

# A Literature Discussion and Research Gap Identification on Role, Art Activity and Economy: A Relationship Between Artist, Gallery, and Buyer from The Islamic Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

Visual art is dynamically developed in Malaysia. The opening of many art galleries shows that people are more receptive to the visual arts as a part of their community. These collisions create the art sector as a career field. This phenomenon encouraged artists to exhibit their artworks in the gallery and economically increased the numbers of art collectors as buyers to support the art scene and build a new bridge of connection between artist, gallery, and buyer. There is interest growing yet little research in this area has been discovered. This research is to identify the relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer which is related to the role, art activity involved, and economic factors based on the Islamic perspectives. These relations are common and have become the norm in the social environment of visual arts. Furthermore, the role, art activity involved, and economic factor between the relationship of the artist, gallery, and buyer is rarely been discussed. The gap identification will occur by using the qualitative method through observations on the content analysis. This research has the potential to extend the understanding of the relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer from the Islamic perspective.

**Keywords:** *Art, Gallery, Relationship, Islamic, Perspectives*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The number of galleries in the developing area has increased in Malaysia. There are more than 70 galleries in Malaysia, indirectly these galleries play a role in preserving our local artefacts (Johar, 2007). In fact, modernization is one of the most prominent issues in deliberating the development of Malaysian culture, including visual arts, cartoon arts, and literature. The statement above shows that the support came from the surrounding community as they can accept art existence and be a part of their community.

As this culture grows, the dimension is not focusing only on the gallery but also on the increase of artists as art makers and buyers as art collectors. These two sectors are important to set attention to because they play a role in the relationship with gallery development. Artists, galleries and buyers are

inevitable. The relationship between them directly shows the relationship that is closely related to their art activities. Each of them plays a role. Artists act as art makers, galleries as mediators / dealers and buyers as purchasers or art collectors. These three relationships are economical relationships where they are intertwined with the process of buying and selling art pieces (Polèse, 2012). Each of them has its own role in supporting the other.

From the perspective of art enthusiasts, it may be customary in visual art, but less attention to creative writing and causing it to be neglected in writing. The relationship between the artist and the gallery is very bright and real as they need to be one another. As has been mentioned, without a gallery, an artist cannot survive, and without an artist, a gallery will not exist (Simpson Solicitor, n.d.). This relationship gives a significant impact because, with this connection, there will be another relationship, that is the buyer. When a buyer exists, the system also changes. It becomes a commercial relationship where it is involving a system of buying and selling between artists, galleries and buyers. The development of this relationship involves many factors, especially in terms of role, art activity and economy. Indirectly it also affects the community in relation to job opportunities, economic improvement and education in visual arts (Shkuda, 2013). Clearly, communities are exposed to the development of art in Malaysia and the public can now accept these developments willingly. It gives a positive impact on the world of arts in Malaysia. However, discovery in the aspect of Islamic perspectives is not entirely revealed in terms of the relationship between artists, galleries and buyers as well as roles, art and economics.

The purpose of this study is to identify the relationships between artists, galleries and buyers which are related to the role, art activity and economic factors from the Islamic perspectives.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the development of visual arts, there are many things to highlight. Among them, are the increase in the number of galleries in Malaysia, the emergence of talented young artists, the increasing understanding of visual arts among local communities, and others. These things indirectly provide a terrific opportunity regarding roles, related art activities, and the country's economy. The Malaysian art scene also changed around the early 1950s from the regional scene to its rugged tempo and rich patterns. The influencing factors are traditional art, aesthetic value and western art style or better known as global technology. In general, visual art has been accepted by the community and the developments have sharply demonstrated its importance in the community.

In the world of art, artists, galleries, and buyers are three important sectors and create a bridge of connection between each other by selling and buying artworks. The relationship between them also creates a dynamic relationship. The hidden purpose behind what they are doing creates a special relationship between them and their surroundings. With the power of consistent relationships, it also creates a strategy and forms clear management within the organization (Ramli et al., 2020).

