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The Impact of Information Technology Development on the Preservation of Traditional Culture at the Cirebon Palace

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Abstract: *The development of information technology has progressed rapidly in recent decades, bringing major changes in various aspects of life, including culture in Cirebon Palace. This study aims to determine the impact of the development of information technology on the preservation of traditional culture in Cirebon Palace. This research uses qualitative research methods with data collection techniques through literature studies, namely exploring journals, books, and other information relevant to the research. The data that has been collected is then analyzed through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that the development of information technology has a positive impact on the preservation of traditional culture in Cirebon Palace, including increased access and reach of information about the traditional culture of Cirebon Palace to the wider community, documentation and digitization of various cultural heritages of Cirebon Palace, promotion and public education about the traditional culture of Cirebon Palace, as well as the development of cultural ecotourism in Cirebon Palace. The implications of this study indicate that information technology can be an effective tool in cultural preservation efforts, and it is recommended that further research be conducted to explore the best strategies for integrating technology with cultural preservation.*

Keywords: Information Technology, Preservation, Traditional Culture, Cirebon Palace, Keraton Kasepuhan.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of Information and Technology (IT) has significantly changed various aspects of human life (Dwivedi et al., 2020). In recent decades, technological advances have changed how we work, learn, communicate, socialize, and even perform our daily activities. Technology allows us to carry out various tasks more efficiently and quickly and provides seamless access to information and resources that were previously difficult to reach (Zahwa & Syafi'i, 2022). The rapid advancement of technology has significantly influenced many aspects of human life, including the preservation of culture at Cirebon Palace.

Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon, located in Kasepuhan Village, Lemahwungkuk District, Cirebon City, is a cultural heritage site that has the status of a protected area according to the Cirebon City Regional Spatial Plan (RTRW) for 2011-2031. Within this framework, the area is recognized as one of the socio-cultural strategic areas. This designation is also supported by the direction of the Cirebon City Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (Riparda) for 2019-2024, which emphasizes that Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon has been identified as a tourist attraction focusing on cultural wealth. Keraton Kasepuhan is the oldest and largest palace in Cirebon City and is an important center of cultural and historical heritage in the region (Ahnaf et al., 2023).

The main problems faced in cultural preservation in Cirebon Palace are the lack of adequate digital documentation and the lack of public participation in utilizing information technology for cultural

preservation (Agustina, 2021). Information technology has great potential in preserving the cultural heritage and traditions of Cirebon Palace. With increasingly sophisticated digitization and documentation capabilities, technology allows us to capture cultural artifacts, oral traditions, dances, music, and other aspects of culture more effectively. In addition, social media and online platforms allow various communities to share their knowledge, experiences and love for their culture, thus expanding the reach and appreciation of existing cultural heritage (Daga et al., 2022; Ginzarly & Teller, 2021).

This research is important to do now because threats to cultural heritage are increasing due to the lack of utilization of technology in preservation. In the midst of globalization, maintaining local cultural identity is very important (Hamdiah & Ahnaf, 2024). Using information technology wisely in cultural preservation efforts can help overcome this challenge and ensure that cultural heritage, such as that of Cirebon Palace, can be preserved for future generations (Dharma et al., 2021).

Previous research by Budiarto (2020) examined the impact of cultural invasion on local culture, especially local languages. The results showed that cultural invasion has a significant impact on the mother tongue. Cultural invasion utilizes global communication to offer its ideas, which can influence and suppress local culture in general and the mother tongue in particular. Another study by Musthofa (2020) developed a Betawi cultural preservation strategy with the Betawi Access application; the results showed that Betawi culture was increasingly eroded by the increasing number of migrants and the unstoppable influence of globalization. The government's efforts to overcome this by utilizing information technology through the Betawi Access application have become an alternative cultural development strategy in the current era of digital technology and a new means of communication for fellow Betawi citizens.

The novelty of this research lies in its object, namely the impact of the development of information technology on the preservation of traditional culture in Cirebon Palace, which has never been studied before. This research uses digitization methods that have never been applied to cultural preservation in Cirebon Palace and utilizes social media platforms to involve the community in preservation efforts.

This study aims to identify the role of information technology in cultural preservation in Cirebon Palace, evaluate the effectiveness of digitization and cultural documentation there, and develop strategies to utilize information technology in future cultural preservation efforts. The benefits of this research are to provide practical recommendations for the government and Cirebon Palace managers in using information technology for cultural preservation, increasing public awareness and participation in preserving local culture, and developing a technology-based cultural preservation model that can be applied in other areas. The practical implications include expanding access to information about traditional culture through digital platforms, which can help strengthen public understanding and appreciation of the Cirebon Palace's cultural heritage.

