

EMBEDEDDNESS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIONS: SOUVENIR VENDORS AT SUKAWATI ARTS MARKET, INDONESIA

Dewa Ayu Made Wintensari¹, Ikma Citra Ranteallo², Ni Made Anggita Sastri Mahadewi³, Nyoman Ayu Sukma Pramestisari⁴

¹²³⁴Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Udayana

Email: gekintan487@gmail.com¹, ikma_citra@unud.ac.id², anggitasastrimahadewi@unud.ac.id³, ayusukma@unud.ac.id⁴

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini berfokus pada keterlekatan tindakan sosial ekonomi pedagang *souvenir* khas Bali di Pasar Seni Sukawati Gianyar. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah memaparkan dan menganalisis keterlekatan yang terjalin diantara pedagang *souvenir* khas Bali di Pasar Seni Sukawati. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis deskriptif-eksplanatif. Teori yang digunakan dalam menganalisis penelitian ini adalah Keterlekatan Tindakan Sosial Ekonomi oleh Mark Granovetter. Hasil penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa adanya hubungan keterlekatan yang terjalin diantara pedagang *souvenir* khas Bali di Pasar Seni Sukawati Gianyar. Keterlekatan yang terjadi di pasar ini masuk kedalam dua konsep sesuai dengan pemikiran Mark Granovetter yaitu (*undersocialized*) dan (*oversocialized*). Kedua konsep ini terjadi diantara pedagang *souvenir* khas Bali di Pasar Seni Sukawati akan tetapi lebih condong dalam konsep *oversocialized* yang dimana para pedagang masih memegang teguh norma adat istiadat yang berlaku seperti harus saling tolong menolong dengan sesama, adanya rasa toleransi dan empati yang tinggi sehingga keterlekatan yang terjalin diantara pedagang bersifat positif serta menumbuhkan rasa kaharmonisan dalam hubungan yang terjalin diantara mereka.

Kata kunci: Granovetter, keterlekatan, tindakan sosial ekonomi, pedagang *souvenir*

ABSTRACT

This research delves into the socio-economic behaviours of Balinese souvenir vendors at Sukawati Gianyar Art Market. The objective is to analyse and understand the connections between these traders. The study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-explanatory methodology. The research employs Mark Granovetter's Embeddedness of Socio-Economic Action theory to analyse the findings. The findings reveal a web of relationships between the vendors, which the study divides into two categories: undersocialized and oversocialized. While both concepts are present, the vendors generally lean towards the oversocialized concept, highlighting their strong regard for customary norms such as mutual aid, acceptance, compassion, and nurturing positive relationships that foster a harmonious environment.

Key words: embeddedness, Granovetter, socio-economic actions, souvenir vendors

1. INTRODUCTION

Souvenirs serve as tangible reminders of a particular place or occasion, enabling individuals to revisit the memories they cherish (Andinata, 2010: 3). It is vital to note that these items do not necessarily have to be costly or extensive in size to hold any

significance. The Sukawati Art Market in Bali offers a vast selection of Balinese souvenirs. This market has everything from bracelets and key chains to beach and barong clothes. The prices of the souvenirs sold here are more reasonable compared to other shops and supermarkets that carry similar items. Moreover, the souvenir traders at the

Sukawati Art Market have embraced technology by incorporating digital payment tools. Consumers can conveniently use electronic payment methods like debit or QRIS, making purchasing seamless without cash.

Vendors interact socially with each other in selling the souvenirs, whether it be between individuals or groups (Muslim, 2013: 485). Despite selling similar merchandise, traders typically maintain a positive relationship with one another due to their shared source of goods from the same supplier. These suppliers play an essential role in ensuring the availability of necessary goods for a company and are regarded as business partners (Putri, 2012: 32). Ultimately, it is the supplier's responsibility to provide goods or services that meet its needs. The vendors have a unique and exciting method of acquiring goods from suppliers. They take the goods first and pay for them later, with the picking-up process in the morning and the payment process in the afternoon before closing. This system is made possible by the solid relationships and embeddedness between the vendors and suppliers. Additionally, the vendors share a sense of camaraderie and often borrow merchandise from each other, paying for it at a later time. This practice aligns with the theory posited by Mark Granovetter, which proposes that economic actions are socially situated and embedded in the personal social networks between actors (Damsar, 2011: 139-144).

Balinese culture's social values and norms heavily influence the economic activities of souvenir vendors, embedded in their interactions with other vendors and suppliers. It is intriguing to observe that, unlike conventional economic practices that prioritize payment preceding the exchange of goods or services, Balinese vendors

prioritize upholding social values over personal gain. The values reflected in their interactions with customers, where they prioritize building relationships and maintaining harmony rather than negotiating prices or maximizing profits—the unique economic practices of souvenir vendors and their contribution to the local economy.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Matusin (2021) states the embeddedness of social actions between traders in traditional markets. The relationships between fellow traders in the act of working are a social process based on the social, cultural, and religious conditions that occur within them. According to a study by Rasda (2021), the interaction process at the Terong and Mattirowalie markets in South Sulawesi functions smoothly and by established norms. However, a few minor conflicts still need to be addressed. The AGIL scheme, which encompasses adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency, plays a pivotal role in shaping the social dynamics of these markets. It is indispensable in ensuring that the markets operate efficiently and effectively while fostering a harmonious relationship among all stakeholders.

