

## **STORYLINE STRUCTURE OF THE PROPHET RASULULLAH MOHAMMED SAW MUSEUM GALLERY AL JABBAR MOSQUE BANDUNG**

**Ryanty Derwentiana Nazhar**

Universitas Komputer Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

**Praymoedya Alramadhan Bahroun**

Universitas Komputer Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this study is to expound on the storyline structure and flow concept within the Gallery of the Museum of Prophet Muhammad saw Al Jabbar Mosque. Utilizing a qualitative descriptive method, the research involves an analysis of narrative structure focusing on the exhibition at the Gallery of the Museum of Prophet Muhammad, which narrates the life history of Prophet Muhammad. The study examines the storyline flow approach employed in organizing and communicating messages and stories to visitors. Results indicate that the narrative flow structure used in the exhibition is linear in its overarching theme and stratified in its subtopics. The museum's storyline flow is instrumental in providing visitors with a profound and memorable experience. These research findings are expected to contribute to the advancement of design strategies aimed at conveying messages using the storyline flow concept.

**Keywords:** Museum, Gallery, Storyline Structure

### **INTRODUCTION**

The storyline structure in a museum exhibition functions as a narrative framework that guides visitors through a coherent and meaningful sequence of information, artifacts, and other display materials. By utilizing a storyline structure, exhibitions can organize information and display materials into a coherent narrative that is easily understandable to visitors. This structure helps create a memorable and immersive experience for visitors, allowing them to grasp the context and significance of the displayed collections. Additionally, the storyline structure aids in conveying important messages and values that the exhibition seeks to communicate to visitors. Thus, the storyline structure is a key element in the design of effective and impactful museum exhibitions.

Several previous research articles have focused on the application of storylines in exhibitions, particularly in museums. Purnama, I.Y (2023) wrote about the exploration of implementing historical storylines for the collection of historical artifacts at the Stovia Medical school building in Jakarta, depicting the development of medical science in the past regarding the history of the struggle of Indonesian youth and tourism, as well as heritage management.

The findings of this research indicate that storyline processing supports conservation reconciliation and regenerates the development of interior spaces. (Purnama, 2023). In the study conducted by Meirissa et al. (2021), the focus is on the narrative flow as one of the supporting aspects in creating visitor experiences in museums. The storyline is a component of the presentation technique in museums. Storylines that categorize similar collection objects can be implemented. The presence of a storyline combined with the spatial atmosphere will enable visitors to experience the spatial environment, with a case study of the East Java Cultural Museum (Meirissa et al., 2021). Aguspriyanti et al. (2023) conducted research on how narrative can be utilized in museum design to enhance creative placemaking. This approach, known as storytelling architecture in architectural design, comprises two techniques: 'storytelling as a metaphor' and 'storytelling through sequencing'. By integrating these storytelling techniques, architects and designers can develop spaces that not only evoke emotions and forge connections but also enrich the overall experiential quality of a place. (Aguspriyanti et al., 2023). In the research conducted by Firliani Z, et al. (2022), it was found that the spatial language in museum design can effectively communicate with visitors through their spatial experiences and the architectural elements present. This aspect of spatial language is crucial as it serves as a significant medium for conveying meaning. The study focused on the City of Water Museum in Surabaya as a case study. The primary issue addressed in this research was the museum's ability to convey the meaning of memories to visitors, as opposed to simply displaying artifacts as objects. The design process utilized a narrative method that emphasized the use of water material as a means of communication to convey the significance of the City of Water's memories. This approach aimed to identify the key strengths based on the historical storyline of the City of Water and analyze how meaning could be effectively communicated through visitors' sensory experiences in the museum space (Firliani et al., 2022). Mulholland, P et al (2013) explore a methodical approach to storytelling in museums. This method involves collecting events, museum objects, and related stories. It also includes constructing story segments to organize content in diverse ways, as well as assembling these segments into a coherent story structure. (Mulholland et al., 2013)

