



# Preservation of a Rare Art, Okokan, through the Quality Improvement in Musical Instrument Quality and Merchandise Design

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## Abstract

An Okokan art group named "Omelan I Kayu Bolong" in Banjar Dinas Kukuh Kangin, Kukuh Village, Kerambitan District, Tabanan Regency, is a partner in the implementation of the Community Partnership Program (CPP). The issues of the partner are that the musical instruments for the Okokan performance have been dull, and the paint has peeled off. Meanwhile, the partner had no merchandise to promote this Okokan art group. CPP aims to improve the capability of this art group, revitalize the Okokan musical instrument by re-coating ornaments, and design merchandise. CPP was implemented with the training to be attended by the partners, which started with a Focus Group Discussion and continued with training for coating the Okokan ornament and designing the merchandise. The CPP improved the partner's skill in re-coating the Okokan musical instrument and merchandise design as the media for promotion, in the form of Okokan miniature, logo, poster, and T-shirt.

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## INTRODUCTION

Okokan is a kind of art belonging to the traditional music art group. The main instrument is made of wood; sane wood is commonly used (Krisna, 2021). Okokan resembles a *kentongan* (slit drum), while the inner part is hollow to produce sound and filled with a beater called *Palit*. There is a way to play Okokan musical instrument. A player hangs the musical instrument on the neck and swings it forward and backward while a unique sound, "klok, klok, klok" is produced, in which Okokan responds to each other. In Bali, this kind of Okokan instrument is also called *keroncongan*, hung to cow or buffalo, but its size is made smaller than Okokan.

Okokan was initially used as a means of entertainment while waiting for the paddy harvest, and it was then believed to be a medium to get rid of the plague. Okokan tradition is also considered a noble cultural value, symbolizing fertility, creation, and harmony (Harta et al., 2024). Based on a survey conducted in February 2024, Okokan is played by some people and is equipped with a drum. To show the beauty, the front of the Okokan instrument is decorated with ornaments and a boma/barong mask. A ritual to repel the plague is called "ngerebeg," carried out by walking around the village (Tresnawati, 2023). This art is also performed in

traditional events of villagers, competitions, the celebration of Indonesian Independence Day, to welcome officials, and performances for tourists (Janiasa, 2011).

Okokan Group, as a partner for this community service team, was an Okokan Art Group named "Omelan I Kayu Bolong" in Banjar Dinas Kukuh Kangin, Kukuh Village, Kerambitan District, Tabanan Regency. Kerambitan District is located 4 (four) kilometers west of Tabanan City. Problems faced by the partner require the involvement of the related parties and solutions to solve them. The head of the partner group, Drs, stated that the issue was I Wayan Arshana, M.Pd (in an interview on March 27, 2024), in which to preserve this Okokan art requires further action because it has existed for a long time and intensity of the events requiring involvement of this art tends to be higher. Okokan art is performed during traditional ceremonies and for tourism purposes. Commercialization of Okokan art can be an opportunity to increase the income of art supporters.

The head of the partner group explained that the main issue of this CPP partner was the condition of the musical instrument, which needed repair, particularly for bringing back the visual of its ornament, in which the instrument got dull. The paint got peeled off, as shown in Fig. 1. This condition is a

consequence of higher intensity in Okokan art performance, so the musical instrument is often used, affecting the visual of Okokan's ornament, which gets dull and peeled off. The visual appearance of the Okokan instrument can reduce its beauty in performance and affect the group's spirit while playing the musical instrument. The maintenance effort, coating in this case, has been carried out all this time on the physical appearance of Okokan, but it is not yet optimum. Thus, the result cannot be permanent, and further repair is still required. The art group lacked the painting skills needed to perform the coating work.



**Fig. 1.** The initial condition of Okokan with its paint getting dull before re-coating

Partner group as the actor of Okokan art has 31 members, and they have a great enthusiasm for preserving and developing Okokan art as a means of entertainment and tourist attraction in Kerambitan Village. Puri Agung Kerambitan supports tourism in Kerambitan Village, managed as a unique tourist destination with authentic, old plate decoration on the castle from the age of the old kingdom (Kamiasih et al., 2023). The existence of this castle allows Okokan art to be performed and watched by tourists and earn income from the event. This tourism positively affects Okokan art, and the head of the art group stated that its role can be optimized as a creative potency. For example, Okokan can be made in miniature (merchandise) and a promotion media to be sold to visitors of tourist destinations around Kerambitan District. That idea has not yet been realized because of the absence of skilled workers to handle this field. The absence of merchandise design is the second issue from this partner.

