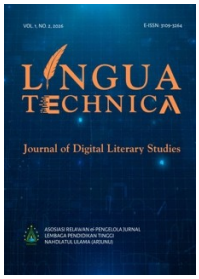
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From manuscript to metadata: preserving Indonesian literary heritage in the contemporary digital transition

M Naveen Kumar [1] and Moh. Ainol Yaqin [2*]

[1] Telangana University, Nizamabad, India
[2] Universitas Nurul Jadid, Indonesia
** Corresponding author. Email: ainolyaqin09@unuja.ac.id*

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A B S T R A C T

Background: The contemporary digital transition has transformed Indonesian literary heritage by shifting literary production from physical manuscripts to born-digital artifacts, while archival infrastructures and metadata practices struggle to keep pace with this change. **Objective:** This study aims to examine how material transformation, metadata inequality, and digital writing practices collectively reshape literary preservation and authorship in Indonesia. **Method:** Using a qualitative interpretive approach grounded in digital humanities and archival studies, the research analyzes a multi-layered corpus comprising institutional archives, author-managed digital materials, and platform-based literary outputs through comparative archival analysis and visual-analytic mapping. **Results:** The findings reveal three interrelated patterns: a dominance of born-digital literary materials accompanied by low archival stability, a stratified metadata landscape that privileges institutional archives over platform-based environments, and a structural tension between high textual productivity and fragile preservation in digital authorship practices. **Implication:** These patterns indicate that digital literary abundance does not guarantee cultural memory without coordinated archival mediation. **Novelty:** This study introduces a visual–relational framework that reframes Indonesian literary heritage as an infrastructural and authorially contingent process within the digital transition.

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary digital transition has profoundly transformed how literary heritage is produced, stored, circulated, and interpreted. Globally, cultural institutions report that more than 90% of newly created textual materials are now born-digital (Rimkus et al., 2020; Salinas, 2023), while UNESCO estimates that over 70% of digital cultural content produced since the early 2000s is at risk of loss due to technological obsolescence, format instability, and inadequate archival infrastructures (Albuquerque, 2019; von Schorlemer, 2020; Vuković & Štefanac, 2023). In Indonesia, this challenge is particularly acute. National libraries, universities, and literary communities increasingly encounter manuscripts, drafts, correspondence, and literary paratexts that exist exclusively in digital form—emails, word-processing files, blogs, and social media archives—yet remain weakly integrated into formal heritage preservation systems. Despite Indonesia's vast literary ecosystem, encompassing thousands of published authors and a rapidly expanding digital literary sphere, institutional frameworks for managing born-digital literary archives remain fragmented (Fatonah, 2025; Hoerudin, 2025; Putranto et al., 2025). This condition renders Indonesian literary heritage vulnerable to disappearance, distortion, or selective memory, making systematic scholarly inquiry into digital literary preservation not only relevant but urgent.

Existing scholarship on literary archives and digital humanities has largely concentrated on Western contexts, emphasizing digitization projects, digital philology, and the remediation of analogue manuscripts into searchable digital corpora (Jaillant & Caputo, 2022; Todorova-Ekmekci, 2021). Studies have examined how digital tools enhance textual criticism, enable collaborative editing, and expand access to cultural memory (Colaprice, 2025; Fan & Daly, 2021; Ojamaa & Ibrus, 2021). Parallel research has explored born-digital archives, highlighting issues of authenticity, volatility, and archival legitimacy (Boudart, 2024; Trivette, 2022). However, the majority of these studies remain institution-centered and geographically concentrated in Europe and North America. Research on Southeast Asian or Indonesian literary heritage tends to focus on textual analysis, canon formation, or sociopolitical contexts of literature (Annabeth, 2023; Chin, 2021; Manuaba et al., 2024; Piocos, 2021) rather than on archival infrastructures and digital preservation practices. Critically, little attention has been paid to how Indonesian writers themselves produce, manage, or discard digital traces of their creative processes, nor to how these practices challenge conventional archival logics. This absence reveals a significant gap at the intersection of Indonesian literary studies, archival theory, and digital humanities—a gap this article seeks to address.

Responding to these limitations, this article aims to examine how Indonesian literary heritage is being reshaped in the shift from manuscript-based traditions to metadata-driven digital environments. Specifically, the study addresses three interrelated questions. First, how does the contemporary digital transition transform the nature and status of literary archives in Indonesia, particularly those that are born-digital? Second, what institutional, technological, and cultural challenges emerge in preserving and describing Indonesian literary materials within digital archival frameworks? Third, how do authors' digital writing practices complicate established assumptions about literary memory, authenticity, and textual authority? Rather than treating digital archives as neutral containers of literary data, this research conceptualizes them as contested cultural spaces where preservation, loss, and reinterpretation coexist. By framing these questions, the article positions itself not merely as a descriptive account of digital change, but as an analytical inquiry into the evolving epistemology of literary heritage in Indonesia.

