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CULTURAL ACCOUNTING BASED ON STAKEHOLDER THEORY TO SUPPORT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF BANTENG TRADITIONAL ART

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Abstract

Bantengan art faces sustainability challenges due to informal cultural accounting and limited stakeholder engagement. This study aims at examining cultural accounting practices and stakeholder roles in sustaining Bantengan through Stakeholder Theory. Using a qualitative case study of 12 participants, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using pattern matching and explanation building. Findings show that informal, experience-based accounting reflects values of independence, transparency, trust, and kinship. Art communities and government institutions serve as primary stakeholders, while sponsors and donors remain minimally involved. The study proposes a stakeholder-based cultural accounting framework integrating local values, accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement to strengthen collaborative governance and sustainable Bantengan preservation.

INTRODUCTION

The development of accounting has increasingly moved beyond the recording of financial transactions to include the management of non-financial resources, including cultural assets. Accounting for cultural heritage presents a particular challenge because cultural assets embody social, historical, and symbolic meanings that cannot be fully captured through conventional financial measures. In this setting, cultural accounting can be understood as a public-sector and socio-cultural

practice concerned with documenting, managing, and communicating cultural resources and activities in ways that promote accountability and transparency (Sopanah, Hermawati, et al., 2024).

Bantengan is one form of cultural heritage with strong historical, social, and spiritual significance in Malang Raya, East Java. The art is not simply a form of entertainment. It embodies local knowledge and values associated with leadership, protection, and the relationship between people and their natural environment. A typical performance brings together dance, music, pencak silat, and spiritual rituals, making Bantengan closely associated with the cultural identity of the Malang community (Khasanah, U., Bagea, I., Fatmasari, R. K., & Renawati, 2024). At the same time, the continuity of traditional arts is increasingly affected by social change, urbanization, and modernization. Sustaining them therefore requires governance arrangements that encourage documentation, community participation, and cooperation among relevant stakeholders (Ferri et al., 2026). (Kingston, Kylie L. & C, Laura de Zwaan, 2023) further note that traditional art communities in Indonesia may experience difficulties in maintaining accountable records of activities and financial matters, raising concerns about transparency.

For traditional art communities, accountable record-keeping is important not only for administrative purposes but also for maintaining the legitimacy and continuity of cultural practices. Accounting and reporting in cultural settings extend beyond technical financial procedures and may operate as social and moral practices through which communities demonstrate accountability to stakeholders (Carnegie et al., 2022). In many traditional communities, including Bantengan groups, financial and activity records are maintained informally or are not consistently documented. Such conditions may contribute to information asymmetry, weak internal control, and misunderstanding among members. When records are incomplete, it becomes more difficult to trace the use of resources, evaluate activities, and maintain organizational knowledge over time. This is particularly relevant where financial and organizational routines are learned primarily through experience. Asogwa (2024) argued that accountability should be supported by information and engagement mechanisms that recognize the interests of different stakeholder groups rather than relying exclusively on formal reporting to authorities. In cultural accounting, documentation can therefore help make tacit knowledge more accessible and support its transmission across generations. Participatory governance and stakeholder collaboration are similarly important in strengthening the management and long-term sustainability of cultural resources (Snis & Olsson, 2026).

Transparency is equally important because it shapes trust within the community and affects relationships with external parties. For members, openness in financial matters can reduce uncertainty, encourage participation, and reinforce a sense of collective responsibility. External stakeholders, including government institutions, donors, and the wider public, also need sufficiently clear information when considering whether to provide financial or other forms of support. Nguyen (2024) showed that effective communication and meaningful stakeholder engagement could help organizations respond to stakeholder concerns, reduce information gaps, and strengthen accountability relationships. Transparency, therefore, should not be viewed only as an ethical requirement. It could also contribute to organizational credibility and create conditions for wider stakeholder participation. Participatory approaches to cultural heritage governance likewise suggest that involving different groups in decision-making could strengthen shared responsibility and collective ownership. The benefits of transparency are consequently distributed across stakeholder groups: community members gain greater confidence in resource management, while external actors obtain information that can inform decisions about support, resource allocation, and cultural preservation (Hengevoss, 2023).