### 2.1 Definition

As to be more specific of the terms, the definition of the role was handed out to received a clearer understanding.

**Table 1** Role and Definition of Artist, Gallery and Buyer (Ramli et al., 2017)

No.	Role	Definition
1.	Artist	A person who creates paintings or drawings as a profession or hobby.
2.	Gallery	A gallery is known as a room, series of rooms, or building devoted to the exhibition and often the sale of works of art.
3.	Buyer	Buyer in this context was defined as a person who buys; purchaser or another term in the visual art scene is an art collector.

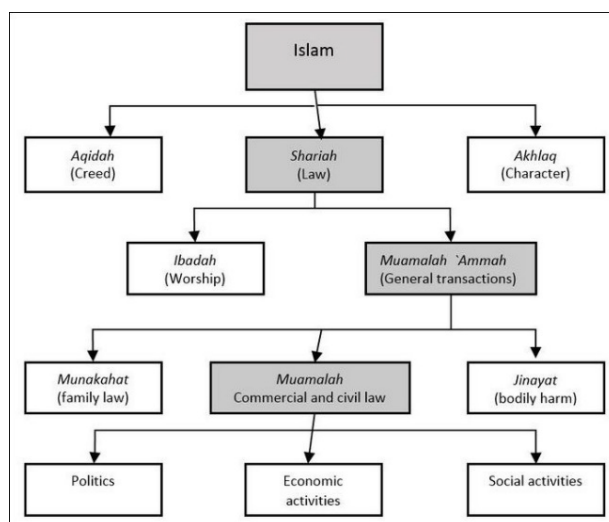
Developments in the visual arts world also depend on artists, galleries and buyers. Each of these sectors has a role in improving the quality of the work. Groups and art organizations play a key role in the process of developing Malaysian art from the very beginning. Artist's role is commonly viewed as the person responsible for producing works, the gallery acts as the party responsible for selling and promoting the work of an artist. And indirectly, buyers play a role in having the work of an artist by generating a system of buying and selling through the gallery. Art spaces (galleries) may play a role as a community centre for artists by providing a space to display their work in an environment where mentoring, peer review, and discussion are stimulated (Grodach, 2011). When roles and art activities occur, the term economy will exist and the implication will develop because they are closely related to each other (Markusen & Schrock, 2006). Economic making benefits artists and galleries and benefits buyers too. The work purchased by the buyer can be invested in the future (Mei & Moses, 2002).

The role, art activity and economy maybe not be the main factors in this relation, but it is the current factor that can be developed in this visual art world. The factors can be changed due to the research made.

## 2.2 Islamic Perspective

Based on the observations on the current environment, the acceptance of visual art in the community is encouraging. Where artists, galleries and buyers celebrate art at every exhibition (art activity). This situation happens because there is a demand. The minute demand increased; a lot of artists produced artwork to be sold. All this process is really related to roles, art activities and economic aspects. Each artist, gallery and buyer.

When discussing the scope of Islamic perspectives, visual arts are also a part of the discussion (Ramli et al., 2020). Examining the position of visual arts from the perspective of Islam is in the context of the breakdown of *Fiqh Muamalat* involving social relations among people (Ramli et al., 2017). The following figure shows a visual arts position referring to Islamic Perspectives.



**Figure 1** Visual arts position referring to Islamic Perspectives (Fatimah Surani, 2023)

Referring to the figure above, the *Shariah* (Law) is the fundamental factor (Mohammaed Omer Rafique, n.d.) in discovering visual Art positioned under the economic extent because it is related to the factors studied namely roles, art activity, and economy. Generally, the economy is one of the selected factors under Islamic Syariah. Furthermore, visual arts can also be classified as social activities. Both combinations of economic and social activities seem relevant to describe the position of the visual arts. It is compulsory for each Muslim in this world to learn about Islamic *Shariah* (Mohamed Naim, 2016).

