

Multi-Stakeholder Governance for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage

Djuni Thamrin¹, Emi Winarno²

¹Universitas Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya, ²Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kepolisian (STIK-PTIK)

Email: Djuni.thamrin@dsn.ubharajaya.ac.id,
ptik.emi.wiranto@gmail.com

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Abstract : *The safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has evolved beyond cultural preservation into a complex public governance challenge requiring coordinated action among governments, local communities, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, and law enforcement agencies. Although the UNESCO 2003 Convention advocates community-centred safeguarding, existing studies largely conceptualize collaboration as an implementation mechanism rather than as an institutional governance architecture. This study addresses this gap by developing a Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model (CMSGM) that institutionalizes collaborative governance for the sustainable safeguarding of ICH in Indonesia. A qualitative case study was employed using the Kebaya Goes to UNESCO initiative as the empirical context. Data were collected through five Focus*



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Group Discussions, semi-structured interviews with 145 purposively and snowball-selected informants, participant observation, and documentary analysis. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, supported by triangulation and trustworthiness procedures. The findings reveal that effective ICH safeguarding depends on institutionalized collaboration rather than regulatory intervention alone. Community participation remains constrained by government-led decision-making, highlighting the need to reposition communities as co-producers of public value. The study further demonstrates that adaptive governance emerges through the integration of Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing, with the Indonesian National Police serving as a boundary-spanning institution that facilitates coordination, conflict mediation, and cultural security. The proposed CMSGM advances governance theory by shifting collaboration from a policy implementation mechanism to an institutional policy design. This study contributes to the literature on cultural governance by offering an integrative governance framework that strengthens legitimacy, collaborative capacity, and the long-term sustainability of living heritage, while providing practical guidance for public policy reform in Indonesia and other culturally diverse societies.

Keywords :

Intangible Cultural Heritage; Collaborative Governance; Multi-Stakeholder Partnership; Polycentric Governance; Collaborative Policing; Public Governance; Cultural Security; Public Value.

INTRODUCTION

The safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has emerged as one of the most significant governance challenges in contemporary cultural policy. Over the past two decades, rapid globalization, digital transformation, urbanization, demographic change, commercialization, and the growing mobility of communities have fundamentally altered the social environments in which cultural traditions are created, transmitted, and sustained. Unlike tangible heritage, which can be preserved through physical conservation and legal protection, intangible cultural heritage exists only through continuous social practice, collective memory, and intergenerational knowledge transmission. Consequently, safeguarding living heritage extends far beyond preserving

cultural artefacts or documenting traditional practices; it requires maintaining the institutional, social, and cultural conditions that enable communities to continuously reproduce their cultural identity. This transformation has shifted the discourse on heritage safeguarding from a predominantly conservation-oriented agenda toward a broader public governance challenge that requires coordinated action across multiple sectors and institutions.

The adoption of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage marked a significant turning point in this transformation by repositioning communities as the primary custodians of living heritage rather than passive beneficiaries of state intervention. The Convention introduced a community-centred safeguarding paradigm, emphasizing that cultural sustainability depends on the active participation of heritage bearers throughout policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and intergenerational transmission. This principle fundamentally challenged the conventional state-centred model of cultural management, in which governments exercised exclusive authority over heritage preservation through administrative regulation and bureaucratic control. Instead, safeguarding has increasingly been understood as a collaborative process in which governments facilitate, rather than monopolize, the governance of cultural resources.

Reflecting this paradigm shift, recent scholarship has increasingly examined safeguarding through the lens of governance rather than conservation. Research has expanded beyond issues of inventorying, documentation, and heritage nomination to explore collaborative governance, stakeholder participation, institutional resilience, community empowerment, digital transformation, and public value creation. These studies consistently demonstrate that sustainable safeguarding depends not solely on regulatory capacity but also on the ability of public institutions to establish collaborative arrangements that mobilize diverse forms of knowledge, authority, and resources.

Collaborative governance enhances policy legitimacy through deliberative decision-making, while multi-stakeholder partnerships strengthen implementation capacity by integrating governments, communities, academia, civil society organizations, cultural practitioners, media, and the private sector into collective action. Similarly, polycentric governance provides a

complementary perspective by explaining how multiple centres of authority can coordinate adaptively to manage complex public resources whose sustainability depends upon distributed knowledge and shared responsibility.

Despite these important theoretical developments, the literature remains fragmented in several respects. *First*, collaborative governance research continues to conceptualize collaboration primarily as an implementation mechanism characterized by dialogue, trust-building, facilitative leadership, and stakeholder engagement. Although these dimensions are indispensable for successful collaboration, considerably less attention has been devoted to collaboration as an institutional architecture embedded within public policy design. Consequently, existing studies provide limited explanation of how authority, accountability, resource allocation, and decision-making responsibilities should be institutionally organized to sustain collaboration beyond individual programmes or political administrations.

Second, studies on multi-stakeholder partnerships have developed extensively within environmental governance, climate adaptation, public health, and sustainable development, yet their application to intangible cultural heritage remains relatively underdeveloped. Existing research predominantly examines tangible heritage management or tourism-oriented heritage development, whereas the distinctive characteristics of living heritage—its dependence on community recognition, social practice, cultural transmission, and collective ownership—require fundamentally different governance arrangements. As a result, current partnership models insufficiently explain how multiple stakeholders can collaboratively sustain heritage whose existence depends upon dynamic social interaction rather than physical conservation.

