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Preserving Cultural Identity through Architecture: A Case Study of Traditional Tenganan Village (Desa Adat)

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Abstract. This research investigates the role of architecture in preserving cultural identity through a case study of Tenganan Customary Village. The village features rich traditional architecture with distinctive cultural values. Through the use of traditional building materials, unique architectural features, organized spatial arrangement, cultural activities, rituals, and active community involvement, the cultural identity of Tenganan Village has been successfully maintained and preserved. The study employs a qualitative approach, incorporating literature review, field survey, and interviews as data collection methods. The research findings highlight the significant role of architecture in cultural identity preservation, with active community participation being a key factor in sustaining the culture. These findings offer valuable insights for policymaking and practices in preserving cultural identity through architecture, not only in Tenganan Customary Village but also in other regions with rich cultural heritage.

Keywords. *Preservation, cultural, identity, traditional, architecture, Tenganan*

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1 Introduction

Cultural identity in a community is essential for maintaining diversity and preserving cultural heritage in a region. Architecture plays a significant role in safeguarding and conserving cultural identity through designs, materials, and spatial usage that reflect local cultural values (Sumunar et al., 2017). Bali is one of the regions known for its distinct architectural style and settlement patterns oriented towards religion. The traditional village patterns in Bali have contributed to the island's unique village development. Traditional Balinese architecture is the result of human ingenuity rooted in their worldview, way of life, religious norms, beliefs, and historical culture. The community's way of life always underpins their creations, and Balinese society is inseparable from its teachings and beliefs, namely Hindu Dharma. Their teachings state that all creatures live in their respective natural environments and coexist harmoniously with them (Kristiono, 2017). Traditional Balinese Architecture refers to an architectural style predominantly influenced by Hindu religion, encompassing religious buildings, residential buildings, and public buildings with social functions. Hindu influence does not entirely dictate traditional Balinese architecture, identified three types of areas in Bali based on their architectural influence: (1) areas with minimal Hindu influence on their buildings, (2) areas with partial Hindu influence on their buildings, and (3) areas with complete Hindu influence (Kumurur & Damayanti, 2009).

Preserving cultural identity through architecture is a crucial approach to safeguarding cultural heritage. It involves efforts to maintain the use of traditional building materials, preserve unique traditional architecture, understand spatial arrangements and traditional building patterns, and involve the community in preserving cultural activities and rituals. In this context, the research aims to investigate cultural identity preservation through an architectural approach, using Tenganan Customary Village as a relevant case study.

Tenganan Customary Village is located in the Karangasem Regency, Bali Province, Indonesia. The village is renowned as one of the oldest customary villages with authentic Balinese traditions and culture. Tenganan Customary Village boasts unique and intricate traditional architecture, along with distinctive social patterns, beliefs, and cultural activities. However, preservation challenges for the traditional architecture often arise due to external factors such as urbanization and modernization, as well as internal factors like changing lifestyles and community needs. Tenganan Village falls under the category of villages with partial Hindu architectural influence (Kumurur & Damayanti, 2009).

Through this research, it is expected to gain an understanding of the role of architecture in strengthening and preserving the cultural identity of Tenganan Village. Employing a case study approach, the research will explore the architectural elements associated with cultural identity and their impact on

cultural preservation. The study will also consider contemporary dynamics and challenges faced by the village in maintaining its cultural integrity, as well as the potential of architecture as a means to address these challenges.

By comprehending the complex relationship between cultural identity and architecture in Tenganan Village, this research aims to provide valuable insights for the development of other customary villages, architectural practitioners, and stakeholders involved in cultural identity preservation. The research findings are expected to deepen the understanding of the importance of architecture in preserving and strengthening cultural identity, as well as offering practical guidance for developing architecture that respects local cultural values in Tenganan Village and its surroundings area.

2 Literature Review

Preservation is an effort to conserve and maintain cultural elements, traditions, knowledge, and other heritage to keep them alive and relevant in society both in the present and the future. This involves the protection, preservation, and development of cultural heritage to prevent it from becoming extinct or forgotten. Preservation is not only about maintaining the physical form of cultural heritage but also understanding and appreciating the values and meanings embedded within it (Library of Australia, 2003).