The Grand Mosque of Al Jabbar serves as a place of worship, but it also comprises the Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw, which showcases various artifacts, memorabilia, and information about the life of the Prophet Muhammad saw. With the increasing public interest in this Gallery, it is important to consider the use of the storyline concept to enrich visitors' experiences. The Grand Mosque of Al Jabbar, as one of the main landmarks, attracts visitors' attention. The Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw within it plays a crucial role as an educational facility that provides deep insights into the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad saw. The Museum Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw presents information related to the history of the Prophet Muhammad saw. The exhibition presentation concept in the Museum Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw not only showcases items owned by the Prophet Muhammad saw but also conveys historical, cultural, and Islamic developmental values. Therefore, in presenting its collection, there is a narrative or storyline designed to assist visitors in understanding the concepts of the exhibition or displayed collections more easily. The Gallery of Prophet Muhammad was officially opened in March 2023. As of now, there have been no studies focusing on its design, particularly its storyline concept. This research aims to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the storyline concept and its impact on spatial layout and visitor experiences.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

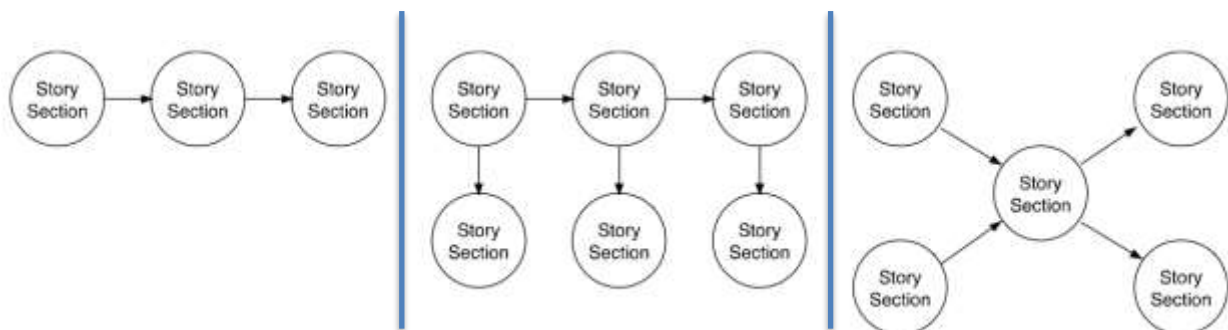
In the scope of exhibition interior design, particularly in museum settings, visitors are expected to receive clear information and education and to experience recreation from the activities and atmosphere of the space. This aligns with the expectations of ICOM (International Council of Museums), which suggests that professional museums offer diverse experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection, and knowledge sharing (Nazhar, 2020). In addition to designing the spatial atmosphere, one way to effectively convey information about museum collection items and the story of history is through easily understandable storyline concepts. There are several approaches to organizing stories in an exhibition or museum. The first approach is chronological. The chronological approach is a method of organizing or presenting information, events, or data in the sequence of time in which they occurred. This enables

visitors to understand the development of a topic or issue from beginning to end. The chronological approach greatly aids in crafting a narrative from start to finish, especially when there are important timelines supporting the story or narration, or when the story needs to be told in a logical sequence. The second approach is thematic. The thematic approach divides objects or ideas into various themes that can be viewed sequentially. Designers using this approach must be careful to ensure that the audience can still understand the overall story. (Locker, 2017)

Ütkür Güllühan et al. assert that museums are active learning environments created to enhance visitor participation, and one way to enhance learning and visitor experiences is using storyline methods. This research found that with the storyline method, visitors have a more positive perception of the museum, especially when learning about history. By employing the Storyline method, museum visitors experience feelings and thoughts of "happiness, joy, exploration" regarding historical works. (Ütkür Güllühan et al., 2022). Storylines offer a reliable and tested solution for organizing historical sequences and communication in museum development, serving educational and entertainment purposes. (Purnama, 2023)

The utilization of a storyline in the concept of collection presentation is optimal. Therefore, it is crucial to convey the complete narrative elements in every aspect, including natural elements, human elements, history, and activities involved in the presentation of the collection, so that the collection can effectively communicate with visitors and provide historical information. (Arnando & Laksmi, 2023). The processing of historical storyline aids in reconciling conservation and regeneration in the development of interior spaces, as well as providing new insights into spatial planning. Historical storyline also plays a crucial role in spatial development (Purnama, 2023a). The museum functions as an intermediary between heritage and its audience, employing storylines as a validated and reliable method for structuring historical narratives and facilitating communication within museum exhibitions, thus serving both educational and entertainment objectives (Purnama, 2023a). The museum serves as an intermediary between cultural heritage and its audience, utilizing storylines as a validated and dependable method for organizing historical narratives and facilitating communication within museum exhibitions, thereby fulfilling both educational and entertainment objectives (Meirissa et al., 2021).

