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Making home visible: language, memory, and spatial belonging in Indonesian domestic visual cultures

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ABSTRACT

Background: Indonesian domestic visual culture remains underexamined within linguistic-landscape and spatial-visual scholarship, although homes, thresholds, interiors, objects, and mediated household images function as crucial sites where language, memory, identity, and belonging become publicly readable. **Objective:** This study examines how Indonesian domestic spaces make home visible through linguistic signs, vernacular forms, memory-bearing objects, spatial arrangements, and mediated practices of homemaking. **Method:** This study uses qualitative multimodal discourse analysis, linguistic-landscape interpretation, and spatial-semiotic reading of twenty-two publicly verifiable domestic visual units drawn from official tourism pages, cultural-heritage records, and peer-reviewed academic sources. **Results:** Domestic visibility is most strongly organized through vernacular and heritage house forms, including named typologies, roof structures, facade orders, and culturally coded spatial sequences. Memory and belonging appear through ancestral houses, ritual spaces, gendered domestic labour, adaptive kinship, work-care routines, digital homemaking, and psychological attachment. Spatial belonging is negotiated through thresholds that connect private dwelling with tourism, heritage governance, public representation, and mediated circulation. **Implication:** This study shows that Indonesian homes should be read not as static private containers but as layered semiotic environments where cultural continuity and social transformation are visibly arranged. **Novelty:** This study extends linguistic-landscape inquiry inward by integrating domesticity studies, visual semiotics, and spatial belonging within one Indonesian corpus-based framework.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia offers an unusually dense social setting for examining how home becomes visible through language, memory, and spatial belonging. BPS recorded Indonesia's population at around 281.6 million people in mid-2024, while official diplomatic information describes Indonesia as an archipelagic state of more than 17,000 islands, only about 7,000 of which are inhabited. Domestic space therefore cannot be treated as a neutral background to social life; it is a dispersed cultural infrastructure through which kinship, migration, religion, ethnicity, aspiration, and everyday hierarchy are materially arranged. This urgency is sharpened by digital circulation: BPS reported that 72.78 percent of Indonesia's population accessed this internet in 2024, increasing how household images, interior signs, vernacular objects, and domestic

thresholds enter public visibility. In this context, Indonesian domestic visual culture becomes a critical site for understanding how private dwelling is translated into visible social meaning.

Existing scholarship has established strong foundations for reading Indonesian space as a linguistic, visual, and semiotic field. Studies on street art, ethnolinguistic signage, tourism advertising, commemorative murals, toponymic change, and metropolitan peripheries have shown how public visibility organizes identity, memory, inequality, and spatial belonging [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]. Parallel work in architecture and domestic studies has examined traditional house ordering, privacy values, spatial hierarchy, women's interior practice, household work adaptation, and vernacular transformation under urban or tourism pressures [7], [8], [9], [10], [11], [12]. Yet these two conversations rarely meet. Public linguistic landscape studies often stop at streets, institutions, and tourist sites, while domestic architecture studies often privilege form and function over visible language, inscription, display, and memory.

This study addresses that gap by examining how Indonesian domestic visual cultures make home legible as a social, spatial, and affective formation. It asks how language, objects, images, and spatial arrangements within or around domestic settings mark belonging; how memory is materialized through walls, thresholds, photographs, ornaments, religious inscriptions, and vernacular design; and how domestic visibility negotiates tensions between privacy and display, continuity and transformation, rootedness and mobility. Rather than assuming home as a private container separated from public semiotic life, this study treats home as a layered visual-discursive environment. This approach enables a more precise account of how domestic spaces communicate identity without reducing them to architectural typology or sentimental attachment. Methodologically, this study combines multimodal discourse analysis, linguistic-landscape interpretation, and spatial-semiotic reading to connect visible textual signs, material objects, domestic locations, and broader cultural meanings.

The central argument developed here is that Indonesian homes become visible not only through built form, but through patterned relations among language, memory objects, and spatial placement. Domestic visual culture is therefore best understood as a situated archive: it preserves family histories, religious commitments, ethnic attachments, gendered routines, aspirational modernity, and experiences of movement while also arranging what may be seen, concealed, formalized, or shared. This proposition extends recent work on digital homemaking and psychological home-making, which shows that home is produced through lived, material, relational, and mediated practices rather than through residence alone [13], [14]. Its implication is theoretical as well as methodological: linguistic landscape inquiry can be moved inward, from public signage to domestic interiors and thresholds, while domestic studies can be strengthened by attending to language, visibility, and semiotic memory as constitutive features of belonging.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Domestic visual culture

Domestic visual culture can be understood as a constellation of visible signs, objects, inscriptions, surfaces, ornaments, images, and spatial displays through which household life becomes socially readable. Unlike architectural studies that define domesticity mainly through form, function, privacy, or spatial hierarchy, visual-cultural approaches treat home as a semiotic environment where meaning is arranged materially. Indonesian scholarship on public visuality has shown how walls, typography, murals, signage, and tourism images organize identity and power [1], [3], [15], [6]. Yet domestic visual culture requires a more intimate scale of analysis because household signs often combine memory, affect, kinship, religion, and everyday spatial order.

Key indicators of domestic visual culture include visible language, symbolic objects, material displays, spatial placement, and relations between threshold and interior. Linguistic landscape research offers useful tools for reading scripts, names, multilingual signs, and typographic choices, but domestic settings require attention to less formal signs such as family labels, devotional texts, wall photographs, heirlooms, certificates, curtains, room arrangements, and vernacular decoration [1], [16], [5]. Studies of Indonesian spatial discourse and architectural narration further suggest that domestic visibility is produced not only by objects themselves, but also by where they are placed, who may see them, and how they stabilize household identity [17], [12].

