

# Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center: Safeguarding Dayak Traditions in Kubu Raya

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**Abstract.** *The objective of this research is to analyze the role of the Tamae' Agokng cultural heritage center as a sanctuary for tradition and the preservation of Dayak culture in Kubu Raya Regency. This study examines how the cultural house functions as a space for the preservation, education, and transmission of Dayak cultural values. A qualitative approach with a case study research design was employed. The qualitative method was selected to facilitate an in-depth analysis of Tamae' Agokng's significance as a hub for cultural conservation. Through this approach, the roles, activities, and meanings of the cultural house as enacted by cultural practitioners and the community can be understood contextually. Furthermore, this research provides essential information to the public and cultural observers regarding the existence of a dedicated cultural space in Kubu Raya Regency that ensures the sustainability of Dayak heritage.*

**Keywords:** *Tamae' Agokng, Cultural House, Sape', Christian Mara, Space*

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a nation profoundly shaped by the ethnic diversity dispersed across its vast archipelago (Tumonggor et al., 2013; Schefold, 1998). Among these groups, the Dayak tribe holds a significant role in the country's cultural wealth. As the indigenous inhabitants of Kalimantan, they represent one of the largest ethnic populations on the island. The Dayak people are renowned for their diverse traditions, belief systems, and local wisdom, which constitute their distinct cultural identity (Suswandari et al., 2022; Usop & Rajiani, 2021; Kustanti et al., 2024; Halim et al., 2021; Andreastuti et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Dayak society possesses a long history rooted in communal values, spirituality, and a harmonious relationship with nature (Niko, 2025; Azahra, 2026; Raharso et al., 2025). This uniqueness makes Dayak culture a compelling subject for in-depth exploration. Consequently, these traditions and local wisdom must be passed down through generations to prevent their disappearance and ensure they remain an integral part of the national identity (Fahra et al., 2024).

The influence of globalization has exerted a negative impact on the preservation of local wisdom, particularly in West Kalimantan. This change is evident in the search for artistic and cultural identity among the Dayak community, especially those residing in urban areas. There has been a noticeable shift in dance movement patterns across Dayak sub-tribes, as well as modifications in the motifs and patterns of traditional attire influenced by modernization (Kuspraningrum et al., 2026).

Furthermore, most of the younger Dayak generation is now losing both knowledge of and direct engagement with their ancestral arts and culture. Such conditions raise concerns regarding

the erosion of Dayak artistic and cultural values in West Kalimantan. Therefore, there is an urgent need for institutions such as Cultural Houses (Rumah Budaya), which serve as centers for the preservation, education, and development of Dayak arts and culture to remain resilient and relevant amidst globalizing trends (Fauzan, 2025; Sani et al., 2025; Zakiyudin, 2025; Sibarani, S., & Zerlina, 2023).

Previous research conducted by Yosua Pebrianto titled "The Role of the Sangkalemu Arts and Culture Studio in Sepang District, Gunung Mas Regency, in Efforts to Preserve and Develop Regional Arts," explains that art studios play a crucial role in maintaining the existence and development of regional arts through various local cultural activities. This study highlights how art studios serve as a medium for the community to uphold regional cultural values in a changing era.

The objective of this research is to analyze the role of the Tamae' Agokng cultural house as a center for safeguarding traditions and preserving Dayak culture in Kubu Raya Regency. This study explains that arts and cultural centers are essential facilities for every region in Indonesia, acting as hubs for local heritage that significantly influence youth and artists to appreciate their culture. These centers function as educational facilities and gathering points for artists committed to cultural conservation (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010; Grodach, 2011).

