

Research Manuscript



Heritage Encounters: Critical Place-Based Learning and the Making of Historical Awareness

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examines how direct engagement with local heritage sites shapes historical consciousness in post-colonial classrooms. Engaging Indonesian tenth-graders with Liyangan, a pre-colonial site buried by volcanic eruption, the research investigates site visits as critical pedagogical intervention against textbook-dominated history instruction. Drawing on interviews with teachers, students, and site custodians, findings reveal that heritage encounters foster multi-dimensional awareness: students demonstrated heightened curiosity about marginalized local pasts, stronger preservation motivation, and deeper engagement with cultural traditions. The model creates transformative spaces where formal knowledge meets community memory, enabling learners to confront buried histories as reconciliatory practice. While implementation faces structural constraints—time, finance, transportation—this study contributes to global conversations on place-based pedagogy and heritage education in post-colonial societies.

KEYWORDS

Place-Based Pedagogy, Critical Heritage Education, Post-Colonial Learning, Historical Consciousness, Indonesia

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted:
21 June 2024
Revised:
16 July 2025
Accepted:
21 July 2025

ABSTRAK

Studi kualitatif ini meneliti bagaimana keterlibatan langsung dengan situs warisan lokal membentuk kesadaran sejarah di ruang kelas pascakolonial. Dengan melibatkan siswa kelas sepuluh di Indonesia di Liyangan, sebuah situs pra-kolonial yang terkubur akibat letusan gunung berapi, penelitian ini menyelidiki kunjungan situs sebagai intervensi pedagogis penting untuk melawan pengajaran sejarah yang didominasi buku teks. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pertemuan dengan warisan budaya menumbuhkan kesadaran multidimensional: siswa menunjukkan rasa ingin tahu yang lebih tinggi tentang masa lalu lokal yang terpinggirkan, motivasi pelestarian yang lebih kuat, dan keterlibatan yang lebih dalam dengan tradisi budaya. Model ini menciptakan ruang transformatif di mana pengetahuan formal bertemu dengan memori komunitas, memungkinkan peserta didik untuk menghadapi sejarah yang terkubur sebagai praktik rekonsiliasi. Studi ini berkontribusi pada percakapan global tentang pedagogi berbasis tempat dan pendidikan warisan budaya di masyarakat pascakolonial.

KATA KUNCI

Pedagogi Berbasis Tempat, Pendidikan Warisan Kritis, Pembelajaran Pascakolonial, Kesadaran Sejarah, Indonesia

SEJARAH ARTIKEL

Submit:
21 June 2024
Revisi:
16 Juli 2025
Diterima:
21 Juli 2025

Introduction

Twenty-first century education demands that students acquire diverse knowledge and skills to navigate future challenges. Education constitutes deliberate, systematic efforts to create learning environments where students actively develop their potential encompassing spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and essential competencies (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System). Within this framework, learning serves as the cornerstone of educational processes. Gagne (1981) conceptualizes learning as a series of externally designed events supporting students' internal learning processes, enabling information processing toward predetermined objectives (Žakelj et al., 2024).

History education holds particular significance in cultivating critical historical thinking and historical understanding. Such understanding enables individuals to comprehend the meaning embedded within historical events, subsequently informing their behavior when confronting contemporary and future challenges (Miles & Gibson, 2022; Santiago & Dozono, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum positions history learning as a process of contextualizing past events with present circumstances, enabling students to evaluate and orient themselves toward improved futures. Among its thirteen stated objectives, developing historical awareness stands as a fundamental aim alongside fostering self-understanding, collective national consciousness, pride in past achievements, nationalism, patriotism, moral values, diversity appreciation, and multidimensional analytical capabilities (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, Dan Teknologi, 2022).

Despite these articulated goals, secondary school history education continues grappling with persistent challenges. History instruction frequently becomes characterized as monotonous and unengaging. Such perceptions stem from pedagogical approaches that reduce historical study to mere factual memorization, leaving students unable to grasp the substantive meanings and messages embedded within historical narratives (Ndo-mondo, 2024; Ogah, 2023). Students often perceive history as offering little tangible benefit, viewing the study of past events as irrelevant to contemporary dynamics and national development. These perceptions are reinforced by student apathy toward history learning, influenced by both internal factors such as negative attitudes toward the subject and low motivation, and external factors including monotonous content presentation, inappropriate pedagogical method selection, and inadequate learning facilities (Miguel-Revilla, 2022).

