

## Maintaining the Sustainability of the Rumah Gadang Architectural Culture through Social Media In the Age of Digital Technology

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### Abstract

*The culture of the Minangkabau tribes in West Sumatra has existed since ancient times. One of the masterpieces of architectural cultural heritage that characterizes Minangkabau is the rumah gadang, which is a traditional building belonging to the Minangkabau tribes, which is beautiful, of high value and full of meaning. This information is not widely known by the Indonesian people, especially people outside Indonesia. While the architecture of the rumah gadang is decreasing, it requires media, where people can get various information about the rumah gadang. In the era of the digital technology revolution, various communication technologies were born in the form of various applications that can be used as a means of social media. One of them is the Instagram application, where users can exchange information, especially through photos, videos and other information so that the observer (followers) gets various images. The research method used is the virtual ethnographic method, by making virtual observations through the Instagram application. The data were analyzed qualitatively using Visual Discourse theory. From this research it was found that information through social media, especially Instagram, is not only a place to exchange photos and videos but can provide positive information about the architectural culture of the Rumah Gadang. From these preliminary findings,*

*hoped that it's become input for further research through social media with similar topics, especially in cultural sciences in order to enrich people's knowledge and preserve Minangkabau culture in general, the architecture of the rumah gadang in particular.*

*Keywords: images, information, Instagram, rumah gadang, Minangkabau*

## INTRODUCTION

Most of the people of West Sumatra are of Minangkabau ethnicity, having a characteristic cultural tradition. One of them is the tradition of building a rumah gadang (*gado* in Minang means 'big'), which is a traditional house representing the Minangkabau tribes. Rumah gadang has its own characteristics and uniqueness, making it a cultural asset that must be cared for and preserved, not only as a tourist attraction but also as evidence of high value cultural heritage. (Izati, 2002).

There are various means and ways to maintain the sustainability of traditional culture, one of which is the delivery of information through communication, both orally and in writing. In the era of digital technology, information technology is developing rapidly, the delivery of information to each individual does not have to be directly face to face with anyone, one of these ways is through various social media, which can function as a place for individual or group interaction to do knowledge sharing, socializing activities, exchange information, and mingle and join other people (Fikri, 2019).

As a masterpiece in Minangkabau culture, the architecture of the rumah gadang is an interesting object to be documented and published on various social media. Consciously or not, through social media, the community has also provided information about the existence of the traditional culture of the rumah gadang, which indirectly has an impact on preserving and maintaining the Minangkabau culture in general, the architecture of the rumah gadang in particular. Of the many applications on social media, there is the Instagram application, which functions to share photos and videos that allow users (account owners and observers / followers) to take photos, take videos, apply digital filters, and share them on various social networking services.

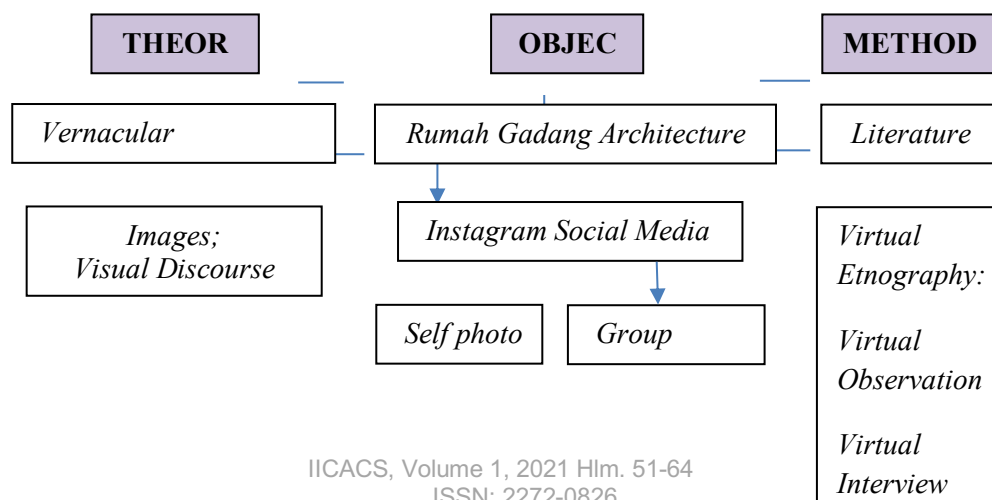
Given that social media has become the main and popular source of information, it is necessary to study the extent to which social media, in this case the Instagram application, can support the preservation of the rumah gadang architecture. As well as being able to become an alternative discourse for the community, that preserving traditional culture does not always have to be in the form of physical actions, but also virtually. For this reason, in order to become a

means of information conveying positive images, it is hoped that the public can maintain the attitude and ethics of delivery on social media, especially in the Instagram application.