Culture is the result of the combination of intellect and capability, giving rise to ideas. Ideas are the embodiment of culture, largely arising from various elements, such as concepts, values, norms, regulations, and others, which coexist within a society and imbue it with its essence. All of these interconnected elements constitute a cultural system, a term coined by anthropologists and sociologists, which can be translated into Indonesian as "adat" or customs/traditions (Wardiningsih, 2015).

Cultural identity is closely related to preservation because cultural identity represents the distinctive and unique characteristics of a group or community. Cultural preservation helps to safeguard and strengthen this cultural identity. Local genius can be understood as the intelligence of local people to adapt and acculturate external cultural influences, resulting in the transformation of existing cultures into new, beautiful, and unique forms that represent the distinct identity of the region. This uniqueness becomes a source of pride for the owner, as it sets them apart from others and highlights their individuality. On the other hand, the concept of local wisdom, which comprises the words "wisdom" and "local," refers to the wise ideas, agreements, values, or perspectives of the local community. These aspects are full of wisdom and moral goodness, and they are followed and embraced by its members, making them an integral part of the local culture (Wayan, 2016).

Architecture serves as a significant medium in implementing cultural preservation. Through architectural design that integrates traditional elements and local cultural values, a place can maintain its distinctiveness and prevent the loss of cultural heritage. The implementation of preservation through architecture in the traditional village of Tenganan, for example, relies on the use of traditional forms, materials, and construction techniques that have been passed down through generations.

The Tenganan Traditional Village in Bali, Indonesia, serves as a concrete example of cultural preservation through architecture. This village possesses a unique system of house arrangement, with strict regulations governing the size, placement, and form of buildings. The houses in Tenganan are designed to create an appropriate level of privacy in accordance with the local culture and community needs. Additionally, the use of natural materials such as bamboo, wood, and weaving is a hallmark of the traditional architecture in this village (Kristiono, 2017).

Cultural preservation is of utmost importance as it profoundly impacts the identity and self-esteem of a society. Preservation helps prevent the loss of knowledge and traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. By safeguarding cultural heritage, communities can honor and appreciate their own history and cultural roots. Preservation also contributes to economic and social sustainability, as it can enhance cultural tourism and empower the local population. As stated by UNESCO (Library of Australia, 2003), "Preservation of cultural heritage is an investment in the future and a pathway to improving the quality of life". In addition, preservation offers opportunities for economic growth through cultural tourism, where visitors can immerse themselves in the life of the Tenganan traditional community while generating income for the local populace.

As an essential key, preservation plays a pivotal role in ensuring the perpetuation of cultural identity and the enduring viability of a society. The preservation of old/historical architectural buildings serves as a significant means for communities to maintain and demonstrate their distinctiveness and uniqueness amid the challenges posed by global architectural standardization (Pratama et al., n.d.). The loss of old/historical buildings leads to the disappearance of a place's historical elements that contribute to its unique identity, causing the erosion of cultural identity (Sumunar et al., 2017).

Through the practical implementation of preservation, as exemplified by the architectural practices in the Tenganan traditional village, the transmission of unique cultural values is secured and perpetuated. This imperative extends far beyond the confines of the local community. Thus, the collective endeavour of cultural preservation becomes an indispensable collaborative pursuit in safeguarding cultural diversity and the invaluable wealth of world heritage. Through proper preservation, societies can

maintain the uniqueness and diversity of their cultures for enjoyment by future generations (Semadi, 2023).

