



# The Implementation of Stakeholder-Based Cultural Accounting in the Effort to Sustain the Traditional Art of Bantengan

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## Abstract

This purpose research to explore cultural accounting practices that embody local values within the Bantengan community and assess the contributions of various stakeholders in sustaining traditional arts, guided by the principles of Stakeholder Theory. Employing a qualitative methodology, the study uses a single case study approach focused on the Bantengan community in Malang Regency. Data were gathered through interviews, observations, and document analysis, and were interpreted using explanation-building and pattern-matching techniques consistent with case study research protocols. The results reveal that cultural accounting practices within the Bantengan community are still informal, rooted in lived experience, and emphasize values such as self-reliance, openness, and communal ties. Key stakeholders like local art groups and village authorities actively participate in administrative functions. However, secondary stakeholders—including sponsors and regional governmental bodies—have not yet demonstrated strong involvement. This study offers a conceptual model of stakeholder-based cultural accounting that aligns with local values, encourages participatory engagement, and supports the sustainable safeguarding of cultural traditions. It also contributes to the growing discourse on socio-cultural accounting in Indonesia and provides practical insights for policymakers and cultural practitioners.

**Keywords:** Cultural Accounting, Stakeholder Theory, Bantengan Art, Cultural Heritage Preservation, Sustainability, Community Participating

## 1. Introduction

Currently, accounting has undergone a significant transformation from its primary role as a financial transaction recording tool to a strategic instrument for managing non-financial resources, including cultural heritage. Cultural accounting is a part of public sector accounting that plays a role in recording, managing, and presenting reports on cultural assets and activities in a transparent and accountable manner (Ilyas et al., 2023). This practice is not solely focused on economic aspects but also integrates the social, spiritual, and historical values that exist within society. Baldarelli (2023) states that accounting based on social and cultural values can enhance the accountability of social organizations, such as cultural communities, through ethical and inclusive stakeholder engagement. Therefore, cultural accounting has an important role in maintaining the sustainability of local values that are increasingly threatened by modernization.

One concrete example of cultural heritage rich in historical, social, and spiritual meaning is the traditional art of Bantengan, which has developed in the Greater Malang area of East Java. This art form is not merely a form of entertainment, but a symbol of local values such as leadership, protection, and harmony between humans and nature (Utami & Cindrakasih, 2023). Combining elements of dance, music, pencak silat (traditional martial arts), and spiritual rituals, Bantengan has become a cultural identity of the Malang community (Khasanah et al., 2024). Unfortunately, this art form currently faces serious challenges, including social shifts, urbanization, and a lack of proper documentation and structured financial management. Sopanah et al. (2024) reveal that many traditional art groups in Indonesia do not yet have accountable accounting systems, which could result in mismanagement of funds and activities.

Previous research by Sopanah et al. (2024) serves as an important foundation for understanding how cultural accounting is practiced within Bantengan communities. The study shows that although local wisdom-based financial recording practices remain informal, they are capable of maintaining

traditional values in the management of art-related funds. These findings are supported by Thalib (2024), who asserts that accounting grounded in local cultural values can strengthen the social legitimacy of indigenous communities in the public eye. However, earlier studies tend to focus only on internal aspects of the community, without in-depth discussion of the role of external stakeholders in supporting cultural preservation—creating a gap for further exploration (Wahyuni, 2024).

In this context, Stakeholder Theory becomes a relevant approach for understanding the involvement of various parties in managing traditional culture. This theory acknowledges that all parties affected by an organization's activities—including communities, governments, sponsors, academics, and the general public—have the right to be involved in decision-making processes. Mykhayliv & Zauner (2025) emphasize that a stakeholder approach promotes the creation of shared value and social sustainability through multi-party collaboration. Similarly, Jayasinghe et al. (2020) demonstrate that stakeholder-based public accounting, when applied in indigenous communities in Indonesia, can increase social accountability through collective participation in the management of cultural assets. Therefore, conducting research on cultural accounting from a stakeholder approach in the context of Bantengan is both necessary and urgent.

Previous studies have generally focused on internal aspects within cultural communities, without considering the roles and contributions of external stakeholders such as local governments, academics, sponsors, and the wider community (Subroto & Endaryati, 2022). Yet, the success of traditional cultural preservation cannot rely solely on art communities without support and synergy from other parties with a vested interest in the continuity of cultural heritage. The concept of stakeholder-based cultural accounting is considered capable of reinforcing the social legitimacy of cultural communities through a reporting system that is participatory, accountable, and transparent (Ahmad et al., 2025). The absence of a stakeholder-based reporting and recording system could jeopardize the existence of traditional arts such as Bantengan amidst globalization and cultural commercialization.

