



RANU AGUNG HERITAGE: OPTIMIZING VILLAGE HISTORICAL LITERACY THROUGH THE DIGITALIZATION OF ARTIFACTS AS AN ICON OF EDUCATIONAL TOURISM

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Abstract:

Ranu Agung Village possesses a rich combination of historical, cultural, and natural resources with significant potential to be developed as a heritage-based educational tourism destination. However, these potentials have not yet been systematically documented nor optimally utilized as learning resources and instruments for strengthening local identity. This activity aims to explore, document, and highlight the local historical potential of Ranu Agung Village as an effort to enhance community historical literacy and to support the development of heritage-based educational tourism. The method employed in this activity is a descriptive qualitative approach within the framework of community engagement. Data collection techniques include field surveys, direct observation, in-depth interviews and podcast recordings with community leaders, as well as literature studies based on research conducted by the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), particularly archaeological studies from the Yogyakarta Archaeology Center. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing field data, oral histories, and scientific references. The results indicate that Ranu Agung Village has multilayered historical wealth, including the distribution of bujuk sites across various hamlets, discoveries of prehistoric artifacts such as Neolithic stone axes, pottery fragments, ancient beads, punden structures, unique stones indicating megalithic traditions, the legends of Dewi Rengganis and Joko Tarop as intangible cultural heritage, and the existence of a cave beneath Ranu Agung Lake. These findings demonstrate strong potential to be developed as educational tourism materials based on history and culture. This activity concludes that the exploration of local history integrated with scientific approaches and digitalization can serve as an effective strategy to enhance community historical literacy, strengthen village identity, and support the sustainable development of heritage-based educational tourism in Ranu Agung Village.

Keywords: Ranu Agung Heritage, Local History, Prehistoric Artifacts, Bujuk Sites, Educational Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Ranu Agung Village is one of the areas that possesses rich historical and cultural heritage, which holds significant value as part of the local community's identity. The existence of historical artifacts, ancient heritage sites, traditions passed down through generations, and sacred burial sites of local figures (bujuk) serve as concrete evidence that Ranu Agung Village has strong heritage potential that must be preserved, maintained, and developed sustainably. However, along with the advancement of time, globalization, and changes in community lifestyles, the level of historical literacy among villagers – especially the younger generation – has tended to decline.

The low level of historical literacy in the village is caused by several factors, including limited access to information, the lack of written and visual documentation

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of historical artifacts, and the suboptimal use of digital technology in cultural preservation efforts. Existing historical artifacts are often perceived merely as old objects without strong historical narratives, resulting in their educational value and cultural identity not being optimally conveyed to both the community and visitors.

On the other hand, the development of digital technology offers new opportunities for preserving and disseminating historical information. The digitalization of artifacts, through visual documentation, narrative descriptions, and digital-based presentations, can serve as an effective strategy to enhance historical literacy in the village. Digitalization functions not only as a non-physical conservation effort but also as an educational medium capable of reaching a broader audience in an interactive and sustainable manner.

Optimizing historical literacy through artifact digitalization also has the potential to encourage the development of Ranu Agung Village as an icon of educational tourism. By packaging historical heritage in an informative and engaging format, the village can offer a tourism experience that is not only recreational but also educational. Heritage-based educational tourism is expected to increase public awareness of the importance of local history, strengthen village identity, and provide positive economic impacts for the local community.

Therefore, the concept of "Ranu Agung Heritage" becomes a strategic approach to integrating historical preservation, cultural literacy enhancement, and the development of educational tourism through the utilization of digital technology. This effort is expected to serve as a model for managing village cultural heritage that is adaptive to modern developments while contributing to the sustainability of local historical and cultural values.

The discovery of artifacts in Ranu Agung is generally carried out through field observations, community activities, and exploration of locations considered sacred or historical, such as bujuk sites, old cemeteries, and traditional settlement areas. The artifacts found include various types of objects such as uniquely structured stones, building fragments, and items believed to have had ritual or social functions in the past. These artifacts indicate organized human activities with symbolic significance in the life of past communities.

