



## Ethno-photography of Selorejo's eco-cultural resilience for Civic education courses

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### ABSTRACT

The integration of indigenous knowledge (local wisdom) into environmental conservation represents a crucial evolution in the cycle of civilization. This is evidenced by the growing public recognition of authentic ecological insights and sustainable practices preserved by indigenous peoples worldwide, particularly in relation to ecosystem balance, over many years through the tradition of "Wong Ireng". This study focuses on the development of reflective educational media with aesthetic value, specifically an ethnophotography book on the eco-cultural life of the Selorejo Village community. This research aims to increase awareness and knowledge among the younger generation in Selorejo Village. This research employs the 4D development research method, which comprises four stages: Define, Design, Development, and Disseminate. The development of the Selorejo Cultural Ecology ethnographic photography book was implemented in Pancasila and Citizenship Education as a learning medium for students. This book provides fresh and informative insights for the general public, using easy-to-understand language, and describes both the culture and social characteristics of the Selorejo community.

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### ABSTRAK

*Integrasi pengetahuan masyarakat adat (local wisdom) ke ranah usaha konservasi lingkungan menandai adanya evolusi krusial dalam perputaran peradaban. Hal tersebut dibuktikan dengan berkembangnya pengakuan masyarakat terhadap wawasan ekologi yang otentik serta praktik-praktik berkelanjutan yang senantiasa dilestarikan oleh masyarakat adat di seluruh dunia terkait korelasinya dengan keseimbangan ekosistem selama bertahun-tahun dengan adanya tradisi "Wong Ireng". Kajian ini berfokus pada pengembangan media edukasi yang reflektif dan memiliki nilai estetika secara visual berupa buku etnofotografi seputar kehidupan eko-budaya masyarakat Desa Selorejo. Penelitian ini dimaksudkan sebagai upaya untuk meningkatkan kesadaran dan pengetahuan di kalangan generasi muda Desa Selorejo. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian pengembangan 4D yang dikategorikan melalui empat tahapan yakni Define, Design, Development, dan Disseminate. Pengembangan buku etnofotografi Ekologi Budaya Selorejo ini diimplementasikan pada Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan sebagai media pembelajaran pada murid. Buku ini memberikan wawasan segar dan informatif kepada khalayak umum menggunakan bahasa yang mudah dipahami, menggambarkan baik budaya maupun karakteristik sosial komunitas Selorejo.*

**Kata Kunci:** ekologi budaya; etnofotografi; ketahanan; pendidikan Kewarganegaraan

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## INTRODUCTION

The social character of a community is reflected not only in its patterns of behavior but also in how people understand and interpret their surroundings. In line with this perspective, indigenous knowledge is integral to community life. Taufan et al., in their book "*Kearifan lokal (local wisdom) Indonesia*" stated that Indigenous knowledge (local wisdom) comprises locally grounded insights deeply rooted in the experiences and observations of communities that interact closely and directly with their environment. Local knowledge fundamentally offers unique perspectives and sustainable practices that, even when assessed in nominal or economic terms, are incomparable in value and therefore immensely significant for the sustainability of environmental conservation. Nwankwo, in their book "*Harnessing Indigenous Knowledge for Climate Action: Bridging traditional wisdom,*" stated that the integration of indigenous knowledge into conservation efforts is not merely a legacy of indigenous communities, but also reflects the significance of their collective historical values. Rather, it also represents their brilliant ideas, whose relevance deserves recognition in addressing increasingly urgent environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation.

Eco-cultural resilience is a conceptual framework proposed by indigenous communities to address these challenges. One phenomenon that is a key concern in the study of cultural ecology is the degradation of local eco-cultural knowledge, in which younger generations often have a limited understanding of the ecological wisdom transmitted across generations. Social change, economic modernization, tourism, and emerging consumption patterns often neglect principles of sustainability; consequently, these transformations exert detrimental effects on cultural resilience, or what is referred to as eco-cultural resilience, which had previously developed organically through sustained interactions between humans and their surrounding environment (Laila, 2023). Accordingly, through sacred and traditional practices, indigenous communities have demonstrated cognitive frameworks and capacities that transcend temporal boundaries, particularly in the sustainable management of natural resources. These practices, which have been transmitted intergenerationally and directly embedded within the natural environment, contribute significantly to conservation efforts and the maintenance of ecosystem health (Rasmussen, 2023).

On the other hand, a pressing contemporary challenge lies in bridging the gap in understanding between indigenous knowledge systems and modern scientific approaches more effectively and equitably, and in fostering collaborative partnerships that respect the integrity and legitimacy of both knowledge systems. The Selorejo community serves as a tangible example of how local knowledge can be sustainably preserved while bridging more prudent environmental conservation practices. Selorejo and its social and ecological dynamics offer an intriguing case study for gaining deeper insight into how eco-cultural resilience can be continuously cultivated (Rahmatih et al., 2020). Various local traditional practices that are closely associated with the preservation of local ecosystems reflect a profound understanding of ecological processes and sustainable resource management (Das et al., 2023). By maintaining traditional agricultural practices, forest management, and water conservation grounded in spiritual beliefs, the Selorejo community fosters greater

awareness. It provides valuable insights into the potential integration of indigenous knowledge into broader conservation strategies (Pujiarti et al., 2022).

The presentation of studies on the eco-cultural life of the Selorejo community in the form of a coffee table book was deliberately chosen to enable readers to develop their imagination by immersing themselves in the depth of visual meaning conveyed throughout the book, particularly among university students who tend to prefer learning materials that are easier to comprehend and supported by engaging visual elements (Rohman, 2023). Photography as an art form is often perceived as existing solely for aesthetic appreciation. However, from a deeper perspective, photography essentially emerges through the evolutionary cycle of human cognition, rooted in one of the most primitive human impulses: the desire to communicate or narrate events more profoundly. Storytelling was initially known primarily through oral traditions; however, with the rapid advancement of technology, oral narration alone appears insufficient to satisfy the emotional and intellectual needs of contemporary audiences fully.