Despite various studies on the functions of cultural houses as well as art studios, there is a lack of specific research focusing on Dayak cultural centers in Kubu Raya Regency within the context of tradition safeguarding and local cultural preservation. Accordingly, this research is vital to address this empirical gap and to determine the specific role of the Tamae' Agokng cultural house in maintaining and preserving Dayak traditions in Kubu Raya Regency.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study research design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on an in-depth analysis of the role of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center as a center for the preservation of Dayak culture in Kubu Raya Regency. Through this approach, the researcher is able to understand contextually how the role and meaning of the cultural center are interpreted and utilized by cultural practitioners and the surrounding community. The selection of informants in this study used a purposive sampling technique, namely the deliberate selection of informants based on their involvement and knowledge of cultural activities at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. The informants consisted of four individuals Christian Mara as an artist and founder of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center, David son of Christian Mara, who is active as a young artist and successor of traditional Dayak arts, Yuyus, a Dayak musical instrument craftsman who actively produces instruments at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center, and Felicia, a music student at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. The research design is a case study, which aims to specifically explore social and cultural phenomena occurring in a particular location, namely the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. Data were collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews with managers, artists, and members of the community, as well as documentation of cultural and artistic activities conducted at the cultural center. In this study, observation was conducted to obtain a comprehensive overview of the role of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center as a center for Dayak cultural galleries. In-depth interviews were carried out with informants and other parties involved in the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. This aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of its role. The documentation used in this study includes photographs of cultural activities, activity records, and other supporting documents related to artistic activities at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, following the analytical model of Miles et al. (2014). In the data reduction stage, data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were selected, categorized, and focused on aspects related to the role of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. The reduced data were then organized into descriptive analysis, tables, or visual documentation to facilitate

understanding. This presentation aimed to systematically display the role of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. The conclusion was drawn by identifying patterns, relationships, meanings, and the role of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center through comparison of interview results, observations, and documentation, thereby producing valid and accountable research findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



Figure 1. Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center  
(Source: Researcher, 2025)

The Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center, commonly known as Tamae' Agokng, is a cultural house owned and managed by a Dayak artist from West Kalimantan named Christian Mara. Christian Mara is known as a multitalented artist who is actively involved in music, dance, and the preservation of Dayak culture. Through his works, he seeks to promote Dayak traditional values within modern forms of artistic expression without eliminating the original meanings and philosophies of each art form. The name "Tamae' Agokng" originates from the Dayak Jangkang language, where "Tamae" means "sound" and "Agokng" refers to the "sound of the gong." The gong itself is one of the traditional musical instruments that plays an important role in Dayak cultural arts. Thus, the meaning of Tamae' Agokng is "The Sound of the Gong." The Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center was established in 2019 and is located on Wonodadi II Street, Arang Limbung Village, Sungai Raya District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia.

Based on direct observation, the researcher found that the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center is strategically located, as it is situated not far from Supadio International Airport. This location facilitates access for tourists, both domestic and international, making it easier for the public to recognize and appreciate Dayak culture through various artistic and cultural activities available at the center. The researcher also observed that the building resembles a traditional Dayak longhouse, strongly reflecting local cultural identity through its architectural design and traditional ornaments (Batrisyia et al., 2024; Gapor et al., 2022).

Based on an interview conducted with David, the eldest son of Christian Mara, on October 28, 2025, David stated that his father is a Dayak artist who owns a private Rumah Betang as a center for cultural and artistic activities. Rumah Betang is a traditional Dayak house that is generally managed by local governments as part of cultural preservation. However, due to his strong artistic spirit and dedication, Christian Mara independently built a Rumah Betang, which was then developed into a Dayak cultural center open to the public free of charge. It functions as a space for cultural appreciation, a center for tradition preservation, and a cultural hub in West Kalimantan, particularly in Kubu Raya Regency and Pontianak City (Patulak et al., 2026; Sada et al., 2019; Middleton et al., 2024; Rozaki & Izudin, 2025). As a result, both local communities and visitors from outside West Kalimantan can directly experience Dayak arts and culture by visiting the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center.

Through observation, the researcher found that almost every corner of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center is filled with the artistic works of Christian Mara. These works include

carved sculptures, traditional shields, Dayak musical instruments, traditional Dayak clothing, traditional weapons, and various other cultural ornaments that decorate the entire cultural space. The existence of this cultural center symbolizes the strong commitment of a Dayak artist from West Kalimantan in preserving and strengthening ancestral cultural values amid modern development. As a center for cultural preservation, the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center plays various important roles in maintaining the existence of Dayak culture.

## DISCUSSION

### Educational Space

Based on the researcher's observations, the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center functions as a learning and training space for the community, particularly the younger Dayak generation, in recognizing and developing local arts and culture. Tamae' Agokng serves as a place where artists and cultural practitioners can improve and refine their skills in their respective artistic fields.

#### *Educational Space for Dance Arts*



Figure 2. Dance Practice Activities  
(Source: *Lensa Kreatif*, 2025)

The Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center serves as a place for the younger generation to develop their dancing skills. In addition, Tamae' Agokng is often invited to participate in cultural events and Gawai celebrations, including entertainment dance performances, inauguration dances, welcoming dances, and other cultural presentations. Therefore, the dancers at Tamae' Agokng regularly conduct dance training sessions as preparation before performing in various cultural activities. Christian Mara also stated that the dances performed are folk dances, such as the Tempurung dance and welcoming dances.

