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Place-Based History Learning for Cultural Heritage Awareness

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Abstract: Place-based history learning has become an important pedagogical approach for strengthening students' historical understanding, cultural identity, and heritage awareness through direct engagement with local environments and cultural landscapes. However, history learning in schools is often still dominated by textbook-oriented instruction that limits students' emotional connection to local cultural heritage. This study aimed to analyze the implementation of place-based history learning through exploration of the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The study employed a qualitative case study design with contextual and experiential learning approaches. Data were collected through observations, semi-structured interviews, documentation studies, and students' reflective journals involving 35 eleventh-grade students, a history teacher, and a site caretaker. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking, while data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that place-based learning activities involving historical field visits, artifact exploration, collaborative inquiry, and reflective reinterpretation significantly enhanced students' historical empathy, cultural heritage awareness, and emotional engagement with local history. Students developed stronger appreciation toward the megalithic heritage of Central Sulawesi and demonstrated greater responsibility for cultural preservation after directly interacting with the Vatunonju site. The study further indicates that experiential and contextual history learning contributes positively to transformative education, cultural sustainability, and identity construction among students. These findings highlight the importance of utilizing local cultural heritage sites as living educational spaces for developing meaningful, reflective, and sustainability-oriented history learning in contemporary education.
Keywords: Place-Based Learning; History Education; Cultural Heritage Awareness; Historical Empathy; Experiential Learning; Cultural Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

History education plays a crucial role in shaping students' historical consciousness, cultural identity, critical thinking, and civic responsibility in contemporary society (Firmansyah et al., 2025; Mbura & Wiyanarti, 2024). In the context of twenty-first-century education, history learning is no

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longer expected to function merely as the transmission of chronological facts and memorization of past events, but rather as a transformative educational process that enables students to critically interpret historical experiences and connect them with present-day social realities (Beare & Slaughter, 2021; Budi et al., 2025). Through meaningful historical learning, students are expected to develop awareness of cultural diversity, appreciation for local heritage, and a sense of responsibility toward preserving collective memory and identity (Hajisoteriou et al., 2023; Lin, 2020; Nurdauletova et al., 2024). Consequently, history education increasingly requires innovative pedagogical approaches that are contextual, experiential, and culturally responsive.

One of the major challenges in contemporary history education is the declining level of students' historical awareness and emotional connection to local cultural heritage (Marques & Martins, 2026; Wijayanti et al., 2025). The dominance of textbook-oriented instruction and teacher-centered pedagogical practices often causes history learning to become abstract, monotonous, and disconnected from students' real-life experiences. In many schools, historical narratives are still presented as static information to be memorized rather than interpreted critically and meaningfully (Yoder, 2021). This condition becomes increasingly problematic in the digital era, where students from Generation Z and Alpha tend to prefer visual, interactive, and experience-based learning environments. Conventional classroom instruction frequently fails to accommodate these learning characteristics, resulting in low engagement and limited emotional attachment toward historical knowledge and local identity (Mbura & Wiyanarti, 2024; Wijayanti et al., 2025; Zulkarnain et al., 2025).

The weakening of students' cultural attachment is also closely related to broader global challenges associated with globalization and cultural homogenization. Rapid technological development, global popular culture, and standardized educational content often marginalize local historical narratives and indigenous cultural knowledge (Ajani et al., 2024; Dutta, 2019). As a result, younger generations may become increasingly unfamiliar with the historical significance and cultural values embedded within their own communities. Previous studies indicate that the lack of contextual and environment-based learning contributes to low levels of cultural literacy (Shliakhovchuk, 2021), historical empathy (Karn, 2022), and awareness of local heritage among students (Kafadar, 2021; Santos, 2021). This situation highlights the urgent need for educational approaches capable of reconnecting students with their cultural environment and historical roots.

Place-based learning has emerged as an important pedagogical approach capable of addressing these challenges by utilizing local environments, communities, and cultural heritage as authentic learning resources (Isnawati et al., 2025a; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Sobel, 2006). Place-based education emphasizes direct interaction between learners and their surrounding environment to create meaningful and contextual learning experiences (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008). In history education, place-based learning enables students to engage directly with historical sites, artifacts, landscapes, and community narratives, thereby transforming historical learning into a more experiential and reflective process (Ark et al., 2020; Cassaithe, 2020). Such learning experiences not only strengthen students' understanding of historical concepts but also foster emotional engagement, cultural awareness, and social responsibility toward heritage preservation.