Third, although community participation constitutes the normative foundation of the UNESCO Convention, empirical research continues to reveal a persistent implementation gap. In many contexts, participation remains largely consultative, while governments retain dominant authority over agenda setting, resource allocation, and policy evaluation. Communities are therefore frequently positioned as recipients of cultural policy rather than as genuine co-producers of public value. This institutional imbalance limits adaptive learning, weakens

collaborative accountability, and constrains the long-term sustainability of safeguarding initiatives.

These conceptual limitations are particularly evident in Indonesia, one of the world's most culturally diverse countries and home to hundreds of recognized elements of intangible cultural heritage. While national policy has made considerable progress in documentation, inventorying, legal recognition, and UNESCO nominations, governance arrangements remain predominantly administrative. Existing studies on collaborative governance have focused primarily on tourism development, the creative economy, regional innovation, and community empowerment, with relatively limited attention devoted to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage as a distinct field of public governance. Consequently, the institutional mechanisms required to integrate governments, cultural communities, academia, civil society organizations, media, the private sector, and public institutions into a coherent governance system remain insufficiently theorized.

Building upon these observations, this study argues that the principal challenge facing contemporary ICH safeguarding is no longer whether collaboration is necessary, but rather how collaborative governance can be institutionalized as a durable public policy architecture. Addressing this challenge requires moving beyond viewing collaboration as a managerial process toward understanding it as a governance institution that structures authority, accountability, collective learning, resource sharing, and public value creation across multiple actors. Such a perspective is particularly important for living heritage because cultural sustainability depends upon maintaining relationships among institutions, communities, and social networks rather than preserving cultural expressions in isolation.

Accordingly, this study develops a Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model (CMSGM) by integrating the complementary insights of Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing into a unified governance framework for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The proposed model conceptualizes government as a metagovernor responsible for orchestrating collaborative institutions, communities as co-producers of public value, and law enforcement agencies as boundary-spanning institutions that facilitate

coordination, conflict mediation, and cultural security within collaborative governance networks. By integrating these perspectives, the study extends the theoretical boundaries of cultural governance beyond existing approaches that emphasize administrative coordination or community participation in isolation.

This study makes three principal contributions to the international literature. Theoretically, it advances collaborative governance scholarship by repositioning collaboration from an implementation mechanism to an institutional policy design capable of sustaining long-term collective action. Conceptually, it develops an integrative governance framework that connects Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing within the context of living heritage. Practically, it offers an adaptive policy model that can assist governments and cultural institutions in strengthening community-centred safeguarding while enhancing the legitimacy, resilience, and sustainability of intangible cultural heritage governance in Indonesia and other culturally diverse societies.

State of the Art

Since the beginning of the 2020s, scholarship on the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has undergone a notable conceptual transformation.¹ While research during the early implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention primarily focused on legal protection, inventorying, documentation, and inscription procedures, recent studies increasingly frame ICH safeguarding as a complex governance challenge rather than a technical conservation exercise. This shift reflects a growing recognition that the sustainability of living heritage depends not only on formal legal recognition but also on the institutional capacity to facilitate collaboration, collective action, and adaptive governance among diverse societal actors.² Consequently, the central

¹ Stephen P. Osborne, ed., *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance* (London: Routledge, 2010).

² Torfing et al., *Interactive Governance: Advancing the Paradigm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

question in contemporary ICH research has evolved from what should be safeguarded to how safeguarding should be governed.³

A major development within this evolving literature is the emergence of community-centred governance as the normative foundation of sustainable safeguarding.⁴ Building upon the principles of the UNESCO 2003 Convention, contemporary research consistently recognizes communities not merely as beneficiaries of cultural policy but as knowledge holders, rights bearers, and co-producers of cultural sustainability.⁵

Empirical studies demonstrate that meaningful community participation throughout policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation significantly enhances policy legitimacy, local ownership, and the long-term transmission of cultural practices.⁶ Nevertheless, comparative evidence also reveals a persistent implementation gap. In many countries, community participation remains largely consultative, while strategic decision-making continues to be dominated by government institutions. Consequently, the transition from state-centred administration to genuinely community-centred governance remains incomplete.⁷

Parallel to this development, the literature has witnessed a broader transition from heritage conservation to heritage governance.⁸ Rather than treating safeguarding as a technical matter of preservation, recent scholarship conceptualizes it as a governance process involving the distribution of authority, stakeholder coordination, accountability, resource mobilization, and institutional learning.⁹ This perspective reflects the broader shift in public administration

³ Eva Sørensen and Jacob Torfing, *Theories of Democratic Network Governance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

⁴ UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Paris: UNESCO, 2003).

⁵ Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa, eds., *Intangible Heritage*, (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁶ Janet Blake, "Further Reflections on Community Involvement in the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage," *International Journal of Cultural Property* 28, no. 2 (2021): 171–190.

