

Sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang, Kapal Village, Badung Regency

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Abstract

The life Balinese community is closely to religious ceremonies that utilize traditional ceramics as ceremonial tools. Among several traditional ceramic craft centers scattered throughout Bali, there is one craft center remains resilient, while some other traditional ceramic craft centers tend to become marginalized. The research objective to analyze the sustainability traditional ceramic art of Basang Tamiang from the perspective the younger generation. The main research issues are the sustainability traditional ceramic art Basang Tamiang from the perspective of the younger generation, aesthetics traditional ceramic art Basang Tamiang, and implications sustainability traditional ceramic art Basang Tamiang on the social, cultural, and economic aspects for the craftsmen. The research method carried out with qualitative, data collected by observation, interviews, and documentation using purposive sampling. The study is conducted in Banjar Basang Tamiang, Kapal Village in 2023. The research findings are First, the sustainability traditional ceramic art is solely based on belief and respect for ancestors. The younger generation shows little interest in directly engaging as ceramic craftsmen, posing a threat to continuity of its existence. Second, the aesthetics of traditional ceramic art indicate that ornamental ceramics take the form of artistic touches given to animal and human figurines, while ceramics for religious ceremonies are crafted in various forms and sizes according to their functions. Third, the sustainability traditional ceramic art has implications for economic improvement, social interaction closeness, job opportunities, and product diversity.

Keywords

Traditional ceramic art, Younger generation, Economic impact

Introduction

Traditional ceramic craft is a craft that has existed since prehistoric times, evidenced by the discovery of ceramic artifacts in Bali, both in intact and fragmented conditions, dating back to prehistoric times. Ceramics are better known as objects made from clay that are fired at high temperatures where the object is created using solid non-metallic and inorganic materials through a high-temperature firing process [1]. Traditional ceramic art has been made from generation to generation using simple techniques as a

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household industry. The products produced include household utensils and ceremonial equipment. This traditional ceramic generally has a market for middle to lower community class. However, in its development it has been able to penetrate the export market, hotels, villas and restaurants [2]. Traditional ceramic products made in Bali were initially intended for ceremonial purposes, but later on, craftsmen began creating decorative ceramics for the needs of hotels and villas. The development of traditional ceramics in Bali is not significant compared to modern ceramics (stoneware), and some craft centers seem dormant or even face the threat of extinction.

The traditional ceramic center of Basang Tamiang is a center that has endured until today. Banjar Basang Tamiang is a center for traditional ceramic crafts located in the Kapal Village-Badung Regency. Along the route connecting Kapal Village and the city of Denpasar, there are stalls offering many varieties of ceremonial tools made from both coconut leaves (janur) and traditional ceramics such as coblong, jun, pengasepan, caratan, paso, and pane. The demand for traditional ceramics for religious ceremonial purposes remains continuous, in line with the frequency of religious ceremonies. The belief that the residents of Banjar Basang Tamiang should not abandon their work as traditional ceramic craftsmen due to potential issues affecting their families is a positive aspect in preserving its existence.

Customs, traditions, and culture are deeply ingrained in Banjar Basang Tamiang as a craft center with its own unique characteristics, earning it a certificate of Intellectual Property Rights in the form of Intangible Cultural Heritage from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2018-Directorate of Heritage and Cultural Diplomacy- Ministry of Education and Culture). In addition to crafting ceramic products for religious ceremonies, Basang Tamiang craftsmen also create decorative ceramic products for the needs of hotels and villas in Bali, such as decorative lamps, flower pots, and human figure sculptures that have been infused with artistic touches. However, the percentage of these decorative items is relatively small, as they are made on a commissioned basis.

