

AN EXPLORATION OF LOCAL LITERATURE AS A MEANS OF PROMOTING CULTURAL TOURISM IN HULU SUNGAI SELATAN

Haswinda Harpriyanti¹⁾, Kamariah^{2)*}

^{1,2}Universitas PGRI Kalimantan

Jl. Sultan Adam No 18 Banjarmasin South Kalimantan, Indonesia

E-mail: haswindaharpriyanti@upk.ac.id

E-mail: kamariah@upk.ac.id

Abstrak

Artikel ini menyajikan pengembangan penelitian mengenai sastra lokal dan budaya masyarakat di Kabupaten Hulu Sungai Selatan, dengan fokus pada eksplorasi dan pelestarian legenda serta ritual tradisional yang masih hidup dalam masyarakat. Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk mendokumentasikan dan menganalisis nilai-nilai kearifan lokal yang terkandung dalam cerita rakyat, seperti Legenda Banyu Baulak serta Batu Laki dan Batu Bini, serta peranannya dalam kehidupan sosial dan spiritual masyarakat. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data dari wawancara, observasi, dan studi pustaka untuk memahami makna dan relevansi legenda-legenda tersebut dalam konteks modern. Selain itu, artikel ini juga mengeksplorasi potensi pengembangan pariwisata budaya berbasis legenda lokal yang dapat meningkatkan kesadaran akan pentingnya pelestarian budaya dan lingkungan. Hasil awal menunjukkan bahwa sastra lokal tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai warisan budaya, tetapi juga sebagai alat pemberdayaan masyarakat dan daya tarik wisata. Dengan mengintegrasikan unsur edukatif dan interaktif, seperti festival budaya dan paket wisata edukatif, diharapkan dapat meningkatkan partisipasi masyarakat serta menarik perhatian generasi muda. Laporan ini diharapkan memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap upaya pelestarian budaya dan pengembangan pariwisata di daerah tersebut, sekaligus memperkuat identitas budaya masyarakat Hulu Sungai Selatan.

Kata kunci: sastra lokal, alat promosi, pariwisata budaya

Abstract

This article presents the development of research on local literature and community culture in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, focusing on the exploration and preservation of legends and traditional rituals that are still alive within the society. The article aims to document and analyze the local wisdom values contained in folk tales, such as the Legends of Banyu Baulak and Batu Laki and Batu Bini, as well as their role in the social and spiritual life of the community. Through a qualitative approach, this research collects data from interviews, observations, and literature reviews to understand the meaning and relevance of these legends in a modern context. Additionally, this article explores the potential for developing cultural tourism based on local legends, which can raise awareness of the importance of cultural and environmental preservation. Preliminary results show that local literature not only serves as a cultural heritage but also as a tool to empower the community and attract tourist interest. By integrating educational and interactive elements, such as cultural festivals and educational tour packages, it is hoped to increase community participation and attract the attention of younger generations. This report is expected to make a significant contribution to cultural preservation efforts and tourism development in the area, as well as strengthen the cultural identity of the Hulu Sungai Selatan community.

Keywords: local literature, promotional tool, cultural tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

Hulu Sungai Selatan, a regency in South Kalimantan, is renowned for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. Despite its significant potential as a tourist destination, the region remains relatively unknown to both domestic and

international travelers. One contributing factor is the lack of effective promotion to highlight its unique local culture essential attraction for tourists seeking distinctive and immersive experiences.

Local literature from Hulu Sungai Selatan such as folktales, legends, and poetry forms an integral part of the region's cultural identity. However, these literary traditions are increasingly threatened by modernization and a lack of preservation efforts. A study by Harpriyanti, et al., (2023) indicates that many folktales and oral traditions in South Kalimantan are poorly documented, leading to a gradual loss of cultural knowledge among younger generations. Without concrete efforts to preserve and revitalize this local literature, there is a significant risk that these valuable cultural assets will disappear over time (Semadi, 2022).

Meanwhile, current tourism trends indicate a growing interest among travelers in destinations that offer authentic experiences and local culture. A study by Kusumastuti and Priliantini (2017) reveals that tourists increasingly seek experiences that not only showcase natural beauty but also involve deep and authentic engagement with local culture. In this context, the use of local literature as a medium for promoting cultural tourism presents a significant opportunity to both harness the potential of literary heritage and highlight the unique cultural identity of Hulu Sungai Selatan (Dotrimensi, dkk., 2023).

However, efforts to integrate local literature into cultural tourism promotion strategies in Hulu Sungai Selatan remain suboptimal. Research by Fauzi (2022) identifies several key barriers, including limited documentation, low awareness of the importance of local literature, and insufficient collaboration among stakeholders. The study emphasizes that an effective promotional strategy must involve multiple actors including local governments, community members, and academics to ensure the comprehensive integration of local literature into tourism promotion efforts (Suparman and Muzakir, 2024).