2.2. Home-making

Home-making refers to practices through which dwelling is transformed into a meaningful place of attachment, continuity, and social orientation. Foundational work on domesticity emphasizes that home is not simply a physical shelter, but a lived formation shaped by time, routine, emotion, and material practice [18], [19]. Recent studies extend this argument by showing that home may be produced through digital connection, migration, psychological belonging, and displacement rather than residence alone [13], [20], [21], [14].

These perspectives challenge static definitions of home and allow Indonesian domestic interiors to be read as unstable yet meaningful sites of memory.

The observable dimensions of home-making include domestic routines, kinship arrangements, gendered labor, religious practice, adaptation to work, and spatial negotiation under changing economic or social conditions. Indonesian architectural studies show that households are shaped by privacy values, extended-family relations, communal space, vernacular hierarchy, and everyday adaptation [22], [23], [10]. Other works document how domestic interiors respond to work-from-home demands, women's interior practices, pandemic food flows, and constrained housing conditions [8], [9], [24], [25]. These indicators show that home-making is both spatial and semiotic.

2.3. Spatial belonging

Spatial belonging concerns how people recognize themselves as attached to, authorized within, or excluded from particular spaces. In public-space studies, belonging is often examined through visibility, language hierarchy, cultural representation, and spatial inequality [1], [2], [5], [4]. In domestic research, however, belonging is more relational and embodied: it emerges through access to rooms, placement of personal objects, inherited spatial rules, and remembered attachments. Work on traditional houses, urban *kampung* layouts, and domestic transformation shows that belonging is not only declared linguistically, but also organized through spatial syntax, circulation, threshold, and culturally coded visibility [26], [27].

Indicators of spatial belonging include threshold marking, visibility control, vernacular continuity, gendered access, intergenerational memory, and adaptation to mobility or commercialization. Indonesian studies of Balinese, Javanese, Sasak, Kajang, and *kampung* housing show that domestic belonging is continually negotiated through tradition, tourism, urban density, and changing household needs [7], Candrakirana et al. (2024), [11], Wahyudi et al. (2026), Nurwahid et al. (2026). Strassler's (2010) [28] work on visual culture and memory also helps frame domestic images as social mediators rather than passive records. This study therefore positions Indonesian domestic visual culture as a meeting point between visible language, material memory, and spatially organized belonging.

3. METHOD

This study used domestic visual units as its material object of analysis. A unit was defined as one publicly documented domestic or domestic-adjacent visual formation that contained spatial, linguistic, material, or memory-bearing significance. Items included traditional houses, domestic thresholds, house facades, communal houses, heritage dwellings, interior practices, home-work adaptations, digital homemaking, and psychological home-making. This definition allowed domestic visibility to be examined across physical architecture, published visual description, and mediated representations without entering private households directly. This unit of analysis follows recent work on Indonesian spatial discourse, vernacular domesticity, and visual culture, which treats built form, inscription, object, and spatial order as meaning-making systems [17], [6], [12].

Table 1. Dataset composition

Code	Data Type	Source	Period	Quantity	Characteristics
DV-PRI-001	Official tourism page	Indonesia.travel	n.d.; collected 2026	1	*Mbaru Niang*, communal dwelling, tourism homestay
DV-PRI-002	Official tourism page	Indonesia.travel	n.d.; collected 2026	1	Sasak house, settlement, tradition narrative
DV-PRI-003	Official tourism page	Indonesia.travel	n.d.; collected 2026	1	Weaving, porch, gendered domestic threshold
DV-PRI-004	Official tourism page	Indonesia.travel	n.d.; collected 2026	1	House gates, *angkul-angkul*, collective facade order
DV-PRI-005	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2011; collected 2026	1	*Rumah Gadang*, roof form, carved surface
DV-PRI-006	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2016; collected 2026	1	Pendhapa, *pringgitan*, *ndalem* sequence
DV-PRI-007	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2011; collected 2026	1	Ancestral traditional house
DV-PRI-008	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2009; collected 2026	1	Baileo, communal ritual house
DV-PRI-009	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2010; collected 2026	1	House memory and funerary landscape
DV-PRI-010	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2014; collected 2026	1	Banjar Gajah Baliku heritage house
DV-PRI-011	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2010; collected 2026	1	Bantaeng traditional house
DV-PRI-012	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	n.d.; collected 2026	1	*Rumah Gadang* facade and window structure
DV-PRI-013	Heritage registry	Kemdikbud Cagar Budaya	SK 2003; collected 2026	1	Bubungan Tinggi heritage house
DV-SEC-014	Peer-reviewed article	Budiman, 2024	2024	1	Digital homemaking and lived religion
DV-SEC-015	Peer-reviewed article	Harani et al., 2022	2022	1	Women's interior practice
DV-SEC-016	Peer-reviewed article	Fathimah et al., 2023	2023	1	Work-at-home spatial adaptation
DV-SEC-017	Peer-reviewed article	Asriana & Khidmat, 2024	2024	1	Spatial layout of traditional houses
DV-SEC-018	Peer-reviewed article	Asriana et al., 2024	2024	1	Space syntax and privacy hierarchy
DV-SEC-019	Article record	Putra et al., 2025	2025	1	Tourism transformation of Balinese houses
DV-SEC-020	Peer-reviewed article	Suryantini et al., 2021	2021/2023 profile	1	Healthy home and food-flow practice
DV-SEC-021	Peer-reviewed article	Yulianto & Rembulan, 2024	2024	1	Psychological home-making, real and virtual
DV-SEC-022	Peer-reviewed article	Hakim et al., 2022	2022	1	Extended household and kinship space

This study adopted a qualitative multimodal research design, combining visual-semiotic analysis, linguistic-landscape interpretation, and spatial reading. This design was selected because this study investigates how domestic space becomes meaningful through visible forms rather than through measurable causal relations. It therefore does not test behavioural effects or claim direct social causation. Instead, it examines how public representations of Indonesian homes organize language, memory, material culture, and belonging. This approach is consistent with recent Indonesian studies on signage, murals, tourism media, and spatial discourse, while extending those approaches inward toward domestic interiors, thresholds, and heritage dwellings [1], [2], [3], [5].