3 Research Methods

This research adopts a qualitative approach, observing phenomena through the following stages:

1. Literature Review: Conducting a literature review on Tenganan Village, traditional Balinese architecture, and the concept of cultural identity in architecture.
2. Field Survey: Conducting a field survey in Tenganan Village to gather data on distinctive and significant architectural elements, such as building forms, materials, ornaments, and village spatial arrangements.
3. Interviews: Conducting interviews with community leaders and local stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of architecture in building the cultural identity of Tenganan Village.
4. Data Analysis: Analyzing data collected from the literature review, field survey, and interviews to identify architectural elements that reflect the cultural identity of Tenganan Village and analyze the role of architecture in preserving and strengthening the cultural identity of the Customary Village.

The data analysis will utilize various indicators and instruments as follows:

Table 1. Research Indicators and Data Analysis Instruments

No	Indicator	Data Analysis Instruments
1.	Distinctive Features of Traditional Architecture	Visual Observation: Identifying distinctive architectural elements present in Tenganan Village, such as house forms, structures, materials, ornaments, and applied architectural principles.
		Interviews: Inquiring about the community's perspective on the uniqueness of traditional architecture.
2.	Village Spatial Arrangement and Traditional Building Patterns	Visual Observation: Analyzing the village's spatial arrangement and traditional building patterns in Tenganan Village.
		Interviews: Inquiring about the role of spatial arrangements and building patterns in preserving cultural identity.
3.	Community's Role in Cultural Identity Preservation	Interviews: Inquiring about the community's role and involvement in preserving and conserving cultural

	identity.
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4 Result and Discussion

Based on the analysis derived from observations and interviews, the research yielded the following findings.

4.1 Distinctive Features of Traditional Architecture

Traditional architecture in Tenganan Village exhibits several distinctive features that set it apart from traditional architecture in other regions. Some notable characteristics of traditional architecture in Tenganan Village are as follows:

1. **Building Form:** Traditional houses in Tenganan Village possess unique building forms with conical or pyramid-shaped roofs. The roofs are made from thatched grass tied with bamboo or rattan, while the walls are made from woven bamboo or wickerwork.

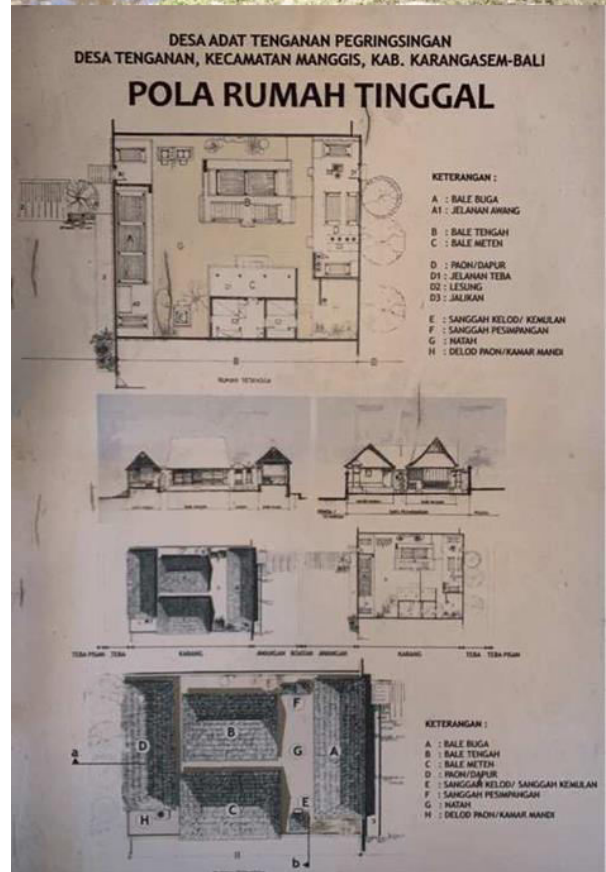


Figure 1. Traditional Houses Style in Tenganan Village

2. **Structure:** Traditional buildings in Tenganan Village are designed with sturdy structures to withstand natural disasters like earthquakes and strong winds. The use of traditional materials and construction techniques provides excellent resilience to external environmental conditions.



Fig. 2. Structure Model of Tenganan Village's Houses

3. **Materials:** Traditional buildings in Tenganan Village utilize natural materials such as bamboo, wood, and thatched grass as primary construction materials. These materials create a natural ambiance that harmonizes with the surrounding environment.



