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# Leveraging Social Media for Cultural Preservation: Promoting Traditional Minangkabau Arts in the Digital Era

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Abstract: This study discusses how the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community utilizes social media to maintain and promote Minangkabau traditional arts. Using media ecology theory, this research analyzes the interactions and social media ecosystem within the community and its impact on the existence of traditional culture. A qualitative research method with a descriptive approach was used in this study, involving observation, interviews, and documentation. The results show that social media plays a crucial role in sustaining traditional culture through various digital platforms. With approximately 200 members, this community utilizes a social media ecosystem comprising Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok to expand reach and promote traditional culture. Instagram is used as a visual documentation showcase, WhatsApp for intensive communication, and TikTok to attract a global audience. Through this interconnected media ecosystem, the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community has successfully created an effective platform for interacting with the audience and promoting traditional arts. Support from local officials, collaboration with art enthusiasts, and participation in cultural festivals and social events strengthen the community's presence. Challenges in funding and relevance in the digital era are addressed with innovative strategies and educational programs. With a long-term vision to establish a cultural center, this community is committed to preserving and developing Minangkabau cultural heritage through education, training, and active participation in cultural activities.

Keywords: Cultural Existence, Media Usage, Social Media, Traditional Culture

#### Introduction

Amidst the increasingly rapid flow of modernization, the existence of intangible cultural heritage is often threatened(Afolabi & Zolkepli, 2023). However, technological advances, particularly digital media, have opened up significant new opportunities for cultural heritage preservation. In the digital era, the dissemination of information becomes easier and faster, making it possible to preserve cultures increasingly eroded by modernization. According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2021, the development of intangible cultural heritage in Indonesia has declined each year. Intangible

cultural heritage, which includes language, music, dance, and traditional ceremonies, requires extra effort to be continuously passed on to the next generation(Le, 2019).

The internet and social media provide substantial opportunities for cultural preservation. According to Yahaya (2018), the use of technology such as mass media allows communities or cultures to access information about art trends, factors that attract audiences, and marketing targets for art performances. Additionally, art communities actively using mass media can more easily distribute services to the public through published documentation of their activities. A concrete example of this technology utilization can be seen in the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community, based in East Agam, West Sumatra(Mirembe et al., 2019).

The Siliah Galanggang Arts Community is one of the communities actively using social media to promote Minangkabau traditional arts. This community uses various social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok to introduce Minangkabau culture to a broader audience, especially the younger generation who are more familiar with digital technology. The main focus of art activities in this community is the tambua tansa art, a Minangkabau art form brought by Indian traders to the Pariaman area of West Sumatra and played by striking or drumming. The tambua tansa art has two main musical instruments, tambua or drums and tansa(Ovalle et al., 2021).

The routine agenda of the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community includes the August 17th parade, community anniversaries, and biweekly routine practices. This community shows sensitivity to technological advancements by utilizing digital media as a means of information dissemination and communication. In the digital era, a cultural community is required to utilize digital media, and to use digital media effectively, a community must have an understanding of mass communication. According to Bittner (1980), mass communication is characterized by messages communicated through mass media to a large number of people. Meanwhile, Gerbner (1967) states that mass communication is an effort of production and distribution based on technology (mass media) and institutions of continuous and most extensive message flows owned by people in industrial societies(Ocran et al., 2023).

The social media accounts of the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community, such as Instagram, have been active since December 24, 2019, coinciding with the first day of the community's establishment. The content displayed generally includes educational material as well as artistic attractions and performances. Some content and posts receive positive responses from the public, such as comments from Instagram account @anton\_erizal stating, "I really like young people who are active & creative and not anti-culture like this, always success Siliah Galanggang." Collaboration between the community's official social media accounts and the personal accounts of community members forms an ecosystem that supports the preservation of Siliah Galanggang arts heritage(Penttinen, 2023). The Siliah Galanggang Arts Community not only relies on their official accounts but also encourages community members to post community activities on their personal accounts on platforms like TikTok and Instagram. This integrated social media usage creates a strong media ecosystem, ensuring the cultural heritage remains preserved (Li et al., 2022).