## METHOD

The method used is the Virtual Ethnography method, with a qualitative analysis approach. In the virtual ethnography method, virtual observation procedures are carried out which are limited to social media Instagram (also called IG or Insta). From the photos displayed on the IG media, photos of the account owner, both individually and in groups, are selected in front of the rumah gadang architecture.

From the photo display, information is collected in parts of the photo, such as: captions, comments, likes by, hashtags, locations, as well as interviews with account holders, to obtain information as needed, with discussion aspects in accordance with Visual Discourse theory. So it can be obtained the perception of the account owner and followers of the traditional architectural culture of the rumah gadang that is displayed in the photo / video. From the collected data, a comprehensive data analysis and interpretation were carried out using the Visual Discourse theory. Furthermore, a compilation of the detailed descriptions obtained is made, which contains the views of the participants in the photo on the IG and the researcher.



## Scheme 1: Research Framework

### RESULTS

Observation and information through Instagram media as well as informants (IG account owners) according to needs (purposive sampling), in the form of displaying photos of themselves and / or groups / groups in front of the gadang house. On the display, as much information as possible can be obtained by followers in a photo and information in it, and grouped based on the characteristic aspects in Visual Discourse.

Several locations were chosen as a comparison, at tourist destinations that have a rumah gadang in it, as well as a private rumah gadang which is still well maintained and actively used in the West Sumatra region, namely: (1) Pagaruyung Basa Palace. Batusangkar, (2) Center for Documentation Information and Culture of Minangkabau. Padang Panjang, (3) Rumah gadang. Nagari Sariak, (4) Adityawarman Museum. Padang, (5) Minangkabau Village. Mifan Complex. Padang.

Table 1. Locations at the Palace of Basa Pagaruyung. Batusangkar.

## 1. Pagaruyung Basa Palace. Batusangkar



1.1. The group photo of the Field Work Lecture of a private university in Jakarta, will be seen by many followers of the college's academic community.

Hashtag: #kkl #sumbar  
#minangkabau #exploresumbar  
#trisakti



1.2 Above: Shows another attraction inside the Pagaruyung Basa Palace complex. Batusangkar  
Below: Caption: information on the name of the activity, the college and the activity coordinator, namely the travel management agency, so that photos can be seen by the followers of the agency and college.

Hashtag: #traveluxtravel  
#trisaktiuniversity #group #tour  
#trisakti



1.3 Shows another attraction inside the Pagaruyung Palace complex. Batusangkar: there is a mascot wearing Minangkabau traditional clothings.



Table 2. Locations at the Minangkabau Documentation, Information and Culture Center. Padang Panjang

2. Center for Documentation Information & Culture of Minangkabau. Padang Panjang	
 <p>2.1 Show part of the beauty of the rumah gadang architecture, using a variety of attractive traditional Minang bridal clothes. Liked by: 83 people</p>	 <p>2.2 Shows some space inside rumah gadang while wearing traditional Minang bridal clothing.clothing. Liked by: 60 orang</p>
 <p>2.3 Another composition that shows the beauty of the detailed carved ornaments that are full of meaning in the front view of the rumah gadang architecture</p>	 <p>2.4 Millennial style in taking pictures but still proud to show the beautiful details of the rumah gadang carving ornaments, wearing traditional Minang bridal clothing and crown (<i>sunti</i>ang).</p>

2. Center for Documentation Information & Culture of Minangkabau. Padang Panjang	
while wearing traditional Minang wedding dresses. Liked by: 178 orang	Caption: trying to look cool while using <i>Suntiang</i> Liked by: 172 people

Table 3. Location at Rumah Gadang. Nagari Sariak.

3. Rumah Gadang. Nagari Sariak	
 <p>3.1. Above: A group of women dressed in red at the entrance steps show the important role of women in the Matrilineal understanding of Minangkabau society. Shows the type of rumah gadang that is not always <i>bagonjong</i>. There is a set of traditional Minang musical instruments: Talempong, to introduce the Minang musical instrument, indicating a special event at that time.</p> <p>Below: liked by: 48 people, showing one photo, in no time can be seen by many people. The caption of the account owner: "Between the rumah gadang, Datuk and his dearest relatives" shows the</p>	 <p>3.2. Above: shows the architectural details of the beautiful, magnificent rumah gadang and shows the influence of colonialism (Indies style).</p> <p>Below: caption of the account owner: "Various forms of the magnificent gadang house"</p>

### 3. Rumah Gadang. Nagari Sariak

existence of close kinship ties in the Minang kinship system.  
Hashtag: #rumahgadang  
#pulangbasamo #galeriminang  
#badatuak #wastraindonesia  
#indonesiaku #bukittinggi.  
Shows various Minang activities / traditions.

