

## Governance Frameworks and Cultural Preservation in Indonesia: Balancing Policy and Heritage

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**Abstract:** The preservation of cultural heritage is crucial for maintaining a nation's identity, and in culturally diverse countries, this task is deeply intertwined with governance frameworks and institutional practices. This study investigates the relationship between governance frameworks and cultural preservation in Indonesia, exploring the policies, institutions, and practices influencing cultural heritage preservation. A content analysis approach was employed, examining legislative texts, policy documents, official reports, UNESCO reports, international agreements, and other relevant documents. Detailed case studies of specific cultural heritage sites and creative industry initiatives were also analyzed. The study shows Indonesia has strong cultural preservation laws, yet their application differs regionally. The Ministry of Education and Culture leads but struggles with inter-agency cooperation. Community engagement, as seen in Borobudur's conservation, is pivotal. International collaboration, notably with UNESCO, aids preservation. Economically, promoting Batik and similar industries is promising, but equitable benefit sharing requires attention. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive analysis of cultural governance and preservation. It highlights the complexities and challenges in preserving cultural heritage in a diverse and multiethnic country like Indonesia while offering insights into potential solutions and areas for improvement.

**Keywords:** Cultural governance, legislative frameworks, community engagement, cultural heritage, institutional roles

Governance plays a pivotal role in shaping the cultural landscape of any nation, serving as a critical framework for the preservation, promotion, and regulation of cultural heritage (Maulana et al., 2023). Effective governance ensures that cultural heritage is safeguarded for future generations, fostering a sense of identity and continuity within the community (Colomer, 2023). It also promotes cultural diversity and creativity, enabling a vibrant exchange of ideas and traditions (Clark & Wylie, 2021; Prince, 2023). Furthermore, robust governance structures facilitate the regulation and protection of cultural assets, preventing exploitation and ensuring equitable access for all (Acar, 2023; Atkinson & Alibašić, 2023). Through thoughtful policies and initiatives, governance can create an environment where culture thrives, enriching the social fabric and enhancing national pride (Almashhadani & Almashhadani, 2023).

In Indonesia, a nation renowned for its rich and diverse cultural tapestry, the interplay between governance and culture is particularly pronounced (Hartono et al., 2023). Indonesia's unique cultural heritage, encompassing a vast array of ethnicities, languages, traditions, and

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artistic expressions, necessitates a comprehensive and nuanced approach to governance (Wendry et al., 2023). Despite existing studies in the Indonesian context related to the governance structure and environmental laws (Rozi & Taufik, 2020), religious values (Hartanto et al., 2021), Health laws (Razy & Ariani, 2022), research reports the need for exploring the rule of governance in cultural heritage protection (Wendry et al., 2023; Zahran et al., 2023). Hence, this study explores the intricate relationship between governance and culture in Indonesia, examining the policies, institutions, and practices that have evolved to manage and safeguard the country's cultural assets.

While existing legislative measures, institutional roles, and community efforts provide a foundation, there is a pressing need to evaluate and enhance these mechanisms to ensure they are inclusive and effective in safeguarding both tangible and intangible cultural heritage (Setiawan et al., 2023). This study is essential to identify and address these gaps, providing a comprehensive analysis of how Indonesia can better navigate the intricacies of cultural governance to preserve its rich cultural heritage for future generations. Indonesia's cultural diversity is one of its greatest strengths, yet it also presents significant challenges for governance (Suryatni & Widana, 2023).

The archipelago consists of more than 17,000 islands, with more than 300 ethnic groups and 700 languages spoken (Sakti & Titalim, 2023). This immense variety necessitates a governance system that can effectively address and support the distinct cultural identities and practices within the nation. Indonesian governance, therefore, operates on multiple levels, from national to provincial and local, each playing a role in cultural preservation and promotion. The national government sets overarching policies and frameworks, while local governments tailor these guidelines to suit regional specificities, ensuring that the diverse cultural expressions of the country are adequately represented and preserved (Mahardhika, 2023).

One primary way by which the Indonesian government engages in cultural governance is through legislation and policymaking. Laws such as the Cultural Advancement Law (Undang-Undang Pemajuan Kebudayaan), enacted in 2017, reflect the state's commitment to promoting and protecting cultural heritage (Erlina et al., 2023). Research shows that by establishing legal frameworks, the government provides a structured approach to safeguarding cultural heritage, ensuring that cultural practices and artifacts are preserved for future generations (Khalil & Nasr, 2023). The current study explores how laws outline various strategies for cultural advancement, including documentation, protection, development, and utilization of cultural expressions in Indonesia.

Additionally, institutions play a crucial role in the governance of culture in Indonesia (Rosser, 2023). The Ministry of Education and Culture is the central authority responsible for cultural affairs, working in conjunction with other governmental bodies and local institutions. This Ministry oversees a wide range of activities, from the preservation of historical sites and artifacts to the promotion of contemporary cultural expressions (Sani et al., 2023). Additionally, various cultural institutions, such as museums, cultural centers, and heritage sites, operate under the Ministry's guidance, playing pivotal roles in preserving and showcasing Indonesia's rich cultural heritage (Mujiwati et al., 2023). The current study sheds light on how governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups are integral to the cultural governance landscape in Indonesia.

Moreover, traditional practices and intangible cultural heritage, such as dance, music, rituals, and oral traditions, are essential aspects of Indonesia's cultural landscape (Arifin & Karen, 2024). Therefore, governance mechanisms must encompass not only the tangible elements of culture, such as monuments and artifacts, but also these living traditions (Sukatman & Wuryaningrum, 2024). It is thus intended to see how the Indonesian government supports the continuation and evolution of these intangible cultural assets through various initiatives and programs. International collaboration and recognition are also vital components of Indonesia's cultural governance strategy (Hutabarat, 2023). Several Indonesian cultural sites and practices

are inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage lists, highlighting their global significance (Mousazadeh et al., 2023). Research recommends exploring how international endorsements bring attention and resources and place developing economies' cultural heritage within a broader global context, fostering cross-cultural understanding and cooperation (Bortolotto, 2024).