With growing awareness of the importance of cultural preservation and the economic potential of cultural tourism, it is time to develop more

creative and collaborative strategies. Documenting and promoting local literature can not only attract the interest of tourists, but also strengthen local cultural identity and preserve a literary heritage that is on the verge of being forgotten.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Local literature plays a crucial role in shaping and sustaining the cultural identity of a community (Harpriyanti, et al. 2024). In Hulu Sungai Selatan, forms of local literature such as folktales, legends traditional narratives that blend historical and mythical elements and poetry constitute an integral part of the cultural heritage that carries the community's core values and traditions. According to Ahmadi, et al. (2021)), local literature functions not only as a medium for transmitting cultural values, but also as a cultural expression that reflects the unique characteristics of a community. The preservation of local literature is vital amid the strong currents of modernization that threaten to erode cultural identity. In this context, community-based and effective preservation strategies are essential to ensure that cultural knowledge is not lost over time (Artawan, 2020).

Current global tourism trends indicate a shift in traveler preferences toward seeking authentic experiences that are closely tied to local culture. Sugiyarto and Amaruli (2018) note a growing interest in tourist destinations that enable direct interaction with community culture, including through literature and traditions. These traditions encompass customary rituals traditional ceremonies imbued with spiritual and social values that reflect the community's belief systems (Kamariah, et al., 2023). When integrated into tourism promotion strategies, local literature can serve as an effective medium for conveying local wisdom, which refers to the values and traditional knowledge passed down through generations based on communal experiences (Hermawan dan Anjariyah, 2023).

Nevertheless, efforts to preserve local literature face significant challenges. Harpriyanti dan Kamariah (2019) highlight that many folktales and oral traditions across various regions in Indonesia remain undocumented in a systematic manner. This poses a serious risk to the survival of intangible cultural heritage. Jumriani dkk. (2021) emphasize the need for cross-sector collaboration between government, academics, and local communities to document and disseminate the richness of local literature. The active involvement of all stakeholders is essential for preserving literature as a vital component of collective identity (Kinanti dan Tjahjono, 2022).

In response to these challenges,, Choirunnisa And Mila (2022) propose a strategic approach to integrating local literature into cultural tourism promotion. They recommend utilizing folk theater performances, poetry readings, and the publication of local storybooks as promotional tools that can authentically convey cultural nuances to tourists. In addition, the use of digital technology such as mobile applications and social media is seen as an effective means of expanding the reach of promotional efforts, making them more adaptive to younger audiences and international travelers.

Case studies from various regions show that the success of promoting local literature is largely determined by the active involvement of local communities. Richards (2020) observes that tourism destinations which have successfully and sustainably promoted local literature are often supported by community participation in activities such as literary festivals, local storyteller training, and traditional performing arts events. Such involvement not only strengthens the bond between communities and their cultural heritage but also fosters cross-generational awareness of the importance of cultural preservation.

Overall, this literature review highlights the significant potential of local literature as a

strategic element in cultural tourism promotion (Ghani, 2017). By offering authentic experiences through innovative, community-based approaches and leveraging digital technology, local literature can become a cultural asset with substantial economic and social impact. Further research and cross-sector collaboration are needed to optimize this potential within the broader context of cultural development and regional tourism, particularly in areas such as Hulu Sungai Selatan.

3. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research method with a descriptive design, as it aims to explore and elaborate on the potential of local literature as a medium for promoting cultural tourism in Hulu Sungai Selatan. Qualitative research is intended to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects holistically, and to describe them in words and language within a specific context (Tohirin, 2013). The purpose of descriptive research is to provide systematic, factual, and accurate descriptions of facts related to a particular population or location (Baycan and Girard, 2016).

This research adopts an interdisciplinary approach, characterized by intensive interaction between one or more disciplines whether directly related or not with the goal of integrating concepts, methods, and analytical frameworks (Sudikan, 2017). Specifically, the study draws from the fields of local literature, cultural tourism, and promotional strategies to identify and analyze local literary forms in Hulu Sungai Selatan and to propose culturally grounded promotional strategies based on local literature.

The data in this study consisted of both written and oral forms of local literature found in the Hulu Sungai Selatan region of South Kalimantan Province. The sources of data included local artists, cultural figures, tourism managers, and community members. In qualitative research, the role of informants is

essential in supporting the data collection process.

Informant selection was based on the following criteria: (1) individuals who are directly involved in relevant cultural or tourism activities; (2) individuals with in-depth knowledge of the local environment and culture (3) individuals who have sufficient availability to participate in the study; and (4) individuals who can provide objective and reliable information to the researcher (Duxbury and Campbell, 2011). Accordingly, informants were chosen based on their deep understanding of the local culture and their status as native residents of Hulu Sungai Selatan. Age was also a consideration, with a preference for older informants, as they are expected to have a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the historical and cultural development of the region.

The data collection techniques used in this study included observation and interviews. Observation involved directly visiting the research sites. The first step in the observation process was visiting the Department of Culture and Tourism of Hulu Sungai Selatan to gather information regarding active theater groups, local artists and cultural practitioners, and to obtain supporting documents such as books and materials related to the region's cultural heritage.

Following the observations, interviews were conducted to obtain key information relevant to the research. Interviews involved asking questions aligned with the objectives of the study (Creswell, 2015). Several important principles were observed during the interview process, including: (1) avoiding interviews during the informant's busy hours; (2) keeping the interviews brief and respectful of the informant's time; (3) avoiding questions on sensitive topics; (4) refraining from lecturing or correcting the informant; (5) not contradicting the responses given; and (6) not interrupting while the informant is speaking (Sudikan, 2017).