Also, visual art is an integral part of the discussion regarding Islamic *Shariah*. Economy activity in Islam are highly recommended to his people. As an artist, a gallery owner, and a buyer, the relationship must be suggested to refer to the Islamic perspectives. All the processes and activities that happened must not exceed of Islamic *Shariah* context. As an artist (art maker), he/she must know the rules and regulations of the art-making process based on Islamic perspectives. From the process of choosing a material, and preparation in art making, to the process of buying and selling (trading) with other parties, galleries or buyers. Currently, the evolution of the gallery concept likewise changes due to the situation and exhibit of the artwork in the virtual platform (Chandra & Uchil, 2017).

As a gallery (mediator), the organization plays a significant role as a gallery is connected to both sectors. Particularly, galleries must be more creative in handling art activities involving buying and selling systems, consignment, and activity ambience, when conducting activities such as exhibitions, and so on. All the process needs to be subsequently with the Islamic *Syariah*. While buyer (collector) need to know the terms and condition according to Islamic *Syariah* as a part of the buying and selling artwork through the gallery or the artist him/herself.

In other words, all the factors, roles, art activity, and economy in visual arts must lead toward Islamic *Syariah*.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study is more focused on content analysis, where observation applies to the literature review, and data referenced will be used for analysing data and using it as a guide in enhancing this research. The identification of the relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer was chosen from an extract of statements made by researchers or artists themselves so that they support and verify this research. Several citations and definitions are focused on and discuss understanding the relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer.

The previous research paper was then grouped and categorized accordingly. They are collected from journals and websites, dated from 1999s – 2016. The analysing process was conducted to find out the existence of a relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer adapts to the primary form of role, art activity, and economy in visual arts. It is the basis of this study to see the sense of the relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer in good relation to determine the increase from the aspect role, art activity, and economy.

#### **3.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

To understand and answer the objectives of this study, a conceptual framework is built as an analytical model consisting of several factors referred to from related disciplines.

##### **3.1.1 Content (Literature Review)**

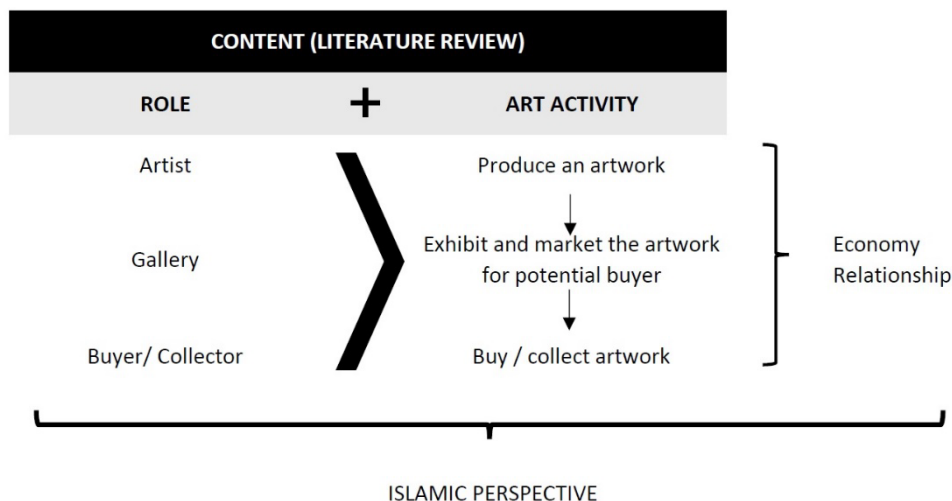
In this study, the content studied is related to the subject of keywords as a benchmark to ensure that the goals are in line with the objectives to be achieved.

##### **3.1.2 Artist, gallery and buyer relationship**

Art relations involve three entities, namely artists, galleries and buyers/ collectors. This relationship exists on the basis of the development of art through the economic sector that encourages these entities to be active in the arts. A more accurate interpretation is that this relationship is a business relationship that involves each other's responsibilities (Bamberger, n.d.).