⁷ Blake, "Further Reflections on Community Involvement," 174.

⁸ Chiara Bortolotto, ed., *Il Patrimonio Culturale Immateriale: Le Sfide della Convenzione UNESCO 2003* (Rome: Carocci Editore, 2015).

⁹ Osborne, *The New Public Governance?*, 15.

from hierarchical government toward networked governance, recognizing that the complexity of cultural policy exceeds the capacity of any single institution.¹⁰ Consequently, collaborative arrangements involving governments, communities, academia, civil society organizations, the private sector, and international institutions have become increasingly prominent as mechanisms for enhancing policy legitimacy, institutional resilience, and public value creation.¹¹

Within this governance paradigm, multi-stakeholder partnerships have emerged as one of the most influential institutional approaches.¹² Recent studies demonstrate that collaborative partnerships broaden stakeholder representation, integrate complementary knowledge and resources, and strengthen adaptive policy implementation. However, existing research remains unevenly distributed across policy domains.

While partnership models have been extensively developed in environmental governance, sustainable development, and the management of tangible heritage, their application to intangible cultural heritage remains comparatively limited. As Žuvela argues, current governance models insufficiently capture the distinctive characteristics of living heritage, whose sustainability depends upon continuous social practice, community recognition, and intergenerational transmission rather than the conservation of physical assets.¹³ Consequently, the theoretical relationship between collaborative governance and the institutional dynamics of living heritage remains insufficiently developed.¹⁴

Another rapidly expanding research frontier concerns the role of digital transformation in safeguarding ICH.¹⁵ Advances in artificial intelligence, digital

¹⁰ Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, "Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18, no. 4 (2008): 543–571.

¹¹ Ansell and Gash, "Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice," 546.

¹² Kirk Emerson, Tina Nabatchi, and Stephen Balogh, "An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 22, no. 1 (2012): 1–29.

¹³ Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh, "An Integrative Framework," 12.

¹⁴ Ansell and Gash, "Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice," 550.

¹⁵ Emerson and Nabatchi, *Collaborative Governance Regimes*, 48.

archives, virtual reality, and collaborative digital platforms have substantially expanded opportunities for documenting, disseminating, and promoting cultural expressions.¹⁶ However, recent systematic reviews caution that technology-driven safeguarding strategies may unintentionally produce digital fossilization, whereby cultural expressions become extensively documented yet gradually lose their social function as living practices.¹⁷ These findings suggest that technological innovation alone cannot ensure cultural sustainability. Instead, digital tools should be embedded within participatory governance arrangements that strengthen community agency, facilitate knowledge transmission, and reinforce collaborative safeguarding rather than replace it.¹⁸

These developments have further stimulated growing interest in stakeholder governance and Collaborative Governance Regimes (CGRs).¹⁹ Contemporary governance research increasingly emphasizes that safeguarding outcomes are shaped not only by institutional structures but also by collaborative capacity, stakeholder trust, facilitative leadership, collective learning, and the ability to mobilize resources across organizational boundaries. Within this perspective, collaboration is understood as more than an administrative coordination mechanism; it represents an institutional process through which diverse actors jointly generate public value by sharing authority, responsibilities, and knowledge. Such an understanding is particularly relevant for intangible cultural heritage, whose sustainability depends fundamentally on long-term

¹⁶ John M. Bryson, Barbara C. Crosby, and Melissa M. Stone, "Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations: Needed and Challenging," *Public Administration Review* 75, no. 5 (2015): 647–663.

¹⁷ Emerson and Nabatchi, *Collaborative Governance Regimes*, 55.

¹⁸ Elinor Ostrom, "Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems," *American Economic Review* 100, no. 3 (2010): 641–672; Ostrom, "Beyond Markets and States," 643.; Ana Žuvela, Marta Šveb Dragija, and Daniela Angelina Jelinčić, "Partnerships in Heritage Governance and Management: Review Study of Public–Civil, Public–Private and Public–Private–Community Partnerships," **Heritage** 6, no. 10 (2023): 6862–6880.

¹⁹ Ostrom, "Beyond Markets and States," 652; Herman Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990); Wesley G. Skogan, *Police and Community in Chicago: A Tale of Three Cities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Skogan, *Police and Community in Chicago*, 88.

cooperation among actors with diverse interests, capacities, and cultural responsibilities.

The Indonesian literature reflects many of these international developments but remains comparatively fragmented.²⁰ Existing studies have successfully demonstrated the value of collaborative governance within the contexts of cultural tourism, the creative economy, regional development, MSME empowerment, and pentahelix collaboration.²¹ Nevertheless, culture is generally positioned as an instrument for economic development rather than as the primary object of governance.²² Consequently, limited scholarly attention has been devoted to developing an integrated governance framework specifically designed for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through sustained multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Overall, the contemporary state of the art reveals three interconnected trajectories that are reshaping international scholarship on ICH safeguarding. First, the governance paradigm has progressively shifted from state-centred protection toward community-centred governance. Second, hierarchical administrative approaches are increasingly being replaced by collaborative and multi-stakeholder governance arrangements capable of managing the institutional complexity of living heritage.

