Preserving cultural heritage through creative industry: A lesson from Saung Angklung Udjo

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Abstract

Cultural heritage is one important thing about the existence of a society. Therefore, now it’s become increasingly important to preserve many valuable cultural heritage. It includes many kinds of art works. Recently, creative industries grow rapidly at SME scale. It increases opportunity to preserve cultural heritage, as we know that many creative industry produce cultural product. The objective of this paper is to show how creative industries succeed in preserving cultural heritage. The methodology of this paper is a case study at Saung Angklung Udjo (SAU), one of creative industry which has successful business records on preserving angklung as a cultural heritage. In-depth interview was conducted to gather information, and will be combined with some archival data to build a comprehensive discussion. The study reveals several key successful factors to preserve cultural heritage by creative industry. The proposed factors can be used to predict the successfulness of another creative industry which is based on cultural products, or some practitioners may use them to build another business which has similar type with SAU.

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1. Introduction

It is generally recognized that the 21st century will be a century of globalization. Notwithstanding all the benefits of economic globalization, it causes the substantive threat of cultural globalization (Grazuleviciute, 2006). Culture is important driving force in the process of urban economic development (Songjie, et al., 2011). Nowadays, it is becoming increasingly important to preserve the valuable cultural heritage of history. Protecting cultural heritage is economical, as well as historical, and also a cultural process (Ekwelem et al., 2011). Cultural heritage can be one of country’s main revenue through tourism. Cultural heritage is not only former history, but also one of the main identities of a nation. As key resource, cultural heritage has become a driver for sustainable development.

Cultural heritage can be managed and preserved through several ways. One way that commonly used is preserving cultural heritage through creative industry. Cultural-creative industry is one of creative-industry type. Creative industries are becoming important components of modern post-industrial knowledge-based economies. Not only are they thought to account for higher than average growth and job creation, they are also vehicles of cultural identity that play an important role in fostering cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2005).

The important question is what are factors that must be considered in preserving cultural heritage through creative industry? How the creative industry can combine culture and business principle to get succeed in preserving cultural heritage? The objective of this paper is to answer those research questions, particularly to show how creative industries succeed in preserving cultural heritage.

This paper is based on case study at Saung Angklung Udjo (SAU), as one example of cultural-creative industry in Bandung, West Java. This research took place at SAU because SAU is one of successful example creative industries in preserving cultural heritage. As the capital city of West Java province, Bandung has long historical development of creative culture where the society involved in creative-based activities. Bandung also has educational institutions as its great asset. Based on data gathered by Dyahrini et al. (2009), the growth rate of regional income of Bandung has reach almost 7% and this is higher than city that surrounding it. From such information, Bandung is suitable for study about this topic. This because preserving cultural heritage needs a supportive environment from financial aspect and also other aspects.

This paper has five parts in its content. The following part is literature review, consists of defining cultural heritage section and cultural creative industries. The next part is the explanation of research methodology, includes Saung Angklung Udjo profile. The fourth part is the result of this study. There are five factors need to be concerned in preserving cultural heritage. Those factors are: training and education of art, cooperation with government for international recognition and promotion, cooperation with educational institution, broadening marketing strategy, and make local community are involved in production process. The last part is conclusion of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Defining cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is including tangible and intangible culture. Before beginning a discussion on preserving cultural heritage, it is helpful to find a working definition of “culture”. There are many definitions of ‘culture’ has been developed. Culture affects everything people do in their society because of their ideas, values, attitudes, and normative or expected patterns of behavior. Hofstede (1980, pp. 21-23) in Belshek (2006) defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another”, which is passed from generation to generation, it is changing all the time because each generation adds something of its own before passing it on.

UNESCO operates with a broad definition of culture as
...the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterizes a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2003 page 3).

Ahmad (2006) in his article examines scope and definition about heritage. Heritage also can be defined as tangible and intangible. He states that the scope of heritage has broadened to include environment and intangible values, and has received agreement from the international communities, the finer terminology of ‘heritage’ has not been streamlined or standardized, and thus no uniformity exists between countries.

The word "preserve" is defined as to keep something the same or prevent it from being damaged / destroyed or to add substances to something so that it stays in good condition for a long time. Cultural heritage may be defined as the entire corpus of material signs - either artistic or symbolic - handed on by the past to each culture and, therefore, to the whole of human kind (Jokilehto, 1989).