This study employed in-depth interviews, conducted directly by the researcher without intermediaries, with a strong preference for face-to-face interaction. The interviews were unstructured, meaning that questions were not arranged in a systematic order but instead adapted to field conditions, focusing on topics related to local literature in the Hulu Sungai Selatan region.

For the interviews, the researcher prepared a mobile phone for audio recording, a notebook, and writing tools to support data collection. In addition to interviews, the researcher also conducted documentation by collecting supporting materials such as archives from various sources, including the Department of Culture and Tourism of Hulu Sungai Selatan, as well as documents and records from cultural figures, artists, and local community members. This documentation process was considered essential to ensure that all collected data were properly archived and that the evidence obtained was valid and robust.

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to explore the potential of local literature as a medium for promoting cultural tourism in Hulu Sungai Selatan. The research utilized an interdisciplinary approach, integrating concepts from literary studies, cultural tourism, and promotional strategies. Data consisted of both oral and written forms of local literature and were collected through observation, in-depth unstructured interviews, and documentation. Informants selected based on their cultural expertise and native status included artists, cultural practitioners, tourism managers, and local residents. Data collection involved field visits to the Department of Culture and Tourism, interviews with key stakeholders, and archival documentation. The interview process followed ethical considerations such as respecting informants' time, avoiding sensitive questions, and ensuring open dialogue. Data were analyzed using the framework of (Miles & Huberman, 1992), involving data reduction, coding, theme

identification, narrative analysis, and interpretation. This approach enabled a holistic understanding of the cultural essence and values embedded in local literature, supporting its strategic use in cultural tourism promotion.

Data analysis was conducted through five stages: (1) data reduction, by collecting and identifying relevant local literary materials, both oral and written; (2) coding, to organize the data and facilitate mapping of the motivations and messages embedded in the literature; (3) theme identification, by recognizing patterns and recurring themes in the local literary content; (4) narrative analysis, used to describe the stories and lived experiences shared by respondents; and (5) interpretation, which involved analyzing the meaning and implications of the findings from interviews and observations. This analytical technique enabled the researcher to describe the essence and cultural values found in local literature, which serve as the focus of the study and have the potential to be optimized as a medium for promoting cultural tourism in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As previously explained, local literature refers to a form of cultural heritage originating from a specific region and reflecting the unique cultural traits, customs, and daily life of its community. It encompasses various forms such as legends, myths, rituals, and performance-based drama. However, in this study, the forms of local literature still practiced and believed by the people of Hulu Sungai Selatan were found to be primarily legends and traditional rituals.

The research involved several key informants, including cultural leaders, local artists, traditional elders, and managers of art studios in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency. Based on in-depth interviews, it was revealed that local literature in the form of legends and traditional rituals continues to be practiced and is regarded as having high spiritual and social value. The

following section presents an overview of the specific legends that are still known and preserved in Hulu Sungai Selatan, South Kalimantan Province.

The Legend of Batu Laki and Batu Bini

The Legend of Batu Laki and Batu Bini is one of the most well-known folktales in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency. The story tells of a mother who deeply loved her child. One day, her disobedient son wandered far from home and never returned. In a moment of despair, the mother cursed her son, turning him into stone. The curse resulted in the formation of two mountains, now known as Mount Batu Laki (Male Stone) and Mount Batu Bini (Female Stone).

According to one of the key informants a 70 year old traditional elder "*The Legend of Batu Laki and Batu Bini is not just a fairy tale; it serves as a reminder for children not to disobey their parents. Every year, we still bring our children to the site to tell them the story of its origin.*" This statement underscores the role of the legend as a form of character education, passed down across generations through oral storytelling. The continued tradition of visiting the site and retelling the story demonstrates how local literature functions not only as cultural entertainment but also as a moral guide and a living heritage. Moreover, this legend presents an opportunity for cultural tourism development through educational storytelling tours and site-based cultural interpretation.



Figure 1. Mount Batu Laki and Mount Batu Bini

According to local belief, the Mangkung Eagle, often heard in the vicinity of the mountains, is said to be the incarnation of the grieving mother who longs for her lost child. The eagle's call is regarded as a mother's lament, calling out for her child to return home. This legend not only conveys themes of love and loss, but also imparts moral values related to parental affection and the consequences of disobedience. It has become an important element of local cultural heritage and is frequently shared as an educational narrative for younger generations, helping to preserve historical memory and the values embedded in the community's traditions.

The Legend of the Origin of Panambaian in Kampung Luk Lua

The Legend of the Origin of Panambaian in Kampung Luk Lua tells the story of a husband and wife who lived at the foot of the Meratus Mountains with their only daughter, Idang. Idang was a diligent and obedient child who actively helped her parents, especially during the rice planting and harvesting seasons. The family lived in harmony and often held communal prayers before planting and celebrated the harvest with a thanksgiving ritual (*selamatan*).

At times, Idang and her friends would play in the clear waters of the Amandit River, a sacred source of life for the villagers. The river holds spiritual significance and is central to the community's way of life. This legend illustrates the close relationship between humans and nature, as well as the importance of family values and gratitude in everyday life. It is not only a part of the region's intangible cultural heritage but also serves as an educational narrative, teaching younger generations to maintain harmonious relationships with both family and the environment, and to respect nature's gifts.

