

# Bayan Traditional Library as the Source of Information, Education, and Cultural Preservation

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## ABSTRAK

Studi kasus pada penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali perkembangan dan peran perpustakaan tradisional Bayan sebagai sumber informasi, edukasi, dan pelestarian budaya. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Penelitian ini melibatkan tokoh adat, pengelola perpustakaan, dan Pokdarwis sebagai informan. Kajian menunjukkan bahwa perpustakaan tradisional Bayan hadir di tengah masyarakat adat akibat modernisasi yang menggeser paradigma generasi muda untuk terus melestarikan budaya. Fungsi perpustakaan adalah sebagai wadah untuk menumbuhkan minat baca masyarakat, wahana museum tradisional Bayan, dan sarana bagi masyarakat Bayan untuk memenuhi kebutuhan buku terkait pendidikan formal dan informal. Selain itu juga memberikan banyak referensi bagi peneliti untuk melakukan penelitian, sarana pembelajaran kearifan lokal, dan kesenian masyarakat asli. Pelayanan perpustakaan tentunya masih bersifat konvensional, terlihat dari konsep ruang perpustakaan yang terbuka, dan pelayanan sirkulasi yang belum menggunakan teknologi. Selain itu, peran perpustakaan dalam melestarikan budaya dilakukan dengan mendokumentasikan berbagai kegiatan budaya, yang kemudian diterjemahkan ke dalam tulisan atau karya untuk meningkatkan semangat generasi muda dalam menjaga eksistensi budaya.

**Kata kunci:** Perpustakaan tradisional; fungsi perpustakaan

## ABSTRACT

This case study is aimed at exploring the development and role of Bayan traditional library as the source of information, education, and cultural preservation. The data were gathered through observation, interviews, and documentation. The study engaged traditional leaders, library managers, and *Pokdarwis* (tourism awareness group) as the informants. The study showed that Bayan traditional library was present among indigenous peoples due to the modernization which shifted the younger generation's paradigm to continue preserving culture. The library functions are as a forum to foster public interest in reading, a vehicle for Bayan traditional museum, and facilities for Bayan community to meet the book needs related to formal and informal education. It also provided numerous references for researchers to conduct research, learning facilities for local wisdom, and the arts of the native community. The library services are of course still conventional, as it can be seen from the concept of open library space, and circulation services are not organized technologically. Moreover, the role of the library in preserving culture is carried out by documenting various cultural activities, which are then translated into writings or works to increase the spirit of the younger generation to maintain cultural existence.

**Keywords:** Traditional library; library functions



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Human civilization and the progress of a nation begin with book civilization or sustainable literacy mastery between generations, not only because of the potential for abundant natural resources (Tunardi, 2018). The library's existence as a health information center for the community impacts human lives. In this digital era, the library is no longer the only source of information for the community. For this reason, people are required to be competent to sort and choose the scattered information so as not to get trapped in false information (Okike, 2020).

Technological development impacts libraries, as evidenced by information services innovations in the form of various library types. Changes in the library include the types and forms of library collections, management systems, utilization, and distribution. This change also causes the division of library types to be influenced by the management institution. The emphasis is on the type of collection, the user community, the scope of its working area, and the purpose of its formation (Tambunan, 2004). Due to the rapid growth of technology, the library can be accessed without following the operational schedule.

People require various information from the library as an information center to complete their knowledge. Thus, modern libraries have developed by providing accessible online or digital libraries. However, there are several problems related to digital libraries, including the absence of the development design concept, management, technology, and access policy and development strategy (Suharso et al., 2020). In addition, libraries play an essential role in education quality development (Mahwasane, 2017) and literacy dissemination (Abumandour, 2021). As institutions that manage information sources, libraries should occupy a key position in the education and training process for the community. However, the reality is still far from expectations due to low interest in reading and a lack of awareness that learning should seek information on the problems at hand (Mangnga, 2015).