Third, although recent studies have begun to integrate digital innovation, stakeholder participation, and sustainability, these dimensions remain theoretically fragmented. A comprehensive governance framework that systematically integrates Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, and the distinctive institutional characteristics of intangible cultural heritage has yet to be fully developed. This unresolved theoretical gap provides the foundation for the present study.²³

²⁰ Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, 45.

²¹ Skogan, *Police and Community in Chicago*, 92.

²² Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, 50.

²³ For the metagovernor framework, see Eva Sørensen and Jacob Torfing, *Theories of Democratic Network Governance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

Research Gap

Although the literature on Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs), and the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has expanded considerably over the past decade, important theoretical and conceptual limitations remain.²⁴ Existing scholarship has generated valuable insights into stakeholder participation, collaborative processes, community empowerment, and institutional coordination. Nevertheless, these streams of research have largely evolved in parallel rather than converging into an integrated governance framework capable of explaining how collaboration should be institutionally designed to sustain living heritage over the long term. Consequently, the principal challenge confronting contemporary scholarship is no longer whether collaboration is necessary, but how collaborative institutions should be constructed to generate sustainable public value in the governance of intangible cultural heritage.

The first limitation concerns the dominant conceptualization of Collaborative Governance itself. Most studies continue to treat collaboration primarily as an implementation mechanism characterized by dialogue, trust-building, facilitative leadership, and stakeholder engagement.²⁵ While these process-oriented dimensions have substantially enriched the collaborative governance literature, they provide only a partial explanation of governance effectiveness. Considerably less attention has been devoted to collaboration as an institutional policy design that regulates authority distribution, accountability arrangements, resource mobilization, collective decision-making, and adaptive learning across multiple actors.²⁶ As a result, existing research offers limited theoretical guidance regarding how collaborative governance can be institutionalized as a durable governance architecture rather than remaining dependent upon individual programmes, projects, or political leadership.²⁷

²⁴ Emerson and Nabatchi, *Collaborative Governance Regimes*, 110.

²⁵ Harriet Deacon, Riëks Smeets, and Federico Lenzerini, *Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2020).

²⁶ Bryson, Crosby, and Stone, "Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations," 660.

²⁷ Osborne, *The New Public Governance?*, 22.

A second limitation arises from the development of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships. Although MSPs have become an established governance approach in climate policy, sustainable development, environmental management, and public health, their application to intangible cultural heritage remains comparatively underdeveloped.²⁸ Existing partnership models have predominantly been designed for policy domains concerned with tangible assets or measurable development outcomes.²⁹ By contrast, intangible cultural heritage constitutes a living cultural resource whose sustainability depends upon continuous social interaction, community recognition, and intergenerational knowledge transmission.³⁰ These distinctive characteristics require governance arrangements capable of coordinating multiple actors while simultaneously preserving cultural authenticity, social legitimacy, and community ownership. Current partnership theories provide only limited explanation of how such institutional arrangements should be designed within the context of living heritage.

The third limitation concerns the fragmentation of the ICH safeguarding literature itself. Research has developed through several relatively independent streams, including legal protection, implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention, digital heritage, cultural tourism, community empowerment, and the creative economy.³¹ While each perspective contributes important insights, they rarely converge into a unified governance framework capable of explaining how institutional design, collaborative dynamics, stakeholder interaction, and public value creation operate collectively within safeguarding policies.³² In particular, the theoretical integration of Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing remains largely unexplored, despite their complementary potential for explaining the institutional complexity of safeguarding living heritage.

²⁸ Osborne, *The New Public Governance?*, 25.

²⁹ Sørensen and Torfing, *Theories of Democratic Network Governance*, 142.

³⁰ Blake, "Further Reflections on Community Involvement," 182.

³¹ Osborne, *The New Public Governance?*, 30.

³² Ostrom, "Beyond Markets and States," 660.

These theoretical limitations become particularly evident within the Indonesian context. Existing research has made important contributions to understanding cultural advancement, heritage inventorying, creative economy development, and collaborative governance across sectors such as tourism, environmental management, and community empowerment.³³ However, relatively little attention has been devoted to developing an institutional governance model specifically designed for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through sustained multi-stakeholder collaboration.³⁴ Consequently, the governance architecture required to coordinate governments, cultural communities, academia, civil society organizations, media, the private sector, and public institutions responsible for maintaining cultural security remains insufficiently theorized.

Taken together, these limitations reveal a broader theoretical deficiency. Contemporary scholarship has made substantial progress in explaining how collaboration functions, yet considerably less progress has been achieved in explaining how collaboration should be institutionally designed. In other words, the frontier of research has shifted from understanding collaboration as a managerial process toward conceptualizing collaboration as a governance institution capable of structuring authority, accountability, resource sharing, collective learning, and public value creation within complex cultural policy environments.³⁵

Addressing this theoretical gap, the present study develops the Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model (CMSGM) as an integrated governance framework for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The model synthesizes four complementary theoretical perspectives—Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing—into a coherent institutional architecture.³⁶ Unlike

³³ Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, 102.; also see Skogan, *Police and Community in Chicago*, 115.

³⁴ Bryson, Crosby, and Stone, "Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations," 662.

³⁵ Bryson, Crosby, and Stone, "Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations," 662.