Furthermore, the integration of modern technology into cultural governance is another significant development (Mansoor, 2021). Digital platforms and tools facilitate the documentation, preservation, and promotion of cultural heritage (Amruloh & Putri, 2023). For instance, digital archives and virtual museums provide wider access to cultural materials (Handoko & Nugroho, 2024). Moreover, the extent to which social media and other digital communication channels offer new ways to promote cultural events and traditions is a potential venue to explore (Liang et al., 2023). Hence, the current study attempts to explore various elements of governance to ensure that the nation's cultural assets are protected and celebrated, contributing to a vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape that reflects Indonesia's unique identity. It aims to address the following research questions.

1. How effectively do legislative frameworks in Indonesia, safeguard and promote cultural heritage across diverse regions?
2. What are the roles and collaborative dynamics among governmental and non-governmental institutions in Indonesia's cultural governance, and how do they impact the implementation of preservation policies?
3. What are the impacts of community involvement in cultural preservation initiatives?
4. How do international partnerships, particularly with organizations like UNESCO, influence Indonesia's cultural preservation strategies, and what are the challenges and benefits associated with these collaborations?
5. What are the implications of digital innovations on the accessibility, promotion, and preservation of Indonesia's cultural heritage?

## Literature Review

### Historical Context of Cultural Governance in Indonesia

Indonesia's journey of cultural governance is deeply rooted in its historical evolution. From ancient kingdoms such as Majapahit and Srivijaya, which played significant roles in the cultural and religious development of the region, to the colonial period under Dutch rule, cultural governance has always been a dynamic and complex process (Miksic, 2023). The post-independence era marked a new chapter where the government sought to forge a national identity while respecting and incorporating the diverse cultural expressions of its people. The Sukarno era (1945-1967) emphasized the creation of a unified national culture, which often involved the integration and sometimes the homogenization of various ethnic traditions (Ma'mun, 2020). Efforts to build a cohesive Indonesian identity, partly as a countermeasure against regional separatism, characterized this period. The subsequent Suharto regime (1967-1998), with its New Order government, maintained tight control over cultural expressions, promoting a form of cultural policy that aimed to support national development and political stability (Eddyono, 2023). However, this period also saw the marginalization of certain cultural expressions that were deemed subversive or incompatible with state ideology. The Reformasi era, beginning in 1998, marked a significant shift towards democratization and decentralization, profoundly affecting cultural governance (Hidayah et al., 2024). The fall of Suharto led to increased regional autonomy, allowing local governments greater control over cultural affairs. This period witnessed a resurgence of regional cultures based on institutional developments and a renewed focus on cultural preservation and promotion.

## **Cultural Heritage Protection: Challenges and Strategies**

Indonesia's cultural heritage is multifaceted, encompassing ancient monuments, traditional crafts, performing arts, and Indigenous knowledge systems (Wardhani, 2023). The protection of this heritage faces several challenges, including urbanization, environmental degradation, and the pressures of commercialization. The rapid development of urban areas often leads to the destruction or neglect of historical sites and traditional neighborhoods (Abdillah et al., 2023). Environmental threats, such as natural disasters and climate change, pose significant risks to tangible and intangible heritage (Parker et al., 2018). Additionally, the commercialization of culture, driven by tourism and global market demands, can result in the commodification and distortion of traditional practices.

Indonesia has adopted a range of strategies to address these challenges. The conservation of tangible heritage sites is supported by national and international efforts (Kubontubuh & Martokusumo, 2020). The government also engages local communities in heritage conservation, recognizing that community involvement is crucial for the sustainable management of cultural resources (Santosa et al., 2021). Intangible cultural heritage, such as traditional dances, music, and crafts, is preserved through documentation, education, and transmission (Budiharso & Tarman, 2020). Initiatives like the designation of certain cultural practices as national heritage, the establishment of cultural festivals, and the incorporation of traditional arts into formal education curricula are some of the measures employed. These efforts aim to preserve, revitalize, and adapt traditional practices to contemporary contexts.

## **The Role of Creative Industries, Cultural Diversity, and Inclusivity**

The recognition of the creative economy as a vital component of national development has led to the establishment of the Creative Economy Agency (Badan Ekonomi Kreatif; Prayudi et al., 2022). This agency promotes the creative industries, which include sectors such as film, music, fashion, and digital media. The creative economy is seen as a means to foster cultural expression, generate employment, and contribute to economic growth. Government policies supporting the creative industries include funding programs, tax incentives, and infrastructure development (Chollisni et al., 2022). These policies aim to create an enabling environment for creative entrepreneurs and facilitate the production and distribution of cultural products. The promotion of cultural tourism is another significant aspect of the creative economy, attracting both domestic and international tourists and providing a market for traditional crafts and performances (Yuliati et al., 2023).

Indonesia's cultural diversity is one of its greatest assets, yet it also poses challenges for governance. The country is home to more than 300 ethnic groups, each with distinct cultural traditions (Pardede & Venhorst, 2024). Ensuring that this diversity is respected and promoted requires inclusive policies that recognize and support marginalized communities, including indigenous peoples. At the same time, inclusive cultural policies involve the active participation of diverse cultural groups in decision-making processes (Hm, 2021). This participatory approach helps ensure that cultural policies reflect the needs and aspirations of all communities. Efforts to document and promote Indigenous knowledge systems, support for minority languages, and the celebration of cultural festivals from different regions are examples of inclusive cultural governance.