This research is grounded in prior studies that inform the development of ethnography-based research. One such study describes an analysis that identifies needs for teaching material development through a curriculum centered on students' potential, needs, interests, and their surrounding environment (Rohman, 2023). Another study that underpins the present research indicates that the ethnography approach is an effective means of stimulating interest and providing a clearer understanding of ancestral culture without requiring physical presence (Nugraha & Noviana, 2024). Furthermore, this visual approach can attract attention and increase curiosity about the activities documented in the book. Consequently, this approach helps strengthen and sustain the continuity of local culture in the era of globalization.

Based on the presentation of the phenomena and fundamental issues underlying this research, the study aims to explore and clearly depict the cultural ecology practices of the Selorejo community through the development of a coffee table book. The resulting ethnography product on cultural ecology is presented as a learning medium that will serve as a resource for university students in integrating eco-cultural resilience values into civic education materials. In this context, students are expected to strengthen their understanding of civic identity, ecological responsibility, and active participation in environmental conservation. Documenting Selorejo's cultural ecology elements through an ethnographic approach is also a primary objective of this study, as such documentation produces authentic and educational visual representations that are well aligned with the social and cultural context of the local community. Longitudinal studies may be necessary to evaluate the long-term impacts of governmental conservation interventions on both ecological and cultural outcomes.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Ethnography as a Visual Approach: Ethnography**

Ethnography is a research and educational method that integrates ethnographic inquiry with photographic techniques to document, analyze, and interpret cultural phenomena (Purnomo, 2024). Ethnography is not merely intended to capture images but also to

reveal cultural narratives embedded within each visual element, such as rituals, artifacts, social spaces, and ecological landscapes. Ethnophotography bridges the fields of art and the social sciences, as its visual outputs can function as both ethnographic data and contextual learning materials (Yasa, 2022). In educational practice, ethnophotography enhances visual literacy, interpretative skills, and students' sensitivity to social and cultural diversity. For example, students can analyze the symbolic meanings of communal activities, cooperation, and environmental ethics through photographs they take during fieldwork (Monteblanco & Moya, 2021). The implementation of ethnophotography requires several methodological stages, including intensive observation, ethical image production, and visual documentation that encompasses semiotic, contextual, and narrative aspects.

Along with its development, ethnophotography has expanded in its approach, one of which involves the use of visual media, subsequently recognized as visual ethnophotography. In this context, ethnography becomes a form of visual ethnography that integrates photographic techniques with ethnographic approaches (Rosaliza et al., 2023). Ethnophotography, as a visual ethnographic approach, does not merely produce aesthetically pleasing images but also presents portraits of both the researcher and the participants. The relevance of ethnophotography is particularly significant in educational contexts, especially as a medium for developing visual literacy and enhancing symbolic-analytical skills related to community practices. In culture and environment-based learning, ethnophotography as a visual ethnographic approach can be utilized to describe and illustrate human-nature interactions, forms of communal cooperation, and ecological ethics that are internalized within the daily lives of local communities (Al Atok et al., 2025).

Thus, ethnophotography, as a visual ethnographic approach, not only contributes to the advancement of the social sciences and anthropology but also serves as a valuable educational resource with the potential to strengthen character formation and ecological citizenship awareness within educational settings (Rohman, 2023). Visual documentation through ethnophotography plays a crucial role in preserving cultural resilience. Photographs function as archives of collective memory, capturing cultural expressions that are at risk of disappearing. For instance, images of agricultural rituals, communal labor, or traditional ceremonies can serve as both educational materials and historical evidence of cultural sustainability. In Selorejo, eco-cultural resilience is reflected in the community's ability to sustain organic farming traditions, actively involve residents in tourism management, and balance economic activities with environmental conservation.

### **Cultural Ecology as a Conceptual Framework**

Julian H. Steward introduced the concept of cultural ecology to explain the reciprocal relationship between humans and their environment. Cultural ecology emphasizes that culture cannot be separated from the ecological context in which human life is embedded. Every cultural practice represents an adaptation to environmental conditions, natural resources, and ecological change (Shanti et al., 2021). In the context of Selorejo, this relationship is reflected in how local communities manage orange plantations, conserve water resources, and adapt agricultural traditions to natural cycles. Selorejo can thus be understood as a cultural ecology that not only illustrates physical interactions between humans and nature but also embodies symbolic values such as respect for nature, beliefs in

cosmic balance, and cooperation (gotong royong) as expressions of social harmony (Shanti et al., 2021).

Septriani, in her book "*Antropologi Ekologi*" stated that cultural ecology, as a conceptual framework, views culture as an adaptive system in which patterns of behavior, traditions, and everyday practices reflect human efforts to maintain ecological sustainability. This framework enables an understanding of cultural change processes and how culture influences environmental quality and sustainability. As a conceptual framework, cultural ecology provides a foundation for analyzing three main aspects: 1) The physical environment, including climate, topography, and natural resources; 2) technologies and environmental utilization practices, such as agriculture, water management, and food production; and 3) social organization and value systems that have developed as consequences of the interactions established between humans and their environment. As a conceptual framework, cultural ecology is highly relevant for understanding practices of eco-cultural resilience, as it explains a community's capacity to sustain traditions, identity, and ecological systems amid various social and environmental challenges.

### **Cultural and Eco-Cultural Resilience**

The concept of cultural resilience refers to a community's capacity to sustain and adapt its cultural practices in response to external pressures without losing its identity. This capacity encompasses values, traditions, social structures, and culture-based creative economies. Within the eco-cultural dimension, resilience refers to a community's ability to maintain a balance between cultural practices and ecological sustainability. Key characteristics of cultural resilience include adaptive change without loss of core cultural identity, the capacity to preserve fundamental values that sustain community life, and cultural transformation that remains relevant in new contexts rather than merely preserving longstanding traditions. This concept does not treat cultural resilience and cultural ecology as separate entities; instead, they are understood holistically, in which community resilience depends on the dynamics and harmony between them. Cultural and ecological resilience can be analyzed through three interrelated layers: 1) Ecological resilience, reflected in efforts to maintain soil, water, and forest quality; 2) Socio-cultural resilience, evident in cultural practices, rituals, and local knowledge systems; and 3) Economic or livelihood resilience, observed in strategies for sustaining livelihoods that are compatible with the community's social conditions (Hikmah & Lestari, 2024).