Transparency and accountability are closely connected to the sustainability of traditional arts. Sustainable preservation involves more than maintaining performances; it also requires institutional resilience, financial continuity, and social legitimacy (Mzembe et al., 2023). Where financial and activity management is not transparent, cultural communities might face greater difficulty in securing long-term support, responding to changing social conditions, and maintaining public confidence. Weak accountability can therefore compound the pressures created by modernization and commercialization (Fatori, 2023).

Previous research provided an important starting point for understanding cultural accounting in the Bantengan community. (Sopanah, Hermawati, et al., 2024) explained that financial recording based

on local wisdom can remain informal while still reflecting traditional values in the management of artistic activities. Such findings are consistent with the broader argument that accounting practices grounded in cultural values can contribute to the social legitimacy of indigenous and community-based organizations. However, existing research has paid less attention to the role of actors outside the cultural community. This is an important omission because traditional art groups operate within a wider socio-economic environment in which funding, legal recognition, policy facilitation, and knowledge transfer may depend on external relationships. Accountable cultural accounting can serve as a communication mechanism between internal community practices and the expectations of external stakeholders. Reliable information about funds and activities may reduce information asymmetry, strengthen trust, and provide a basis for more sustained collaboration. This study therefore considers stakeholder involvement as an integral part of cultural accounting rather than as a separate issue.

Although interest in cultural accounting has increased, a comprehensive stakeholder-based framework that explains how accountability and transparency contribute to the sustainability of traditional arts remains limited. Existing studies tend to emphasize internal cultural values and informal financial practices, while the integration of external stakeholders into cultural governance receives comparatively less attention. This gap has practical consequences. Inadequate recording and reporting can increase information asymmetry, weaken stakeholder confidence, restrict access to external support, and ultimately constrain cultural preservation. The current study addresses this gap by examining how cultural accounting practices and stakeholder engagement can be brought together to support the sustainability of Bantengan traditional art.

Stakeholder Theory provides a useful lens for examining these relationships because the management of traditional culture involves actors with different interests, resources, and responsibilities. Cultural accounting is not confined to internal financial management; it also involves accountability and transparency toward governments, sponsors, communities, and other interested parties. By recognizing the legitimacy of these interests, Stakeholder Theory helps explain how participation, resource support, and social legitimacy may be developed through engagement among stakeholders. Mykhayliv (2025) emphasized the potential of stakeholder approaches to foster shared value and social sustainability through multi-stakeholder engagement, while Kelum Jayasinghe et al. (2020) demonstrated how stakeholder-oriented public accounting can strengthen social accountability through collective participation in managing cultural resources. Accordingly, this study uses Stakeholder Theory to examine cultural accounting as a mechanism for connecting stakeholder roles in the preservation of Bantengan art.

Previous cultural accounting studies have generally concentrated on internal community practices, with less attention to the involvement of local governments, academics, donors, and surrounding communities (Raji, 2021). Cultural preservation, however, is unlikely to be sustained by artists alone. It requires cooperation among actors whose resources and interests are connected to the continuation of cultural heritage. A stakeholder-based cultural accounting framework can help strengthen the legitimacy of cultural communities by combining participation with transparent and accountable reporting (Nguyen, 2024).

Experiences from other countries also illustrate the value of participatory and accountable approaches to cultural heritage. In New Zealand, Māori cultural heritage has been supported through collaborative arrangements involving indigenous communities and government institutions, together with cultural documentation and community participation (Short, 2023). Japan has similarly developed structured mechanisms for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage by combining documentation, community involvement, and government support (Jimura, 2022). These examples suggest that the sustainability of cultural heritage depends not only on maintaining cultural meanings but also on establishing governance arrangements that enable participation, documentation, and accountability.

For Bantengan, the absence of a stakeholder-based system for recording and reporting cultural activities may increase vulnerability to modernization and commercialization. Without adequate documentation, the social, spiritual, and historical meanings associated with Bantengan may become less visible and more difficult to transmit. Limited stakeholder involvement may also contribute to information asymmetry, weak social oversight, and uncertainty in the management of funds and

activities. Developing a cultural accounting model that recognizes the roles and interests of different social actors is therefore important for strengthening the preservation of this local heritage.