The term “Cultural heritage preservation” involves the preservation of the physical heritage of living societies, including their buildings, structures, sites, and communities. It includes the protection of landscapes that societies transformed through agricultural and industrial development. It embraces material culture, including artifacts, archives, and other tangible evidence. Beside the tangible aspects, “Cultural heritage preservation” also encompasses the transmission of intangible aspects of a society, such as oral traditions, music, and community rituals (Coppin State University, 2002).

In this paper, the term “preserving cultural heritage” means preserving tangible and intangible culture, particularly cultural heritage related to arts. Music instruments and dance performance are two kinds of arts that commonly preserved by a community to reveal their existence.

Inherited culture of a community (tangible and intangible cultural heritage) should provide a community with a competitive advantage and uniqueness, one that differentiates it from all other communities (George, 2010). Preserving cultural heritage is very important, not only to keep community’s identity, but also to give economic advantage and other values.

2.2 Cultural and creative industries

The terms “cultural industries” and “creative industries” are often used interchangeably; there is little clarity about these terms and little appreciation or official explanation of the difference between the two (Galloway et al., 2006). If searching ‘cultural industries’ and ‘creative industries’ at Google, it will come up with a feast of learning about the international conversation around these terms and the activities that come under their banner. This conversation is part of the global awakening about what creative activity means for our present lifestyle and our future economic survival (Pippen, 2008).

The term cultural industries refer to industries which combine the creation, production and commercialization of creative contents which are intangible and cultural in nature. The contents are typically protected by copyright and they can take the form of a good or a service. Cultural industries generally include printing, publishing and multimedia, audiovisual, phonographic and cinematographic productions as well as crafts and design (UNESCO, 2005).

The definition of the cultural industries and its related terms has been the subject of intense debate over the last few years. It is related to cultural forms that can be intangible and tangible. Industries often claim themselves as cultural industry while not engaged in the preserving cultural heritage. But according to the terms of the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions adopted by UNESCO in 2005, cultural industries produce and distribute cultural goods or services ‘which, at the time they are considered as a specific attribute, use or purpose, embody or convey cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have’.

In this paper, cultural industry means kind of industry which has purpose to preserve culture, including tangible and intangible culture.
‘Creative industries’ is a new analytic definition of the industrial components of the economy in which creativity is an input and content or intellectual property is the output (Cunningham et al., 2008). The term creative industries encompasses a broader range of activities which include the cultural industries plus all cultural or artistic production, whether live or produced as an individual unit. The creative industries are those in which the product or service contains a substantial element of artistic or creative endeavour and include activities such as architecture and advertising (UNESCO, 2005).

UNESCO also classify creative industries into the following thirteen separate fields: (1) advertising, (2) architecture, (3) art and antiques markets, (4) crafts, (5) design, (6) designer fashion, (7) film and video, (8) interactive leisure software, (9) music, (10) performing arts, (11) publishing, (12) software and computer services, (13) television and radio. From this classification, SAU is included in creative industry in which has three different fields: crafts, performing arts, and music. With combine those three fields, SAU succeed introduce and preserve Sundanese culture.

The creative industries, in Cunningham et al. (2008) view, have dynamic and not just static economic value – they contribute to the process of economic growth and development over and above their contribution to culture and society. This view supports the purpose of this research, in which creative industry has important role in preserving culture.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection and research methodology

As an exploratory study, this research adopts qualitative approach in order to combine an in depth understanding about preserving cultural heritage through creative industry. Qualitative approach is proper for this research because this research aims to gather in-depth understanding of creative industry behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour.

The case study methodology allowed us to combine different data collection strategies: observation and interviews. The study involved multiple sources of data, such as semi-structured interviews, analyses of organisations’ annual reports, use of website materials and semi observation. This study took about one month semi observation. The semi-structured interviews conducted with Head of each division. Since SAU has seven main division (sales and marketing, finance and accounting, corporate secretary, human resource, guest-relation officer, general and household, and craft and souvenir division), this research conducted seven semi-structured interviews.

The limitation of this methodology is this case study only take in one industry. The research is also only qualitative, not combined with quantitative (i.e. using questionnaire). Improvement in methodology can be conducted to gather more accurate result.