Media ecology theory helps explain how the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community utilizes social media to build the existence of traditional culture and interact with a wider audience(Solanki et al., 2023). This research analyzes the interactions and social media ecosystem within the community and its impact on the sustainability of traditional culture. Media ecology theory focuses on human perception and emotions in receiving messages, helping to understand how society receives information conveyed through the media used. The Siliah Galanggang Arts Community is required to utilize digital media effectively so that cultural preservation goals can be achieved, build strong interactions with the audience, and ensure the sustainability of their traditional culture (Pellegrino & Abe, 2023).

In their efforts to preserve culture, the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community has demonstrated how strategic use of social media ecosystems can support the preservation and promotion of traditional arts(Sunio et al., 2021). By utilizing Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok, they have successfully reached a broader audience and built a solid community. Support from various external parties, innovation in artistic presentations, and educational programs for the younger generation are key success factors. Challenges such as funding and relevance in the digital era are addressed through innovative strategies and effective collaborations(Dong, 2020).

Through active participation in cultural festivals and social activities, as well as ambitious plans for the future, the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community continues to commit to preserving and promoting Minangkabau traditional arts. They not only focus on cultural preservation but also strive to adapt and integrate the culture into the daily lives of a younger generation increasingly familiar with technology. This demonstrates that cultural preservation is not just about maintaining traditions but also finding new ways to keep culture alive and relevant in a modern context(Chen et al., 2019).

Through collaboration, innovation, and the use of digital technology, the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community has proven that cultural preservation can be done in a dynamic and adaptive manner. They serve as an inspirational example for other communities striving to preserve cultural heritage amidst the challenges of modernization.

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Their success shows that with the right strategies, digital media can be an effective tool in supporting the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage (Katib, 2020).

#### Literature Review

Media ecology is a theoretical approach that uses ecological metaphors to examine the complexity of interactions between media, individuals, and society. This concept was first developed by Marshall McLuhan and expanded by scholars such as Neil Postman and James Carey to explain how media functions not just as communication channels but also as environments that shape our perceptions, behaviors, and cultures (McLuhan, 2003; Postman, 1985; Carey, 1989).

This approach is rooted in the idea that, like organisms in a biological ecosystem, humans adapt to the media environment they consume. McLuhan described media as "extensions of our senses," where each medium not only changes how we communicate but also influences our social and cultural structures (McLuhan, 1964). Postman continued by emphasizing that media create environments that determine roles, build thoughts, and shape social norms in society (Postman, 1970; Postman, 1985).

More broadly, media ecology considers how media evolves and interacts within a larger communication ecosystem(Rizkallah, 2021). This evolutionary approach was extended by McLuhan through the concept of media interaction, which describes how each medium not only affects our communication but also transforms cultural practices and social structures (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1992).

The ecological metaphor enriches media studies by providing a holistic framework that integrates environmental and intermedia dimensions. The environmental dimension depicts media as creating immersive environments that shape human experiences, while the intermedia dimension examines how different media interact within a shared ecosystem, similar to species in a biological community (Carey, 1989; McLuhan, 1962).

Further, media ecology continues to evolve by integrating insights from fields such as evolutionary biology and complexity theory. Scholars like Logan have suggested extending media ecology by incorporating evolutionary concepts such as adaptation, mutation, and coevolution, deepening our understanding of the dynamic role of media in cultural and social changes (Logan, 2007).

## Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research is defined as a method used to understand and explore the meanings from individuals or groups experiencing social issues (Creswell, 2014). Data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted by attending various activities organized by the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community, such as routine practices, art performances, and other community activities. Interviews were conducted with key informants, including community leaders, social media managers, and active community members who use social media. Documentation involved analyzing the content from the community's social media accounts as well as community documents and archives(Barros et al., 2020).