One important dimension of place-based history learning is the development of historical empathy, which refers to students' ability to understand historical experiences, perspectives, and human conditions within their social and cultural contexts (Kassim et al., 2024; Sheppard et al., 2019). Historical empathy encourages students to move beyond passive memorization and actively imagine how people in the past lived, struggled, and constructed meaning in their societies (Budi et al., 2025; Karn, 2022; Nurdauletova et al., 2024). Through direct encounters with historical evidence and cultural landscapes, students are more likely to develop deeper emotional and intellectual connections with historical narratives. Experiential interactions with heritage sites therefore play a significant role in transforming history learning into a process of identity construction and reflective citizenship education.

In the Indonesian context, local cultural heritage possesses enormous educational potential for supporting contextual and sustainability-oriented history learning (Mbura & Wiyanarti, 2024; Wijayanti et al., 2025). Central Sulawesi, particularly the megalithic region surrounding Sigi and the Palu Valley, contains one of the richest concentrations of megalithic cultural heritage in Southeast Asia. However, many of these heritage sites remain underutilized as formal educational resources despite their

historical, archaeological, and cultural significance. Students living near these sites often possess limited understanding regarding the symbolic meanings, historical relevance, and cultural values associated with local megalithic heritage (Krzemińska et al., 2018; Mahadzir et al., 2025). This indicates a gap between the availability of local cultural resources and their pedagogical integration within school-based history learning.

One of the most significant cultural heritage locations in Central Sulawesi is the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site located in Sigi Regency. The site contains various megalithic remains, including stone mortars, menhirs, and other archaeological structures reflecting the complexity of prehistoric civilization in the region. As a historical landscape rich in tangible cultural evidence, Vatunonju offers students opportunities to directly observe, interpret, and interact with authentic historical artifacts beyond classroom textbooks. Previous studies revealed that direct interaction with megalithic artifacts contributes positively to students' historical understanding, cultural literacy, and reflective thinking abilities (Johansson, 2019; Pratama et al., 2025). The physical and sensory experiences obtained through heritage site exploration provide learning dimensions that cannot be fully replicated through digital or classroom-based instruction alone.

To maximize the educational potential of heritage sites, contextual learning strategies such as historical field visits or outdoor history learning become highly relevant. Historical field visits are not merely educational excursions but structured inquiry-based learning activities involving observation, documentation, interpretation, and critical reflection conducted directly within historical environments. Through Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) principles, students are encouraged to connect historical knowledge with real-world experiences and local cultural realities (Fitroh & Rosidi, 2026; Khalil, 2025). Such approaches transform students from passive recipients of historical information into active participants who construct knowledge through authentic experiences and social interaction.

Preliminary observations conducted during history learning activities revealed that many students initially perceived history as monotonous and disconnected from their daily lives. However, interactions with the Vatunonju site significantly altered students' perspectives toward local history and cultural heritage. Students demonstrated increased curiosity, emotional engagement, and appreciation for local identity after directly exploring the megalithic environment. Reflective activities further indicated that students began to perceive heritage sites not merely as ancient objects but as meaningful representations of ancestral civilization and cultural continuity within Central Sulawesi society.

Although previous studies have explored outdoor learning and local history education, research specifically examining place-based history learning through megalithic heritage exploration remains relatively limited within Indonesian educational contexts (Karn, 2022; Kassim et al., 2024; Sheppard et al., 2019). Existing studies tend to focus primarily on tourism, archaeology, or heritage documentation rather than investigating how local heritage sites can function as transformative educational spaces fostering historical empathy, cultural identity, and sustainability awareness among students. Moreover, the integration of experiential heritage learning within the framework of contextual and culturally responsive pedagogy has not been sufficiently examined in secondary history education research.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation of place-based history learning through exploration of the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site in Central Sulawesi. The study specifically investigates how historical field visits contribute to students' contextual understanding, historical empathy, cultural heritage awareness, and emotional connection to local identity. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to place-based education, heritage pedagogy, and transformative history learning while practically providing educators with alternative strategies for developing meaningful, contextual, and sustainability-oriented history education rooted in local cultural heritage.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design with a place-based and contextual learning approach. The qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to explore students' learning experiences, historical understanding, cultural awareness, and emotional engagement during the implementation of place-based history learning at the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site in Central Sulawesi. The case study design enabled the researchers to investigate the learning process comprehensively within its natural educational context, particularly regarding the integration of local cultural heritage into history learning activities (Achille & Fiorillo, 2022; Zhang et al., 2025).