Regarding the continued existence of traditional ceramic craftsmen in Basang Tamiang, it is attributed to the belief among the craftsmen that seeking the blessing of "taksu" at Pura Dalem Bangun Sakti ensure the continuity of their business [3]. Craftsmen believe that, if the ceramic-making business is not continued, it may bring about a catastrophe in their lives. Beliefs that are animism and dynamism in nature are often encountered in certain communities in Bali [4]. This tradition is an ancestral heritage and no one among the community has courage to disobey the believability. This local wisdom is deeply embedded in the lives of traditional ceramic craftsmen in Basang Tamiang. The mystical stories behind these beliefs often serve as a reference for them when engaging in any activity.

Based on the results of initial interviews with I Nyoman Suarjana as group leader of traditional ceramic craftsman at Basang Tamiang, on September 13, 2023, He confirms that every family is obliged to continue the work as traditional ceramic craftsmen, and

he believes in this belief. He expresses a desire for the existence of traditional ceramics in Basang Tamiang to be preserved amidst the flow of products from outside Bali that are marketed in the Kapal area. However, Suarjana has concerns that this business will gradually disappear in the future. The phenomenon observed is the low interest of the younger generation in continuing the work as traditional ceramic craftsmen. They are more interested in pursuing other more promising jobs, and they are also unaware of the beliefs/myths in their environment. This statement is further supported by the results of interviews on October 9, 2023, that is Ni Putu Nadia Lestari (16 y.o, a high school student), I Made Galang Windu Saputra (16 y.o, a vocational school student), I Nyoman Oka Yuliasa (25 y.o, a private sector employee), Ni Luh Parmi Widiasih (24 y.o, a private sector employee), and I Putu Eri Santosa (40 y.o, a private sector employee). They all express the same sentiment that there is no interest in continuing the business as traditional ceramic craftsmen, as pursued by their parents. They also have no knowledge of the beliefs/myths in Basang Tamiang.

In his research titled "Marginalization of Balinese Decorative Pottery in Kapal Village, Badung in the Global Era," concludes that forms of marginalization of Balinese decorative pottery can be observed in the quantity of products available in the decorative pottery market of Kapal Village, Badung, the community's interest in consuming decorative pottery, and the interest of traders in selling Balinese decorative pottery [5]. Behind this marginalization, several perceived factors include market ideology, production ideology, distribution ideology, and the implications of marginalization on craftsmen, traders, and the community. His research focuses on the marginalization of decorative pottery, while this study is about the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang-Kapal Village-Badung Regency.

In his book titled "Gerabah Bali," states that Basang Tamiang pottery is produced by pottery craftsmen in Banjar Basang Tamiang, Kapal Village, Badung Regency. Craftsmen in Basang Tamiang believe that leaving their work as pottery craftsmen will bring misfortune to their families [6]. Based on this belief, the residents of Banjar Basang Tamiang are hesitant to abandon their profession as pottery craftsmen. This belief has a positive impact on the existence of the pottery, allowing it to endure until today. This writing can serve as initial data for examining the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang.

In his research titled "Innovation of I Wayan Kuturan's Pottery Crafts in Pejaten Village, Kediri District, Tabanan Regency, Bali Province," shows that Kuturan pottery, in terms of form, is crafted to eliminate monotony by applying various themes to its products [7]. The application of visual elements such as curved and straight lines can be observed in the forms and decorations of sculpture, piggy banks, terracotta reliefs, and garden lamps. The applied forms include a circular shape for the basic form of garden sculptures, piggy banks, and garden lamps, while a square shape is applied to terracotta reliefs. The garden lamp mimics the shape of the upper part of a shrine. Colors and spaces are arranged based on design principles such as unity, balance, simplicity,

emphasis, and proportion. This research examines form, function, and aesthetics, while the study being conducted is from the perspective of the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang.

Addresses the theme of her writing on "Pejaten Village Pottery: Traditional Craftsmen's Adaptability in the Era of Globalization [8]." The results of her research indicate that, in broad strokes, the adaptability of pottery craftsmen in responding to global cultural changes involves reinterpreting traditional cultural heritage, processing it, and developing it by altering forms, functions, and processes during their creative work. This study delves into the adaptability of traditional craftsmen in responding to global cultural changes, while the research being conducted examines the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang from the perspective of the younger generation.