Data collection techniques included participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Participatory observation allowed the researcher to understand the social and cultural context of the community more deeply. Semi-structured interviews provided flexibility in exploring informants' experiences and views. Document analysis was conducted to review the community's social media content and understand how the community uses digital platforms to promote their culture (Momin et al., 2024).

## **Result and Discussion**

The Siliah Galanggang Arts Community is located in East Agam, West Sumatra, an area rich in tradition and culture. One of the traditional arts they preserve is tambua tansa, a form of traditional Minangkabau music played with tambua (drum) and tansa (percussion) instruments. Since its establishment in 2019, the community has grown and attracted around 200 members scattered across various regions in Agam and Bukittinggi. The community focuses not only on cultural preservation but also on introducing and disseminating traditional arts to the broader public through various social media platforms(Adetayo et al., 2023).

## Interaction and Social Media Ecosystem of the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community

Interactions on social media are formed due to the postings related to community activities, in line with the Medium Theory used in this research. According to McLuhan (1964), the Medium Theory emphasizes the characteristics of the media itself more than just what is sent or how information is received. The Medium Theory elaborates on the specific functions and uses of these media. The use of social media by the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community is very strategic and structured. They utilize platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok for various purposes(Rishi & Kuthuru, 2021).

1. **Instagram** is used to share visual content such as photos and videos of art performances, which is very effective in attracting a young audience and allows for direct interaction through comments and direct messages.

- 2. **WhatsApp** is used for internal and external communication, including activity coordination and interaction with partners and sponsors.
- 3. **TikTok** is used to post short videos showcasing Minangkabau art and culture, which is highly effective in attracting global attention and broadly promoting the culture.

Below is an overview of the media ecosystem usage by the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community(Coleman et al., 2020) :

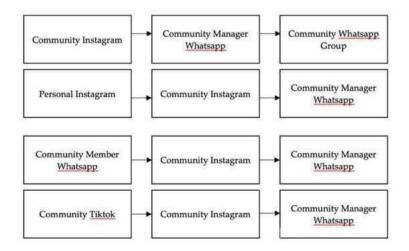


Figure 1. Mindmap of Media Ecosystem Usage by the Siliah Galanggang Arts Community Source: Data Processing, 2023

Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, play a pivotal role in the preservation and promotion of traditional Minangkabau culture within the Siliah Galanggang Art Community. Through Instagram, the community effectively showcases the aesthetic allure of traditional Minangkabau arts via visual media formats such as photos and videos. The interactive functionalities of Instagram, including comments and direct messaging, facilitate direct communication between the community and its followers, enabling feedback mechanisms and fostering closer relationships. Additionally, Instagram serves as a digital showcase, presenting documented activities of the Siliah Galanggang Art Community and functioning as a portfolio for prospective partners and new members (Zhan et al., 2020).

The social media ecosystem of this community begins with content uploads on Instagram. Engaging content directs audiences to connect with community administrators through the WhatsApp contact details provided in the Instagram bio, whether for service inquiries, community participation, or information requests. A similar engagement strategy is employed through personal Instagram accounts of community members, where pre- and post-event content drives audience traffic towards the official community account(Johnson et al., 2022). WhatsApp also holds significant relevance within the social media framework of the Siliah Galanggang Art Community. Frequently, WhatsApp statuses of community members feature links to the community's Instagram account, facilitating comprehensive content viewing for audiences. Following engagement on Instagram, interested audiences typically initiate contact with community managers via WhatsApp. TikTok complements these efforts by adding an additional promotional dimension; content that gains traction on TikTok's algorithm can potentially reach a broader audience through its For You Page (FYP), subsequently directing viewers to the community's Instagram platform(Robinson et al., 2020).

The management of the community's social media presence is overseen by dedicated teams comprising public relations specialists and creative personnel. These teams encompass social media administrators, event reporters, and content creators responsible for curating, editing, and disseminating content across diverse platforms. Tools such as InShot, Canva, and Adobe Premiere are employed to ensure the high-quality production of uploaded content. Feedback garnered from these social media activities can range from direct responses via personal member accounts to interactions facilitated on the community's official digital channels.