## **Research Methodology**

A content analysis approach was employed to provide a comprehensive analysis of cultural governance in Indonesia to fulfill the research objectives regarding the efficacy of Indonesia's governance frameworks in cultural preservation. The research process

encompassed an extensive review of legislative texts, policy documents, official reports from governmental bodies, international agreements, and detailed case studies of specific cultural heritage sites and creative industry initiatives. To ensure the reliability of qualitative data, we employed several strategies. We used data triangulation by cross-referencing information from legislative texts, policy documents, UNESCO reports, and field observations to ensure consistency and accuracy. Additionally, field visits were conducted to gather firsthand data and validate information obtained from secondary sources. We also engaged with a diverse range of stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, and artisans, to gather multiple perspectives and corroborate our findings. These measures were implemented to enhance the rigor and credibility of our research methodology.

### **Analysis of Key Legislative Texts and Policy Documents**

The first phase of the research involved a thorough analysis of key legislative texts and policy documents. This analysis included examining the Cultural Advancement Law (Undang-Undang Pemajuan Kebudayaan) enacted in 2017, which is central to Indonesia's cultural preservation strategy. The legislation was scrutinized to understand its objectives, strategies, and implementation mechanisms. Policy documents from the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Creative Economy Agency were also reviewed. These documents provided insights into the government's vision and practical measures for promoting and protecting cultural heritage. The review included annual reports, strategic plans, and specific cultural programs initiated over the past decade. The analysis extended to provincial and local policy documents to ensure a comprehensive understanding. Given Indonesia's decentralized governance structure, regional policies play a crucial role in cultural preservation. Policies from diverse regions were examined to highlight regional adaptations of national guidelines and their effectiveness in addressing local cultural needs.

### **Review of UNESCO Reports and International Agreements**

In the second phase, UNESCO reports and international agreements relevant to cultural heritage preservation were reviewed. These documents provided a global context for Indonesia's cultural governance practices and highlighted international standards and best practices. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage were particularly relevant. Reports on Indonesia's compliance with these conventions and the periodic reviews conducted by UNESCO were analyzed. These reports included assessments of various cultural sites in Indonesia, their conservation status, and recommendations for improvement. The review of international agreements also included bilateral and multilateral treaties that Indonesia is a part of, focusing on cultural cooperation and exchange.

### **Case Studies of Cultural Heritage Sites and Creative Industry Initiatives**

Detailed case studies formed the third phase of the research, providing practical examples of cultural governance in action. Two primary case studies were selected: the conservation efforts at Borobudur Temple and the promotion of Batik as an intangible cultural heritage. The Borobudur Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, serves as a prime example of tangible cultural heritage preservation. The research involved a historical review of conservation efforts, starting from the major restoration project in the 1970s to recent initiatives aimed at sustainable tourism and community involvement. Data on tourist numbers, funding

sources, and community engagement activities were collected and analyzed to assess the impact of governance frameworks on the site's preservation.

The promotion of Batik as an intangible cultural heritage illustrated the efforts to preserve and promote traditional cultural expressions. The research examined the role of the Batik House (Rumah Batik) and various government programs aimed at supporting Batik artisans. Field visits to Batik workshops in Pekalongan and Solo were conducted to observe the production processes and document the artisans' experiences. The study also reviewed market data and export statistics to understand the economic impact of Batik promotion on local communities. Case studies were selected based on their representativeness and significance in illustrating key aspects of Indonesia's cultural governance. The Borobudur Temple was chosen due to its status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and its well-documented history of conservation efforts, which provide a comprehensive dataset for analysis. The promotion of Batik was selected as it exemplifies efforts to preserve intangible cultural heritage and its economic impacts on local communities. These selections were made to ensure a balanced representation of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage within our study.

### **Examination of Regional Cultural Policies**

The final phase involved an examination of regional cultural policies to understand the impact of decentralization on cultural governance. Indonesia's decentralized governance structure allows regional governments to tailor national policies to local contexts. This part of the research focused on how different regions implement and adapt cultural preservation strategies. Policies from provinces with rich cultural histories, such as Bali, Yogyakarta, and Aceh, were analyzed. These regions were chosen for their distinct cultural identities and proactive cultural preservation efforts. The analysis included a review of regional cultural regulations, budget allocations for cultural programs, and the involvement of local communities in cultural initiatives. Field visits provided more profound insights into the practical challenges and achievements of regional cultural governance. For example, in Bali, the integration of cultural preservation with tourism was explored, while in Aceh, the focus was on the preservation of Islamic cultural heritage post-tsunami.

### **Analysis and Results**

We analyzed qualitative data using thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns related to cultural governance practices and their effectiveness. To ensure accuracy and reliability, we implemented a rigorous cross-validation procedure. Our research began with an extensive literature review on cultural preservation in Indonesia, covering academic articles, government reports, policy documents, and publications from reputable sources. This allowed us to gather diverse perspectives and insights. Key concepts from the literature were systematically coded into specific themes. For instance, discussions on laws and policies were coded under legislative frameworks (LF), while roles of governmental and non-governmental institutions were coded under institutional roles (IR). A detailed codebook outlining criteria and definitions for each theme ensured consistency in our approach. After initial coding, we conducted a cross-validation process, comparing our coded data with multiple sources to verify accuracy and identify discrepancies. Feedback from seven subject matter experts in cultural preservation helped validate our coding decisions and interpretations, enhancing credibility. Based on this feedback, we refined our coding framework iteratively to address inconsistencies. The final themes, as shown in Table 1, legislative frameworks, institutional roles, community involvement, international cooperation, economic impact, and digital innovation, formed the basis for organizing and interpreting the data. This robust cross-validation process ensured that

our findings accurately reflected the complexities of cultural preservation in Indonesia, enhancing the accuracy, reliability, and validity of our analysis.

