

The Cultural Event Typology in Bali

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Abstract: There is limited research focusing on festivals and cultural events. This study aims to enrich previous research on event typology, particularly in cultural events. Additionally, the findings of this research can be applied by event practitioners. This is particularly valuable for organizers from outside Bali who may not be familiar with local wisdom and regulations. A qualitative approach was used to have a better understanding of ritual practices and culture. The researcher observed three cultural events in 2024: the Piodalan and Pengerupukan ceremonies in a village in Gianyar Regency, and the Ogoh-ogoh competition in Denpasar city, Bali, Indonesia. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with the village head and unstructured interviews with the participants of the ceremonies. Thematic analysis was conducted to obtain dimensions. Four dimensions of cultural events were found: (1) management – who manages and how the event is managed, (2) function – the purpose of the performing arts, (3) objective – the goal of the event, and (4) audience – who attends the event. This domain was then combined with the typology of performing arts according to Balinese local wisdom, broadly divided into sacred and profane performances, which include Wali, Bebalih, and Balih-balihan dances. This combination was reflected in a matrix of event typologies in Bali. Further research could explore the audience's or the artists' perspectives on presenting each type of performing arts. Expanding the number of villages could also provide insights into different rituals in other villages in Bali.

Keywords: *Cultural festival; Cultural event events; Typology of festival; Typology of event*

1. Introduction and Background

Researchers continue to strive to identify the evolution of planned event types, adapting to the changing times. Planned events can be examined from various perspectives such as function, theme, attendees, scale, and more, making it impractical to have only one typology as a reference (Mysyk, 2020). The classification can also be based on the type of venue, urban design, and adaptations to COVID-19 conditions, including hybrid and online events (Hassanien and Dale, 2011; Smith *et al.*, 2021; Schulte-Römer & Gesing, 2023; Higgins & Halpin, 2022; Yakovchuk, 2022; Simons, 2019).

Knowing the types of events is crucial for event organizers and managers to understand the purpose of each event, prepare specific facilities, choose the appropriate venue, and handle other particular requirements for each type of event (Getz, 2008). He divides events based on their forms: (a) cultural celebrations, (b) political and state events, (c) business and trade events, (d) educational and scientific events, (e) arts and entertainment events, (f) sports competitions, (g) recreational events, and (h) private events. Planned events can be categorized based on a portfolio approach, by considering seasonality, market profile, and the value offered by an event, resulting in (1) occasional mega-events, (2) periodic hallmark events, (3) regional events, and (4) local events (Getz & Page, 2020).

Understanding typologies is instrumental in the development of event tourism, is acknowledged as a strategic consideration (Brown *et al.*, 2007; Hughes, Weaver & Pforr (Eds.), 2015; Presenza & Sheehan, 2013; Trost *et al.*, 2012; Oklobdzija, 2015). From the perspective of event tourism, Getz & Page (2015) categorize planned events and their venue types into four sections: (a) business, (b) festivals and culture, (c) sports, and (d) entertainment.

This research focuses on festivals and cultural events to explore the typology of events in Bali, Indonesia. In the early stages of Bali's tourism development, the island was renowned for its cultural tourism (Williams & Putra, 1997). However, concerns arose that tourism might significantly impact Balinese culture, shifting it from "cultural tourism" to a "touristic culture." In practice, there has been a dialogic process between tourism and culture in Bali, where tourism is no longer an external force that alters Balinese culture; rather, it has become

an integral part of it (Picard, 1990).

To safeguard and clarify cultural practices, Balinese Hindu communities have categorized their arts and performances into those intended for tradition, religion, and entertainment (Picard, 1990). A core principle upheld by the Hindu-Balinese community is the local wisdom of Tri Hita Karana, which emphasizes harmony among humans (pawongan), nature (palemahan), and the divine (parahyangan), and involves the daily practice of Hindu religious rituals.

The Balinese people's life is inseparable from rituals, traditions, and cultural ceremonies. This has drawn the attention of researchers for many years (Mead, 1970; Di Kleen, 1923). As the only island among thousands in Indonesia with a Hindu majority population, and as the largest contributor to Indonesia's tourism sector, it is no surprise that Bali employs various strategies to preserve its socio-cultural identity. Organizing festivals is one way to sustain cultural heritage (Wulandari *et al.*, 2021; Foley, & Sumandhi, 1994).

