

EFFORTS TO PRESERVE BATAK CULTURE THROUGH LOCAL WISDOM CORNER SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH SUMATRA LIBRARY

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of local wisdom corner services in preserving Batak culture at the University of North Sumatra (USU) Library. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach through interviews, observations, documentation and literature review. The results of the study indicate that cultural preservation is carried out through collection management, distribution, physical preservation of library materials of Batak cultural collections and even efforts to digitize the collection. The process of preserving Batak cultural knowledge is carried out through six stages, namely identification, validation, documentation, storage, transfer, and dissemination. The preserved cultural collections reflect the cultural dimensions according to Hofstede, which include symbols, figures, rituals, and values. However, there are several obstacles that cause this service to be less than optimal, such as limited collections, lack of collaboration, the absence of SOPs and the lack of cultural programs or promotions. This study confirms that local wisdom corner services can be a model for university library-based cultural preservation that not only functions as a collection provider, but also as a manager and disseminator of indigenous knowledge. Therefore, policy support, collaboration with cultural institutions, and sustainable service development are needed so that cultural preservation can run more optimally.

Keywords: Cultural preservation, Batak culture, Local Wisdom Corner, College Library

INTRODUCTION

Batak culture is one of the most prominent cultural heritages in North Sumatra Province. The diversity of sub-ethnic groups, including the Toba Batak, Karo, Simalungun, Mandailing, Pakpak, and Angkola, contributes to Batak culture's richness, encompassing values, language, and unique social systems. This cultural heritage can be seen through the symbolization of ulos cloth, kinship system (Dalihan Na Tolu), traditional music and various traditional ceremonies, all of which have philosophical meaning and are a form of cultural identity (Febrianti 2024). But with the fast speed of modernization and globalization this culture can be challenged, particularly among younger generation who, in general, are not knowledgeable about their

ancestral Batak tradition. To overcome this, USU Library began to carry out local wisdom corner services to support local wisdom in North Sumatra, especially Batak and Malay culture.

This service was inaugurated on October 19, 2023, to support the University of North Sumatra's rectorate's work program, which promotes local wisdom within the university environment. This service also supports study programs related to local wisdom at USU, namely Batak and Malay literature. This service is expected to be an innovation to bring local wisdom closer to students, lecturers, and library visitors. The service offers a collection of 217 titles with 248 copies. This collection consists of 137 titles on Batak culture with 153 copies and 80 titles on Malay culture with 95 copies. But, the level of service is not as desired as stated by the Head of User Services at the USU Library directly. The number of copies collected was 1,055, which was the least of all services based on 2024 data. Librarians also commented that there was a lack of activities and promotions that can engage students or users to actively use this service. This phenomenon suggests that there is a mismatch between service purpose and utilization by the service users.

There have been several studies that have focused on libraries and their function in the preservation of local culture. Research by Manik and Siregar (2024) shows that libraries play a crucial role in documenting and promoting local culture through the acquisition of cultural collections, exhibitions, education, and community outreach. However, constraints such as limited funding and human resources are major obstacles to the implementation of cultural preservation programs. Furthermore, research by Hidayah (2018) shows that school libraries also play an active role in preserving local culture through various creative, culture-based programs, such as the creation of an Agrarian Culture Literacy House featuring traditional agricultural tools, wayang and batik displays as learning media, a Wayang and Javanese Script Literacy Ladder, culture-based library learning, and the addition of cultural collections such as traditional games, Javanese script, and Javanese pepak basa. Obstacles faced in these programs include the lack of clear standard policies or SOPs and limited human resources to optimize cultural preservation services.

Based on these studies, there are similarities with this study, namely positioning libraries as strategic institutions in local cultural preservation, both at the school and regional levels. However, there is a difference in that this study will specifically examine local wisdom corner services as a model for cultural preservation based on the management of indigenous knowledge in university libraries. This study emphasizes a structured preservation process, from identification to dissemination of cultural knowledge, and how preservation strategies are implemented to physically preserve cultural collections. Furthermore, this research specifically focuses on the preservation of Batak culture within the context of academic libraries, a practice still understudied. This research contributes to the development of library and information science studies related to the integration of local wisdom services and cultural preservation.

The existence of libraries has always been closely linked to human culture and civilization, and the progress or decline of a nation can be reflected in the condition of its libraries (Hartati, 2020). Therefore, libraries, as continuously evolving organizations, play a crucial role in efforts to preserve the nation's culture.