Information was drawn from three source categories. Primary data consisted of official tourism pages and cultural-heritage registry records that publicly describe or visually represent domestic architecture, village houses, communal houses, thresholds, and heritage dwellings. Secondary data consisted of peer-reviewed articles and academic records on domestic space, gendered interior practice, work-at-home adaptation, spatial syntax, tourism transformation, digital homemaking, and psychological home-making. Contextual data were taken from source metadata, location descriptions, public-access notes, and verification records contained in the corpus workbook. This combination enabled this study to connect official visual

representation with scholarly interpretation while maintaining a clear distinction between primary representation and secondary analytical support.

Data collection proceeded through a structured public-corpus protocol. First, official institutions, tourism portals, heritage registries, academic publishers, and university repositories were identified. Second, searches used keywords related to *rumah adat*, domestic space, interior practice, homemaking, spatial belonging, vernacular house, threshold, facade, memory, and Indonesian household. Third, items were limited to publicly accessible records relevant to Indonesian domestic visual cultures and collected on 4 July 2026. Fourth, each item was assigned a unique code, metadata were recorded, URLs were verified, and duplicate records were removed. Finally, titles, dates, source names, locations, source roles, image descriptions, textual excerpts, and contextual notes were stored in aligned corpus sheets.

Analysis followed three sequential but connected procedures. First, multimodal domestic visibility mapping identified where home became visible through language, object, image, material surface, facade, threshold, or spatial zone. Second, memory-and-belonging register analysis examined how public descriptions linked domestic forms to ancestry, kinship, religion, cultural continuity, gendered practice, migration, or psychological attachment. Third, spatial negotiation and threshold analysis interpreted tensions between privacy and display, tradition and modernity, household life and tourism, domestic labor and public visibility, or physical and digital home-making. Coding remained preliminary and interpretive, requiring refinement through intercoder checking before frequency-based claims could be made.

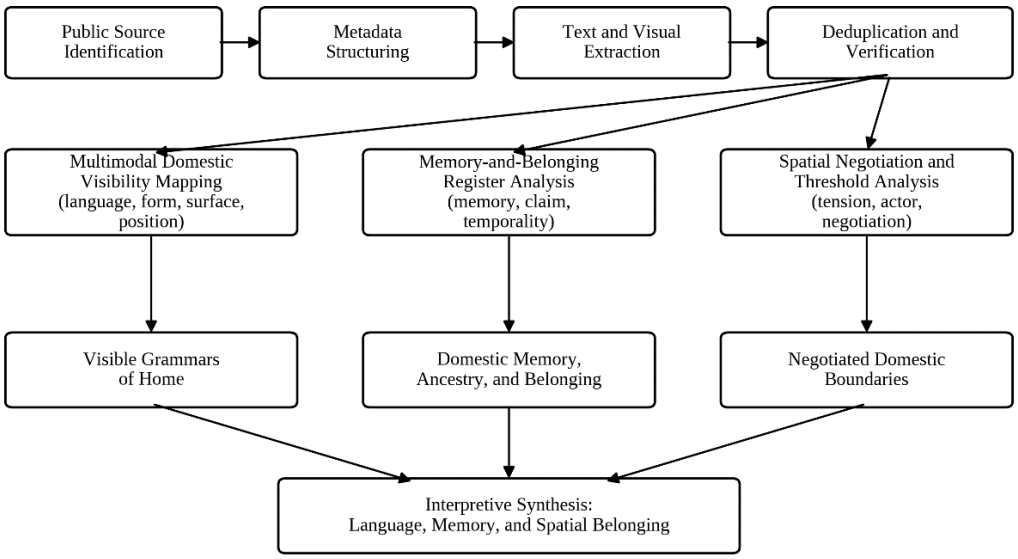


Figure 1. Operational matrix of analysis

4. RESULTS

4.1. Visible grammars of home

Indonesian domestic visual culture appears most legible when home is approached as a visible grammar rather than as a merely functional shelter. Table 2 organizes twenty-two corpus items according to how domesticity becomes publicly readable through form, inscription, object, threshold, routine, and mediated representation. The largest category concerns heritage and vernacular house form, while smaller categories capture adaptive practice, gendered and mediated homemaking, threshold display, ritual-ancestral landscapes, and tourism-economic transformation. This distribution does not claim causal hierarchy; it identifies how often each mode of visibility appears within this public corpus. The table therefore establishes an empirical basis for reading home as a semiotic arrangement, consistent with Indonesian studies on spatial discourse, visual landscapes, and vernacular architecture.