METHODS

This study uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are one way to research a problem more deeply and thoroughly, which takes longer to complete (Ulfatin, 2022). The data collection technique in this study is a literature study, namely exploring journals, books, and other information relevant to the research. Once the data is collected, the analysis stage is carried out to produce a deeper understanding and relevant conclusions. The first stage is data reduction, where the data that has been collected is filtered, simplified, and grouped based on patterns or themes. Then, the data is presented systematically in the data presentation stage, which involves organizing the data in the form of an easy-to-understand narrative. Finally, the results of the analysis are used to identify patterns, trends, or key findings.

RESEARCH RESULT

Cirebon, one of the unique tourist destinations in West Java, is famous for its culinary richness, such as Nasi Lengko and various shrimp-based dishes, and its rich historical heritage. This city is also known as

the Palace City because of its existence. It is home to four palaces that still stand firmly and are led by sultans who are respected by the local community (Kartika et al., 2022). The history of the Cirebon Palace began with the establishment of the Kasepuhan Palace by Prince Cakrabuana, a son of Prabu Siliwangi from the Padjajaran Kingdom. Although Prince Cakrabuana, also known as Raden Wadirectsang, was the eldest son and was supposed to be the heir to the throne in the Padjajaran Kingdom, because he embraced Islam, he was unable to take over the throne, which was still based on the strong Sundanese Wiwitan beliefs influenced by Hindu beliefs. Therefore, Cakrabuana left Padjajaran and established a palace in Cirebon (Nansha et al., 2021). Over time, power in Cirebon developed, and there was a division of power among the family of Prince Cakrabuana, which resulted in the establishment of four palaces which were then inhabited by his successors among them (Irawan et al., 2023):

1. The Kasepuhan Palace is the first palace in Cirebon that is the core of the government in the city. Although it has been converted into an Islamic sultanate, the architecture of this palace still reflects the strong influence of Hindu culture. The buildings feature a variety of ornaments and ceramics with distinctive motifs, while Chinese cultural influences can also be found in them. Previously known as Pakungwati Palace, its name changed to Kasepuhan Palace when the Cirebon area was divided into two during the leadership of Prince Raja Martawijaya, where Prince Raja Kartawijaya established the Kanoman Palace.

2. The Kanoman Palace, founded by Prince Kartawijaya, is located not far from the Kasepuhan Palace. Its architectural design is very different from that of the Kasepuhan Palace, with buildings dominated by white and decorated with ceramics on the walls. Many historical relics can be found in the Kanoman Palace, including horse-drawn carriages, household appliances, and various types of weapons used by the palace soldiers.

3. Kacirebonan Palace is a fraction of the Kanoman Palace which displays architectural nuances that mix Dutch, Chinese, and Arabic styles. This is due to various renovations, rehabilitations, and additions to buildings carried out during various periods of government. As a result, this palace complex has become an attractive tourist destination in Cirebon.

4. The Kaprabonan Palace also has a close relationship with the Kanoman Palace. This palace was founded by a prince from the Kanoman Palace who refused to become the successor to the throne and chose to establish a hamlet to deepen the knowledge of Islam.

Figure 1. Kasepuhan Palace, Cirebon
Source: (Ningsih & Nailufar, 2021)

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The long history of Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace, one of Indonesia's oldest palaces, highlights its central role in preserving and enriching Cirebon culture (Agustina et al., 2020). As a guardian of valuable cultural heritage for the local community, the Kasepuhan Palace is also a symbol of pride and cultural identity of the city of Cirebon. This palace's historical, artistic, and customary values reflect the local cultural identity well. As a silent witness to the development and cultural changes of Cirebon over the centuries, the Kasepuhan Palace has an important role as the center of power and government of the Kingdom of Cirebon.

Traditional arts, such as dance, music, carving, and crafts, are an integral part of the culture of the Kasepuhan Palace. Typical palace dances, such as the Cirebon mask dance, *bedhaya* dance, and *golek* dance, are examples of the beauty and subtlety of art that depicts the elegance and richness of Cirebon culture (Robson, 2021). The customs practiced at the Kasepuhan Palace are also an important part of the local cultural identity, with traditional ceremonies such as *slametan*, recitation, and salvation, which are celebrated with great solemnity, becoming a means to strengthen the relationship between members of the royal family and the surrounding community (Lestari et al., 2021). Thus, by maintaining historical, artistic, and customary values, the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace strengthens and promotes Cirebon culture to the local community and visitors from outside. Therefore, this palace is important in maintaining and preserving a rich and unique local cultural identity.

The use of technology has become an effective means of preserving traditional culture, including cultural heritage, such as the Cirebon Palace (Nursalim & Sobandi, 2020). In the midst of technological advances that continue to develop, the Cirebon Palace can integrate modern technology as part of its cultural preservation strategy. One form of technology utilization in efforts to preserve the traditional culture of the Cirebon Palace is through the creation of digital content that raises the cultural and historical values of the palace. The Cirebon Palace can utilize digital technology such as websites, mobile applications, and social media to disseminate information about the palace's history, art, and traditional culture. These digital contents can be in the form of articles, photos, videos, and audio recordings that introduce various aspects of life and activities at the Cirebon Palace. In addition, virtual reality (VR) technology can also be used to provide an interactive experience for visitors to explore the palace digitally (Allal-Chérif, 2022).