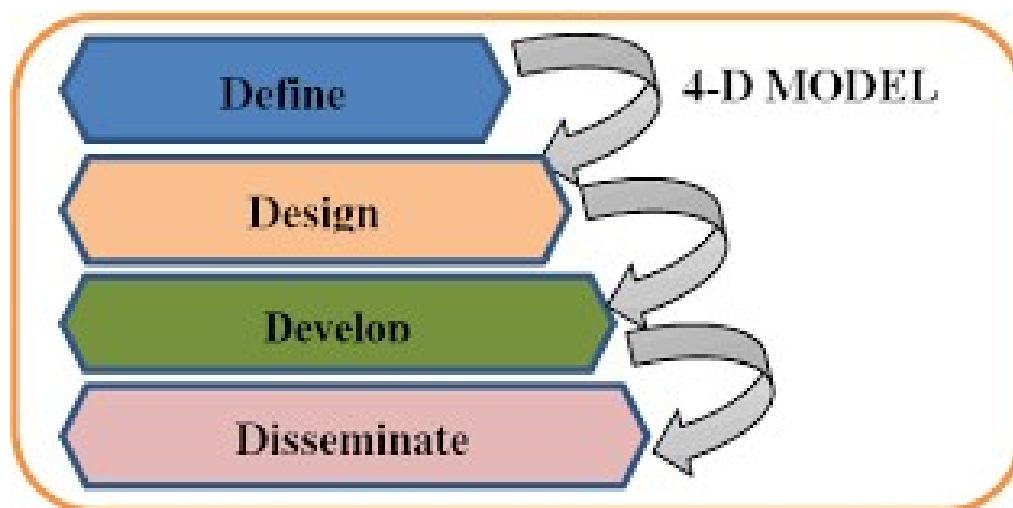
### **Ethnophotography as a Learning Resource in Civic Education**

Integrating ethnophotography into Civic Education offers a new paradigm for values and character education. Civic Education is not limited to normative theory but also emphasizes the lived experiences of citizens within their social and cultural contexts (Sartika & Megasari, 2025). Through ethnophotography, students can develop ecological citizenship and an awareness of their responsibility to preserve culture and the environment. Ethnophotography serves as an authentic learning resource because it presents real-life situations that can be analyzed directly (Rohman, 2023). For example, ethnographic photographs from Selorejo can be utilized to discuss cooperative values in agricultural management, citizen participation

in tourism development, and democratic practices within local governance. This approach aligns with the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), which connect academic content with real-world experiences. Students may engage in participatory ethnography projects by directly interacting with communities to identify socio-cultural and environmental issues. Their photographs can then be analyzed in classroom discussions to foster critical thinking, social empathy, and civic responsibility. Thus, ethnography is not merely an aesthetic medium but an educational instrument that cultivates moral and ecological intelligence.

## METHODS

The research method employed in this study is a research and development (R&D) approach aimed at producing an instructional product suitable for educational use. The development research approach was selected because it does not merely focus on describing phenomena but also involves designing, producing, and testing an instructional media product capable of addressing concrete learning needs. This study was conducted in Selorejo Village, Dau District, Malang Regency, East Java. Participants included residents across various age groups and professions, as well as community leaders and cultural practitioners, such as farmers and religious figures. Direct involvement in community activities provided an authentic, contextual understanding of daily life, supported by photographic documentation and field notes. Furthermore, interviews were held with key informants, including customary elders and hamlet heads, using a semi-structured format. In the context of this study, the product developed is a Selorejo cultural ethnography designed as a learning resource for the Civic Education course; therefore, systematic processes of design, validation, and field testing are required.



**Figure 1.** The 4D Research and Development Method  
*Source: Authors' Documentation 2025*

The research and development (R&D) model, particularly the 4D model, was proposed by Thiagarajan. Accordingly, this study adopts the 4D development model, which comprises four stages: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate (see **Figure 1**). It emphasizes the importance of four main stages in the development of a product:

1. In this phase, the researcher defines several key data indicators to be examined, including research gap analysis, target audience identification, and product design objectives;
2. Design, in this phase, involved planning visual observations and determining cultural and ecological categories to be documented, such as rituals, land management practices, human-nature relationships, and cultural resilience practices;
3. Develop, a longer period of time was required compared to the previous two stages in order to collect field research data and materials, as well as to begin the practical realization of the product; and
4. Disseminate, it represents the final phase of the 4D development model and focuses on the mass and systematic publication of the developed product through various media. This model is well-suited to the development of educational products, such as digital coffee table books, that emphasize the presentation of visual elements integrated with informative narrative content.

Analysis extended to archival materials, historical photographs, and written references to strengthen the community's visual and historical narratives. The results of the analysis served as the basis for designing the ethnography book, taking into account principles of editorial design and visual ethics. The book was designed using a visual storytelling format that integrates images and narrative text to create a deep, contextual reading experience. Layout, typography, and photo framing were carefully selected to support the narrative flow of the cultural ecology theme presented.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Analysis of Selorejo Cultural Ecology Study through the 4D Model**

Findings from the initial analysis were systematically translated into the design of the ethnography book, balancing aesthetic principles with ethical visual considerations. The book was developed using a visual storytelling format that integrates images and narrative text to create a deep and contextual reading experience. The selection of layout, typography, and photo framing was deliberately tailored to support the narrative flow of the cultural ecology themes presented.

### **Define**

A unique research gap explains how local indigenous values have contributed to ecological sustainability in the tourism area of Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency (Pratama, 2022). The distinctive contribution of the local village community highlighted in this study motivated the researcher to conduct a similar investigation in a different geographical context, namely Malang Regency. Thus, the research gap—emphasizing the selection of a different research location—serves as the initial foundation for this study. The target audience of the research on Selorejo Cultural Ecology includes a broad public characterized by openness and cooperative attitudes toward cultural diversity. Empirically, the target audience encompasses youth, tourists, adults, and the elderly who seek a deeper understanding of the cultural life

of the Selorejo community and its implications for environmental sustainability, particularly concerning water resources and forest areas.