Cultural heritage is divided into two categories: tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage. Tangible cultural heritage includes artifacts, ancient architecture, temples, keris (sacred daggers), and inscriptions, while intangible cultural heritage encompasses oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, customs, knowledge, and behavioral habits in social life (Nurfatah, 2020). UNESCO, in its 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural

Heritage, outlines protection measures aimed at ensuring the sustainability of intangible cultural heritage, including identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, development, and inheritance (Jagielska-burduk & Pszczy, 2021).

According to Sulisty-Basuki (1991), libraries serve a cultural function. In this regard, libraries can undertake maintenance or preservation activities. Preservation of library materials is one of the primary functions of libraries in fulfilling their role as institutions preserving knowledge and culture. According to Rachman (2017), library preservation is a library managerial task that encompasses policies and strategies for preserving library materials, maintaining the storage environment, conservation and restoration, collection digitization, and library security.

The local wisdom corner service is a service unit within a library specifically designed to collect, manage, conserve, and disseminate materials containing the local wisdom of a region. The establishment of this service makes local knowledge accessible as a source for learning, research and cultural preservation activities (Library.usu.ac.id, 2023). The corner is the main resource center to enrich local learning and research materials (Kurniati 2023). The success indicators of the local wisdom corner can be measured in several aspects: The number of collections inventoried and digitized, The level of using collections, The number and quality of the activities, The sustainability of cross-institutional cooperation (Pertiwi and Prasetyawan 2018).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative method and case study to be able to better understand the cultural preservation efforts of the Batak people by utilizing services in the local wisdom corner. To focus the study on a phenomenon or event within a single unit or system in one location, case studies were chosen (Yin 1997).

The research was carried out in the University of North Sumatra Library from September to December 2025. The informants were selected using purposive sampling technique, which is done by selecting the informant according to the research objectives (Fiantika et al., 2022). The informants meeting the above criteria were those with first-hand knowledge of local wisdom corner management, who were involved in the preservation work of local cultural library materials, and who were willing to provide information openly and broadly that fully satisfied research needs. The four informants chosen were the Head of User Services, Head of Technical Support, Head of Preservation Sub-Division and a librarian in charge of digitizing the locals wisdom corner collection.

This research used two sources of data namely primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques used in this research were in-depth interviews and participant observation of the activities of primary data in the form of local wisdom in the corner. The interviews were semi-structured with an interview guide that addressed various aspects of collection management, cultural preservation processes, preservation strategies and challenges faced. In the meantime, observations were made by observing the service conditions, the governance of the collections, and the user interaction with the service. Secondary data were collected from institutional documents, service reports and scientific literature. The data were analyzed qualitatively using the data analysis framework suggested by Miles and Huberman (1992), which includes data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. Data analysis also included coding, whereby data were organized into thematic categories which included

preservation processes, collection maintenance strategies, and service challenges. The coding process was carried out manually, by identifying patterns and relationships between data to draw out systematic findings. In order to enhance data validity, source triangulation, time triangulation and technical triangulation were used to compare data gathered from interviews, observations and documentation (Sa'adah et al., 2020). The information from a number of informants with different roles related to the provision of the service was compared, an exercise known as source triangulation. Technical triangulation was used by comparing the findings of observations, interviews and literature study. Temporal triangulation is the technique of collecting data at various times to assure consistency of information. This is to ensure that the results of research have a reliable level of accuracy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section outlines research findings regarding the preservation of Batak culture through the local wisdom corner service at the USU Library. These findings were obtained from interviews and observations, which were then analyzed qualitatively to examine the forms of preservation efforts, library material preservation strategies, and the various obstacles encountered. The following discussion links field findings to the preservation framework of preservation theory to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research findings.

Efforts to Preserve Batak Culture through the Local Wisdom Corner Service

Libraries not only function as information providers but also play a role in cultural preservation. The level of culture and civilization of a nation can be seen from the condition of its libraries (Hartati, 2020). In this regard, the USU Library carries out this preservation function through the local wisdom corner service.

