

Processing Visual Communication: *Developing a Creative Economy in the Era of COVID-19 Pandemic in Bali*

Anak Agung Gde Bagus Udayana^{1,*}

¹Indonesian Institute of Art (ISI) Denpasar, Indonesia

*Corresponding author. Email: bagusudayana@isi-dps.ac.id

ABSTRACT

In the era of 4.0, which marked by the outbreak of COVID-19, many people took new steps creatively with an orientation to economic value. This seems potentially important to support the sustainability of national development, which is commonly known as development with an economic emphasis on cultural insight.

This paper aims at the overview of the phenomenon in creating Balinese art illustrations through digital technology. In this case, it seems that digital technology really helps art activities as can be seen on the difference between manual and digital art activities. It also shows that digital technology-based art products can be obtained through a production process that relies on ideas and knowledge related to the created product. Thus, production can be carried more faster with superior quality products, both totally new products and reproduction products. In addition, with digital technology, marketing of production results can be wider, faster, practical and smoother in the pandemic era. In fact, the product turn out have significant economic value during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This phenomenon highlighted by referring to the theory of globalism with market ideology nuances. Based on this theory, there is a tendency that with creative visual communication design of economic nuances would result in products that are quite saleable via online market, not only in Bali but throughout Indonesia and even abroad. Therefore, this phenomenon shows the important contribution of creative economy towards sustainable development.

Keywords: “Visual Communication Media, Digital, COVID-19, Economy, Creative”

1. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 pandemic that hit international world, including Indonesia and Bali, in particular, had a long-term negative impact on the economy, which then spread to social and cultural aspects. In order to deal with this problem, various parties, including artists or designers, have taken strategic steps to survive in this pandemic era. Based on that explanation, this paper would like to prescribe an overview of the process of designing, producing, reproducing, and marketing art products carried out by designers using digital technology. Digital technology is a way to utilize resources into something that is needed by the community by using computers and connecting to the internet [1]. Nowadays, visual communication designers offer their services through social media such as: Instagram, facebook, Twitter; where they can meet their market, since almost everyone concentrates on social media. Visual communication designers in carrying out their creativity by using practical tools to produce their works, such as: Wacom, iPad Pro, tablet computers, and others, so that they can apply their ideas through these tools immediately. As well as in their marketing or exhibiting their works, they are able to do it by a single touch through those digital tools which can be seen by millions of people around the world. Therefore, their product marketing has no borders in this digital era. In the situation in which digital technology has not known yet, visual communication designers were limited by geographic location which make them could only create their creativity based on the need of their surrounding area, such as: The tourism field in Bali which can only open the opportunity for the designer to create their works that only match the needs of visual communication in the tourism sector, such as making brochures, business cards, letterheads and others. But today, with digital technology, designers can have more offers easily and be able to work with companies with big brands such as Starbucks, app development from the UK, Australia or Mexico. The mural project also dominates because of the trend of people using Instagram and it is used by the people as their photo shoot background to be uploaded on their Instagram, so others may like their photos on their Instagram and share them. This way can be alternative media in making promotion in today's digital era, where they used to use magazine ads. or newspaper advertisements previously and turned into digital media currently.

Moreover, this paper also describes how designers taking a position as businessmen utilize

digital technology in an effort to dominate the market so their product can be distributed in the market. Thus, the problem discussed in this case is how designers design and do their marketing on their art products by digital technology. The urgent of the discussed problem considering the fact that the artistic creativity and marketing strategies carried out by designers bring results in the form of relatively significant financial input.

Toward the reveal, it is expected that it will become an inspiration source, both for designers who want to develop their artistic creativity continuously, and for other designers in an effort to maintain their economic sustainability. If it can be accomplished, the artistic activities which are carried out by designers will be full of nuances of the creative economy, which are expected to contribute to the sustainability of national development.

2. METHODOLOGY

In correlation to the paper content which describe various things as explained above, this research is carried out by referring to globalization theory and qualitative research methods. The definition of globalization, among others, is put forward by Ritzer as "the worldwide spread of habits, the expansion of relationships across continents, the organization of social life on a global scale, and the growth of a shared global consciousness"[2].

The description of globalization also can be seen from what Appadurai mentioned as the five conceptual dimensions or "landscapes" that are formed and also known as the characteristics of global cultural as quoted by Steger, in his book entitled *Globalism The Rise of the Fifth Market Ideology* "landscape" and/or called as the characteristics of the global cultural flow, as follows:

1. Ethnoscapes refers to the movement of people from one country to another such as tourists, immigrants, refugees, workers.
2. Technoscape refers to technological developments that are now flowing at high speed across national borders.
3. Mediascape refers to the ability of electronics to disseminate information to various parts of the world.
4. Finanscape refers to a financial aspect or money that is difficult to predict in the era of globalization.

