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Public Policy Implementation in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage: A Case Study of Barru Regency

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ABSTRACT

The preservation of cultural heritage is a crucial aspect of sustainable development and national identity. This study examines the implementation of government policy in preserving cultural heritage within Barru Regency. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through interviews with local government officials, cultural experts, and community leaders. The findings reveal that while the regional government has issued various regulations and programs aimed at heritage conservation, the implementation still faces several challenges, including limited budget allocation, lack of public awareness, and inadequate coordination among related institutions. Nevertheless, community participation and local wisdom have played a significant role in sustaining several historical and cultural sites. This research highlights the importance of integrated policy, adequate resource allocation, and active stakeholder involvement in ensuring the long-term preservation of cultural heritage. The study concludes with policy recommendations to strengthen preservation efforts through capacity building, public engagement, and cross-sector collaboration.

Keywords: cultural, heritage, public policy, preservation.



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A.INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage serves as a vital repository of a nation's identity, encapsulating historical narratives, traditional knowledge, and collective values. In Indonesia, the preservation of cultural heritage is a shared responsibility between the government and local communities. Barru Regency, located in South Sulawesi, is home to numerous cultural heritage sites that reflect the region's rich cultural tapestry. However, efforts to preserve these sites face challenges such as limited resources, inadequate documentation, and insufficient public awareness. The Indonesian government has established several legal frameworks to safeguard cultural heritage, including Law No. 11 of 2010 on Cultural Heritage and Law No. 5 of 2017

on Cultural Advancement. These laws provide guidelines for the protection, development, utilization, and fostering of national culture. Despite these efforts, the implementation of such policies often encounters obstacles at the regional level, including in Barru Regency.

A study by Qimyatussa'adah and Sharma (2023) highlights the need for robust governance frameworks to ensure effective cultural preservation in Indonesia. In the context of Barru Regency, coordination among local government agencies, cultural institutions, and community stakeholders is crucial for the successful preservation of cultural heritage. However, discrepancies between national policies and local execution often hinder these collaborative efforts. One significant challenge in preserving cultural heritage in Barru Regency is the lack of accurate data and comprehensive information about existing heritage sites. This deficiency hampers effective planning and implementation of preservation programs. Additionally, limited financial resources and human capital further constrain preservation initiatives.

Community participation is essential in cultural heritage preservation. However, a lack of awareness and understanding among local populations about the importance of cultural heritage often impedes their involvement. Educational and outreach programs are necessary to enhance community engagement and foster a sense of ownership over cultural assets. The integration of digital technologies offers promising solutions to address data limitations in cultural heritage preservation. For instance, the development of virtual reality applications, such as the Bali Temple VR project, enables the digital documentation and virtual exploration of heritage sites, thereby increasing accessibility and public interest (Darmawiguna et al., 2020). Implementing similar technologies in Barru Regency could enhance preservation efforts and community engagement.

Moreover, the economic potential of cultural heritage through tourism and creative industries can provide incentives for preservation. The Indonesian Heritage Agency emphasizes the synergy between cultural heritage management and economic development, advocating for community involvement in managing and utilizing cultural assets to improve local livelihoods (TIMES Indonesia, 2024). Such approaches can be adapted to the context of Barru Regency to promote sustainable preservation practices. Collaborative efforts between government entities, academic institutions, and local communities are vital for effective cultural heritage preservation. The Sangiran Integrated Cultural Programme exemplifies a successful model where multi-stakeholder collaboration has led to both the preservation of

cultural heritage and the enhancement of community welfare (Wadah Foundation, 2024). Adopting similar collaborative frameworks in Barru Regency could strengthen preservation initiatives.

Legal and regulatory considerations are also critical in cultural heritage preservation. The enactment of Government Regulation No. 1 of 2022 on National Heritage Registration allows broader community participation in heritage acknowledgment and preservation (Qimiyatussa'adah & Sharma, 2023). However, challenges such as limited human resources and the need for additional regulations persist, necessitating ongoing policy refinement and capacity building. Incorporating local values and traditional knowledge into preservation strategies is essential for maintaining cultural authenticity and community relevance. The preservation of intangible cultural heritage, such as traditional practices and oral histories, contributes to the reinforcement of community identity and social cohesion. Efforts to document and sustain these cultural expressions are integral to comprehensive preservation approaches.