Another informant a 65 year old traditional storyteller from Nagara explained that such legends, including those like Telaga Bidadari, are often told to children before bedtime or during

customary celebrations. He remarked: *"These legends are not just stories, but also advice. For example, about protecting nature and respecting the unseen. If we're careless, nature can retaliate."* This statement highlights the role of oral tradition in conveying cultural norms and ecological wisdom in the local worldview.



Figure 2. A view of the Amandit River

The Legend of Balai Amas and Batu Baranak

The Legend of Balai Amas and Batu Baranak originates from a village in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency. The story centers on a massive Ulin tree that once stood in the area, serving as the dwelling place of a Garuda Bird. This mythical bird often disturbed the villagers by abducting babies from their cradles, causing fear and unrest. In an attempt to stop the Garuda, the villagers tried to cut down the Ulin tree, but all efforts failed.

Eventually, a village elder heard a mysterious bird's voice, believed to be a spiritual sign, suggesting that the tree could be felled using only a small knife. Following this guidance, the villagers succeeded in cutting down the tree, and the Garuda fell along with it. Interestingly, the tip of the fallen tree was said to reach as far as the Marabahan area thus giving rise to the name of that place.

Additionally, based on interviews with a local performing arts leader, it was found that several legends have been adapted into local theatrical performances. According to the informant, *"We once staged the story of Balai Amas in the form of a Mamanda drama during a*

cultural festival. The public response was very positive, and young people became more aware of the stories from their own villages.” This highlights the evolving, creative ways in which local literature is being preserved and transmitted in contemporary cultural contexts.

The legend reflects core Banjar cultural, moral, and social values, such as reverence for nature, the importance of community solidarity, and the wisdom of leadership. More than just folklore, the story serves as a symbol of local identity and traditional wisdom, embodying the values that continue to shape the worldview and cultural memory of the people in Hulu Sungai Selatan.



Figure 3. The Legend of Balai Amas and Batu Baranak

The Legend of the Old Mosque (Mesjid Lama)

The Legend of the Old Mosque (Mesjid Lama) revolves around the early construction of *Masjid Lawas* in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency. During the initial stages of building the mosque, the community experienced a series of mysterious and unexplainable events. Despite their hard work in constructing the mosque's walls, the foundations that had been firmly laid would mysteriously collapse or vanish overnight. These strange occurrences instilled fear among the villagers, leading many to believe that supernatural forces were obstructing the construction of the sacred site.

This legend reflects the local belief in the presence of the unseen (*yang gaib*) and highlights the spiritual dimensions that often accompany

traditional narratives surrounding sacred spaces. It also underscores the deep cultural and religious respect held by the community, suggesting that the establishment of religious sites must be carried out with spiritual permission and alignment with ancestral values.



Figure 4. The Legend of the Old Mosque (Mesjid Lama)

After the mosque was finally completed, the local community came to recognize *Masjid Lawas* as a place of unique spiritual significance. In addition to serving as a house of worship, the mosque is believed to possess a powerful spiritual aura. Numerous miraculous stories have been told about the mosque, including its ability to remain standing despite severe flooding in the surrounding area. Many residents view this as evidence of supernatural protection safeguarding the sacred site.

This legend conveys important moral lessons about faith and resilience in the face of both visible and unseen challenges. Today, *Masjid Lawas* is regarded not only as a place for religious devotion, but also as a symbol of spiritual strength and cultural heritage, attracting visitors who come to pray and seek blessings.

The Legend of Batu Baangkat

The Legend of Batu Baangkat is a well-preserved folktale in the collective memory of the people of Hulu Sungai Selatan, particularly in the Kandangan area. The story revolves around a mystical stone that is believed to have “*lifted itself*” from the ground following a ritual prayer

conducted by a charismatic religious leader. This event is considered a manifestation of spiritual power and the community's sincerity in practicing religious devotion and ancestral traditions.

In an interview with a community leader from Sungai Mandala village, it was explained that Batu Beangkat holds deep spiritual significance in the lives of the Banjar people. He stated, *"That stone is no ordinary stone. It rose by itself after people recited salawat. Many believe it was a sign that the prayers and intentions of the villagers were accepted in the past."* This belief has been passed down orally and continues to be preserved as part of the region's cultural tradition.

The legend contains strong religious and social values, including sincerity, communal unity, and the power of prayer in the lives of the people. Beyond being an entertaining tale, Batu Beangkat serves as a reminder of the importance of spirituality and community cohesion in overcoming challenges. It also reinforces a local identity deeply rooted in the cultural and religious values of the Hulu Sungai Selatan community.



Figure 5. The Legend of Batu Beangkat

The Legend of Amuk Hantarukung

The Legend of Amuk Hantarukung is a historically grounded folktale that portrays the heroic resistance of the Banjar people against Dutch colonial rule around the 1860s. The story centers on a pivotal moment triggered by the arrest and execution of a respected community leader, Ning Bulang, who was perceived as a

threat by the colonial government. His death ignited widespread outrage among the local population, leading to a fierce uprising known as *Amuk Hantarukung*.