The primary objective of this coffee table book is to enhance the understanding of domestic and international audiences of the interconnection between the environment and indigenous values and traditions in Selorejo Village, Malang Regency. From a geographical perspective, data indicate that the majority of Selorejo Village consists of agrarian landscapes, including rice fields, orange plantations, and village forests. Consequently, farming constitutes the primary livelihood of residents. The presence of a well-preserved natural environment is a key indicator of community well-being, serving not only as a foundation for daily subsistence but also as a driver of the village economy. From a cultural standpoint, Selorejo Village also possesses inherited local cultural traditions that have been preserved across generations, such as Merti Wono (a forest thanksgiving ritual accompanied by reforestation), Jagong Alas (a deliberative forum involving village elders, residents, and youth conducted through dialogue in the forest), and the Wong Ireng dance.

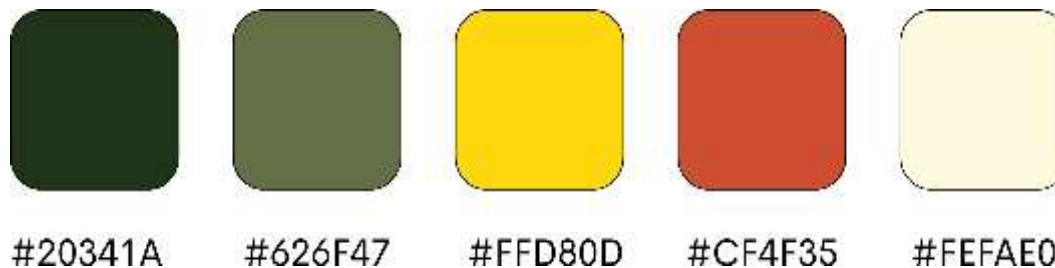
## Design

The editorial concept adopted is organized around two central lines: a main theme and a sub-theme. The main theme of the book is "*Selorejo Cultural Ecology*", while the sub-theme is "*Voices from the Slopes of Mount Kawi*". The content structure is systematically divided into chapters, beginning with an introductory section followed by six thematic discussions: (1) "*Mengenal Alam dan Manusia Solerejo*" (Understanding Nature and Humanity in Selorejo); (2) "*Jejak Pengetahuan Lokal: Alam Sebagai Guru*" (Local Knowledge: Nature as a Teacher); (3) "*Ritual dan Konservasi: Spiritualitas untuk Ekologi*" (Rituals and Conservation: Spirituality for Ecology); (4) "*Tantangan dan Resiliansi: Melintasi Krisis dengan Kebudayaan*" (Challenges and Resilience: Navigating Crisis through Culture); (5) "*Living Culture Sebagai Bentuk Adaptasi dan Perlawanan*" (Living Culture as a Form of Adaptation and Resistance); and (6) "*Warisan untuk yang Akan Datang*" (A Legacy for Future Generations).



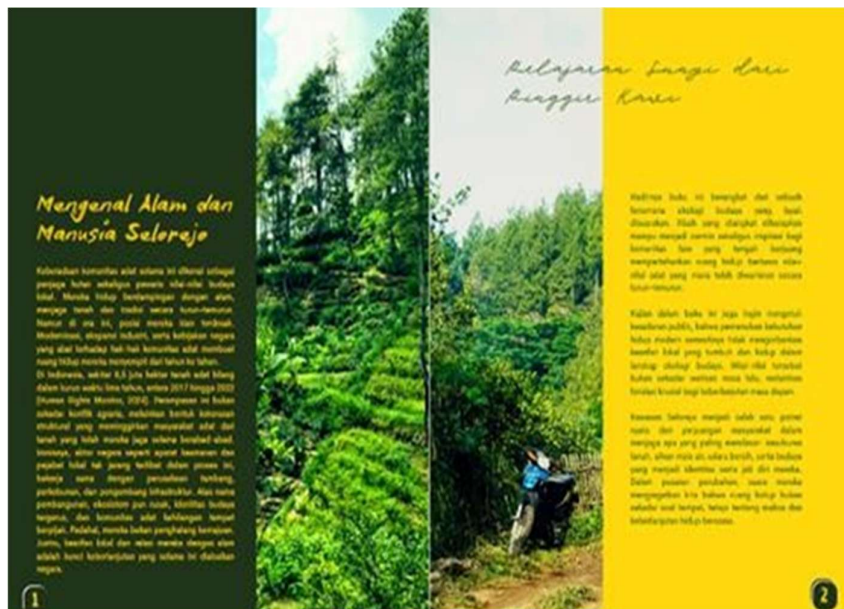
**Figure 2.** Design Stage of Development  
*Source: Authors' Documentation 2025*

The visual implementation of this thematic structure is presented in the table of contents design shown in **Figure 2**. During the visual design stage, significant attention was given to selecting compelling documentary imagery, ensuring typographic legibility, and defining a color palette. The curation, layout, and post-processing of these images were executed with precision, yielding visual representations that range from expansive landscapes to intimate, unembellished portraits. To capture this authenticity, the photography team conducted several field revisits, fostering a deep rapport with the community. Beyond aesthetic considerations, these direct interactions provided essential empirical insights into the daily dynamics of Selorejo Village. Consequently, the final compilation presents a harmonious blend of genres, including natural landscapes, documentary photography, and portraits of local cultural figures. This book is designed in a portrait-oriented rectangular format, measuring 28.5 cm × 37.5 cm × 3 cm. It features a hardcover finish and full-color printing. This design choice was intended to create a visually pleasing appearance and to encourage readers to spend more time engaging with and exploring the book's pages. The book consists of 64 pages printed on art paper.



