The Preservation of Angklung through Art Studios in Ujungberung

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Abstract. Angklung is a Sundanese traditional musical instrument played in group. This traditional art has been gradually decreasing in popularity in line with the times, thereby necessitating an action of preservation. The research aims to analyse how Ujungberung District becomes the centre for the preservation of angklung. Ujungberung has become the centre for efforts of developing angklung in West Java Province. The research adopted a descriptive-qualitative method with 78 Sundanese artists in Ujungberung District as the sample. Data were collected through interview and observations. The findings show that Ujungberung District has become the centre for communication for Sundanese artists to preserve Sundanese arts. The association of the artists does not only preserve, but it also makes and develops angklung. In this district, angklung is developed by establishing art studios with a curriculum similar to the one implemented in formal schools.

1. Introduction

The sustainability of human life on earth is highly dependent upon the environment. This is so because the environment is exploited to meet human needs, from food, clothing, housing, to psychological needs. The fulfilment of psychological needs in particular will give a sense of security, serenity, and peace; hence, environmental sustainability affects individuals’ psychology. The fulfilment of material and psychological needs on the other hand also affects environmental equilibrium. The sustainability of various human activities will trigger the creativity of the people: Most people go into a natural environment to decrease their mental and physical exhaustion, restore their mental clarity and engender a mental sense of well-being, as well as physical relaxation [1]. Creativity is most expressed in the form of arts. Creative approaches have been reported as leading to improved practical skills and emotional development among people who have a diverse range of backgrounds. There were very few contributors who did not recognize the capacity of the creative processes and outcomes employed in arts activities for individual and community [2]. Community’s exploitation of the environment creates a relationship between the society and the environment, resulting in the formation of community’s culture and institution. Community’s thinking styles and habits in interpreting life are also expressed through arts. This phenomenon illustrates the essential role of image-based, non-linguistic thinking (as in visual thinking, qualitative reasoning, and imagination) in interpreting and expressing understanding of works of art [3]. The knowledge materializes from a complex process that relates to social, situational, cultural, and institutional dynamics. In their daily lives, people classify, cipher, process, and assign meaning to their experiences, thereby defining their everyday forms of knowledge [4]. On the other hand, sustainable
development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future. Sustainability is a process which tells of a development of all aspects of human life affecting sustenance. It requires wise exploitation and good maintenance of the environment [5].

The equilibrium between the environment and human life is materially and psychologically reflected in the exploitation of natural resources. Thinking is manifested by the speech. "In the encoding process of the thought through speech, and in the decoding—the understanding of the thought, is developed the mental process itself" [6]. The meeting of community’s psychological needs is achieved through the activities which are intended to express their gratitude to the Creator. The expression of gratitude creates a sense of self-efficacy, which is very important for the serene life of individuals. Perceived self-efficacy and social support positively mediate the relationships between leisure activities and life satisfaction, especially in the elderly [7]. To express their gratitude to God, human beings need a medium of expression in the forms of various activities. The expression of gratitude shows that human beings still have faith in God. The total loss of faith in God in favour of technology again fails to solve problems and improve the quality of human life [8]. The various activities of expressing gratitude to God are inherited from one generation to the next. Heritage, as a cultural expression, refers to a set of tangible and intangible assets that certain groups of individuals use to express themselves. Design is part of these productions that empower objects and create emotional bonds between people and their culture [10].

The activities showing expression of gratitude usually take such forms as planting, harvesting, and other important moments for the community. The activities become the custom of the community and media of entertainment that are embodied in artistic forms. The media of expression use the resources in the community; in other words, while doing the daily activities of farming (irrigated and dry-farming) and the like, the community members also do entertaining activities that can meet their psychological needs. In this regard, angklung is one of the media of expression and entertainment for Sundanese communities. Angklung can also be functioned in education field (teaching and learning and training, both in the formal and (schools) [10]. Angklung as a form of art then can be understood as the reflection and expression of community’s gratitude to God as the Creator. The art forms and activities of performing the arts have formed a certain culture that triggers creativity. History has shown the close link between arts leadership and environmental impacts, but most importantly this history will be a multi-layered reconstruction of archival research, oral history, and material culture [11]. Art as a medium of meeting the psychological/spiritual needs requires material support. A community’s life and art becomes a unity. Art is the medium of expression of the community. Art is “the embodiment of an individual’s ideas and feelings that is inseparable from the community and culture [12]. These ideas come from the activities of the communities in using the environment, so that art has been formed since human beings acquired the ability to do such activities as irrigated farming and dry-farming [13]. Different evolutionary theories and models were suggested trying to reason the emergence of the symbolic culture and symbolic behavior, giving rise to art, alongside with language, rituals, and religion [14]. Because art is linked to the environment, art develops in line with the development of technology, economy, livelihoods, and the environment, which makes it possible to attend to what has come to be called acoustic ecology which coincides when considering a sonic landscape [15]. Such holistic essence could be interpreted in two aspects. Firstly, from the horizontal perspective, culture never expresses itself in isolation. It must be unfolded in different fields with diversified ways, which hence revealed the same cultural origin. That means a type of culture could make self-expression in those fields as technology, economy, politics, ethics, and art, but they all were dominated totally by the same cultural system [16]. Goal provided the structure for the activity of their text production; tool refers to the mediational means employed to solve goal-oriented problems; setting served as the social context in which they used a compositional tool [17].