International attention to cultural heritage preservation underscores the global significance of safeguarding cultural assets. Indonesia's initiatives to repatriate artifacts and promote cultural heritage on international platforms reflect a commitment to preserving national identity and contributing to global cultural diversity (AP News, 2025). Barru Regency can leverage such international frameworks to enhance local preservation efforts. Urbanization and modernization pose threats to cultural heritage sites through physical encroachment and changing social dynamics. Integrating cultural heritage considerations into urban planning and development processes is necessary to mitigate these risks. Strategic planning that balances development needs with preservation priorities can ensure the sustainability of cultural heritage in Barru Regency. Local governments play a pivotal role in cultural heritage preservation. Effective policy implementation, resource allocation, and community engagement at the regional level are essential for the success of preservation initiatives. Strengthening institutional capacities and fostering inter-agency collaboration can enhance the efficacy of local preservation efforts.

Engaging the private sector and civil society organizations can augment resources and expertise available for cultural heritage preservation. Public-private partnerships and community-based initiatives can facilitate innovative preservation strategies and broaden the impact of preservation programs. Encouraging such collaborations in Barru Regency can

diversify preservation approaches and outcomes. Education and training programs are fundamental to building local capacities for cultural heritage preservation. Developing curricula and workshops that focus on preservation techniques, cultural significance, and community involvement can empower local stakeholders. In Barru Regency, such educational initiatives can cultivate a knowledgeable and committed preservation community.

Economic considerations are integral to the sustainability of cultural heritage preservation. Developing cultural tourism and creative industries linked to heritage sites can generate income and incentivize preservation. Implementing economic models that align with preservation goals can support both cultural sustainability and community development in Barru Regency. Environmental sustainability is also a key aspect of cultural heritage preservation. Preservation efforts should consider ecological impacts and promote environmentally friendly practices. Integrating environmental and cultural preservation strategies can contribute to the holistic sustainability of heritage sites in Barru Regency.

Social inclusivity in preservation initiatives ensures that diverse community voices are represented and respected. Engaging marginalized groups, including women, youth, and indigenous populations, in preservation activities fosters equity and enriches preservation outcomes. Inclusive approaches in Barru Regency can strengthen social cohesion and cultural resilience. Technological innovation offers new avenues for cultural heritage preservation. Utilizing digital tools for documentation, education, and engagement can enhance preservation efforts and reach broader audiences. Adopting such technologies in Barru Regency can modernize preservation practices and increase their effectiveness.

Policy development and strategic planning are critical for guiding preservation efforts. Establishing clear objectives, allocating resources, and monitoring progress are essential components of effective preservation strategies. In Barru Regency, comprehensive planning can align preservation activities with broader development goals. Considering these various aspects, cultural heritage preservation in Barru Regency requires a multifaceted and collaborative approach. Engaging government entities, communities, academia, and the private sector in a concerted effort can ensure the effective and sustainable preservation of cultural heritage for future generations.

B.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research approach to analyze the implementation of public policy in the preservation of cultural heritage in Barru Regency. The qualitative method was chosen to allow for an in-depth understanding of social phenomena, particularly the dynamics between policy formulation, implementation, and community participation in cultural heritage conservation.

➤ Data Collection Techniques

Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with key informants, including:

- a) Officials from the Department of Culture and Tourism of Barru Regency,
- b) Local community leaders involved in cultural heritage preservation,
- c) Experts and academics in the fields of history, culture, and public policy.

In addition, direct field observations were conducted at several cultural heritage sites in Barru Regency to assess their physical condition and ongoing preservation efforts.

Secondary data were collected from relevant policy documents, government regulations (such as Law No. 11 of 2010 on Cultural Heritage and Law No. 5 of 2017 on Cultural Advancement), planning documents, and previous research studies. Supporting literature was also gathered from journal articles, government reports, and UNESCO publications related to cultural heritage governance.

➤ Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes the following stages:

1. Data Reduction – filtering and categorizing data based on research themes,
2. Data Display – organizing data into matrices and visual aids to identify patterns,
3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification – interpreting the meaning of the findings and validating them through triangulation.

Triangulation was applied by comparing information across different sources, including interviews, observations, and documents, to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings.

➤ Research Location and Duration

The research was conducted in Barru Regency, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, where a number of recognized cultural heritage sites exist. The fieldwork was carried out from January to April 2025.

➤ Ethical Considerations

All research procedures adhered to ethical guidelines. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the interviews, and their identities were anonymized to ensure confidentiality. The study was also reviewed and approved by the ethics committee of the researcher's academic institution.

