

Utilization of Archaeological Excavation Results as a Source of History Learning for History Education Students at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Banda Naira University

Fadli Fatotnem^{1*}, Rahma Temarwut², Kasman Renyaan³

^{1,2,3}History Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Banda Naira, Indonesia

*correspondence email : vikingfatih@gmail.com

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Abstrak

Perkembangan zaman menuntut pembelajaran sejarah yang inovatif, kontekstual, dan berbasis bukti empiris. Permasalahan dalam penelitian ini adalah belum optimalnya pemanfaatan situs dan hasil ekskavasi arkeologi sebagai sumber belajar sejarah, meskipun wilayah sekitar kampus memiliki potensi tinggalan sejarah yang melimpah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pemanfaatan hasil ekskavasi arkeologi sebagai sumber belajar sejarah serta dampaknya terhadap pembelajar mahasiswa. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik observasi lapangan, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Observasi dilakukan di Situs Gua Gunung Manangis dan Situs Okamakaita. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan ekskavasi meningkatkan antusiasme mahasiswa serta membuat pembelajaran sejarah lebih konkret dan bermakna. Mahasiswa terlibat langsung dalam proses penggalian, penyortiran, dan pencatatan temuan berupa artefak seperti fragmen keramik, tembikar, obsidian, tulang, dan logam. Pemanfaatan ekskavasi arkeologi terbukti mampu mengembangkan keterampilan berpikir kritis, analisis sumber primer, dan kesadaran sejarah, sehingga perlu diintegrasikan secara sistematis dalam kurikulum pendidikan sejarah di perguruan tinggi.

Kata kunci: pemanfaatan hasil ekskavasi, artefak arkeologi, sumber belajar mahasiswa.

Abstract

Modern developments demand innovative, contextual, and empirically based history learning. The problem in this research is the suboptimal utilization of archaeological sites and excavations as sources for history learning, despite the abundant potential of historical remains in the surrounding campus. This study aims to describe the utilization of archaeological excavations as sources for history learning and their impact on student learning. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach using field observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. Observations were conducted at the Gunung Manangis Cave Site and the Okamakaita Site. The results showed that excavation activities increased student enthusiasm and made history learning more concrete and meaningful. Students were directly involved in the process of locating, sorting, and recording findings in the form of artifacts such as ceramic shards, pottery, obsidian, bone, and metal. The utilization of archaeological excavations has been proven to develop critical thinking skills, primary source analysis, and historical awareness, thus warranting a systematic inventory in the history education curriculum at universities.

Keywords: utilization of excavations, archaeology, student learning resources.

INTRODUCTION

History education plays an important role in shaping national character and identity. young generation. Through history, students not only learn about past events but also understand the social, cultural, and political values that shape the nation's

life today. In an increasingly complex world, approaches to history learning are required to be more innovative, contextual, and evidence-based. Previously, no history course at Banda Naira University had utilized archaeological excavations. Therefore,

this research is crucial to establish a new learning method and active.

A course is a body of knowledge. For example, in introductory archaeology courses, I've observed that the learning process focuses solely on theoretical explanations, with no practical experience, such as excavations. Therefore, archaeological excavations can be a valuable starting point for introductory archaeology courses.

Apart from the introductory archaeology course, there is also a local history course where the lecture process is still theoretical and based on oral tradition, there is no scientific proof such as looking at existing artifact evidence, whereas in the history learning process, *"no document no history"* We must examine evidence or excavation findings, including artifacts, materials, and other finds. Furthermore, there are courses on Banda history, which rely solely on oral traditions and theories, but do not consider concrete evidence in the form of fieldwork. Oral history courses also focus solely on local stories, lacking any scientific evidence.

The use of archaeological remains in history learning can foster students' critical thinking skills and increase their interest in abstract historical material (Hasan, 2022). The use of archaeological sources can help history students understand historical contexts more concretely and visually, as well as improve

their analytical skills regarding archaeological excavation results (Soekmono, 2002).

The History Education Study Program of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Banda Naira University has great potential in making archaeological excavation an integral part of the learning process.