Stakeholder-based cultural accounting has both academic and practical implications. From an academic perspective, it contributes to the development of public-sector and socio-cultural accounting research in Indonesia, an area that remains relatively limited in conceptual and practical exploration (Sopanah, Hermawati, et al., 2024). From a practical perspective, the findings can inform cultural governance initiatives involving local governments, art communities, and philanthropic organizations. A more accountable and participatory approach may help address documentation gaps, strengthen social legitimacy, and improve the capacity of traditional art communities to respond to changing conditions.

Against this background and the identified research gap, this study examines how cultural accounting practices within Bantengan communities in Malang represent and preserve embedded cultural values. Particular attention is given to the ways in which cultural activities are recorded, managed, and reported, and to how these practices reflect local values and contribute to the continuity of Bantengan. The study also considers the role of cultural accounting in strengthening accountability and transparency in the management of cultural activities.

The study further examines stakeholder roles in supporting the sustainability of Bantengan through the Stakeholder Theory perspective. It considers whether stakeholder engagement can strengthen participation, accountability, transparency, and long-term cultural sustainability. By bringing cultural accounting and stakeholder engagement into the same analytical framework, the study looks forward to moving beyond an internally focused understanding of cultural accounting toward a multi-stakeholder accountability perspective. The findings are expected to contribute to socio-cultural accounting scholarship and provide practical insights for strengthening the preservation of traditional cultural communities in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach using a single-case study strategy to obtain an in-depth understanding of a complex socio-cultural phenomenon within its real-life setting. The case study focuses on the Bantengan community in Malang Regency and examines how economic, social, and cultural values are reflected in cultural accounting practices, as well as why collaboration with government institutions is relevant to cultural preservation. The approach makes it possible to examine relationships among cultural actors, community practices, and local policies without direct intervention, particularly where the boundaries between the case and its context are not clearly separated. The data are qualitative, descriptive, and contextual, reflecting the social realities and meanings constructed by participants in the preservation of Bantengan. Twelve participants were selected purposively, consisting of village government officials, local government representatives, community leaders, artists, and residents. Selection was based on direct involvement in Bantengan activities, relevant knowledge or experience concerning cultural practices and financial management, and participation in community decision-making. These criteria were used to obtain information from participants with substantive knowledge of the case.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Each interview lasted approximately 30–60 minutes and used open-ended questions to elicit participants' experiences and perspectives. Interviews were recorded using audio devices and supplemented with field notes, then transcribed verbatim for analysis. Following Yin's case study approach, the analysis used pattern matching and explanation building, with time-series analysis applied when relevant. Interview transcripts were coded by identifying recurring themes and grouping the data into categories that could be compared with the concepts of Stakeholder Theory, particularly the roles and relationships of primary and secondary stakeholders. Data credibility was strengthened through triangulation by comparing interviews with observations and documentary evidence and by cross-checking information across participants. The resulting interpretations are presented in the Results and Discussion sections and used to develop the study's conclusions and implications.

RESULTS

The analysis examines cultural accounting practices in Bantengan communities through the perspective of Stakeholder Theory, with particular attention to their implications for cultural sustainability. Two research questions guided the analysis. The first concerns how cultural values are represented in accounting practices and was examined through explanation building. The second concerns stakeholder roles in sustaining Bantengan and was examined through pattern matching. Together, these analytical strategies provide a contextual account of how accounting practices and stakeholder relationships operate within the community.

Interview data indicate that cultural accounting in the Bantengan communities is practiced simply and contextually. The practices reflect local values, particularly independence, transparency, and kinship. Financial records are generally prepared manually and are strongly influenced by experience. Most participants had not received formal training in financial management, so accounting routines developed gradually through everyday practice and shared experience. The head of the Galogo Jati community explained:

> "Just by feeling, Ma'am. Because no one understands accounting, we just learn from our own experience" (T, 8/7/2025)

Similarly, the *Jabung* community representative expressed:

> "It's all based on feeling and experience, Ma'am. Not from the internet, and there's no formal course." (D, 10/7/2025).