This legend reflects not only the spirit of resistance and bravery demonstrated by the Banjar people in the face of oppression, but also reinforces deeply rooted cultural and social values, such as courage, solidarity, and collective identity. Passed down through generations, the tale serves as both a historical memory and a moral narrative that strengthens the community's awareness of their cultural heritage and shared struggles. It also highlights the role of folklore in preserving subaltern voices and instilling national pride in local history.

In an interview with a 68-year-old community elder, a descendant of a family known for preserving oral traditions in the Daha subdistrict, it was revealed that the story of Amuk Hantarukung is still frequently recited during religious gatherings (*pengajian*), memorial events (*haul*), and national commemorations. He stated, *"We always tell the story of Ning Bulang so that our children and grandchildren know their ancestors were not cowards. It's not just a war story it's a story of honor."* This narrative serves not only as a historical account but also as a medium for local character education.

The legend has become a powerful symbol of local history, inspiring younger generations to appreciate the struggles of their forebears and to defend their rights and dignity. According to a local youth leader (32 years old), the story is now often featured in speech contests, folk dramas, and local history essay competitions in schools. *"Kids today may not enjoy history class, but when they hear the story of Ning Bulang, they get curious and excited to learn,"* he noted. This demonstrates how the Legend of Amuk Hantarukung functions as a bridge between past heroism and the character development of today's youth.

Thus, the legend is not merely a piece of folklore, but a valuable lesson on humanity and the struggle for justice. Its role in fostering historical awareness and local pride makes it a relevant and vital narrative to preserve and pass on to future generations.



Figure 6. The Legend of Amuk Hantarukung
The Legend of Masjid Baangkat (Masjid Su'ada)

The Legend of Masjid Baangkat, also known as *Masjid Su'ada*, narrates the mystical events surrounding the construction of a sacred mosque in Hulu Sungai Selatan. Central to the legend is the miraculous moment when the mosque's main pillar lifted itself into place following the recitation of prayers and *salawat*. This event is seen as a manifestation of spiritual power and the community's profound trust in the role of religious leaders (*ulama*) in guiding social and spiritual life.

According to a religious teacher from Sungai Mandala Village, the mosque is regarded as sacred and built through divine intervention. He noted, *"During religious memorials and commemorative events, people from various villages come to make pilgrimage and retell the story of this mosque."* This reinforces the mosque's role not only as a place of worship but also as a cultural symbol and site of communal memory for the Banjar people.

With its designation as a National Cultural Heritage Site, the values embedded in the legend such as mutual cooperation, sacrifice, and obedience to Allah continue to be passed down through generations. The legend serves to strengthen communal unity and a sense of shared blessing, making it an integral part of the Banjar community's historical and spiritual tradition.



Figure 7. The Legend of Masjid Baangkat (Masjid Su'ada)

The Legend of Telaga Bidadari

The Legend of Telaga Bidadari tells the enchanting story of a young man named Awang Sukma, who found harmony and peace deep within the forest after building a treehouse. The tale reflects the interaction between humans and supernatural beings, particularly celestial maidens (*bidadari*) who descend from the heavens, creating a magical atmosphere imbued with natural beauty.

According to an interview with a 65-year-old traditional storyteller, this legend is still frequently passed down to children and grandchildren, especially during afternoon family gatherings. He shared, *"We heard this story from our grandmother. I often tell it to my grandchildren. They love it because it's beautiful and full of wonder. But it's also a lesson—not to be greedy and to always respect nature."*

The storyteller further explained that Telaga Bidadari is not only a narrative setting but also a spiritually charged location, believed by locals to

possess sacred energy. As a result, the community continues to protect the area from environmental harm and strictly forbids immoral acts near the site. The tale functions not just as entertainment, but as a means of transmitting ecological values and ethical behavior toward nature to younger generations.

Beyond its magical charm, the legend conveys deep moral and cultural messages about the importance of living in harmony with nature and appreciating the beauty of the world around us. It teaches courage, love, and sacrifice, while reinforcing the cultural identity of the local community. As such, the Legend of Telaga Bidadari remains an essential part of the region's intangible heritage, inspiring younger generations to uphold and cherish traditional values in everyday life.



Figure 8. The Legend of Telaga Bidadari

The History of Masjid Besar Jami Ibrahim

Masjid Besar Jami Ibrahim, located in Sungai Mandala Village, Hulu Sungai Selatan, is a central religious and cultural landmark for the local community, with a rich and meaningful history. Founded by Habib Ibrahim Al-Habsy, the mosque has served not only as a place of worship but also as a center of Islamic education, particularly for the teaching of Sufi spirituality (tasawuf) and classical Islamic texts.

In an interview with a fourth-generation mosque caretaker, it was revealed that the mosque's dome was mysteriously displaced multiple times by strong winds, each time landing

precisely at a spot that would later become the qibla direction for a new construction. The caretaker noted, *"The dome never fell randomly. It always landed at a point that became the orientation of the new building. We believe it's not coincidence, but a sign from Allah."* This statement underscores the belief that the positioning and development of Masjid Jami Ibrahim are guided not only by architectural considerations but also by spiritual intuition and divine signs a key part of the community's collective religious consciousness.