The Bali Arts Festival organized by the provincial government of Bali is an example of an event aimed at preserving Balinese culture. In 2022, this event attracted 1.5 million visitors over 30 days. The economic transactions from the exhibition of small and medium enterprises amounted to 10 billion Rupiahs. In 2023, the 45th Bali Arts Festival saw an increase in visitors to 1.6 million, including 1,476 international tourists. The festival involved 309 art groups with an estimated 19,000 artists from various regencies/cities across Bali Province (Novlina *et al.*, 2023).

Denpasar, as a municipality in Bali, also utilizes festivals to preserve culture and attract tourists (Mahardika, 2015; Setianti *et al.*, 2018). A series of events are created, including the Ogoh-Ogoh Festival, Heritage Omed-Omedan Festival 2018, International Kite Festival, Charm of Serangan Island, Lais Meseluk Market, Denpasar Book Fair, Sanur Village Festival, Rare Bali Festival, and Maha Bandana Prasadha. These are followed by the Denpasar Festival (DenFest), which serves as the culmination of the series. Table 1 shows some data regarding DenFest from 2020 to 2023.

Table 1: Data of Denpasar Festival

Year	Events	Number of visitors	Number of small enterprises	Total transaction (IDR)	Number of artists involved	Number of the community involved
2020	Online	17,867	1255	3,388,472,000	64	27
2021	Hybrid	26,531	71	492,311,000	1,141	20
2022	Offline	48,537	161	3,426,969,250	2,041	46
2023	Offline	58,630	178	4,908,028,000	1,648	22

Source: <https://satudata.denpasarkota.go.id/dataset/80a0cc6d-b7c0-4782-bc63-0b0d9f12ee87/resource/ea71666c-6ff0-414d-8997-3a4ebddb5ca4/download/309.-denpasar-festival-dalam-angka-tahun-2020-2023.xlsx>

Besides the Bali Arts Festival (PKB), Bali has a tradition of parading Ogoh-Ogoh during the Pengerupukan ceremony as part of the Nyepi Day festivities, which could be a strong basis for village-centered events. Ogoh-Ogoh represents balance, embodying qualities such as good and evil, divinity and demonism, as well as unity and conflict (Winarta, 2018). Through their youth organizations (Sekaa Teruna Teruni), traditional neighborhoods in Bali create Ogoh-Ogoh annually. Bali has 4,432 customary villages distributed across 9 regencies (Department of Advancement of Customary Communities, 2023), meaning there are at least 4,432 events at the village level.

Apart from the Bali Arts Festival (PKB), Bali holds a tradition of parading Ogoh-Ogoh during the Pengerupukan ceremony as part of the Nyepi (The Silence Day) celebrations. Ogoh-Ogoh symbolizes balance, representing qualities like good and evil, divinity and demonism, as well as unity and conflict (Winarta, 2018). 'Banjar adat' which is a traditional group of neighborhoods in Bali, through their youth organizations (Sekaa Teruna Teruni), create Ogoh-Ogoh every year. Dinas Pemajuan Masyarakat Adat (2023) reports that 4,432 traditional

neighborhoods (*banjar*) are spread across 9 regencies in Bali. This means there are at least 4,432 events at the smallest village level.

In 2017, a total of 7,079 Ogoh-Ogoh were recorded parading through the streets of Bali. It required nearly 30,000 personnel, consisting of 5,626 police officers and 22,291 traditional security guards (pedaling), to assist in securing the event. For comparison, the COVID-19 period Olympics in Tokyo in 2020 required 34,000 police personnel and private security units (Polak-Rottmann, 2020). Kompas.com (2017) on March 17, reports that Buleleng regency had the highest number of Ogoh-Ogoh, with 1,381, followed by Gianyar with 1,355 Ogoh-Ogoh.