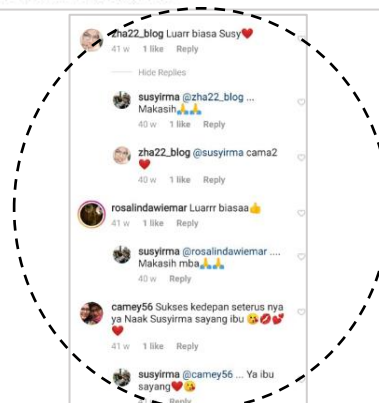


3.3. Caption: related to the Minangkabau culture at the rumah gadang:

"After finishing parading the Datuak ... The guests were welcome to enter the 8 rumah gadang that had been prepared by Datuak Labiah nan Putih's nephew. This is where all guests enjoy eating *Bajamba* with the *Kancah* curry menu (from buffalo meat). Thank God, all guests enjoy this special meal. "

Hashtag: #gulaikancanh  
#galeriminang  
#kulinersumaterabarat  
#budayaleluhur  
#menukhasbadatuak #badatuak  
#rumahgadang

Comment from photo observers: praise to the Minangkabau tradition



3.3. Comment: Praise for the beauty of the rumah gadang in the photo, shows interest in the photo.



3. Rumah Gadang. Nagari Sariak	
that is carried out at the rumah gadang:	
“Our culture is cool. Reading yours, I could learn a lot about the wealth of our archipelago ”.	

Table 4. Location at the Adityawarman Museum. Padang.


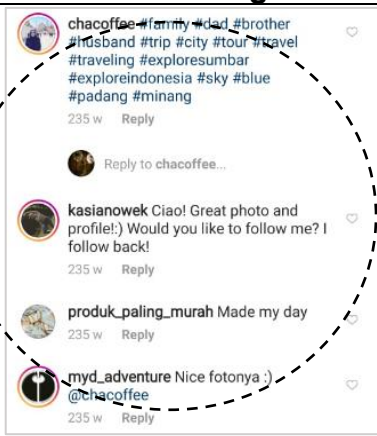

4. Adityawarman Museum. Padang.	
 <p>4.1. Hashtag: #minang #rumahgadang #museum #architecture #minang #padang</p>	 <p>4.2. Hashtag: #trip #city #tour #travel #travelling #exploresumbar #exploreindonesia #sky #blue #padang #minang Hashtags that are not characterized by Minang still spreading information about the architecture of the rumah gadang to the viewing followers</p>

Table 5. Location at Minangkabau Village. Mifan complex. Padang.

5. Minangkabau Village. Mifan Complex. Padang
 <p>chacoffee Minangkabau Village,Kompleks Mifan,Padang</p> <p>Liked by eldafr and 26 others chacoffee Always proud to be #UrangAwak 🤘 View all 2 comments Feb 2016</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>chacoffee Hayati pulang uda... 😊 Kampung Halaman den #bukittinggi #exploresumber #HIJUPtravel #westsumatera #exploreindonesia @hijup 222 w · Edited</p> <p>5.1. Caption: Always proud to be #Urang Awak , Hashtag: #UrangAwak #bukittinggi #exploresumber #westsumatera #exploreindonesia</p>

## DISCUSSION.

The development of social media in the digital era is inherent and serves as a fulfillment of needs. This need raises thoughts about how culture and culture can take advantage of digitalization in its preservation, and not be the cause of the waning of the preservation and existence of culture and culture in human life.

Currently, cultural knowledge around the world is wide open. Cultural information is conveyed quickly. The community should be able to take advantage of this digitalization era to be an effective means of preserving and developing Indonesian culture, especially the rumah gadang. If not, Indonesian culture will gradually disappear and erode because it is defeated by other cultures. What can be a question is how the cultural heritage of the rumah gadang is able to enter the realm of popularity or a trend for all levels of society while