Based on research findings, the USU Library has made efforts to preserve culture, including Batak culture, by providing a collection of books. The collection covers the six Batak sub-ethnic groups: Toba, Simalungun, Karo, Angkola, Mandailing, and Pak-Pak. Procurement of collections through the local wisdom corner service is not limited to simply providing books, but also involves a series of structured processes. The library selects collections by reviewing titles, tables of contents, and author backgrounds or biographies to assess the cultural value contained within the collection before it is presented as part of the local wisdom corner. This identification process is the first step in preserving cultural heritage (Jagielska-burduk & Pszczy, 2021). In line with this framework, the USU Library has implemented some safeguarding efforts for Batak culture. The following is a distribution of collections by sub-ethnicity to provide a more systematic overview of the distribution of Batak cultural collections in the local wisdom corner service.

Table 1. Distribution of Batak cultural collections in the local wisdom corner service

Batak Sub-ethnicity	Number of Collections
Batak Toba	76
Batak Mandailing	18
Batak Simalungun	20
Batak Karo	27
Batak Pak-pak	9
Batak Angkola	3
Total	153

Source : Library of Universitas Sumatera Utara

From the table, it is observed that the Toba Batak sub-ethnic group is the majority of the collections, and the Angkola Batak collection is still limited. The situation suggests that the distribution of cultural preservation through collections is still not well spread among all the cultural sub-ethnic groups of the Batak people, which might also affect cultural representation given to users.

Hofstede (2010) suggested that culture could be considered as a multi-layered construct – the cultural onion model. In this model, the culture is portrayed as an onion consisting of four layers: the first is the symbolic dimension, which is represented by a meaningful word or a sign or a visual object, such as the script, ulos and traditional houses as part of the identity of Batak culture. The hero dimension is then about the historical and symbolic figures of heroes of the Batak culture which are representatives and exemplars of the Batak culture. The ritual dimension is associated with the repeated collective social practices, including traditional ceremonies and religious practices. The values dimension is the community's underlying beliefs, norms, and attitudes towards life and is transmitted through the transmission of life philosophies, kinship systems, and folklore. These four come from the cultural dimension that manifests at different levels (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

The four dimensions in the analysis of local wisdom corner collection, are contained and preserved. The symbols dimension has 23 preserved collections at its outermost layer. The collection is of significance because it includes a basic knowledge of the Batak culture. Although ulos is considered as one of the symbols of Batak culture, Fitriyani and Rachmawati (2024) said the cognitive ability of the younger generation of the Batak people to learn cultural elements of the ulos as a cultural heritage is still low. This means that efforts to further improve knowledge and understanding are needed. In this context, libraries contribute to preserving books on ulos and traditional Batak wedding attire as a source of traditional knowledge for today's younger generation. One such collection is entitled "Symbols, Functions, and Meanings: Wedding Attire in Instilling Simalungun Cultural Values." This collection provides an understanding of the symbols and meaning of ulos in Batak wedding attire and serves as a source of knowledge that the younger generation can utilize to further their understanding of the significance of important symbols in Batak culture.

The Heroes dimension encompasses eight preserved collections. These collections are also crucial for introducing prominent figures in Batak culture so they can be read and used as role models by today's younger generation. Examples of these collections include "Tanah Karo dan Sosok- tokohnya" (The Land of Karo and Its Figures), "Turi-turi ni Datuk Tuongku Aji Malim Lemen dohot si tapi mombang suro dilangit" (The Heavenly Tribulation), and other titles that provide information and knowledge about the Heroes dimension.

The Rituals dimension encompasses 25 preserved collections, depicting traditional practices and socio-religious activities carried out collectively. According to Saputra et al. (2016), modernization presents a challenge because it significantly impacts Batak marriage customs. This finding underscores the dynamic nature of cultural rituals, making the availability of information sources on customary knowledge crucial to ensure the value of rituals and traditions is not lost over time. In this context, the library preserves collections on customary marriage customs, specifically seven collections that provide knowledge about Batak cultural customs, such as the collection entitled "Customs and Marriage Procedures of the Pakpak Community." With this collection, customary knowledge can be studied and the philosophical

meaning of each stage of custom can be understood, the values in Batak cultural traditions are not lost.