**Figure 3.** Color Palette used in the Ethnophotography Book  
*Source: Authors' Documentation 2025*

The dominant color palette in **Figure 3** of this ethnophotography book is characterized by warm, natural tones. It includes yellow, dark green, green, cream, terracotta, and white as the primary background colors for the layout. The selected color palette is strategically aligned with the Selorejo Cultural Ecology theme, utilizing a spectrum of earth tones. The main colors of this book are yellow, green, and white. In the psychology of color, yellow signifies warmth and is associated with joy (Jonaskaite et al., 2019). It is also identified as a stimulating hue that encourages an external orientation, catalyzes decisive and vigorous action (Elliot & Maier, 2014). Furthermore, green symbolizes natural freshness and harmony and is identified as a restorative hue that facilitates relaxation, fosters internal reflection, and promotes a sense of calm and stable engagement (Elliot & Maier, 2014). White often symbolizes purity, innocence, truth, and goodness (Ćurčić et al., 2019; Rajabaliyeva, 2024). The use of diverse layout styles in the photography book serves as one of its main attractions for readers. In Selorejo Cultural Ecology, the layout is designed to remain simple while maintaining a minimalist aesthetic through harmonious placement and font selection.



**Figure 4.** Minimalist Presentation of Photographs and Narratives in the Book  
 Source: Authors' Documentation 2025

On several pages, the grid system consists of one to two columns, allowing visual variation without compromising the minimalist impression (see **Figure 4**). The use of minimalist space is also a key design element in this book. In addition to conveying a sense of simplicity and elegance, minimalist space helps prevent reader fatigue and boredom, thereby enhancing reading comfort. Layout refers to the arrangement of design elements within a given medium to support the concept or message being conveyed. The layout design employs a mixed layout to enhance visual variety throughout the book. This approach represents a contemporary approach to book layout design aimed at harmonizing structure and innovative aesthetics to enhance the educational narrative. Implementing a mixed-layout approach in the learning process has been shown to improve individual performance in information comprehension (Adhani & Remijin, 2024). Finally, the typography in the Selorejo Cultural Ecology book adopts a simple typographic style, carefully arranged to align with the target segment of the design concept.

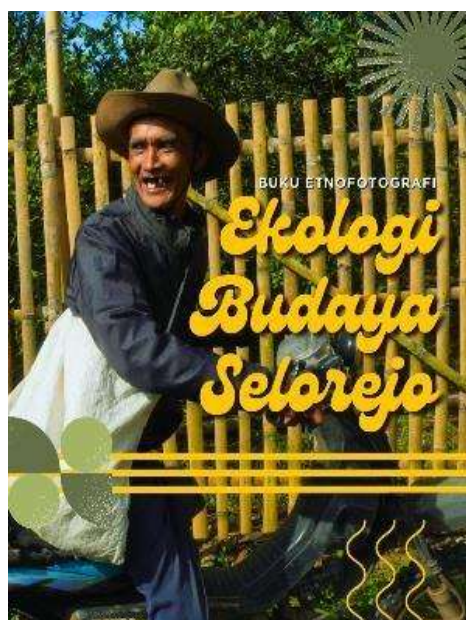


**Figure 5.** Types of Fonts Used in the Book (From top to bottom: Genty, Biro Script Plus, Cerebri)  
 Source: Authors' Documentation 2025

The layout of the ethnography book is designed to be as engaging as possible in order to minimize reader fatigue and maintain reading interest. The decorative typographic elements applied in this book are inspired by the gateway at the boundary between Malang City and Malang Regency, leading toward Dau District. This visual reference conveys simplicity and clarity while symbolizing a transition from urban civilization to rural life. The typographic system employed in this book consists of two primary handwriting-style fonts—Genty and Biro Script Plus—and one supporting serif font for longer narrative texts, namely Cerebri (See: **Figure 5**). The selection of these typefaces reflects characteristics that are flexible and simple yet firm and reflective, aligning with the book's overall visual and conceptual identity. The Genty font is used for main titles because its thickness enhances readability, thereby ensuring effective communication of information. Furthermore, the strategic use of enlarged characters and contrasting palettes, supported by a systematic arrangement, facilitates data accessibility for a diverse range of readers (Setiawan & Amayati, 2025).

## Develop

The collected research materials were then systematically mapped and organized to ensure that the final product achieved both conceptual relevance and visual appeal. The data collection methods employed in this study comprised three approaches: Photo Essay, Oral History, and Participatory Mapping. The photo essay method was used to document everyday life, which illustrates human-environment interactions in Selorejo Village. Oral history involved recording spoken narratives from older generations about environmental changes in Selorejo. Participatory mapping was conducted collaboratively with community members to identify areas and elements considered ecologically and culturally sacred by the local population. The phase of producing visual content accompanied by narrative text required approximately one to two months.



**Figure 6.** Development of the Book Cover Design  
*Source: Authors' Documentation 2025*

The initial draft of the book's content structure was developed by composing narratives aligned with the research's central sub-theme and grounded in empirical findings. Following the completion of the initial draft, the process proceeded to the expert review stage. Expert review involved validating the chronological accuracy and credibility of the data by academic specialists in ecology and culture, as well as by local cultural practitioners. After the data were validated, visual editing and narrative revisions were undertaken to enhance reader engagement, particularly for Generation Z audiences. During the visual editing stage, the photographer applied color grading techniques consistent with the predetermined color palette to ensure visual coherence throughout the digital book.