Located in an area surrounded by various historical sites from across the ages, both pre-colonial and colonial, unfortunately, most of these sites have not been thoroughly explored and have not been widely used as direct learning resources in the campus environment, even though the integration of archaeological excavation results into learning not only enriches students' learning experiences visually and practically, but also develops critical thinking skills, analytical abilities towards primary sources, and strengthens historical awareness.

This research is crucial, not only to enrich history teaching methods but also to foster student interest in the study of history. Through this approach, it is hoped that students will be able to understand Banda Naira's past in a more vivid, contextual, and meaningful way within the context of today's life.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to

describe and understand in depth how the results of archaeological excavations are used as learning resources in the history learning process by students of the History Education study program.

A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore perceptions, experiences, and learning practices that are contextual and complex (Creswell, 2016). This type of research is descriptive qualitative research, with a case study approach. The case study was chosen to provide an in-depth overview of the phenomenon of the use of archaeological excavation results as a source for learning history in academic environments (Yin, 2011).

Data collection techniques are carried out in three ways, namely (1) field observation, directly observing the process of field activities such as visits to archaeological sites, (2) interviews with students and lecturers involved in the archaeological excavation process, (3) documentation of each archaeological excavation process and all archaeological excavation findings.

Subject, Time and Place of Research. This research was conducted in Dwiwarna Village in the Harmony Society building area in October - November 2025. Those who were directly involved in this research included researchers, history students and history lecturers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Archaeological Observations and Excavations

1. Preparation Stage and Introduction to Archaeological Excavation Tools

In this study, the researcher first introduced the tools used in archaeological excavations to the students. Each tool was introduced with an explanation of its function and how to use it. Some of the main tools used include a small shovel, a brush, a measuring line, a tape measure, a soil sieve, and a directional indicator. The researcher also explained that there are two common methods used in excavations: the fast method and the slow method.

In this activity, researchers and students employed a slow method, ensuring the excavation process was carried out carefully and without damaging the archaeological findings in the soil layers. Students demonstrated high enthusiasm during the tool introduction activity. Several students asked questions about the function of the directional markers. Researchers explained that these tools facilitate the determination of the direction and position of the excavation box, allowing for systematic and measured activities.

2. Field Observations at the Mount Manangis Cave Site

The next stage was field observation conducted at the Gunung Manangis Cave

Site, together with students and lecturers of the History Education Study Program. From the beginning of the trip, students appeared enthusiastic even though the weather was hot and the terrain was quite difficult. Some students even sang throughout the trip to increase their enthusiasm.



Figure 1. Documentation of observations at the Gunung Manangis Cave site (Personal documentation, 2025)

Upon arrival at the location, researchers, along with lecturers and students, conducted an exploration of the cave. However, due to the cave's narrow size, not all students were able to enter. After a joint discussion, it was decided that only male students would be allowed to enter to conduct observations. The observations showed that the cave has a structure that demonstrates the technical capabilities of past societies in creating shelters or dwellings. However, due to the hard ground conditions and the intrusion of banyan tree roots, the location was not suitable for archaeological excavation. By mutual agreement, excavation activities

were diverted to another, more suitable location, the Okamakatita Site.

3. Excavations at the Okamakatita Site

Day One Saturday, October 11, 2025

Excavation activities at the Okakakati site were conducted on Saturday, October 11, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The researcher acted as field director and divided the students into several task groups: 1) Excavator group (excavating the soil according to layers), 2) Sorting group (sorting findings), 3) Recording group (recording every artifact found), 4) Documentation group (Documenting all activities).



Figure 2. Documentation of archaeological excavations (Personal documentation, 2025)

The excavation proceeded smoothly and enthusiastically. Students took turns digging, sorting, and recording. On the first day, excavations reached the third layer (layer 3). Students found several findings such as aram, snail shells, iron, bones and obsidian. This finding shows that the Okakakatita site has cultural

layers with diverse human activities in the past.

