



## **The Potential Utilization of Sunan Bonang's Tomb as Learning Resources : A Preliminary Findings**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore and uncover another side of the potentials of Sunan Bonang's Tomb in relation to its use for educational purposes. Its main focus is the utilization as a learning resource. Through a qualitative research under a case study approach with descriptive data. The data analysis start from data collection through observation, and interviews with local figure and site functionary, also documentation as support. Then step into data reduction, and subsequently the data presentation, later on draw the conclusion of research results. The Results showed that the Tomb of Sunan Bonang contains various potentials that can be utilize in relation to be as a learning resources. From the geographically and architecturally, The Sunan Bonang's tomb possess opportunities as a learning resource such in Islamic education, history education, moreover multicultural and character education. Its use in the learning process can be through direct or indirect.

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## **Introduction**

Compared to other members of Walisongo, Sunan Bonang was the only member of Wali Sanga to leave controversy regarding his funeral. In Indonesian knowledge, Sunan Bonang has 3 tombs (Aizid, 2015: 61). All of which are trusted by the local community and are compete for recognition of their validity. The absence of primary evidence in this regard is the main reason for the debate in Indonesian society regarding the tomb of the original Sunan Bonang. Nowadays, the site of the Sunan Bonang's Tomb is only often viewed as a tourism point of view. There is still a lack of study on the educational point of view from Sunan Bonang's Tomb. Hence, this research aim to explore the potentials utilization of the Sunan Bonang's Tomb in a focus related to the field of educational point of view.

According to a research result, it was revealed that contextual learning is needed to help teachers increase students' interest and meaning (Hakim et al., 2020). Certain things that can be seen and close in real terms is one of the embodiments of the contextual means. A site in terms of learning process has various function, one of an example is to strengthen that past events occurred or that there was life that could be used as a source of historical knowledge, and add facts (new) past events, also know the dynamics of the past with the present related to the condition of its sites (Rosyid, 2021). The tomb of Sunan Bonang, which is real in the form of a building, can be one of an example or media that serves as the basis for the development of models and teaching materials in education.

Furthermore, there were no research yet on the Sunan Bonang as a historical site that oriented to educational aspects. Meanwhile, there are already several historical sites of the past that have been explored aspects of their use in terms of education. For example, the Tomb of Sunan Kudus complex which has been sought for its historical value to be used as a



development of teaching materials (Indra F et al., 2017). Then, the Jami' Mosque and the Tomb of Ki Ageng Gribig in Malang which have been explored for their potential use to support local history education and character education (Sulistyo & Pamungkas, 2020). Thus, Sojiwan Temple also had been visualized its reliefs in values to support character education (Sari, 2013). Therefore, sites in Indonesia have a lot of potentials and opportunities that can be used as learning resources.

Learning resources define by The Association of Education and Communication Technology (AECT) as all sources, whether in the form of data, people, or objects that can be used by people who learn, either individually or in combinations that are used to facilitate or provide convenience in learning (Warsita, 2008). Learning resources are seen as things that are not merely limited to textbooks. Meiristiya (2016) mentioned that the existence of the natural surroundings and events around can be used as a source of learning. Learning resources are part of the availability of facilities and infrastructure at home and at schools that will assist students in learning.

According to Association of Education and Communication Technology (AECT), learning resources classified into two, learning resources by design and by utilization (Setiyani, 2010). Learning resource by design is all sources that have been specifically developed as components of an instructional system to provide targeted and formal learning facilities; and conversely learning resources by utilization is learning resources that are not specifically designed for learning purposes but can be found, applied, and utilized for learning purposes.

For that reason, this research seeks to explore the potentials of Sunan Bonang's Tomb in the scope of educational aspects. This research develops the existing potentials to be further utilize as a learning resources. The results of this study are expected to be use by teachers in Indonesia for the benefit of supporting the achievement of learning goals in schools. By emphasizing one of the criteria for a good education is the presence of an attitude respect the diversity of religion, culture, ethnicity, race, and social and economic groups within the national scope (Irawan & Faqih, 2020). This research use multi-aspect studies are carried out to obtain maximum results regarding the potential of multi-subjects.

## **Research Method**

This type of research is qualitative with a descriptive method to understand and describe the potential use of the Tomb of Sunan Bonang as a learning resource. Based on case study approach, data collection using variety procedures with cases limited by time and activity (Creswell & Creswell, 2014). According to Moleong (2013), in this qualitative research, the main data sources are words and actions, the rest is additional data such as documents and others.