The environment caters to the physical and spiritual needs; therefore, art instruments as one of the media to meet the spiritual needs will be formed by the environment. The environment and its resources support the meeting of life’s needs, creating sustainability in human life. When the
environment changes, the custom of a community will consequently change. This means that culture will continuously change in line with the changes in the community and environment. In addition, community’s attitudes and behaviours affect the formation of culture, whereas attitudes and behaviours are affected by the environment. According to current academic achievements, in explaining humans’ behaviours, the theory that can clearly explain this causality is cultural determinism: special cultural tradition determines the general behaviour of the cultural members [18]. The emerging culture is the psychological expression of the local community. The psychological theory-of-everything that I express here as the superposition of nonlocality over locality may help us overcome the challenges imposed by climate change, increasing autism and schizophrenia, and hatred-driven fundamentalism [19].

Because culture is related to its source of formation, the forms of culture will be influenced by the resources. said that the development of art in general follows the changes taking place in the culture of a society and is influenced by factors such as geographical factor. West Java is one of the provinces in Indonesia with high temperature and rainfall, allowing for bamboos to thrive, in addition to rice field [20]. Bamboos are made as the materials to build houses, and they are also known to prevent soil erosion. Bamboos grow in humid areas. The traditional period of a people necessitates that one has to identify the geographical area of this group in order to consider the autochthonous art practice of the place so as to determine its cultural beginnings, extent, and forms of art explored [21]. In this regard, the geographical condition of West Java supports the formation of angklung. One of the districts in West Java Province that continues to maintain and preserve angklung is Ujungberung District in Bandung City. In this district, Sundanese cultural roots are strongly perceived.

Angklung is a form of art, or a traditional musical instrument, developing in West Java, and Ujungberung District has become a centre for the development of this art form. The present research aims to analyse how Ujungberung District becomes the centre of angklung preservation and development in West Java Province.

Ujungberung District is located in Bandung, which is the capital city of West Java Province. It is one of the regions that have continued to consistently maintain Sundanese traditional arts. The district still maintains a strong root of Sundanese culture and there are a large number of Sundanese art forms that can be found in this district, one of which is in the form of Sundanese art studios.

2. Methods

The research adopted a descriptive method. The method was selected for its benefits in gaining information by observing the processes of making and performing certain arts.

The population and sample of this research consisted of 100 artists belonging to art studios. Out of these 100 artists, 78 resided in Ujungberung District; therefore, the 78 Ujungberung native artists were taken as the sample.

The instrument used to obtain data consisted of the researchers as the observers and analyzers and guided interviews to participants and non-participants in this research.

The data were then analyzed descriptive-qualitatively. The interview scripts were analyzed and processed manually. Descriptions of the data were clarified by the artists involved in this study to make sure they matched what the artists had meant to.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Sundanese Art in Ujungberung

Angklung is one of the traditional musical instruments of Sundanese community developing particularly in the provinces of West Java and Banten. This musical instrument is made of bamboo that creates beautiful sounds. The angklung as a “multitional” (dual tone) musical instrument made of bamboo. Angklung is played by simply shaking it. The sound is produced by the clash of the bamboos. The produced sound vibrates in the composition of 2, 3, to 4 tones for any size of angklung, either small or big [22]. Angklung is made in various sizes, and it should be played together by a group of people. Angklung is only made for one individual tone part, such as bass, melody, and chord. The tone parts in angklung are described in Figure 1.
For each tone of angklung, there is an octave and original note, and when the musical instrument is shaken the two notes are produced simultaneously. Hence, angklung needs to be played by several people together in a group. The original note and octave are illustrated in figure 2.

![Figure 1. Tone parts in Angklung](image1.png)

![Figure 2. Octave and Original Note in Angklung](image2.png)

Angklung as a form of traditional arts from West Java and Banten is increasingly losing its popularity among the younger generations who prefer the modern or new art forms. Nevertheless, there are still people who love this musical instrument and continue to maintain it.