Sutami's (2012) research highlights the complex challenges traders face in the market, including trust, service, and delivery problems. To overcome these challenges, traders employ rational strategies that can be broadly categorized into five distinct areas. Firstly, traders build relationships with intermediaries such as suppliers and distributors. Secondly, they focus on fostering positive customer relationships to ensure repeat business. Thirdly, they cultivate relationships with their fellow traders in the market, which can lead to mutually beneficial partnerships. Fourthly,

they establish relationships with market officials and regulators to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Finally, traders work hard to succeed, including investing in their businesses and staying up-to-date with market trends. Through regular social interactions, market traders develop strong relationships with one another that become integral to the workings of the market. As Putri (2017) notes, this is evident among the traders in the Sambilegi and Kranggan markets in Yogyakarta. These bonds are more than just casual connections; they embody a deep social connection that has taken shape over time through shared experiences and interactions.

3. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach that delves into individual and group phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, and thoughts (Mahmud & Muslimin, 2016). The research method utilized is descriptive-explanatory, which aims to comprehensively broaden our understanding of the research object. It describes and interprets a situation or phenomenon based on factual information (Zellatifanny and Mudjiyanto, 2018). Additionally, the explanatory method sheds light on a particular phenomenon's causes and effects. By utilizing a qualitative approach with a descriptive-explanatory method, this study aims to explore the socio-economic actions of Balinese souvenir vendors at the Sukawati Art Market. This market is an exceptional research location selected for its exceptional qualities. As one of Bali's largest and most comprehensive souvenir centers, it boasts an impressive collection of unique and traditional goods that appeal to tourists and locals. With affordable pricing, the market is accessible

to all and provides an excellent opportunity to immerse oneself in the local culture through art and craft.

From 20 October 2023 to 20 January 2024, a comprehensive research project was carried out at the Sukawati Art Market. The research explores various market aspects, including buying and selling practices, customer preferences, and pricing strategies. For this research, eight respondents were carefully selected: two key respondents, five primary respondents, and one additional respondent. Key respondents were selected based on their expertise and extensive experience in the art market. On the other hand, primary respondents were selected based on their active participation in buying and selling activities in the market. The research team conducted face-to-face interviews with each respondent, gathering in-depth insights into their experiences and perspectives. The interviews cover various topics, including the types of art sold, the most popular items, pricing strategies used, and the challenges of buyers and sellers.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1.1 SOUVENIR VENDORS AND SUPPLIERS

The Sukawati Art Market's vendors benefit from the Tourism Office's crucial role in supporting their endeavors. The Office prioritizes human resource development through its creative economy program, which inspires and empowers local artists to produce and distribute innovative products and services that contribute to the economy's growth. This forward-thinking approach highlights the importance of creativity in fostering sustainable economic development, which is essential for the region's long-term success.

Suppliers are a vital component of the art

market. Most vendors rent stands or kiosks and source their goods from souvenir suppliers and skilled artisans. These suppliers create their products at home and then entrust them to traders at the market. Every morning, suppliers replenish and inspect stock that may have been depleted before the traders open. Regarding payment, suppliers offer traders ample time to settle their accounts, fostering a relationship built on trust. Vendors and suppliers rely on each other to meet their respective needs. Suppliers provide goods for sale, while vendors handle retail sales to customers. If customers require large quantities of items or wholesale purchases that vendors cannot supply, they turn to suppliers to restock based on customer demand.

Suppliers can usually be found waiting outside the market, either in their parked vehicles or nearby shops, eagerly anticipating a call from vendors. These suppliers serve as a crucial link between the vendors and the sources of goods, such as manufacturers or farms. Although there are no formal agreements between the vendors and the suppliers, a social bond is typically formed between them, which creates a sense of loyalty. This bond is strengthened over time as the suppliers consistently provide high-quality and affordable goods to the vendors.

Vendors value their relationship with their regular suppliers and remain committed to them even if there is a shortage of merchandise stock. This is because suppliers understand the vendors' needs and are willing to go the extra mile to satisfy them. For instance, suppliers may offer customized packaging or provide extra discounts during peak seasons. This level of personalization and attention to detail sets the suppliers apart and helps traders make

informed decisions. Despite the strong relationship between the traders and their regular supplier, there is no guarantee that vendors will receive a low price on goods, even if it was agreed upon with their regular supplier. This is because suppliers often have to contend with unpredictable factors such as changes in market prices, transportation costs, and supply chain disruptions. However, vendors understand that these factors are beyond the supplier's control and value the supplier's reliability and trustworthiness.