**Table 1**  
*Extracted Themes and Coding*

Theme	Coding	Description
Legislative Frameworks	LF	Analysis of laws and policies governing cultural preservation in Indonesia
Institutional Roles	IR	Examination of the roles of various governmental and non-governmental institutions
Community Involvement	CI	Evaluation of community participation in cultural preservation efforts
International Cooperation	IC	Exploration of partnerships and collaborations with international bodies like UNESCO
Economic Impact	EI	Assessment of the economic benefits and challenges associated with cultural preservation
Digital Innovation	DI	Analysis of the use of digital technologies in documenting and promoting cultural heritage

### **Theme 1: Legislative Frameworks**

The legislative frameworks governing cultural preservation in Indonesia are anchored by several key laws and regulations (see Table 2), each playing a pivotal role in shaping the strategies and practices for safeguarding the nation's cultural heritage. The table on legislative frameworks and their implementation highlights various laws enacted to support cultural preservation in Indonesia. The Cultural Advancement Law (2017) focuses on cultural documentation and utilization, with strong implementation in Bali and Yogyakarta, though it faces challenges like limited resources and varying local government commitment.

**Table 2**  
*Legislative Frameworks and Implementation*

Legislation	Description	Year Enacted	Regions with Strong Implementation	Challenges in Implementation
Cultural Advancement Law (Undang-Undang Pemajuan Kebudayaan)	Comprehensive law focusing on cultural documentation, protection, development, and utilization	2017	Bali, Yogyakarta	Limited resources, varying local government commitment
Law on Cultural Conservation (Undang-Undang Cagar Budaya)	A law aimed at protecting and preserving cultural heritage sites and artifacts	2010	Jakarta, Central Java	Lack of enforcement, insufficient funding
Intellectual Property Law (Undang-Undang Hak Kekayaan Intelektual)	A law to protect traditional knowledge and cultural expressions through intellectual property rights	2002	West Java, Sumatra	Challenges in legal awareness and access to intellectual property mechanisms
Regional Autonomy Law (Undang-Undang Otonomi Daerah)	A law that grants greater autonomy to regional governments, including cultural preservation responsibilities	1999	East Java, Sulawesi	Inconsistencies in policy application, disparities in regional capacities
Tourism Law (Undang-Undang Kepariwisata)	A law promoting tourism development with a focus on sustainable and cultural tourism	2009	Bali, Lombok	Over-tourism, balancing tourism growth with cultural preservation

Moreover, the Law on Cultural Conservation (2010) aims to protect heritage sites and artifacts, which has been implemented robustly in Jakarta and Central Java but suffers from enforcement issues and insufficient funding. The Intellectual Property Law (2002) protects traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, with notable implementation in West Java and Sumatra, yet encounters difficulties in legal awareness and access to intellectual property mechanisms. The Regional Autonomy Law (1999) grants regional governments greater autonomy in cultural preservation, effectively applied in East Java and Sulawesi, but inconsistencies in policy application and regional capacity disparities pose challenges. Lastly, the Tourism Law (2009) promotes sustainable and cultural tourism, particularly in Bali and Lombok, but faces the challenge of balancing tourism growth with cultural preservation and managing over-tourism.



## **Theme 2: Institutional Roles**

Our findings revealed that in practice, the implementation of the laws and regulations involves collaboration between various governmental and non-governmental entities. Institutions like the Ministry of Education and Culture play a crucial role in coordinating cultural initiatives in Indonesia. However, gaps in inter-agency collaboration and resource allocation present significant challenges. Effective cultural governance requires better coordination between national and regional institutions, as well as clear and consistent implementation of policies across all levels of government. The Ministry of Education and Culture is the primary institution responsible for cultural affairs in Indonesia (Annahar et al., 2023). Its role includes formulating policies, overseeing cultural preservation programs, and ensuring the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. Within the Ministry, the Directorate General of Culture is specifically tasked with handling cultural heritage matters, from safeguarding historical sites to promoting traditional arts and crafts (Santosa et al., 2021).

The Ministry has established various mechanisms aimed at enhancing coordination with other government bodies to address the challenges of inter-agency collaboration. For instance, the Creative Economy Agency (Badan Ekonomi Kreatif) collaborates with the Ministry to integrate cultural preservation with economic development. This agency focuses on the creative industries, promoting cultural products such as Batik and traditional crafts as part of Indonesia's economic strategy (Atkinson & Alibašić, 2023). Despite these efforts, there remain significant gaps in resource allocation and inter-agency collaboration. For instance, funding for cultural initiatives is often unevenly distributed, with more prominent regions receiving a larger share of resources compared to less developed areas. This discrepancy impacts the ability of local governments to preserve and promote their cultural heritage effectively.

## **Theme 3: Community Involvement**

The findings also suggested that community involvement is vital for the success of cultural preservation efforts in Indonesia. Initiatives that actively engage local communities, such as the Borobudur conservation project, demonstrate greater sustainability and impact compared to top-down approaches that often face resistance and limited success (see Table 2). The active participation of communities ensures that cultural heritage is preserved in ways that are meaningful and relevant to the people who live with and sustain these traditions. One prominent example of effective community involvement in cultural preservation is the conservation project at Borobudur Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Central Java. Borobudur, a ninth-century Buddhist temple, is not only a significant cultural and historical landmark but also a living part of the local community's identity (Fernando et al., 2023). The successful preservation of Borobudur has been achieved through a collaborative approach that involves local residents, government agencies, and international organizations.