This article advances the argument that the digital transition does not simply threaten Indonesian literary heritage, nor does it automatically democratize access to it. Instead, it actively reframes what counts as literary memory, whose texts are preserved, and how authorship is reconstructed through metadata, platforms, and archival protocols. The study hypothesizes that without critical archival mediation, born-digital literary materials risk either erasure or excessive decontextualization. Conversely, when guided by reflective institutional practices and informed scholarly engagement, digital archives can expand the analytical possibilities of Indonesian literary studies, enabling new forms of genetic criticism, authorship studies, and cultural memory research. By integrating empirical observations, archival perspectives, and literary theory, this article contributes a Global South–oriented intervention into debates on digital humanities and literary preservation. Ultimately, it argues that preserving Indonesian literary heritage in the digital age requires not

only technological solutions, but also conceptual rethinking of archives as dynamic, interpretive, and culturally situated systems.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary heritage and archival memory

Literary heritage constitutes a foundational concept in this study, commonly understood as the corpus of texts, manuscripts, paratexts, and material traces through which a literary culture preserves its historical continuity and symbolic value. In archival and literary studies, literary heritage is not merely a collection of canonical works but a dynamic assemblage of drafts, correspondence, notebooks, and contextual materials that enable philological, historical, and cultural interpretation. Scholars differ, however, in their conceptualization of heritage: some emphasize its materiality and authenticity (Djabarouti, 2022; van Tussenbroek, 2020), while others foreground its social construction and institutional mediation (Eitler & Ament-Kovács, 2024; Zanirato et al., 2021). Recent cultural memory studies argue that literary heritage is shaped as much by archival practices and selection mechanisms as by the texts themselves (Baillot, 2023; Muñoz-Viñas, 2023; Ullah, 2025; Zanirato et al., 2021). This shift underscores that heritage is neither neutral nor complete, but contingent upon preservation policies, power relations, and epistemological frameworks. Consequently, literary heritage must be approached as a negotiated field in which memory, authority, and interpretation intersect.

Building on these debates, scholars have proposed several analytical dimensions for understanding literary heritage. First is the material dimension, encompassing manuscripts, print editions, and physical artifacts that historically grounded literary studies (Falcone et al., 2024). Second is the documentary dimension, which includes drafts, marginalia, and paratexts essential for genetic criticism and textual scholarship (Follonier, 2021). Third is the institutional dimension, referring to libraries, archives, and cultural agencies that legitimize, preserve, and disseminate literary materials (Dolata, 2022). Finally, recent research highlights a discursive dimension, wherein literary heritage is continuously reframed through exhibitions, digital platforms, and scholarly narratives (Sánchez-Macías et al., 2025). These dimensions reveal that heritage is not static but evolves alongside technological and cultural transformations. In the digital age, each dimension is reconfigured, challenging traditional hierarchies between "primary" texts and ancillary materials. Thus, understanding literary heritage requires an integrative framework that accommodates both continuity and transformation within archival ecosystems.

Digital archives and digital transition

The concept of digital archives lies at the core of contemporary discussions on cultural preservation. Digital archives are broadly defined as curated collections of digitized or born-digital materials maintained through computational infrastructures. While early scholarship treated digitization primarily as a technical process of conversion from analogue to digital formats (Peruccio et al., 2025; Varadarajan et al., 2024), more recent studies emphasize the digital transition as a paradigm shift affecting archival ontology, authenticity, and accessibility (Buršić & Stančić, 2019; Friedewald et al., 2024; Pierce, 2024). Researchers distinguish between digitized archives—digital surrogates of physical objects—and born-digital archives, which have no analogue origin. This distinction has significant implications for literary studies, as born-digital materials challenge established archival principles such as fixity, provenance, and originality. Scholars diverge in their evaluations: some celebrate digital archives for democratizing access and enabling new analytical methods, while others warn against data volatility, platform dependency, and the loss of contextual integrity. These tensions frame digital archives as both opportunity and risk.

Analytical frameworks of digital archives typically identify several interrelated dimensions. The technical dimension concerns formats, storage, migration, and long-term preservation strategies. The epistemic dimension addresses how digital infrastructures shape knowledge production, influencing what can be searched, visualized, or analyzed. The institutional dimension focuses on governance, standards, and professional practices that confer legitimacy and authenticity on digital records. Additionally, scholars emphasize a temporal dimension, as digital archives are inherently unstable, requiring constant maintenance and reinterpretation. For literary heritage, these dimensions intersect in complex ways: digital platforms may

enhance visibility while simultaneously flattening historical context. Consequently, digital archival practices must be understood not merely as neutral tools but as active agents in reframing literary memory and scholarly interpretation.