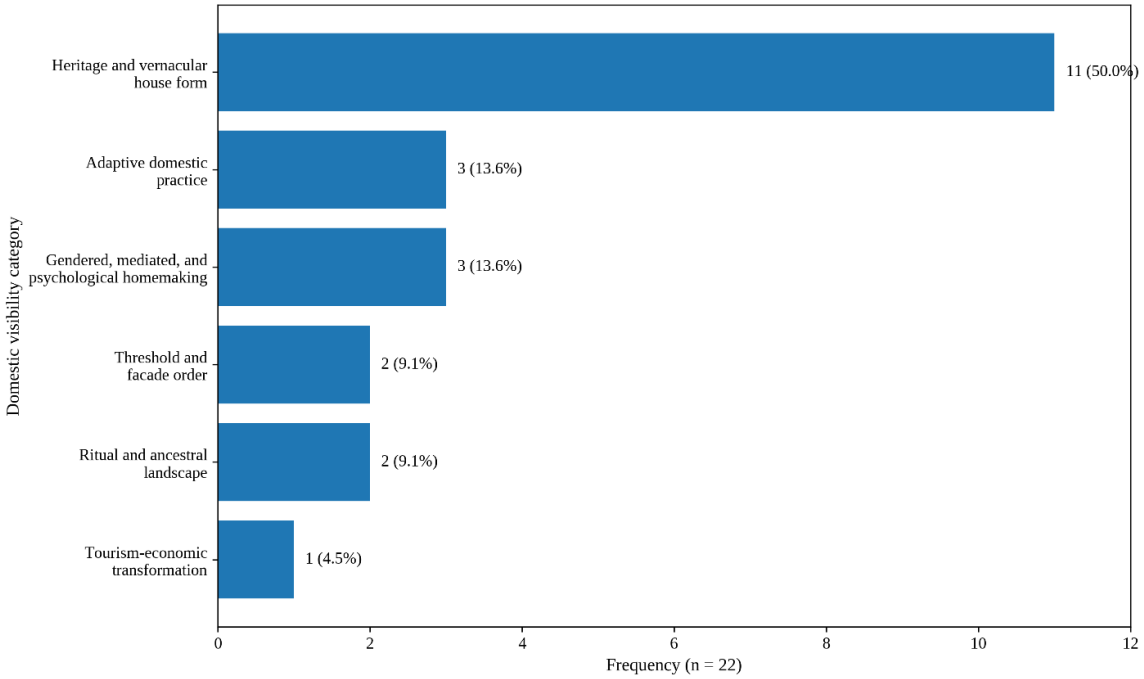


Figure 2. Distribution of domestic visibility forms

The dominant pattern is architectural and typological visibility, which accounts for 11 of 22 items, or 50.0 percent. These items foreground house form through named structures, roof profiles, spatial sequences, and layout grammar. The corpus includes references to "*Mbaru Niang*," "*Rumah Gadang*," "*Rumah Adat Bubungan Tinggi*," and Javanese spatial terms such as "*pendhapa*," "*pringgitan*," and "*ndalem*." This pattern shows that Indonesian homes are often made visible through culturally recognizable forms before they are interpreted through private experience. Smaller patterns complicate this dominance. Porches, gates, food flow, work-at-home arrangements, women-led interiors, and real-virtual homemaking show that domestic visibility also emerges through practice, boundary, routine, and mediation rather than architectural form alone.

These patterns position domestic space as a layered semiotic field in which visibility is produced by relations between built form, cultural memory, social practice, and spatial placement. The prominence of vernacular and heritage form supports arguments in Indonesian architectural scholarship that house types encode social order, privacy, kinship, and cultural continuity [7], [10], [12], [27]. Yet the presence of work, gender, health, migration, and digital belonging extends this reading beyond typology. Home is not only inherited through architecture; it is also repeatedly made through labour, display, movement, and mediated memory. This study therefore treats domestic visual culture as an inward extension of linguistic-landscape inquiry and a semiotic expansion of domestic-space studies.

Table 2. Visible grammars of home in Indonesian domestic visual cultures

Main Category	Subcategory	Indicator	Frequency	Percentage	Data Variation	Example / Corpus Excerpt	Data Codes
Heritage and vernacular house form	House typology, roof form, named interior sequence, spatial grammar	Domestic visibility is organized through recognizable architectural forms and culturally named spaces	11	50.0%	Tourism village pages, Cagar Budaya registry records, and peer-reviewed spatial studies	"*Mbaru Niang*"; "*pendhapa*, bagian kedua… *pringgitan*… *ndalem*"; "formal rule basis for spatial configurations"	DV-PRI-001, DV-PRI-002, DV-PRI-005, DV-PRI-006, DV-PRI-007, DV-PRI-010, DV-PRI-011, DV-PRI-012, DV-PRI-013, DV-SEC-017, DV-SEC-018
Adaptive domestic practice	Work, health, food flow, kinship, and shared household routines	Home becomes visible through practical reorganization of rooms and everyday flows	3	13.6%	Academic studies on work-at-home, healthy home, and extended households	"Home as workplace"; "food flow is intertwined with cleaning protocols"; "socio-cultural values of kinship"	DV-SEC-016, DV-SEC-020, DV-SEC-022
Gendered, mediated, and psychological homemaking	Women's interior practice, digital homemaking, real-virtual belonging	Domestic visibility emerges through gendered agency, mediated religious life, and affective attachment	3	13.6%	Peer-reviewed studies on women's domestic territory, migrant homemaking, and urban youth psychological homes	"women-led domestic territory"; "home is made by negotiating lived experiences"; "real and the virtual"	DV-SEC-014, DV-SEC-015, DV-SEC-021
Threshold and facade order	Porch, gate, house-front repetition, and domestic boundary	Belonging is displayed at domestic edges where private space becomes socially readable	2	9.1%	Tourism representations of Sasak and Balinese village houses	"women busy weaving fabric on the porches"; "*Gerbang masuk setiap rumah (angkul-angkul) memiliki desain yang identik*"	DV-PRI-003, DV-PRI-004
Ritual and ancestral landscape	Communal house, grave-house relation, ritual dwelling form	Domestic meaning is extended beyond residence into ritual and ancestral spatial memory	2	9.1%	Cagar Budaya records on Baileo Haria and Lemo heritage landscape	"*tidak dijadikan sebagai rumah tinggal*"; "*Kuburan Batu dan Rumah Adat Lemo*"	DV-PRI-008, DV-PRI-009
Tourism-economic transformation	Retained traditional icons within transformed domestic space	Home becomes visible through selective preservation under tourism and modern living pressures	1	4.5%	Academic record on Balinese traditional house transformation	"Icons from the past have been placed in the house"	DV-SEC-019