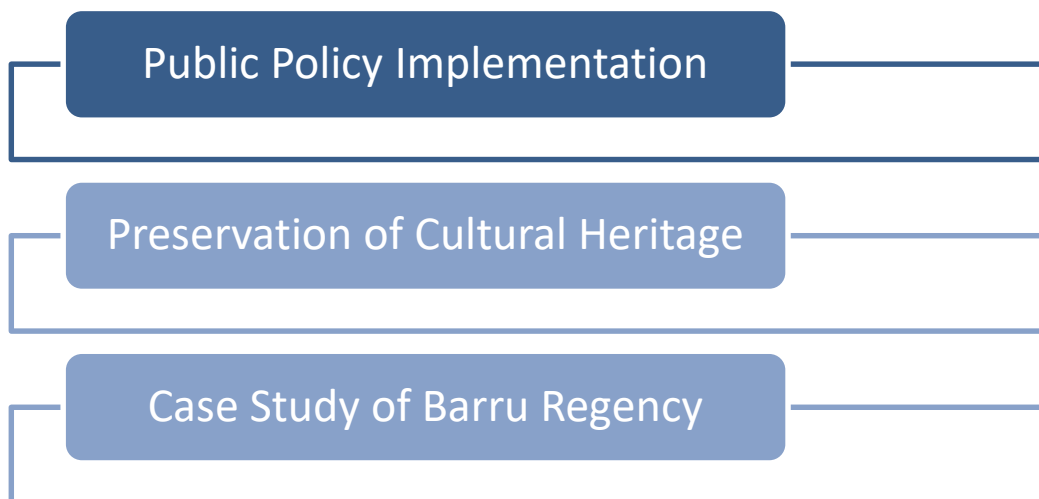


Figure 1 Thinking Framework Diagram

C. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

➤ Research results

The preservation of cultural heritage in Barru Regency is part of an effort to safeguard local identity and strengthen historical legacy. However, in its implementation process, communication plays a vital role in ensuring that the policy is well understood and effectively carried out. Based on the interview findings, although there have been decent internal communication efforts, various obstacles are still encountered in field-level information dissemination. Especially in remote areas, information regarding cultural preservation policies

has not been fully delivered. This results in uneven implementation of programs across different regions. Some schools even face difficulties accessing the necessary information. Therefore, communication effectiveness becomes a key element in the success of this policy. A more inclusive communication approach that reaches all stakeholders is needed.

Informant 1, a Cultural Affairs Officer, emphasized that communication among staff at the Department of Education has been running well through coordination meetings and routine discussions. However, he also mentioned persistent challenges, especially in remote schools. Limited access to information becomes the main barrier that causes the policy not to be evenly distributed. This directly impacts the implementation of cultural preservation programs in schools. Without comprehensive understanding of the policy, schools struggle to carry out preservation programs consistently. Therefore, improvements in the policy communication system are necessary to create collective and holistic understanding. Two-way and transparent communication is urgently needed not only in conveying information but also in receiving feedback from field implementers.

The role of schools as agents of information dissemination is highly strategic. Informant 2, a staff member in the Culture Division, mentioned that schools in Barru Regency serve as an effective communication channel for delivering cultural preservation policies to the community. Teachers act as agents of change who not only educate students but also reach out to parents and the surrounding community. Activities such as awareness campaigns, community service at cultural sites, and cultural dialogues involve local residents. This shows that vertical communication between the Education Office and schools has been established fairly well. However, the effectiveness of horizontal communication among community members and cultural actors still needs strengthening. The Education Office has tried to involve various parties in the policy communication process. Nevertheless, synergy among social actors must be enhanced to expand the impact of preservation efforts.

Besides schools and teachers, cultural practitioners also have a significant role in conveying historical and cultural values. Informant 3 highlighted that cultural actors are vital connectors between the older and younger generations. They not only deliver information but also bring cultural values to life through performances, folklore, and artistic activities. In the context of cultural heritage preservation, collaboration between cultural actors and educational institutions is crucial. Cultural actors help reinforce the government's message in preserving cultural legacy. However, their involvement has not been optimal due to the lack of systematic

communication platforms. Cultural practitioners are often included only during ceremonial events without being involved in planning. To strengthen this collaboration, a permanent and structured communication forum between cultural actors and the government is needed.

Unfortunately, as explained by Informant 4, communication between the Education Office and cultural actors remains incidental and unstructured. The absence of an official platform or regular forum becomes the main obstacle in building sustainable synergy. In fact, cultural actors need a space to express their aspirations, provide input, and participate in designing preservation activities. The lack of a formal communication channel results in cultural actors' roles being suboptimally accommodated. The government needs to establish cultural forums or preservation task forces that directly involve cultural actors. This will increase their active participation in the preservation process. Cultural actors can contribute from the planning stage to program evaluation. Consequently, policy implementation becomes more inclusive and responsive to local conditions.