³⁶ Sørensen and Torfing, *Theories of Democratic Network Governance*, 150.

previous approaches that primarily emphasize collaborative processes, the CMSGM conceptualizes collaboration as a governance institution that regulates stakeholder relationships, coordinates distributed authority, facilitates adaptive learning, and strengthens the long-term sustainability of living heritage.³⁷ Within this framework, government assumes the role of a metagovernor responsible for orchestrating collaborative institutions, while communities become co-producers of public value, actively participating in the creation, transmission, and safeguarding of cultural heritage.

Building upon this conceptual foundation, the study addresses the following overarching research question: *How can an institutional model of collaborative multi-stakeholder governance be designed to strengthen the long-term safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Indonesia?*

To answer this question, the study examines the institutional limitations of existing safeguarding policies, analyses the governance dynamics among multiple stakeholders, and develops an integrative governance framework that combines the principles of Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing.

The study contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, it extends Collaborative Governance theory by repositioning collaboration from an implementation mechanism to an institutional policy design. Second, it advances cultural governance scholarship through the integration of four complementary theoretical perspectives into a unified framework for safeguarding living heritage. Third, it provides an adaptive governance model capable of informing public policy reforms aimed at strengthening community-centred safeguarding and enhancing the legitimacy, resilience, and sustainability of intangible cultural heritage governance in Indonesia and other culturally diverse societies.

³⁷ UNESCO, Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris: UNESCO, 2024).

Theoretical Foundations of the Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model

The governance of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has undergone a profound conceptual transformation during the past two decades.³⁸ Traditionally, safeguarding was predominantly understood as an administrative function of the state, emphasizing legal protection, inventorying, documentation, and conservation measures designed to preserve cultural expressions from disappearance. This perspective reflected a broader state-centred paradigm in which governments possessed primary authority over cultural policy, while communities were largely regarded as beneficiaries of state intervention.³⁹

Although this model contributed substantially to the institutional recognition of cultural heritage, its effectiveness has become increasingly constrained by the dynamic nature of living heritage. Unlike tangible cultural assets, intangible cultural heritage exists only insofar as it continues to be practiced, interpreted, transmitted, and recreated within communities. Consequently, safeguarding living heritage cannot be achieved solely through regulatory intervention or administrative control; it depends fundamentally upon sustaining the social relationships that enable cultural knowledge to remain alive across generations.

This conceptual transformation is closely associated with the broader evolution of public administration from government to governance.⁴⁰ Classical public administration assumed that governments possessed sufficient authority, resources, and legitimacy to address public problems through hierarchical coordination and bureaucratic control. However, increasing societal complexity has challenged this assumption. Contemporary public problems—including climate change, public health, environmental sustainability, digital governance, and cultural preservation—transcend organizational and jurisdictional boundaries, making unilateral government intervention increasingly insufficient.

³⁸ Stephen P. Osborne, ed., *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance* (London: Routledge, 2010).

³⁹ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 54.

⁴⁰ Blake, "Further Reflections on Community Involvement," 178

Rhodes conceptualizes this transformation as the emergence of self-organizing governance networks, while Osborne's New Public Governance perspective argues that public value is increasingly generated through collaborative interactions among multiple actors rather than through state action alone. Within this paradigm, governments no longer function exclusively as policy makers and service providers; instead, they facilitate, coordinate, and orchestrate relationships among diverse organizations that collectively contribute to public outcomes.

This governance perspective is particularly relevant for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage because living heritage represents one of the most complex forms of public resources. Unlike infrastructure or natural resources, cultural practices cannot simply be produced through government expenditure nor preserved through legal regulation alone. Their continuity depends upon community participation, collective memory, social legitimacy, and intergenerational transmission. Consequently, threats to intangible cultural heritage arise less from the absence of legislation than from the gradual erosion of the social ecosystems that sustain cultural practices. Urbanization, migration, commercialization, demographic transformation, and digital disruption may weaken cultural transmission despite the existence of comprehensive legal frameworks. Therefore, safeguarding ICH should be understood fundamentally as the governance of social relationships rather than the management of cultural objects.

The UNESCO 2003 Convention reflects this conceptual transition by redefining communities as the principal custodians of living heritage. Rather than positioning governments as exclusive guardians of culture, the Convention emphasizes community participation, free and informed consent, and shared responsibility in safeguarding processes. Nevertheless, while UNESCO successfully established the normative principle of community-centred safeguarding, it provides relatively limited guidance regarding the institutional arrangements through which governments, communities, academia, civil society organizations, cultural institutions, media, and the private sector should coordinate their respective responsibilities. Consequently, the principal theoretical challenge is no longer whether collaboration is desirable, but how

collaborative governance should be institutionally designed to sustain living heritage over time.

Collaborative Governance provides the initial theoretical foundation for addressing this challenge. Ansell and Gash conceptualize collaborative governance as a collective decision-making process in which public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders through formal, consensus-oriented deliberation. Their model identifies face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes as the principal determinants of successful collaboration. The significance of this framework lies in its departure from hierarchical public administration toward participatory decision-making, recognizing that complex public problems require collective solutions rather than unilateral governmental action.

