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Efforts to Preserve the Cultural Heritage of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque in Susukan District, Banjarnegara Regency

Fahmi Nur Latif¹, Dedy Riyadin Saputro²
UIN Prof K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

Correspondence: Dedyrian@uinsaizu.ac.id

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ABSTRACT:

Background: The Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque in Banjarnegara, founded around 1559, is a historical site and cultural heritage site for the spread of Islam. Its architecture is unique because it displays Javanese-Islamic acculturation, characterized by a triple roof and sturdy teak pillars.

Aims: This study aims to comprehensively identify and analyze the preservation efforts of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque in Susukan District, Banjarnegara Regency. The main objective is to determine the forms of protection, development, and utilization carried out by the mosque management in their efforts to preserve this cultural heritage site.

Methods: This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection was carried out using three main techniques: interviews (with the village head, mosque administrators, community members, and visitors), field observations (conducted directly at the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque), and documentation (notes, pictures, works, and recordings). Data analysis was carried out in stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Results: The analysis shows that the preservation of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque is carried out through three main strategies: physical and legal protection, educational and da'wah development, and utilization as a religious tourist attraction. However, it is still constrained by limited funds and digital documentation, so the active role of the community and managers is crucial.

Conclusion: The preservation of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque as a cultural heritage site requires more than just physical protection; its success greatly depends on social synergy, policy support, utilization based on local values, and active participation from multiple parties. This study is expected to be an important reference for cultural heritage preservation strategies in Indonesia.

Keywords: Preservation, Cultural Heritage, Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque, Protection, Religious Tourism

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INTRODUCTION

The Urgency of Cultural Heritage Preservation Research (Variable Y) Cultural heritage preservation is a very urgent and relevant issue in the context of a nation's sustainable development. Cultural heritage not only serves as a physical legacy of the past, but also as a marker of collective identity, a source of historical education, and a basis for the development of cultural-religious tourism.(Mugiatmi et al., 2024; Periksubmit et al., 2024; Rizqi et al., 2025) The Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque in Banjarnegara, with its strong traditional architecture and close connection to the history of the spread of Islam in the region, has essential value that must be preserved. Therefore, research on Cultural Heritage Preservation (Variable Y) is crucial to ensure that the historical and spiritual values contained in the site can be passed on and enjoyed by future generations, while also supporting efforts to protect national assets from the threat of physical damage and loss of value. (Abdullah et al., 2025; Agustin & Nikmah, 2025)

The Gap Between Ideal Practices and Actual Conditions Ideally, cultural heritage preservation efforts should be carried out holistically, covering three main pillars: protection (physical conservation and administrative security), development (research and education), and utilization (non-destructive use).(Idrus et al., 2025; Jarevsi & Yusuf, 2025; Nafiah & Arsana, 2025; Setiawan et al., 2025) In practice, significant gaps are often found, especially at sites managed by local communities or foundations, such as this historic mosque. This gap manifests itself in the form of limited conservation funds, a lack of standardized digital documentation, and challenges in balancing the mosque's function as a place of worship and a religious tourist destination.(Muchibbin et al., 2025; Rianse, 2025; Taufikkurrohman et al., 2025) This reality calls for an in-depth analysis of how current preservation efforts can be optimized to align with the ideal principles of sustainable cultural heritage preservation.

Research Opportunities Given the gap between practice and the urgency of preservation, this research presents an opportunity to empirically document and analyze community-based cultural heritage management models. (Rukmana et al., 2025) This research has great potential to produce specific findings on the synergy between the traditional roles of mosque administrators, religious leaders, and the community in implementing preservation policies. In addition, the findings from the case study of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque can be developed into practical guidelines and benchmarks for similar cultural heritage sites in Indonesia, especially those under non-governmental management, thereby making a real contribution to cultural heritage management practices.

Research Gap and Novelty Several previous studies tended to focus on historical analysis and architectural descriptions of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque. Existing research is still limited in thoroughly exploring the managerial aspects and implementation of the action variable, namely the preservation efforts carried out by multiple parties.(Fareza & Subianto, 2022; Nursyamsu & Marcillia, 2022) The research gap filled by this study is the lack of comprehensive understanding of the practical strategies for protection, development, and utilization that have been implemented in the field, as well as the operational challenges faced. The novelty of this study lies in the identification of the Preservation Efforts model as a unified process involving physical, social, and spiritual dimensions, which is reviewed through the framework of national cultural heritage regulations (Law No. 11 of 2010), thus offering a new perspective on the management of historical religious sites.