The *Jabung* Village Secretary also confirmed:

> "As for accounting, we don't have a system yet, Ma'am; we're still learning step by step" (HS, 9/7/2025).

These accounts suggest that financial management has developed through local learning rather than through formal accounting instruction. The practice reflects a form of independence and adaptation in which community members develop workable procedures according to their circumstances. A second pattern concerns transparency. Financial information is communicated through internal groups and community meetings, making openness part of everyday interaction among members. The head of Galogo Jati stated:

"I usually announce it in the group so that all members are aware" (T, 8/7/2025),

In another statement, he emphasized:

> "When financial matters are open, members become more trusting and more motivated to participate in activities" (D, 10/7/2025)

A similar practice was found in *Jabung,* where openness is seen as part of collective responsibility:

> "Because all the money belongs to everyone, it's important to be transparent with members" (TN, 9/7/2025)

Having taken altogether, these accounts show that transparency in the Bantengan communities is closely tied to social relationships and mutual trust rather than to formal bureaucratic procedures. A third pattern concerns the timing and form of financial reporting. Recording is flexible: some transactions are documented immediately, whereas others are remembered and recorded later. The practice is therefore adjusted to the circumstances and capacity of those responsible for administration. The head of Paguyuban Jabung explained:

"Sometimes we record it right away, sometimes we just remember it first. If we have time, then we write it down" (D, 9/7/2025),

Meanwhile, the head of *Padepokan Galogo Jati* added:

"Usually, it's recorded directly when there's an activity or payment" T(8/7/2025)

Although financial reports are presented openly, not all members fully understand the report details, as expressed by one informant:

> "It's reported and announced during meetings, or photos of income and expenses are shared in the group, but not all members understand them." (T, 8/7/2025)

The findings indicate that financial reporting within the Bantengan communities is shaped by local social capacity. Kinship, tolerance, and collective responsibility influence how information is recorded and communicated. At the same time, the absence of a more structured cultural accounting system presents potential risks. Inconsistent documentation may weaken institutional memory, make cultural activities more difficult to trace, reduce confidence among external stakeholders, and complicate efforts to obtain sustained financial support. Over time, these limitations may affect the community's ability to preserve and transmit cultural knowledge across generations.

The second research question examines how different stakeholders contribute to the sustainability of Bantengan and how their roles correspond with Stakeholder Theory. Pattern matching was used to compare field evidence concerning art communities, village and local governments, surrounding communities, and external actors such as sponsors with the theoretical distinction between primary and secondary stakeholders. The analysis draws on interview data to assess the extent to which actual relationships reflect collaborative principles in cultural preservation.

Table 1. The Role of Stakeholders in the Sustainability of Bantengan Art: Empirical and Theoretical Pattern Matching

Stakeholder Category	Theoretical Pattern (Freeman & Clarkson)	Field Findings	Informant Statements
Art Communities (*Paguyuban, Padepokan*)	Primary stakeholder: central actor with a direct interest in the continuity of the cultural organization.	Actively involved in decisions and financial management through consensus, transparency, and cooperation.	"Usually, we discuss it first before buying equipment for the *padepokan*. Once agreed upon, then we spend the funds." (T, 8/7/2025) "Everyone is invited to discuss financial matters, Ma'am, so that we all understand and avoid suspicion." (D, 10/7/2025) "It's very important. If everything is recorded clearly, there will be no misunderstandings, and the activities can continue." (S, 10/7/2025)
Village/Sub-District Government *(Jabung & Tumpang)*	Primary stakeholder: provides administrative facilitation, legal support, and technical assistance.	Facilitates permits, proposals, and legal status, but has not provided technical training in cultural accounting.	"We have never held any government-organized training related to that." (W, 7/7/2025) "For proposals, we just need the sub-district head's signature, then it goes to the Tourism Office." (HS, 9/7/2025) "The government helps with permits and legality during events." (T, 8/7/2025)
Local Community *(Tumpang & Jabung)*	Primary stakeholder: beneficiary and social supporter of cultural activities.	Supports Bantengan through participation and appreciation but does not have direct access to financial reports.	"Usually, we know through conversations or when events are held. But there's no official report announced to the public." (B, 8/7/2025) "Young people now have positive activities. Instead of being idle, they join *Bantengan* training." (D, 10/7/2025) "So far, it's been good. They're transparent internally, and it's clear from how the activities keep running." (M, 10/7/2025)
Local Government (Tourism Office/Regency)	Primary stakeholder: contributes to funding and institutional legitimacy.	Provides occasional grants but does not systematically monitor or evaluate fund utilization.	"In 2023, we once received assistance from the Tourism Office—2.5 million per group." (W, 7/7/2025) "But regarding fund realization and how it's used in the group, we at the sub-district don't do any monitoring." (S, 7/7/2025) "The legality process has begun, Ma'am, assisted and facilitated by the village government." (D, 10/7/2025)
Sponsors/Donors	Secondary stakeholder: may provide financial and promotional support but is not directly bound to the organization.	Involvement remains occasional and has not been systematically facilitated by government or the community.	"There are no permanent donors. Only when there's an election campaign or a big event do we get some help." (T, 8/7/2025) "We've never received help in finding sponsors, Ma'am. But if the government could help connect us, that would be great." (D, 10/7/2025) "There has never been any training or outreach from the government." (S, 10/7/2025)