Mulholland et al. present that in recent years, methods for organizing and constructing storylines based on historical and cultural data in museums have been developed through digital presentations. Museum storytelling involves three stages: (i) integrating events, museum objects, and related narratives, (ii) creating narrative segments that organize content differently, and (iii) arranging narrative segments into a story structure (Mulholland et al., 2013). The construction of storylines in museum exhibitions can be approached in several ways: 1) linear, 2) layered, and 3) multi-route. These structures are formed based on narrative levels, such as titles and subtitles, or overarching themes and details. (Figure 1.)



**Figure 1.** Linear (left), layered (middle) and multi-route (right) story structures (Mulholland et al., 2013)

Museums must be able to convey more than just their physical structures to deliver the knowledge and messages they carry. When architecture can be appreciated both physically and psychologically, it can be more easily remembered, understood, and valued by its users. How people perceive a place can be influenced by narratives that give character or identity to that place. The use of narratives in design has been recognized as spatial storytelling through two techniques known as 'narrative as metaphor' and 'narrative through sequencing arrangement'. Narrative through sequencing arrangement is referred to as storyline in museums (Aguspriyanti et al., 2023). The storyline serves as a medium of communication between the museum and visitors. Its presence in the museum can assist visitors in obtaining information and becoming interested in exploring further information. (Moortheeswari et al., 2015)

### **METHODOLOGY**

This research constitutes a qualitative descriptive study with a literature review approach. Data was obtained through field surveys and video surveys. The study examines the analysis of the storyline structure applied in the Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw, Al Jabbar Mosque in Bandung, utilizing the theory of storyline structure. The selected object is the exhibition area of the Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw, Al Jabbar Mosque in Bandung. The plot or storyline structure plays a significant role in providing support for understanding the history presented in the narrative, enabling visitors to obtain clear information about the museum displays. It is necessary to present a complete story from the presented collection, which can be observed sequentially from the entrance to the exit of the exhibition space.

### **DISCUSSION**

The presentation system referred to as a storyline pertains to a set of documents or written blueprints containing detailed information about the collection to be exhibited in an exposition. These documents serve as the primary guide in the planning and execution of the exhibition with the aim of creating a learning experience and conveying specific values. The storyline is constructed as a framework for conveying the interpretative outcomes regarding a particular topic to be presented in the exhibition. The narrative underlying the storyline is generated through research conducted both in the field and through collection studies. The importance of this narrative lies in its function as the exhibition's topic, typically devised by curators or collection departments. Furthermore, the development of the exhibition outline is required, encompassing elements such as title, topic, sub-topics, and key points. This outline includes descriptions, images, and collections that support the exhibition's narrative. Present-day museum exhibitions adhere to three universal principles: 1) The primary function of exhibitions is to communicate; 2) Exhibitions serve as tools for communication; and 3) Exhibitions are experiences, not products. (Arbi et al., 2011). The concept of storyline is considered to play a significant role as the foundational framework for the arrangement of museums (as the 'connector') presenting collections organized based on storyline scenarios, particularly in exhibition facilities showcasing history (Purnama, 2023).

The Rasulullah al Jabar Gallery Museum narrates the history of Prophet Muhammad from his birth to his passing, as well as the period of the spread of Islam in Indonesia. The focus of the exhibitions held at the Rasulullah Masjid Raya Al Jabbar Gallery is to provide visitors with a profound understanding of the development of Islam, including the historical journey of Islam in the West Java region. Below are some chronological events that serve as the storyline in the Museum Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw:

#### **a. Pre-Prophetic Era Zone**

This opening zone invites visitors on a journey back to the past, delving deeper into the history of Mecca, the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad. Through this zone, visitors can explore the significance and importance of the Kabbah, the most revered site in Islam, and understand the social and religious landscape of Arabia during the period before the emergence of Islam. One key highlight within it is the replica of the Cave of Hira (Figure 2.), the site where Prophet Muhammad received his first revelation, a moment marking the beginning of his prophethood. Thus, this



section creates a profound experience that allows visitors to feel the uniqueness and grandeur of the historical sites associated with the early journey of Prophet Muhammad.