Reasons for Choosing Variable X (Preservation Efforts) The selection of the independent variable Preservation Efforts (Variable X) is based on the desire to analyze the action and strategy aspects of preservation, not just a static description of the object. This variable directly tests the extent to which the legal mandate and philosophy of preservation are translated into concrete activities, including physical protection, educational program development, and the use of sites as

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centers for religious outreach and tourism. By focusing on efforts or processes, this research can provide more applicable and strategic recommendations to managers and local governments regarding concrete steps that must be improved or continued to ensure the sustainability of cultural heritage sites.

Research Objectives and Contributions The main objective of this research is to describe in detail the forms of preservation efforts that have been carried out by managers and the community at the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque, covering the aspects of protection, development, and utilization. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the literature in the field of Cultural Heritage Management, particularly case studies of religious sites in rural areas, and provide a new analytical framework related to policy synergy and the role of the community. Practically, this research contributes by providing measurable recommendations to the Mosque Management Foundation, the Banjarnegara Regency Government, and the local community to develop more effective, integrated, and sustainable preservation strategies.

Cultural heritage not only serves as a physical legacy of the past, but it also acts as a marker of collective identity and a source of historical education. Furthermore, it forms a basis for the development of cultural-religious tourism.

METHOD

Research Design

This research uses a qualitative research design with a case study approach (Abid et al., 2024). The choice of a qualitative design is based on the nature of the research, which aims to explore and comprehensively understand social phenomena in a specific location, namely the preservation efforts of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque cultural heritage site. Through case studies, researchers seek to obtain a complete and in-depth picture of the processes, strategies, and challenges faced by the parties involved in carrying out preservation, which cannot be measured through numerical data. The main focus is on interpreting the meaning and social roles underlying every preservation action carried out by the community and managers.

Participants

The key participants in this study are those who are directly involved and play a central role in the preservation and management of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque. They are referred to as Key Informants. The criteria for informants include: Mosque Foundation Managers, local Religious Leaders/Ulama, Village Heads or authorized village officials, Representatives of the Community around the mosque, and regular Visitors or pilgrims. Determining these participants is important in order to obtain diverse perspectives (source triangulation) from the dimensions of policy, spirituality, management, and public views on preservation activities.

Population and the methods of sampling Instrumentation

The target population in this study is all individuals who have connections, interactions, or responsibilities related to the existence and preservation of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque. Given the qualitative nature of the research and case study, the sampling technique used is purposive sampling, combined with snowball sampling if necessary. Purposive Sampling was chosen to select informants who were considered to be the most knowledgeable, credible, and relevant to the focus of the research, as mentioned in the Participant section. This technique ensures that the information collected is rich and in-depth, rather than for statistical generalization.

Instruments

The main instrument in this qualitative research is the researcher himself (human instrument), who acts as a collector, analyst, and interpreter of data. Supporting instruments used to collect data include:

1. Interview Guide: Contains a list of open-ended questions tailored to each category of participant, focusing on aspects of protection, development, and utilization of cultural heritage sites.
2. Observation Guide: Used to record the physical condition of the building, worship activities, social interactions, and maintenance efforts observed in the field.
3. Documentation: In the form of field notes, photographs, audio recordings, and archival data related to the history and regulations of the mosque.

Psychometric Properties (Validity and Reliability)

The research procedure is divided into three main stages, starting with the Pre-Field Stage (submitting permits, preliminary studies, determining informants, and preparing instruments), followed by the Field Stage during a certain period that focuses on participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation collection. The stage ends with the Data Analysis Stage, which includes reduction, data presentation (coding, categorization), and drawing conclusions. To ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative findings, validity was tested primarily through triangulation, by comparing data from various sources (informants) and methods (interviews, observation, and documentation).