Partner's issues in the Community Partnership Program (CPP) can be solved through Society Partner Empowerment with two solutions offered. 1). The first solution is revitalizing the Okokan instrument by re-coating the ornament on its surface while adjusting to the previous Okokan object with the sigar

technique, but it is made more detailed without losing the identity of the previous ornament. This coating work involves members of the Okokan art group as partners, with an expectation that the group can do coating work independently 2). The second solution is to design merchandise as promotional media, such as Okokan miniatures, logos, posters, and T-shirts. Okokan miniature is smaller in size compared with the real Okokan instrument commonly performed. Merchandise design can be a sustainable creative activity (Julianto et al., 2024) for the art community in Kuku Village. Merchandise can be interpreted as an object or product that functions as a means of information and promotion (Tama et al., 2017). The sale of merchandise is expected to make a profit, which can be capital for preserving musical instruments or purchasing other attributes for Okokan dance in the future. The implementation team and the CPP partner have agreed upon this problem-solving.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The CPP was carried out through the training method by involving the partner. In this case, training was for partner members to participate in revitalizing the okokan instrument and designing the merchandise, particularly the Okokan miniature. This method was selected because of its direct practice implementation with assistance from lecturers and college students. This method was more suitable than other methods, namely speech or discussion. Ciptaningtyas et al. (2020) stated that training provides students with knowledge by teaching them the necessary skills. In CPP, three students were selected to attend the training as partners' representatives, and they were considered to have fine art skills. These participants were expected to teach other members after the end of the program. CPP was comprehensively implemented in several phases based on the managed issues, as follows:

1. Preparation for program implementation. In this phase, a meeting was held with the team, including writing letters, scheduling, and coordination with partners.
2. Socialization of program implementation. Socialization was carried out in the partner's location regarding two events to be carried out and attended by the members of the Okokan community in Kuku Village, Kerambitan District, as partner and chief of the Kerambitan Village.
3. Implementation of the first program. Implementation of the revitalization program, re-coating the Okokan body, was planned to be done five times. This activity involved fine arts students who were registered in the CPP team and had skills in coating and Balinese mask ornament. Thus, students played a significant role

in guiding partners in training the re-coating process on Okokan.

4. Evaluation of the first program implementation result was carried out in every meeting to see the progress achieved by partner members, while determining a more suitable strategy for the implementation at the next phase.
5. Implementation of Second Program The Second program was completed after the first one was completed. The implementation of the second program was *merchandise* designing, which was Okokan miniature for souvenirs, in five meetings attended by the group members.

The second program implementation was evaluated at every meeting to see the progress achieved and determine the strategy for the next stage.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Revitalization of Okokan Ornament Re-coating

The first program was implemented by purchasing paint and other tools, such as paintbrushes and sandpaper. The type of paint used was acrylic, which is commonly used for painting cars, thus having a good resistance for this okokan paint.

### Paint removal process and Okokan surface smoothing

The grinder was carried out on the Okokan surface until the entire paint was peeled off evenly. When finding the perforated surface, it can be flattened with putty, made of sawdust and wooden glue (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Okokan paint removal process

Removing old paint was carried out using the grinder and sandpaper. This process was easy, resulting in a fine, smooth surface. However, the perforated okokan body required the puttying process to obtain an even surface in this process.

### Puttying process

This puttying process used glue mixed with sawdust to paste on the perforated body. This

process required drying to paste the putty well. After drying, the smoothing process was carried out using a grinder and sandpaper on the whole surface of the Okokan (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Puttying process

### Base coating process

After the puttying process, the next step was the application of black as the base color, which was carried out evenly on the whole Okokan surface. This color was applied with a sprayer so the paint could be evenly and more quickly applied to the Okokan surface (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Base coating process with spraying

### Ornament painting process

The ornament for Okokan was done in the base paint, using some colors, namely white, yellow, and red, for the *boma* motif and the hand. Meanwhile, the *pepatran* motif was applied with *Prada* (golden) colors. White was applied as the base color of the *boma* motif and the hand (Fig. 5).

Applying colors in some layers, from the brightest to the darkest, and vice versa, is called the gradation technique (Komalasari & Lita, 2022). This technique is common in the coating of paintings and masks in Bali. The final result of the re-coating Okokan instrument ornament is shown in Fig. 6.





**Fig. 5.** The process of making boma motif ornament



**Fig. 6.** The final result of the re-coating on the Okokan ornament

The Okokan-coating technique applied the *sigar* technique to obtain the acrylic color. The *sigar* technique is commonly applied in coating Balinese ornaments with Balinese colors (Gunada & Pramana, 2021), but more colors are being applied to date. In CPP, basic colors from the factory were used, and they have been widely sold in stores and are of good quality. Factory colors used were acrylic and paragon because they can resemble natural colors (Putra et al., 2023).

Re-coating an Okokan musical instrument with acrylic color resulted in a bright color, a strong unification of black background, *boma* motif, and golden *pepatran*. The making of Balinese ornament on masks and others, in terms of its interests, is classified into a. the making of ornament for the interest of Hinduism, b. the making of ornament on musical instruments for performance, and c. the making of ornament on Okokan musical instrument for the interest of the general public as souvenir (Mudra, 2021). In CPP, the making of Okokan ornament aims to serve the performance.