Odalan is another religious event in the form of anniversary celebrations held at every temple (*pura*) scattered throughout Bali. In 2022, the Central Statistics Agency recorded a total of 4,837 temples, consisting of 9 Sad Kahyangan, 189 Dang Kahyangan, and 4,639 Kahyangan Tiga (Adnyana et al., 2017). The series of Odalan events are particularly special because they feature sacred performing arts, known as Wali, which are exclusively dedicated to Sang Hyang Widhi (The God). Tourists attending these events will not find the usual Balinese dance performances named Balih-balihan typically showcased in hotels, restaurants, or open-air theaters, as they are far removed from the sacredness (Ariana, 2023)

Apart from events aimed at cultural preservation and those closely related to religion and tradition, Bali frequently hosts international events such as The 2022 G20 Bali Summit, the 2018 Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund – World Bank Group, and The 10th World Water Forum in 2024. Music festivals like Djakarta Warehouse Project, Soundrenaline, and Joyland are examples of how external event organizers see Bali as an ideal location for their events. In these events, Balinese culture is often showcased as a key element.

The organizers, sponsors, and stakeholders of these events, who are mostly from outside Bali, need to understand how to integrate their events with Balinese culture, traditions, and religion. By studying the typology of events, especially festivals and cultural events in Bali, the existing event typologies can be enriched. For practitioners, this research is expected to help event organizers and managers planning to hold events in Bali gain a deeper understanding of local wisdom and apply it to their event management practices.

2. Research Methodology

As researchers, we delve into the rich tapestry of human experience, capturing thoughts, feelings, and perspectives beyond simple numbers. Usually, qualitative researchers perform new concepts and refine concepts grounded in the data (Newman, 2014). We use tools like thematic analysis to make sense of this vast amount of unstructured data. This method allows them to systematically identify recurring patterns and themes within the data, offering valuable insights into human behavior and social issues, especially when we try to dig deeper into this case in Bali.

We believe that thematic analysis is a flexible and adaptable approach that researchers can use to analyze data collected through various methods, such as observation, in-depth interviews and secondary data. It can capture beneath the surface of the data, uncovering the underlying meanings. By identifying and analyzing these themes, researchers can better understand the phenomenon under investigation.

Thematic analysis itself is a multi-step process. Initially, researchers become thoroughly familiar with the data by carefully reading and rereading it to absorb the nuances. This familiarization phase allows them to start identifying potential themes and concepts. Next comes the coding stage, where researchers assign codes to specific data segments that represent relevant ideas or topics. These codes serve as building blocks for the themes that will emerge later.

Once the coding is complete, researchers begin the crucial task of identifying themes (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). They group related codes, searching for patterns and recurring ideas that weave a narrative through the data. These themes represent the core findings of the research, offering valuable insights into the central issues and experiences captured in the data. Researchers then refine these themes, ensuring they accurately reflect

the data and address the research questions that guided the study.

This research focuses on several festivals and celebrations. First, the Piodalan Ceremony in Batuan Village, Gianyar Regency, Bali. The ceremony takes place over 4 days and 3 nights, starting from February 3, 2024. Observations and interviews were conducted on the first day at Pusa Puseh Batuan. This location was chosen because Batuan is one of the oldest villages in Bali, according to the Baturan Inscription written during the reign of King Sri Aji Mara Kata. The inscription, dated 944 Icaka (1022 AD), mentions that artistic activities, including performing arts, were part of everyday life in Batuan. The inscription is still preserved intact at Pura Puseh Batuan (Adnyana *et al.*, 2017; Ariana, 2023).

Second, the 2004 Kasanga Festival, an Ogoh-Ogoh competition held by the Denpasar city government. The competition ran from March 1-3, 2024. Twelve winners were selected from 360 Sekaa Teruna Teruni groups that participated. This event was chosen because Denpasar is the largest district in Bali and invests heavily in cultural preservation. Observations were made on March 1, 2022, when the Ogoh-Ogoh finalists were paraded through the city center.

Third, the Pengerupukan ceremony was held one day before The Silence Day (Nyepi) which was on 10 March 2024. Observations were conducted in Banjar Gerih and Banjar Puaya in Batuan Village. Banjar Gerih had over 5 giant Ogoh-Ogoh installations, while Banjar Puaya had 14. Unstructured interviews were conducted to support field observation data.