The use of technology can also be a tool to increase public awareness and interest in traditional culture through interesting and informative digital content. The Cirebon Palace can build closer relationships with local communities and tourists, thereby strengthening support for cultural preservation efforts (Hindersah et al., 2021). In addition, the use of technology can facilitate educational and training activities related to traditional culture for the younger generation. By utilizing online platforms, such as webinars or online courses, the Cirebon Palace can provide interesting and interactive learning programs about Cirebon's history, art, and culture to the younger generation, thereby helping to encourage interest and appreciation for local cultural heritage.

The development of information technology has had a significant positive impact on the preservation of traditional culture at the Cirebon Palace (Agustina et al., 2023). One of these impacts is the increase in access to and coverage of information about the traditional culture of the Cirebon Palace to the wider community. Through the Internet and social media, information about the history, art, and culture of the Cirebon Palace can be accessed by anyone, anywhere, and anytime. This helps expand people's understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage.

The development of information technology also allows the documentation and digitization of various cultural heritages of the Cirebon Palace; by using technology such as digital cameras, video recordings, and special software, various artifacts, art objects, and cultural traditions of the Cirebon Palace can be better documented (Akbar et al., 2024). This documentation and digitization allows for more efficient archiving and wider reuse of information. In addition to being a documentation tool, information technology also promotes and educates the public about the traditional culture of the Cirebon Palace.

Using the official website, mobile application, and social media, the Cirebon Palace can promote cultural events, art performances, and other activities to the wider community (Sofiyawati et al., 2023). In addition, education about the history, art, and customs of the Cirebon Palace can be conveyed through various digital content, such as articles, videos, and live broadcasts. Finally, the development of information technology also opens up opportunities for the development of cultural ecotourism in the Cirebon Palace through the use of technology in the marketing and management of tourist destinations. The Cirebon Palace can attract tourists who are interested in experiencing the beauty of its traditional culture firsthand. Thus, information technology not only strengthens the preservation of the traditional culture of the Cirebon Palace but also supports the sustainable and inclusive growth of tourism in the area. The challenges faced in integrating information technology in efforts to preserve traditional culture at the Cirebon Palace are as follows:

1. Alignment with cultural values
    Cultural changes and traditions due to technology's influence can be contrary to traditional values upheld by the people of the Cirebon Palace. A deep understanding of how technology can be integrated without sacrificing the authenticity and integrity of traditional cultures is essential.
2. Limited human resources
    Traditional cultural stakeholders, such as palace administrators and local artists, may lack skills and knowledge about information technology, which can be an obstacle to using information technology for cultural preservation.
3. Data security and privacy threats
    The use of information technology carries risks to the security of sensitive cultural data and information, such as archival documentation and traditional information. Data protection and privacy are challenges that need to be overcome.

The participation of the community and the local government (Pemda) also plays an important role in maintaining the preservation of the palace. Community participation is manifested in various forms, ranging from material contributions such as giving produce in the tradition of *caosan*, to contributions of manpower such as securing the *maulid* event and cleaning the palace environment. The local government also participated by providing funds to support palace activities. In addition, community participation and empathy are reflected in their participation in religious activities and traditional arts such as the prophet's *maulid* and mask dance, while the local government plays a role in supporting art and cultural activities such as cultural festivals. The community's concern can also be seen from efforts to protect the palace environment as part of their identity and pride. The local government also shows its concern by increasing synergy and cooperation with the palace, exploring the potential of local wisdom, and presenting it in performances to attract tourists. This shows that in efforts to preserve culture, participation and support from various internal and external parties are needed to maintain cultural values and regional uniqueness and continue to develop (Ramdani & Ramdani, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The development of information technology has significantly impacted the preservation of traditional culture at Cirebon Palace. One of the impacts is the increase in access and coverage of information about the traditional culture of the Cirebon Palace to the wider community. The Cirebon Palace can be easily accessed by anyone in various locations through online platforms and social media, information regarding the traditions, customs, and history of the Cirebon Palace. In addition, information technology also allows the documentation and digitization of various cultural heritages of the Cirebon Palace, ensuring that knowledge about the culture is maintained and accessible for future generations. Furthermore, information technology is also used for public promotion and education activities about the traditional culture of the Cirebon Palace, thereby strengthening awareness of the importance of preserving this cultural heritage. Finally, the development of information technology supports the

development of cultural ecotourism at the Cirebon Palace, which opens up new opportunities to increase tourist visits and income for the local community and strengthen awareness of the importance of preserving traditional culture.

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