#### Merchandise Design as a Promotional Media Strategy

Okokan instrument merchandise was designed in two variants based on its size, using *kruing* wood

with dense texture to obtain good product quality. The production of miniature Okokan instruments as merchandise improved the partners' skills, and the product can be offered to tourists visiting Puri Anyar Kerambitan and Puri Agung Kerambitan near Kukuh Village. The potency of marketing okokan miniature as a souvenir was high, based on the Tourism Office of Tabanan Regency data, in which tourist visits until July 2024 showed a positive trend, up to 2,810,513 people (Pantai Bali, 2024). This number included the tourists visiting the Kerambitan tourism. The process of designing the Okokan miniature is shown in Fig. 7 and Fig. 8.



**Fig. 7.** Initial process (*makalin*) of Okokan miniature



**Fig. 8.** The final result of Okokan miniature

This Okokan miniature was painted with grey primer and black as the base color for the ornament. The ornament used *prada* (golden) paint with a motif resembling Balinese *pepatran*, which was applied with the painting technique. In the visual of the Okokan miniature, the ornament's motif and shape looked united because the round shape of the Okokan miniature was in line with the curve. Similarly, the visuals of the black color in the Okokan minia and the golden color in the ornament looked in contrast while improving the ornament's visuals.

The next step was the designing of the partner's logo. According to Januariyansah (2018), a logo or picture mark is an identity used to describe an institution, company, or organization's image and character, as inspired by the shape of the Okokan instrument. Some alternative designs were made, and the partner selected one design. The approved design had three colors: red, black, and yellow, while the lower part had typography. The design of this logo was applied when producing T-shirts. The logo

took the basic shape of the *Okokan* instrument. It was illustrated in such a way that the association of *Okokan* instrument players in Kukuh Village, Kerambitan District, Tabanan Regency, owned this logo.

Design of the *Okokan* logo illustrates a human face silhouette, meaning that all related parties must constantly preserve the *Okokan* tradition since the *Okokan* instrument belongs to the rare, traditional musical instrument. The logo had eight leaves representing eight directions, intending that all directions supported the *Okokan* instrument to be preserved as the pride of villagers of Kerambitan in particular and Indonesia in general. The color applied was identical to the illustration found in the *Okokan* instrument. Red was interpreted as the strength of Kukuh Village to preserve the *Okokan* instrument. The golden yellow color represented the dignity of the *Okokan* instrument, while the black was construed as the neutralizer (Fig. 9)



Fig. 9. Logo of Okokan Art Group "Omelan I Kayu Bolong"

This logo was applied to the black and white T-shirt design. For the T-shirt, a black logo was applied at the back, while a white T-shirt was applied at the front. In its design, an illustration was put on the front of the T-shirt. The designs of these two T-shirts are shown in Fig. 10 and Fig 11.



Fig. 10. Design of black T-shirt

The illustration on the black T-shirt design took some elements unique to the Kerambitan District. This illustration described a person playing the *Okokan* instrument as inspired by a statue in front of the office

of the Kerambitan District Chief. Fire illustration represented a burning passion when playing the instrument and introducing the *Okokan* instrument to the general public. A frame illustration was made to resemble Balinese ornaments to show that the *okokan* instrument was still well preserved by villagers in Kukuh. CPP also designed the mascot to promote *Okokan* in Dukuh Village, as shown in Fig. 12.



Fig. 11. Illustration of the front part of the black T-shirt design



Fig. 12. Mascot design

The mascot can be comprehended as a characteristic figure to set identity and create and express a brand's personality (Armayuda & Pragadeva, 2020). Mascot is a marketing element that can directly relate to consumers' emotions (Hafizh & Gumelar, 2024). This mascot is expected to introduce a partner to a wider community. The same is also expected from the existence of the *Okokan* art group in Kerambitan Village.

Based on the evaluation of these two programs, these activities can be carried out well without any issue, while partners can participate, as shown by lecturers and students, in applying ornament and making merchandise, such as *okokan* miniature. In the implementation, the partner was guided more frequently by students. It was easier to teach

participants in the initial coating process, but an issue was found when starting an ornament application requiring drawing skills. However, the seriousness of the participants in attending the training allowed the completion of the ornament application process on the Okokan instrument. In making the okokan miniature, the partner was capable of completing the product, from the shaping to the coating processes. However, it still needed improvement in fineness and shape to be more interesting.

The mascot's design from an okokan art group, "Omelan I Kayu Bolong" was described as a cheerful, energetic figure portraying the spirit of traditional music. This character was designed to wear traditional Balinese clothes, equipped with *kamben*, *saput*, *udeng*, and other accessories on the arm, and a necklace to enhance the Balinese luxurious impression. Their hand-held okokan, a musical instrument from Kukuh Village, Kerambitan District, Tabanan Regency, with a wide smile, shows their passion for music. Their motion described dynamic rhythm, inviting other people to feel the warmth and cheerfulness of the music play. This mascot was not merely a musical symbol but also a mediator between culture and community.

## CONCLUSION

The Community Partnership Program (CPP) in Kukuh Village, Kerambitan District, Tabanan Regency, was welcomed well by local villagers. Its implementation went as smoothly as planned regarding design and the allocated time. Similarly, some outputs resulting from the CPP implementation can be accepted well, and similar programs are expected to be applied in the future to preserve this rare art.

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