Libraries and literacy are related to preserving local culture. Libraries function to save written relics and other cultural civilizations that may become extinct over time (Centres, 2017). Saving the cultural treasures of the nation and appreciating the culture of the community around the library through the provision of reading materials is a cultural function of the library (Nugraha, 2013). According to Sulisty-Basuki (1991), the expansion of the cultural function of the library must later lead to efforts to preserve cultural values. There are five library functions: storage, research, education, information, and cultural recreation (Krismayani, 2018). Therefore, this paper discusses the library's function as a source of information and education.

The presence of the traditional library in the Bayan community maintains the continuity of cultural existence that has begun to erode due to the rapid growth of technology. The Bayan sub-district area, North Lombok regency, West Nusa Tenggara, has two traditional libraries named "Wetu Telu" and "Bayan" traditional libraries. These libraries were founded on the traditional leaders' ideas motivated by their concern for the younger generation of Bayan, who had begun to be affected by the flow of globalization and massive technological developments that concerned indirectly affected the culture. The library functions as a source of information and education. Besides, it also stores histories and ancient writings related to the *Wetu Telu* meaning that the traditional library is also a means of preserving the culture of indigenous peoples. *Wetu Telu* culture is acculturation between Javanese, Balinese and Islamic cultures, identical to the Bayan people that still exist, carried out by indigenous peoples in the Bayan sub-district (Ribut et al., 2019).

Most importantly, based on the observation, a study on traditional libraries has never been carried out. Several references related to the library mainly discussed library digitalization and digital services, such as in (Dong, 2021), which explained the automation and streamlining of traditional workflow cataloging workflows at the Florida International University library. Scott (2021) and Singh (2014) also discuss library modernization. Unlike a study conducted by Ezeokwuora & Ifechukwu (2021) that disclosed the availability and use of online and conventional libraries on students' reading culture. The discussion regarding the culture of the Bayan indigenous people remains scanty. Several existing studies focus on the culture, including research conducted by (Saputra, 2021), (Zuhdi, 2018), and (Athhar, 2005). The three articles elaborated on the religious ritual practices of the local people, both from a religious and cultural perspective. Thereby, it is interesting to conduct research related to the development pattern and the role of the Bayan traditional library as a source of information, education, and cultural preservation.

## 2. METHODS

This research is exploratory research with a case study approach. A case study was employed to generate an in-depth understanding and multiple data sources about a complex problem in a real-life context (Crowe, 2011). Moreover, data collection techniques included observation, documentation, and interviews. The interview was carried out with library managers, traditional leaders, and *Pokdarwis* (Tourism awareness group). The framework of thinking in this research can be illustrated as follows:

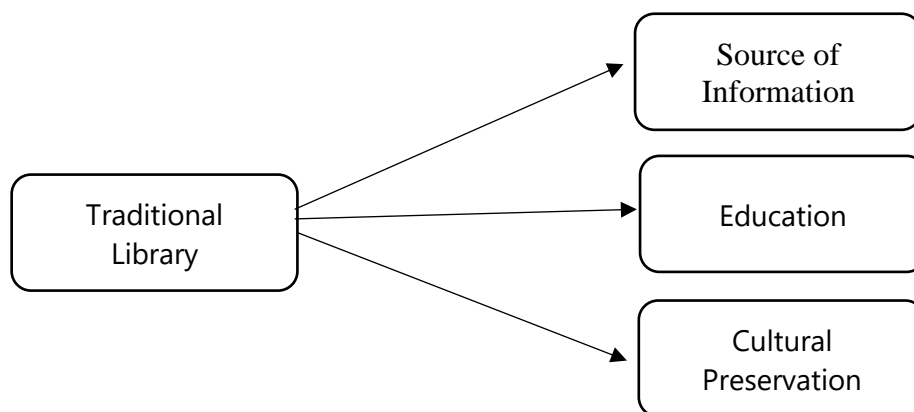


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework  
Sources: (Krismayani, 2018), (Nugraha, 2013)

## 3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS ANALYSIS

### ***Bayan Traditional Library Profile***

Bayan is one of the residential areas of the Sasak people in North Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, which still adheres to their ancestral traditions (Fitriya & Sari, 2010). It is evident from the shape of houses, mosques, traditional ceremonies, and lifestyles that still maintain the traditions of ancestral heritage. The native community has local wisdom as a traditional value called "*awig-awig*," a provision that regulates the manners to realize a stable life order in society (Mutia et al., 2019).