4. Excavation at the Okamakatita Site Day Two

The second day of excavations took place on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, which was also the final day of excavation activities. The activities went well, with students continuing to actively participate and showing a high level of enthusiasm for learning. On the second day, more artifacts were discovered, including:



Figure 3. Documentation of archaeological excavations
(Personal documentation, 2025)

Smoking pipe, Blue and white ceramic fragments, Plain pottery shards, Copper needles, Iron bullets. During the activity, researchers explained each discovery to students, including its function, chronology, and historical context. Students demonstrated high interest and felt that the excavation provided a tangible and meaningful history learning experience.

A. Results of interviews with history students and lecturers

1. Results of interviews with students

- a. What do you think about using the results of archaeological excavations as a source for learning history

Students: strongly agree because from the findings of archaeological excavations, we can find out and see events that occurred in the past, and make learning history more real.

Students believe that archaeological excavations make history learning more concrete and meaningful. Excavation activities help students understand history through direct experience, not just theory. Using archaeological excavations as a source for history learning is considered effective because it provides a real-life and contextual learning experience.

- a. In your opinion, are the findings of archaeological excavations important or not?

Students: feel important because these findings enable them to observe, study history, and use them as learning resources. Excavation findings are considered important as evidence-based historical learning materials. Students understand the importance of archaeological findings as learning resources that strengthen historical theory. Archaeological excavation findings

serve as concrete evidence that supports empirical fact-based historical learning.

- b. What did you feel the first time you did an archaeological excavation?

The students felt scared, nervous, and confused, but after the supervisor gave examples repeatedly, they became careful and used their feelings so that the findings would not be damaged.

Students' early experiences reflect an emotional learning curve, shifting from fear to caution and responsibility. The fieldwork fosters a careful attitude and a caring attitude toward historical objects. Excavation activities not only develop technical skills but also develop students' scientific character and sense of responsibility for cultural heritage.



Figure 4. Documentation of interviews with students
(Trisari Documentation, 2025)

2. Results of interviews with history lecturers

- a. Question 1: What is your view on archaeological excavation

activities carried out by history students?

Lecturer's answer: I see students are quite enthusiastic, enthusiastic. Motivation because so far learning in class has turned out to be more interesting and in-depth when excavation and how the excavation process takes place, students directly practice directly and understand directly and not only imagine how excavation is what excavation is and what methods are desired by students in theory but with this kind of learning that is applied because they are directly involved not only knowing the theory but directly practicing it from the implementation stage to completion.

- b. Question 2: In your opinion, to what extent are the results of archaeological excavations used as sources for learning history in universities?

Lecturer's answer: the excavation results found can be used in learning about excavation implementation, can be used in the history learning process, for example, learning related to colonial sites can be used in history learning, there is also learning about the history of colonialism, learning about the

16th-19th centuries, historical methodology and history learning planning.

- c. Question 3: Do you think that archaeological excavation activities can develop critical thinking and analytical skills in students?

Lecturer's answer: Actually, that's where critical thinking skills come in when they find objects suspected of being historical relics. They immediately analyze them, for example, aram, they analyze whether the discovery is new or old, then they sort it out using excavation methods, archaeological methods. Ecoval, artifacts, features, and so on. Critical thinking is there, there are questions that arise during excavation activities.



Figure 5 Documentation of interview with history lecturer
(Nirfat Documentation, 2025)

- d. Question 4: In your opinion, can archaeological excavation

activities increase students' interest in learning history?

The lecturer's response: "As far as I've asked, they've been quite enthusiastic about field activities, as far as classroom learning is concerned. But it's precisely the excavation activities in the field that have fueled their passion for history, their understanding of history, and their practical and practical experiences in the field. They've also developed motivation and interest in studying history."

1. Utilization of Archaeological Excavation Results as a Source for Learning History

Utilization of Archaeological Excavation Results as a Source for Historical Learning The results of the study indicate that archaeological excavation activities have a strategic role as a source for contextual and meaningful historical learning for students. Observation and interview findings show that students not only understand history conceptually, but also empirically through direct engagement with material remains of the past. This condition is in line with the view (Sanjaya, 2020) who emphasized that contextual learning based on real experiences encourages students to actively construct

knowledge through direct interaction with learning objects.

