

Subjectivity, Objectivity Culture in Art Axiological

**Wan Samiati Andriana W. Mohamad Daud^{1*}, Zuriati Mohamad Shaari¹,
Nik Syahida Sabri¹, Yulriawan Dafri. M.Hum²**

**Corresponding Author*

¹ College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

² Faculty of Visual Arts, Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

samiati@uitm.edu.my, zuriati9216@uitm.edu.my, niksyahida@uitm.edu.my, yulriawandafri@isi.ac.id
Tel: +60122750539

Abstract

This article explores the dynamic interplay between subjectivity and objectivity in art axiology, highlighting the challenges of evaluating art today. It examines the importance of balancing these dimensions to comprehensively understand art's value and meaning. Through case studies and examples, it discusses how contemporary artists and critics navigate this duality using digital media and interactive technologies while considering formal elements, historical context, and cultural significance. The article addresses ethical considerations, such as cultural appropriation and inclusivity, and concludes that balancing subjectivity and objectivity enhances our appreciation of art's personal and cultural dimensions.

Keywords: Art; axiology; objectivity; subjectivity; culture

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1.0 Introduction

Art has been a place where subjectivity and objectivity were blurred, creating a rich tapestry of discourse within the field of aesthetics. The perennial question of whether art is an entirely subjective expression of the individual artist's inner world or an objective entity subject to universal standards has intrigued philosophers, artists, and scholars for centuries. This intricate interplay between subjectivity and objectivity in art axiology forms the cornerstone of exploration in this paper. Exploring into the world of aesthetics, navigating a landscape marked by diverse viewpoints, historical shifts, and evolving artistic movements. From the transcendent musings of Immanuel Kant to the revolutionary declarations of Clive Bell, the discourse on subjectivity and objectivity in art has spanned centuries and continues to shape our understanding of what constitutes art and how it should be evaluated.

This article embarks on a philosophical journey in art axiology to unravel the complex relationship between subjectivity and objectivity. The purpose is to examine how personal emotions, experiences, and cultural contexts infuse art with subjectivity while reviewing the criteria and standards that aim to establish objectivity in artistic evaluation. Examine the ever-shifting nature of this discourse by case studies and contemporary perspectives. The primary objective of this research article is to critically examine and elucidate the complex interplay between subjectivity and objectivity in art axiology, focusing on their historical evolution, philosophical

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underpinnings, and contemporary relevance. This paper shall contribute to the ongoing conversation about the nature of art, its values, and the intricate balance between subjectivity and objectivity that defines its place in the realm of human expression and culture.

2.0 Literature Review

Axiology is one of the oldest fields of study. It can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy, especially the great Greek philosophers, including Socrates and Plato. An axiology study principally contains two kinds of values: ethics and aesthetics. According to Saracevic and Kantor (1997), the theory of value, or axiology, is the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of value and valuation. Philosophers consider value as the worth of something, and the valuation process is an estimate, appraisal, or measure of its cost. In their works, it is what seems to be an undefined primitive term. They consider values related to, but not synonymous with, "good," "desirable," or "worthwhile," which can be positive or negative. The theory of value in philosophy refers to the problems of ethics and aesthetics, where the meaning of ethics has two meanings: a set of knowledge concerning the assessment of human performance and a predicate, which is used to distinguish works, conduct, or otherwise. Art Axiology, the philosophical study of the worth of art, frequently confronts the conflict between subjectivity and objectivity. The tension is caused by the fact that art is both a deeply personal and subjective experience, and it can also be evaluated and critiqued using objective criteria. Mohd Johari (2013), in his book about the Relationship of Art, Philosophy, and Aesthetics, wrote that a German philosopher named Alexander Baumgarten (1714-1762) was the person responsible for coining the term aesthetic, borrows from the Greek word 'aesthesia', which means perceive. There was also an opinion stating that the aesthetic is derived from the Latin word 'aesthetics', which means trained in perceiving. In the English language, aesthetics is defined as the people who are trained to create the perception.