Observations at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan revealed similar challenges. History instruction predominantly employed conventional pedagogical paradigms, resulting in diminished student interest and motivation. Such reduced engagement inevitably affects students' historical awareness a dimension more crucial than mere factual recall. Historical awareness constitutes a prerequisite for historical knowledge and represents the ultimate purpose of historical study (Hanif & Maruti, 2025). Addressing these challenges requires teachers to identify appropriate learning models capable of generating student interest and response, thereby fulfilling the comprehensive objectives articulated within the Merdeka Curriculum.

Historical site visits (*lawatan sejarah*) present one such pedagogical model. According to Hanif and Maruti (2025), historical site visits constitute activities involving journeys to places of historical significance. This model transports students to historical sites,

transforming visited locations into learning resources. The approach creates distinctive learning atmospheres distinct from conventional classroom instruction. Schools in Parakan and surrounding areas possess access to numerous historical locations within reasonable distance from SMA Negeri 1 Parakan. However, these resources remain underutilized for supporting instructional activities.

This study addresses two research questions: (1) How is the historical site visit learning model implemented among tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan during the 2023/2024 academic year? (2) How does implementation of the historical site visit learning model affect the enhancement of historical awareness among tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan during the 2023/2024 academic year?

Theoretical Framework

Historical Awareness in Post-Colonial Contexts

Historical awareness represents both a cognitive state and a reflective process through which individuals recognize the significance of history for present and future circumstances, cultivating wisdom in navigating contemporary life (Edling et al., 2022; Keynes, 2023). Bleeze (2024) defines historical awareness as a psychological condition referring to the degree to which individuals internalize history's meaning and essence for both present and future orientations, while also encompassing awareness of history's foundational role within educational processes. Gibson et al. (2025) note that historical consciousness (*historical conciousness*) appears in scholarly literature alongside related concepts including historical sense, historical perspective, and historical mindedness. Kartodirdjo (in Ayatrohaedi, 1985) emphasizes that historical awareness exerts a hygienic influence on the psyche by liberating individuals from uncritical acceptance of received narratives.

Within Indonesia's post-colonial context, historical awareness assumes particular significance. The nation's educational system must navigate complex relationships between pre-colonial heritage, colonial experiences, and post-independence nation-building. Subagyo (2011) argues that historical awareness fundamentally exceeds the mere retention of historical facts, serving instead as the precondition for genuine historical knowledge. This conceptualization aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum's explicit aim of cultivating students' historical consciousness. Such awareness fosters critical historical understanding, enabling students to comprehend the meaning embedded within past events and subsequently employ historical understanding as guidance for navigating present realities and future possibilities (Jannah & Thabit Azinar Ahmad, 2022).

Four indicators commonly operationalize historical awareness: (1) appreciation of history's meaning and essence, (2) recognition of self and national identity, (3) cultivation of history for national cultural development, and (4) preservation of national historical heritage. These indicators move beyond cognitive dimensions to encompass affective and behavioral manifestations of historical consciousness. As Aman (2011) contends, historical awareness manifests in tangible attitudes including love of country, nationalism, and patriotism simplified expressions that become observable through student behaviors

during national anthem singing, flag ceremony participation, punctuality, and task engagement.

Place-Based Pedagogy and Heritage Education

Contemporary scholarship in history education increasingly emphasizes place-based approaches that connect students with local heritage and community memory. Yemini et al. (2025) argue that place-based pedagogy reconnects education with the lived experiences of students within their specific geographical and cultural contexts. This approach challenges universalizing tendencies in curriculum design, advocating instead for learning that emerges from and responds to local particularities. Within history education specifically, place-based approaches enable students to encounter historical evidence directly, moving beyond textual representations to engage with material remains of the past.

Heritage education scholarship similarly emphasizes the pedagogical potential of historical sites. Immonen & Sivula (2025) conceptualize heritage not as static objects but as cultural processes involving negotiation of meaning, identity construction, and community engagement. When students visit heritage sites, they participate in these meaning-making processes, encountering history not as completed narrative but as ongoing dialogue between past and present. (Ludvigsson et al., 2022) identify multiple learning dimensions activated through site visits: cognitive engagement with historical information, affective connection to past lives and experiences, and embodied experience of historical spaces.

International research on historical site visits demonstrates their effectiveness in developing historical thinking competencies. (Marovah & Ncube, 2024) found that well-structured museum and site visits enhanced students' ability to analyze historical evidence, understand multiple perspectives, and recognize the constructed nature of historical narratives. Similarly, (Strand, 2025) documented how place-based history education fostered deeper emotional connection to historical content and increased student motivation. These findings resonate with local Indonesian scholarship including [Wardayanti, Suharso, and Romadi \(2020\)](#), who emphasize that utilizing nearby learning resources through site visits provides valuable experiential learning opportunities, with students' emotional proximity to learning resources enhancing educational outcomes.