These mystical events add to the mosque's spiritual and historical value, turning it into a revered site of pilgrimage and reflection for the Muslim community. According to a senior congregant (72 years old) who actively participates in the annual *haul* (memorial ceremony), the mosque serves as a multigenerational gathering place not only for worship but also to honor the life and legacy of. *"Each haul draws thousands of people. We prepare nasi kebuli and hold communal prayers. We bring our children so they know the history of our scholar and love the mosque,"* he explained.

The community continues to preserve the mosque through regular renovations and deeply rooted traditions such as the annual *haul*, ensuring that Masjid Besar Jami Ibrahim remains a living heritage. As such, the mosque not only stands as a historical monument but also as a

Banjar people reflecting values of faith, solidarity, spiritual devotion, and reverence for tradition.



Figure 9. The Legend and History of Masjid Besar Jami Ibrahim

The Legend of Banyu Baulak

The Legend of Banyu Baulak originates from the Nagara area in Hulu Sungai Selatan and tells of a sudden natural phenomenon: a flood caused by water that mysteriously “reversed” after previously receding. This unusual occurrence, known locally as *banyu baulak* (reversed water), is remembered as a significant event that disrupted daily life and reshaped the local understanding of natural patterns.

The legend highlights the intimate relationship between the community and their natural environment, emphasizing the importance of attentiveness to environmental signs and natural shifts. For the local people, such stories serve not only as cultural memory but also as practical guidance teaching that nature communicates warnings, and that respecting and observing natural rhythms is essential for survival and harmony. As part of the region’s oral tradition, the Legend of Banyu Baulak continues to be shared as a cautionary tale and a symbolic reminder of nature’s power and unpredictability, reinforcing local ecological wisdom passed down through generations.



Figure 10. The Legend of Banyu Baulak

In an interview with a 61-year-old local elder, it was explained that the Banyu Baulak phenomenon is not merely seen as a natural event, but is widely believed to be a warning from nature against human negligence. He shared, “*If you hear strange sounds from the river or unusual winds at night, it’s usually a sign that the water*

will rise and return. The elders always taught us not to be arrogant toward nature.” This statement illustrates how the Legend of Banyu Baulak serves as a form of local knowledge system, helping the community mitigate environmental risks.

Additionally, a 55-year-old villager involved in local rituals explained that when signs of Banyu Baulak begin to appear, the community immediately holds a ritual meal (*selamatan*) and collective prayers by the riverbank. “*We don’t just pray we also remind people to stay alert, especially the younger generation who might not understand the signs,*” he said. These activities highlight the legend’s role as a communal mechanism for disaster preparedness and social cohesion.

The legend thus functions not only as folklore but also as a profound moral message about vigilance and reverence toward natural forces. The community often conducts ceremonies as a gesture of respect and a plea for safety when Banyu Baulak signs arise. In this way, the legend becomes an integral part of local culture and ecological wisdom, promoting values of harmony with nature and disaster awareness. Furthermore, it holds potential as a cultural tourism asset, offering visitors insights into traditional knowledge and the beauty of the local environment while helping to preserve community heritage.

Local literature in Hulu Sungai Selatan, including legends, myths, rituals, and performance-based drama, represents an essential part of the region’s cultural heritage. These narratives reflect the distinct identity, customs, and daily life of the Banjar community.

Several forms of local literature continue to be preserved and believed in by the people of Hulu Sungai Selatan, reflecting the region’s deep-rooted cultural identity:

1. Legends: A wide range of legends tell mystical stories and convey cultural values, such as the *Legend of Telaga Bidadari* and

the *Legend of Batu Laki and Batu Bini*. These legends function not only as storytelling traditions but also as reminders of the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and a higher spiritual force.

2. **Traditional Rituals:** Rituals practiced by the local community represent beliefs and customs passed down through generations. These ceremonies are often tied to spiritual and cultural celebrations, embodying the community's collective memory and spiritual heritage.
3. **Art Performances:** The community also holds cultural festivals that feature local literature, including folk theater and traditional performing arts. These events aim to preserve and promote local culture, especially among younger generations, by bringing literary heritage to life through performative expression.

Overall, local literature in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency functions not only as a form of entertainment but also as a vital medium for preserving cultural identity and strengthening social cohesion within the community. The findings of this study reveal that various forms of local literature such as the legends of *Batu Laki and Batu Bini*, *Telaga Bidadari*, *Masjid Baangkat*, and *Amuk Hantarukung* remain deeply embedded in the collective memory of the people and carry profound cultural significance. These narratives serve not merely as storytelling traditions, but also as vehicles for preserving values, reinforcing identity, and cultivating social solidarity among the Banjar community.

This is consistent with Clifford Geertz (1973), theory of cultural expression, which defines culture as a system of symbols through which humans give meaning to their world. In this context, orally transmitted legends function as crucial instruments in shaping collective consciousness and the value systems of local communities. These legends emphasizing values such as parental love, human-nature harmony,

spirituality, and resistance to injustice serve as reflections of the cultural structures that the community continues to uphold and transmit across generations.

Empirically, these findings reinforce the study by Kamariah (2025) which noted that oral literary traditions continue to exist in South Kalimantan despite threats posed by limited documentation and the pressures of modernization. The present research found that in Hulu Sungai Selatan, these legends are still actively narrated in various social contexts such as religious gatherings (*pengajian*), traditional ceremonies, and local festivals. This demonstrates that local literature is not merely a passive cultural artifact, but rather an active social practice that provides a collective space for cultural and spiritual reflection.