The values dimension, as the deepest layer, encompasses 97 preserved collections that teach the Batak people's philosophies of life, norms, and perspectives, such as Dalihan Na Tolu and Taronbo. However, research indicates that the younger generation of Batak people in Pekanbaru lacks understanding of the Martarombo tradition, even though it is a crucial part of their cultural system (Octaviani et al., 2025). Resdati (2022) further emphasized the importance of Dalihan Na Tolu in fostering mutual respect within the Batak people. However, this understanding among the younger generation is declining due to the influence of technology and social media. This situation reflects a lack of cultural understanding. In that regard, the USU library offers collections such as "The Function and Meaning of Dalihan Na Tolu in the Toba Batak People", which present the traditional knowledge, namely the kinship and social meanings. From the above observations, it can be concluded that the values layer is the dominant layer in the Batak cultural collections in the local wisdom corner service. This suggests preservation has gone into the more cultural level. There is, however, a lack of collections at more visible layers of things like symbols, heroes and rituals, which makes it difficult for individuals to get the traditional knowledge associated with them. Preserving indigenous knowledge is a multi-stage process of recognition, identification, validation, recording/documenting, storage, transfer and dissemination (Sharma, 2014). The following illustrates how the Batak cultural knowledge is preserved through the local wisdom corner service:

The first processes are recognition and identification which are used to arrive at what is important and should be preserved. This activity is designed to introduce an understanding of the cultural values in the collection. In the local wisdom corner service, identification is conducted via web search based on the collection to make sure that the collection is suitable for preservation.

"Identification begins by reviewing the contents of the book and checking Google so we know which Batak language it belongs to." (EE)

The first step in identification is to see the contents of the book and checking on Google to make sure that we know what Batak language it is. This stage involves knowing where the information comes from, whether the information is relevant and the potential value of the information for the sustainability of the organization/community. By identifying, institutions are able to prioritize the preservation, which makes their preservation efforts more targeted and effective (Putra & Salim, 2021).

Validation is a process of confirming the truth and accuracy of a collection by confirming it with cultural practitioners, traditional leaders and/or sources of authority to make sure that the collected knowledge is true and correct (Putri & Desriyeni, 2023). At this stage however, there is no local wisdom corner service which validates it by directly contacting traditional leaders to confirm its accuracy. Validation is done by checking the author's or publisher's credibility. Collections published by academic institutions, official bodies, or cultural researchers are assumed to have undergone a selection process and scientific review, making the information they contain credible. This information was explained by an informant.

"We don't directly question the collection's accuracy; we look at the publisher and author. For example, if the National Library is the publisher, we assume it is accurate." (EE)

Recording and Documentation is the process of transforming knowledge into a documented form, such as writing, recordings, or digital media. Documentation aims to preserve

knowledge so that it is not lost and can be accessed again (Putri & Desriyeni, 2023). Recording and preserving cultural heritage are crucial for future generations to benefit from (Kapil, 2023). The library strives to document Batak cultural knowledge through lecturers' research appeals and support, such as providing access to a repository that stores various research, accessed through <https://repositori.usu.ac.id/> which can be used by lecturers as a secondary source and support for research on Batak culture.

The storage process is a crucial step in preserving indigenous knowledge, ensuring that documented knowledge is systematically stored for future access (Kaenuwihanulah et al., 2021). The USU Library has implemented a storage process based on its function as a collection repository (Usholicchah et al., 2024). The Batak cultural collection is physically housed on the fourth floor of the USU Library's collection room, while the digital library is still undergoing digitization as a long-term preservation effort. Therefore, digital access is not yet fully available, but scientific works on Batak culture are stored digitally through the USU repository.

Transfer is the process of sharing knowledge from someone who is more knowledgeable to someone who does not yet have that knowledge (Putri & Desriyeni, 2023). Knowledge transfer can be achieved through various approaches, such as formal training, individual discussions, collaborative learning, and the use of information technology for effective knowledge sharing (Zalmi & Zalmi, 2021). However, this process has not been implemented due to the limited collection, which makes it impossible to conduct knowledge transfer through activities such as discussions or other formal activities. Knowledge dissemination is the transfer of knowledge within and between communication environments (Igiriza et al., 2024). The process of disseminating knowledge to a wider audience can be done through publications or information media so that knowledge is not only stored but also utilized (Putri & Desriyeni, 2023). In this case, the USU library carries out the process of disseminating knowledge through the local wisdom corner service. This service serves as a medium for disseminating Batak cultural knowledge that is open to the public and can be utilized by all library visitors. Dissemination is also through information technology, such as promotions using Instagram media to introduce services regarding Batak culture.