**Figure 2.** Replica Diorama of the Cave of Hira

Furthermore, the prophetic era zone is also equipped with replicas of Prophet Muhammad's tools and the rooms used by Prophet Muhammad. These replicas serve as narrative enhancers about Prophet Muhammad, allowing visitors to feel as if they are directly experiencing being in the place where Prophet Muhammad lived, as the replicas are made in a 1:1 scale model and strive to approach the original story. (Figure 3)



**Figure 3.** Replica Diorama of the Prophet's Chamber and His Equipment on a 1: 1 Scale

#### **b. The Makkah Era Zone**

Entering the gateway of the Mecca Zone, visitors are introduced to a profound journey through various stages of the early life of Prophet Muhammad. From his childhood years to the moment of his marriage to Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, and even to his call to prophethood at the age of 40, this zone bears witness to and narrates the life experiences and struggles of Prophet Muhammad. This zone also details and portrays each challenge faced by

Prophet Muhammad during the period of persecution by the Quraysh tribe. The culmination of this narrative lies in the significant event of the Hijrah, the migration to the city of Medina, which marks a crucial turning point in Islamic history. Through storytelling and in-depth exploration, this zone not only delineates critical historical events but also allows visitors to imbibe every nuance and profound meaning contained within this arduous journey. A highlight of the narrative in this zone is the event of the Isra and Mi'raj, which is one of the miracles bestowed upon Prophet Muhammad by Allah. The Mecca Zone thus becomes a space that narrates the life of Prophet Muhammad in detail and with full emotion. The medium used to convey the story of Isra and Mi'raj is immersive cinema.



**Figure 4.** Highlighting the story, the event of Isra and Mi'raj presented in the form of Immersive Cinema media.

### c. The Madinah Era Zone

Upon entering this area, visitors will be introduced to the formation of the first Muslim community in the city of Medina and the significant role of Prophet Muhammad as its primary leader. Within the framework of this zone, it is exposed how Prophet Muhammad guided the political and social changes that occurred, including the construction of his grand mosque, the Masjid Nabawi (Figure 5), and his leadership roles during historical events such as the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud. This zone serves not only as a silent witness to the emergence of the first Muslim community in Medina but also highlights the political and social reforms implemented by Prophet Muhammad. The construction of the Masjid Nabawi, as one of the grand monuments in Islamic history, becomes a significant marker in the continuity of social changes and political policies at that time. At the same time, through storytelling and special emphasis on his leadership, this zone illustrates how Prophet Muhammad faced and guided his Muslim community through historic moments, such as the victory at the Battle of Badr and the challenging trial of the Battle of Uhud. Thus, this zone becomes a rich foundation of detail and meaning, providing visitors with a deep understanding of how Medina became a center of early Islam's strong and empowered growth. To strengthen the narrative regarding the story of war, this area is equipped with replicas of war tools and dioramas. (Figure 6)



Figure 5. The Madinah Era Zone



Figure 6. The Battle of Badr Diorama

#### d. The Zone of Islamic Expansion in the World/West Java

The area illustrates the global influence generated by the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Visitors are invited to explore the extensive spread of Islam across various continents, with a particular focus placed on its crucial role in Southeast Asia and Indonesia. In this segment, the peaks of Islamic journeys are summarized, and it is delineated in depth how Prophet Muhammad enriched and imparted meaning to various layers of society across the world.



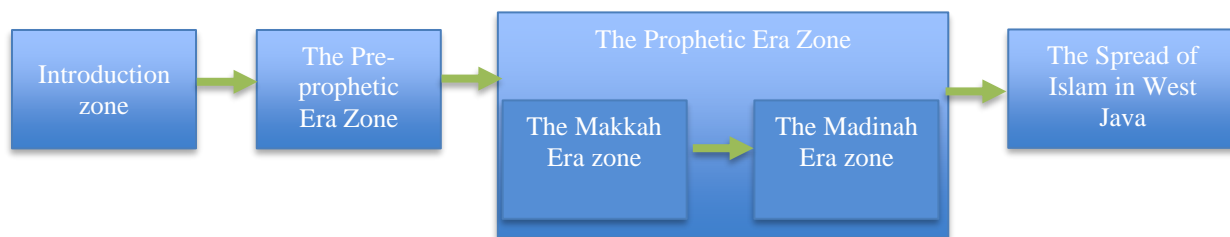
Figure 7 The Zone of Islamic Expansion Worldwide/West Java Indonesia