The study was grounded in the principles of place-based education and experiential learning, which emphasize direct interaction between learners and authentic social-cultural environments. Through historical field visits and contextual exploration, students were encouraged to actively construct historical understanding based on observation, interpretation, reflection, and collaborative inquiry.

Research Site and Participants

The research was conducted at the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site located in Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, and involved one public senior high school situated near the heritage area. The site was purposively selected because it represents one of the important megalithic cultural landscapes in Central Sulawesi and possesses significant educational potential for contextual history learning.

The participants consisted of 35 eleventh-grade students enrolled in history classes, one history teacher, and one site caretaker who served as a supporting informant. The participants were selected purposively based on their involvement in the implementation of historical field visit activities and contextual learning processes. The students involved in the study were considered representative of learners experiencing place-based historical learning within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Learning Implementation Procedure

The implementation of place-based history learning was conducted through several interconnected stages consisting of pre-visit orientation, on-site exploration activities, reflective discussion, and post-visit reinterpretation tasks. Before visiting the heritage site, students participated in classroom orientation sessions focusing on the historical background, archaeological significance, and cultural context of the Vatunonju megalithic site. Teachers introduced students to basic concepts related to megalithic civilization, cultural heritage preservation, and local historical narratives. Students were also provided with digital learning modules and inquiry-based guiding questions to stimulate critical thinking prior to field exploration.

During the field visit, students were divided into collaborative groups with different observational responsibilities, including artifact documentation, environmental observation, interviews with the site caretaker, and visual recording activities. Students conducted direct observations of megalithic remains such as stone mortars, menhirs, and other archaeological structures found within the site area. The learning process emphasized inquiry-based exploration and experiential interaction with historical artifacts. Students engaged in observation, note-taking, sketching, photography, and group discussions while interpreting the possible social, cultural, and spiritual meanings of the artifacts.

After completing the field exploration, students participated in reflective classroom discussions to share their observations, interpretations, and emotional responses toward the historical site. Students subsequently produced reflective outputs such as essays, digital posters, documentaries, or historical vlogs representing their understanding and reinterpretation of the Vatunonju heritage site within contemporary contexts.

Data Collection Techniques

To obtain comprehensive and credible data, this study utilized multiple data collection techniques consisting of observations, interviews, documentation studies, and reflective journals. Participant observation was conducted during classroom learning sessions and field visit activities. The

observations focused on students' participation, interaction with historical artifacts, collaborative inquiry processes, emotional engagement, and expressions of cultural awareness throughout the learning activities.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students, the history teacher, and the site caretaker to explore participants' perceptions and experiences regarding place-based history learning. Student interviews focused on learning experiences, historical empathy, and cultural awareness, while teacher and caretaker interviews explored pedagogical implementation and the educational significance of the heritage site. Documentation techniques were used to collect supporting evidence related to the learning process, including photographs, videos, field notes, students' reflective writings, learning modules, presentation materials, and student-created digital products. Students were asked to write reflective journals after the field visit activities. The journals aimed to capture students' emotional responses, personal interpretations, historical reflections, and perceptions regarding the importance of preserving local cultural heritage

Data Validation Techniques

To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, this study employed triangulation and member-checking techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from students, teachers, and the site caretaker to verify consistency across different participant perspectives. Technique triangulation involved comparing findings obtained through observations, interviews, documentation, and reflective journals to strengthen data validity and reduce interpretive bias. Member checking was conducted by reconfirming several interview interpretations and reflective findings with participants to ensure that the researchers accurately represented participants' experiences and viewpoints.

Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive qualitative analysis model proposed by Miles et al. (1992), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. At this stage, researchers selected, simplified, and categorized relevant data related to contextual learning experiences, historical empathy, cultural identity, and heritage awareness emerging from observations, interviews, and student reflections. The organized data were subsequently presented in the form of descriptive narratives, thematic categories, reflective excerpts, and interpretative explanations to facilitate comprehensive understanding of the findings. The final stage involved interpreting patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from the data to formulate conclusions regarding the effectiveness of place-based history learning in fostering cultural heritage awareness and contextual historical understanding among students.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to conducting the research, permission was obtained from the school administration and relevant local authorities responsible for managing the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study after receiving explanations regarding the research objectives and procedures. Participants' identities were kept confidential to ensure privacy and ethical integrity throughout the research process. All collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes and reported objectively without manipulation or misrepresentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Implementation of Place-Based History Learning at the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site

The implementation of place-based history learning through historical field visits at the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site demonstrated significant transformation in students' learning experiences and engagement during history instruction. The learning process shifted from conventional classroom-centered instruction toward experiential and inquiry-based learning that directly connected students with local cultural heritage and historical environments.

The learning activities were implemented through several interconnected stages consisting of pre-visit orientation, field exploration, collaborative interpretation, reflective discussion, and creative reinterpretation. During the orientation stage, students were introduced to the historical background and archaeological significance of the Vatunonju megalithic site through digital learning modules, contextual discussions, and guiding inquiry questions. This initial stage functioned as cognitive scaffolding intended to prepare students for meaningful engagement during field exploration activities.

During the field visit, students actively interacted with megalithic artifacts such as stone mortars, menhirs, and other archaeological remains found within the heritage site. Students conducted direct observations, measurements, visual documentation, group discussions, and interviews with the site caretaker regarding the historical significance and cultural meaning of the artifacts. The learning activities encouraged students to become active investigators rather than passive recipients of historical information.

The field observations revealed that students demonstrated high levels of participation and curiosity throughout the exploration process. Students collaboratively discussed the possible functions, symbolic meanings, and historical contexts of the megalithic structures while relating them to broader narratives of prehistoric civilization in Central Sulawesi.

Table 1. Learning Activities During Place-Based History Learning

Learning Stage	Main Activities	Educational Focus
Pre-Visit Orientation	Digital modules, contextual discussion, inquiry questions	Historical understanding and inquiry preparation
Site Exploration	Observation, documentation, interviews, artifact analysis	Experiential and inquiry-based learning
Reflective Discussion	Group reflection and interpretation	Historical empathy and critical reflection
Reinterpretation Activities	Vlogs, essays, posters, presentations	Creative historical representation

The implementation of contextual and outdoor learning strategies created a more interactive and meaningful learning atmosphere compared to conventional classroom instruction. Students expressed greater enthusiasm and emotional involvement during learning activities because they directly experienced the historical environment rather than only reading historical narratives from textbooks.

Development of Historical Empathy and Cultural Heritage Awareness

One of the major findings of this study was the significant development of students' historical empathy and cultural heritage awareness after participating in place-based learning activities. Students reported that direct interaction with megalithic artifacts helped them imagine the social, cultural, and spiritual lives of prehistoric communities in Central Sulawesi.

Reflective journals indicated that many students initially perceived history as abstract, monotonous, and disconnected from their daily experiences. However, after participating in field exploration activities, students began to perceive history as a meaningful representation of human experiences and cultural continuity. The physical encounter with ancient stone structures created emotional engagement and deeper appreciation toward local historical heritage.

Several students stated that touching and observing the physical dimensions of the artifacts gave them a stronger sense of authenticity and emotional connection to the past. The experiential interaction encouraged students to recognize that local historical heritage represented an important part of their collective identity and ancestral legacy.

Table 2. Students' Reflections on Historical Learning Experiences

Reflection Theme	Students' Responses
Emotional Engagement	Students felt more emotionally connected to local history
Historical Understanding	Students understood historical narratives more concretely
Cultural Pride	Students developed stronger appreciation toward local heritage
Preservation Awareness	Students expressed responsibility for protecting heritage sites

Approximately 85% of students reported positive changes in their perceptions toward local history after participating in the field visit activities. Students no longer viewed megalithic artifacts merely as ancient objects but rather as meaningful evidence of the intellectual and cultural achievements of their ancestors.