Authorship and born-digital literary practices

Authorship constitutes a third crucial concept, particularly in relation to born-digital literary practices. Traditionally, authorship in literary studies has been associated with the production of finalized texts, while drafts and revisions served as ancillary materials for scholars. In digital environments, however, writing processes are increasingly fragmented, iterative, and platform-dependent. Born-digital authorship encompasses word-processing files, version histories, emails, blogs, and social media posts, blurring the boundaries between draft, publication, and archive. Scholars disagree on whether these proliferating traces enhance or dilute authorial intention. Some argue that digital writing exposes the creative process more transparently, enabling richer genetic analysis (Bekius, 2024; Caron & Woerly, 2024). Others caution that excessive data accumulation risks obscuring meaningful authorial decisions (Cummings, 2023; Eragamreddy & Joseph, 2025). These debates highlight that authorship in the digital age is no longer confined to textual output but extends to practices of saving, deleting, sharing, and curating digital traces.

Research identifies several dimensions for analyzing digital authorship. The processual dimension examines how writing unfolds through versions, revisions, and interruptions enabled by digital tools. The archival dimension considers which traces are preserved, discarded, or rendered invisible. The platform dimension focuses on how software and online environments shape stylistic choices and modes of expression. Finally, the cultural dimension addresses how authors negotiate visibility, privacy, and legacy in digital spaces. For Indonesian literary studies, these dimensions remain underexplored, despite the rapid expansion of digital writing practices. Integrating authorship into discussions of digital archives and literary heritage allows for a more nuanced understanding of how literature is produced, preserved, and remembered. This integration provides the conceptual foundation for examining Indonesian literary heritage within the contemporary digital transition.

METHOD

The unit of analysis in this study comprises Indonesian literary materials undergoing digital transition, focusing on both digitized and born-digital artifacts. The material objects include authors' manuscripts, drafts, revision files, correspondence, and platform-based literary outputs that collectively represent the transformation from manuscript culture to metadata-driven environments. To ensure analytical depth and representativeness, this research constructs a multi-layered corpus encompassing institutional archives, author-managed digital traces, and publicly accessible literary platforms. The corpus is purposively selected to reflect diversity in genre, period, and medium, rather than exhaustiveness. This approach aligns with qualitative digital humanities research that prioritizes interpretive richness over statistical generalization. Table 1 presents the corpus structure used in this study, illustrating the breadth of materials analyzed and their relevance to Indonesian literary heritage in the contemporary digital transition.

This study adopts a qualitative interpretive research design grounded in digital humanities and archival studies. Rather than applying experimental or quantitative models, the research emphasizes contextual interpretation of literary materials within their technological and institutional environments. The design integrates documentary analysis, comparative archival reading, and conceptual mapping, allowing the study to trace how literary meaning, authorship, and memory are reconfigured through digital infrastructures. This approach is particularly suitable for examining literary heritage, as it acknowledges the non-linear, processual nature of literary production and preservation. By combining close reading with contextual analysis, the research design bridges traditional literary scholarship and contemporary digital methodologies. The design also enables cross-comparison between analogue-derived archives and born-digital materials, highlighting continuities and ruptures in archival logic. Overall, this design supports a reflective examination of digital transition as a cultural and epistemological process rather than a purely technical phenomenon.

Table 1. Research corpus of Indonesian literary materials

No.	Corpus Category	Material Type	Source	Period	Format
1	Authorial Drafts	Manuscripts, revisions, Word files	Personal author archives	1995–2024	Born-digital
2	Literary Correspondence	Emails, letters (digitized)	Institutional archives	1998–2023	Hybrid
3	Institutional Literary Archives	Digitized manuscripts, paratexts	National & university libraries	1900–2000	Digitized
4	Online Literary Platforms	Blogs, literary websites	Public platforms	2005–2024	Born-digital
5	Social Media Literature	Serialized texts, posts	Author accounts	2015–2024	Born-digital
6	Editorial Metadata	Catalog records, tags	Archival databases	2000–2024	Metadata