Alongside this exploration, this zone highlights the valuable contributions of key figures as well as various manifestations of Islamic expression in diverse cultural contexts. This narrative serves as a window for visitors to understand the dynamic interaction between Islamic teachings and various local traditions, particularly in the Southeast Asian and Indonesian regions. Thus, this zone opens broader global perspectives and enables visitors to explore the transformative impact of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad along its dissemination routes, including remarkable achievements and adaptations in various cultures. The final leg of this journey brings the narrative closer to visitors, particularly by focusing on the evolution of Islam in West Java, Indonesia. This segment delves deeply into the rich history of Islam in the region, highlighting the significant roles of influential figures who have made meaningful contributions. Meanwhile, special attention is also given to the establishment of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), which play a central role in education and community development in the area. In this section, it



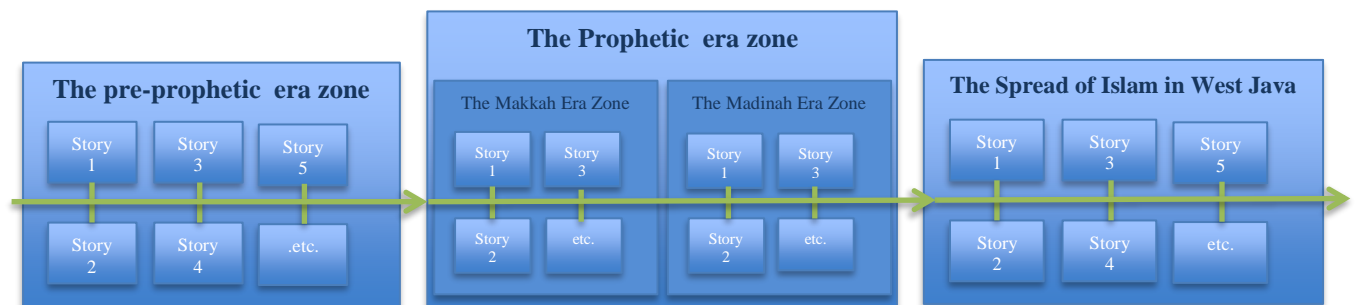
is explained how the Islamic tradition has taken root and grown to become an inseparable part of the culture of West Java. The focus is on specific aspects such as cultural diversity, unique religious practices, and the heritage of local Islamic identity that have shaped the character and dynamics of society in this region. Thus, this area becomes a central point for visitors to delve deeper into the contextual development of Islam and to see firsthand how local values and traditions enrich and animate Islam in the specific context of West Java, Indonesia.

When examined based on the conceptual structure of storyline proposed by Mulholland et al. (2023), the storyline concept utilized in this museum combines both linear and parallel elements, employing a chronological approach based on time and events. For the overarching framework, the storyline concept employs a Linear Structure, whereby visitors are guided through the narrative from Introduction, pre-prophetic era to the era of dissemination in Mecca and Medina. Following the prophetic era zone, it continues to the zone of the spread of Islam worldwide and its dissemination in West Java. (Figure 8)



**Figure 8.** Schematic Structure Diagram of the Conceptual Storyline of the Prophet Muhammad saw Al Jabbar Gallery in General

In each major zone, categorized as topics, there are sub-topics containing significant events during each zoning period. These sub-topics are organized chronologically, both linearly and in parallel. Because there are several sub-topics that can be visited non-sequentially or events that occur simultaneously. In terms of its detailed structure, the storyline is designed in a layered manner, ranging from the overarching overview to the detailed occurrences.



**Figure 9** Schematic Structure Diagram of the Conceptual Storyline of pararel Zone specific detailed of the Gallery of the Prophet Muhammad saw Al Jabbar



The storyline structure requires museum institutions to continuously innovate, not only in the presentation of collections but also in the messaging conveyed, with the aim of broadening the communication scope. The dynamic interaction between storyline and heritage sets the groundwork for the museum's advancement within its management systems, seamlessly integrating into the realms of education and entertainment (Purnama, 2023a). Spatial language in the form of a storyline can communicate with visitors through spatial experiences and architectural elements as media, making it highly important in conveying meaning. (Firliani et al., 2022)