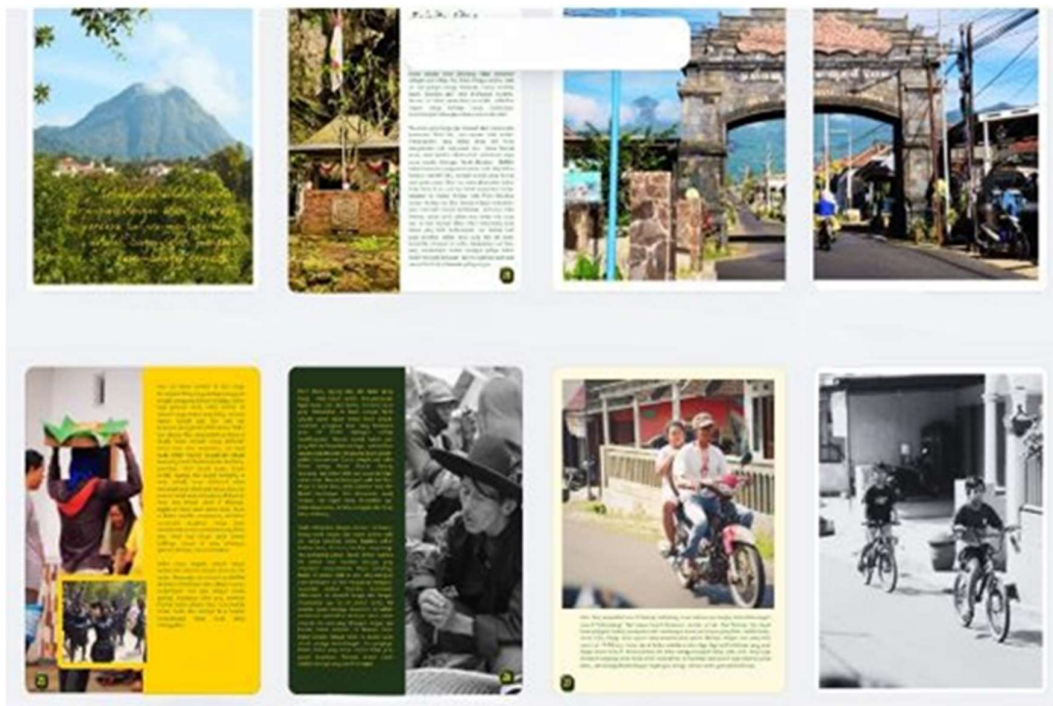


**Figure 7.** Layout Design in the Book  
*Source: Authors' Documentation 2025*

Layout design was also guided by established principles of good design (see **Figure 7**). Finally, the refinement process included improvements in language use and narrative structure to ensure clarity, coherence, and readability.

### Disseminate

The dissemination strategy for the book *Ekologi Budaya Selorejo* employs both print and digital publication formats. Print publication is carried out through collaboration with local publishers to produce a hardcover coffee table book printed in full color on high-quality art paper, following the predetermined size and design specifications (see **Figure 8**). This printed edition is planned for a limited, high-quality print run.



**Figure 8.** Mixed Layout Design in the Book  
*Source: Author Documentation 2025*

In addition, digital publication is implemented by converting the book into an e-book format and distributing it through interactive reading platforms such as iPusnas, Google Play Books, and FlipHTML5. This dual dissemination approach is expected to broaden the book's reach among academics, educators, students, and the general public, while strengthening its role as an educational medium that promotes eco-cultural awareness and sustainability. The dissemination strategy involves photography exhibitions and thematic installations in academic and public spaces to highlight marginalized environmental and cultural discourses. This is complemented by a social media campaign using the hashtag *#SuaraDariLerengKawi* to promote this book and raise awareness of local wisdom. Distribution targets include educational institutions, literacy-oriented commercial spaces (e.g., cafes), and tourism stakeholders, including regional offices and cultural preservation groups. This collaborative, multi-sectoral approach aims to internalize conservation values and cultural traditions within the broader society.

## **Discussion**

### **The Cultural Ecology Space of Selorejo**

Selorejo Village is located on the eastern slopes of Mount Kawi, specifically in the Dau District of Malang Regency. Administratively, this village is part of Malang Regency. Administratively, Selorejo Village is part of Malang Regency. The village directly borders Petung Sewu Village to the west, Gading Kulon Village to the north, Tegalweru Village to the east, and Petung Sewu Village to the south. These village boundaries reflect the diversity of natural elements

and dominant ecosystems in the area (Maulana et al., 2024). The village's beautiful natural landscape is also a major tourist attraction for most visitors. Its location in the northern part of Malang Regency makes Selorejo Village easily accessible from various directions. From the center of Malang City, the journey to the village takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes, depending on traffic conditions and the route taken. This village is not only seen from its geographical perspective, but also from the interconnectedness between humans and their environment. The community's livelihoods depend on fields, orange groves, and small-scale livestock farming.

While Selorejo, located in the Malang Raya region, is not a bustling hub, citrus farming is a key focus in Selorejo Village. Nearly every plot of land, large or small, is planted with citrus trees, whose sweet, delicious fruit thrives. The community utilizes citrus plantations not only as a source of fruit for export to various regions but also as a means of supporting ecotourism. Varieties ranging from Baby Malang oranges to Keprok Batu grow abundantly in this area (Aulawi & Susilowato, 2022). However, citrus is not the only crop sustained by Selorejo's soil. Several plots have been converted for vegetable cultivation, thereby meeting household needs while also supplying the local market. Agriculture, or the agrarian lifestyle, in Selorejo Village is not merely an economic activity but also a collective entrepreneurial identity for the villagers. Amidst agriculture, the service sector is beginning to play a role. Residents are pioneering tourism routes based on local potential. Fruit-picking tours are among the factors that attract tourists; picking oranges directly from the trees and taking home the fruit creates a unique impression.

Not far from the plantation fields of Selorejo Village, the Bedengan tourist area offers additional experiences, such as camping under pine trees. The river surrounding Bedengan provides a pleasant atmosphere and tranquility for visitors, particularly those from urban areas (Pratama et al., 2025). Tourism activities do not originate solely from the local government but rather from the Selorejo community's cooperation and perseverance in identifying tourism opportunities (Sulastri et al., 2023). Selorejo Village shows a process of socio-economic transformation based on the utilization of natural resources and the preservation of local traditions, reflected in the integration of agricultural activities with the development of community-based businesses. The independence of Selorejo Village supports sustainable development practices and contributes to strengthening national development in the Mount Kawi Slopes area.

From a socio-economic perspective, Selorejo Village is well-known as a center for agrotourism, particularly fruit-picking, where nearly every community farmland is planted with orange trees. This activity has become one of the village's iconic attractions, drawing visitors from various regions. However, it is not merely an economic endeavor; the community has developed an adaptive pattern that integrates agricultural practices, communal cooperation, and environmental conservation into its daily lives. Selorejo Village continues to develop cultural and community-based tourism potentials, including ornamental plants, organic vegetables, and local cultural practices, as part of a strategy to strengthen the village's tourism identity. The interactions between the community and their environment through farming, garden management, and tourism activities demonstrate a reciprocal relationship between the natural system and local culture (Maulana et al., 2024).