This is consistent with the ideas raised by Supangkat and Zaelani (2006) that the term aesthetic was given a new meaning in 1735 by Alexander Baumgarten. This aesthetic judgment means to evaluate, feel, and appreciate something genuinely or deeply. The word aesthetics comes from the ancient Greek aesthetic, which means perception. According to Djelantik (1999), beauty covers natural beauty and artificial beauty that, in general, we call art. Thus, art is one of the platforms that contains elements of beauty. Hamidah Abdulhamid (1995) argued that Baumgarten did not contribute much in giving opinions about aesthetics; instead, the philosopher who formed and streamlined the definition of aesthetics was George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). Hegel was a German philosopher who often used the term aesthetic in his writings on art.

In addition, Shaari (2001) wrote that aesthetics in literary works means the value of beauty. The meaning of value here relates to human feelings and is subjective. For example, the first reader might consider one's work as aesthetical work, but the other reader might not think so. Therefore, according to Shaari (2001), technique and style determine the aesthetic value of a work. Even with the presence of good content in a work, it does not necessarily guarantee a high aesthetic value of that work, but the more important is there must be a balance in every work.

Djelantik (1999) explained that aesthetics is a field of science that studies all things related to beauty. Beauty in the soul generally creates a feeling of ease, contentment, peacefulness, comfort, and happiness. When these kinds of feelings become very strong, one will start to feel transfixed, overwhelmed, and fascinated, creating a desire to have the same experience of feelings again.

In their article, Hussin et al. (1987) argue that the word aesthetics comes from the word 'aisteikos', meaning sensitive, and this word evolved from the word 'aisthannesthai', which means to perceive (perception). It is also mentioned in his book *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present*, that aesthetics is a branch of philosophy of beauty in which the criteria of perception on the external appearance of an art are reviewed or evaluated.

Furthermore, Ali mentioned in Hussin et al. (1987) that aesthetics derived from Greek sources are related to the sense of observation that involves the eyes' ability to see. While enjoying the aesthetics of the art object, the eye, as an organ of vision, is one of the senses that can evaluate the aesthetics. In this context, aesthetics, according to Socrates, involves imagination, and this process of imagination is how someone enjoys and appreciates a work that involves feelings and emotions.

3.0 Methodology

Case Studies and Contemporary Perspectives can help investigate how subjectivity and objectivity manifest in contemporary art and aesthetics, with a particular emphasis on selected case studies and the viewpoints of modern artists and critics. This attempts to connect historical concepts with current artistic practices and debates. Finally, Contribution to Discourse contributes to the ongoing discourse on art axiology by offering fresh insights and perspectives on the enduring tension between subjectivity and objectivity in evaluating and understanding art. This contribution explores the implications of digital media and globalization on contemporary art's subjectivity-objectivity dynamics.

4.0 Findings

Aesthetic value, the capacity of an artwork to elicit pleasure or displeasure, plays a crucial role in balancing subjective and objective evaluations in contemporary art. The ability of a piece of art to trigger either pleasure or unhappiness is referred to as its aesthetic value. In contemporary art, aesthetic value plays a significant role in maintaining a balance between subjective and objective evaluations.

Everything valuable is valuable in a diversity of ways. Art objects often have sentimental value, historical value, or financial value. Wilderness can have economic and recreational value. However, great artworks are considered to own a distinctive form of non-

instrumental and non-utilitarian value that is of fundamental concern when judged as artworks. It might be supposed that this value is beauty, but many artworks are not beautiful. Thus, it is more plausible that beauty is a particular value of the species.

Aesthetics can make someone pleased when they see (look) and observe an object of study. In short, aesthetics can be summarized as the philosophy of beauty, even though the whole discussion about aesthetics is from its philosophical view. From the period of philosophy, aesthetics has a broad scope and is arguably infinite. Generally, a work of art results from humans' vision and creative process of creating beauty by doing something.

