali has grown deep in the roots of the Balinese people: understanding that the preservation of Balinese art and culture is the most important reason to study it. Balinese dance is nurtured, developed, and preserved in the Balinese art studios or *sanggars*. These informal institutions play a big role in preserving the values of Balinese art and culture, specifically Balinese dance. The learning process in the *sanggars* is casual but at the same time has its aspects of discipline and seriousness. The students, mostly young children, learn Balinese dance in the *sanggars* to follow the recommendation of their parents, to be able to perform in temple ceremonies, and to be able to dance as a casual hobby. Tourism in this sense is not a direct aspect but in the future has a direct impact: providing culture resources for performances in tourism objects and destinations. This as a part of social sustainability, also the *sanggars*, is a part of the sustainable tourism family.

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