Without systematic documentation, the noble values embedded in Bantengan risk being overlooked or even forgotten from the collective memory of society (Ta'dung & Lusdani, 2020). Furthermore, the lack of stakeholder participation in cultural governance could lead to information imbalances, weak social oversight, and low accountability in the use of funds and implementation of cultural activities (Thalib et al., 2021). Hence, this research is crucial for developing a model of cultural accounting that is not merely administrative, but also able to accommodate the interests of multiple parties in the preservation of local culture.

Academically, the development of stakeholder-based cultural accounting is relevant as it expands the literature in the fields of public sector and socio-cultural accounting in Indonesia, which so far have received limited theoretical and practical attention (Sopanah et al., 2023). Practically, the findings of this research could serve as the basis for policy formulation on cultural governance by local governments, art communities, and philanthropic institutions that care about preserving traditional culture. Without this research, there is a risk that traditional arts such as Bantengan may face stagnation in documentation, loss of social legitimacy, or even extinction due to an inability to adapt to modern, participatory, and accountable reporting systems (Budianto et al., 2023).

Based on the background and urgency of this research, the focus of this study is directed toward analyzing how cultural accounting practices carried out by Bantengan art communities in Malang reflect the cultural values they embody. In addition, the study aims to examine the extent to which stakeholders play a role in supporting the sustainability of this tradition through a Stakeholder Theory approach. The main focus is also on identifying and evaluating the practices of recording, managing, and reporting cultural activities, and to what extent cultural accounting can serve as a strategic tool in preserving local values. This research also explores how stakeholder involvement can be integrated into an accountable cultural reporting system to create space for dialogue, social oversight, and strengthen the legitimacy of Bantengan cultural management within the community (Fahlevi & Adnyana, 2024).

### **Research Questions:**

1. How do cultural accounting practices reflect cultural values in Bantengan art?
2. What is the role of stakeholders in supporting the sustainability of Bantengan art through the Stakeholder Theory approach?

### **Research Objectives:**

This study aims to analyze how cultural values are represented through cultural accounting practices in the Bantengan art community. Additionally, it seeks to identify and evaluate the roles of stakeholders in the preservation of this traditional art through the lens of Stakeholder Theory. Furthermore, the study is intended to develop a stakeholder-based cultural accounting model that can be applied to other traditional cultural communities in Indonesia. Thus, the findings are expected to contribute to the development of socio-cultural accounting literature and provide practical guidance for art communities and local governments in the accountable, inclusive, and sustainable preservation of cultural heritage.

## **2. Methods**

This research adopts a qualitative approach using a single-case study strategy, as outlined by Yin (2018), aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of complex and contextual socio-cultural phenomena. The case study method was selected to explore how the Bantengan community in Malang Regency implements sustainability practices that integrate economic, social, and cultural values within the framework of cultural accounting, and why collaboration with the government plays a crucial role in the preservation process. This approach enables the researcher to examine the dynamic relationships between cultural actors and local policy in a real-world setting, without direct interference, and to analyze phenomena where the boundaries between the case and its context are closely intertwined and cannot be clearly separated.

The type of data used in this study is qualitative data, which is descriptive, contextual, and rooted in the social reality of the community. Data collection was conducted to uncover the meanings constructed by cultural actors in preserving the traditional art form of Bantengan. The main informants in this research include village officials, regional government representatives, community leaders, artists, and local residents.

The structure for presenting the case study data is based on Yin's approach, which serves as the primary guide for data analysis. The structure begins with the Introduction section, which explains the background, research focus, and urgency of the topic. The Research Design section outlines the case study framework based on Yin's five core components. The Data Collection section details the techniques used, such as interviews, direct observations, and documentation. In the Case Description section, a contextual narrative is provided to present the study object in detail. The Data Analysis stage employs Yin's three main strategies: Pattern Matching (aligning patterns between data and theory), Explanation Building (developing explanations from the findings), and Time Series Analysis (if a time dimension is present). The analysis results are then further interpreted in the Discussion section and concluded in the Conclusions and Implications section, which summarizes the key findings and their theoretical and practical significance.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

This study examines the practice of cultural accounting within the Bantengan art community using a Stakeholder Theory approach to support the sustainability of tradition. Employing a case study method, the data were analyzed based on two research questions. The first question, concerning the representation of cultural values in accounting practices, was addressed using the explanation building method. The second question, which focuses on the role of stakeholders, was analyzed using pattern matching. This approach provides a deeper understanding of participatory and contextual cultural accounting.