However, to date, most artifacts discovered in Ranu Agung have not been systematically documented. The lack of recording, data collection, and scientific study makes these artifacts vulnerable to damage, loss, or shifts in meaning. Additionally, the low level of historical literacy among the community, particularly the younger generation, further weakens awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage. This condition presents a serious challenge in maintaining the sustainability of the historical values contained in these artifacts.

On the other hand, the discovery of artifacts in Ranu Agung holds great potential to be developed as a source of education and local identity. Artifacts should not only be understood as inanimate objects but also as contextual learning media closely related to community life. With proper management, artifacts can serve as tools to enhance understanding of village history, foster a sense of belonging, and strengthen the identity of the Ranu Agung community. Moreover, if creatively and educationally packaged, these discoveries can support the development of the village as a cultural and historical tourism destination.

Therefore, a study on the discovery of artifacts in Ranu Agung Village is essential. This article aims to analyze how artifact discoveries can initiate the development of heritage-based tourism in Ranu Agung Village. The study emphasizes the role of artifacts as triggers for strengthening the village's historical and cultural identity, as well as key attractions in tourism development. Additionally, this article is expected to provide an overview of the potential utilization of artifacts as a foundation for planning sustainable and community-based preservation, management, and tourism development.

Through this study, it is hoped that artifact discoveries in Ranu Agung will not only remain at the level of discovery but will evolve into valuable, sustainable knowledge that benefits both the village community and stakeholders involved in preserving local cultural heritage.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. This approach is chosen because the research aims to understand, describe, and interpret in depth the condition of village historical literacy, the existence of historical artifacts, and efforts to digitalize artifacts as a means of developing educational tourism in Ranu Agung Village. The descriptive qualitative method allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of social and cultural phenomena based on the perspectives of research subjects.

1. Observation

Observation is a process of direct examination and review of an object to understand and evaluate the aspects being studied.

The observation conducted in this study is participatory observation. Researchers directly observed the condition of artifacts, bujuk sites, and community activities related to preservation efforts and local traditions.

2. SISDAMAS (Community Empowerment System)

The Community Empowerment System (SISDAMAS) in this community service activity is designed as a participatory approach that places the community as the main subject in the preservation and development of village cultural heritage. This approach ensures that all stages of the program are not top-down but based on the potential, needs, and active participation of the community.

The SISDAMAS approach focuses on strengthening historical literacy, digitalizing artifacts, and developing heritage-based educational tourism through collaboration between the service team, village government, community leaders, and the younger generation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

The implementation of community service activities in Ranu Agung Village was carried out using a participatory approach through descriptive qualitative methods, participatory observation, and the SISDAMAS framework. The program focused on strengthening historical literacy through artifact digitalization as a foundation for developing heritage-based educational tourism.

The initial stage involved coordination with village authorities and community leaders to align perceptions, determine potential artifact locations, and build community participation.

Field observations were then conducted through participatory methods, involving direct engagement with the community while observing artifacts, *bujuk* sites, and local traditions.

Next, identification and documentation of artifacts were carried out, involving local leaders as sources of oral history to ensure both descriptive and symbolic-cultural data were obtained.

The following stage involved artifact digitalization through photos, videos, and narrative documentation, which were then presented in accessible digital formats.

Educational and socialization activities were conducted, particularly targeting the younger generation, to enhance historical awareness and understanding of artifacts as sources of knowledge and identity.

The final stage consisted of evaluation and reflection with the community and village government to assess program effectiveness and sustainability potential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Exploration and Reconstruction of Local History through Field Surveys and BRIN References

The exploration and reconstruction of the history of Ranu Agung Village were conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach by combining field surveys, in-depth interviews, and literature studies derived from research by the *National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)*, particularly archaeological studies previously carried out by the Yogyakarta Archaeology Center. This approach aligns with local historical research methods that emphasize the integration of empirical field data and written scientific sources (Kuntowijoyo, 2005; Sugiyono, 2019).

Field surveys were conducted by directly exploring locations believed by the local community to hold historical value, such as *bujuk* sites, unique stones, lake areas, and locations suspected to contain prehistoric remains. Direct observation is a primary technique in surface archaeology surveys used to identify potential cultural remains (Sharer & Ashmore, 2003).