The historical site visit model as conceptualized by [Utomo \(2007\)](#) and [Lestariningsih \(in Yuliani, 2020\)](#) integrates these international and local perspectives. The model operates across multiple theoretical foundations behaviorist, cognitive, and constructivist depending on how teachers and students frame their engagement. [Khubaib, Atmaja, and Sodiq \(2020\)](#) note that site visits facilitate students' comprehension of temporal concepts fundamental to historical understanding, enabling connections between past, present, and future. (Almqvist Nielsen, 2025; Cooper, 2023) add that students demonstrate heightened engagement with historical content directly connected to their immediate surroundings, as such content facilitates mental visualization of past events.

Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, which is fundamentally appropriate for examining social phenomena within their natural contexts and interpreting the meanings participants assign to their experiences (Moleong, 2017; Sugiyono, 2019). The qualitative approach was deliberately selected to enable deep exploration of how the historical site visit model unfolded organically and how participants teachers, students, and heritage site custodians perceived its influence on historical awareness development. Unlike quantitative approaches that might measure predetermined outcomes through standardized instruments, qualitative methodology allows researchers to capture emergent themes, contextual nuances, and participant perspectives that are essential for understanding complex educational interventions. This design aligns with (Strand, 2025) conceptualization of qualitative research as employing multiple methods to interpret phenomena within their natural settings. The research adopted a case study orientation, focusing specifically on one school and one heritage site to generate rich, contextualized understanding of the site visit model's implementation and its relationship to historical consciousness formation within Indonesian secondary education.

Data and Sources of Data

The research was conducted at two interconnected locations: SMA Negeri 1 Parakan and Liyangan Site. SMA Negeri 1 Parakan, the sole public senior high school in Parakan Sub-district, Temanggung Regency, Central Java, declared itself a "Cultural School" (*Sekolah Budaya*) in 2022, emphasizing character cultivation and local cultural appreciation across all instructional activities. This institutional commitment provided a supportive context for implementing heritage-based learning. Liyangan Site, located approximately 9.7 kilometers from the school in Dusun Liyangan, Desa Purbasari, Kecamatan Ngadirejo, is a Hindu-Buddhist period archaeological site accidentally discovered by sand miners in 2008. Archaeological investigations by the Yogyakarta Archaeological Office identified it as an ancient settlement buried by Mount Sindoro's volcanic eruption approximately 1,000 years ago (Riyanto, 2020), making it a significant local heritage resource.

Research subjects comprised three categories of participants purposively selected to provide comprehensive perspectives. The history teacher, Mr. Fendi Aditiya, S.Pd, served as primary informant regarding instructional design and implementation. All thirty-six tenth-grade students from class X-6 participated in the site visit, with fourteen students purposively selected as key informants based on their active participation and willingness to provide detailed information during interviews. The Liyangan Site caretaker, Mr. Isti-arso, contributed essential knowledge about the site's history, preservation efforts, and community engagement with heritage. Data sources included these informants, documentation comprising teaching modules, photographs, and interview recordings, and the

Liyangan Site itself as a material historical source. Data collection occurred from May through June 2024, aligned with the history subject schedule and teacher coordination.

Data Collection

Data collection employed three complementary techniques to ensure comprehensive coverage of the phenomenon under investigation. First, passive observation was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan and Liyangan Site from May 20 to June 17, 2024. The researcher observed classroom history instruction prior to the site visit, the site visit implementation itself, and post-visit activities. Observation focused on participant behaviors, interactions, learning processes, and contextual factors influencing the educational experience. The researcher maintained detailed field notes documenting both descriptive observations and reflective insights, following guidelines for qualitative observation (Sugiyono, 2019).

Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with all participant categories. The history teacher was interviewed on June 10, 2024, focusing on instructional objectives, preparation processes, implementation experiences, and observations of student learning and historical awareness development. Student interviews occurred on June 11 and June 14, 2024, exploring their prior experiences with history learning, perceptions of the site visit, and reflections on how the experience influenced their understanding of and connection to local heritage. The site caretaker was interviewed on June 13, 2024, providing perspectives on the site's significance, community engagement, and observations of student learning during the visit. All interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility to pursue emergent themes while maintaining focus on research questions. Interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Third, document study examined teaching modules, instructional materials, student assignments, photographs documenting the site visit, and publications about Liyangan Site including Riyanto's (2020) comprehensive study. These documents provided contextual information about intended curriculum, actual implementation, and the historical and archaeological significance of the heritage site. Document analysis complemented observational and interview data, enabling triangulation across multiple data sources.