Despite its substantial contribution, Collaborative Governance remains primarily concerned with explaining how collaboration emerges rather than how collaborative institutions should be designed. The framework concentrates on interactional dynamics—dialogue, trust, facilitative leadership, and consensus-building—but pays comparatively less attention to institutional architecture, authority distribution, accountability mechanisms, and governance configurations that sustain collaboration over extended periods. Consequently, Collaborative Governance effectively explains collaborative processes but provides a less comprehensive explanation of the governance structures required to manage highly complex, multi-level policy environments such as intangible cultural heritage safeguarding.

The Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) developed by Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh substantially extends this perspective. Rather than viewing collaboration as a discrete decision-making process, CGR conceptualizes collaboration as an adaptive governance system emerging from the interaction of principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action. This framework recognizes that sustainable collaboration depends upon institutional learning, collaborative leadership, shared resources, and adaptive capacity rather than interpersonal trust alone. Within the context of safeguarding ICH, the CGR perspective is particularly valuable because it explains how collaborative arrangements can evolve into enduring governance systems capable of responding to changing cultural, political, and social environments.

However, even the CGR framework does not fully explain one of the defining characteristics of cultural governance: the diversity of stakeholders participating in safeguarding living heritage. Governments, indigenous communities, cultural practitioners, universities, museums, civil society organizations, media, tourism industries, creative enterprises, and international organizations possess fundamentally different forms of authority, expertise, legitimacy, and interests. Understanding collaboration therefore requires not only explaining collaborative processes but also analysing the institutional relationships among heterogeneous actors.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to examine how collaborative governance is institutionalized in the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and to develop the proposed Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model (CMSGM).⁴¹ A qualitative approach is particularly appropriate because the research seeks to explain complex governance processes, stakeholder interactions, institutional dynamics, and trust-building mechanisms that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative methods.⁴² Rather than measuring causal relationships, the study aims to understand how collaboration is constructed, negotiated, and sustained within the real-world context of cultural heritage governance.

The empirical setting is the "Kebaya Goes to UNESCO" initiative, selected as a critical case because it represents one of Indonesia's most prominent examples of collaborative safeguarding involving government agencies, cultural communities, academia, civil society organizations, media, and international actors.⁴³ The case provides an appropriate context for examining

⁴¹ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018).

⁴² Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4th ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016). Please see too John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018).

⁴³ Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications*, 45.

how multiple stakeholders coordinate their roles in advancing the safeguarding of living heritage while simultaneously revealing the institutional challenges associated with collaborative governance.

Data were collected through methodological triangulation between May 2024 and March 2025.⁴⁴ Five Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with key stakeholders directly involved in the kebaya advocacy process to UNESCO in order to reconstruct the governance process and validate institutional relationships. Informants were initially selected through purposive sampling based on their expertise, organizational roles, and direct involvement in the safeguarding initiative. Subsequent snowball sampling expanded participant recruitment to include local practitioners and community representatives across the three research locations of "Kebaya Goes to UNESCO", resulting in a total of 145 informants. Interviews continued until theoretical saturation was achieved, indicating that additional data no longer generated new conceptual insights.

Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews, guided by dimensions of organizational trust—ability, benevolence, and integrity—to explore collaborative relationships among stakeholders. Interviews were complemented by passive participant observation, allowing the researchers to compare participants' accounts with actual governance practices observed during safeguarding activities. Documentary evidence, including government regulations, institutional reports, organizational documents, policy papers, UNESCO-related materials, and advocacy records, was analysed to reconstruct the institutional development of the safeguarding initiative and to corroborate evidence obtained from interviews and observations.

Data analysis followed the interactive analytical framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, involving three iterative stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview transcripts, field notes, and documentary materials were first coded through an inductive–deductive process that combined theory-informed coding with

⁴⁴ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2020).

emergent empirical categories. The analysis focused on identifying patterns related to collaborative governance, stakeholder roles, institutional coordination, authority distribution, trust formation, community participation, collaborative policing, protective nudges, and public value creation.

Themes were continuously compared across multiple data sources to identify recurring governance mechanisms and to develop the conceptual propositions underlying the CMSGM. Throughout the analytical process, empirical findings were interpreted iteratively alongside Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnership, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing theories, allowing conceptual refinement through constant comparison between empirical evidence and theoretical constructs.

To ensure methodological rigor, the study adopted the trustworthiness framework proposed by Lincoln and Guba, encompassing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.⁴⁵ Credibility was strengthened through data-source triangulation, methodological triangulation, prolonged engagement with participants, and member checking with key informants. Transferability was supported through rich contextual descriptions of the research setting and institutional environment. Dependability and confirmability were enhanced by maintaining a comprehensive audit trail documenting methodological decisions, coding procedures, and analytical interpretations, complemented by peer debriefing to examine analytical consistency and minimize researcher bias. Collectively, these procedures strengthen the reliability, transparency, and trustworthiness of the study while enhancing the credibility of the proposed Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From Cultural Preservation to Collaborative Governance: Reframing Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding

The empirical findings demonstrate that safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Indonesia has undergone a profound transformation from a

⁴⁵ See the classic criteria for qualitative rigorousness in Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, 1985).