In addition to Instagram and WhatsApp, TikTok also significantly contributes to enhancing the community's visibility. TikTok serves as a medium to showcase community activities and bolster cultural presence. However, the dual management of multiple social media accounts necessitates a primary focus on Instagram for streamlined engagement strategies. The community's public Instagram account enables unrestricted content accessibility without mandatory pre-following, capitalizing on Instagram's search algorithm to enhance post discoverability among users(Lin & Wang, 2023).

WhatsApp occupies a pivotal role within this community's social media ecosystem due to its capacity to facilitate intensive communication between internal stakeholders and external audiences. Through WhatsApp, community administrators achieve swift and effective communication for internal coordination and negotiations with external partners. Meanwhile, Instagram remains the cornerstone platform for documentation and promotional purposes, while TikTok capitalizes on its distinct algorithm to attract new audiences.

McLuhan's Medium Theory (1964) posits that the characteristics of media are paramount compared to the conveyed messages. This perspective resonates with the Siliah Galanggang Art Community's strategic utilization of diverse media channels. Each platform yields distinct outcomes tailored to its unique features and functionalities. Instagram serves as a visual documentation platform, TikTok leverages its robust algorithm for audience engagement, and WhatsApp facilitates intensive communication, illustrating the nuanced roles of each platform in constructing a robust social media ecosystem.

Effective collaboration with external entities is critical for the sustainability and growth of the community. Local officials frequently participate in official community events, providing essential moral and financial support crucial for community resilience and expansion. Additionally, collaborating with fellow art enthusiasts often involves joint participation in local and regional events, effectively expanding the outreach of traditional Minangkabau arts to broader audiences. Journalists play an integral role by providing essential media coverage, significantly enhancing visibility and fostering positive community perceptions.

Among the community's primary challenges is maintaining relevance in the digital era. Social media platforms offer an effective solution, enabling the community to reach expansive audiences at minimal costs. However, this necessitates precise strategic planning and consistent content management. Consequently, the roles of public relations and creative teams become instrumental in ensuring that each social media post not only captivates but also embodies the community's values and objectives.

The Siliah Galanggang Art Community also grapples with financial challenges despite receiving support from local officials and sponsors. Substantial financial resources are required for event organization and the upkeep of traditional musical instruments. Consequently, the community actively explores innovative fundraising strategies such as charity concerts, merchandise sales, and crowdfunding initiatives. Adequate funding sustains community operations and facilitates the development of new programs to attract more members and audiences.

Moreover, the community emphasizes educational initiatives and training for its youth members, recognizing regeneration as pivotal for cultural preservation. Regular workshops and training sessions are conducted to hone the skills of the younger generation in tambua tansa arts. These initiatives not only cultivate technical proficiency but also instill a profound appreciation for Minangkabau cultural heritage. Through education, the community aspires to nurture young artists capable of advancing traditional Minangkabau arts to new heights(Brown et al., 2020).

The Siliah Galanggang Art Community actively participates in various cultural festivals, both domestically and internationally. Participation in these festivals not only promotes their traditional arts but also facilitates networking opportunities with other artistic communities. These collaborative endeavors provide valuable learning experiences, enriching community programs and enhancing cultural preservation efforts. Cultural

festivals serve as platforms to introduce Minangkabau culture to global audiences, expanding the community's reach and impact(Kolber et al., 2021).

In the long term, the Siliah Galanggang Art Community envisions establishing a comprehensive cultural center equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for training, performances, and art exhibitions. Furthermore, plans include creating a small museum dedicated to documenting the history and evolution of tambua tansa arts, fostering deeper understanding and appreciation of Minangkabau cultural heritage among visitors. This cultural center aims to attract increased attention and support from both the public and governmental sectors.

Beyond their primary focus on performing arts, the Siliah Galanggang Art Community actively develops social programs. They frequently engage in social initiatives such as organizing charity events to assist marginalized communities. These social programs strengthen community ties with surrounding society, promoting values of solidarity and mutual assistance. Additionally, the community collaborates with various social institutions to extend the reach and impact of their initiatives (Chiang, 2021).