The shift in traditional values in the community influenced by modernization has caused the younger generation not to recognize their own culture. According to Triyono (2019), the younger generation is more interested in foreign cultures and is starting to leave their local

culture. Thus, the younger generation should possess cultural literacy through various reading materials in the community library to preserve the local culture. This issue was derived from the educational curriculum that does not require elementary school students to study local culture to instill the importance of their cultural identity. Moreover, [Ghufron \(2017\)](#) reinforced that it is necessary to integrate cultural values into the school curriculum, including noble values, artefacts, and societal customs. For this reason, the traditional library was formed as a center for literature and learning about local culture in Bayan.

Bayan District has two traditional libraries, first is the Bayan traditional library located in Bayan village was established in 2015. Secondly, *the Wetu Telu traditional library* in Karang Bajo Village was established in 2016. Both libraries were initiated and established by the local community and government, including The Office of the Management of Indigenous and Cultural Tourism and the Community Solidarity Care Program for Transparency of West Nusa Tenggara. They conducted a workshop to provide communal land for the library building. This traditional library is adjacent to the Bayan traditional school, an informal education place to learn the customs and traditions of Bayan. The "Bayan" traditional library takes place on a *berugaq* (gazebo) (see figure 2). *Berugaq*, a typical building of the Sasak tribe, was established with wood as the main structural material and generally functions as a gathering place for residents ([Pujiyanto & Yenny Gunawan, 2017](#)). Meanwhile, the village government has provided land and established simple buildings for the "Wetu Telu" traditional library (See figure 3).



Figure 3 Traditional Library "Bayan"  
Source: Documentation, 2022



Figure 3 Traditional Library "Wetu Telu"  
Source: Renadi (2016)

The library has experienced significant developments related to the public interest in reading, book collections, and library services from its inception to the present. The interest in reading among indigenous peoples seems to increase slowly. Library managers continue to encourage by forming a reading community together. Students from various schools, both in person or in a group, come to read and look for needed references. The book collection received assistance from an NGO (non-governmental organization) in Yogyakarta. However, since the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been no addition to the book collection. Village funds are mostly diverted during the pandemic to provide social assistance to the community. According to library managers and tourism awareness groups (interview, January 14, 2022), the availability of space to accommodate various collections of books is very limited. Managers are still trying to add to the collection of literature from researchers who come to donate books after completing the research. This step is implemented with the aim of researchers conducting research in Bayan Village to contribute to the community by adding literature to the traditional library. The village government only provides land to build a traditional library, and the focus of the village government is on tourist visits, especially during traditional ceremonies.

The library service is still manual and open to anyone who wants to access information without boundaries. The community does not feel rigid or distinguished by their specificity. The library building is also semi-permanent with a red roof and woven bamboo walls to maintain the tradition of building the *Wetu Telu* community. Furthermore, local wisdom distinguishes the concept of library space in a city or urban area, which seems formal. Nonetheless, the circulation service in borrowing books is still not well organized and systematic. The recording was done when the officer was in the library. This traditional library concept emphasizes trust and openness since the borrower is always committed to returning the book without taking notes.

### **The Purpose of the Bayan Traditional Library**

The word "library" comes from "liber," which means book. A library is defined as a place where a collection of human cultural records in various formats and languages is preserved, organized, interpreted, and disseminated to meet the various information needs of individuals for the recreational vehicle of knowledge and technology (Iwayemi & Oyeniyi, 2019). According to Yang (2011), the library is a center for information resources, culture, knowledge, and experience, and a place for science and technology development.