Source: Researcher (2025)

The pattern-matching analysis shows that primary stakeholders, particularly the art communities and village governments, are the most consistently involved actors in sustaining Bantengan. Their contributions, however, are concentrated largely on internal decision-making and administrative facilitation. By comparison, secondary stakeholders such as sponsors and donors remain involved only occasionally. The pattern points to a need for more sustained coordination among stakeholders if accountability and the resilience of the cultural organization are to be strengthened.

The limited participation of secondary stakeholders means that preservation activities continue to depend heavily on resources generated within the communities themselves. This dependence may restrict opportunities for capacity building, diversification of funding, cultural promotion, and institutional development. Stronger relationships with external actors could therefore broaden the resource base available to Bantengan communities and reduce their reliance on informal networks.

The evidence also indicates that cooperation between primary and secondary stakeholders remains fragmented. Relationships are often built through personal connections rather than through formal or continuing partnerships. More systematic integration through participatory reporting, clearer government facilitation, and more predictable funding arrangements could strengthen accountability while supporting the longer-term continuity of Bantengan as a local heritage practice.

The findings have implications beyond the description of financial practices. They suggest that cultural accounting within Bantengan functions as a socially embedded form of accountability. Transparency, participation, and trust are shaped by local norms and relationships rather than being derived primarily from formal accounting standards. This interpretation is consistent with cultural accounting research that views community accounting as a practice influenced by socio-cultural values and collective norms (Sopanah, Novianti, et al., 2024).

The findings also accord with studies of community accountability and indigenous accounting practices, which show that accountability in traditional settings may be established through mutual trust, social control, and participatory communication rather than through formal reporting alone. The present study adds to this literature by showing that informal mechanisms can be valuable within the community but may need to be complemented by stakeholder-oriented accountability when cultural groups seek wider legitimacy and longer-term support.

The stakeholder findings further demonstrate the usefulness of Stakeholder Theory for understanding cultural sustainability. Primary stakeholders remain central to internal governance, whereas the limited participation of secondary stakeholders reveals a gap between existing practice and a more comprehensive stakeholder engagement model. Cultural accounting can therefore be developed as a more inclusive practice that communicates not only within the community but also with actors whose resources, decisions, or support affect cultural continuity.

Based on these findings, the study proposes a stakeholder-based cultural accounting model that connects local values, including trust, kinship, and cooperation, with accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement. The proposed model treats cultural accounting as a connecting mechanism: it retains the community's existing social practices while providing a basis for communicating with external stakeholders. In this way, accounting can contribute to both social legitimacy and the longer-term sustainability of traditional art.

The contribution of the study lies in bringing cultural accounting and Stakeholder Theory into one analytical framework. Rather than treating accountability and stakeholder participation as separate issues, the study positions them as mechanisms that can work together to support cultural sustainability. The analysis consequently shifts attention from the internal preservation of cultural values toward a governance perspective in which multiple stakeholders share responsibility for sustaining traditional art.