In the center of Selorejo Village stands Gumuk Hamlet, a residential area located slightly higher than the other hamlets in Selorejo Village. Gumuk is a relatively remote hamlet bordering the forest. It remains one of the hamlets whose natural beauty and sustainability remain largely untouched by modernity. For the Gumuk residents, the forest is not merely a backdrop; it is a sacred living space and source of life. They enter the fields daily to gather grass for their livestock and cultivate intercropping. All of this is done consciously to maintain the balance of vegetation, not simply to harvest and benefit from it. The majority of the population are traditional farmers who depend on the slopes of Mount Kawi for their livelihood (Pratamawati et al., 2021). For the residents of Dusun Gumuk, the mountains and forests are also regarded as sacred spaces imbued with spiritual power. From these areas, the community draws water and other essential natural resources.

This belief shapes agricultural practices and social structures based on cooperation (gotong royong) and environmental sustainability. It is therefore natural that many traditional rituals are held throughout the year, serving as expressions of gratitude, requests for protection, and as a spiritual bond between humans and nature. From this, it can be observed that Selorejo Village represents a tangible example of the community's efforts to safeguard the most fundamental aspects of life: fertile soil, flowing springs, clean air, and cultural practices that define their identity and heritage. Amidst ongoing social and environmental changes, their endeavors remind the broader society that a living space is not merely a place of residence, but a realm where collective solidarity gives meaning and ensures the sustainability of shared life (Pratamawati et al., 2021).

### **Ethnophotography as a Medium for Conserving Traditional Knowledge of the Selorejo Community**

Ethnophotography, as a component of visual ethnography, functions not only as an aesthetic documentation tool but also as a research approach that captures, depicts, and disseminates a community's traditional knowledge through visual representations that both internal members and external audiences can interpret. This approach leverages the narrative power of images to bring local socio-cultural contexts and ecological practices to life, while also creating opportunities for dialogue between researchers and participants (Nykiyoruk et al., 2011). In modern conservation, conservation photography has been recognized as a powerful educational medium, capable of raising public awareness and supporting environmental advocacy. Its effectiveness, however, depends on how visual practices are integrated with local knowledge, community engagement, and ethical, reflective communication strategies (Farnsworth, 2011; Saif et al., 2024).

Studies on the integration of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) indicate that systematic documentation of TEK—including context-based visual records—provides practical benefits for habitat restoration, species selection for recovery, and adaptive monitoring. This underscores that ethnographically rich knowledge archives directly contribute to community-based conservation strategies (Haq et al., 2023). Photo-based participatory techniques—often referred to as photovoice or participatory photography—provide collective mechanisms that enable communities to control the narrative of their representations, strengthen local capacities for critical reflection, and translate implicit knowledge into formats accessible to policymakers. The impact on traditional knowledge conservation is a shift from top-down

documentation toward co-production of knowledge that preserves cultural ownership (Nykiforuk et al., 2011; Budig et al., 2018).

However, methodological analyses highlight ethical and practical challenges, including representation bias, copyright and image ownership issues, power imbalances between researchers and communities, and the tendency of conservation institutions to overlook the biocultural aspects of traditional knowledge if protection processes focus solely on access-benefit mechanisms without safeguarding cultural context (Rakotondrabe, 2021; Saif et al., 2024). Conceptually, the literature advocates an integrated approach—combining documentary ethnography, biocultural protocols, and participatory methods such as photovoice—as the most promising strategy for conserving traditional knowledge. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also provides empirical data for environmental management and restoration policies.

Specifically, for research on the Selorejo community, this framework suggests the application of participatory ethnography aligned with local biocultural protocols, complemented by ethical guidelines (informed consent, access/ownership rights of images, and use of outputs), ensuring that the conservation of traditional knowledge remains connected to the social and spatial contexts in which it is produced (Haq et al., 2023; Rakotondrabe, 2021; Farnsworth, 2011). Consumer insight is a conclusion drawn from the study of consumer behavior, providing a deeper understanding of the thoughts and habitual actions of a target audience. Based on consumer insights gathered from the target audience, it was concluded that the elders of Selorejo support the creation of an ethnography project on the Eco-Cultural Society of Selorejo. They expect the book to highlight the community's culture, religious values, and social life.

The ethnography book, *"Eco-Cultural Selorejo"* is expected to provide readers with insights into the lives of the Selorejo community and to convey positive moral values inherent in their everyday practices. The central concept guiding the design of the ethnography book on the Eco-Cultural Community of Selorejo is *"Voices from the Slopes of Kawi."* The meaning of this keyword emphasizes how the people of Selorejo live and respond empirically to the pressures of modernity, which often overlook environmental impacts. The concept *"Voices from the Slopes of Kawi"* is expressed in Indonesian, making it universally accessible and easily understood by diverse audiences. Its style is straightforward and clear. In the ethnography book, the concept *"Voices from the Slopes of Kawi"* is used to explore several crucial subtopics, including the community's religious life, the implicit meanings of rituals, and their relationship to the principles of ecophilosophy.

### **Ethnography as a Teaching Resource for Citizenship Education Courses**

Ethnography, as an interdisciplinary branch of visual cultural studies, emphasizes photography as a multifunctional medium for preserving social memory, documenting historical narratives, and communicating social realities—both explicit and implicit—through visual elements. In the context of citizenship education, ethnography extends beyond the mere technical practice of photography. It functions as a deep visual analytical tool for interpreting cultural meanings, social value hierarchies, and the construction of collective identity embedded within photographic compositions. Through this integration,

ethnophotography emerges as an authentic and contextual teaching resource that strengthens pedagogical approaches grounded in local cultural values and national diversity, thereby facilitating a holistic understanding of social and political dynamics within Indonesian society.