In meeting information needs, David Reith (1984) in Juchnevič (2014), distinguishes library functions, among others; as a repository, distribution of data/information collections, education and learning centers, social roles for advocacy, cultural centers, public information services, shelters for public spaces for socially vulnerable groups.

The library was established for the following purposes: (1) to enhance the reading interest among the community, (2) as a vehicle for the Bayan traditional museum, such as traditional equipment and books related to traditional writings and documentation of Bayan traditional activities; (3) Bayan community facilities in meeting the needs of books related to formal (elementary, junior and senior high school) and informal education (such as agriculture and plantations) for researchers who wish to research the Bayan traditions; (4) references for conducting research, and (5) a place for learning local wisdom and traditional arts of the Bayan community.

### **Traditional Library as a Source of Information**

Community information needs depend on the information distribution process where the sources can be distributed through formal and non-formal institutions (Nurhayati, 2018). Figure 4 shows an illustration of the distribution flow from location-based or institution-based institutional structures to resources.

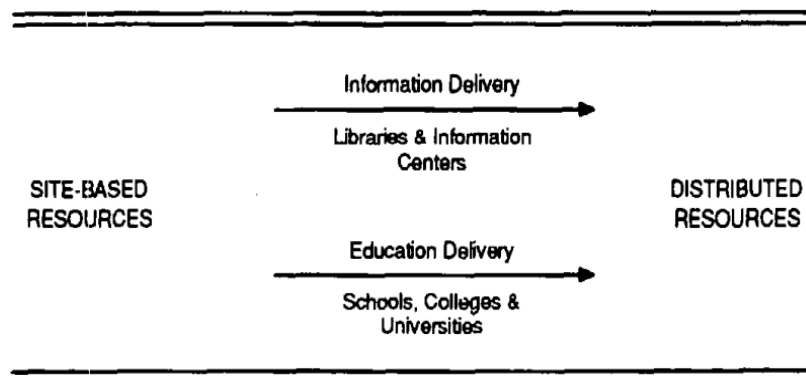


Figure 4. Site-Based to Distributed Resources  
Source: (Sutton, 1996)

In several countries, especially in Africa and Asia, most people live in rural areas and have different information needs than urban people (Islam & Zabed Ahmed, 2012). They also explained that urban communities are considered faster in obtaining information than rural communities due to more sophisticated urban facilities, heterogeneous communities, supporting facilities, and human resources in education.

Like the function of a library in general, this traditional library can provide services in the form of information through its reference collection. Research conducted by Mansyur & Abadi (2020) states that the need for information and references to increase knowledge and insight must be available in the library and easy to access. In addition to meeting information needs, not a few researchers rely on libraries for research purposes (Bollido et al., 2019).

The traditional library as an information center has an extensive collection of books, ancient manuscripts, and research results on Bayan culture. Standard libraries play a role in supporting information literacy for people who want to learn in more detail related to bayan customs. Visitors are also allowed to ask questions and ask for help if there are difficulties in using the literature collection in the library.



Figure 5. Reference of Ancient Manuscript Translation  
Source: Documentation (2022)

### **Traditional Library as Education**

Based on Law Number 43 of 2007 concerning Libraries, the library is an institution that manages the collection of written, printed, and/or recorded works professionally with a standard system to meet the educational, research, preservation, information, and recreational needs of the users. The library as a learning resource center is a unit that has a role in encouraging and optimizing the learning process through the services provided, such as media, training, and consulting to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process (Cahyono, 2017). What is more, the library also contributes to learning success (Hufford, 2013). Thus, it can be concluded that the library's role is significant in learning activities, both in formal and informal schools.