The success of the Siliah Galanggang Art Community in leveraging social media is evident in the positive feedback received from interested individuals. Prospective members often express interest in community activities after encountering posts on Instagram or TikTok. Many of these individuals subsequently choose to join the community or engage its artistic services. This underscores social media's dual function not only as a promotional tool but also as a conduit for building a larger and more engaged community.

The community also acknowledges the significance of innovation in maintaining relevance and attracting audience interest. They continually explore novel approaches to presenting tambua tansa arts, whether through collaborations with other artists, repertoire adjustments, or the integration of cutting-edge technologies in performances. Such innovations sustain audience engagement while expanding the reach of traditional Minangkabau arts to diverse and expansive audiences(Coleman et al., 2020).

As part of their ongoing efforts to evolve, the Siliah Galanggang Art Community forges partnerships with educational institutions. They regularly host workshops and seminars at schools and universities to introduce tambua tansa arts to the younger generation. Collaborations with educational institutions are pivotal in instilling a deepseated love and respect for Minangkabau culture among youth. Through these initiatives, the community aims to cultivate young artists who will continue the legacy of cultural preservation in the future. Furthermore, the Siliah Galanggang Art Community actively engages in national cultural activities, frequently receiving invitations to perform at various cultural events organized by governmental and private entities alike. Participation in these events not only broadens exposure for tambua tansa arts but also garners due recognition and appreciation for community members. This heightened visibility enhances the community's profile and reputation on a national scale, paving the way for new collaborations and support from diverse stakeholders.

In confronting diverse challenges, the Siliah Galanggang Art Community remains committed to maintaining flexibility and adaptability. They recognize change as an intrinsic aspect of life and remain prepared to embrace and navigate these transformations. Consequently, they continuously seek innovative ways to refine and elevate their programs, both in terms of cultural preservation and efforts to introduce traditional Minangkabau arts to global audiences.

The Siliah Galanggang Art Community places profound value on the active participation and contributions of its members. They understand that the community's strength lies in camaraderie and collaboration among its members. Hence, they strive to cultivate an inclusive and supportive environment where every member feels valued and empowered to contribute meaningfully. This inclusive ethos permeates through their organizational activities, ensuring that all members are entrusted with roles and responsibilities aligned with their abilities and interests.

In addition to active member participation, family support also plays a pivotal role within the community. Many members involve their families in various community activities, whether as spectators, supporters, or active participants. This familial engagement not only fosters stronger bonds among members but also serves as a conduit for introducing and nurturing cultural values among younger generations from an early age. Through familial involvement, the community endeavors to foster a harmonious environment conducive to long-term cultural preservation(Momin et al., 2024).

#### Conclusion

Social media plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting traditional Minangkabau culture within the Siliah Galanggang Art Community. Each social media platform utilized by the community fulfills unique functions and roles within the media ecosystem, collectively aiding in the preservation of traditional cultural existence in the digital era. The use of social media not only assists the community in documenting and disseminating cultural content but also enables broader interaction with a global audience. This highlights that digital technology, particularly social media, can serve as an effective tool for the preservation of traditional culture. The Siliah Galanggang Art Community has demonstrated how strategic use of the social media ecosystem can support the preservation and promotion of traditional arts. By leveraging Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok, they have successfully reached a wider audience and built a cohesive community. Support from various external parties, innovation in artistic presentations, and educational programs for the younger generation are key factors contributing to their success. Challenges such as funding and relevance in the digital era are addressed through innovative strategies and effective collaborations. Through active participation in cultural festivals and social activities, as well as ambitious plans for the future, the Siliah Galanggang Art Community remains committed to preserving and introducing Minangkabau culture to the world. Support from members and families, along with partnerships with educational institutions, further strengthen their efforts. This community serves as a tangible example of how technology and social media can be leveraged for cultural preservation, demonstrating that with dedication and strategic approaches, cultural heritage can be preserved and developed for future generations.

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