#### *Educational Space for Music Arts*



Figure 3. Music Practice Activities at Tamae' Agokng

*(Source: Lensa Kreatif, 2025)*

Music training is also conducted regularly at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. Christian Mara explained that the music practice sessions are part of the accompaniment for dance performances. Therefore, music and dance rehearsals are conducted simultaneously to ensure synchronization between sound and movement (Krug, 2022; Zhang, 2025; Woolhouse & Lai, 2014; Basso et al., 2021; Rohwer, 1998).

Based on the researcher's observation, the participants involved in both music and dance activities are mostly teenagers and students. This is because Christian Mara aims to introduce Dayak cultural traditions to the younger generation in order to ensure continuous regeneration of cultural practitioners. This finding is supported by one of the music students, Felicia Margareta, who stated that the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center should be introduced more widely to the public because it plays an important role in introducing Dayak culture to young generations. She also mentioned that Christian Mara directly teaches various traditional Dayak musical instruments such as the Sape, gong, and other traditional instruments to students at the center.

The educational function of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center is evident in its role as a learning and training space for the community, particularly the younger Dayak generation, in understanding and developing local arts and culture. Tamae' Agokng serves as a place for artists to refine their skills in dance, music, and other forms of cultural expression. Christian Mara, as the founder and manager, also plays an active role as an instructor who guides participants in understanding the aesthetic values and philosophical meanings embedded in Dayak art. Through these educational activities, the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center not only develops artistic skills but also fosters awareness of cultural preservation as an essential part of Dayak identity in Kubu Raya.

### **Expressive and Creative Space**

Through field observations, the researcher found that the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center serves as a place for producing various traditional Dayak musical instruments such as the Sape', Gong, Dau, and other instruments. In addition to musical instruments, the cultural center also produces various other artworks, including wood carvings and sculptures (Howard, 2022; Juréniené, 2012; Montagu, 2017; Dawe, 2001).

#### ***A Place for Producing the Sape Musical Instrument***



Figure 4. The process of making the Sape by Christian Mara at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center

*(Source: Researcher, 2026)*

The Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center serves as a production site for the Sape musical instrument in West Kalimantan. This was evidenced through the researcher's direct observation, which showed that Christian Mara produces Sape instruments every day, both for personal collection and for sale to customers. Christian Mara also stated that regardless of whether there are orders or not, he consistently continues producing Sape instruments daily.

According to him, this activity is not only intended to meet consumer demand but also reflects his deep passion for collecting and preserving the Sape so that it can be appreciated by visitors to the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center

### ***Production of Traditional Dayak Percussion Instruments***



Figure 5. The Process of Producing Traditional Dayak Percussion Instruments at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center  
(Source: Researcher, 2025)

In addition to producing the Sape, traditional Dayak percussion instruments are also produced at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center. These percussion instruments include the beduk, ketobong, gong, and kenong, all of which are regularly manufactured at the center. Christian Mara also stated that he sincerely does not mind if his handmade musical instruments are not paid for, as long as they are used for the preservation of Dayak culture.

### ***Sculpture Carving***



Figure 6. The Process of Christian Mara Carving Sculptures at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center  
(Source: Lensa Kreatif, 2025)

In addition to producing Dayak musical instruments, the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center also serves as a place for creating Pantak artworks, which are traditional Dayak sculptural carvings known as Pantak. Christian Mara explained that Pantak refers to a distinctive type of sculpture within Dayak cultural identity. In the production process, he carves various facial expressions such as sadness, anger, and patience. Each expression embedded in the sculpture carries its own meaning and symbolic message intended to be conveyed through the artwork (Gryglewski et al., 2020).

The documentation shows that the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center functions not only as an educational space but also as a place for expression and creativity in traditional Dayak art, manifested through the creative work of artists actively engaged in artistic practices at the center. According to Hagman (2009), the expressive and creative function of art serves as a means for individuals to channel their inner experiences and transform them into meaningful artistic forms. Meanwhile, Soreanu (2020) and Lusebrink (2004) stated that artworks are symbolic forms of human emotional expression that are creatively manifested through artistic media.