#### **Cultural Accounting Practices Can Represent Cultural Values in the Bantengan Art Tradition**

Interview findings indicate that cultural accounting practices in the Bantengan community are conducted in a contextual and simple manner, reflecting local values such as self-reliance, openness, and kinship. The first finding shows that financial record-keeping is done manually and based on experience. Most communities have not received formal training in financial management, so their accounting systems have developed organically from habit and intuition. The leader of the *Galogo Jati Community* stated: "Feeling tok, Bu. Soale nggak ada yang ngerti akuntansi, belajarnya yo sak pengalamane dewe" (T, 8/7/2025)

Similarly, a representative from the *Jabung community* expressed: “By feeling and experience, Ma'am. Not from the internet, and no courses.” (D, 10/7/2025)

The *Jabung Village Secretary* also confirmed: “Regarding accounting, for now, it doesn't exist yet, Ma'am. We're still learning bit by bit.” (HS, 9/7/2025)

This reflects the cultural values of grassroots self-reliance and adaptation, without technocratic intervention. The second finding reveals that the principle of transparency is practiced through open communication among community members, reinforcing a climate of trust and mutual cooperation. Financial information is shared through internal communication groups or during regular community meetings. As the *Galogo Jati leader* noted: “I usually announce it in the group so that all members know.” (T, 8/7/2025)

In another statement, it was emphasized: “If financial matters are transparent, members become more trusting and eager to stay involved in activities.” (D, 10/7/2025)

A similar practice was observed in *Jabung*, where openness is seen as a collective responsibility: “Because all the money belongs to everyone, it's important to be open with the members.” (TN, 9/7/2025)

Thus, transparency in cultural accounting practices is more oriented toward social relationships and trust rather than bureaucratic standards. The third finding shows that financial reporting is done in a flexible and informal way, aligned with the kinship values within the community. Records are not always made immediately but are still reported within internal community forums. As stated by the leader of the *Jabung community*: “Sometimes directly, sometimes just remembered first. If there's time, it gets written down right away.” (D, 9/7/2025)

Meanwhile, the leader of *Galogo Jati Padepokan* added: “Usually it's recorded right after an activity or a payment.” (T, 8/7/2025)

Even though financial reports are shared openly, not all members fully understand the content, as noted: “They're reported, announced during meetings or sent via photo to the big group—income and expenses—but not all members understand.” (T, 8/7/2025)

This indicates that the structure of cultural accounting reporting in the Bantengan community is tailored to the local social capacity, making kinship and tolerance the main pillars of governance.

### **The Role of Stakeholders in the Sustainability of Bantengan Art: Empirical Patterns and Stakeholder Theory**

The presentation of data for the second research question aims to identify and align the roles of stakeholders in supporting the sustainability of Bantengan art within the framework of Stakeholder Theory. Through a pattern matching approach, patterns of stakeholder involvement—such as from art communities, village and regional governments, local society, and external parties like sponsors—are compared against the categories of primary and secondary stakeholders. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed to assess the extent to which practices in the field reflect collaborative principles in preserving local culture.

Stakeholder Category	Theoretical Pattern (Freeman & Clarkson)	Field Findings	Informant Statements
Art Community (Paguyuban, Padepokan)	Primary stakeholder: main actors with direct interest in the continuity of cultural organizations.	Actively involved in decision-making and financial management based on consensus, transparency, and mutual cooperation.	“We usually hold discussions first if we want to buy equipment for the padepokan. Once agreed upon, then we spend the money.” (T, 8/7/2025) “Everyone is involved in discussions about finances, Ma'am. So we all understand and avoid suspicion.” (D, 10/7/2025) “It's very important. If it's recorded clearly, there will be no misunderstanding and activities can continue smoothly.” (S, 10/7/2025)
Village/Subdistrict Government (Jabung & Tumpang)	Primary stakeholder: provides administrative facilitation, legality,	Involved in permits, proposal, legal matters, has not	“We have never held any training from the government about that.” (W, 7/7/2025) “For proposals, we just get the subdistrict head's signature and go straight to the Tourism Office.” (HS,