3.2. Centre for Arts Development
To maintain the sustainability of angklung, artists work together to protect, maintain, and develop this musical instrument. In this way, the artists communicate with each other and eventually gather in a certain residential area in Ujungberung District. The reason for gathering in this particular region is not only driven by the efforts of preserving angklung, but also because bamboos as the main material for making angklung are available in this district. The development of angklung is hindered by the decreasing interest of society in this musical instrument; therefore, it requires the support from artists...
and resources. Angklung is made of bamboo with certain characteristics. Although any kind of bamboos can be used to make angklung, the sounds produced will differ from one kind to another. Certain types of bamboos produce the best sounds of angklung; however, the challenge is in the fact that these bamboos are increasingly rare. The best types of bamboos to make angklung are, among others, temen bamboo (Gigantochloa atter), wulung bamboo (Gigantochloa atroviolacea), lengka bamboo (Gigantochloa hasskariiiana), and tali bamboo (Gigantochloa apus Kurz). For the prototype of angklung, each tone is produced from the sound of the bamboo tube in the form of rod on each segment of the bamboo, from the smallest to the biggest tubes [23]. These types of bamboos can be found in any tropical regions. To help its development, angklung should not only be continuously played but also produced. Hence, the most important challenge in angklung preservation is preserving people’s interest in angklung. Angklung is played together, thereby requiring good communication among the artists. By joining an association, the artists form a community of angklung. This community helps preserve the musical instrument. It also becomes the medium by which the artists communicate with each other. Gradually, the association has become a community of Sundanese artists, especially those who are concerned with angklung.

3.3. The Roles of Studios in Angklung Preservation
Sundanese arts in various regions are getting less and less popular due to the rush of new art forms from other regions, especially those from abroad. Changes in motivation and enjoyment in arts have pushed the traditional arts to the edge. However, some people still consider it important to maintain the traditional arts. The efforts of preserving traditional arts need support from the society and the resources from the environment.

The artists who are active in art studios play a key role in the efforts of preserving the traditional arts. One of the efforts made by the artists in preserving Sundanese arts in the art studios in Ujungberung is regeneration. According to the artists, the younger generations should love traditional arts, making regeneration very important. Atang, one of the artists, emphasized that art lovers from the younger generations play a vital role more than any other factors in preserving traditional arts. As many of these constructions may be inherited or unconscious, a concern for the agency of those involved to rupture, subvert, rescript or resist such constructions motivates this research, while acknowledging that this may be limited by structural and cultural contexts [24].

The artists are of the opinion that in order to preserve Sundanese arts, especially angklung, regeneration is necessary. The preservation of traditional arts should also be one of the topics of arts subject in school. Angklung should be made one of the teaching materials in various levels of education in Indonesia [25]. However in reality, this ideal is far from realization. Alternatively, then studios can be built to specifically train children in arts. Hence, the establishment of art studios for the sake of regeneration should be accompanied with a clear curriculum. The curriculum will help the regeneration process to be done with a relevant system. According to other artists, namely Nia, Toni, and some other artists, the teaching and learning process of angklung should be implemented in formal education and take the form of a specialized subject. The participants who attend the lesson should be classified based on their age and their initial ability as measured by a certain entrance exam. If the younger generations have decreasing motivation and interest in angklung, it is possible that angklung will be replaced by the western arts and become extinct. Hence, in an attempt of preserving this art form, angklung should be made a part of teaching and learning in schools, even if it is only included in the extracurricular activities.

4. Conclusion
Angklung is a traditional musical instrument made of bamboo with “multitonal” or dual tone characteristics. The sounds produced are in the range of 2, 3, to 4 tones, and the musical instrument must be played together in a group. Angklung has been pushed to the edge by new musical instruments, but angklung artists strive to preserve this musical instrument. The motivation to preserve angklung becomes the basis for their participation in an association located in Ujungberung District.
The sustainability of angklung is highly influenced by the interest and motivation of the future generations. Hence, the preservation of angklung should not only be realized by continuously playing the musical instrument. More importantly, the artists should have the ability to make angklung, bearing in mind that bamboos as the main material should be made available. With the association of angklung artists who continuously communicate and support each other, it is expected that angklung will be preserved and continue to develop.

The less practicality of angklung that has to be played by a group of people is also another reason why this musical instrument has become less popular. Nevertheless, the artists strive by continuously communicating the importance of this Sundanese art through the establishment of traditional art studios specialized in angklung. The studios are formed in order to inherit the tradition of angklung to the future generations with methods and curricula similar to those implemented in formal education institutions.

The efforts of preserving angklung by these art studios are pivotal for the sustainability of angklung. The studios have their own curricula, learning methods, and other relevant systems adjusted to the age of the students as well as clear parameters for graduation. To increase the love of the younger generation for this traditional musical instrument, angklung should be included as part of the formal education. Angklung should not be necessarily made one of the main subjects, but it can be a part of the extracurricular activities that can increase the interest of students in the musical instrument and indirectly contribute to the preservation of this traditional art.

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