Based on the results of the aforementioned research, there has not been a specific examination of the sustainability aspect of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang-Kapal Village-Badung Regency. Considering the findings outlined above, this research is deemed worthwhile as an effort to ensure its continuity. The research aims to analyze the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang-Kapal Village-Badung Regency, in its operation as a ceramics craftsmens and to explore the views of the younger generation regarding the existence of traditional ceramic art. The urgency of this research has potential reference for the younger generation and ceramic craftsmen in other centers, contributing to the preservation of cultural art especially traditional ceramic art, which is an ancestral heritage that needs to be safeguarded for its continued existence.

Methods

Research methodology is the approach used to uncover truths in a study. In this research, the chosen method is qualitative research. In qualitative research, the collected data is expressed in the form of relative values and is generally conducted in social research, producing objective and context-specific results [9]. The aim of using qualitative methods is to unveil what is hidden behind phenomena. Qualitative research is naturalistic as it is conducted in a natural setting. Data is collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The object of research in this article is about the younger generation's interest as traditional ceramic craftsmen. The research was conducted in the year 2023. The selection of informants was done using purposive sampling, chosen for its overall depiction of the research location and the known characteristics of its community. Interviewed informants are deemed to have the capacity to reveal facts related to the existence of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang. These informants include the Customary Village Chief of Kapal Village, traditional ceramic craftsmen, and the youth in the Banjar Basang Tamiang community. The theories used to dissect issues related to the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang are Derrida's Deconstruction theory, Parker's Aesthetics theory for

analyzing the aesthetics of traditional ceramic products in Basang Tamiang, and Luxemburg's Reception theory for analyzing the community's perception of the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang.

Results and Discussion

The existence of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang

The production of traditional ceramics or pottery can be interpreted as a product that refers to the result of clay-based objects, incorporating patterns from past traditions that have remained static over an extended period, and developments in terms of form, function, and technological applications. The development of ceramics in Indonesia is greatly influenced by choices in materials, firing techniques, finishing touches, and marketing strategies [10]. Traditional ceramic art, as a result of human life activities, is an ancestral heritage that continues to evolve in line with the progress of time and human needs. The various produced items ranging from simple household tools to intricate forms laden with symbolic meanings and spiritual connotations [11]. Basang Tamiang is one of the centers for traditional ceramic crafts located in Kapal Village-Badung Regency. The majority of the population in Basang Tamiang engages in the occupation of traditional ceramic craftsmanship. Its existence is based on the local belief that misfortune will occur if the occupation of traditional ceramic craftsmanship is not pursued by the local residents. This belief has a positive impact on the sustainability of its existence.

The existence of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang has persevered amidst the rapid influx of modern ceramics. Factors influencing the continuity of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang include cultural heritage, which plays a key role. Traditional ceramic craftsmen in Basang Tamiang inherit skills and knowledge from previous generations, preserving and passing them down with utmost honor. This aligns with the viewpoint of [12], stating that artists fundamentally utilize the unconsciousness of the past in creating their work, consisting of personal unconsciousness received in the present life and impersonal unconsciousness received through ancestors. Traditional ceramic craftsmen in Basang Tamiang create products based on their beliefs. The continuous Hindu religious ceremonies provide extensive space for traditional ceramics to fulfill religious ceremony needs, such as *coblong*, *paso*, *jun*, *pengasepan*, and various forms and functions. The presence of traditional ceramics in religious and cultural aspects adds significant value to the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang. This corresponds with [13] assertion that religion is an existential need inseparable from daily life. Tourism plays a crucial role in the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang. The decorative ceramic products crafted by artisans are sought after by tourism establishments as decorations for hotels and villas. This is supported by [14] statement that humans instinctively have motivation based on a hierarchy of needs. The development of the tourism sector is one activity that motivates artisans in the creation of decorative ceramics for hotels and villas, where economically,

the results of their work can meet their living needs. Government support contributes to the preservation of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang by providing training to artisans on technological processes and marketing their products.