Trustworthiness of Data

Establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research requires systematic attention to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Abbey & Wansink, 2022). This study employed triangulation as the primary strategy for ensuring data credibility. Triangulation of sources involved comparing information obtained from the teacher, fourteen students, and the site caretaker, identifying convergence and divergence in their perspectives on the site visit experience and its influence on historical awareness. For example, teacher observations about student engagement were cross-referenced with student self-reports and the caretaker's observations during the visit.

Triangulation of techniques involved cross-verifying data obtained through observation, interviews, and document study. Observational records of student behavior during the site visit were compared with interview accounts of their experiences and documented evidence from photographs and teaching materials. This methodological cross-verification ensured that findings were not merely artifacts of a single data collection method.

Triangulation of methods, as recommended by Sugiyono (2019), involved employing multiple data collection approaches to capture different dimensions of the phenomenon. The combination of observation (capturing behavior in real time), interviews (accessing participant perspectives and interpretations), and document study (providing contextual and historical information) enabled comprehensive understanding while compensating for the limitations of any single method. Additionally, member checking was conducted by summarizing key findings with participants to verify accurate representation of their perspectives. Detailed description of research contexts, participants, and processes supports transferability by enabling readers to assess applicability to other settings.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1984) interactive model, comprising four concurrent activities: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Sugiyono, 2019). Analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process, allowing emerging findings to inform subsequent data collection.

Data collection involved gathering observational records, interview transcripts, and documentary materials. During this phase, the researcher maintained an open orientation, documenting all potentially relevant information without premature filtering. Field notes and transcripts were prepared promptly after each observation or interview to ensure accuracy and capture initial analytical insights.

Data reduction encompassed the processes of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data. After all data were collected, the researcher reviewed materials to identify information relevant to the research questions regarding site visit implementation and historical awareness development. Irrelevant or redundant information was set aside, while pertinent data were organized into preliminary categories corresponding to the four indicators of historical awareness: appreciation of history's meaning, self and national identity recognition, cultivation of history for cultural development, and preservation of historical heritage. Additional categories emerged inductively, including implementation challenges and student responses to the site visit experience.

Data display involved organizing reduced data into accessible formats facilitating analysis and conclusion drawing. Primary displays took the form of narrative text organized thematically around research questions and emerging categories. Within each thematic section, data from multiple sources teacher interviews, student interviews, caretaker interviews, observations, and documents were presented together, enabling examination of convergence and divergence. Matrix displays were developed to compare perspectives across participant groups on key topics, supporting systematic cross-source analysis.

Conclusion drawing and verification involved interpreting patterns, explanations, causal flows, and propositions emerging from the data. Initial conclusions were formulated as analysis proceeded, then systematically verified by returning to the data to confirm supporting evidence, identify counter-examples, and assess alternative interpretations. Verification continued until data saturation was achieved, with no new insights emerging from additional analysis. This iterative process ensured that final conclusions were firmly grounded in empirical evidence and represented credible interpretations of participant experiences and perspectives.

Results

History Learning Context at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan

History instruction at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan operates within the Merdeka Curriculum framework, employing three history teachers. Classroom observations revealed continued reliance on conventional methodologies including lecture-based instruction, contributing to diminished student interest and motivation. Student Jovan Amirudin articulated this experience:

"History class is sometimes interesting, sometimes boring. It's boring when the lesson is just stories or lectures that make you sleepy, and the material doesn't really sink in. Sometimes it's interesting when we have discussions, but mostly it's just storytelling like that." (Interview, June 11, 2024)

Teacher Fendi Aditiya acknowledged these challenges while noting efforts to vary instructional approaches:

"History instruction at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan sometimes uses Project Based Learning, where I give students problems to analyze and discuss. But admittedly, we sometimes use conventional methods, which often make students bored and sleepy. Not all classes respond to the same approach we must understand each class's conditions and needs. Sometimes one class works well with PjBL while another doesn't. History is often associated with conventional teaching, but we don't always use that. We need to figure out how to keep history learning going while ensuring students understand what we teach." (Interview, June 10, 2024)

The transition from Curriculum 2013 to Merdeka Curriculum brought modest changes to history instruction. Class hours decreased from previous allocations, with tenth grade receiving three weekly hours while eleventh and twelfth grades receive only two hours due to specialization subject requirements. However, teacher Fendi noted increased flexibility in material selection:

"There's no significant difference between Curriculum 2013 and Merdeka Curriculum for history instruction, mainly just the hours. The Merdeka curriculum allows us to adjust materials to student needs and local conditions. We can incorporate local history content into lessons accordingly." (Interview, June 10, 2024)