In history teaching at universities, the use of archaeological excavations strengthens the historical sources-based learning approach. Artifacts such as obsidian, bones, ceramics, pottery, and even iron bullets serve as primary sources, enabling students to conduct scientific historical analysis. This aligns with research (Said, 2021), which states that the use of authentic sources in history teaching can improve historical understanding, critical thinking skills, and methodological awareness in history students.

Thus, the formulation of the problem regarding the effectiveness of excavation results as a source of historical learning is answered, namely that archaeological excavations are not only relevant, but also effective in improving the quality of evidence-based historical learning in higher education.

2. The Meaning of Excavation Findings in Strengthening Students' Understanding of History

Archaeological findings at the Okamakatita site indicate the existence of cultural layers reflecting continuous human activity in the past. The presence of artifacts from

different periods indicates complex cultural dynamics, both in terms of continuity and change. This view aligns with Mundardjito (2020), who asserts that archaeological remains are material representations of the social, economic, and cultural systems of past societies.

Students interpreted excavation findings as concrete historical evidence, not merely textual narratives. This demonstrates a paradigm shift in history learning from memorization to an analytical and evidential approach. These findings reinforce the view (Koentjaraningrat, 2021) that understanding Indonesian history and culture must be based on empirical data and reliable scientific interpretation.

3. Archaeological Excavation and the Formation of Critical Thinking Skills

Interviews with lecturers and students indicate that archaeological excavation activities contribute significantly to developing critical and analytical thinking skills. Students are trained to observe, identify, classify, and interpret findings based on the stratigraphic context and artifact characteristics. This process aligns with the concept of higher-order thinking skills (HTR) as proposed by

(Sani, 2021), which emphasizes the importance of analysis, evaluation, and synthesis in learning.

When students question the status of a discovery as an artifact, ecofact, or feature, they directly apply the scientific method of archaeology. This demonstrates that excavation serves as a methodological learning tool that integrates theory and practice. This finding aligns with the inquiry-based learning approach emphasized by (Trianto, 2020) in developing active and reflective learning.

4. The Impact of Archaeological Excavation on Students' Interests and Attitudes towards History

This study found that archaeological excavation activities had a positive impact on students' interest, motivation, and attitudes toward learning history. Students' emotional experiences starting from fear and nervousness to developing into a careful, disciplined and responsible attitude. This finding indicates significant affective learning. This finding aligns with (Sudjana, 2020), who emphasized that direct learning experiences can more deeply shape students' attitudes, values, and character.

Field learning activities such as archaeological excavations provide a

more lively alternative to conventional classroom history learning. This also helps raise students' awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage, as emphasized by (Kartodirdjo, 2021) in the study of national history and historical awareness.

5. Conceptual Findings and Theoretical Implications

Based on the research results, a conceptual finding was formulated that archaeological excavations as a source for learning about history form an integrative learning process that combines cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects through direct experience based on material evidence. This finding expands the study of history learning in Indonesia, which has tended to emphasize the cognitive aspect, by adding the dimensions of field experience, emotional engagement, and student methodological skills.

6. Implications for History Learning in Higher Education

The results of this study imply that archaeological excavation activities need to be systematically integrated into the history curriculum at universities. Excavations serve not only as practical activities but also as pedagogical strategies to develop

academic competence, critical thinking skills, scientific awareness, and the character of history students.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the use of archaeological excavation results as a source for learning history has a strategic role in supporting innovative, contextual, and empirically evidence-based learning. Direct student involvement in excavation activities at the Okakakati Site has been proven to improve concrete historical understanding, foster critical thinking skills, and develop analytical skills towards primary sources. Diverse archaeological findings indicate the existence of cultural layers and human activities in the past, thus enriching the understanding of local history. Therefore, archaeological excavation activities need to be systematically integrated into the history education curriculum in higher education, not only as field practical activities, but also as a pedagogical strategy for developing students' academic competencies.

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