Overall, the traditional ceramic art of Basang Tamiang has managed to endure until now due to the combination of cultural heritage, continuity in religious ceremonies, government support, the interest of tourism stakeholders, and the artisans' ability to adapt to changing times. All these factors together create an environment conducive to its sustainability. The sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang is currently being pursued mainly by the older generation, who strongly desire for the preservation and continuation of Basang Tamiang ceramic art by the next generation. Field observations indicate that the younger generation is less interested in taking up the occupation of traditional ceramic craftsmanship, and they are not even aware of the beliefs held by the local residents. Things that indicate that the younger generation is ignoring the growing belief is that they do not want to help their parents in the process of making ceramics, are not interested at all and even actually want to leave the profession because it is considered unpromising and not prestigious. Based on these observations, it can be stated that the younger generation has no interest in traditional ceramic art and lacks confidence in the mythical concepts that develop in their region. The impression is that there is a reluctance to believe in the existence of myths that have developed in the area. The indifference of the younger generation towards the sustainability of Basang Tamiang ceramic art is a deeply concerning issue that can pose a threat to this highly valuable cultural heritage. [15], states that there is no absolute truth; rather, there is always a new truth behind the previously believed truth. The context of this research indicates that the new truth is the indifference of the younger generation towards the sustainability of Basang Tamiang ceramic art. Deconstruction can be interpreted as dismantling, but not destruction [16]. Deconstruction can be understood as a method for analyzing social texts, dissecting, and opening/unveiling the possibilities of motivations or ideologies hidden behind the text [17]. Ideology is a system of beliefs and values and their representations in various media and social actions [18]. This theory aims to support the revelation of new truths behind the phenomenon of the younger generation's indifference towards the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang.

Factors contributing to concerns about the gradual extinction of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang in the future are as follows: Lifestyle changes and the interests of the younger generation can influence their inclination towards traditional ceramic art. In this fast-paced modern era, many young people tend to be more interested in fast-paced digital technology than dedicating their time to understand and learn the traditional ceramic making process. This was emphasized by younger informants who expressed a greater interest in technology, believing it provides faster and more promising results. This generational gap may result in a lack of interest in learning and inheriting the skills required in traditional ceramic making. This reality aligns with the

opinion of [19], stating that society is an open system with characteristics that control the forms and development of an organism. The widespread tendency to generalize all forms of totalizing characteristics is a distinctive feature of modern society. Economic factors also play a role in the indifference of the younger generation. The income from being a traditional ceramic artisan does not compare to more lucrative modern jobs. The younger generation tends to seek more promising opportunities than following the tradition of being a traditional ceramic artisan without the guarantee of stable income. This aligns with [20] assertion that in the era of globalization, the economy dominates the world with the emergence of market hegemony.

Aesthetics of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang

Traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang, from an aesthetic perspective, is discussed using Parker's aesthetic theory, which consists of six principles: the principle of overall unity; the theme principle; the variation principle according to the theme; the balance principle; the development principle; and the hierarchical arrangement principle [21]. Based on these characteristics, products of traditional ceramic artisans in Basang Tamiang exhibit all six of these characteristics. The objects discussed are ornamental ceramics featuring human figures with different expressions, as depicted in the following Figure 1.