predominantly preservation-oriented activity into a complex public governance challenge.⁴⁶ Although legal recognition, cultural inventorying, and UNESCO inscription remain important components of safeguarding policy, they are insufficient to ensure the long-term sustainability of living heritage. Rather, the continuity of cultural practices depends on the capacity of multiple institutions to coordinate their authority, mobilize complementary resources, and sustain community participation through collaborative governance.⁴⁷

This finding reflects a broader conceptual shift in cultural policy. Instead of treating heritage as an object protected through administrative regulation, safeguarding increasingly concerns the governance of social relationships that enable cultural knowledge, identity, and practices to be continuously reproduced across generations.⁴⁸ Consequently, the principal policy challenge is no longer preserving cultural expressions themselves, but designing governance institutions capable of sustaining the social ecosystems within which those expressions remain meaningful.⁴⁹

The findings therefore extend the community-centred safeguarding paradigm promoted by the UNESCO 2003 Convention. While UNESCO recognizes communities as the primary custodians of living heritage,⁵⁰ empirical evidence indicates that normative recognition alone does not automatically translate into effective governance.⁵¹ Across the research sites, community participation frequently remained consultative, whereas agenda setting, resource allocation, and strategic decision-making continued to be dominated by

⁴⁶ Stephen P. Osborne, ed., *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance* (London: Routledge, 2010).

⁴⁷ Jacob Torfing et al., *Interactive Governance: Advancing the Paradigm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴⁸ Kirk Emerson and Tina Nabatchi, *Collaborative Governance Regimes* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015).

⁴⁹ UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Paris: UNESCO, 2003).

⁵⁰ Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa, eds., *Intangible Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁵¹ Janet Blake, "Further Reflections on Community Involvement in the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage," *International Journal of Cultural Property* 28, no. 2 (2021): 171–190.

government institutions.⁵² This institutional imbalance limits community ownership and weakens the adaptive capacity required for long-term safeguarding.

Accordingly, this study argues that community-centred safeguarding should be understood not simply as expanding participation but as institutionalizing communities as co-producers of public value. Such a shift fundamentally changes the relationship between government and society, replacing hierarchical policy implementation with collaborative governance based on shared authority, mutual accountability, and collective responsibility.

Beyond Collaborative Governance: From Collaborative Process to Institutional Design

A second major finding concerns the theoretical limits of existing Collaborative Governance scholarship. The empirical evidence confirms the importance of dialogue, trust-building, facilitative leadership, and shared commitment in fostering collaboration among stakeholders. These findings are broadly consistent with the collaborative governance model proposed by Ansell and Gash⁵³[8] and further elaborated within the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) framework.

However, the findings also demonstrate that collaborative processes alone are insufficient to sustain safeguarding initiatives over time. Successful collaboration depends equally upon institutional arrangements that regulate authority distribution, clarify stakeholder responsibilities, facilitate cross-sector coordination, establish accountability mechanisms, and enable adaptive learning across organizational boundaries.

This observation suggests an important theoretical refinement. Existing collaborative governance scholarship primarily explains how collaboration emerges, whereas the present study addresses how collaboration can be

⁵² Blake, "Further Reflections on Community Involvement," 174.

⁵³ Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, "Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18, no. 4 (2008): 543–71, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>.

institutionalized. In the context of living heritage, collaboration should therefore be understood not merely as a deliberative process but as an institutional architecture embedded within public policy. Such an architecture enables collaborative relationships to endure beyond individual projects, organizational leadership, or political cycles.

Consequently, the study advances Collaborative Governance theory by repositioning collaboration from an implementation mechanism toward an institutional design principle capable of supporting long-term governance.

Polycentric Governance and the Institutional Ecology of Living Heritage

The findings further reveal that safeguarding ICH operates through a polycentric governance system involving multiple centres of authority rather than a single coordinating institution.⁵⁴ Government agencies establish regulatory frameworks and policy direction; local governments coordinate implementation; cultural communities maintain the authenticity of cultural practices; universities contribute scientific knowledge; civil society organizations facilitate community engagement; media organizations strengthen public awareness; and private-sector actors support economic sustainability.

Rather than creating institutional fragmentation, this distribution of authority enhances governance effectiveness by allowing different actors to contribute according to their comparative advantages. The empirical evidence therefore supports the application of Polycentric Governance beyond natural resource management, demonstrating that intangible cultural heritage functions as a common cultural resource whose sustainability depends upon adaptive coordination among multiple autonomous institutions.

This finding broadens Ostrom's theoretical perspective by illustrating that the governance of cultural commons requires not only shared rules but also collaborative learning, institutional trust, and continuous coordination among organizations operating across different policy domains.

⁵⁴ Elinor Ostrom, "Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems," *American Economic Review* 100, no. 3 (2010): 641–672, <http://www.aeaweb.org/articles.php?doi=10.1257/aer.100.3.641>.