The study draws on multiple sources of information to ensure triangulation and analytical rigor. Primary sources consist of literary artifacts within the research corpus, including manuscripts, drafts, and digital traces of writing practices. Secondary sources include scholarly literature on digital archives, literary heritage, authorship, and digital humanities, drawn from peer-reviewed journals and authoritative academic publishers. Institutional documents—such as archival guidelines, metadata standards, and digitization policies—serve as contextual sources that illuminate professional archival practices. Additionally, public statements, interviews, and essays by Indonesian authors regarding their writing and archiving practices are used to contextualize authorial perspectives. By integrating textual, institutional, and scholarly sources, the study avoids a monolithic viewpoint and instead situates Indonesian literary heritage within intersecting discourses of technology, culture, and memory. This layered sourcing strategy strengthens the study's interpretive validity.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic documentary approach in four stages. First, relevant literary materials were identified through institutional catalogs, author websites, and publicly accessible digital platforms. Second, materials were screened based on relevance to digital transition, ensuring inclusion of both digitized and born-digital artifacts. Third, selected materials were documented using standardized data sheets capturing origin, format, date, and archival context. Fourth, metadata associated with each item—such as tags, version histories, and platform structures—was recorded to support analysis of archival framing. Throughout this process, ethical considerations were observed, particularly regarding author privacy and platform-specific access conditions. This structured yet flexible procedure aligns with best practices in qualitative archival research and ensures transparency in corpus construction.

Data analysis proceeded through four interrelated analytical stages. First, a descriptive mapping identified the material characteristics of each corpus category, distinguishing between analogue-derived and born-digital forms. Second, a thematic analysis examined recurring issues related to preservation, authorship, and archival mediation. Third, a comparative analysis explored differences between institutional and author-managed archives, focusing on metadata practices and narrative framing. Finally, a conceptual synthesis connected empirical findings to broader theoretical debates on digital archives and literary heritage. These stages collectively enabled the study to move from empirical observation to conceptual interpretation. By combining close reading with archival analysis, the method provides a robust framework for understanding how Indonesian literary heritage is preserved and reframed in the contemporary digital transition.

RESULTS

Shifting materiality: from physical manuscripts to born-digital literary artifacts

The first major finding concerns the material transformation of Indonesian literary artifacts across analogue, digitized, and born-digital forms. This transformation is visualized in Figure 1, which maps the relationship between the estimated proportion of literary materials and their degree of archival stability. Figure 1 visually captures the asymmetry between literary production and archival stability in contemporary Indonesian literature, revealing an inverse relationship between the quantity of born-digital materials and their degree of institutional preservation.

Figure 1 reveals a pronounced diagonal asymmetry: while born-digital artifacts constitute the largest share of contemporary literary production, they cluster at the lowest level of archival stability. Conversely, analogue manuscripts occupy the upper-left quadrant of the diagram, indicating strong institutional stabilization despite their comparatively smaller quantity. Digitized materials appear in an intermediate position, reflecting their hybrid status between physical provenance and digital accessibility. Rather than indicating a linear progression from analogue to digital, the figure demonstrates a disjunctive transition in which quantitative growth is inversely related to archival security.

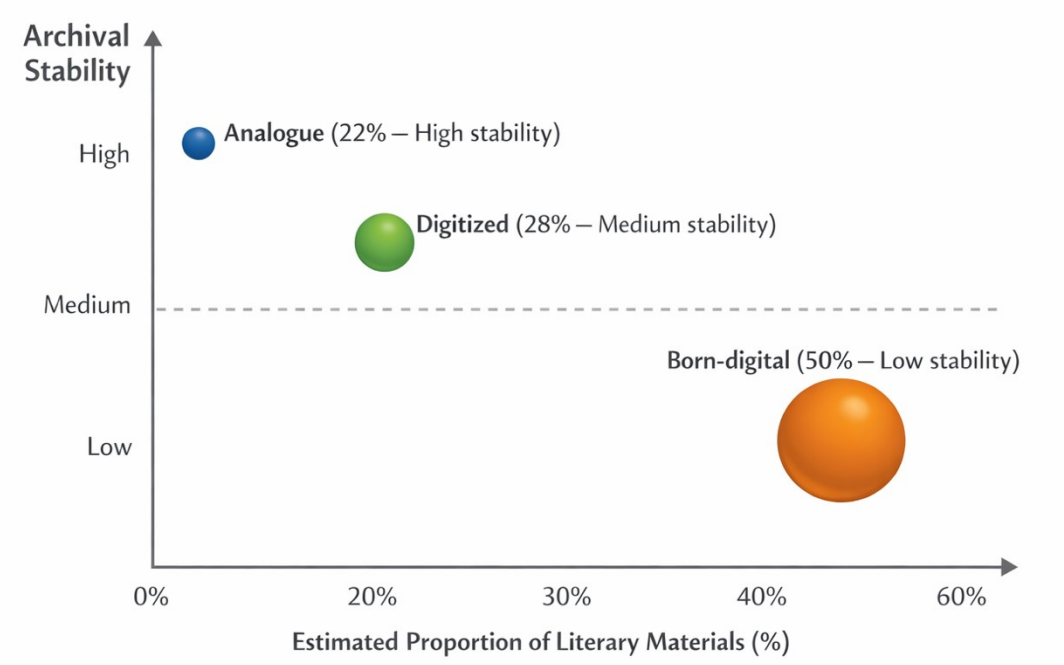


Figure 1. Quantity-stability asymmetry in Indonesian literary materials.