5. Ideoscape is related to political issues, such as freedom, democracy, sovereignty, welfare, someone's rights, state ideologies, and social movements [3]

In other words, the boundaries of national culture, national economy, and national territory are increasingly blurred or no longer recognized by distance, time, regional boundaries, national boundaries or island boundaries, because everything can be easily reached through global technology [4,1]. However, it does not mean that globalization can simply cause changes in the culture of a society without any reaction of the community concerned. In this context, there are two basic points of views developed in globalization theory; the first point of view see globalization as the cause of globalization while the second point of view sees globalization as the cause of glocalization. Glocalization (a translation of the words globalization and localization) is a business jargon to describe the adaptation of products or services to the region or culture in which they are sold. Glocalization is similar to internationalization. The word "glocalization" refers to a concept to describe individuals, groups, organizations, products, or services that reflect both global and local standards.

Globalization point of view emphasizes the increasing ability of modern organizations and states throughout the largely capitalistic world to increase their power and reach the world [2]. On the other hand, the point of view of glocalization is a complex interaction between global and local which is characterized by cultural borrowing [3]. Furthermore, globalization point of view emphasizes the occurrence of uniformity or homogenization versus point of view of glocalization which emphasizes the heterogenization or cultural diversity of society as a mixture of global and local [2][3].

The implementation of qualitative research methods in this study was carried out through data collection with in-depth interview and observation techniques on the process of creating visual communication design by designers in Denpasar. The research results were analyzed and described in accordance with the qualitative data analysis procedure, which connect problems and theoretical framework with the research data [5][6]. In this case the data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Based on theories and methods above, it can be seen that there is a creative visual communication design that is full of economic nuances; the products

are quite salable in online market, not only in Bali but throughout Indonesia and even abroad. Therefore, this phenomenon can be seen as a creative economy that has an important contribution to sustainable development.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the interview results with a designer who experienced on creative communication design with economic nuances, it is known that the creative economy which was carried out by them has gone up and down. In the period where the COVID-19 Pandemic did not existed yet, their business got a very rapid development, marked by the expansion of their market, both domestically and abroad. In such circumstances, the personnel involved in creative economic activities are 6 people consisting of four designers, one manager, and one accountant. It turns out that the achievements that have been achieved are degraded since the COVID-19 pandemic occurred.

There was decline marked by a drastic and continuous decrease in orders. This condition was inevitable, and it forced them to reduce the workers involved in the production process. However, the perpetrators of this design did not just give up. He tries to build ideas and seek knowledge related to how to revive his own business. In this effort, it was found that there were other sectors, namely the ornamental plant business which was able to survive and continue to exist during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the matter of this, he concluded that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was still money in circulation and it was possible to obtain it in a certain way. Based on this conclusion, he continued to search for ideas or ways to win the market in the field of visual communication design. In his search, he did some thought-provoking until the idea came up to build new relationships with different clients from the previous ones. In this case, the clients that are believed to be suitable to work with are Gojek, Grab, Procreate, Affinity, Kita Art Friends, Museum of toys, etc. These various parties are believed to be suitable partners considering that these parties still exist during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to maintain their existence, these parties need the assistance of designers, and these parties are believed to obtain orders according to their respective needs. Their needs include the need to promote their company on the website, social media or on YouTube. Starting from his idea, the designer became the resource person then accessed the parties

by digital technology: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and websites. In short, they were able to meet these parties who gave orders to each other so that there was an opportunity to rise up by making new products according to the needs of the new relations.

As an example, there were new products created at the beginning of rise and up to date, before the pandemic outbreak. The following were new products which were created after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. The products are mask designs ordered by Kita Arta Friendster; a community of 32 artists who exhibited their work at the Painting Exhibition in Alila Hotel, Seminyak, Kuta-Bali.



Figure 1 Project Desain Masker.

The illustration on the Grab car to promote the Grab company is a new product design in ordered by the Grab Company in 2020 designed by Monez, the informant of this study. It became a new relocation for designers during the COVID 19 pandemic. More clearly the illustration can be seen in the following image.

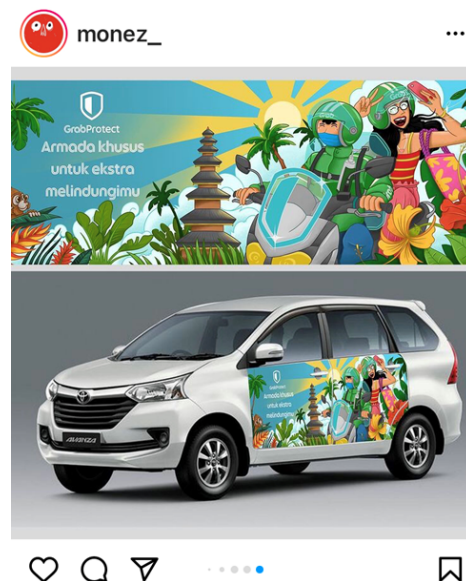


Figure 2 Project GrabProtect

Furthermore, he also mentioned that, during the second year of the pandemic, he asked to make an order from his new client @Museumoftoys in making a design of a character namely preciousjunkz as can be seen on the following picture.