Out-of-class learning remained infrequent due to time constraints and logistical considerations. Teacher Fendi explained:

"I usually only assign out-of-class learning through tasks. For example, early last semester on Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms, I asked students to report on sites or temples around Temanggung near their homes. I rarely conduct out-of-class learning due to cost

considerations. Working around this, I assign group visits. Limited class hours make out-of-class learning during school time seem inefficient, plus we must consider transportation and student safety.” (Interview, June 10, 2024)

The school's Cultural School designation, declared in 2022, emphasizes integrating local cultural content across learning activities. This vision statement “Realizing Individuals with Noble Character, Achievement, Cultural Appreciation, Entrepreneurial Spirit, and Environmental Care” manifests through 5S Culture implementation (greetings, politeness, smiles, courtesy, respect) and local cultural appreciation cultivated through instruction, extracurricular activities, and special events. However, implementing local history content faces challenges including limited sources about Temanggung's local history. Teacher Fendi elaborated:

“Local history material is taught to students, emphasized by the principal to all teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan. This relates to our Cultural School declaration. History instruction frequently includes Temanggung local history like historical buildings around the school the Kawedanan office, Parakan station, and historical sites. For example, during Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms study, I assign students to report on temples or sites near their homes. However, incorporating local history faces challenges particularly limited sources. Looking around the school environment, you'll see student work related to history informational pamphlets about Liyangan Site, Pringapus Temple, and more. This implements both the Cultural School concept and Merdeka Curriculum's P5 program.” (Interview, June 10, 2024)

Learning resources include history textbooks, PowerPoint presentations, supplementary books, and internet sources. Teachers attempt to leverage available technology, using presentations for material delivery and mobile applications for assessment. Classroom observations revealed typical lesson structure: opening prayer, attendance checking, stimulating questions connecting to previous material, material presentation, assignments, reflection, announcement of next meeting's material, and closing prayer.

Implementation of Historical Site Visit Learning

The historical site visit learning model was implemented at Liyangan Site on June 12, 2024, from 08:00 to 11:00 WIB. Twenty-one of thirty-six students participated; absent students were either ill or engaged in student organization activities supporting new student admissions. Preparation activities included providing students with relevant content about visited sites, communicating activity sequences and regulations, securing site visitation permits, and arranging transportation appropriate to participant numbers.

The journey from school to Liyangan Site required approximately twenty minutes. Upon arrival, students were organized, attendance confirmed, and permissions verified with site personnel. The learning session commenced with prayer, followed by teacher presentation on Hindu-Buddhist development in Indonesia and associated historical remains. Students then explored the site accompanied by the teacher and site caretaker Mr. Istiarso, who provided explanations about Liyangan's history from initial discovery through recent findings.

Exploration began at courtyard four (the lowest currently accessible level), featuring a bathing temple (*candi petirnaan*) and water channels. Movement to courtyard three

revealed temple two, with a talud (retaining wall) between courtyards three and two pre-dating Hindu-Buddhist influence, indicated by river stone (*boulder*) construction later covered with square stones during the Hindu-Buddhist period. Courtyard two contained *batur* one and four alongside temple fencing extending to courtyard one. Courtyard one, the highest level, featured temple one and multiple *batur* structures (Riyanto, 2015).

Exploration continued to agricultural areas, where a flat round yoni (100 cm diameter, 10 cm thickness) near water channels and an excavated ancient agricultural plot were observed. The settlement area revealed bamboo charcoal, palm fiber, and wood charcoal interpreted as building material remains from ancient dwellings. A stone path resembling village roads extended from courtyard four to courtyard two (Riyanto, 2015). After returning to courtyard two for rest, Mr. Istiarso delivered material on historical site preservation, procedures for encountering suspected heritage objects, and annual cultural processions held at Liyangan following tobacco harvests. Two site areas remained unexplored due to difficult terrain and weather conditions; artifact collections stored at the caretaker's residence were also not viewed. Learning concluded with student reflection and prayer before returning to school.

