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Sustaining the Independent Art Festival: Social Capital and Mutual Interest in Festival Lima Gunung

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between art and society is often commodified as an instrument for the exploitation of non-artistic communities in artistic work. In practice, this is often considered to be merely diversification, in the sense that the idea of collaboration needs to be further reviewed in order to avoid tokenization. This study emphasizes artistic practices and work that grow out of society by looking at how they operate in terms of social capital. Festival Lima Gunung is an annual art festival initiated by Komunitas Lima Gunung, which has successfully demonstrated resilience by running continuously for 24 years since 2002. This festival manifests artistic performances produced through collaborative community work in presenting performance-based and theatrical art. Collaborative practices between communities will be contextualized through the concept of social capital proposed by Robert D. Putnam, through three elements, namely: 1) social trust, 2) networks of civic engagement, and 3) reciprocal norms. This research analyzes how these three elements become the core strategy for the sustainability of an art festival that runs independently without dependence on corporate sponsors or government funds. The hypothesis so far shows that in the Lima Gunung Festival, trust minimizes managerial bureaucratic barriers, engagement networks expand the distribution of resources across villages, and reciprocal norms blur the hierarchical boundaries between audiences, committees, and artists, making them equal initiators. Thus, Festival Lima Gunung proves that cultural sustainability is not determined by the amount of financial capital, but rather by how strongly social capital is converted into community power. This demonstrates the community's collaborative practices in art, while challenging art and community practices that often trap citizen participation at the level of tokenism. The findings offer a model of socially engaged art that acts as an organic and sustainable social glue.

Keywords: *Festival Lima Gunung, Sustainability in Art, Art and Society, Collaboratives Practices, Socially Engaged Arts*

INTRODUCTION

Festival Lima Gunung (FLG) was initiated by Komunitas Lima Gunung (KLG), which was founded in 2002 by cultural observer Sutanto Mendut, who is also the owner of Studio Mendut in Mungkid District, Magelang Regency. The members of this community consist of artists from the slopes of the five mountains and hills in Magelang Regency, namely Mount Merapi, Merbabu, Sumbing, Andong, and the Menoreh Hills.

Festival Lima Gunung (FLG) is an art event organized independently by the farming community as an effort to celebrate and preserve traditional arts used in various rituals in the villages surrounding the mountains. FLG does not rely on external assistance and is managed entirely by the local community, making it an example of a festival that is entirely community-based. Over time, the festival has grown to involve various art groups from surrounding hamlets, presenting a variety of performances, ranging from traditional to contemporary art. In its implementation, FLG promotes the principle of mutual cooperation as a management system, in which the community actively participates in every aspect of the festival, from preparation to implementation (Aswoyo, 2013). In addition to being an art performance event, FLG also serves as a forum to strengthen social bonds between villagers and enhance artistic creativity at the local level, with a significant impact on the cultural identity of the surrounding community.

Festival Lima Gunung (FLG) is not only an art performance event, but also a collaborative practice involving various art groups and local communities. FLG was first initiated by cultural observer Sutanto Mendut in 2002, with the aim of bringing together various local art groups from the slopes of five mountains in Magelang Regency. The uniqueness of FLG lies in its community-based collaboration, where artists and villagers work together to design and implement the festival.

This collaboration not only involves art performances but also leads to mutual cooperation in organizing the festival, with the local community actively participating in all processes, from preparation to implementation. According to Mulder (1996), mutual cooperation in Indonesia often serves as a means to strengthen social bonds and build solidarity at the community level. FLG is an example of artistic collaboration that is not only artistic but also social, where each party, including artists, the community, and managers, contributes to maintaining the sustainability of the independently managed festival. The collaboration between art groups with different backgrounds and traditions has resulted in various artistic innovations that reflect the diversity of local culture. Thus, this festival not only serves as entertainment but also as a model for strengthening cultural identity and building broader social networks.

GAP Research;
Not much research has examined how mutual cooperation in FLG operates beyond simply interpreting identity, tradition, culture, and folk art. This study is an analysis of the social capital that constructs mutual interest between artists and non-artistic communities in presenting art festivals through mutual cooperation. Existing literature often fails to explain the mechanisms by which the different interests of artists, organizers, and the community can merge, and how this merging causally impacts the sustainability of the festival without external financial support. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by positioning FLG's collaborative practices not only as art events but also as manifestations of

art and societyart and society according to its performance that ensure the sustainability of presenting art festivals.

This study proposed research formulation;
1: How does social capital (trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity) operate to construct the community's mutual interest in initiating the Festival Lima Gunung?
2: How is this mutual interest transformed into concrete collaborative practices that ensure the festival's independent sustainability?

Based on the theoretical framework of Social Capital (Robert D. Putnam) and the specific context of Festival Lima Gunung, the following hypotheses are proposed:
1: The accumulation of social capital manifested through levels of trust, dense civic networks, and established norms of reciprocity acts as the fundamental mechanism that constructs and aligns individual motivations into a collective mutual interest among the community members.
2: Mutual interest, when translated into egalitarian collaborative practices, fosters a sense of psychological ownership that significantly contributes to the festival's independent sustainability.

Methodology
The research method will use descriptive qualitative with a phenomenological approach. Data will be collected through observation, interviews, and literature studies related to the Lima Gunung Festival. All collected data will be analyzed using Robert D. Putnam's social capital theory approach, According Putnam in Sudarmono (2021, p. 28) which instrumentally examines aspects of social trust, reciprocal norms, and networks of civic engagement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on Robert D. Putnam's social capital theory, the results of the study show that the formation of mutual interest among community members can influence the intention and spirit of collaboration in running the festival sustainably. Involvement between communities expands the distribution of resources between society and art communities in presenting this festival. Meanwhile, the norm of reciprocity that refers to the same mutual interest makes the work of each party involved a collective effort based on a similar spirit.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a qualitative framework for understanding the operationalization of social capital in ensuring the sustainability of the Festival Lima Gunung. By connecting Putnam’s theoretical lens with on-ground collaborative practices, it moves the discourse from descriptive cultural appreciation to a structural analysis of independent arts management. The findings offer a distinct perspective for arts managers and community organizers, demonstrating that sustainability is driven not by financial capital, but by the strategic conversion of mutual interest into psychological ownership. Ultimately, this research validates “*gotong royong*” collaborative practices as a resilient managerial model, suggesting that social connection is the most vital asset for the longevity of socially engaged art and sutainability for Festival Lima Gunung.

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