4.2. Domestic memory and spatial belonging

Memory and belonging are most clearly organized through registers that connect domestic form with inherited identity, everyday practice, and mediated attachment. Table 3 keeps this analysis within the same twenty-two domestic visual units used earlier, but shifts attention from visible form to the kinds of memory and belonging that each form activates. The categories are mutually organized around the dominant role of each item: vernacular continuity, ancestral or ritual memory, adaptive kinship and care, gendered belonging, threshold-based collectivity, mediated homemaking, and tourism-economic recontextualization. This arrangement clarifies that domestic visibility is not only a matter of what can be seen, but also of what kind of social attachment becomes recognizable through visible domestic space.

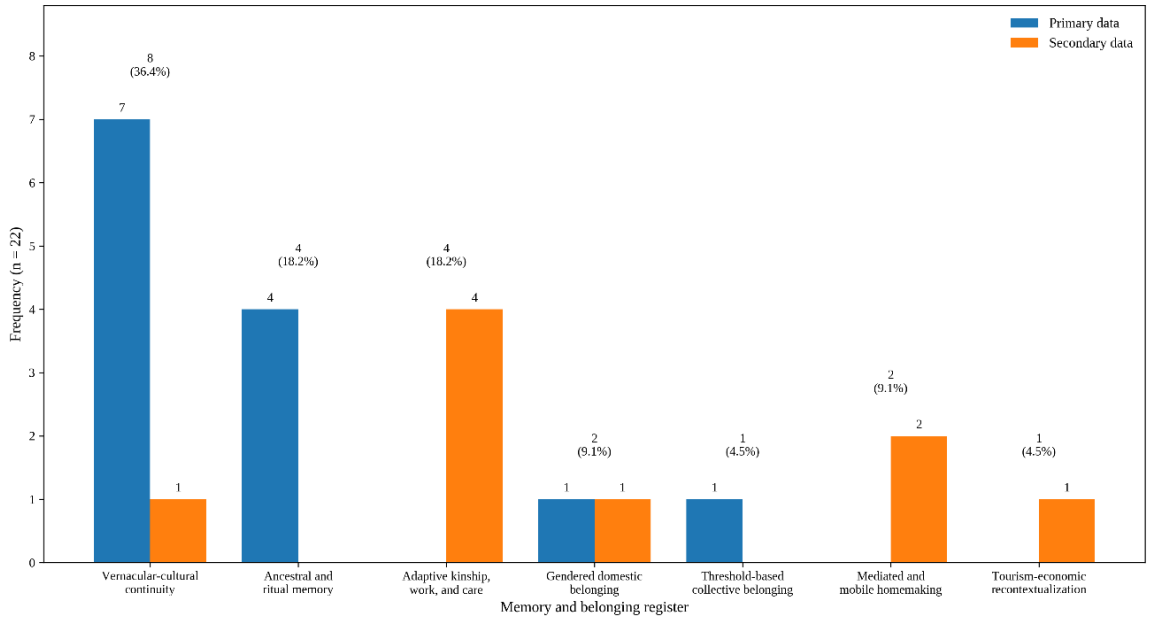


Figure 3. Memory and belonging registers by source type

The strongest pattern is vernacular-cultural continuity, representing 8 of 22 items, or 36.4 percent. Corpus excerpts such as "*Mbaru Niang*," "*Rumah Gadang*," and "*Rumah Adat Bubungan Tinggi*" show how belonging is anchored through named house forms and recognizable regional typologies. Ancestral and ritual memory follows with 4 items, including the Javanese sequence "*pendhapa… pringgitan… ndalem*" and the Lemo record linking "*Kuburan Batu dan Rumah Adat Lemo*." Adaptive kinship, work, and care also accounts for 4 items, indicating that memory is not only inherited but reorganized through everyday routines. Smaller registers—gendered porch work, *angkul-angkul* gates, digital homemaking, and tourism transformation—show how belonging is made visible at domestic edges, through labour, or across physical and mediated spaces.

These patterns suggest that Indonesian domestic belonging is neither purely architectural nor purely emotional. It is produced through a layered relation between inherited form, spatial practice, and visible memory. Vernacular continuity confirms the importance of traditional spatial grammars described in Indonesian house studies (Agusintadewi, 2020; Wazir & Indriani, 2020; Asriana & Khidmat, 2024), while adaptive and mediated categories complicate any fixed reading of home as stable heritage. Work-at-home arrangements, women's interior practices, digital homemaking, and psychological home-making show that belonging is repeatedly negotiated through routine, gender, mobility, and media [8], [9], [13], [14]. This study therefore reads domestic memory as an active spatial practice rather than a passive residue of tradition.