##### **3.1.3 Islamic Perspective**

According to Dimas Bagus Wiranata Kusuma (n.a.), current economic development according to the Islamic perspective also helps the structuring of other sectors such as moral, spiritual and material as well and has an impact on the effectiveness and balancing of the personality of human life with the guidance of the Quran and Sunnah.



**Figure 2** Conceptual Framework

The concept presented is based on basic relationships in the world of visual arts commerce. The roles categorized are artists, gallery parties and also buyers or collectors of art. The activity process that prevails in this relationship is where the artist produces artwork and then exhibits it or sold by the gallery. The gallery becomes an intermediary between the artist and the buyer. The buyer or collector will become a third party by purchasing the work in the gallery on display.

This conceptual framework will be used as a guide to better understand the relationship between roles, art activities and the economic development within the art scene.

#### 4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Interesting discussion are going on in the various research related to this research by different sources. Due to the limited research data, all the data were gathered in a form of table to be more precise in analysing the relationship from the Islamic perspective.

**Table 2** List of sources and statement description related to role, art activity, and economy

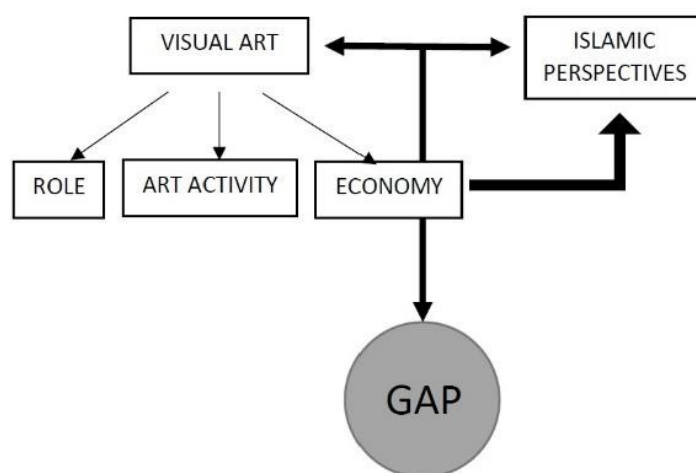
No.	Year	Author(s) / Source(s)	Description Statement
1	1999	(Bryan et al., 2000)	The authors examine the economic impacts of the arts and cultural industries on the Welsh economy.
2	2001	(Madden, 2001)	'Economic' impact studies have been popular in arts and cultural advocacy.
3	2006	(Markusen & Schrock, 2006)	Explores variations in the definition of artist, the relationship between artistic occupation and industry, and differentials in artists' self-employment rates and earnings across cities. It is concluded that artists comprise a relatively footloose group that can serve as a target of regional and local economic development policy; the components of such a policy are outlined
4	2011	(Grodach, 2011)	There is growing interest in the arts in community and economic development, yet little research examines the dynamics of community-based arts institutions to inform urban planning and policy. Drawing on interviews with participants and organizers of small and midsized art spaces, the study explores the factors that influence their involvement