DISCUSSION

This section interprets the findings in relation to the study's theoretical framework and the relevant literature. The discussion focuses on two connected issues: first, how cultural accounting practices within the Bantengan community reflect local values; and second, how the roles of different

stakeholders correspond with Stakeholder Theory. The comparison between empirical practices and the theoretical framework also helps identify areas where current arrangements remain informal or fragmented.

The cultural accounting practices observed in Bantengan are closely connected to the community's local social structure (Sopanah, 2025). Although financial management does not follow formal accounting standards, participants have developed accountability practices based on trust, participation, and social solidarity (Sopanah et al., 2024). Records are generally prepared manually and depend substantially on the experience and judgment of community administrators (Nogueira & Gomes, 2024). The limited availability of formal training or technical guidance appears to have encouraged the development of procedures that are practical and adapted to local circumstances (Khan et al., 2026). Rather than indicating an absence of accounting, this pattern shows how accounting routines can emerge through local learning and adaptation.

Transparency is maintained primarily through internal communication and collective deliberation rather than standardized administrative formats (Madsen, 2022). Within the community, openness functions as a social practice that supports cohesion and trust. Financial control is consequently exercised not only through documentary evidence but also through interpersonal relationships and gotong royong (cooperation). This finding suggests that transparency in Bantengan is embedded in ordinary community interactions and is sustained through participation in collective decision-making.

Financial recording and reporting are similarly flexible. The timing and form of recording vary according to the availability and capacity of administrators, reflecting kinship and tolerance as important features of community management (Khan et al., 2026). Although financial information is communicated to members, the evidence also shows that not everyone fully understands the information presented. Accounting therefore operates partly as an expression of shared responsibility and commitment rather than solely as a technical mechanism for verification.

These findings indicate that cultural accounting in Bantengan represents a locally grounded form of accountability (Zyznarska-dworczak, 2020). Simple records, interpersonal transparency, and flexible reporting allow accounting to operate within the social practices of the community (Song & Zhou, 2021). In this sense, accounting is not merely an administrative procedure; it becomes part of the community's cultural governance. This interpretation is consistent with Ebaid (2022) and Sopanah et al (2020), who argue that accounting practices embedded in local cultural values can support social accountability and legitimacy in traditional communities. The present study extends that argument by showing that cultural accounting can also provide a basis for strengthening relationships with stakeholders outside the community.

The development of a cultural accounting framework based on Stakeholder Theory therefore needs to accommodate both social and cultural dimensions. A framework that is too formal may be difficult to apply in a community whose practices have developed through experience, whereas an entirely informal system may not provide sufficient information for external stakeholders. The challenge is to develop an adaptive and participatory arrangement that preserves local practices while improving documentation, institutional memory, stakeholder trust, and access to longer-term support. Without such development, Bantengan and similar traditional arts may remain vulnerable to the pressures associated with modernization and commercialization.

The preservation of Bantengan also involves stakeholders with different levels of influence and different forms of participation. Pattern matching shows a partial correspondence between field practices and Stakeholder Theory, particularly in the distinction between primary and secondary stakeholders. Art communities occupy the most central position, while government institutions and residents provide varying forms of administrative, social, and institutional support.

Village and sub-district governments can be regarded as primary stakeholders because they provide administrative support, facilitate legal recognition, issue permits, and assist with proposals for financial support (Raji, 2021). Their role, however, remains largely procedural. The absence of training and mentoring related to accounting suggests that the potential of government institutions to strengthen community capacity has not yet been fully realized (Yanti, 2026). Government bodies consequently

function more often as facilitators of administrative processes than as strategic partners in developing the institutional capacity of cultural communities.

The surrounding community acts as both a beneficiary and a source of social support for Bantengan. Its involvement is visible through attendance, appreciation, and participation in cultural activities, although community members are not directly involved in financial management or formal supervision. Even so, this support contributes to the social legitimacy of the Bantengan groups. In practical terms, continued community acceptance provides an important social basis for the groups to maintain their activities over time (Siswandoyo & Indah, 2025).