In addition to observation, data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews with community leaders, caretakers of sacred sites, and local residents possessing hereditary knowledge of village history. These interviews were not only conducted directly but were also packaged in the form of podcasts as a medium for documenting oral history. Oral history is considered an essential source in reconstructing local history with limited written documentation (Vansina, 1985).

To ensure data validity, findings from field surveys and interviews were verified through literature studies sourced from journals, research reports, and scientific publications by BRIN (formerly the Yogyakarta Archaeology Center). These references were used to identify the consistency between field findings and previous archaeological studies, particularly regarding prehistoric artifacts, *punden* structures, and indications of megalithic traditions in the Ranu Agung area.

The integration of field data and scientific references was carried out as a form of source triangulation, ensuring that the information obtained is not merely narrative but also supported by strong academic foundations. Thus, the resulting local history

is not solely based on legends or oral traditions but is reinforced by credible archaeological data and scientific studies.

The results of this exploration serve as the main foundation for constructing the historical narrative of Ranu Agung Village. This narrative is directed not only for academic purposes but also as a basis for developing heritage-based educational tourism. By integrating scientific research and local knowledge, the history of Ranu Agung can be presented in a more comprehensive, educational, and sustainable manner for both the community and visitors.

Distribution of Bujuk Sites as Traces of Religious and Social History

The distribution of *bujuk* sites in Ranu Agung Village and its surrounding areas indicates the presence of evolving religious and social historical traces. Based on field surveys and interviews with community leaders, *bujuk* sites function not only as graves of respected figures but also as markers of settlement history, centers of social activity, and sacred spaces that continue to hold significance for the local community. In cultural anthropology, the graves of local figures often serve as centers of collective memory and social legitimacy (Geertz, 1980; Koentjaraningrat, 2009).

The presence of *bujuk* sites across various hamlets shows that the development of Ranu Agung Village was not centralized but grew through multiple interconnected social and religious centers. This reflects a rich and layered local historical dynamic as well as the interaction between religion, culture, and social structure.

Bujuk Sites in Krajan Hamlet

In Krajan Hamlet, several *bujuk* sites of high historical and religious value were identified, including Bujuk Habib Umar bin Alwi bin Salim Al Bufteim, Bujuk Isa, and Bujuk Maryam. According to community accounts, these figures played important roles in spreading Islamic teachings and shaping local moral and social values.

These sites remain pilgrimage destinations and reflect the continuity of religious traditions passed down through generations. Historically, they indicate the integration of Islamic influence with local traditions.

Bujuk Sites in Betok Hamlet

Betok Hamlet contains Bujuk Gridin and Bujuk Srijo, believed to be early settlers who played significant roles in establishing and maintaining social order. These sites represent early settlement markers and local identity.

Bujuk Sites in Tancak Hamlet

In Tancak Hamlet, Bujuk Sorah and Bujuk Sappar are associated with leadership and social harmony. These sites hold strong potential as educational media emphasizing social values and local wisdom.

Bujuk Site in Segaran Agung Hamlet

Segaran Agung Hamlet contains Bujuk Mujer, a figure believed to have had significant social influence. The site symbolizes ancestral connection and local identity.

Bujuk Sites in Wates Barat and Wates Timur

Wates Barat contains Bujuk Dila, while Wates Timur includes Bujuk Gus Maden, a figure with strong religious influence still respected today.

Bujuk Site in Komalang Blok Durin

Bujuk Ibrahim, located in Komalang Blok Durin, is relatively unknown but holds historical importance as a marker of early settlement. Its limited documentation highlights the need for preservation efforts.

Implications for Educational Tourism

The distribution of *bujuk* sites demonstrates strong potential for developing religious and historical educational tourism. Digitalization and systematic storytelling can transform these sacred spaces into accessible educational resources.

Optimization of Historical Literacy through TikTok as a Digital Artifact

In the digital era, social media serves not only as a communication tool but also as a digital artifact that records and disseminates historical knowledge. Platforms like TikTok, with short visual-based content, are highly effective in engaging younger audiences.

TikTok can be utilized to present *bujuk* sites through short videos containing historical narratives, cultural values, and their relevance to village development. These videos function as digital archives and contribute to the formation of collective digital memory.