Student responses to the site visit were notably positive. Anisa Nur Khanani contrasted this experience with classroom learning:

"History class is usually just in the classroom and sometimes boring when it's just explanations and stories. It makes you sleepy when it's the same thing repeatedly. Out-of-class learning usually just means assignments I once had group assignments to visit Hindu-Buddhist historical sites. Visiting historical places directly and learning there is much more interesting, I understand the material better. It's easier to grasp what the teacher teaches and definitely not boring because the learning atmosphere is completely different from classroom learning." (Interview, June 14, 2024)

Historical Site Visits and Enhanced Historical Awareness

Pre-implementation assessment indicated that student historical awareness required substantial development. Teacher Fendi observed:

"Students' historical awareness level really needs improvement. A simple example Monday flag ceremonies many students aren't serious about following the ceremony. Some joke around, chat with friends, don't salute properly during flag raising, don't sing Indonesia Raya seriously. Monday flag ceremonies represent one way we honor heroes' sacrifices. Yet many students aren't serious even for these brief ceremonies. Additionally, as I've explained, students' historical understanding nowadays is relatively limited." (Interview, June 10, 2024)

Student Indah Dwi Lestari expressed common perceptions:

"I find history difficult because there's so much memorization and material, making it hard to understand. That's why I don't really like history. I also think history isn't very important for my major since I focus on health sciences, and we've studied history since junior high even elementary school, so we already know it and don't need deeper study." (Interview, June 11, 2024)

Regarding local historical heritage awareness, Jovan Amirudin noted:

"I don't really know historical remains in Temanggung. I only know Liyangan Site because I've been there twice. First time hanging out with friends but didn't go to the temple

area, just the swimming pool, and second time because of a history assignment requiring a report. Historical remains outside Temanggung I know like Prambanan and Borobudur. That's about it." (Interview, June 14, 2024)

Student Tiara Sukma Kinanti added:

"I don't really know local history in Temanggung. Historical events I know are like Proclamation and Youth Pledge those have been taught from elementary school until now and there are movies too. National heroes I don't particularly like or idolize any." (Interview, June 14, 2024)

Despite limited historical awareness, students demonstrated stronger connection to local culture. Teacher Fendi explained:

"As a Cultural School, teachers are emphasized to introduce local culture to students through learning processes. The Merdeka Curriculum includes P5 programs aimed at introducing national culture to students. SMA Negeri 1 Parakan has a cultural group where students learn about Temanggung local culture like dance and customs or traditions. One P5 program example was a performance of Temanggung traditional wedding procession, *1 Suro* traditional ceremony, *Grebeg Makukuhan* traditional ceremony, and tobacco planting traditional ceremony." (Interview, June 10, 2024)

Following the Liyangan Site visit, notable shifts in student perspectives emerged. Farlinda Wini Ramadhani reflected:

"I knew where Liyangan Site is in Ngadirejo, but didn't know its deeper history. I'd visited before but just hung out with friends, not to learn about its history. After joining this site visit, I learned Liyangan's history. I used to think Liyangan Site was just a temple like Prambanan and Borobudur. Didn't even know if it was Hindu or Buddhist. Just thought it was a temple." (Interview, June 14, 2024)

Students previously unfamiliar with or uninterested in visiting Temanggung's historical sites expressed desire to explore them. Triska Dwi Rahma shared:

"I really enjoyed yesterday's activity, it was interesting, I learned so many things I didn't know. If I have time, I want to come back to Liyangan Site. There are things that still make me curious like how they built temples and much more. I also want to know about traditional ceremonies held at Liyangan Site. And I want to visit other temples in Temanggung too." (Interview, June 14, 2024)

The site caretaker's presentation on preservation and heritage discovery procedures resonated with students. Muhammad Azhar Afrani noted:

"I just learned the procedures for when we find objects that might be historical remains. It turns out near my house, a large stone was found shaped like a square, almost like stones at Liyangan. But the stone is gone now. It was found when preparing to build a house, according to my parents. Mr. Istiarso's material really expanded my knowledge. I also better understand how to behave when visiting historical places." (Interview, June 14, 2024)

Teacher Fendi affirmed the model's effectiveness:

"Learning by directly taking students to visit historical remains in our environment is valuable. This learning model brings students closer to historical facts they usually only study through books, where they can only imagine without knowing the actual objects. This model also introduces more local history in Temanggung. By introducing nearby historical remains, curiosity emerges leading to a sense of ownership. With ownership

comes desire to protect these places. Historical site visit learning positively impacts students' historical awareness." (Interview, June 10, 2024)

Implementation Challenges

Despite positive outcomes, several challenges emerged. Time constraints proved significant, as site visits require substantial preparation, travel, and implementation time exceeding typical class periods. When history periods fall between other subjects, conducting site visits becomes impractical. Teacher Fendi noted that a potential solution involves scheduling visits during holiday periods rather than instructional hours.

Financial considerations presented another challenge. Site visits incur costs for transportation and potential entry fees that cannot reasonably be imposed on teachers or collected from students without formal procedures. Transportation logistics compound this challenge not all students possess personal vehicles, while arranging group transportation adds financial and organizational complexity. Student safety during independent travel raises additional concerns. Teacher Fendi suggested that careful advance planning, school communication, and formal parental notification letters could address financial and transportation challenges through transparent fee collection mechanisms.