By integrating storytelling techniques, architects and designers can create spaces that evoke emotions, strengthen connections, and enhance the overall experience of a place (Aguspriyanti et al., 2023). The implementation of a storyline in museums is intended to stimulate visitors' imagination towards the exhibited exhibitions, leveraging information technology, and simplifying visitors' navigation in exploring the museum's contents. Thus, the information intended to be conveyed can be understood and remembered by visitors.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The museum serves as a facility utilized to narrate history and convey essential information regarding culture. Effective communication methods and suitable media are necessary for visitors to clearly comprehend the conveyed information. Through the arrangement of five unique zones, this gallery guides visitors on a profound journey through various phases of life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad. The presentation of the Prophet's story is organized chronologically, commencing from the pre-prophetic era to the significant phase of Islam's dissemination worldwide. Throughout this process, there is a specific emphasis on the developmental journey of Islam in West Java. The Museum Gallery of Prophet Muhammad utilizes a chronological approach in its storyline concept. This is intended to enable visitors to comprehend history more clearly and coherently. Various media are employed to convey the narrative, ranging from 2D visual forms, dioramas, to digital media. The plot or storyline is highly crucial in planning a history museum as it aids visitors in understanding the presented history, allowing for a clearer comprehension of the museum's exhibits.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank to Universitas Komputer Indonesia for the opportunity.

### REFERENCES

- Aguspriyanti, C. D., Benny, B., Christine, V., Fernando, D., & Tan, A. (2023). Between Architecture, Story, and Place Identity: A Narrative Approach for Creative Placemaking in Museum Design. *Jurnal Arsitektur TERRACOTTA*, 5(1), 13–22.
- Arbi, Y., Yulianto, K., Tjahjopurnomo, R., Ridwan Abdulroni Kosim, M., Oesman, O., & Sukasno, S. (2011). *Konsep penyajian museum*. Direktorat Permuseuman.
- Arnando, M. L., & Laksmi, N. K. P. A. (2023). Rancangan Storyline Museum Perjuangan Bogor di Kota Bogor, Provinsi Jawa Barat. *ULIL ALBAB: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, 2(10), 4721–4731.
- Firliani, Z. R., Ekasiwi, S. N. N., & Dinapradipta, A. (2022). The Language of Space as Approach to Storying Historical Memories (Case Study: Narrative Museum Kota Air in Surabaya). *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Publications (IJMRAP)*, 5(2), 117–125.

- Locker, P. (2017). *Basics interior design 02: exhibition design*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Meirissa, A. S., Sarihati, T., & Haristianti, V. (2021). Implementation of Experience Design on Museum Interiors. Case Study: East Java Cultural Museum. *Journal of Architectural Design and Urbanism*, 4(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.14710/jadu.v4i1.11929>
- Moortheeswari, S. K., Archaeologist, D. S., & George, F. S. (2015). Telling stories with museum objects—Reflection on Interpretation. *Fort Museum, Archaeological Survey of India*, 1–8.
- Mulholland, P., Wolff, A., Zdrahal, Z., Li, N., & Corneli, J. (2013). Constructing and Connecting Storylines to Tell Museum Stories. *Interactive Storytelling: 6th International Conference, ICIDS 2013, 8230*, 121–124. <http://decipher.open.ac.uk/curate>
- Nazhar, R. D. (2020). National Museum of Indonesia: Virtual Tour Experience. *Proceeding of International Conference on Business, Economics, Social Sciences, and Humanities*, 3, 718–725. <https://proceedings.unikom.ac.id/index.php/icobest/article/view/235>
- Purnama, I. Y. (2023). Conservation and Development: Implementation of The Storyline at The National Awakening Museum, Stovia Building-Jakarta. *LITERACY: International Scientific Journals of Social, Education, Humanities*, 2(2), 33–44. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.56910/literacy.v2i2.861>
- Ütkür Güllühan, N., Özden, G., & Bekiroğlu, D. (2022). Museum Education with Storyline Method: How Do Primary School Students Perceive Historical Artifacts? *Mimbar Sekolah Dasar*, 9(1), 98–124. <https://doi.org/10.53400/mimbar-sd.v9i1.43317>

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ryanty Derwentiana, email: [ryanty.derwentiana@gmail.com](mailto:ryanty.derwentiana@gmail.com)

**Ryanty Derwentiana Nazhar**, is a lecturer at the Universitas Komputer Indonesia (UNIKOM) Interior Design study program. During this time she was interested in writing articles about museum interior design and exhibition management. She has written several articles on the application of technology and human factors in museums.

**Praymoedya Alramadhan Bahroen**, is a graduate student from the UNIKOM Study Program. He is interested in taking the theme of museum facilities and educational tourism in his final project.