Figure 3 Project @museumoftoys

By seeing the description of the designer's experience as explained above, it appears that the designer has succeeded in building a creative economy based on digital technology. Creative

Economy is a concept in the economic era that intensifies information and creativity by relying on ideas and knowledge from human resources as the main production factors [7]. In fact, digital technology has become the important tool to assist designers in building relationships, both domestically and abroad, such as from Japan, England, Germany, Mexico, and Australia. Based on the perspective of globalization theory as stated above, it seems that it has become a phenomenon that cannot be separated from globalization.

This phenomenon shows the nuances of ethnoscape, that is known as the global spread of humans from one country to another, but in this case, the spread is not physically present and meets cross-country relations, but it is present and communicates on social media using sophisticated communication technology. Through communication on social media, designers make transactions with their clients who are physically far from each other, for example, client from abroad. It means that technoscape as one of globalization characteristics has been implicated in this phenomenon and with communication technology in the form of the internet has been applied by designers in assisting them in carrying out their creative economic activities.

Besides, the implementation of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube, etc which created by designers can be noticed as globalization dimension called Mediascape. Those types of social media are very important to smooth their business faster. As well as new ideas which came up from the designer to built new relation and create various products during COVID-19 pandemic can be seen clearly as glocalization nuances called as Ideoscapes. Therefore, characteristics of globalization existed simultaneously and continually in the life of designers.

All the creative economy steps taken by the designer have succeeded in bringing financial input known as financescape based on from the perspective of globalization theory. The financial input is relatively significant and affected to the increase demand of his business marked by the growing number of orders from various parties. In addition, his workers who involved in the production process, has now added by two new workers, which originally reduced by one person.

4. CONCLUSSIONS

Based on data and discussion above, can be concluded that activities done by the designer has a

strong relation to digital technology. This relation showed the utilization of various digital technologies to develop new ideas and new products which describe important achievements in any situation, including the situation where COVID-19 hit the world. In this situation, designers can use the benefit of digital technology to develop ideas and knowledge connected to their business in field of creative economy.

In other words, built ideas and knowledge can support designers become more creative in designing various new products according to the needs of their clients, which then affected to the increasing of their client's orders. This fact then used as a good momentum by designers to deal with their problems that they experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge the organizing committee of the 2nd International Conference on Art, Craft, Culture and Design (ICON ARCCADE 2021) - FSRD ITB, who has given the opportunity to publish this paper. The author would also like to share his great gratitude to the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design who has been given the trust to write this article to participate in international seminars organized by FSRD ITB.

REFERENCES

- [1] Udayana AA G B. Teknologi Global dan Tumbuh Kembangnya Desain Komunkasi Visual. Kapita Selektta Citra Leka Desain: Dialektika Seni, Desain, dan Budaya Pada Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 edited by I Nyoman Jayanegara, I Nyoman Anom Fajaraditya Setiawan, 55-68. Denpasar: STIKI Press. 2020.
- [2] Ritzer. G. The Globalization of Nothing. Mengkonsumsi Kehampaan Di Era Globalisasi (Lucinda, penerjemah; Heru Nugroho, penyunting). Universitas Atma Jaya; Yogyakarta.p 96,99,104. 2006.
- [3] Steger M.B. Globalisme Bangkitnya Ideologi Pasar [Penerjemah: Heru Prasatia].Lafadi Pustaka:Yogyakarta. P 57-58. 2006.
- [4] Hirst, Paul dan Graham Thompson. Globalisasi adalah Sebuah Mitos Sebuah Kesangsian

terhadap Globalisasi Ekonomi Dunia dan Kemungkinan Aturan Mainnya (Sumitro, penerjemah). Jakarta : Yayasan Obor Indonesia. 1991.

- [5] Miles, M.B. dan A.M. Huberman. Analisis Data Kualitatif Buku Sumber tentang Metode-Metode Baru (Tjetjep Rohindi, penerjemah). Jakarta : Penerbit Universitas Indonesia. 1992
- [6] Soewardikoen D.W. Metodologi Penelitian Desain Komunikasi Visual.Pt Kanisius :Yogyakarta. P 81. 2019.
- [7] Wikipedia
https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ekonomi_kreatif
 diakses tanggal 3 Juli 2021