Furthermore, the application of ethnophotography in the citizenship education curriculum not only enhances students' analytical skills through visual exploration but also encourages critical reflection on cultural stereotypes and the role of photography in fostering multicultural awareness. This, in turn, enriches academic discourse on national identity in the digital era. Therefore, Rose 2022 in "*Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*" stated ethnophotography plays a strategic role in transforming learning into a more immersive and inclusive process, enabling students to actively engage in reconstructing cultural narratives through the photographic lens while maintaining ethical integrity in the visual representation of communities. Integrating ethnophotography into citizenship education courses requires a curriculum design that synergistically combines visual analysis with contextual learning, thereby creating a more in-depth and practical pedagogical framework. This approach intrinsically connects indigenous knowledge, local cultural elements, and citizenship education theory, aiming to cultivate ethical and responsible civic attitudes and behaviors.

The use of ethnophotography as a teaching resource facilitates learning experiences that go beyond theoretical boundaries by activating cultural literacy and encouraging critical reflection on socio-cultural dynamics in the context of citizenship. Pink (2007) in her book "*Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research*" stated that this allows students to internalize democratic values through authentic visual exploration. Research has shown that ethnophotography-based learning significantly strengthens character formation and democratic values among students, with broad pedagogical implications for higher education (Romero et al., 2024). Furthermore, this approach enriches both cognitive and affective dimensions by utilizing digital technology to integrate visual narratives into collaborative discussions, thereby supporting the development of holistic citizenship competencies that are responsive to contemporary social challenges (Banks, 2008). Consequently, ethnophotography functions as a catalyst for curriculum transformation, enabling students to engage in interdisciplinary analysis that combines visual anthropology with civic education principles, ultimately strengthening social cohesion and fostering multicultural understanding in pluralistic societies (Harper, 2002).

In the context of Citizenship Education (PKn) courses, one of the challenges is how to present material in a way that is contextual, relevant, and able to actualize citizenship values in a living, practical manner, rather than purely theoretical. The use of ethnophotography books was implemented with students of the Pancasila and Citizenship Education program at Universitas Negeri Malang (Al Atok et al., 2025). Ethnophotography was utilized as a framework for documenting local socio-cultural life, serving as a learning resource. This approach provides visual experiences, cultural observation, and social narratives that can be used as a foundation for teaching citizenship values. The integration of ethnophotography into citizenship education represents an innovative pedagogical approach, combining ethnographic visual analysis with citizenship principles. This facilitates a deeper understanding of socio-cultural dynamics within a pluralistic society. Through this method, students are encouraged to analyze images and visual narratives that represent indigenous

knowledge and local cultural elements, which are then connected to citizenship education theory to cultivate ethical attitudes, responsible behaviors, and democratic competencies (Larasati et al., 2025). Survey data indicate a strong interest among students in using the ethnophotography book. Out of 40 students surveyed on a scale of 1-4, 37 students rated it 4 (very good), while 3 students rated it 3 (good), demonstrating positive reception and engagement with the resource.

The use of ethnophotography as a teaching tool not only enriches the cognitive dimension through contextual exploration but also fosters cultural literacy and critical reflection on social issues such as ethnic diversity, human rights, and civic participation, which are essential to higher education in the era of globalization (Rohman, 2023). This is supported by empirical findings that ethnophotography-based learning enhances student engagement in interdisciplinary discussions, enabling them to internalize citizenship values through authentic and collaborative visual experiences, thereby fostering a character responsive to contemporary challenges such as intolerance and social polarization (Yulista et al., 2023). Thus, this integration emphasizes the role of higher education as an agent of transformation, where ethnophotography serves as a bridge between visual anthropology theory and civic education practice, ultimately strengthening social cohesion and multicultural understanding among younger generations (Yasa, 2020).

Although ethnophotography offers significant potential to enrich citizenship education through a visually immersive approach to culture and social identity, its implementation is constrained by various structural challenges. These include limited access to technological resources and supporting infrastructure, deficiencies in visual literacy among educators who often lack proficiency in interpreting images as pedagogical tools, and the imperative to design learning materials that are not only locally relevant but also aesthetically and cognitively engaging. Therefore, strategic initiatives, such as intensive training programs for teachers, are essential to develop ethnophotography competencies that are integrated with a deep understanding of local cultural contexts, thereby enabling the method to be fully exploited in formal educational settings. The positive implications of integrating ethnophotography include substantial improvements in the quality of the learning process, an emphasis on direct empirical experience, and the development of cultural literacy, which gradually strengthens national identity and fosters greater tolerance within civic life.

Furthermore, Tuhiwai Smith in her book *"Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples"* stated that empirical studies indicate that visual approaches like ethnophotography can facilitate more inclusive multicultural understanding, as illustrated in research on social education in the Southeast Asian context, where such techniques not only enhance student engagement but also reduce cultural stereotypes through authentic representation. These challenges, however, can be mitigated through interdisciplinary collaboration among academics, education practitioners, and local stakeholders, ultimately contributing to a pedagogical transformation that is more responsive to social diversity, in line with Rose, in *"Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials"*.

## CONCLUSION

The cultural ecology of Selorejo presents an intriguing dynamic for integrating indigenous knowledge into environmental conservation efforts to realize the concept of eco-cultural resilience. Addressing this challenge requires collaborative initiatives to empower the Selorejo community in safeguarding their cultural heritage, traditional practices, and ecological integrity. By recognizing the interconnectedness of culture and environment, this study emphasizes the importance of fostering eco-cultural resilience through community-based conservation approaches and policy interventions that prioritize indigenous rights and knowledge. The ethnophotography book serves as a medium for capturing and summarizing the multifaceted aspects of life in Selorejo. It is envisioned as an alternative platform that provides the broader public with comprehensive information about the enduring cultural practices of Selorejo, presented as a curated collection of photographs. The design of the ethnophotography book "*Selorejo Cultural Ecology*" aims to provide fresh and informative insights to a general audience through accessible language, while illustrating the culture and social characteristics of the Selorejo community. Moreover, through this publication, the researchers hope to cultivate public awareness, foster appreciation, and encourage the preservation of cultural heritage across Malang Regency. Future research could focus on developing a comprehensive framework for assessing and monitoring eco-cultural resilience within the Selorejo indigenous community. Further investigations are needed to explore the potential integration of traditional ecological knowledge with modern technology to enhance local resource management and to understand how the local community adapts to waves of contemporary change.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

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