Fig. 3. Materials Tenganan Village's House

4. **Ornaments:** Traditional architecture in Tenganan Village is characterized by rich ornaments and decorations. These ornaments adorn doors, windows, and building pillars. They often take the form of beautiful wood carvings, symbolizing cultural values and community beliefs.



Fig. 4. Ornament of Tenganan Village's Houses

5. **Design Principles:** Traditional architecture in Tenganan Village reflects the principle of harmony with nature. The buildings aim to harness natural sunlight, wind, and air circulation to create a comfortable indoor environment.

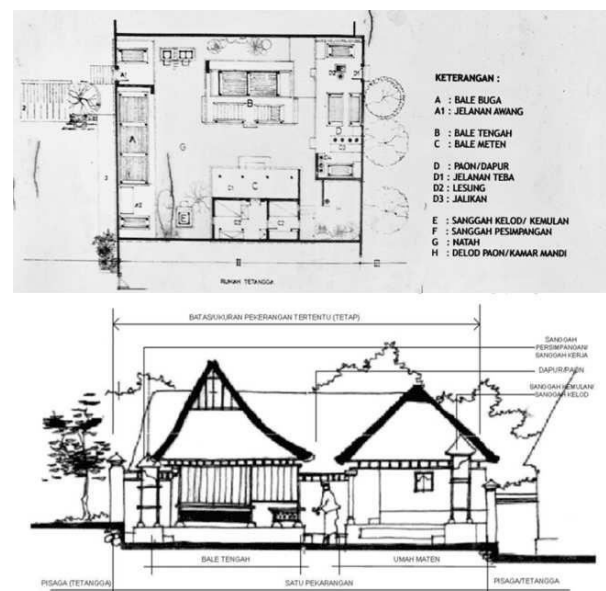


Fig. 5. Spatial Arrangement Principles in Tenganan Village

The distinctive features of traditional architecture in Tenganan Village mirror its cultural identity and local wisdom passed down through generations.

4.2 Village Spatial Arrangement and Traditional Building Patterns

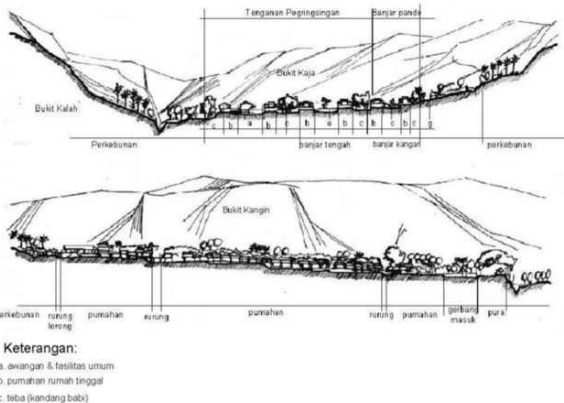


Fig. 6. Image Area of Village Spatial Arrangement

Tenganan Village features an organized spatial arrangement with well-planned street and building patterns. The positioning and layout of traditional buildings adhere to customary concepts and local beliefs.

1. **Planning System:** Tenganan Village has a structured and organized planning system. The village is divided into several regions or “banjars” each with specific roles and functions within the community. Each banjar has its own rules and guidelines for land use and building arrangement.
2. **Main Street:** A main street runs through Tenganan Village from north to south. This street serves as the primary communication route and acts as the main axis for the village spatial arrangement.
3. **Traditional Houses:** Traditional houses in Tenganan Village are placed side by side, forming neat rows along the main street. These houses

often face the main street and have limited courtyards.

4. **Block Formation:** Traditional houses in Tenganan Village usually form specific blocks with enclosed inner yards surrounded by buildings. These blocks create clear internal structures and organized open spaces.
5. **Village Center:** The village center features important locations such as puras (places of worship), balai banjar (community meeting halls), and other public spaces. These places often serve as central points of activity and serve as references for the village’s spatial organization.
6. **Agriculture and Gardens:** Agricultural and garden areas are typically situated around the village, outside residential areas. These spaces are designated for agricultural activities such as planting, nursery, and soil cultivation.