The regional government, particularly the Tourism Office, contributes mainly through occasional financial assistance and support for institutional legality. These contributions are not accompanied by systematic monitoring, evaluation, or continued mentoring (Khater Mohamed, 2025). The policy-making and strategic partnership role of government therefore remains relatively limited (Fisher, 2021). The findings point to the value of moving from short-term assistance toward longer-term partnerships that focus on strengthening the organizational capacity of cultural communities.

Sponsors and donors, classified here as secondary stakeholders, have so far played a limited role. Their involvement is largely incidental and is not supported by a structured mechanism established by either the government or the cultural communities (Nguyen, 2024). The absence of sustained relationships with private or philanthropic actors indicates a weakness in the wider support ecosystem for cultural preservation. Stakeholder-oriented approaches nevertheless suggest that broader engagement can contribute to the social and financial sustainability of cultural organizations (Höglund et al., 2021).

The comparison between theory and field evidence indicates that the sustainability of Bantengan currently depends to a considerable extent on the capacity and commitment of the art communities themselves. Government institutions and residents provide important support; however, their involvement has not yet substantially addressed capacity building or long-term institutional development. At the same time, the limited participation of secondary stakeholders leaves the preservation ecosystem fragmented. A more integrated approach is therefore needed, moving beyond administrative assistance toward sustained, adaptive, and participatory collaboration.

This pattern is consistent with Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes the importance of accommodating the interests and participation of multiple stakeholders in organizational sustainability (Almeida et al., 2022; Nguyen, 2024). For Bantengan, collaboration among art communities, government institutions, residents, and external actors can strengthen accountability, social legitimacy, and cultural continuity. Such collaboration would also create a more inclusive basis for local cultural governance.

The study's contribution is its integration of cultural accounting and Stakeholder Theory into a single framework in which accountability, transparency, and stakeholder participation are treated as interconnected elements of cultural sustainability. This perspective extends socio-cultural accounting beyond the internal values of a community and places greater emphasis on the relationships through which cultural resources are governed and sustained.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that cultural accounting in the Bantengan communities represents a locally grounded form of accountability. Although the communities do not yet use a formalized accounting system, their practices are shaped by trust, gotong royong (cooperation), kinship, and collective responsibility. These values influence how financial information is recorded, discussed, and communicated. The findings also show that cultural accounting has the potential to function beyond internal administration by connecting local practices with the accountability expectations of external stakeholders. In this respect, cultural accounting can contribute to the long-term sustainability of traditional arts when it is combined with meaningful stakeholder engagement.

Theoretically, the findings support an understanding of cultural accounting as a socially embedded practice rather than simply a technical reporting mechanism. Stakeholder Theory is useful

for extending this understanding because it draws attention to the different actors whose interests and resources affect cultural continuity. The study therefore conceptualizes cultural accounting as a bridge between internal community values and external stakeholder expectations, with transparency, participation, and engagement serving as important components of cultural governance.

Practically, the findings point to the need for a community-based cultural accounting system that is simple enough to fit local practices while providing clearer information for external stakeholders. Such a system should be participatory, adaptive, and consistent with local cultural values. Stronger collaboration with government institutions, sponsors, donors, and other external actors is also needed to improve transparency, broaden access to resources, and strengthen the institutional capacity of Bantengan communities. These measures can help maintain the continuity of traditional art in the face of social change and modernization.

This study has several limitations. First, it examines a single case within one cultural community, so the findings should not be generalized without considering differences in local contexts. Second, the study relies primarily on qualitative evidence, which means that interpretation is an inherent part of the analysis. Third, the examination of stakeholder roles is situated within a local context and does not fully capture wider institutional relationships or policy dynamics.

Future research could compare cultural accounting practices across different traditional art communities to identify similarities and context-specific differences. Comparative and mixed-method designs could also be used to examine more systematically the relationship between cultural accounting, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability outcomes. Further studies may consider the involvement of private-sector actors, digital platforms, and cultural policy institutions in developing accounting systems that remain locally meaningful while offering stronger documentation, participation, and accountability.

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