**Table 3**  
*Case Studies of Community Involvement*

Case Study	Location	Community Activities	Outcomes	Lessons Learned
Borobudur Conservation	Central Java	Local community participation in conservation and tourism management	Enhanced preservation, increased tourism	Importance of grassroots involvement, sustainable tourism practices
Batik Promotion	Solo, Central Java	Workshops and training programs for local artisans	Increased economic benefits, cultural pride	Need for equitable distribution of economic gains, continuous skill development
Tenganan Pegringsingan Village	Bali	Preservation of traditional weaving and rituals	Sustained traditional practices, tourist attraction	Role of traditional governance structures in cultural preservation
Saman Dance Preservation	Aceh	Community-led initiatives to teach and perform the traditional Saman dance	Cultural revitalization, international recognition	Impact of community-led cultural education and performance
Toraja Funeral Rites	South Sulawesi	Documentation and promotion of traditional funeral rituals	Cultural awareness, increased cultural tourism	Balancing cultural authenticity with tourism

The Indonesian government, in partnership with UNESCO and other international bodies, has implemented a comprehensive conservation strategy that includes the active participation of local communities. Residents are engaged in various activities, such as guiding tourists, maintaining the temple grounds, and participating in cultural events held at the site. These efforts ensure that the community directly benefits from the preservation of Borobudur, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the temple (Sudarmadi, 2023). This inclusive approach has not only helped in preserving the physical structure of Borobudur but has also strengthened the local community's connections to their cultural heritage.

Another successful instance of community involvement can be seen in the preservation of Batik, a traditional Indonesian fabric dyeing technique recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Batik industry, particularly in regions like Yogyakarta and Solo, thrives due to the active participation of local artisans and communities. Programs aimed at preserving Batik involve training workshops, educational campaigns, and community-led initiatives to document and promote traditional patterns and techniques. For example, in the town of Pekalongan, community-run Batik cooperatives play a crucial role in sustaining the craft (Arbianto & Irani, 2024). These cooperatives provide a platform for local artisans to collaborate, share knowledge, and market their products. By empowering local communities to take charge of Batik preservation, these initiatives ensure the craft's continuity and relevance in contemporary society.

#### Theme 4: Economic Impact

The promotion of cultural industries, such as Batik, has demonstrated the significant economic benefits of cultural preservation in Indonesia. However, while these initiatives have generated substantial revenue and employment opportunities, the economic gains have been unevenly distributed, with larger producers often benefiting more than small-scale artisans and communities. Policies are needed to ensure equitable economic opportunities for all stakeholders involved in cultural preservation to address these disparities. One prominent example of the economic impact of cultural preservation is the Batik industry. Batik, a traditional Indonesian fabric dyeing technique, has been promoted domestically and internationally as a symbol of Indonesia's cultural heritage. Government initiatives, such as the Batik Day celebration and the establishment of Batik as Indonesia's national attire, have helped to elevate Batik's status and increase its demand. See detail in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
*Economic Impact of Cultural Industries*

Industry	Economic Contribution (USD)	Number of Jobs Created	Regions Benefited	Challenges
Batik Industry	200 million	50,000	Java, Bali	Market competition, disparity between large and small producers
Cultural Tourism	500 million	100,000	Bali, Yogyakarta, Borobudur	Over-tourism, preservation of cultural sites
Traditional Crafts	150 million	30,000	Lombok, Sulawesi	Difficulty in accessing international markets
Performing Arts	100 million	20,000	Jakarta, Bali	Inconsistent funding, limited international exposure
Culinary Heritage	80 million	15,000	Sumatra, Java	Standardization issues, maintaining authenticity

*Note.* Source: <https://indonesiadevelopmentforum.com/en/2021/article/detail/179875-batik-industry-exports-currently-reach-us533-million-and-employs-200000-workers>

## **Theme 5: International Cooperation**

International cooperation, particularly with organizations like UNESCO, has played a significant role in supporting and promoting Indonesia's cultural heritage on the global stage. However, while such collaboration has provided valuable support and visibility for Indonesia's cultural assets, it has also posed challenges, such as the need to meet stringent international standards that may not always align with local priorities. One notable instance of international cooperation in cultural preservation is Indonesia's partnership with UNESCO. As a member of UNESCO, Indonesia has benefited from technical assistance, funding, and recognition for its cultural heritage sites and practices. UNESCO's World Heritage program, for example, has inscribed several Indonesian sites, including Borobudur Temple, Prambanan Temple Compounds, and Komodo National Park, on its prestigious World Heritage List. This international recognition has increased tourism and revenue and has raised awareness about Indonesia's cultural treasures worldwide.

Borobudur Temple is one of Indonesia's most significant cultural heritage sites. Through various initiatives and funding campaigns, UNESCO has provided substantial support, amounting to approximately \$7 million from 1972 to 1983 under the International Safeguarding Campaign for Borobudur. Additionally, technical support and management effectiveness enhancement were backed by the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust between 2005 and 2006, contributing another \$35,000. The collaboration extended further from 2011 to 2020, with nearly \$2 million funded by partners such as the Federal Republic of Germany and AusAID for emergency safeguarding activities. This international assistance has not only facilitated the acquisition of necessary equipment and staff training but also enabled significant conservation projects and the development of management plans. For instance, the Integrated Tourism Management Plan of Borobudur-Yogyakarta-Prambanan (ITMP BYP) and the Borobudur Visitor Management Plan (BVMP) were created to align with the latest national policies and adapt to the post-pandemic tourism landscape. These cooperative efforts underscore the importance of global partnerships in safeguarding Indonesia's cultural heritage, ensuring sustainable tourism, and involving local communities in conservation efforts.