Data collection techniques are carried out using observation, interview, and documentation methods. Observations are made to obtain information about the real situation of the moment at the place or location of the Tomb of Sunan Bonang in a certain period in the field. Interviews with local figure and site fuctionary were intended to obtain data by asking questions about everything related to the history of Sunan Bonang and his tomb. Interviews are conducted like everyday and informal conversations. Last is the documentation method. The documents to be studied are texts and some photos of activities carried out at the Sunan Tomb Complex. The texts are archives, activity records, and reference books. Photo documents and recordings provide visual information about the state and physical condition of Sunan Bonang's tomb. Meanwhile, references in the form of previous literature are used to



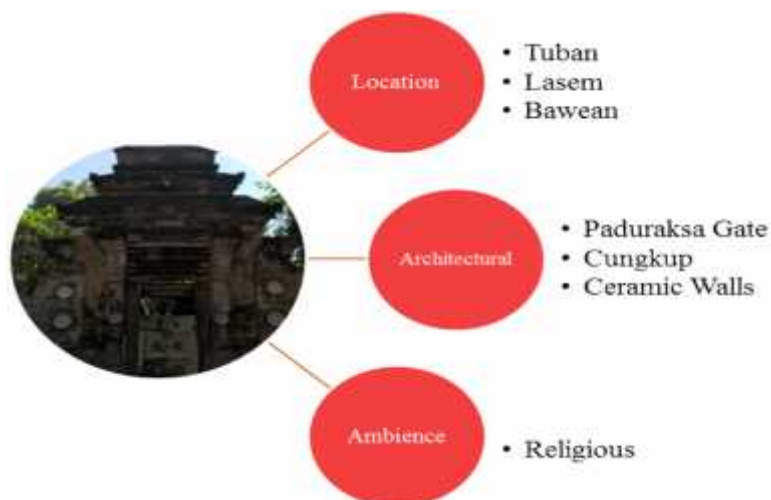
explore topics that have main relevance in the educational aspect. Data analysis in this study consists of three activities that occur together, step by step from data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclude of research results (Rijali, 2019). The process takes place before, during, and after data collection to form a comprehensive analysis.

## Results and Discussion

The first tomb of Sunan Bonang is located in the area of the cemetery complex located in Kutorejo Village, Tuban, East Java. Precisely in the center of the city, west of Tuban square, behind the Great Mosque. Among all the versions about the tomb of Sunan Bonang, this is the most popular and trusted existence of the public. There is no and no archaeologically strong evidence found that sunan Bonang's tomb is in Tuban, but according to folklore, which is based on the tomb of Sunan Bonang in Tuban, this is the original tomb. The shape of this tomb building explains that Sunan Bonang's tomb indicates that he is not arbitrary descendant, because there is a Suryo Binolong Majapahit symbol on the tombstone of Sunan Bonang's tomb. The tomb of Sunan Bonang itself is protected by a very large and tall *Cungkup* (Tomb Cup in Java). There is only one *Cungkup* in this area of the complex, it illustrates a great respect into Sunan Bonang. Sunan Bonang's tomb complex still has many tombstones with Javanese and Arabic inscriptions (Atmodjo, 1982).

The second tomb of Sunan Bonang in Lasem is located in a village known as Bonang village or *mBonang*, Lasem District, Rembang Regency, Central Java. The location of the tomb is not far from the site of Pasujudan Sunan Bonang. The tomb of Sunan Bonang who does not use a cupola. According to the caretaker of Sunan Bonang's tomb, several attempts have been made to make a *Cungkup* for Sunan Bonang's tomb have always failed. This is interpreted as a phenomenon that does not allow it to be built even more magnificently because it follows sunan Bonang's simplicity principles in living. The building in the form of an earthen mound with a low peak with a jasmine tree in the middle of the peak, there is only a scrap metal fence and white walls that surround without a tombstone and without cupola is a sight that is visible when looking at the Tomb of Sunan Bonang in Lasem, Rembang, Central Java. Petilasan from Sunan Bonang in Rembang is better known as a Pasujudan Sunan Bonang. Pasujudan Sunan Bonang is inside a cupola to the south. Inside the cup, there are four flat-faced andesite stones. The largest stone is believed to be the pasujudan of Sunan Bonang, which is the place where Sunan Bonang performs worship. But there is also a speech story that states, this stone was the prayer mat of Sunan Bonang when he was fishing in the sea. Because his house is located near the beach, one of Sunan Bonang's jobs is as a fisherman. Once upon a time when Sunan Bonang was fishing in the sea, and Ashar's prayer time was almost up. If he returned home, then he would not get asar prayer time, so he decided to pray on the hill using a black stone as his base. On this stone there are traces of limbs such as knees and palms that show traces of people praying in Islam.

The third and last is located in Bawean Island which became one of the main mysteries in the death of Sunan Bonang, because it is said that he experienced illness and died on this island while proselytizing. There are two sites known as the tomb of Sunan Bonang and it is still a conflict between which one is actually, both are located in the sea side of the Pond area. There is no way to be sure which one is more convincing, even if it is simply mistaken for the tomb of Sunan Bonang. One of the tombs seems more taken care of, as it is called a house and given a mosquito net, while the other tomb still has to contend with other speculations that it is actually the tomb of a sailor from Sulawesi whose ship was wrecked around Bawean.