Figure 1 confirms that the contemporary digital transition reshapes Indonesian literary heritage not through simple replacement of formats, but through uneven stabilization mechanisms that fundamentally alter how literary materials are preserved, curated, and rendered meaningful within archival systems. Analytically, this pattern reflects a deeper reconfiguration of literary materiality under digital conditions. The dominance of born-digital artifacts is driven by changes in authorial practice, including reliance on word processors, iterative file saving, and platform-based writing. However, archival infrastructures in Indonesia—and in many Global South contexts—remain historically oriented toward physical objects, resulting in a lag between literary production and preservation capacity. The instability of born-digital materials further complicates archival intervention, as frequent format changes, platform dependency, and intentional deletion challenge traditional notions of fixity and authenticity. From a theoretical perspective, this finding supports arguments in digital archival scholarship that materiality in the digital age is no longer anchored to physical substrates but to metadata, version histories, and infrastructural contexts. Consequently, Indonesian literary heritage is not disappearing, but being reframed—its survival increasingly dependent on how digital traces are selected, structured, and interpreted within evolving archival regimes.

Fragmentation and inequality in Indonesian digital archieve and metadata

The second key finding addresses the fragmentation of archival practices and the uneven distribution of metadata quality across Indonesian digital literary environments. This condition is visualized in Figure 2, which presents a heatmap of metadata completeness across archival environments and metadata dimensions, including descriptive, structural, and administrative metadata. The visualization is derived from the research corpus encompassing national and university repositories, publisher-managed collections, author-managed digital archives, and online literary platforms. Drawing on established metadata standards in digital heritage scholarship, the heatmap translates qualitative assessments of metadata completeness into a comparative visual matrix. By positioning archival environments against metadata dimensions, Figure 2 provides empirical evidence of how metadata practices vary systematically rather than randomly across the Indonesian digital literary landscape.