In practice, the Education Office has attempted various methods to establish communication with stakeholders. Informant 5 revealed that public outreach, meetings, and socialization through schools have been conducted as part of the cultural preservation policy communication. However, the effectiveness of these activities heavily depends on the delivery method and participant involvement. One-way communication tends not to result in deep understanding. A participatory approach in communication activities is necessary. For instance, through group discussions, simulations, or collaborative training. Communication activities should be reciprocal processes, not merely information delivery. Actively involving cultural actors and the community in discussion forums can enhance the policy implementation's effectiveness.

Furthermore, obstacles in cultural heritage preservation are also influenced by a complex bureaucratic structure. Preservation policies are often overlapping between different agencies. This causes the communication and coordination process to become ineffective. In many cases, preservation policies are set by the central government, but the implementation is assigned to local governments. Limited authority and budget allocation become major barriers. An inefficient organizational structure also slows down decision-making. Therefore, more intensive cross-sectoral coordination is needed. Communication must be built not only vertically but also horizontally among institutions. Bureaucratic reform in the cultural sector should aim at simplifying procedures and enhancing cross-institutional collaboration.

Another influencing factor is the lack of public awareness regarding the importance of cultural preservation. Many communities do not yet understand the economic, social, and historical value of cultural heritage. This indicates that policy communication has not effectively reached the wider public. Information circulates mainly among bureaucrats and educators, without actively involving the community. Yet, community support is crucial for sustaining and maintaining cultural sites. The Education Office needs to design a more creative and locally based communication strategy. For instance, through social media, cultural festivals, traditional competitions, or audiovisual documentation. Communication that is engaging and relevant to daily life will be more easily accepted by the public.

From the overall findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of cultural heritage preservation policy in Barru Regency is still not optimal. This is due to weak policy communication that has yet to reach all implementers and the wider community. In fact, communication is a crucial bridge connecting policy with its field implementation. The lack of communication platforms, budget constraints, and low public awareness are the main obstacles. Moreover, cultural actors have not been fully empowered in the preservation process. Synergy between the government, schools, cultural actors, and the community is needed to build effective communication. Policy communication should be directed toward understanding, participation, and collective action in preserving regional cultural heritage.

The Barru Regency Government inherently possesses significant potential in preserving cultural heritage through local wisdom that continues to thrive within the community. However, this potential has yet to be fully optimized due to the absence of communication strategies that resonate with the cultural roots of the people. Policy communication, which remains formal and structural, has not been effective in evoking the emotional participation of citizens in cultural preservation efforts. Therefore, a culturally-based communication approach must be developed, for instance by involving traditional leaders and religious figures as spokespersons for preservation. Delivering preservation messages through local languages and narrative approaches can be a more effective way to build collective awareness among the people.

In addition, the lack of training and human resource capacity in managing policy communication also presents a challenge. Many employees at the Department of Education and Culture lack adequate public communication skills, especially in crafting persuasive and easily understood messages. Information regarding cultural preservation is often conveyed in

administrative documents that are difficult for the general public to comprehend. Capacity building through training in public communication, media literacy, and strategic communication management is necessary. With improved capacity, public officials can serve as effective communicators bridging policies with community needs.

Information technology is also underutilized in disseminating information regarding cultural preservation policies. In fact, the use of social media and digital platforms could serve as effective tools for broader and more efficient communication. In today's digital age, especially among younger generations, people are more likely to access information online. Unfortunately, the Department of Education and Culture lacks integrated and sustainable digital channels to deliver cultural preservation messages. In reality, digital media could be used to package messages about the importance of preserving cultural sites and local traditions in a more engaging and viral format. Digital communication should be made an integral part of the cultural preservation strategy.

From a regulatory perspective, overlapping policies between central and regional governments regarding cultural preservation remain an issue. This creates ambiguity for both the community and field implementers. Policies that are inconsistent or frequently changed contribute to confusion in implementation. Therefore, clearer regulations and harmonization between levels of government are essential. In this regard, stakeholder communication must be strengthened through regular and transparent cross-sector coordination forums. With policy synchronization, the messages conveyed to the public will be clearer, more consistent, and easier to implement.

Ultimately, the success of cultural preservation depends not only on effective communication from the government but also on the willingness of the community to participate. Hence, cultural preservation policies must be framed as a dialogic process that actively involves all parties. The government should serve as a facilitator capable of creating inclusive and participatory cultural communication spaces. Communities, schools, traditional leaders, artists, and young people should be given space to share their ideas, criticisms, and initiatives. With open and participatory communication, cultural preservation will no longer be a mere formality but will flourish as a sustainable and meaningful collective movement.