Table 3. Memory and belonging registers in Indonesian domestic visual cultures

Main Register	Subcategory	Indicator	Primary Data	Secondary Data	Frequency	Percentage	Data Variation	Example / Corpus Excerpt	Data Codes
Vernacular-cultural continuity	House type, facade, roof form, settlement layout, inherited spatial order	Belonging is articulated through recognizable regional house forms and culturally coded domestic arrangements	7	1	8	36.4%	Tourism pages, heritage registry records, and spatial-layout study	"*Mbaru Niang*"; "*Rumah Gadang*"; "*Rumah Adat Bubungan Tinggi*"; "spatial layout patterns of traditional houses"	DV-PRI-001, DV-PRI-002, DV-PRI-005, DV-PRI-010, DV-PRI-011, DV-PRI-012, DV-PRI-013, DV-SEC-017
Ancestral and ritual memory	Ancestral house, ritual dwelling, commemorative landscape, named interior hierarchy	Home is linked to lineage, ceremonial continuity, sacred memory, or intergenerational spatial order	4	0	4	18.2%	Cagar Budaya records on communal, ancestral, and ritual domestic forms	"*pendhapa… pringgitan… ndalem*"; "*tidak dijadikan sebagai rumah tinggal*"; "*Kuburan Batu dan Rumah Adat Lemo*"	DV-PRI-006, DV-PRI-007, DV-PRI-008, DV-PRI-009
Adaptive kinship, work, and care	Work-at-home, food flow, privacy hierarchy, extended household	Belonging is maintained through negotiated routines, shared residence, care practice, and domestic adjustment	0	4	4	18.2%	Peer-reviewed studies on work, health, kinship, and syntactic domestic organization	"Home as workplace"; "food flow"; "extended household"; "privacy hierarchy"	DV-SEC-016, DV-SEC-018, DV-SEC-020, DV-SEC-022
Gendered domestic belonging	Porch work, women's interior practice, domestic agency	Domestic memory is shaped through gendered labour, craft, and control over interior arrangements	1	1	2	9.1%	Tourism representation and peer-reviewed interior study	"women busy weaving fabric on the porches"; "women-led domestic territory"	DV-PRI-003, DV-SEC-015
Threshold-based collective belonging	Gate, porch, house-front repetition, settlement boundary	Collective belonging is displayed through visible domestic edges between household and public space	1	0	1	4.5%	Tourism representation of Balinese village house order	"*Gerbang masuk setiap rumah (angkul-angkul) memiliki desain yang identik*"	DV-PRI-004
Mediated and mobile homemaking	Digital religion, migration, psychological home, real-virtual belonging	Home is produced through mediated attachment and mobile or psychologically layered belonging	0	2	2	9.1%	Peer-reviewed studies on digital homemaking and psychological home-making	"digital homemaking"; "weaving the real and the virtual"	DV-SEC-014, DV-SEC-021
Tourism-economic recontextualization	Domestic transformation under tourism economy	Domestic memory is selectively retained while house space is reorganized for tourism and modern use	0	1	1	4.5%	Academic record on Balinese traditional house transformation	"Icons from the past have been placed in the house"	DV-SEC-019

4.3. Spatial negotiation and domestic thresholds

Spatial belonging in this corpus is most visible where domestic space crosses a boundary: between heritage object and lived house, private dwelling and tourism display, inherited layout and contemporary adaptation, or physical residence and mediated attachment. Table 4 retains the same twenty-two domestic visual units used in the preceding analyses, but reorganizes them according to the negotiation each item foregrounds. This approach clarifies that home is not represented as a single stable category. It is repeatedly positioned between protection and exposure, continuity and change, intimacy and circulation. Such a reading is consistent with Indonesian domestic and visual-spatial scholarship that treats built form, signage, interior arrangement, and public representation as mutually constitutive rather than separate domains.

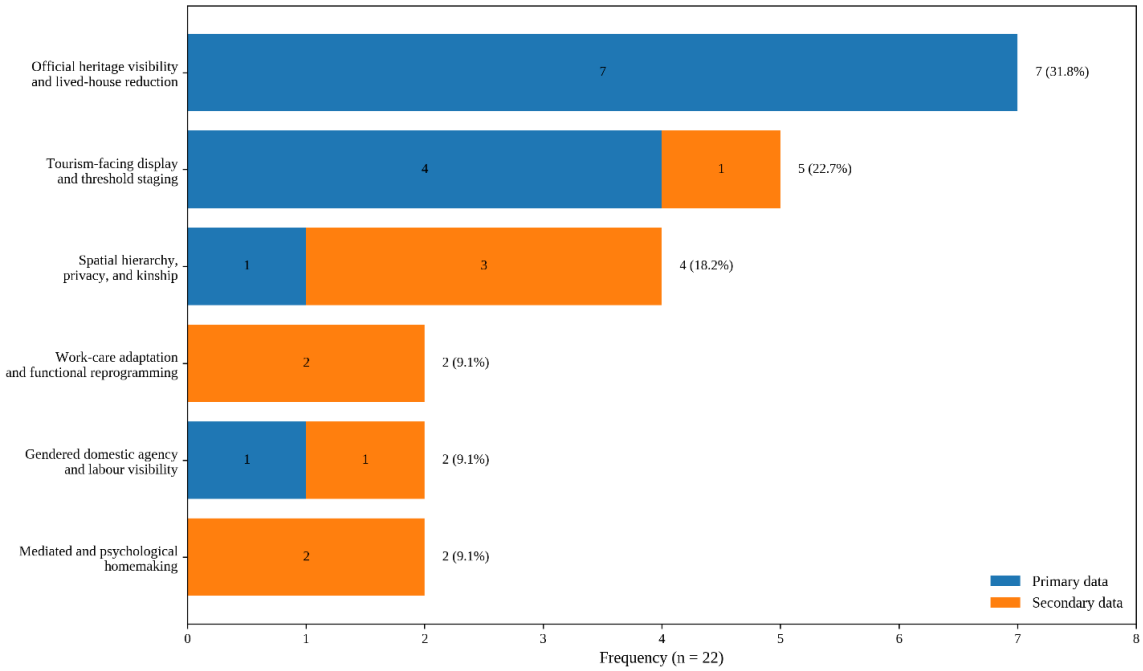


Figure 4. Spatial negotiation across domestic visual units

The most frequent pattern is official heritage visibility and lived-house reduction, covering 7 of 22 items, or 31.8 percent. Corpus phrases such as "*Rumah Gadang*," "*Rumah Tradisional Jawa*," and "*Rumah Adat Bubungan Tinggi*" show how domestic forms become recognizable through formal cultural naming. Yet the Baileo Haria record, described as "*tidak dijadikan sebagai rumah tinggal*," also indicates that domestic or domestic-adjacent architecture may be preserved as collective memory rather than everyday residence. Tourism-facing display follows with 5 items, including "*Mbaru Niang*," "Desa Sade," and "*angkul-angkul*," where household form becomes readable through visitor-oriented visibility. Smaller categories show negotiation through privacy hierarchy, work-at-home arrangements, food flow, porch-based weaving, women-led interiors, digital homemaking, and real-virtual psychological belonging.