An in-depth interview was conducted with the Head of Batuan Village, the highest official in the village. The interview topics included the types of events held in the village throughout the year, the village's role in these events, the performing arts that showed in the events, and the village's efforts in preserving arts and culture.

3. Results and Discussion

The Piodalan Ceremony, Pengerupukan, and Ogoh-Ogoh Competition observed are categorized as festivals and cultural celebrations which include commemorative events, carnival parades, and religious rituals (Getz & Page, 2015). In Batuan Village, there are events outside of these categories, such as (a) sports events, including competitions in various sports aimed at connecting with the younger generation, (b) village birthday celebrations, (c) art exhibitions by local art groups, (d) training and seminar events, (e) community welfare services like blood donation and free health check-ups, and (f) donation handover events from companies as part of Corporate Social Responsibility programs. These events occur throughout the year.

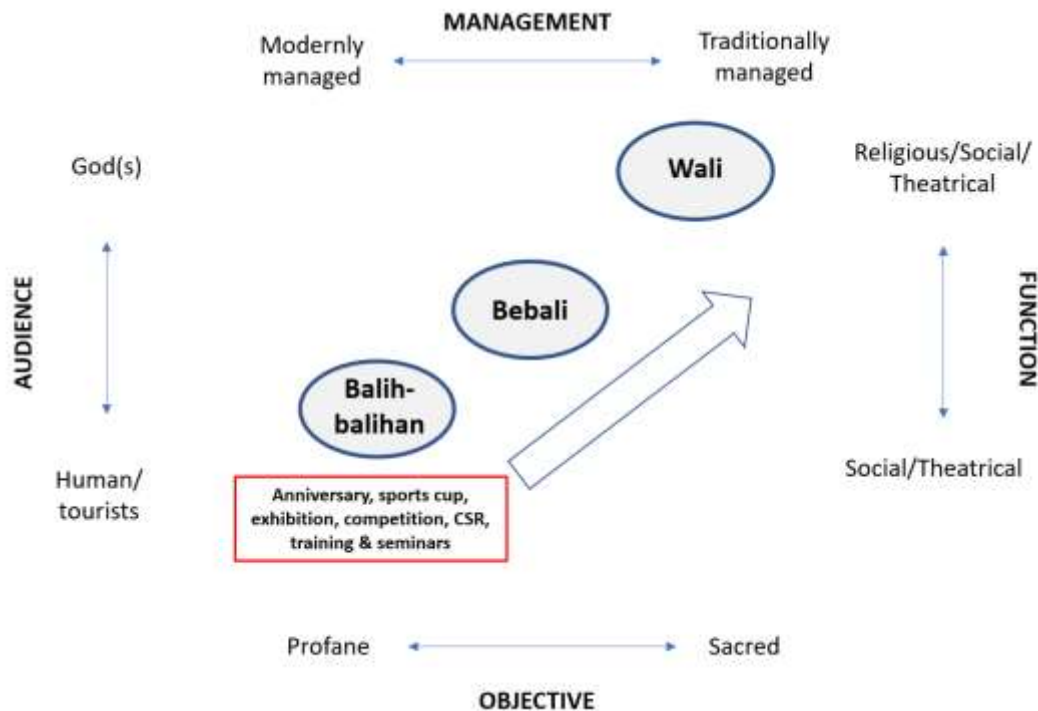
The event organizers and managers of the festivals that were observed were the community groups. They receive support and endorsement from the government at the village, district, municipality, and provincial levels. This support can come in the form of development funds, venues, promotions, and other facilities like security teams. The coding results revealed four dimensions: (1) management – who manages and how the event is managed, (2) function – the purpose of the performing arts, (3) objective – the goal of the event, and (4) audience – who attends the event. Performing arts and cultural attractions were present in every observed festival, in the form of traditional dances, theater, and music. As Suroto & Ardianto (2019) argue, performing arts are an integral part of any event.