And once more, the emphasis on pleasure and displeasure has consistently challenged the objectivity of aesthetic and aesthetic value judgments. However, although some believe aesthetic value is a purely personal preference, there has always been a robust philosophical resistance against such radical subjectivism.

The values and judgments associated with artworks are shaped by subjectivity and objectivity. The complexity of art evaluation is often caused by the interaction and influence between these two elements. Art evaluation is a complex process that involves a dynamic interplay between subjectivity and objectivity. Subjectivity is the personal experiences, emotions, and individual perspectives that viewers bring to their encounters with artworks. Objectivity requires using more impartial and analytical criteria, such as formal elements, historical context, and cultural significance, to assess artistic quality.

Objective or subjective value highly depends on the results emerging from the view of philosophy. As for the definition of metaphysical value, for example, it is how it values the relationship with reality. Among the questions raised in subjectivism, is value entirely dependent on and relative to the human experience of it? In objectivism, the logical value is the rational essence of substances, independent of their being known, yet not the existential status of action. And metaphysical objectivism, values, norms, or ideals are an integral objective and active constituent of the metaphysical realm. Broadly, values can be categorized as either material values or spiritual values. Material values refer to the values of people's daily necessities, such as commodities. Spiritual values, in contrast, refer to values corresponding to the faculties of intellect, emotion, and will or the values of sincerity, goodness, and beauty. However, values are viewed in the philosophy of the Islamic aspect and its implications for the history of Malaysian art in general and Islamic art in particular.

Philosophy emerged from the question of human will. This refers to the philosophical thought of man, which can also be considered a philosophy of human beings. Human philosophy is a branch of philosophy that deals with the meaning of being human. Philosophy of artificial man as the object of his studies. The philosophical starting point is human knowledge, experience, and the world enclosing them. Human philosophy continues to flourish because the human being is an object filled with mystery. In history, some terms have led to human philosophy: rational philosophy, psychology, experimental psychology, and empiricism.

National unity is the cornerstone of the well-being and prosperity of the country. The fact that Malaysians are of various races, religions, and cultures and come from different provinces makes the question of unity fundamental in ensuring national development goals.

5.0 Discussion

Today, Malaysia is recognized by the world for its success in creating unity in a plural society. Yet, strengthening national unity should be continuously performed because, over time, it brings together a range of new challenges that could affect national unity. Ethnic groups often differ in culture, customs, clothing patterns, views on beauty, political and economic activities, and entertainment orientation. In Malaysia, the Malays, Chinese, Indians, Kadazan, Melanau, and many others may be regarded as ethnic groups. Ethnic being ethnocentric, which considers the cultural traits as reasonable, correct, and more mainstream than the other ethnic cultures that are considered low and debased, called odd, low level, or immoral.

Race and ethnicity are often used in place of each other, even if they carry different meanings. In Malaysia, racial and ethnic terms are frequently conflated and used so that their meaning becomes the same. The Malays, Chinese, and Indians are duly recognized as ethnic groups but are also called races in daily life. Race is the difference in terms of physical traits in human groups, and the most striking and often used feature to distinguish human groups is skin color. On the other hand, in terms of ethnicity, languages can be defined as ethnic or racial. Ethnicity can be determined through differences in cultural characteristics such as customs, clothing, language, economic activities, etc.

Ethnic groups, about people, do not force changes to religious beliefs or remove the elements of a person. Ethnic groups usually start from a concept of descent, which is that a generation of ethnic groups today have the same ancestors and generations of their ancestors. Ethnicity is unclassified through cultural differences. In addition, ethnicity can also be classified according to demographics, such as geographical position and the state's boundaries. For example, in Sabah and Sarawak, there are many ethnic groups in different geographical positions.

This demographic classifies the cultural differences of ethnic groups. This clearly shows that each ethnic group has artistic differences from other ethnicities. In culture, the most essential factor is religion because religion is the notion of a policy of the environment regarding the social and physical. Language is also important as a means of communication, and customs are also necessary as an indicator of how someone conducts his life and society's culture. There are two prominent roles in forming a culture: firstly, to build the country's image towards creating a personality and identity. The second is cultivating national consciousness and nationalism based on spirituality, humanitarianism, spirituality, and mentality.