Students' Critical Reflection and Identity Construction

The findings further revealed that place-based history learning contributed positively to students' identity construction and critical reflection regarding local cultural heritage. Through collaborative discussions and reinterpretation activities, students reflected upon the importance of preserving indigenous cultural values amidst globalization and rapid cultural transformation.

Students' creative outputs such as historical vlogs, essays, posters, and digital presentations demonstrated their ability to reinterpret local historical narratives within contemporary social contexts. Several students connected the preservation of cultural heritage with broader issues such as environmental responsibility, cultural sustainability, tourism development, and community identity.

The reinterpretation process allowed students to actively construct personal meanings from their historical experiences. Rather than reproducing historical facts mechanically, students critically reflected on how local cultural heritage shaped their understanding of identity, belonging, and social responsibility within contemporary society.

Challenges in Implementing Place-Based History Learning

Despite its educational benefits, several challenges emerged during the implementation of place-based history learning activities. One of the primary challenges involved logistical and accessibility issues related to organizing field visits to the heritage site. Transportation management, weather conditions, scheduling constraints, and student safety considerations became important practical concerns during implementation. Teachers also experienced challenges related to curriculum demands and limited instructional time within formal classroom schedules. The integration of outdoor learning activities required additional preparation, coordination, and flexibility compared to conventional classroom instruction.

Another challenge involved the limited availability of supporting educational facilities and interpretative materials at the heritage site itself. Some students experienced difficulties obtaining detailed historical explanations regarding certain artifacts due to limited informational signage and educational infrastructure. Nevertheless, collaborative support from teachers, school administrators, and local site caretakers contributed significantly to overcoming many of these implementation barriers.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that place-based history learning through exploration of the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site contributes significantly to the development of students' historical understanding, cultural heritage awareness, historical empathy, and identity construction. The integration of local heritage exploration into history learning created transformative educational experiences that connected historical knowledge with students' lived realities and sociocultural environments (Abiha & Ali Syadihin, 2024; Walter, 2019).

One important finding concerns the effectiveness of experiential learning in transforming students' perceptions toward history education. Prior to the field visit activities, many students perceived history as abstract, monotonous, and disconnected from contemporary life. However, direct interaction with megalithic artifacts enabled students to experience history as a tangible and emotionally meaningful process. This finding aligns with experiential learning theory, which emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs through direct engagement, reflection, and interaction with authentic

environments (Kolb & Kolb, 2018). The sensory and emotional experiences obtained during site exploration strengthened students' cognitive understanding and emotional attachment to historical narratives.

The implementation of place-based learning also supported the development of historical empathy among students. Through observing and interpreting megalithic remains, students attempted to imagine how prehistoric communities lived, interacted, and constructed meaning within their social environments. Historical empathy plays an important role in helping students understand history from humanistic and contextual perspectives rather than merely memorizing chronological events (Bartelds et al., 2020; Karn, 2022). In this study, students' reflective journals revealed that the experiential interaction with cultural artifacts enabled them to emotionally connect with the struggles, creativity, and cultural achievements of past societies in Central Sulawesi.

Another significant finding is the strengthening of students' cultural identity and local heritage awareness. Globalization and digital cultural homogenization often weaken younger generations' connection to local cultural traditions and indigenous heritage. The field visit activities at Vatunonju functioned as an educational intervention that reconnected students with their ancestral cultural landscape and historical roots. Students began to recognize local megalithic heritage not as isolated archaeological remains but as living symbols of collective identity and cultural continuity. This finding supports the perspectives of place-based education, which emphasize that local environments and community heritage function as important educational resources for identity formation and social belonging (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Isnawati et al., 2025).