According to an interview with traditional leaders (interview, January 14, 2022) stated that the function of the traditional library as a source of education is to transfer knowledge such as how to read and understand *lontar*, traditional history, cultural heritage, community settlement concepts, community-building architecture, astronomy and nature in Bayan. The library offered services of reference collections, such as history books, ancient manuscripts, and the findings

of several previous research in the village. The young generation has not mastered the knowledge, and it is concerned with directly affecting their way of thinking in daily life. However, the problem is that the customs and culture are not taught in formal education as the curriculum does not accommodate this knowledge. The cultural activists should master how to read and understand the text written on a *lontar* (palm leaf) that is currently limited. Whereas reading the palm leaf is still carried out in several rituals and traditional religious events training in reading and understanding the text is still carried out in the traditional library.

The existence of a traditional library supports Bayan Traditional School (SAB). This non-formal school attempts to teach environment, customs, and cultural education, located next to *Wetu Telu* Traditional library in Karang Bajo. The teaching staff consists of traditional leaders and officials who carry out traditional and cultural traditions, preserving nature with a local order. The collaboration between traditional libraries and schools is an effort to preserve the current cultural values for the next generation. In addition, visitors who do not participate in traditional ritual activities can read and learn about Bayan culture from reference sources in the library.



Figure 6 Teaching and Learning in Traditional Library  
Source: Renadi (2016)



Figure 7 Bayan Traditional School  
Source: Documentation (2020)

### **Traditional Libraries as Cultural Preservation**

The role of indigenous peoples in maintaining values and norms through customs also enriches the community's cultural diversity. The existence of traditional institutions is vital in preserving customs. One function of the manifestation of the existence of traditional libraries is to internalize the values and norms of indigenous peoples to the younger generation and to pass on local knowledge and practices with the nuances of preservation. Libraries can be a place for character-building for the younger generation to match expectations with the needs of indigenous peoples. So that by re-instilling local wisdom through strengthening cultural values in the younger generation, they can maintain existing customs.

The role of traditional libraries in preserving the community's traditions, rituals, and culture is carried out by documenting various cultural activities translated into writing. So that the younger generation can read and learn the importance of local culture to revive the cultural spirit eroded by modernization as people often cannot adapt to the technological advancement in the globalization era. As a result, there is anomie in society as they do not have a clear grip on life. People who cannot master technology experience cultural lag and their existence will be threatened (Ngafifi, 2014).

Customary libraries play an essential role in preserving culture because the activities of indigenous peoples have not been well documented and published. Currently, it is a fact that

many future generations in Bayan do not know and do not care about who they are. This fact is also supported by much local knowledge not obtained from formal schools. Many people do not understand their respective roles and functions in managing customary areas in Bayan, so it is necessary to revitalize existing local values and wisdom.

Based on an interview with a librarian (interview, 14 January 2022). Apart from being a center for information and knowledge on preserving Bayan culture for the younger generation, it is also packaged in several activities, including (1) learning to read, write and understand the palm leaf as well as learn its songs; (2) Education in learning how to make and understand the meaning of weaving colors; (3) Learning organic farming. All of these activities are traditional libraries' efforts for cultural preservation. Besides the activities, the library functions to store traditional ceremony documentation.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The development and role of the traditional library in the Bayan district as a media source of information, education, and cultural preservation is significant. The local community still maintained the culture and traditions from their ancestral heritage. Although they cannot participate in traditional activities, the visitors can learn about the local culture in the library, considering traditional activities or cultural processions are not carried out daily.

The library as an information center provides various references in terms of books, ancient manuscripts related to culture, and findings of previous research that has been conducted in the village. Apart from being an information center with references, it also has a role as a learning center. Visitors can learn about the local culture even if they do not follow the traditional ritual (as it is carried out at a particular time) by visiting the traditional library. It provides training to conduct traditional rituals, such as reading and understanding the *lontar* (palm leaf). In addition to these two roles, the library also functions as a cultural preservation forum through numerous activities for the younger generation to perform traditional rituals.

Hence, the research implications are related to the function and role of libraries in general. However, the research is different from other library research as it examines the traditional library in Bayan District, North Lombok Regency, with indigenous people instilled with traditions and cultural activities. This traditional library service is still manual and requires human resources management and a more orderly library service process.

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