Supervisory capacity emerged as a further constraint. During the Liyangan visit, a single teacher supervised twenty-one students; full class participation would have meant thirty-six students requiring supervision across an extensive site with students more active than during classroom learning. Teacher Fendi recommended preliminary site surveys to assess suitability for large groups with limited supervision, or coordinating site visits with other school activities involving multiple teachers.

Discussion

Historical Site Visits as Contextual Pedagogy in Indonesian Education

The findings demonstrate that historical site visit learning at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan constitutes what is identified as "contextual pedagogy," a pedagogical practice grounded in local socio-cultural and historical specificities (Greaves et al., 2023). Unlike generic experiential learning models developed within Western educational contexts, the *lawatan sejarah* model as implemented here draws upon distinctly Indonesian educational possibilities. As Karn (2025) argued, history instruction should extend beyond cognitive transmission to encompass affective and psychomotor development areas where conventional classroom instruction often falls short.

The Liyangan Site visit exemplifies how Indonesian heritage sites can function as what Popa (2022) terms "cultural processes" sites where students participate in meaning-making rather than passively receiving historical narratives. The students' engagement with material remains an ancient settlement preserved by volcanic catastrophe created what El Bedewy et al. (2024) might identify as a "place-based" learning experience fundamentally different from textbook-mediated historical study. This aligns with Kochhar's (2008) emphasis that history education should develop self-understanding, appropriate conceptions of time and space, and capacity to evaluate generational achievements.

Particularly significant for the Indonesian post-colonial context is how the Liyangan visit enabled students to encounter pre-colonial heritage directly (Demir & Ilter, 2025;

Pettersson & Müller, 2023). Indonesia's educational system has historically emphasized national narratives often centered on anti-colonial struggle and modern nation-building (Fajar et al., 2025; Sagita Krissandi et al., 2023; Yuliantri & Suwignyo, 2024). Site visits to pre-colonial remains like Liyangan offer what Mocnik (2024) terms "historical awareness" that encompasses deeper temporal horizons extending beyond colonial and post-independence periods. Students' expressed curiosity about temple construction, traditional ceremonies, and local heritage reflects engagement with what Halaç et al. (2025) described as history's "hygienic influence" liberating consciousness from uncritical acceptance of received narratives.

The model's effectiveness resonates with international research on heritage education. Marovah and Ncube (2024) found that well-structured site visits enhance students' capacity to analyze historical evidence and recognize history's constructed nature. Similarly, Strand (2025) documentation of place-based education's emotional impact finds parallel in Indonesian students' expressed desire to return to Liyangan and explore other local heritage sites. However, the Indonesian context adds distinctive dimensions: the encounter with Hindu-Buddhist civilization buried by volcanic forces creates opportunities for historical empathy and connection to land that may differ from heritage education in other national contexts.

Developing Historical Awareness Through Local Heritage Engagement

The four historical awareness indicators derived from Indonesian scholarship (Aman, 2011; Ayatrohaedi, 1985) provide a framework for understanding student development through site visit participation. Pre-implementation assessment revealed limitations across all indicators: students demonstrated minimal appreciation of history's meaning, limited self and national identity recognition, inconsistent cultivation of history for cultural development (though cultural engagement through school programs showed promise), and minimal engagement with heritage preservation.

Post-implementation data revealed meaningful shifts, particularly regarding "History Education as Social and Reconciliatory Practice." Students' engagement with the Liyangan Site as a "site of memory" enabled reconciliation with a past that was previously unknown or inaccessible. Farlinda's admission that she "didn't know Liyangan's deeper history," despite prior recreational visits, illustrates the distinction between passive presence at a site and active historical engagement. Muhammad's learning about heritage discovery procedures, along with his subsequent recognition of potential heritage objects near his home, demonstrates how site-based learning can transform students' relationship with their everyday environments.

The reconciliatory dimension operates at multiple levels. First, students reconciled with local history previously absent from their historical consciousness, dominated by nationally prominent figures and events. Second, engagement with a site of catastrophic destruction and preservation enabled reflection on historical continuity and change fundamental historical thinking competencies (Khubaib, Atmaja, & Sodiq, 2020). Third, students' expressed desire to protect heritage sites represents reconciliation with collective responsibility for cultural preservation a significant outcome given widespread neglect of local heritage documented in pre-implementation findings.