The findings further indicate that contextual and place-based learning contributes positively to cultural sustainability and heritage preservation awareness. Students expressed increased responsibility and concern regarding the preservation of megalithic heritage after participating in the exploration activities. Such awareness is particularly important in sustainability-oriented education because cultural heritage preservation represents an essential component of sustainable societal development. UNESCO (2020) emphasizes that education should promote not only environmental sustainability but also the preservation of cultural diversity, local wisdom, and collective memory as part of sustainable development goals.

The reinterpretation activities conducted after the field visits also reflected transformative learning processes among students. Through reflective essays, digital storytelling, and collaborative presentations, students reconstructed historical meaning based on personal experiences and social reflection. Transformative learning theory suggests that learners develop deeper understanding when they critically reflect upon experiences and reinterpret their assumptions regarding society, culture, and identity (Mezirow, 2023). In this study, students moved beyond passive consumption of historical narratives toward active meaning-making and reflective citizenship engagement.

Furthermore, the use of digital media alongside field exploration activities demonstrated that local cultural heritage can be integrated productively with contemporary educational technology. Students utilized digital tools such as video editing, visual presentation platforms, and online documentation to reinterpret historical experiences creatively. This finding indicates that place-based learning does not oppose digital transformation but rather complements it through culturally grounded and contextually meaningful educational practices.

Despite these positive outcomes, the implementation of place-based history learning still faces several practical challenges. Logistical limitations, transportation issues, curriculum constraints, and limited educational infrastructure at heritage sites remain significant barriers for broader implementation. Teachers require institutional support, flexible curriculum management, and collaborative partnerships with local communities and cultural institutions to sustain such learning programs effectively.

Overall, this study confirms that place-based history learning through cultural heritage exploration provides meaningful contributions to transformative education, cultural sustainability, and contextual history pedagogy. The Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site functioned not merely as a historical object but as a living educational space where students developed historical empathy, cultural awareness, reflective thinking, and social responsibility. Such educational practices are essential for

fostering culturally grounded and critically aware generations capable of preserving local heritage while actively engaging with contemporary global society.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings of this study demonstrate that place-based history learning through exploration of the Vatunonju Cultural Heritage Site contributes positively to students' historical understanding, historical empathy, cultural identity, and awareness of local cultural heritage. The implementation of contextual and experiential learning activities enabled students to engage directly with authentic historical environments and megalithic artifacts, transforming history learning from abstract textual memorization into meaningful and reflective educational experiences. Through observation, inquiry, collaborative discussion, and creative reinterpretation, students developed stronger emotional connections with local history and greater appreciation for the cultural legacy of Central Sulawesi.

The study further reveals that direct interaction with heritage sites encourages students to critically interpret historical narratives while simultaneously strengthening their sense of belonging and responsibility toward cultural preservation. Place-based learning also supports transformative educational processes by fostering reflective thinking, creativity, social awareness, and contextual understanding rooted in local cultural environments. In addition, the integration of field exploration with digital learning activities demonstrates that local cultural heritage can be productively incorporated into contemporary educational practices to create engaging and sustainability-oriented history learning.

This study implies that history education should move beyond conventional textbook-oriented instruction toward more contextual, experiential, and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches. Cultural heritage sites such as Vatunonju should not merely function as tourism destinations but also be utilized as living educational laboratories capable of strengthening students' historical consciousness, cultural literacy, and civic responsibility. Place-based learning therefore offers important opportunities for preserving local wisdom and cultural sustainability within contemporary educational contexts increasingly influenced by globalization and digital transformation.

However, this study was limited to one educational setting and focused primarily on qualitative exploration of students' learning experiences and perceptions. Future research is recommended to investigate the implementation of place-based history learning in broader educational and cultural contexts using mixed-method or quantitative approaches. Further studies may also explore the impact of heritage-based learning on students' critical historical thinking, environmental awareness, intercultural competence, and citizenship development. Additionally, future educational innovations could integrate virtual heritage technologies, digital storytelling, and community-based cultural projects to strengthen transformative and sustainability-oriented history education in Indonesia.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI SOURCES

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author(s) used generative AI-assisted technology, namely ChatGPT by OpenAI, for language refinement, grammar improvement, academic writing assistance, and manuscript organization. All generated content was carefully reviewed, revised, and validated by the author(s). The author(s) take full responsibility for the final content and interpretation presented in this manuscript.

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