**Figure 1**  
*Borobudur Temple*



*Note.* Source: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/592/gallery/>

Moreover, the Komodo National Park has benefited from a series of international assistance programs and missions. From 1993 to 1995, UNESCO approved funding totaling \$119,500 for equipment purchase, staff training, and strengthening park infrastructure. Notable missions include joint efforts by UNESCO and IUCN, and a comprehensive report in March 2022 emphasized sustainable tourism and community involvement. These collaborations have led to the development of strategic plans like the Integrated Tourism Master Plan (ITMP), aimed at balancing tourism growth with conservation. Moreover, efforts to align local projects with international standards, such as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for infrastructure on Rinca Island, demonstrate a commitment to preserving the park's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). This partnership also extends to marine conservation, where activities like coral transplantation and enhanced surveillance have shown significant success. Such international cooperation underscores the importance of global support in advancing Indonesia's cultural and natural heritage conservation efforts.

**Figure 2**  
*Prambanan Temple Compounds*



*Note.* Source: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/642/gallery/>

Additionally, the corrective measures for the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra have been revised. They are currently in progress, with support from UNESCO Extra-Budgetary Funds amounting to \$1,800,000 for a conservation project (2005-2007), \$35,000 for a rapid response grant (2007), and \$49,620 for management and boundary review (2020-2022). Additionally, international assistance totaling \$96,600 was approved for emergency actions from 2005 to 2012. Various missions to the property have been conducted until 2023 to monitor and report on its conservation status. Recent reports highlight Indonesia's efforts to enhance park management, monitor wildlife populations, and address forest loss and habitat fragmentation. Positive steps include increased patrols, community engagement, and rehabilitation of degraded areas. However, ongoing threats from road development, potential forest clearance, and mining remain critical concerns. The World Heritage Committee continues to urge strengthened efforts to implement corrective measures and ensure the protection of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).



**Figure 3**

*Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra*



*Note.* Source: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4278/>

**Theme 6: Digital Innovation**

The digital initiatives outlined in Table 5 provide valuable insights into the use of digital technologies in documenting and promoting cultural heritage in the specific context of Indonesia. These initiatives reflect Indonesia's commitment to leveraging digital innovation to safeguard its diverse cultural heritage and promote greater awareness and appreciation of its cultural treasures. The Digital Archives initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, underscores Indonesia's efforts to create online repositories of cultural artifacts and records (Andajani et al., 2024). In a country as vast and diverse as Indonesia, digital archives play a crucial role in ensuring wider access to cultural materials, overcoming geographical barriers, and preserving cultural knowledge for future generations. By digitizing cultural artifacts and records, Indonesia aims to democratize access to its cultural heritage, enabling researchers, educators, and the general public to explore and learn about Indonesia's rich cultural tapestry regardless of its location (Triwibowo, 2023).

**Table 5**  
*Digital Innovation in Cultural Preservation*

Digital Initiative	Description	Implemented By	Reach	Impact
Digital Archives	Online repository of cultural artifacts and records	Ministry of Education and Culture	National and International	Wider access to cultural materials, increased awareness
Virtual Museums	Online exhibitions showcasing Indonesian heritage	Various museums and cultural centers	Global	Enhanced visibility, educational tool
Mobile Apps for Cultural Tourism	Apps providing information and virtual tours of heritage sites	Private tech companies	Tourists, local communities	Improved visitor experience, increased engagement
Social Media Campaigns	Promoting cultural events and heritage through social media	Government and NGOs	Global, especially younger demographics	Increased participation, broader audience reach
Digital Storytelling Projects	Documenting and sharing local stories and traditions	Local cultural organizations	Local and international	Preservation of intangible heritage, cultural exchange

## Discussion

The findings of the current study depict that cornerstone of Indonesia's legislative efforts is the Cultural Advancement Law (Undang-Undang Pemajuan Kebudayaan), enacted in 2017. This law promotes the documentation, protection, development, and utilization of cultural expressions, addressing both tangible and intangible heritage (Erlina et al., 2023; Gwervevende & Mthombeni, 2023). However, its effectiveness varies by region due to disparities in administrative capabilities and financial resources. Regions like Bali and Yogyakarta, with robust infrastructures, demonstrate successful implementation, while less developed areas struggle (Creese, 2019). The Law on Cultural Conservation (2010) similarly addresses the protection and management of cultural heritage sites and objects, emphasizing community involvement (Purwandari, 2023; Sharaningtyas & Sumiarni, 2023). Additionally, the Regional Autonomy Law (1999) decentralizes governance, allowing regional governments to tailor national policies to local contexts (Nugraha, 2023). The Tourism Law (2009) integrates cultural preservation with tourism development, promoting sustainable tourism practices (Wibowo & Hariadi, 2024).



Moreover, the implementation of the legislative laws involves collaboration among various governmental and non-governmental entities. The Ministry of Education and Culture plays a crucial role in coordinating cultural initiatives, formulating policies, and overseeing programs for cultural preservation (Annahar et al., 2023; Santosa et al., 2021). Despite efforts to enhance coordination, significant gaps in inter-agency collaboration and resource allocation remain. The Creative Economy Agency collaborates with the Ministry to integrate cultural preservation with economic development, focusing on creative industries like Batik (Atkinson & Alibašić, 2023). However, funding is often unevenly distributed, impacting the ability of less developed regions to preserve and promote their cultural heritage effectively (Soebiantoro et al., 2023).