Culture is universal, but paradoxically, at the same time, there is a difference between the culture of one society and another community. Something in the culture evolved and continued to be created according to the people's willingness. There is a culture that matches in the event of a collision with an external influence, whether to fill a vacancy as an alternative or exaggerate what already

exists. Then, man's culture and cultural development evolve according to the progress of society itself. Culture is shared by people who become members of the community. This partnership means that each act is backed up by many links. For example, nasi lemak and roti canai became a culture because society loves it. The Malay language is the culture of Malaysians and is spoken in everyday life. However, behavior is not shared by a group of humans and is not included in culture, such as stealing, even if it exists in the community. Without sharing, it is just individual behavior rather than the conduct of society.

Culture is inherited from one generation to the next generation. This means that the culture of Malays, ethnic Chinese, and Indians today is an extension of the previous culture. Events that have taken place will have an effect to this day. Culture is also inherited as a means of connecting. The technology produced today is the result of the human past. However, culture will change and has not existed before, and until now, that has stayed the same. Art and culture are two entities that are closely related and are suspended between each other. The scope of both these fields is vast and complex, and it is as if they cannot be separated. Arts and culture are very closely related to the identity, ideology, and practices of groups of people. Worldwide, every society has an identity of its own in culture and arts, forming the uniqueness of their way of life.

The arts have become an identity and practice essential to Malaysia's cultural society, which is a multiracial nation. With the diversity of the art practices of multi-ethnic societies in the country, multicultural Malaysia's identity has become more recognized and recognizable. Undoubtedly, things asserted in visual art production are creative activities involving objects that can be touched, seen, and imagined, encouraging the development of perception and intuition. Philosophy can be adjusted to promote understanding of the real and the abstract in art, and interest in the visual arts can be developed. History and appreciation of visual arts concentrate on experiencing art in daily life and the national culture. Comparison with art and culture from outside are also encouraged to expose the balance the exposure in the field of the visual arts to recognize the visual arts in the cultural evolution of nationalities.

It is hoped that through visual arts, generations of Malaysians will be literate in culture, have high aesthetic values, be critical, creative, imaginative, innovative, and inventive, as well as explore thought, exploration, and design in a wide range of visual arts to allow the development of ideas and self-expression. This is a necessary experience because it helps one build self-confidence, make an assessment, and learn how things feel on their own.

6.0 Conclusion

This paper contributes to the field of art axiology by examining the intricate balance between subjectivity and objectivity in evaluating art. Tracing historical and philosophical debates from thinkers like Immanuel Kant and George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, it connects these foundational ideas to contemporary practices. The paper defines aesthetic value as a blend of personal emotions and objective criteria illustrated through case studies and modern perspectives. It explores how digital media and globalization influence the subjective-objective dynamics in art. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of cultural appreciation and creative thinking. This study enriches ongoing discussions about the nature of art, its values, and the balance between personal and universal standards in its evaluation.

7.0 Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

This paper explores the balance between subjective and objective criteria in art evaluation. It traces historical philosophical perspectives and connects them to contemporary practices in art criticism. By analyzing how personal experiences and emotions interact with universal standards like formal analysis and cultural context, the paper offers a framework for understanding the complexity of aesthetic value. This approach is relevant to modern debates on artistic value, especially in the context of digital media and globalization.

Furthermore, the paper addresses ethical considerations like cultural appropriation and inclusivity, emphasizing the role of art in promoting cultural understanding. It examines how contemporary digital platforms impact the way art is perceived and evaluated, contributing to discussions on the evolution of art criticism in a globalized world. The study enriches the field by offering a nuanced perspective on the balance between personal and universal criteria in evaluating art, making it a valuable resource for understanding the evolving standards of art appreciation.

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