Peraturan Gubernur Bali (2017) states that the performance of cultural attractions in Bali is regulated by local regulations and governor decrees. One of the articles, namely Peraturan Daerah Bali (2019). The rules and decree specify the division between profane and sacred cultural arts attractions. Traditional performing arts in Bali are classified into Wali, Bebal, and Balih-balihan (Wang, 2016; Eka, 2023; Asmarandani, 2018). Wali dance is a very sacred performing art, performed by chosen individuals as offerings to God and deities as their representatives. Only certain people are permitted in the area when it is performed. The dances that can be shown to tourists are Balih-balihan-type dances.

Based on the identified dimensions and types of performing arts in Bali, the typology of festival events in Bali can be mapped into a matrix as shown in Figure 1. Events in Bali can be viewed from four dimensions: (1) management, (2) function, (3) purpose, and (4) audience. Each dimension has its spectrum, depicted by arrows

moving left-right or top-bottom. In all observed events, traditional dances accompanied by traditional music and theatrical performances were showcased. As Suroto & Ardianto (2019) argue, performing arts are an integral part of any event. Traditional performing arts in Bali are divided into Wali, Bebali, and Balih-balihan (Wang, 2016; Eka, 2023; Asmarandani, 2018) depicted in the matrix as blue oval shapes. Meanwhile, events that do not primarily involve traditional performing arts, such as anniversary celebrations, sports competitions, exhibitions and competitions, group tourist visits from government institutions, and Corporate Social Responsibility visits from private companies, are represented by red-colored boxes.

Figure 1: The Event Typology Matrix in Bali



Source: own analysis

In the management dimension, there exists a spectrum between modernly managed and traditionally managed events. Performances categorized as Wali are managed by traditional village councils, and religious leaders, and must adhere to the customary village regulations known as Awig-a wig (Bali *et al.*, 2021). In the function dimension, as events move towards Balih-balihan, their function becomes more social-oriented due to their entertaining nature. Conversely, as they move upwards towards Wali, their purpose becomes more religious. Although both types involve social and theatrical elements, gatherings and interactions are inherent in every event.

Moving on to the purpose dimension, traditional dance, music, and theatrical performances are regulated by the Bali government which distinguishes between sacred attractions intended for religious and cultural rituals and profane attractions intended purely for entertainment (Bakker, 2015; Dibia, 1985). Lastly, in the audience dimension, the spectrum ranges from deities to humans. In sacred performances, the dances and music played are offerings presented before the Gods and deities as witnesses. Conversely, in Balih-balihan performances, the audience consists of human attendees such as tourists.

4. Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that villages serve as the smallest yet most abundant base for event organization in Bali, particularly for cultural and religious festivals. Villages also play a key role in the development of the tourism sector, especially through the village tourism program (Suranny *et al.*, 2023). The

function of Odalan, as described by Dibia (1985), remains evident in the current function of Piodalan, indicating that the tradition is well-preserved. They showcase preserved local wisdom while being open to new ideas (Wohangara, 2019).

In the development of events in Bali, both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, Sunarta *et al.*, (2022) observed that the dynamics of events in Bali are closely intertwined with the dynamics of tourism. This connection gives events in Bali a distinctive character compared to those in other regions that are not tourism-related. Some observable characteristics include: (a) events in Bali, in various forms, are closely linked to tourism; (b) events serve various purposes such as fulfilling traditional, cultural, or tourism-related interests; and (c) events in Bali can be categorized as personal, cultural, organizational, or entertainment-based.

Cudny (2014) divides festivals based on (a) attitude to religion, (b) location, (c) social class structure, power distribution, and social roles, (d) important moments in life, (e) season, (f) scale and status/rank, and (g) theme. These findings will complement previous findings on event typology, offering a matrix format to view events from multiple dimensions. Specifically in Bali, there are regulations on how profane and sacred performing arts should be performed when they should take place and their purposes

The author also argues that the cultural and religious elements in Bali's events are inseparable. For those planning to organize events in Bali, it is crucial to understand this typology mapping to ensure compliance with local customs and regulations. These findings can assist event practitioners in designing events to be held in Bali.

Further research could explore the audience's or the artists' perspectives in presenting each type of dance. Expanding the number of villages as research sites could also offer another insight, potentially uncovering variations in rituals.

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