3.2 Profile of Saung Angklung Udjo

Saung Angklung Udjo (SAU) was established in 1966 by Udjo Ngalagina that also known as “Mang Udjo” and his wife, U'um Sumiati, By moving the performing arts especially angklung, Saung Angklung Udjo successfully extended its business into diversity, some of them are traditional merchandise, and traditional event. Saung Angklung Udjo then directed to become one of the major tourist destinations for foreign visitors who come to Bandung. Saung Angklung Udjo as one of the creative industries in Sunda ethnic is an example of how a traditional work successfully spreads with modern business systems and business transformation in multiplied scale.

At the present, SAU becomes one–stop cultural workshop, which consists of:

- Performance venue: sundanese culture performance, including angklung music show, Sundanese
dance, and many other cultural show
- Bamboo instrument workshop, and
- Bamboo handicraft centre shop

Performance is the major attraction at the SAU and also become the core of SAU business. There are two performances: internal show (in the SAU) and external show (outside the SAU). Each type of show is packed in several package. SAU also creates angklung and other music instruments which made from bamboo. The angklung and other bamboo music instruments are made at bamboo instrument workshop. They produce thousands angklung for export commodities and local demands. Besides the two core business, SAU also has bamboo handicraft centre shop as corresponding business. At bamboo handicraft centre shop, SAU buys handicrafts from craftsman community and put it on the market to local and foreign tourists. Beside its vision, SAU has grown to be a Sundanese cultural area, particularly the bamboo culture, which provides the world with its reputation and become the main tourism destination in Indonesia.

SAU performs their business with holding the family business principle and has the structure of business organizations such as the middle class in general. As tourism business, SAU is profit oriented, where it is reflected on its idealism: “Art for Mart”. Art for mart is a form of idealism that puts cultural heritage as a valued commodity that can bring SAU to achieve some financial objectives, which is marked on business profit from each angklung performance of SAU.

Although SAU is profit oriented, SAU holds such a deep cultural value in doing their business. Besides “Art for Mart”, SAU also has “Art for Art” idealism. “Art for Art” means art is the main principle in executing their tourism business. Art for mart is a form of idealism that puts cultural heritage as precious commodity that can bring SAU to achieve some financial objectives, which is manifested on business profit from each Angklung performance of SAU.

4. Key successful factor for preserving cultural heritage through creative industry

There are three main parties involved and two core strategies in preserving cultural heritage through creative-cultural industries. The three main parties should be involved are government, educational institution, and society. Furthermore, the two core strategies (commonly used in creative-industry in advance their business) are training the human resources and have proper marketing strategy. The following section discusses the key findings from the case study analysis, structured by the five identified themes.

4.1 Training and education of art

A significant theme identified in all of the top performing cultural-creative industry was the importance of human resource and training. Children who perform at SAU show are called ‘talent’. Before the talent can perform at the show, they’re taught about how to play music with Sundanese music instruments by trainer for several weeks. Talent can perform if they have advance in playing Sundanese music instrument. SAU also provide dance studio, with the purpose of teaching the talents about Sundanese dance. Children can choose dance if they prefer dancing than playing music instrument.

“If children prefer dancing than playing angklung, they can perform as dancer. We have dance trainer and dance studio to teach the talent,” said Head of Performance Division. It makes the children happy with their activities and the love their culture without any element of compulsion. It also help the children elaborated their talents or ability in art.

Training and education of art to the children foster a sense of belonging and love for their own culture. Furthermore, it is very helpful in culture preservation because foster the next generation who are knowledgeable about local culture.
4.2 Cooperation with government for international recognition and promotion

SAU make good cooperation with local government in legal aspect. SAU cooperate with Ministry of Foreign Affair of Indonesia, to distribute their product and introduce Sundanese culture to around the world. This partnership is very valuable to carry up the name of Saung Angklung Udjo into international tourism. Saung Angklung Udjo also can become go international in performing their cultural art and in Sundanese culture products. In 2010, to complete its mission (to conserve and preserve Sundanese culture), Saung Angklung Udjo prove its sincerity by participating on registers Angklung at UNESCO with the aim of protecting the instruments as one of Indonesia’s cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2010).

“In 2012, Indonesian government challenge SAU to produce 150,000 units angklung in one year. The angklung will be distributed all around Indonesia and also will be exported to other countries,” said Head of Production Division. It proves government have important role in preserving cultural heritage. With the help of government, SAU can work better on its mission to preserve angklung as Indonesian cultural heritage.