**Chart 1. Preliminary Findings**

*Source : Personal Documentation*

The tomb of Sunan Bonang, which is located in 3 different places, does not yet have one of the strongest archaeological evidences that can be trusted by academics. In addition, if we look further, it can be seen that the tomb of Sunan Bonang is at a considerable distance geographically between each other. There is 1 tomb in the Central Java and 2 more in East Java. In historical point of view, the existence of sunan bonang's tomb could be seen as historical sources. Variations in the existence of Sunan Bonang's Tomb can be interpreted by knowing how widespread the efforts to spread or shirk Islam are carried out by Sunan Bonang, from Lasem on the west to Tuban and Bawean on the east and north. In fact, the beginning of Sunan Bonang spreading his proselytizing began from the Kediri area in East Java (Sunnyoto, 2017). The extent of the influence of Sunan Bonang's proselytizing can be used as concrete evidence in relation to historical learning in the subject matter regarding the entry and raising of the spread of Islam in Indonesia, especially the island of Java. Sunan Bonang spread Islam through the encounter of tradition, culture and religion (Mukzizatin, 2018).



**Figure 1. From Left to Right (Cungkup, Ceramic Ornaments Wall, Paduraksa Gate)**

*Source : Personal Documentation*

Architecturally, Sunan Bonang's tomb has a Paduraksa Gate in front as a door to his tomb complex. Paduraksa gate is a building style that characterizes the influence of cultural





acculturation between Islam and ancient Java, in this case are Hinduism and Buddhism as religions that raised before the entry of Islam in Java (Dofari, 2018 ; Subakir, 2020). In addition, there is also the Sunan Bonang Mosque which has a tajug or the pyramid-shaped roof as architectural style which is also affected by the architectural style of the Hindu tradition (Mukaffa, 2017). The walls in the Tuban tomb complex have ornaments in the form of ceramic plates in various motifs (Sunyoto, 2017). Ceramic plates are the mark result of culture from the Chinese civilization. So it can be known that there is also acculturation in the building of the wall influenced between Javanese and Chinese cultures. Influences from cultures other than Javanese which later made the acculturation in the pattern of the Sunan Bonang Tomb complex building can be interpreted as an effort to show tolerance in Islam. Acculturation in terms of culture shows the existence of a form and appreciation for multiculturalism (Schalk-Soekar & Van de Vijver, 2008). Knowledge of religion, greatly affects the formation of human personality or in other words have an implications for character building (Hakim et al., 2020). So there is a need for character education, one of which can take an example from multiculturalism. In relation to education, multiculturalism itself is closely related to character education which is often as a one of important thing in modern humanist-based education. Indonesia is a nation with a multicultural society (Taha, 2022). Hence, Indonesia require an approach to a multiculturalism.

**Table 1. Potentials Utilization of Sunan Bonang's Tomb**

<b>Data Reduction &amp; Presentation</b>		
<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Elucidation</b>	<b>Potentials Utilization as Resources in Learning Process</b>
<b>Geographical</b>	Shows a broad influence on the journey of Sunan Bonang's da'wah in the historical trajectory	History Education
<b>Paduraksa Gate</b>	Shows the existence of cultural acculturation of Hindu /Buddhist and Islamic	Character Education (values of tolerance and multiculturalism)
<b>Cungkup</b>	Shows the existence of cultural acculturation of local and Islamic	
<b>Ceramic Walls</b>	Shows the existence of cultural acculturation of Javanese and Chinese	
<b>Ambience</b>	Represent and encourage an increase in the sense of religiosity in oneself due to the influence of the surrounding environment	Islamic Education

## Conclusion

The Sunan Bonang's Tomb contains rich potential as a learning resources. Aside from its potentials of being a source of learning in Islamic education, it turns out that the Sunan Bonang's Tomb also has geographical and architectural potentials to utilize as a learning



resources for history education, or even multiculturalism in terms of its relation into character education. The Sunan Bonang's Tomb proper to be utilize and use as a media and learning resources in a contextual learning model that is being a necessity in today to increase students' interest compared to conventional text-based in learning process. The Sunan Bonang's Tomb can be classified as "by utilization" learning resources.

The utilization of the Sunan Bonang's Tomb can be done in various ways. Direct visits in the form of study tours can be carried out to improve students skills, in this case are their direct observation skills as a learning method. In addition, it can also be used through visualization of the Sunan Bonang's Tomb in the form of pictures or videos that show important points to be conveyed in the learning process. The choice of how to utilize the potentials of the Sunan Bonang's Tomb is based on the needs and abilities also the affordability in the learning process in accordance with the learning objectives to be achieved.

### Recommendation

The potential of the Sunan Bonang Tomb as a source of learning can be achieved maximally if there is a collaboration between each stakeholders. So, it is recommended that the teacher as the main element must be able to initiate the utilization model with the government (in this case the functionary and related agencies) must be able to fully support the utilization for educational purposes.

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