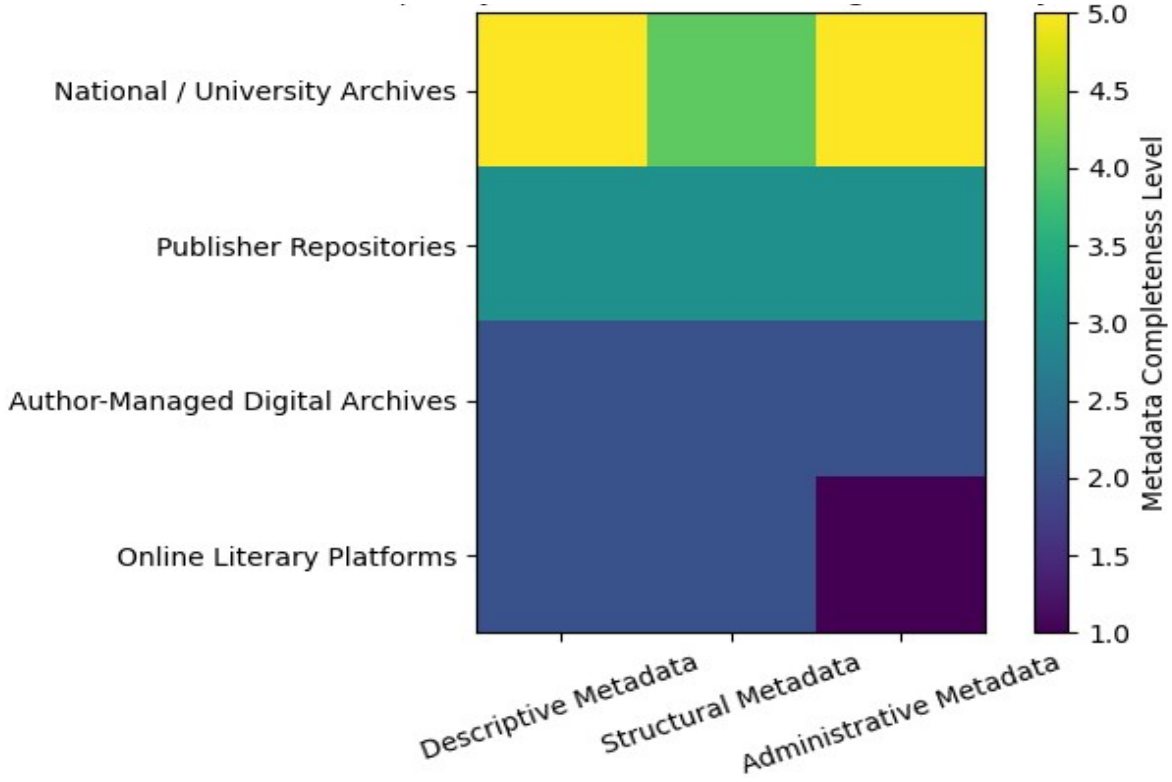


Figure 2. Metadata inequality acrross Indonesian digital literary environment

Figure 2 reveals a clearly stratified archival ecosystem. National and university archives consistently occupy the highest range across all metadata dimensions, indicating strong institutional adherence to cataloguing standards, authority control, and preservation protocols. Publisher repositories form a middle layer, showing moderate metadata completeness that reflects a focus on finalized texts while excluding drafts, correspondence, and revision histories. In contrast, author-managed digital archives cluster in the lower spectrum of the heatmap, characterized by selective and often minimal metadata practices. The lowest level of metadata completeness appears in online literary platforms, where algorithmic indexing replaces archival description, resulting in high visibility but low contextual intelligibility. This stratification demonstrates that Indonesian digital literary heritage is unevenly structured, with metadata functioning as a differentiating mechanism rather than a uniform descriptive layer.

This fragmentation can be interpreted as a consequence of misaligned responsibilities between institutions, authors, and platforms. Institutional archives remain constrained by acquisition policies and resource limitations, while authors often lack archival literacy or incentives to curate their digital traces systematically. Platforms, meanwhile, prioritize engagement metrics over long-term preservation, producing

metadata optimized for circulation rather than memory. Theoretically, this finding supports critical archival arguments that metadata is not merely technical infrastructure but a form of epistemic power shaping what becomes searchable, legible, and ultimately preservable. In the Indonesian context, metadata inequality risks creating a distorted literary record, privileging institutionally sanctioned texts while marginalizing process-oriented or experimental digital writing. Thus, the digital transition reframes literary heritage not only through material transformation, but through differential metadata regimes that govern inclusion, exclusion, and interpretive possibility.

Authorship, digital writing practices, and the reconfiguration of literary agency

The third major finding concerns the relationship between digital writing practices and their archival consequences, conceptualized through the interaction between textual productivity and archival stability. This relationship is visualized in Figure 3, a dual-axis diagram mapping dominant writing practices according to their degree of textual productivity and the stability of the archival traces they generate. The figure is derived from comparative analysis of author-managed archives, interview data, and publicly observable writing platforms within the research corpus. By positioning writing practices as relational entities rather than isolated categories, Figure 3 provides empirical evidence of how different modes of digital authorship simultaneously intensify textual production and reshape the durability of literary memory. The visualization allows for direct comparison across practices, revealing structural patterns that are not readily captured through tabular representation.

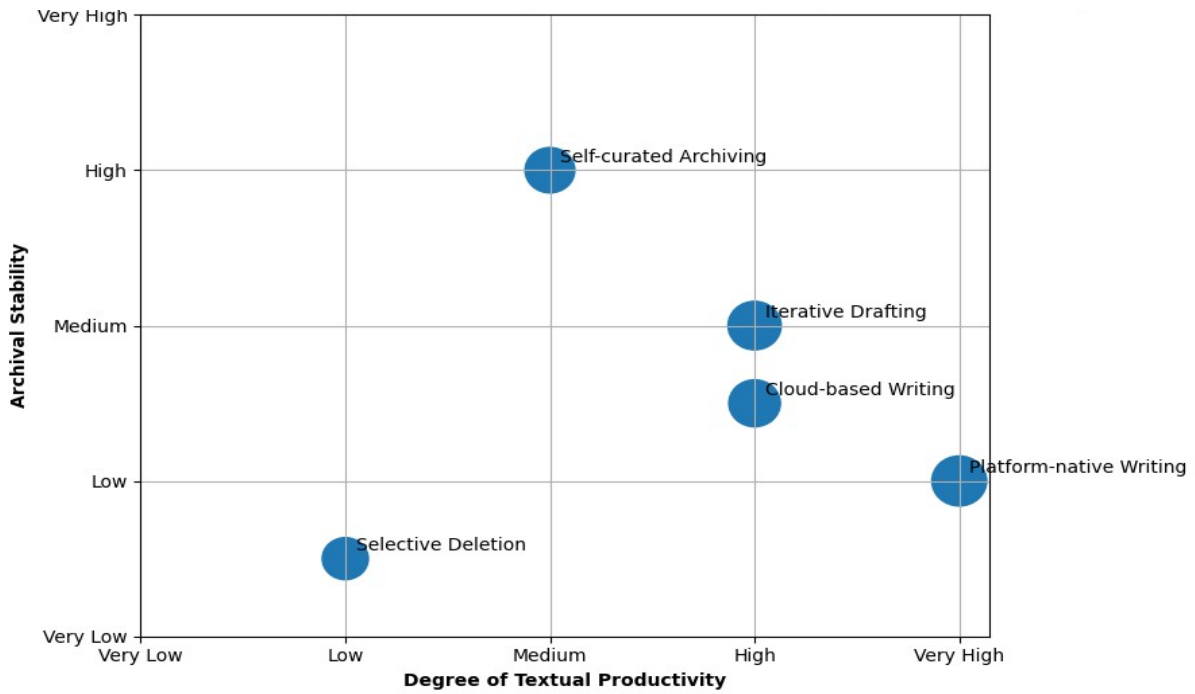


Figure 3. Dual-axis diagram of writing practices: productivity vs archival stability