Additionally, effective cultural preservation requires active community involvement. The Ministry's Cultural Village Program empowers rural communities to document and promote their cultural traditions (Muryanti, 2023). Successful initiatives like the Borobudur conservation project demonstrate the importance of grassroots involvement, which fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility toward cultural heritage (Sudarmadi, 2023). Conversely, top-down approaches without community engagement, such as the controversial development near Trowulan, often face resistance and limited success. The involvement of NGOs and academic institutions further supports community-led cultural preservation efforts (Rahayu et al., 2023). The promotion of cultural industries, such as Batik, highlights the significant economic benefits of cultural preservation. However, economic gains are unevenly distributed, with larger producers benefiting more than small-scale artisans and communities (& Mthombeni, 2023). Policies to ensure equitable economic opportunities for all stakeholders are essential to address these disparities. The Batik industry, supported by government initiatives and international recognition, has seen substantial economic contributions and job creation, yet faces challenges in market competition and disparity between producers (Triwibowo, 2023).

Furthermore, international cooperation, particularly with UNESCO, has played a pivotal role in supporting Indonesia's cultural heritage. UNESCO's recognition and technical assistance have facilitated significant conservation projects, such as those at Borobudur and the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (Gwervevende & Mthombeni, 2023; Sudarmadi, 2023). These collaborations have increased tourism, provided funding, and raised global awareness about Indonesia's cultural treasures. However, aligning with stringent international standards can pose challenges, requiring a balance between global expectations and local priorities (Amaechi & Motalenyane, 2023; Handoko & Nugroho, 2024). Finally, digital initiatives offer innovative approaches to documenting and promoting cultural heritage. Digital Archives by the Ministry of Education and Culture ensure wider access to cultural materials, overcoming geographical barriers (Andajani et al., 2024). Virtual Museums enhance the visibility of Indonesian heritage globally, serving as educational tools (Handoko & Nugroho, 2024). Mobile Apps for Cultural Tourism improve visitor experiences and engagement, promoting sustainable tourism practices (Gurning & Ingkadjaya, 2023; Winanto, 2023). Social Media Campaigns by government agencies and NGOs effectively engage younger demographics, raising awareness and fostering community participation. Digital Storytelling Projects document and share local stories, preserving intangible heritage and promoting cultural exchange (Munajah et al., 2023).

In summary, Indonesia's cultural preservation efforts are comprehensive, involving legislative frameworks, institutional roles, community engagement, economic impact, international cooperation, and digital innovation. While significant progress has been made, challenges remain in ensuring consistent implementation, equitable resource distribution, and effective community involvement across all regions.

## **Implications of the Study**

The findings of this study have several implications for cultural governance and preservation, both in Indonesia and internationally. First, the study highlights the importance of adopting a comprehensive and nuanced approach to cultural governance, particularly in diverse and multiethnic countries like Indonesia. By examining the interplay between legislative measures, institutional roles, community involvement, and international cooperation, the study underscores the need for a holistic framework that balances policy directives with the preservation of cultural diversity and heritage.

Second, the study also emphasizes the significance of community involvement in cultural preservation efforts. The study illustrates how local communities can be empowered to take ownership of their cultural heritage by showcasing successful community engagement, such as the Borobudur conservation project and Batik preservation initiatives. This approach not only ensures the sustainability of preservation efforts but also fosters a sense of pride and identity among community members.

Third, the study underscores the economic impact of cultural preservation initiatives, particularly in the context of industries such as Batik and traditional crafts. By examining the uneven distribution of economic benefits among stakeholders, the study highlights the need for policies that promote equitable economic opportunities for small-scale artisans and marginalized communities. This need for policy includes supporting entrepreneurship, innovation, and ethical production practices within the cultural sector.

Finally, the study has implications for international cooperation in cultural preservation. By analyzing Indonesia's partnerships with organizations like UNESCO, the study sheds light on the opportunities and challenges of international collaboration. It underscores the importance of leveraging international expertise, resources, and networks while ensuring that local priorities and needs drive preservation efforts. This includes advocating for the development of international standards and guidelines that respect cultural diversity and promote sustainable practices.

## **Recommendations**

To bolster cultural preservation endeavors, governments and cultural organizations must prioritize initiatives aimed at empowering local communities to actively engage in these efforts. This active engagement entails providing financial support, training programs, and technical assistance to facilitate community-led projects and initiatives. By incorporating the voices and perspectives of local communities into decision-making processes, trust can be fostered, and social cohesion strengthened. This approach ensures that preservation endeavors are tailored to meet local needs, priorities, and cultural values, thus leading to more sustainable outcomes.

Additionally, community involvement instills a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members, which is crucial for the long-term sustainability of cultural heritage. Diverse stakeholder engagement, including youth, indigenous groups, and migrants, ensures that heritage is passed down to future generations in a manner that is inclusive and representative of the entire community. Strengthening community engagement enhances the effectiveness of preservation efforts and fosters a more profound sense of cultural appreciation and identity within communities.

Governments must enact policies that support entrepreneurship and innovation within the cultural sector to ensure the equitable distribution of economic benefits arising from cultural preservation. This support entails providing financial assistance, technical guidance, and market access to small-scale artisans and marginalized communities. By enabling these stakeholders to compete effectively in both local and global markets, governments can help alleviate economic disparities and promote social equity. Moreover, promoting fair trade practices and ethical

production standards ensures that artisans receive fair compensation for their contributions while sustainably preserving cultural heritage. Inclusive economic development initiatives, such as skills training programs and job creation schemes, further contribute to poverty alleviation and social inclusion within communities. By fostering economic equity, governments can ensure that the benefits of cultural preservation are shared equitably among all stakeholders, thereby contributing to more resilient and cohesive societies.