4.1.2 THE BONDS AMONG THE SOUVENIR VENDORS

For decades, souvenir vendors in Bali have been using a system passed down from generation to generation. It is common for children to follow in their parent's footsteps and continue the family business. One of the most intriguing aspects of these vendors is their strong bonds. Their enduring relationships are a testament to the trust they have built over the years. They have created a tight-knit community that provides customers with the best possible experience by working closely together. Whether helping each other set up shop or lending a hand during a busy day, these vendors know they can always count on their fellow traders to have their back. In today's society, cultural values emphasize the significance of taking into account various aspects beyond just profit when undertaking socio-economic actions. Such aspects encompass adhering to established rules and agreements that promote empathy and tolerance. When economic actors display positive conduct, it fosters trust and stability. Conversely, unfavorable behavior may result in distrust, deviation, and uncertainty (Beckert, 2019).

Building trust among vendors is essential in reducing doubts and fears of

being lied to or cheated by others. It also creates a culture of empathy, where fellow vendors support each other during challenging times. For example, if a trader runs out of stock when a customer orders, other vendors may lend them the necessary items and allow the trader to pay later. Similarly, if a trader needs to step away from their kiosk temporarily, they can ask other vendors to help maintain the stand and serve customers. Through interviews with two souvenir vendors, we learned that maintaining good relationships with other souvenir traders is highly beneficial for them. These positive relationships make it easier for traders to help each other without hesitation or objection. The bond between these vendors has a positive impact on their businesses.

The bustling Sukawati Art Market is a hub of commerce where consumers and vendors engage in lively transactions. However, it is not uncommon for customers to be unable to locate the items they seek from their usual vendors. They may approach other souvenir traders or original suppliers to fulfill their requirements in such instances. Seasoned patrons, who are well-versed in the market's intricacies and have established relationships with various traders, often resort to this method. Despite the inherent difficulties, the art market remains a beloved haven for those seeking distinctive and genuine souvenirs.

4.1.3. EMBEDDEDNESS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIONS AMONG THE SOUVENIRS VENDORS

Mark Granovetter (1985) introduced the concept of embeddedness, which explores the influence of social relationships on economic behavior. According to this theory, personal social networks between individuals play a crucial role in shaping

economic activities within a social environment. Granovetter categorizes economic action into two types: undersocialized and oversocialized. Undersocialized actions prioritize rationality and focus solely on maximizing profits and minimizing losses to achieve individual benefits. On the other hand, oversocialized actions prioritize cultural values and norms that apply to every individual activity, such as helping one another by customary norms. This theory highlights the crucial significance of social relationships in shaping economic behavior and emphasizes the importance of considering social context when analyzing economic actions. The embeddedness of socio-economic actions among souvenir vendors is described in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1. Embeddedness among the souvenirs vendors

Category	Undersocialized	Oversocialized
Nature	Rational	Cultural
Empathy	-	Vendors help each other when someone needs help; give other vendors loans.
Benefit	Vendors determine the price of their products according to the profits they want to gain.	A profit-sharing system among vendors for sold borrowed souvenirs.
Tolerance	-	Vendors respect each other despite being from different regions and circles; always maintain communication to increase vendor harmony.
Sympathy	Vendors offer visitors various promotions to attract their sympathy	-
Marketing	Some vendors market their products via social media (Instagram, Facebook) to	The vendors engage in healthy competition while maintaining

Category	Undersocialized	Oversocialized
	increase personal profits	professional relationships

Souvenir vendors are responsible for managing their financial interests while adhering to societal values. Operating in an environment that prioritizes empathy towards customers and assistance towards fellow vendors, they tend to prioritize social interactions and relationships over financial gain. Consequently, they may need to display more socialization, as illustrated in Table 2.

Tabel 2. Embeddedness of Socio-Economic Actions between Vendors and Suppliers

Category	Undersocialized	Oversocialized
Nature	Rational	Cultural
Empathy	-	Suppliers provide goods quickly and offer loans to traders.
Benefit	Suppliers have determined the prices of their goods to sell to vendors	Vendors who opt for wholesale purchases will be eligible for a discounted price.
Tolerance	-	The relationship between suppliers and traders continues to run harmoniously despite differences.

5. CONCLUSION

The Sukawati Art Market is a prime example of how social relationships can create a sense of attachment and mutual trust between vendors and suppliers. Mark Granovetter's theory of embeddedness supports this notion, as social actions are deeply ingrained in an individual's social connections. In this market, strong social relationships lead to trust and reduced

deviations. Traders and suppliers rely on these relationships to negotiate payment for goods, with souvenir traders placing a higher value on socialization and empathy over their profits.

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