4.3 Cooperation with educational institution

SAU holds function as an art educational institution. SAU executes educational activities include training, Sundanese art and cultural research, seminar and workshop. SAU holds cooperation with several educational institutions in order to expand their market, and organize some events. Many universities frequently invite SAU to perform at their event. It helps SAU in their marketing strategy and also helps in preserving angklung as cultural heritage. Moreover, several universities support SAU by sending their student, to be SAU talents.

As evidence, SAU holds cooperation with University of Indonesian Education (UPI) in several ways. UPI provides new trainer and new talent from their art-student and also often invites SAU to perform at their events. Another example, SAU often holds angklung and art show by coordinating with Universitas Padjajaran (Unpad).

Conservation of cultural heritage is important for the growing need of integration and expertise into higher education. Relating the university curriculum with cultural heritage in an interdisciplinary way is essential to further promotion in the importance of heritage for a sustainable future. Through teachings, the need for joint cooperation between professionals and academics to achieve common goals will come out intensely.

4.4 Broadening marketing strategy

At the beginning of SAU establishment, Udjo Ngalagena marketed its product by spreading SAU name card to hotels at Bandung. The main targets are domestic and foreign tourists who visited Bandung city. Based on its history, SAU has broadened its marketing strategy. Not only market its product to local community, SAU also market to foreign country. Going international is one goal of SAU. In 2012, Indonesian government challenge SAU to produce 150,000 units angklung to be exported. In this case, Indonesian government is very helpful to get SAU going international.

SAU also cooperate with several travel agents in Bandung. Travel agents help SAU to promote its art performance to foreign tourists. Word of mouth communication between foreign tourists becomes the main marketing strategy at foreign tourism business. Cooperation with educational institution also helps SAU to market their products. In short, cooperation with many parties will give advantages in broadening marketing strategy.

As Head of Marketing Division said, “core marketing strategies of SAU nowadays are exhibition in Indonesia and abroad, distributing pamphlets as much as possible, through media partnership (talk show and live show), mini souvenir shop at hotel, and coordinating with travel agents.”
4.5 Make local community are involved in production process

Involvement of local community in preserving cultural heritage is also becoming important factor. SAU give opportunity to surrounding community to make half-made angklung and then sell it to SAU to be finished. Not only angklung, but also the souvenirs are made by community around. Along this way, SAU help governmental improvement improve the communities around. This way is also one of the corporate social responsibilities of SAU.

“SAU doesn’t produce its angklung and handicraft by itself. SAU give opportunity to surrounding community to be involved, particularly in angklung process making. SAU teach to local community surround it to make angklung. Then, several half-made units angklung are bought by SAU based on the quality standards previously set. Finishing touch of angklung is still hold by internal workers,” said Head of Production Division.

As highlighted by Stern et al. (2008) in his article, cultural engagement contributes to the quality of community life by reflecting and reinforcing social diversity. Ethnic, economic, and / or household diverse urban neighborhoods are more likely than homogeneous communities to house cultural programs, cultural participants, and artists. Likewise, culturally-active neighborhoods are more likely to maintain demographic diversity over time. Stern also state to succeed on social and economic justice grounds, a neighborhood-based creative economy must integrate economic opportunity and social inclusion.

Those key successful factors can only well applied when they are supported by surrounding community. Many parties should be involved in the process of preserving cultural heritage. Cultural-creative industry like SAU has role as intermediary agent, introduce culture from local community to wider community. This process needs support from many parties, particularly government and educational institution.

Another thing that determines the performance of those key successful factors is vision and mission of the cultural-creative industry must prioritize the ‘preserving cultural heritage’ as a basis in executing its business activity. Due to many creative industries only pursue the profit, not ambitious to preserve their own culture.

5. Conclusion

Preserving cultural heritage can be done in many ways. Cultural-creative industry is one effective way and has many advantages. Not only the business / industry itself, but also several other parties should be involved in preserving cultural heritage through cultural-creative industry. Saung Angklung Udjo is one of example successful creative-industry which preserving angklung and Sundanese culture. There are five key successful factors can be identified from Saung Angklung Udjo case study: training and education of art, cooperation with government for international recognition and promotion, cooperation with educational institution, broadening marketing strategy, and make local community are involved in production process. The implication of this study is these proposed factors can be used to predict the success of another creative industry which is based on cultural products, or some practitioners may use them to build another business which have similar type with SAU. Future research can be conducted in different type creative industries, to generalise the result.

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