The interactive nature of TikTok enables participatory historical literacy, where audiences actively engage through comments and sharing. This aligns with community-based heritage preservation approaches.

1. Findings of Prehistoric Sites and Artifacts Based on BRIN Studies

BRIN studies indicate that Ranu Agung was inhabited since the prehistoric era. Findings include Neolithic stone axes, ancient beads, pottery fragments, and *punden* structures.

These artifacts reflect early agricultural life, social systems, and spiritual beliefs. The presence of *punden* structures suggests ritual practices and ancestor worship.

These findings hold strong potential for educational tourism through exhibitions, digitalization, and interpretive storytelling.

2. Unique Stones as Indicators of Megalithic Tradition and Cultural Landscape

Field observations identified unique stones such as *batu kenong*, *batu jaran*, *batu kursi*, and *batu gendik*, which are associated with symbolic and ritual meanings.

Additionally, *batu petir* found in Ranu Betok reflects local cosmological beliefs. These stones represent a cultural landscape shaped by interactions between humans, nature, and belief systems.

3. The Underwater Cave of Ranu Agung Lake as a Potential Educational Tourism Site

A cave approximately 20 meters long was identified beneath Ranu Agung Lake. Although not yet scientifically documented, it holds geological, historical, and tourism potential.

This cave can be developed as an educational site focusing on natural processes, environmental systems, and cultural connections, with careful attention to conservation and safety.

4. Implications for Heritage-Based Educational Tourism Development

The findings—including *bujuk* sites, prehistoric artifacts, unique stones, oral traditions, and natural features—highlight Ranu Agung's strong potential as a heritage-based educational tourism destination.

The integration of tangible and intangible heritage allows visitors to experience both natural beauty and deep cultural understanding.

Developing thematic tourism routes—prehistoric, religious, cultural, and natural—can create interdisciplinary learning experiences.

Digitalization plays a key role in improving accessibility and preservation. Additionally, community involvement strengthens historical awareness and supports sustainable tourism development.

Economically, this approach opens opportunities for local income through tourism services and creative industries.

Overall, the **Ranu Agung Heritage** concept serves as a strategic model for sustainable, community-based, and adaptive educational tourism development rooted in local cultural wealth.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the activities carried out, it can be concluded that Ranu Agung Village possesses a rich and diverse historical and cultural heritage with high value for development as a heritage-based educational tourism destination. Historical exploration conducted through field surveys, interviews and podcasts with community leaders, as well as literature studies derived from research by the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), indicates that this area contains layered historical traces, ranging from the prehistoric period to the development of religious traditions and local culture.

Key findings of this activity include the distribution of *bujuk* sites across various hamlets as markers of the community's social and religious history, prehistoric artifacts such as Neolithic stone axes, pottery fragments, ancient beads, and *punden* structures, as well as the presence of unique stones indicating megalithic traditions. In addition, the legends of Dewi Rengganis and Joko Tarop as intangible cultural heritage, along with the existence of an underwater cave in Ranu Agung Lake, further enrich the historical and cultural narrative of the area.

This community service (KKN) activity demonstrates that the integration of scientific data, oral history, and field documentation can serve as an effective strategy to enhance community historical literacy. Utilizing local history as the foundation for developing educational tourism not only strengthens the identity of Ranu Agung Village but also opens opportunities for tourism development that is educational, sustainable, and based on local wisdom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the activities and research conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The village government and local stakeholders are encouraged to conduct further documentation and protection of existing historical sites, particularly *bujuk* sites, prehistoric artifacts, and unique stones, to prevent damage or loss of historical value.
2. The development of heritage-based educational tourism should be carried out in a well-planned manner by involving the local community as the main actors, whether as educational tour guides, destination managers, or guardians of site preservation.
3. The digitalization of local history and culture should be continued through the creation of digital content, information media, and online archives to ensure that information about Ranu Agung's history is widely accessible and sustainable.
4. Collaboration with academic institutions and related agencies, such as universities and BRIN, should be strengthened to support further research, scientific validation, and the development of research-based educational tourism.
5. Future KKN activities are expected to continue this program by focusing on tourism packaging, the development of educational tourism routes, and the creation of historical interpretation media that are engaging and easy for visitors to understand.

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