From an economic and cultural promotion perspective, these findings also support the arguments of Tahir and Dengo (2021) and Wiandari and Meutia (2020) who assert that contemporary tourists increasingly seek authentic, culturally rooted experiences. Legends that embody spiritual, moral, and historical elements can be integrated into educational and spiritual tourism packages, as exemplified in the concept of cultural storytelling in destination development (Utami dan Hardianti 2024). This is also in line with the study by Suparman dan Muzakir, (2024) which advocates for the integration of local literature through cultural performances, digital exhibitions, and narrative-based tourism media.

The central argument of this study is that the preservation and utilization of local literature cannot rely solely on written documentation; rather, it must be revitalized through active community participation. This aligns with a bottom-up approach to cultural preservation, which positions local communities as active subjects rather than passive objects. For example, festivals that showcase local legends can serve as platforms for cultural revitalization while

simultaneously functioning as tools for tourism promotion.

In addition, an ethnopedagogical approach can also be applied to integrate the values embedded in local literature into formal education, as proposed by Harpriyanti dan Wulandari (2024). Values found in these legends such as mutual cooperation, loyalty, sacrifice, and spiritual faith are highly relevant for shaping the character of younger generations. Incorporating these cultural narratives into educational settings reinforces both local wisdom and character development, aligning education with the cultural identity of the community.

This discussion demonstrates that legends and traditional rituals in Hulu Sungai Selatan are not merely cultural artifacts to be preserved, but also serve a strategic function in strengthening identity, shaping character, and promoting creative economy through cultural tourism. This study recommends the importance of synergizing efforts among academics, local government, and community stakeholders to develop local literature preservation programs that are oriented toward education and sustainable tourism.

5. CONCLUSION

This article explores various aspects of local literature and cultural practices in Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, with a focus on legends and traditional rituals that reflect the unique cultural identity of the region. Legends such as *Batu Laki and Batu Bini* and *Banyu Baulak* illustrate the community's close relationship with nature and the moral and spiritual values upheld by the Banjar people.

Through these narratives, the community not only passes down knowledge to younger generations about maintaining harmony with the environment but also emphasizes values such as mutual cooperation, family love, and respect for tradition. Beyond serving as cultural heritage, these legends also hold potential as tourism assets, capable of showcasing the region's

cultural and natural richness to visitors while helping to preserve local wisdom. Thus, local literature in Hulu Sungai Selatan is not only a marker of cultural identity but also plays a vital role in the social and spiritual life of the community.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was made possible by the grace and blessing of Allah swt, who has provided ease and success in every stage of the study. The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to the people of Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, especially traditional leaders, cultural figures, local artists, and art studio managers who generously participated as informants and shared their invaluable knowledge on local literature. Sincere thanks are also extended to the Department of Culture and Tourism of Hulu Sungai Selatan for their support and access to cultural archives, which were instrumental in this research.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the support of the Directorate of Research, Technology, and Community Service (DRTPM), Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, through the Beginner Lecturer Research Grant (PDP) Program 2024. This opportunity has enabled the research team to make a meaningful contribution to cultural preservation efforts in Hulu Sungai Selatan. Appreciation is also extended to Universitas PGRI Kalimantan for providing institutional support throughout the research process.

7. REFERENSI

- Ahmadi, A., Husnia, F., Harpriyanti, H., & Lismayanti, H. (202 C.E.). *Kajian Budaya, Sastra, dan Media*. Graniti.
- Artawan, G. (2020). Aku Cinta Lovina: Peran Sastra dalam Mempromosikan Pariwisata Bali Utara. *Jurnal Master Pariwisata (JUMPA)*, 7(1), 24–256.
<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/jumpa/article/vi>