Figure 1. Digital distribution of service information

Overall, the USU Library has preserved Batak cultural knowledge through the identification, validation, documentation, storage, and dissemination of collections through the local wisdom corner service. The collection validation process, however, has not yet included traditional leaders or cultural institutions, and is characterised by a weak type of external collaboration, this is important for ensuring the accuracy and legitimacy of indigenous knowledge. In addition, this service has not been promoted and there are no programs that

promote knowledge transfer, which leads to less knowledge about this service and less value to users. This suggests that the purpose of the service as a way to reach local users with the local culture is not matched by the actual service situation: the limited availability of collections.

Efforts to Maintain Batak Cultural Library Materials

Library material maintenance is an attempt to make collections not getting damaged from the threat so that they can be used for a long time (Ratnasari et al., 2019). Preservation, conservation and restoration are all activities that contribute to the maintenance of library materials. Preservation emphasizes damage prevention by controlling the environment, conservation includes minor physical treatment which will help to keep collections in their current condition, and restoration includes physical treatment of collections that have been severely damaged.

Preservation of library materials in local wisdom corner service has several phases, namely temperature and humidity control, avoiding direct sunlight exposure for library collections, and cleaning the area of collections regularly. Preservation of library materials is a preventive action by means of environmental control, proper storage, library security, and digitization, according to Rachman (2017). The following are the preservation measures for the local wisdom corner collection.

The preservation of library materials is greatly dependent on environmental factors. Prameswari & Khoerunnisa (2023) note that environmental management and routine maintenance are an important part of the collection protection management. The temperature is controlled by a thermohygrometer, which automatically adjusts the temperature to a range of 20-24°C while the humidity is kept at 45-55%RH in order to create stable and safe environmental conditions for library collections. However, this device can automatically adjust the temperature according to changes in the surrounding temperature. These temperature and humidity settings comply with National Library Standards. The following information was provided by an informant:

"The library uses a thermohygrometer to maintain temperature and humidity, which we regulate according to national library guidelines." (MH)

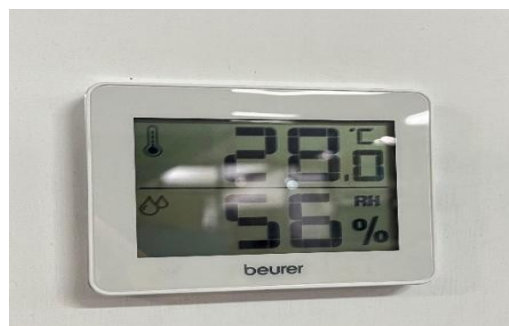


Figure 2. Thermohygrometer to control room temperature and humidity

According to the library materials conservation manual, the ideal temperature for library materials is 20-24°C with air humidity of 45-60% RH (Ayu et al., 2022). It can be concluded that the temperature and humidity used are ideal for maintaining the durability of library collections.

Libraries store books using metal shelves to prevent termites and other small animals from damaging the collections. Ayu et al. (2022) emphasize that library shelves or cabinets must

be made of insect-resistant and rust-resistant materials. Collections should be stored on metal shelves to prevent termites. Wooden shelves are susceptible to termite infestation, which can damage the collections (Hidayat, 2023). Based on this explanation, using metal shelves is an appropriate step to protect collections. This was explained directly by an informant.

"We store books using metal shelves so they don't rot easily like wood, which can attract termites." (MH)

The library also strives to ensure collection security by installing CCTV cameras in every corner to monitor user activity and prohibiting users from bringing bags and food into the collection area. Furthermore, a sensor-based security system (security gate) detects items being removed from the library without going through the loan procedure, which is indicated by an alarm sound when a user passes through the library exit. Nuansa & Rohmiyati (2019) also stated that physical security can be implemented by prohibiting users from bringing their belongings into the library and providing staff at the exit to check users upon exit. System security can be implemented by installing security devices on each collection.

The library has also begun digitizing its cultural collections as part of its cultural information preservation strategy. The digitization is carried out using a special scanner for local wisdom collections, with the aim of transferring the information content from print to digital format without losing the physical collection. The plan is for the scanned results to be submitted to the web publication management department to support online access.