Figure 3 reveals a pronounced tension between textual productivity and archival stability. Platform-native writing clusters in the quadrant characterized by very high productivity but low archival stability, indicating prolific textual output accompanied by fragile preservation conditions. Iterative drafting and cloud-based writing occupy a nearby position, combining high productivity with only moderate to low stability, as revision histories and multiple file versions remain vulnerable to loss or inaccessibility. In contrast, self-curated archiving appears in the upper-middle area of the diagram, demonstrating comparatively high archival stability despite moderate levels of productivity. Selective deletion concentrates at the lower end of both axes, producing minimal and unstable archival traces. Overall, the figure illustrates that digital authorship in

Indonesia is structured by an inverse relationship between the abundance of textual production and the endurance of literary records.

Analytically, these patterns suggest that authorship in the digital transition is increasingly defined by curatorial decision-making rather than textual finality alone. Digital tools afford authors unprecedented control over writing processes, enabling constant revision, concealment, or exposure of drafts. However, this control also transfers archival responsibility from institutions to individuals, many of whom prioritize creative efficiency over long-term preservation. From a literary-historical perspective, such practices disrupt traditional assumptions that manuscripts naturally accumulate as by-products of writing. Instead, literary traces become contingent upon authors' attitudes toward visibility, privacy, and legacy. This finding aligns with contemporary scholarship arguing that born-digital authorship reconfigures literary agency: authors are no longer merely producers of texts but active managers of their own archival presence. Consequently, Indonesian literary heritage in the digital era is shaped not only by institutions and technologies, but by everyday authorial decisions that determine which traces endure and which vanish.

DISCUSSION

The findings on the shift from analogue manuscripts to born-digital literary artifacts carry significant implications for the preservation and interpretation of Indonesian literary heritage. Functionally, the dominance of born-digital materials expands the volume and diversity of literary traces available for scholarly inquiry, enabling new forms of genetic criticism and process-oriented literary analysis. However, this transformation also introduces dysfunctions: the instability and dispersal of digital artifacts undermine archival continuity and threaten long-term accessibility. Unlike physical manuscripts, which naturally accumulate within institutional repositories, born-digital materials depend on active preservation strategies to survive. Without such mediation, literary heritage risks becoming selectively remembered, privileging stabilized texts while marginalizing creative processes. Thus, the digital transition does not merely alter the medium of literary production; it reshapes the very conditions under which literary memory is constituted (Colaprice, 2025; Fan & Daly, 2021; Ojamaa & Ibrus, 2021). The implication is clear: preserving Indonesian literary heritage in the digital era requires reconceptualizing materiality beyond physical objects toward infrastructural and metadata-based forms of stabilization.

The underlying causes of this material transformation lie in the misalignment between contemporary authorial practices and archival infrastructures. Digital writing technologies prioritize efficiency, revision, and portability, encouraging authors to work across devices, platforms, and formats. Archival institutions, by contrast, remain largely oriented toward object-based preservation models inherited from manuscript culture. This structural lag produces a gap between what is created and what can be preserved (Friedewald et al., 2024; Putranto et al., 2025; Rimkus et al., 2020). Additionally, economic and institutional constraints in many Indonesian archival settings limit proactive acquisition of born-digital materials. These conditions reflect broader Global South dynamics in digital heritage preservation, where rapid technological adoption outpaces infrastructural adaptation. The result is not an absence of literary heritage, but its displacement into unstable digital environments. Understanding this structural mismatch explains why material abundance coexists with archival vulnerability, highlighting the need for systemic rather than ad hoc solutions.

The findings on metadata inequality have profound implications for how Indonesian literary heritage is organized, accessed, and interpreted. Functionally, robust metadata in institutional archives enables searchability, contextualization, and scholarly reuse, reinforcing canonical literary narratives. Conversely, weak or absent metadata in author-managed and platform-based environments produces dysfunction by rendering large portions of literary production opaque or unintelligible (Jaillant & Caputo, 2022; Peruccio et al., 2025). This asymmetry risks creating a distorted literary record in which visibility is mistaken for preservation and algorithmic circulation substitutes for archival memory. The implication is that metadata operates as a gatekeeping mechanism, shaping which texts enter scholarly discourse and which remain ephemeral. In the digital transition, heritage preservation is no longer solely about safeguarding texts but about structuring meaning through descriptive and relational data. Without equitable metadata practices, Indonesian literary heritage risks being fragmented into isolated textual islands rather than a coherent cultural memory.