Stakeholder Category	Theoretical Pattern (Freeman & Clarkson)	Field Findings	Informant Statements
Local Community (Tumpang & Jabung)	and technical support.	provided training in cultural accounting.	9/7/2025) "The government helps with legality and permits for events." (T, 8/7/2025)
	Primary stakeholder: beneficiaries and moral supporters of cultural activities.	Supports Bantengan activities through the public participation and appreciation, but lacks direct access to financial reporting.	"Usually we hear about it through conversations or during events. But there's no official report announced to people now have positive activities. Better to practice Bantengan than stay idle." (D, 10/7/2025) "So far it's good. They're transparent internally, and that's reflected in how the events keep going." (M, 10/7/2025)
Regional Government (Tourism Office/Regency Level)	Primary stakeholder: plays a role in funding and institutional legitimacy.	Provides occasional grants but does not conduct monitoring or evaluation of fund use.	"In 2023, we received aid from the Tourism Office, 2.5 million per group." (W, 7/7/2025) "But in terms of fund disbursement and how it's used in the group, we from the subdistrict don't of control that." (S, 7/7/2025) "The legality process has started, Ma'am. It's being helped and made easier by the village government." (D, 10/7/2025)
Sponsors/Donors	Secondary stakeholder: parties that can provide financial and promotional support but are not directly bound.	Have not played a significant role; involvement is incidental and facilitated by government.	"There are no regular donors. If a local politician is running or there's a big event, then we get support." (T, 8/7/2025) "We've never had help is finding sponsors, Ma'am. But if the not government could help with the connections, that would be great." (D, 10/7/2025) "There's never been any training or socialization from the government." (S, 10/7/2025)

*Compiled by: Researcher (2025)*

Based on the pattern matching results, it is evident that primary stakeholders, especially art communities and village governments, are actively involved in supporting Bantengan's sustainability, although their roles are still limited to administrative and facilitative aspects. Meanwhile, secondary stakeholders such as sponsors and media have not been optimally engaged and tend to participate only occasionally. These findings indicate the need to strengthen all stakeholder roles in a strategic and sustainable manner to promote greater accountability and resilience of local culture in a more systemic way.

## Discussion

Following the presentation of data using a case study approach, this section discusses the main findings identified in relation to relevant theories and literature. The discussion focuses on how cultural accounting practices and the roles of stakeholders within the Bantengan art community reflect local values and the principles of Stakeholder Theory. This analysis aims to deepen understanding of the dynamics of cultural preservation within a participatory community context, while also assessing the gap between empirical practices and existing theoretical frameworks.

### Cultural Accounting Practices Can Represent Cultural Values in Bantengan Art

The cultural accounting practices implemented by the Bantengan art community demonstrate unique characteristics rooted in local values and the social structures of the community. Findings from interviews reveal that although financial management systems do not adhere to formal

standards, the community is able to establish accountability mechanisms based on trust, participation, and social solidarity. The following are three key points that represent the form of cultural accounting practices within the Bantengan community:

1. Financial records are kept manually and based on personal experience. The community does not use formal accounting systems; financial documentation is conducted manually and relies on the experience and intuition of the administrators. The lack of training or technical guidance has led these practices to evolve contextually. This finding reflects the community's independence and adaptability in response to limited resources, and also demonstrates a continuous local learning process.
2. Transparency is maintained through open communication and strengthened social trust. Openness in financial reporting is not achieved through formal administrative formats, but rather through internal communication and communal deliberation (*musyawarah*). Transparency is part of a social process that strengthens cohesion and mutual trust among members. In this context, financial control does not depend on audit systems, but on social relationships and the principle of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) as the foundation for collective accountability.
3. Financial reporting is flexible and informal, reflecting values of kinship and tolerance. Financial documentation and reporting are carried out in an adaptive and non-uniform manner, adjusted to the time and capacity of those in charge. Financial information is still conveyed, even though not all members fully understand it. This reflects a social system grounded in kinship and tolerance as the main values in community management, where accounting serves more as a symbol of shared commitment than a technical verification system.

Based on the analysis of field findings, it can be concluded that cultural accounting practices in the Bantengan community represent an alternative form of accountability rooted in local values. The simplicity of recordkeeping, the socially driven transparency, and the flexible nature of reporting provide evidence that accounting can function as a cultural mechanism, not merely as an administrative procedure.

This model strengthens the position of accounting as a form of living social practice, relevant within tradition-based communities. Therefore, the development of a cultural accounting framework grounded in Stakeholder Theory must fully consider the social and cultural dimensions in order to be adaptable and participatory at the local community level.

### **The Role of Stakeholders in the Sustainability of Bantengan Art: Matching Empirical Patterns with Stakeholder Theory**

The results of the study show that the preservation of Bantengan art involves various stakeholders with differing levels of participation and functions. Through a pattern matching approach, a partial alignment was found between empirical practices in the field **and** Stakeholder Theory, which classifies stakeholders into primary and secondary categories based on the intensity and influence they have on the organization.