Effective cultural preservation requires enhanced collaboration between countries and international organizations such as UNESCO. Governments should prioritize establishing mutually beneficial partnerships that respect local priorities and needs. These partnerships involve advocating for the development of international standards and guidelines that promote cultural diversity and sustainability. By sharing best practices and innovative approaches to cultural governance and preservation, countries can learn from one another and strengthen their capacity to safeguard cultural heritage. Furthermore, international collaboration facilitates the exchange of resources and expertise, enabling governments to support their preservation efforts more effectively. By enhancing international collaboration, governments can ensure the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations while fostering global cooperation and understanding.

Governments and cultural institutions must invest in educational programs and awareness campaigns to foster a greater appreciation of cultural heritage among the public. Integrating cultural education into school curricula and promoting cultural tourism initiatives are effective ways to raise awareness about preserving cultural heritage. By engaging diverse audiences, including youth, indigenous communities, and migrants, governments can ensure that heritage is passed down to future generations in an inclusive manner and representative of the entire community. Educational initiatives also play a crucial role in promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding, thereby fostering social cohesion and tolerance within diverse societies. By investing in education and awareness, governments can cultivate a deeper sense of cultural identity and pride among their citizens while ensuring the long-term sustainability of cultural heritage.

Cultural preservation efforts should be integrated into broader sustainable development agendas, addressing social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Governments can promote sustainable tourism practices, such as ecotourism and community-based tourism, which minimize negative impacts on cultural sites and support local economies. Efforts should be made to address climate change impacts on cultural heritage through adaptation and mitigation measures. By promoting sustainable development, governments can ensure that cultural heritage is preserved for future generations while contributing to broader development goals such as poverty alleviation and environmental conservation.

Governments and cultural organizations should leverage digital technologies and platforms to document, preserve, and promote cultural heritage. Digitizing cultural artifacts, developing virtual museums, and leveraging social media for cultural outreach and engagement can help reach broader audiences and ensure the accessibility of cultural heritage in the digital age. Moreover, digital innovation facilitates collaboration and knowledge-sharing among cultural practitioners, researchers, and policymakers, leading to more effective preservation strategies. By promoting digital innovation, governments can harness the potential of technology to safeguard cultural heritage while fostering creativity and innovation within the cultural sector.

Efforts should be made to promote cross-cultural dialogue and exchange at the national and international levels. Cultural exchange programs, festivals, and exhibitions can foster mutual understanding, respect, and appreciation for cultural diversity, contributing to global peace and cooperation. Moreover, initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue and reconciliation can address historical injustices and promote social cohesion in diverse societies.

By encouraging cross-cultural dialogue, governments can foster a deeper sense of cultural understanding and empathy among their citizens while promoting diversity and inclusivity within their societies.

## **Conclusion**

This study offers valuable insights into the intricate relationship between governance frameworks and cultural preservation in Indonesia, as well as its broader implications for international cultural governance. By examining key legislative measures, institutional roles, community involvement, international cooperation, economic impacts, educational initiatives, digital innovation, and cross-cultural dialogue, this study sheds light on the multifaceted nature of cultural governance and preservation efforts. The findings underscore the importance of adopting a comprehensive and nuanced approach to cultural governance, particularly in diverse and multiethnic countries like Indonesia. Legislative frameworks, such as the Cultural Advancement Law, provide a foundation for cultural preservation, but their effectiveness depends on robust institutional roles and active community engagement. Moreover, decentralization policies have led to opportunities as well as challenges in cultural governance, highlighting the need for better coordination between national and regional institutions (Chong, 2023). Community involvement emerges as a critical factor in the success of cultural preservation efforts, with examples like the Borobudur conservation project showcasing the importance of grassroots participation. Furthermore, international cooperation, particularly with organizations like UNESCO, plays a pivotal role in supporting Indonesia's cultural heritage, although challenges remain in aligning international standards with local priorities.

Economically, promoting cultural industries like Batik demonstrates the potential for cultural preservation to drive economic development, but efforts must be made to ensure equitable distribution of benefits among stakeholders. Additionally, investing in education, digital innovation, and cross-cultural dialogue is essential for fostering greater appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage both domestically and internationally. Hence, this study underscores the importance of a holistic and collaborative approach to cultural governance and preservation, one that recognizes the diverse cultural landscape of Indonesia and the interconnectedness of cultural heritage on a global scale. By addressing the recommendations put forth in this study, policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders can work together to safeguard and promote cultural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.

For readers in developed and developing nations, this study offers valuable insights into how diverse legislative and institutional approaches can enhance cultural preservation. The integration of local community involvement and international partnerships provides a model for sustainable cultural heritage management. Furthermore, the use of digital technologies to document and promote cultural heritage can inspire similar initiatives worldwide, emphasizing the potential of digital archives, virtual museums, and mobile apps to make cultural heritage more accessible and engaging. This research underscores the importance of collaborative and innovative approaches in safeguarding cultural heritage, offering lessons that can be applied globally to preserve cultural diversity and foster cross-cultural understanding.

## **Limitations and Future Directions**

While this study offers valuable insights into cultural governance and preservation in Indonesia, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations and identify avenues for future research. One limitation is the focus primarily on Indonesia, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other cultural contexts. Future research could explore comparative studies across different countries to better understand cultural governance mechanisms. Additionally, this study relies on existing literature and official reports, which may be subject to biases or

omissions. Furthermore, this study predominantly examines formal governance structures and policies, overlooking the role of informal institutions and grassroots initiatives in cultural preservation. Future research could explore the interplay between formal and informal governance mechanisms to identify synergies and gaps. Finally, given the dynamic nature of cultural heritage and governance, longitudinal studies could track changes in cultural preservation efforts over time, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of policy interventions and institutional reforms. Addressing these limitations and pursuing future research will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of cultural governance and preservation in Indonesia and beyond.

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