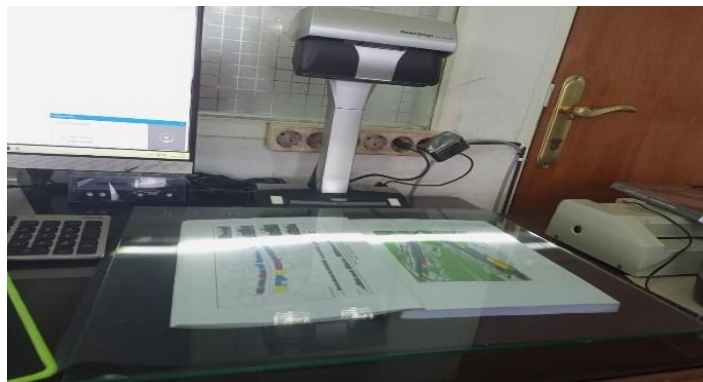


Figure 3. Local wisdom corner collection media transfer process

Observations indicate that the collection digitization is still in the scanning stage. Publication will be carried out after all collections have been scanned and the decision from the head of the library is awaited. The total number of Batak cultural collections scanned has reached 56. These include 21 collections from the Toba Batak, 10 from the Simalungun Batak, 11 from the Karo Batak, 9 from the Mandailing Batak, 4 from the Pak-Pak Batak, and 1 from the Angkola Batak. The digitization process is still gradual due to limited facilities and human resources. Scanning is carried out by only one scanner and is carried out by one person, thus requiring a relatively long time. This was stated by an informant.

"This stage will take a long time because we only have one scanner and only one person is working on it." (IR)

Digitizing collections is not only a media transfer process but also a strategic step to preserve the nation's collective memory. The process of digitizing printed materials is considered effective in preserving the historical value of collections, as digital versions can serve as backup copies if physical collections are damaged or lost (Herawati, 2025).

Conservation is also carried out to repair collections that have suffered minor damage. Conservation involves patching books using paper glue and reinforcing the paper by applying a layer to the back. Fatmawati (2018) explains that conservation is a technical measure to slow damage through minor repairs such as bleaching the paper, patching, reinforcing the paper by layering two sheets of Japanese tissue paper, and reinforcing the paper by applying a layer of reinforcement to the back. Based on this explanation, the USU library carries out conservation efforts through patching using paper glue and reinforcing the paper by applying a layer of reinforcement to one side of the back, typically using cardboard. However, several steps have not yet been completed, such as bleaching the book and reinforcing the paper using two sheets of Japanese tissue paper.

During the restoration stage, if the collection pages are severely damaged and cannot be repaired, reproduction is carried out by reprinting the damaged or missing sections and then reattaching them to the book structure to maintain the continuity of the information content. Also, if the binding structure has become loose or has ceased to support the book block, rebinding is done to re-stabilize and re-strengthen the book block. This is in line with what Asaniyah (2019) said that the library material restoration activities that can be carried out are to replace the torn pages if they cannot be repaired, to tighten the damaged book binding, and to repair the book spine or hinge so that the book can function.

Interviews also revealed that the local wisdom corner service has received recognition from international accreditation assessors in the field of cultural studies and the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP). This recognition indicates that the library serves not only as an academic supporter but also as an institution concerned with the preservation and transmission of local culture. The following information was provided by an informant:

"Not many university libraries have local wisdom services, which is why assessors are interested in this service." (MS)

Academic libraries that provide local wisdom-based services have great potential to strengthen cultural identity and increase cultural awareness among users (Prasad M S, 2021). Therefore, various maintenance and preservation strategies for these cultural collections are essential. Therefore, the library also continues to strive to optimize this service by collaborating with cultural institutions as an initial step in developing the collection, but so far this has not been realized.

Obstacles Facing Batak Cultural Preservation Through Local Wisdom Corner Services

Although local wisdom corner services have strategic potential in supporting the preservation and heritage of Batak culture, research shows that there are obstacles that hinder the optimal role of these services.

The first obstacle relates to the lack of collaboration with cultural institutions such as museums, literacy centers, or cultural institutions. Collaboration between institutions is a crucial factor in cultural preservation because it enables the exchange of resources, knowledge, and technology, enabling more effective and comprehensive efforts to protect and sustain cultural heritage (Hirszenberger et al., 2018). Interviews revealed that libraries have faced resistance to collaboration with other libraries with Batak collections. Initially, this collaboration was intended to preserve information on rare Batak cultural collections and prevent them from becoming extinct. This resistance was not due to different preservation aims, but rather to concerns from collection owners regarding the risk of loss, even though the USU Library has made it its mission to keep collections secure, to give them back once the process of

digitization was finished, and to return the collections directly. The information for the following was provided by informants.