➤ Discussion

The preservation of cultural heritage in Barru Regency is a vital policy initiative aimed at maintaining local identity and reinforcing historical continuity. However, as evidenced by the research findings, the success of this initiative is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of policy communication. Despite notable efforts by the Department of Education and Culture, various communication challenges persist, particularly in remote and under-resourced areas.

Internal communication among government officials has been relatively well established, especially through routine coordination meetings. Nevertheless, gaps remain in the dissemination of information at the grassroots level. Schools located in remote areas often encounter difficulties in accessing policy information, resulting in inconsistent implementation of cultural preservation programs. This highlights the importance of a communication system that is inclusive and reaches all stakeholders equally. The role of schools as intermediaries in policy dissemination is strategically important. Teachers, in particular, function as agents of change who can transmit cultural preservation values not only to students but also to their families and communities. However, although vertical communication between the Education Office and schools has shown progress, horizontal communication among community members, cultural practitioners, and stakeholders remains underdeveloped.

Furthermore, cultural actors possess significant potential as mediators of intergenerational knowledge transfer. Yet their involvement in policy formulation and implementation is often incidental and ceremonial. The lack of a permanent and structured communication platform between the government and cultural actors limits their ability to contribute meaningfully to preservation efforts. Establishing regular forums or task forces that involve cultural practitioners from the planning to evaluation stages would help create a more participatory and responsive policy environment.

The study also underscores the limitations of current communication methods, which are often one-directional and overly bureaucratic. Such approaches do not foster public engagement or deep understanding. A shift toward participatory communication—such as interactive discussions, community workshops, and collaborative planning—is urgently required. This approach will allow for the integration of community voices and ensure that policies are contextually relevant. Complicating the situation further is the presence of overlapping authorities between central and regional governments, which creates ambiguity and hinders coherent implementation. In this regard, cross-sectoral coordination and

communication must be strengthened to align regulations and eliminate redundancies. Simplifying bureaucratic procedures and promoting institutional synergy are critical steps toward effective cultural policy delivery.

The findings also reveal a low level of public awareness regarding the importance of cultural heritage, suggesting that current communication strategies have not sufficiently penetrated society. This underscores the need for innovative and localized approaches to public engagement. Leveraging digital platforms, social media, and audiovisual content can increase outreach and resonate with younger audiences. Communication strategies must be emotionally engaging and grounded in the everyday lives of citizens. Moreover, the lack of communication training and limited human resource capacity among public officials further hampers the effectiveness of policy implementation. The use of complex, formal language in official documents limits public understanding. Capacity building in areas such as public communication, media literacy, and strategic message delivery is essential to empower government officials to serve as effective communicators.

In conclusion, the implementation of cultural heritage preservation policies in Barru Regency is constrained by several communication-related challenges. These include limited outreach in remote areas, weak community engagement, unstructured collaboration with cultural actors, inadequate human resource capacity, and insufficient use of digital media. A shift toward inclusive, dialogic, and culturally sensitive communication practices is imperative. By involving schools, communities, traditional leaders, and artists in a participatory communication process, the government can transform cultural preservation into a sustainable and collective social movement.

D.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ Conclusion

The implementation of cultural heritage preservation policies in Barru Regency reveals that communication plays a central role in determining the effectiveness of policy execution. Although the government, particularly the Department of Education and Culture, has made various efforts to disseminate information, the findings indicate persistent gaps in communication—especially in rural areas, among cultural actors, and within the general public.

The lack of participatory communication mechanisms, limited collaboration with cultural practitioners, inadequate use of digital tools, and bureaucratic barriers all contribute to the suboptimal realization of cultural preservation objectives. Furthermore, the overlapping of government authority and insufficient public awareness further complicate the policy's impact. Effective communication is not merely about the delivery of information but about fostering understanding, participation, and shared ownership of cultural values. Without inclusive and strategic communication, cultural preservation policies risk becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

➤ Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of cultural preservation efforts in Barru Regency, the government should strengthen participatory communication by creating inclusive platforms that involve schools, cultural actors, traditional leaders, and local communities throughout all stages of policy implementation. Outreach should be expanded to remote areas through mobile programs, local partnerships, and tailored educational modules. Cultural practitioners must be formally involved as stakeholders beyond ceremonial roles, ensuring their continuous contribution in policy decisions. Strategic use of digital and audiovisual media is essential to engage broader audiences, especially the youth, while public officials require training in effective communication techniques. Additionally, improved inter-institutional coordination across government levels is necessary to align responsibilities and regulations, and public awareness campaigns should be intensified to foster pride, identity, and understanding of cultural heritage's socio-economic value.

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