Karn (2025) emphasize that historical awareness encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. The findings demonstrate progression across all three: cognitive (learning Liyangan's history and preservation procedures), affective (expressed curiosity, desire to return, emotional connection to heritage), and behavioral (intentions to visit other sites, recognition of heritage objects in home environments). This multidimensional development exceeds what conventional classroom instruction typically achieves, supporting Firdaus, Purnomo, and Ahmad's (2021) contention that history education should cultivate student character alongside cognitive outcomes.

Bridging Formal Knowledge and Community Memory

The Liyangan Site visit created what might be termed a "pedagogical third space" bridging formal school knowledge with living community memory. Unlike textbook-mediated learning, site visits involve multiple knowledge sources: teacher presentations, caretaker narratives, material remains, and peer interactions during exploration. This multiplicity aligns with Smets and Savenije (2025) conception of history education as engaging with diverse aspects of past life political, economic, social, cultural, religious, and belief dimensions requiring multidimensional approaches.

The caretaker's role proved particularly significant for bridging formal and community knowledge. Mr. Istiarso's explanations encompassed archaeological interpretations (the talud predating Hindu-Buddhist influence), traditional practices (annual cultural processes), and practical guidance (heritage discovery procedures). This combination of expert and community knowledge exemplifies what Abbey and Wansink (2022) advocate a multidimensional historical understanding, where topics are examined from various perspectives rather than through a single disciplinary lens.

Students' responses to caretaker presentations revealed the power of community-embedded historical knowledge. Muhammad's recognition that his family's home construction had encountered a potentially significant stone, now lost, illustrates how site-based learning can transform everyday awareness. Similarly, Triska's curiosity about temple construction methods and traditional ceremonies demonstrates engagement with historical questions extending beyond standard curriculum content. These outcomes resonate with Duchatelet et al. (2024) and Mulders et al. (2025), who emphasize that teachers must select innovative models capable of utilizing available environmental learning resources.

Challenges and Implications for Practice

Identified implementation challenges time, finance, transportation, supervision echo findings from international research on outdoor and place-based education. However, the Indonesian educational context adds particular dimensions. Limited class hours under the Merdeka Curriculum constrain out-of-learning opportunities, while financial considerations carry different weight in resource-constrained settings compared to wealthier educational systems. These challenges require contextual solutions rather than simple adoption of practices from other national contexts (Fahrudin & Saefudin, 2025).

Teacher Fendi's suggested solutions, including advance planning, school communication, and coordination with other activities, reflect a pragmatic adaptation to local

circumstances. Importantly, these solutions stem from the practitioner's own experience rather than from external directives, exemplifying what the scope identifies as "contextual pedagogy" developed within specific socio-cultural settings. The fact that only twenty-one of thirty-six students participated due to conflicting school activities also highlights organizational challenges that require institutional-level solutions rather than relying solely on individual teacher effort.

Despite these challenges, the findings support continued development of site-based historical learning. Students' enthusiasm, expressed learning gains, and demonstrated shifts in historical awareness indicators justify efforts to address implementation barriers (Nguyen, 2025). As Zhang (2026) argues, students demonstrate stronger engagement with history connected to immediate surroundings, facilitating visualization of past events. The Liyangan visit enabled precisely such visualization, with students encountering material remains of daily life agricultural fields, settlement patterns, water management providing concrete evidence for historical imagination.

Conclusion

This study examined implementation of historical site visit learning at SMA Negeri 1 Parakan and its influence on student historical awareness. The model generated positive student responses characterized by enthusiasm and active participation during learning activities at Liyangan Site. The approach emphasizes introducing and engaging students with local historical heritage within their immediate environment, creating learning experiences qualitatively different from conventional classroom instruction.

Student historical awareness, assessed across four indicators appreciation of history's meaning, self and national identity recognition, cultivation of history for cultural development, and heritage preservation demonstrated development through site visit participation. Students exhibited increased interest in exploring local history, stronger motivation to preserve nearby historical remains, and enhanced engagement with both historical learning and local cultural traditions. These outcomes support the model's effectiveness for fostering historical consciousness within Indonesia's post-colonial educational context.

Implementation challenges included time constraints, financial considerations, transportation logistics, and supervisory capacity limitations. Limited class hours complicate routine out-of-class learning implementation, while financial requirements cannot be casually imposed on teachers or students. Transportation arrangements and adequate supervision for large student groups across extensive sites require careful planning and institutional support.

This research contributes to understanding how site-based learning models can foster historical awareness within Indonesian secondary education. The findings support continued development of contextual pedagogy drawing upon local heritage resources while addressing implementation challenges through institutional collaboration and careful planning. Future research might explore longitudinal effects of site-based learning on historical awareness, comparative studies across different heritage site types, and

development of assessment instruments specifically designed to capture the multidimensional nature of historical consciousness cultivated through place-based education.

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