The structural causes of metadata inequality stem from divergent priorities across archival actors. Institutional archives operate within professional standards that emphasize provenance, authority control, and long-term usability, yet their scope is often limited by acquisition policies and resource availability. Authors, meanwhile, rarely perceive metadata creation as part of their creative labor, focusing instead on textual production (Buršić & Stančić, 2019; Caron & Woerly, 2024). Digital platforms further exacerbate this imbalance by generating metadata optimized for engagement metrics rather than archival intelligibility. These differing logics reflect deeper epistemic divides between memory-oriented and market-oriented infrastructures. In the Indonesian context, where institutional digital archiving frameworks are still emerging, this divide becomes more pronounced. Metadata inequality thus arises not from technical incapacity alone, but from structural tensions between cultural preservation, individual practice, and platform capitalism.

The transformation of authorship through digital writing practices significantly reframes literary agency and heritage preservation. Functionally, digital tools empower authors with unprecedented control over writing processes, enabling iterative revision and selective disclosure of drafts. This autonomy can enrich literary creativity and self-curation. However, the dysfunction lies in the erosion of unintended archival traces that historically supported genetic criticism and literary historiography. When authors systematically delete drafts or rely on transient platforms, the literary record becomes thinner and more curated, potentially sanitizing the creative process. The implication is that authorship now directly shapes archival memory, making literary heritage contingent on individual decisions rather than institutional accumulation (Follonier, 2021; Rimkus et al., 2020). This shift challenges traditional assumptions that archives passively inherit manuscripts and underscores the active role of authors in determining what survives as cultural memory.

The structural drivers of this transformation in authorship are rooted in the affordances and constraints of digital writing environments. Word processors, cloud platforms, and social media encourage constant revision and ease of deletion, normalizing ephemerality as a feature rather than a flaw. At the same time, the absence of clear incentives or guidance for preserving digital drafts discourages authors from maintaining comprehensive archives (Fatonah, 2025; Friedewald et al., 2024; von Schorlemer, 2020). These practices are further shaped by concerns over privacy, intellectual property, and reputational risk, particularly in highly visible online spaces. Collectively, these factors reposition authors as both producers and gatekeepers of their own archival legacy. This structural reconfiguration explains why authorship in the digital transition becomes inseparable from archival responsibility, fundamentally altering how Indonesian literary heritage is formed, preserved, and interpreted.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the contemporary digital transition fundamentally reshapes Indonesian literary heritage by transforming materiality, archival structures, and authorship practices. The central insight of this research lies in showing that literary preservation in the digital era is no longer anchored primarily in physical manuscripts, but increasingly mediated through metadata, platforms, and curatorial decisions. By integrating archival studies, digital humanities, and literary analysis, this research offers a renewed perspective on how literary memory is produced and stabilized. Methodologically, the study advances a corpus-based, interpretive framework that bridges institutional archives and author-managed digital traces, while conceptually reframing literary heritage as a dynamic and infrastructural phenomenon. These contributions enrich scholarly debates on digital literary preservation, particularly by foregrounding Global South contexts often underrepresented in international research.

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. The qualitative design and purposive corpus selection, while enabling interpretive depth, limit generalization across the full spectrum of Indonesian literary production. Additionally, the analysis focuses primarily on textual and archival dimensions, leaving technological architectures and legal frameworks less explored. Future research could expand this work by incorporating quantitative analyses of larger digital corpora, comparative studies across national contexts, or longitudinal examinations of born-digital literary archives. Further inquiry into policy, copyright, and platform governance would also deepen understanding of digital literary preservation. Addressing these dimensions will be essential for developing more comprehensive and sustainable models of literary heritage in the digital age.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

M. Naveen Kumar: conceptualization (lead); literature review (lead). **Moh. Ainol Yaqin:** analysis (lead); writing – original draft (lead); writing – review and editing (lead).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

AI USE DECLARATION

The authors used artificial intelligence tools to assist with the formatting and layout of this manuscript. AI was not used to generate the substantive content, conceptualization, data, analysis, or conclusions of the research, all of which remain the sole responsibility of the authors.

INFORMED CONSENT

We have obtained informed consent from all individuals included in this study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The research related to human use has been complied with all the relevant national regulations and institutional policies in accordance with the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration and has been approved by the authors' institutional review board or equivalent committee.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Data availability is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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