Thus, the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center has a clear expressive and creative function as a space for the creation and articulation of cultural values through various art forms. In this context, Christian Mara not only acts as an artist and creator but also gains economic benefit from the sale of the musical instruments he produces for art communities. This indicates that artistic activities at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center not only carry expressive and creative value but also contribute to the economic well-being of the artists involved.

### **Social Space**

Every year, Christian Mara organizes the Gawai Dayak Jangkang as a space for social gathering among the Dayak community, particularly the Dayak Jangkang sub-ethnic group. The Dayak Jangkang are the ancestral ethnic group of Christian Mara and his family. Through this Gawai event, a space for social interaction and togetherness is created among the community, thereby maintaining strong social relationships and a sense of brotherhood. In addition, this event also serves as a means of preserving Dayak culture through various customary activities, artistic performances, and cultural traditions presented during the Gawai celebration (Farida & Setyawan, 2025; Atok, 2020; Ghafur, 2024).



Image 7. Gawai Dayak at Rumah Budaya Tamae' Agokng  
(Source: Researcher, 2026)

Based on direct observation, this indicates that the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center functions as a social space for cultural interaction and an appreciation platform for the arts, bringing together various layers of society in an atmosphere of creative and reflective dialogue. With the existence of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center, Christian Mara no longer needs to wait for Gawai Dayak events organized by the government. Through his own initiative and efforts, he is able to hold Gawai Dayak celebrations at any time at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center.

### **Cultural Preservation Space**

Through direct observation, it can be seen that every corner and space of the room is filled with various artworks and Dayak cultural ornaments.



Figure 8. Collection of Cultural Artifacts at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center  
(Source: Researcher, 2025)

**Mandau Collection**



Figure 9. Collection of Traditional Dayak Weapons  
(Source: Researcher, 2025)

The Mandau is a traditional weapon of the Dayak people in Kalimantan. It functions not only as a weapon but also holds cultural, artistic, and symbolic value as a representation of honor within Dayak society. The Mandau is decorated with distinctive Dayak carvings on both the handle and sheath, and is often adorned with feathers and traditional bead ornaments

**Dayak Shield (Tameng)**



Figure 10. Collection of Dayak Shields (Tameng)  
(Source: Researcher, 2025)

The Dayak shield (Tameng Dayak) is a traditional defensive tool of the Dayak people. It is typically made from selected wood and decorated with distinctive Dayak carvings that carry specific symbolic meanings. The shields at the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center vary in size depending on customer requests and the materials used.

### ***Traditional Dayak Attire***



Figure 11. Collection of Traditional Dayak Attire  
(Source: Researcher, 2025)

Traditional Dayak attire is a traditional costume of the Dayak people characterized by distinctive motifs, colors, and accessories. The clothing is decorated with ethnic Dayak patterns, beads, and feathers. At the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center, Dayak traditional attire is also used as performance costumes for dancers in various cultural events and Gawai Dayak celebrations. According to role theory by Talcott Parsons and William J. Goode in the concept of prescription, an individual's actions as an artist represent expectations that must be realized in concrete form (Cooper, 2011; Stickley & Eades, 2013; Geest et al., 1996; McGeer, 2004). These expectations include cultural preservation and accessible spaces of appreciation (Lauria, 2016; Ramírez-Guerrero et al., 2021; Kosmas et al., 2020).

Through direct observation, the researcher found that the existence of this cultural center is a tangible realization of such expectations. Christian Mara preserves culture through the collection of Dayak ornaments, which can be enjoyed freely without having to visit a museum or attend a Gawai Dayak event. Through the existence of the Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center, Dayak art and culture can be directly experienced at any time and by anyone who visits.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Tamae' Agokng Cultural Heritage Center has a clear, strong, and multidimensional role. It provides a space that enables the community to access, learn, and appreciate Dayak art and culture directly. Tamae' Agokng offers educational, social, expressive, creative, and cultural preservation spaces. Therefore, its existence demonstrates that it is not merely the house of an artist, but a living center of Dayak culture. It serves as a cultural hub that strengthens cultural identity and acts as a guardian of tradition and the preservation of Dayak cultural heritage in Kubu Raya Regency. This research also contributes important information to the public and cultural observers that in Kubu Raya Regency there is a cultural house functioning as a space for the continuity of Dayak culture. Its existence shows that cultural preservation does not only occur at a symbolic level but is also realized in a tangible space that can be visited and utilized by the wider community.

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