Figure 1. Human figure sculpture by traditional ceramic artisan in Basang Tamiang (Source: Muliawati Document, 2023)

The principle of unity

This principle means that elements in an object or artwork are crucial for its value, and the work should not contain unnecessary elements but rather include everything essential. In the past, this principle was referred to as unity in diversity. It is the overarching principle that encompasses other principles [22]. When analyzing Basang Tamiang ceramic products in terms of unity of visual elements or design, they are composed of several lines, textures, and colors that are crucial for their aesthetic appeal, as seen in the human figure sculpture holding a gamelan instrument. This visualization represents the Balinese artistic tradition in terms of gamelan art, where each member plays the instrument in harmony with a joyful and happy heart, as

reflected in the facial expression of this sculpture. As an appreciator of art, it evokes a pleasant mood.

The principles of theme

Theme is the central idea that gives life or spirit to a work of art, and the same holds true for traditional ceramic products crafted by artisans in Basang Tamiang. The ceramic products produced encompass themes of flora and fauna as well as human figures. This is understandable as the social interaction of the artisan community is closely connected to these themes. Artisans in Basang Tamiang draw inspiration from themes that are commonly observed and interacted with in their daily lives.

The principle of thematic variation

The principle of thematic variation involves the presence of diversity, creativity, and innovation in the produced items to avoid boredom as a result of the monotony of a product's theme. The application of the principle of thematic variation is evident in the figurative sculptures of humans holding gamelan instruments, showcasing a high degree of variability.

The principle of balance

The principle of balance is a part of aesthetics that emphasizes the harmony of dimensions in the produced artifacts. The dimensions referred to involve the harmony of height, length, width, thickness, and diameter, ensuring that the created products appear aesthetically pleasing. Traditional ceramic products crafted by artisans in Basang Tamiang already incorporate this principle, manifested in the ability of the created products to stand upright in their designated positions, as is appropriate for human figure sculptures.

The principle of evolution

The traditional ceramic products crafted by artisans in Basang Tamiang are predominantly ceremonial ceramics used in Hindu religious rituals. The evolution of these ceramics over time may seem somewhat static, given that their form and function for Hindu religious ceremonies have remained relatively consistent. Based on a brief interview with informant I Nyoman Suarjana, it is evident that the evolution lies in product innovation for various types of religious ceremonies or *Panca Yadnya*. Previously, the center only provided equipment for specific ceremonies, but now, the equipment for all five parts of *Panca Yadnya* in Hinduism is available at the traditional ceramic craft center in Basang Tamiang. The evolution in decorative ceramics refers to traditional decorative patterns applied to products shaped as human figurines.

The principle of hierarchy

The principle of hierarchy applied to traditional ceramic products in Basang Tamiang is dominated by ceremonial equipment compared to other products. This indicates that, hierarchically, ceremonial equipment for religious rituals holds a primary advantage for Basang Tamiang ceramic artisans, placing it at the top, while decorative ceramics are

only made based on orders. Traditional ceramic products from Basang Tamiang are aesthetically pleasing when viewed through the elements of aesthetics, with the philosophy of honoring ancestors, in this case, Mother Earth, which is the primary material for making traditional ceramics. The existence of myths in the Basang Tamiang community that dare not be violated has an impact on the sustainability of traditional ceramics, allowing them to be preserved until today.

Implications of the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang on social, cultural, and economic aspects for artisans

The existence of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang has significant implications for the social, cultural, and economic aspects of the artisan community, reflecting how traditional ceramic art influences their community.

Implications for social life

The existence of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang plays a crucial role in strengthening social bonds among artisans and their community. The traditional ceramic production process involves many individuals, starting from the provision of raw materials, shaping, firing, and up to marketing. These activities represent moments of close socialization among them. According to the interview with I Nyoman Wirtana, a traditional ceramic artisan in Basang Tamiang, fulfilling orders can be challenging because they work only with their elderly siblings. As a result, they sometimes pass on orders to artisans outside Basang Tamiang. Social relations among artisans are closely knit, such as with artisans in Banyuning Singaraja who mutually benefit each other in product marketing. Conversely, Basang Tamiang artisans, to meet the high demand for religious ceremonies, import products from outside Basang Tamiang. This interaction has positive effects, creating mutually beneficial relationships among artisans, thereby ensuring their sustainability. Social implications refer to the consequences that arise from an event, policy, technology, or change in society concerning social relationships, norms, values, and individual well-being. This aligns with the opinion of [12], stating that the philosophical basis of a social approach is the intrinsic relationship between a work of art and society, involving artisans as producers, members of the community, users of societal resources, and the recycling of artisan's creations within the community.