Collaborative Policing as a Boundary-Spanning Institution

One of the most significant findings concerns the strategic role of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) within the collaborative governance system.⁵⁵ Contrary to conventional perspectives that primarily associate policing with law enforcement and public order, the findings indicate that Polri performs an important boundary-spanning function connecting governmental institutions, cultural communities, civil society organizations, educational institutions, media, and local stakeholders.⁵⁶

Within this governance arrangement, policing extends beyond crime prevention to include facilitation, mediation, conflict resolution, public education, and institutional coordination. The concept of cultural security emerging from the findings therefore shifts attention from protecting cultural assets against legal threats toward protecting the social conditions that enable cultural practices to survive, evolve, and be transmitted across generations.

This represents an important theoretical contribution because collaborative policing has traditionally been examined within public safety and crime prevention.⁵⁷ The present study expands its analytical scope by demonstrating that collaborative policing also constitutes an essential institutional mechanism within cultural governance, strengthening both social cohesion and the sustainability of living heritage.

Developing the Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model

The integration of these findings leads to the development of the Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model (CMSGM). The empirical analysis demonstrates that no existing governance framework independently provides a sufficiently comprehensive explanation of ICH safeguarding. Collaborative Governance explains deliberative interaction and collaborative

⁵⁵ Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, 45.

⁵⁶ Wesley G. Skogan, *Police and Community in Chicago: A Tale of Three Cities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁵⁷ Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, 50.

processes but provides limited attention to institutional architecture. Multi-Stakeholder Partnership theory explains stakeholder diversity and cross-sector collaboration but offers less guidance regarding distributed authority and adaptive governance. Polycentric Governance explains institutional decentralization and shared decision-making but pays comparatively limited attention to collaborative processes and public value creation. Collaborative Policing contributes an understanding of facilitative institutions and cultural security but has rarely been incorporated into cultural governance research.

The CMSGM synthesizes these complementary perspectives into a unified governance framework. Within the model, government functions as a metagovernor, responsible for orchestrating collaborative institutions rather than exercising hierarchical control. Communities become co-producers of public value, actively participating in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and cultural transmission. Meanwhile, Polri performs the role of a boundary-spanning institution, facilitating coordination, mediating conflicts, strengthening public trust, and maintaining the collaborative environment necessary for sustaining living heritage.

Accordingly, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage should no longer be understood as the responsibility of a single public institution. Instead, it represents a continuous process of collaborative governance through which multiple stakeholders jointly create, maintain, and reproduce cultural value.

Theoretical and Policy Implications

The findings contribute to governance scholarship in three important respects. First, they extend Collaborative Governance theory by repositioning collaboration from an implementation process to an institutional policy design. Second, they develop an integrative framework that synthesizes Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Polycentric Governance, and Collaborative Policing into a coherent explanation of living heritage governance. Third, they broaden the theoretical scope of collaborative policing by conceptualizing law enforcement agencies as boundary-spanning institutions that facilitate public value creation beyond conventional security functions.

From a policy perspective, the findings indicate that strengthening ICH safeguarding requires more than regulatory refinement or expanded cultural

inventories.⁵⁸ Sustainable safeguarding depends upon institutionalizing collaborative governance through facilitative leadership, shared accountability, adaptive learning, and enduring multi-stakeholder partnerships.⁵⁹ Governments should therefore prioritize the development of governance arrangements that empower communities as co-producers of public value while strengthening coordination across governmental, societal, and cultural institutions. Such an approach offers a more resilient foundation for safeguarding living heritage in Indonesia and provides a transferable governance framework for other culturally diverse societies confronting similar institutional challenges.

CONCLUSION

The safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Indonesia has shifted from a normative cultural preservation agenda to a complex public governance issue. The state is no longer the sole actor, necessitating a collaborative institutional design reform. Although international conventions mandate the principle of community-centred safeguarding, an operational gap remains in the field because local community participation often falls into government-led patterns. Therefore, public policy must institutionalize the community's role as co-producers of public value, ensuring their active involvement from the planning stage through to evaluation.

This research has successfully formulated the Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model (CMSGM) as a public policy innovation. This model integrates the theories of Collaborative Governance, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, and Polycentric Governance to adaptively distribute authority in managing ICH as a common cultural resource. The Indonesian National Police (Polri) can play a strategic role as an institutional boundary spanner through a collaborative policing approach. This approach broadens the policing function from conventional law enforcement into a public value facilitator that maintains cultural security and ensures the continuity of traditional social spaces.

⁵⁸ Bryson, Crosby, and Stone, "Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations," 660.

⁵⁹ Osborne, *The New Public Governance?*, 22.

Central and local governments must immediately institutionalize the multi-stakeholder collaboration model into formal cultural policy regulations, rather than merely utilizing it as a temporary program instrument. The government should assume the role of a metagovernor, focusing on formulating the rules of the game and providing coordination facilities. Furthermore, Polri needs to develop tactical guidelines regarding collaborative policing functions in the cultural sector. Furthermore, Polri is advised to optimize its role as a mediator and public educator to support awareness-based cultural safeguarding.

On the other hand, Indigenous communities, academia, the private sector, and the media need to enhance their collaborative capacities. This will enable them to participate proportionally in data processing, social verification, and creative economy development without undermining the authenticity of cultural values. Since this research focuses on the case study of the "Kebaya Goes to UNESCO" movement, future researchers are encouraged to test the adaptability of the MSGM on other types of ICH in Indonesia that possess different socio-geographical characteristics.

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