As primary stakeholders, art communities play the most central role in supporting the sustainability of Bantengan art. They are not only the main actors in organizing cultural activities but are also responsible for internal management, including financial decision-making and the continuity of activities. Deliberative processes (*musyawarah*), mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and a commitment to openness serve as the core foundations of community governance. The strong role of these communities reflects a functional application of stakeholder engagement principles, even though it remains informal and undocumented in a systematic way.

Village and sub-district governments also fall into the primary stakeholder category, with key roles in administrative aspects such as facilitating legal recognition, permit support, and validating grant proposals. However, their contribution to enhancing the community's technical capacity remains limited. The absence of training or accounting assistance indicates that the government's role as a development facilitator has not been fully realized. In other words, village and sub-district authorities function more as procedural supporters rather than strategic development partners in cultural preservation.

Local communities serve as social beneficiaries and moral supporters of Bantengan activities. Their involvement is reflected in passive participation and appreciation of the cultural community's presence. Although they are not directly involved in management or oversight, their presence reinforces the social legitimacy of the Bantengan community. This support is essential as a source of "social license to operate", allowing the community to endure over the long term.

Meanwhile, the role of regional government (particularly tourism departments) appears mostly in the form of occasional financial aid and support for institutional legality. However, these contributions lack accompanying systems for monitoring, evaluation, or follow-up assistance. The function of the government as a policy-guiding stakeholder has not yet materialized in a structured way. This indicates the need for a shift from short-term assistance models toward long-term partnerships, aimed at strengthening cultural institutions sustainably.

On the other hand, secondary stakeholders such as sponsors or donors have not been significantly involved. Their engagement remains incidental and is not supported by a clear system from either the government or the community. The absence of strategic collaboration schemes with the private sector or other external parties reflects a weak network of non-governmental support in the ecosystem of local cultural preservation. Yet, in modern stakeholder theory, involving the secondary sector is considered a key element in ensuring the social and financial sustainability of cultural communities.

Based on the pattern matching between theory and practice, it can be concluded that the sustainability of Bantengan art is highly dependent on the strength of the art community as the main stakeholder. Although the government and public do play roles, their involvement has not yet addressed substantive aspects such as capacity building and long-term sustainability. In addition, the underutilization of secondary stakeholders shows that the cultural preservation ecosystem still operates in a fragmented manner. Therefore, a transformation in stakeholder roles is needed—from merely providing administrative support to forming integrated, adaptive, and participatory strategic collaborations. This approach would not only strengthen the social legitimacy of cultural communities, but also open the way for the development of a more sustainable and inclusive governance model for local cultural preservation.

#### 4. Conclusion

The practice of cultural accounting within the *Bantengan* art community reflects an alternative form of accountability rooted in local values such as trust, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and kinship, despite not yet utilizing a formal system. This approach demonstrates that accounting functions not only as a tool for financial reporting but also as a social mechanism that mirrors cultural dynamics within a community context. Furthermore, the application of Stakeholder Theory indicates that the sustainability of *Bantengan* art is largely determined by the active involvement of primary stakeholders, particularly the art community and local government, although the participation of secondary stakeholders, such as sponsors, remains suboptimal. Therefore, to support the sustainability of *Bantengan* art more comprehensively, a transformation in cultural accounting approaches is needed—one that is not only adaptive to local values but also based on strategic partnerships among stakeholders to create a governance model that is participatory, accountable, and sustainable.

This study contributes theoretically by showing that cultural accounting is not merely a technical reporting tool, but also a medium for reflecting local values and building community-based accountability. These findings support the study by Sopanah et al. (2024), which emphasizes the importance of local wisdom-based financial recording in the preservation of *Bantengan* art, and highlights the role of spiritual values, mutual cooperation, and togetherness in community accounting practices. This study also expands the scope of Stakeholder Theory within a cultural context and aligns with the concept of sustainability accounting, which stresses the importance of stakeholder involvement in social and environmental reporting (Vysochan et al., 2021). Furthermore, these findings are reinforced by studies in educational institutions by Herremans and Raji & Hassan (2021), which show that stakeholder awareness is crucial in developing inclusive and responsive sustainability practices. Practically, this research recommends the development of community-based cultural accounting systems as a relevant, adaptive, and participatory alternative reporting model to support the sustainability of traditional arts in the face of modernization challenges.

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