			in neighbourhood revitalization and outreach, support for artistic communities, and efforts to build bridges to commercial cultural sectors. Art spaces function as a conduit for building social networks that contribute to both community revitalization and artistic development.
5	2011	(Gray, 2011)	Explores the relationship of political practices and administrative and managerial regimes for the manner in which museums and galleries in the United Kingdom undertake the functions that they are responsible for, and indicates the possibilities and problems for museum and gallery practice that are associated with different political forms.
6	2011	(Polèse, 2012)	Arts-related employment is found to be highly concentrated in the very largest urban centres, with no indication of change. Smaller places with particular attributes (attractive natural settings, proximity to large urban centres) are increasingly successful in attracting arts-related activities, but this is not necessarily associated with stronger employment growth or the development of knowledge-rich industries. Evidence of co-location with knowledge-rich industries is weak, but stronger for larger cities. No consistently significant relationship exists with employment growth.
7	2012	(Shkuda, 2013)	The history of New York's SoHo neighbourhood provides a way to explain how and why art galleries, boutiques, and restaurants have come to define the retail landscape of gentrification. It also can help scholars answer two important questions about the arts and city life: how do artists and art galleries spark retail growth? Furthermore, outside of the economic activity created by the sale of art, how do they inspire economic development and gentrification? In the case of SoHo, the art market, government arts funding, and the sweat equity of artists were of central importance in drawing visitors into the neighbourhood.
8	2013	(Korteweg et al., 2013)	The selection bias in art occurs for several reasons. Among them: Paintings that happen to be in high demand tend to go to auction more frequently and sell at higher prices. People also tend to sell the paintings that have increased in value the most since the time of purchase. A similar selection bias is probably at work in real estate, when, for instance, people sell houses after they have appreciated a lot in value.
9	2016	(Bamberger, n.d.)	An artist/gallery contract, agreement, relationship or arrangement should generally include or at least consider the factors given.

**Table 3** Analysis of sources of statement description, role, art activity and economic relation through the Islamic perspective.

No.	Year	Author / Source	Role	Art Activity	Economy	Remarks
1	1999	Jane Bryan, Steve Hill, Max Munday, Annette Roberts	/	/	/	All factors are included but not mention the Islamic perspective
2	2001	Christopher Madden	X	/	/	2 factors are mentioned but also do not refer to Islamic perspective
3	2006	Ann Markusan	X	/	/	2 factors included but not mention about Islamic perspective
4	2011	Carl Grodach	/	/	/	All factors are included but do not mention the Islamic perspective
5	2011	Clive Gray	/	/	/	All factors are included but do not mention the Islamic perspective
6	2011	Mario Polèse	/	/	/	All factors are included but do not mention the Islamic perspective
7	2012	Aaron Shkuda	X	X	/	Only one factor is mention but also does not mention the Islamic perspectives
8	2013	Arthur Korteweg Roman Kräussl Patrick Verwijmeren	/	/	/	All factors are included but do not mention the Islamic perspective
9	2016	Art Business.com	/	/	/	All factors are included but do not mention the Islamic perspective

Based on the table above, from the previous research paper, the result included of comprehension and literature review. The factors are combined in the understanding of the relationship between the artist, gallery, and buyer but the researches are not parallel with the perspectives of Islam. Due to the limited research data, this finding was simplified from the discoveries and the arrangements that are in tune with the current development in the visual art scene in Malaysia.



**Figure 3** Gap identification

However, to create a relationship, roles, art activities and economy can be wider and open-ended (Bryan et al., 2000) but the main aspect that requires attention is the role, art activity and economy according to Islamic perspectives. All three-factor stated are fundamental and whether it is apparent or not, depends on the extent of the relationship being explored by the artists, gallery and buyer. They can choose one of the factors or even all of them, as all three factors are related to one another if they follow the aspect from Islamic perspectives. Therefore, the identification was based on the study and analysis of previous research papers and the addition of variables through the research process of content and critical analysis. The conventional practice is vastly adapting but the process is not accordingly compliant with *Shariah*. Currently, most of the research referred to is not referring or mentioning at all the Islamic perspective. Due to the lack of information, visual arts in Malaysia specifically are far behind the Islamic way of life.

To sum up the discussion of the data in response to the objective, there are 2 main points to be made. (i) From the researcher's observation, analysis and application of the relationship between the three sectors stated above, it is discovered that between the relationship of the three factors mentioned, there is a gap that occurs. (ii) There are no specific studies in Malaysia related to the art economy from an Islamic perspective. The systematic functional model base on the Islamic perspective needs to be developed as it will be treated as guidance for other researchers to expand their knowledge. Furthermore, the relationship in the visual art spectrum is fundamental through these identifications which will lead the process of building up the gap in the relationship and the Islamic economy itself.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed equally to this research paper.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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