Implications on culture

Traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang has become an integral part of daily life for the community, utilized for various purposes, including religious ceremonies and tourism. There is acculturation between local and external cultures, as Basang Tamiang artisans often learn from external artisans producing similar products. Similarly, Basang Tamiang's products are widely appreciated by people from outside the region, such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and South Sumatra (Lampung), areas with Hindu transmigration populations. The acculturation occurring is not clearly defined because external products share similar forms, functions, and concepts, a phenomenon referred to as cultural convergence according to [20].

Implications on economy

The production and sale of traditional ceramics in Basang Tamiang have a positive impact on the local artisans' economy. The continuity of product orders provides sufficient income to support the livelihoods of the artisans' families. The establishment of rows of stalls along Kapal's main road represents a potential market for the sale of traditional Basang Tamiang ceramics and similar products from outside. The economic aspect's implications for traditional ceramic artisans in Basang Tamiang are crucial in understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by the artisan community in sustaining their existence. Being an artisan is their primary livelihood, and their dependence on product sales shapes their lives. The economic implications for traditional ceramic artisans in Basang Tamiang are highly relevant to maintaining their sustainability. Humans tend to repeat actions if they are deemed economically advantageous. Regarding activities as traditional ceramic artisans in Basang Tamiang, because it is perceived as beneficial, these activities are continuously carried out. The implication is the relatively high occurrence of economic transactions involving artisans and market participants. Another implication is that regional boundaries are no longer a hindrance, increasing the intensity of economic transactions. A similar opinion is also expressed by [20], stating that the current global economy implies transnational capitalism, where capital or funds transactions are no longer restricted by regions and are easily accessible, thus increasing economic intensity among communities. Economically, with the ease of transactions, the factors involved will also increase, leading to an improvement in the economic and living standards of artisans.

In the perception of the younger generation, the existence of traditional ceramic art has received direct and indirect reactions. Directly, they are not interested in continuing their work as traditional ceramic craftsmen because they prioritize digital technology. Indirectly, the disinterest of the younger generation means that traditional ceramic art will gradually become extinct. This is in accordance with the opinion of [23], that the characteristics of acceptance are reactions, both direct and indirect. Diachronic reception can be interpreted as a group of people, in this case the younger generation, responding sociologically and psychologically to a work of art. The younger generation has a tendency to be resistant to the development of traditional ceramic art, especially when it is linked to local beliefs, in contrast to the older generation who tend to revitalize traditional ceramic art which is considered an ancestral heritage.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis presented, the following conclusions are drawn: The existence of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang is currently preserved due to the belief in myths and the continuous demand in the market for traditional ceramics as ceremonial tools. However, there is no guarantee of its sustainability due to the lack of interest among the younger generation. They are more inclined to pursue other, more promising occupations. The aesthetics of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang, especially

decorative ceramics, lacks innovation because artisans focus on ceramics for religious ceremonies, emphasizing function over decorative variety. Decorative ceramics are only produced based on specific orders. The implications of the sustainability of traditional ceramic art in Basang Tamiang on social life indicate a close interaction between artisans as creators of ceramics and the community as users of the products. The cultural implications reveal a cultural acculturation between local and external cultures in terms of knowledge and skills in ceramic making, with no clear limitations, as external cultures share similar concepts, forms, and functions with traditional ceramics in Basang Tamiang. The economic implications suggest that with the continuous market demand, artisans are motivated to produce, resulting in an improvement in their economic conditions.

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