"We promised to immediately return the collection directly. But they remained skeptical about the loss or damage and refused to cooperate." (MH)

This falls in line with Kumbhar's (2018) view which suggests that successful collaboration between libraries is largely dependent on trust, understanding of each other's role and no doubts about the safe management of collections. No collaboration means no collections grow or develop because of lack of information or exchange with other collections, suboptimal preservation efforts. Academically, it also decreases the opportunities to create a research that reflects the local culture and restrict the library's capacity to be a research product and dissemination center.

One of the challenges is the scarcity of Batak cultural collections. Informants said that collecting about Batak culture is very challenging because there are not many people who document knowledge of Batak culture. But it is hard to create new collections as they rely heavily on external sources. The following information from an informant:

"Batak collections are very difficult to obtain or are rare because there is rarely anyone writing about Batak culture. That's why expanding our collection is difficult." (MS)

The lack of written documentation is a major challenge in preserving cultural heritage, as much cultural knowledge remains oral and has not been systematically documented (Jagielska-burduk & Pszczy, 2021). Pertiwi & Prasetyawan (2018) also stated that the development of local content collections in libraries often faces the challenge of limited production of written works on local culture, forcing libraries to rely heavily on the initiatives of local writers and academics. As a result, the limited collection not only impacts the completeness of information but also limits the scope of use of the local wisdom corner service by users. This is also the reason why the USU Library encourages lecturers to conduct research on Batak culture.

This situation also impacts another obstacle, namely the suboptimal promotion and cultural outreach activities in the library. Research results show that to date, no special activities such as exhibitions, discussions, or cultural outreach have been held specifically to introduce the local wisdom corner collection to users. The following information is from informants.

"The collection is small, so I feel like there's nothing to really hype about." (MS)

So, promotions are conducted solely through the library's Instagram social media platform and integrated into general library activities, without any dedicated cultural programs. This is because the library feels its collection is still very limited and not strong enough to be showcased in large-scale events. Manik & Siregar (2024) state that limited collections and access to information are the main inhibiting factors in implementing cultural promotion in libraries. Kamboya (2018) also emphasizes that cultural promotion and outreach activities in libraries require adequate collection support so that local wisdom services can function as a means of education and cultural heritage. This has implications for the low utilization and visibility of the local wisdom corner collection, thus underperforming the library's function as a means of education and cultural dissemination.

These obstacles are contributing to the less than optimal efforts to preserve Batak culture by the USU Library. This is also a reason why the library does not have well-defined standard operating procedures (SOPs) in place for these services. No SOPs leads to unstandardized procurement, selection, and management of collection, which affects the quality and consistency of services. Rachman (2017) also explained that in addition to library

collections, the aid of institutional policies that can control the direction and sustainability of the preservation program is important for the success of cultural preservation in the library.

CONCLUSION

This study proves that the local wisdom corner service conducted at the University of North Sumatra Library is a model of preservation of indigenous knowledge in universities which is not only provided in the form of collections but also through structured management and dissemination of the indigenous knowledge. Ideally, the term cultural preservation should be interpreted as multidimensional; it should refer to the symbols, heroes, rituals and values. In practice, research results show that cultural preservation is not enough when only collections are provided, and that providing this support through institutional policy, engaging cultural value-based collection curation, cross-institutional collaboration, and sustainable preservation strategies are needed to enhance services and their accessibility, utilization, and relevance for users. The primary value of this study is the reinforcement of the idea of university library as an active and participatory cultural protector. Furthermore, for future development, there are strategic steps that should be taken, namely cultural corner SOPs development, strengthening partnership networks with cultural institutions, increasing production of collections and acquisitions in the local cultural heritage, and innovation in cultural literacy programs so that the use of the cultural corner in preserving local cultural heritage is optimal and sustainable within the academic environment.

SUGGESTION

From these results, the USU Library is recommended to increase initiatives to preserve Batak culture in the local wisdom corner service by creating policies and standard operation procedures (SOPs) for cultural preservation as a reference for the management of service. This is important to secure the sustainability of the preservation program. Furthermore, this service needs to build partnerships with other institutions that have Batak cultural collections to enable the exchange of information and collections. The cultural promotion and outreach work must be planned in stages, to allow for greater awareness and use of this service. So, it is hoped that the batak culture corner in the university environment can achieve the best and optimal results in the process of preserving and passing on batak culture through the local wisdom corner.

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