This pattern strengthens the argument that Indonesian domestic visual culture should be read through thresholds rather than interiors alone. Thresholds are not limited to gates, porches, and facades; they also include institutional framing, tourism narration, kinship circulation, digital mediation, and gendered access to domestic territory. Heritage records convert houses into authorized cultural memory, while tourism pages make domestic surfaces available to external spectators. At the same time, studies of work, care, privacy, and psychological home-making show that belonging is actively renegotiated within ordinary routines [8], [9], [25], [14]. This study therefore positions spatial belonging as a negotiated visibility, not simply as residence or cultural inheritance.

Table 4. Spatial negotiation across Indonesian domestic visual units

Main Negotiation Pattern	Subcategory	Indicator	Primary Data	Secondary Data	Frequency	Percentage	Data Variation	Example / Corpus Excerpt	Data Codes
Official heritage visibility and lived-house reduction	Heritage naming, registry framing, formal cultural recognition	Domestic form is made visible as heritage, while everyday household life becomes less central in representation	7	0	7	31.8%	Cagar Budaya records on traditional and communal houses	"*Rumah Gadang*"; "*Rumah Tradisional Jawa*"; "*Rumah Adat Bubungan Tinggi*"; "*tidak dijadikan sebagai rumah tinggal*"	DV-PRI-005, DV-PRI-006, DV-PRI-007, DV-PRI-008, DV-PRI-010, DV-PRI-011, DV-PRI-013
Tourism-facing display and threshold staging	Village house, domestic facade, curated tradition, tourism economy	Home is positioned between dwelling, cultural performance, and public-facing visual attraction	4	1	5	22.7%	Tourism pages, heritage landscape record, and tourism-economy article	"*Mbaru Niang*"; "Desa Sade"; "*angkul-angkul*"; "Icons from the past have been placed in the house"	DV-PRI-001, DV-PRI-002, DV-PRI-004, DV-PRI-009, DV-SEC-019
Spatial hierarchy, privacy, and kinship negotiation	Layout order, facade grammar, extended household, space syntax	Belonging is negotiated through room sequence, visibility, privacy, circulation, and shared residence	1	3	4	18.2%	Heritage facade record and peer-reviewed studies on layout, syntax, and kinship space	"facade and window structure"; "spatial layout patterns"; "privacy hierarchy"; "extended household"	DV-PRI-012, DV-SEC-017, DV-SEC-018, DV-SEC-022
Work-care adaptation and functional reprogramming	Home as workplace, health routine, food flow, domestic adjustment	Domestic space is reworked to accommodate labour, care, hygiene, and changing household routines	0	2	2	9.1%	Peer-reviewed studies on work-at-home and healthy home practice	"Home as workplace"; "food flow is intertwined with cleaning protocols"	DV-SEC-016, DV-SEC-020
Gendered domestic agency and labour visibility	Porch work, women's interior practice, gendered control of domestic territory	Domestic belonging is negotiated through gendered labour, craft, and interior arrangement	1	1	2	9.1%	Tourism representation and interior-practice study	"women busy weaving fabric on the porches"; "women-led domestic territory"	DV-PRI-003, DV-SEC-015
Mediated and psychological homemaking	Digital religion, migration, real-virtual belonging, affective home	Home is extended beyond physical rooms through digital, mobile, and psychological attachment	0	2	2	9.1%	Peer-reviewed studies on digital homemaking and psychological home-making	"digital homemaking"; "weaving the real and the virtual"	DV-SEC-014, DV-SEC-021
Total			13	9	22	100.0%			

5. DISCUSSION

The first analytical layer shows that Indonesian domestic visual culture functions as a grammar of recognizability: homes become socially legible through typological forms, named spatial sequences, roof profiles, facades, thresholds, and material arrangements. This matters because domestic visibility does not merely document houses; it organizes which forms of dwelling can be recognized as culturally meaningful. The prominence of vernacular and heritage house forms suggests that public representations of Indonesian domesticity still rely heavily on architectural legibility as a marker of identity. This supports Wazir and Indriani's (2020) [12] argument that Indonesian houses respond to patterned spatial needs, and Agusintadewi's (2020) [7] account of domestic order as socially structured. However, it also reveals a limitation: when visibility depends too strongly on recognizable form, less monumental domestic practices—work, care, gendered routines, digital attachment—risk becoming secondary. Domestic visual culture therefore functions both as preservation and as reduction.

This emphasis on visible architectural grammar emerges from an underlying structure in which cultural identity is frequently stabilized through form before it is interpreted through practice. Heritage registers, tourism pages, and spatial studies tend to privilege house type, facade, roof, layout, and named rooms because these elements are easier to classify, display, and circulate than everyday domestic experience. This corresponds with Daroji's (2026) [17] view of traditional house descriptions as spatial language and with Asriana et al.'s (2024) [27] concern for syntactic order in traditional houses. Yet this structure also differs from home-making scholarship, which treats home as lived, affective, temporal, and relational rather than primarily formal [18], [20]. The tension indicates that domestic visibility is shaped by institutional and representational convenience. Public sources make home knowable by foregrounding stable forms, while lived domesticity often exceeds what visual typology can capture.