Fig. 7. Village Spatial and Traditional Building

The spatial arrangement and building patterns in Tenganan Village reflect the community’s social structure and cultural norms. This well-organized layout contributes to strengthening cultural identity and preserving traditions in the village.

4.3 Community’s Role in Cultural Identity Preservation

The community of Tenganan Village plays a crucial role in preserving cultural identity. They actively participate in maintaining and conserving their cultural heritage. Some of the key roles of the community in preserving cultural identity in Tenganan Village are as follows:

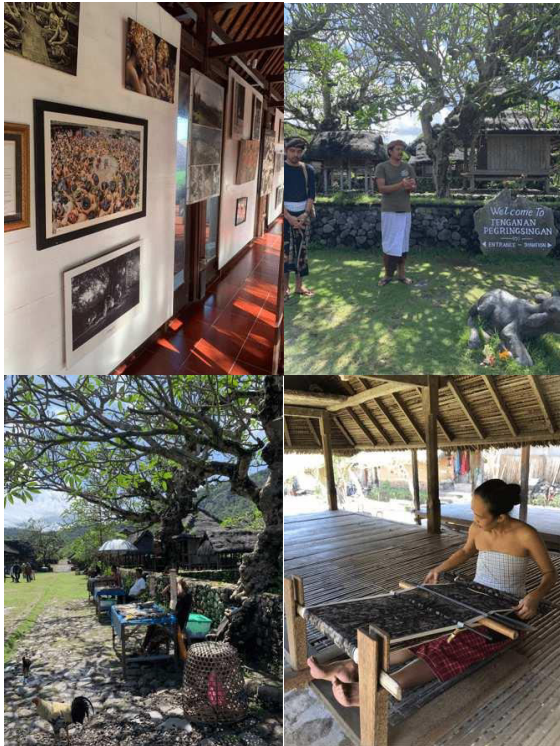


Fig. 8. Community's Role in Cultural Identity Preservation

1. Tradition and Custom Keepers: The people of Tenganan Village are primary keepers of their inherited traditions and customs. They carry out religious rituals, traditional ceremonies, and other cultural activities, adhering to long-standing rules and customs.
2. Preservation of Traditional Architecture: The community is involved in maintaining the traditional architecture that characterizes the village. They preserve and repair traditional houses and other important buildings using suitable traditional materials and techniques.
3. Conservation of Arts and Crafts: The people of Tenganan Village actively preserve their traditional arts and crafts. They safeguard skills such as weaving, carving, and songket fabric-making, which are essential elements of the village's cultural identity. They pass on these skills and knowledge to younger generations to keep the arts and crafts alive and evolving.
4. Cultural and Local Knowledge Education: The community of Tenganan Village plays a vital role in cultural and local knowledge education. They transmit cultural values, mythology, and local knowledge to the younger generation through stories, performances, and direct experiences.
5. Participation in Community Decision-Making: The community actively participates in decision-making processes concerning cultural identity preservation. They engage in village discussions, community meetings, and other forums to decide on policies and actions that support cultural preservation.

The active involvement of the Tenganan Village community in preserving cultural identity is a key factor in maintaining cultural continuity and valuable

cultural heritage. This is evident from the existence of specific buildings constructed by the villagers, serving as galleries that present various information about Tenganan Village, especially its architecture and culture. With their participation, the traditions and cultural identity of Tenganan Village can continue to thrive and be passed on to future generations.

5 Conclusion

Architecture plays a vital role in preserving cultural identity, with community participation playing a key role in safeguarding traditions, arts, and local knowledge. This aligns with the research findings in Tenganan Village, which features rich traditional architecture that contributes to the preservation of cultural identity through the use of traditional building materials, distinctive architectural elements, organized spatial arrangements, cultural activities, rituals, and active community involvement.

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