- ew/61567
- Baycan, T., & Girard, L. F. (2016). *Case Study Window–Culture in International Sustainability Practices and Perspectives: The Experience of ‘Slow City Movement–Cittaslow’* (In The Rou). Routledge.
- Choirunnisa, I. dan M. K. (2022). Strategi Pengembangan Pariwisata Budaya. *Jurnal Kajian Ruang*, 2(1). <https://jurnal.unissula.ac.id/index.php/kr/article/view/20446>
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Research Design, Penedekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed* (5th ed.). Pustaka Pelajar.
- Dotrimensi, D., Astiar, Y., Apriliani, A., Rensianae, R., & Aderini, N. (2023). Loksado Community Participation in Improving Nature Tourism in Loksado. *JETISH: Journal of Education Technology Information Social Sciences and Health*, 2(2), 962–966. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373627346_Loksado_Community_Participation_in_Improving_Nature_Tourism_in_Loksado
- Duxbury, N., & Campbell, H. (2011). Developing And Revitalizing Rural Communities Through Arts And Culture. *Small Cities Imprint*, 3(1). <https://illuminart.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Duxbury-Campbell-developing-and-revitalising-rural-communities-through-arts-and-culture.pdf>
- Fauzi, M. I. (2022). Perawatan Warisan Budaya: Membangun Masa Depan Bangsa Sebuah Penelitian Pendahuluan. *Journal of Indonesian Culture and Beliefs (JICB)*, 1(1), 25–42. <https://journal.formosapublisher.org/index.php/jicb/article/download/1364/1130/7372>
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books Inc.
- Ghani, Y. A. (2017). Pengembangan sarana prasarana destinasi pariwisata berbasis budaya di Jawa Barat. *Jurnal Pariwisata*, 4(1), 22–31. <https://ejournal.bsi.ac.id/ejurnal/index.php/jp/article/view/1798>
- Harpriyanti, H., & Wulandari, N. I. (2024). Mamanda sebagai Wahana Pendidikan Budaya (Kajian Rtnopedagogi). *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra*, 10(1), 43–58. <https://ejournal.my.id/onoma/article/download/3062/21>
- 34/
- Harpriyanti, H., Sudikan, S. Y., & Ahmadi, A. (2023). Mamanda’s oral literature in Indonesia: Review of the form and function of humor through a pragmatic perspective. *Herança*, 6(2). <https://revistaheranca.com/index.php/heranca/article/view/666>
- Harpriyanti, H. dan K. (2019). Character Education in the folklore of Sount Kalimantan (the Perspective of Literary Sociology). *Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 16(1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339456507_Character_education_in_the_folklore_of_South_Kalimantan_the_perspective_of_literary_sociology
- Harpriyanti, H. dkk. (2024). The Potential for Integrating Educational Values of Local Literature from Hulu Sungai Selatan into AI-Based Innovative Learning. *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan--Edisi Khusus ISETA*, 9(2). <https://jurnal.upk.ac.id/index.php/iseta/article/view/26>
- Hermawan, W., & Anjariyah, D. (2023). (2023). Penguatan Nilai Multikultural Sastra Lokal sebagai Media Literasi Anak. *Journal of Education Research*, 4(4), 1918–1926. *Journal of Education Research*, 4(4), 1918–1926. <https://jer.or.id/index.php/jer/article/view/533>
- Jumriani, Mutiani, Putra, M. A. H., Syaharuddin, & Abbas, E. W. (2021). The Urgency of Local Wisdom Content in Social Studies Learning: Literature Review. *The Innovation of Social Studies Journal*, 2(2), 103–109. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.20527/>
- Kamariah, dkk. (2023). Konservasi Bahasa Banjar Sebagai Usaha Pelestarian Bahasa Daerah di Kalimantan Selatan. *Jurnal Konfiks.*, 10(2). <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/konfiks/article/view/13118>
- Kamariah, dkk. (2025). Identitas Perempuan Banjar dalam Lirik Lagu Daerah Kalimantan Selatan: Analisis Semiotika Triadik Charles Sanders Peirce. *Ruang Kata*, 5(1). <https://jurnal.umnu.ac.id/index.php/jrk/article/view/1578>
- Kinanti, A. B., & Tjahjono, T. (2022). Dimensi Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Sumba Dalam

- Novel Melangkah Karya JS Khairen (Kajian Antropologi Sastra). *Bapala*, 9(7), 16–30. <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/bapala/article/view/47587>
- Kusumastuti, R. D., & Priliantini, A. (2017). Dieng Culture Festival: Media komunikasi budaya mendongkrak pariwisata daerah. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 1(2), 163–185. <https://ejournal.unitomo.ac.id/index.php/jsk/article/view/182>
- Miles, M., & Huberman, M. (1992). *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-Metode Baru Terjemahan Tjetjep Rohendi*. Universitas Indonesia Press.
- Richards, G. (2020). Designing creative places: The role of creative tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102922>
- Semadi, A. A. G. P. (2022). Hakikat Dan Fungsi Sastra Lisan Dalam Memuliakan Pendidikan Budi Pekerti. *Widyasrama*, 33(1), 1–16. <https://ejournal.undwi.ac.id/index.php/widyasrama/article/view/1293>
- Sudikan, S. Y. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Sastra Lisan*. Pustaka Ilalang.
- Sugiyarto, S., & Amaruli, R. J. (2018). Pengembangan Pariwisata Berbasis Budaya dan Kearifan Lokal. *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis*, 7(1), 45–52. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14710/jab.v7i1.22609>
- Suparman, S. E., & Muzakir, S. E. (2024). *Pariwisata Budaya: Potensi Pariwisata Budaya di Negeri Seribu Megalit*. Edu Publisher. [info:vRgibKNV4GUJ:scholar.google.com](https://info.vRgibKNV4GUJ:scholar.google.com)
- Tahir, Y. D., Kiyai, B., & Dengo, S. (2021). Strategi Promosi Pariwisata Bunga Di Kota Tomohon. *Jurnal Administrasi Publik*, 7(102). <https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/v3/index.php/JAP/article/view/33308>
- Tohirin. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Rajawali Press.
- Utami, M. P. dan H. (2024). Integrasi Budaya Lokal dan Asing dalam Destinasi Pariwisata Studi Kasus Zulu Park Kabupaten Pangkep Sulawesi Selatan. *Juparita Jurnal Pariwisata Tawangmangu*, 2(2).
- Wiandari, F., & Meutia, C. I. (2020). Local heritage (warisan budaya) dan pengajaran bahasa inggris. *Pionir: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 9(2). <https://jurnal.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/Pionir/article/view/9009>