The second analytical layer demonstrates that domestic memory and spatial belonging operate as active registers rather than passive residues of tradition. Vernacular continuity, ancestral memory, gendered practice, adaptive kinship, and mediated homemaking show that belonging is made visible through more than architectural inheritance. Its implication is significant: Indonesian homes should not be read only as containers of cultural identity, but as sites where memory is selected, arranged, renewed, and sometimes displaced. This aligns with Strassler's (2010) [28] broader argument that visual culture mediates memory, and with Budiman's (2024) [13] account of digital homemaking among Indonesian marriage migrants. At the same time, this study complicates purely digital or psychological readings of home by showing that material forms remain highly consequential. Belonging is not only felt or narrated; it is positioned through walls, porches, inscriptions, ritual objects, and domestic surfaces. Fawaid's (2020) [29] reading of the domestication of space in Durga Umayi, which moves beyond the nation toward the "political body," similarly treats domestic space as politically charged rather than merely sheltering.

This pattern can be explained by the layered structure of Indonesian domestic belonging, where ancestry, kinship, religion, gender, and mobility intersect within the same spatial field. Traditional houses encode lineage and cultural continuity, while contemporary domestic practices reorganize belonging through work, care, migration, and mediated connection. Hakim et al. (2022) [23] show that extended households are shaped by kinship values, while Fathimah et al. (2023) [8] demonstrate how home becomes reworked as a workplace. Harani et al. (2022) [9] further reveal that women's interior practice is not decorative marginality but a form of spatial agency. These studies help explain why domestic memory appears unevenly across the corpus: some sources monumentalize ancestry, while others foreground routine, labour, and adaptation. The correlation is not causal, but it suggests that domestic belonging becomes visible where social continuity meets practical negotiation.

The third analytical layer reveals that domestic thresholds are not merely physical edges but mechanisms of spatial negotiation. Gates, porches, facades, heritage labels, tourism descriptions, interior hierarchies, and digital extensions all mediate what can be seen, shared, preserved, or withheld. This matters because the domestic sphere is often imagined as private, yet the corpus shows that Indonesian homes are repeatedly positioned for external recognition through tourism, heritage governance, academic documentation, and digital circulation. This supports Aini's (2026) [1] and Sain and Assya'bani's (2026) [5] arguments that visibility is tied to spatial belonging and inequality, although their focus is primarily public linguistic landscapes. Moving this insight inward reveals a dysfunction: visibility may protect cultural memory, but it may also detach domestic forms from lived inhabitants, everyday labour, and contested transformation. Thresholds therefore expose both cultural continuity and representational vulnerability.

The underlying structure behind this threshold negotiation lies in the overlap between domestic life, public heritage, tourism economy, and mediated circulation. Heritage recognition turns houses into authorized cultural objects; tourism representation converts domestic surfaces into visitor-facing signs;

academic studies translate household practice into analytical categories; digital homemaking extends home beyond physical residence. Putra et al. (2025) [11] show how Balinese traditional houses are transformed under tourism economy, while Faradis (2026) [2] argues that cultural space can become platformized through tourism media. These perspectives help explain why domestic visibility is never neutral. What becomes visible depends on the institutional frame through which home is encountered. This study therefore contributes a theoretical refinement: Indonesian domestic visual culture should be understood as negotiated visibility, where language, memory, and spatial belonging are continually arranged across the boundary between intimate life and public representation. Abdullah et al.'s (2025) [30] work on visual representation in Indonesian public communication points to a similar logic of curation, in which images are arranged to present particular social orders.

6. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Indonesian domestic visual culture is not simply an aesthetic extension of household life, but a semiotic field where language, memory, and spatial belonging become materially organized. Its most important insight is that home becomes visible through three interconnected formations: recognizable vernacular grammars, memory-bearing domestic registers, and negotiated thresholds between private dwelling and public representation. This finding renews linguistic-landscape and visual-spatial inquiry by moving analysis inward from streets, murals, and signage toward domestic interiors, facades, objects, and mediated homemaking. Its contribution lies in integrating multimodal discourse analysis, spatial-semiotic reading, and domesticity studies within one coherent framework.

This study is limited by its reliance on publicly available corpus materials, including official tourism pages, heritage records, and published academic sources. Such data allow ethical and verifiable analysis, but they cannot fully capture embodied household experience, oral memory, everyday interaction, or residents' interpretations of domestic signs and objects. Future research should therefore combine public-corpus analysis with ethnographic observation, participatory visual methods, household interviews, and comparative regional fieldwork. Further studies may also examine how class, gender, religion, migration, disability, and digital media reshape domestic visibility across urban, rural, coastal, and diasporic Indonesian homes.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Author states no conflict of interest.

AI USE DECLARATION

The author used artificial intelligence tools to assist with the generation of illustrative figures and 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 author.

INFORMED CONSENT

Not applicable – this study did not involve direct human participants. Data consisted solely of publicly accessible domestic visual units drawn from official tourism pages, cultural-heritage registry records, and peer-reviewed academic sources.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This research did not involve human or animal subjects; it analyzed publicly accessible tourism pages, heritage registry records, and scholarly literature on Indonesian domestic space, and therefore no institutional review board approval was required. Where research does involve human subjects, the author affirms that such research would be conducted in full compliance with all relevant national regulations and institutional policies, in accordance with the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki, and would be approved by the author's institutional review board or equivalent committee.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The corpus of publicly accessible domestic visual units, secondary literature, and contextual documents analyzed in this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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