preserving its sustainability. Creativity and innovative ideas are needed in order to be interesting, entertaining as well as a source of knowledge and deepening understanding of Indonesian traditional culture, especially the rumah gadang, especially for the younger generation. In order to convey the "images" as desired, the images displayed must be precise and the perceptions captured by the observer can differ from one another. As stated by Mitchel (2005) Images are everything that appears in various mediums and can be recognized, such as paintings, figures, certain motifs, and others. In observing images, it is necessary to have "objects", as a support that makes images visible, objects can be made of various materials so that they can be observed. Images are anything that can be imagined by the human senses. Images are very dependent on a person's background, insight, reference, culture, so that one object can be the same but the images can differ from one person to another. The appearance contained in the photo is a collection of objects that can provide various images, which theoretically can be analyzed based on Visual Discourse theory, as stated by Foucoult (1990) Discourse is a set of text structures that are not only in the form of writing and speech, but can be in the form of: images, objects, artifacts, layout of furniture in space, or others that organize and coordinate the actions, positions, identities of the people who produce the text. Visual discourse is very broad in use, and can be recognized based on the characteristics it contains, namely: 1. Language; 2. Subject; 3. Knowledge; 4. Exchange; 5. Power Relations and 6. Social Relations.

In the photos displayed on Instagram, we found the following discourse features:

	<b><i>Discourse characteristic</i></b>	<b>Photos</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Images</b>
1	<i>Language</i>	1.1-5.1	The presence of visual language (photos) and verbal language (various descriptions in the photos)	Make it easier for followers to understand the rumah gadang architectural images.
2	<i>Subject</i>	1.1-5.1	1. Between the account owner and followers 2. Profession / status / role of the account owner and followers	As an interactive means between subjects, to give each other information related to the architectural culture of the rumah gadang.
3	<i>Knowledge</i>	1.1-5.1	1. The beauty and splendor of the rumah gadang.	1. Raising awareness to help preserve the

	<b>Discourse characteristic</b>	<b>Photos</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Images</b>
		1.2-1.3 2.1-2.4	2. Another attraction of the rumah gadang is in the form of facilities inside the Rumah Gadang tourism destination complex, such as: rental facilities for traditional Minang bridal clothing, mascot with traditional Minang clothing	architectural heritage of high-value Rumah Gadang. 2. Providing information on Minang culture other than the rumah gadang architecture. 3. Provide more detailed information about the architecture of the rumah gadang 4. As alternative destination information. 5. For information that the rumah gadang is interesting to be visited by various ages / groups.
		3.1-3.2	3. There is another form of rumah gadang, which does not always have a "gonjong" roof 4. Details of architectural parts influenced by the colonial style (Indies).	
		1.1-5.1	5. The location of the rumah gadang.	
			6. Group / age of account holder: adults, teenagers and children.	
4	<i>Exchange</i>	1.1-5.1	1. Information on captions, hashtags and comments that have a positive influence on account owners and followers about Minang culture: Information on the diversity of Minang culture; Pride in being a Minang people. Interest in	1. There is an exchange of information on Minang culture in addition to the rumah gadang architecture. 2. There is an exchange of information about alternative destinations.



	<b><i>Discourse characteristic</i></b>	<b>Photos</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Images</b>
			<p>the architecture of the rumah gadang.</p> <p>2. Function / type of rumah gadang designation: Palace, Information Documentation Center and Minangkabau Culture, Traditional Houses, Museums, Minangkabau Village, as information for followers as needed.</p>	<p>3. There is an exchange of information that the rumah gadang is interesting to visit.</p>
5	<i>Power Relation</i>	2.1-2.4 3.1	1. Minangkabau women are important figures in the Matrilineal ideology	Followers increasingly feel the ambience of the grandeur and strength of the rumah gadang architecture
		1.1-1.5	<p>2. Comparison of the dimensions of the rumah gadang with humans shows the grandeur of the rumah gadang.</p> <p>3. The dimensions of the rumah gadang show the magnitude of the power of the owner of the palace / rumah gadang.</p>	
6	<i>Social Relation</i>	1.1-5.1	<p>1. Give a 'like' sign as a token of appreciation to the account owner</p> <p>2. Giving comments to each other between the account owner and followers or among the followers themselves.</p>	Increasing deeper relationships between account owners and followers

## CONCLUSION.

From data and analysis, it is known that information through social media, especially Instagram, can not only be a place to exchange photos and videos between account owners and followers. Information in social media can provide positive images not only about the architecture of the rumah gadang, but can be revealed and explored on an environmental scale, details of the building, interior and elements that are present complement the setting in the form of: costumes, musical instruments, locations, age and others.

This broader and deeper information is expected to have an effect on increasing the interest and appreciation of the community to preserve the cultural wealth of Minangkabau generally the rumah gadang in particular. As well as being able to become an alternative discourse for the community, that preserving traditional culture does not always have to be in the form of physical actions, but also virtually.

These preliminary findings are expected to be input for further research with similar topics, for example in other areas in Indonesia or the same area but focus on aspects of how the photo format can provide positive and negative values for followers. So that it can be a guide for Instagram users in displaying their work.

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