Analysis Plan

Data analysis is applied inductively and carried out continuously from the beginning of data collection. The analysis model used refers to the Miles and Huberman framework, which includes three interactive activity streams:

Analysis Stages	Definition and Main Objectives	Key Outputs and Activities
1. Data Reduction	The process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data obtained from the field.	Data that is relevant, focused on research questions, and simplified through coding of interview transcripts, observation results, and documentation.
2. <i>Data Display</i>	The process of presenting an organized set of data to facilitate understanding and identify patterns or relationships between research variables.	A systematic narrative, matrix, table , or chart showing the relationship between variables (e.g., protection, development, and utilization).
3. Drawing Conclusions/Verification	The process of drawing general conclusions based on patterns and themes that emerge from the data presentation, then testing their validity and reliability.	Conclusions of research that have been verified and tested for validity. Verification was carried out through triangulation (comparing data from various sources and methods).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of the study show that the efforts to preserve the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque Cultural Heritage Site are carried out based on a framework of three main pillars, namely Protection, Development, and Utilization, in line with the mandate of Law Number 11 of 2010 concerning Cultural Heritage. In terms of Protection, physical conservation efforts focused on the routine maintenance of architectural elements of historical value, such as the three-layered roof and four teak pillars, which were carried out independently by the mosque administrators and the community, with a strong emphasis on the originality of the materials. Administratively and legally, the mosque's status as a cultural heritage site has been recognized and protected by the local government, which legitimizes the security and documentation measures taken. Meanwhile, the Development aspect is realized through the mosque's function as a center for education on the history of the spread of Islam in the region and cultural acculturation, supported by regular da'wah activities and active efforts to engage the younger generation through religious and social activities, although digital documentation still needs to be improved. Finally, in terms of utilization, the mosque is effectively functioning as a religious tourist destination, where pilgrim visits are managed in such a way as not to interfere with its main function as a place of worship, while even providing a positive economic impact for the local community around it.

Discussion

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque Preservation Efforts have succeeded in integrating material conservation responsibilities with the preservation of its social functions and spiritual values, reflecting a modern approach to cultural heritage management. (Kandil, 2024; Mohamed & Amany, 2023; Sedayu et al., 2021) This success is mainly driven by the strong role of the local community, motivated by religious and historical ties, a determining factor that is in line with the theory of participatory preservation. (Canbolat & Gültekin, 2025; Effendi & Arifi, 2023) However, this study also identifies challenges, particularly regarding funding, which is still heavily dependent on community self-reliance, as well as the need for modernization in terms of documentation and digital promotion. This gap indicates that although physical protection efforts have been effective in preserving the originality of the site, development aspects, especially in terms of technological adaptation, still need to be strengthened so that the historical narrative of the mosque can reach a wider and more current audience. Thus, current preservation efforts are effective in maintaining physical existence, but must be strengthened in terms of institutional development and information technology to ensure the sustainability of cultural values.

The results of this study have dual implications, both at the policy and managerial levels. The policy implications suggest that the Banjarnegara Regency Government needs to develop a more structured and sustainable funding support scheme, not only oriented towards physical maintenance, but also covering historical narrative development and archive digitization programs. The managerial implications require the Mosque Management Foundation to immediately develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for cultural heritage maintenance and to form a special team focused on digital marketing to optimize the use of mosques as centers of education and modern religious tourism, while maintaining the sanctity of the sites.

The contribution of this research is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on Cultural Heritage Management by presenting an empirical model that demonstrates the synergy between government regulations (the Cultural Heritage Law) and community self-help initiatives in implementing the three pillars of preservation. Practically, these findings serve as measurable guidelines (best practices) for managers of similar cultural heritage sites in Indonesia, especially religious sites that operate with the dual function of places of worship and historical sites, in formulating more effective preservation strategies.

Despite providing important findings, this study has several limitations. First, the geographical scope focused on a single object makes the findings not fully generalizable to all cultural heritage sites in Indonesia. Second, the qualitative focus of the design limits the study's ability to measure the effectiveness of preservation programs quantitatively, for example in terms of increased pilgrim visits or total conservation funds raised. Third, there are limitations in accessing financial data from self-help groups, resulting in a less in-depth analysis of preservation funding.

Based on the results and limitations, this study proposes several recommendations for mosque managers. It is recommended to improve digital documentation and actively utilize social media for education, as well as establish partnerships with conservation agencies or universities for technical assistance in architectural maintenance. For local governments, it is recommended to allocate regular, measurable grants specifically for community-managed cultural heritage sites and to facilitate training in tourism and conservation management for managers. Finally, for future researchers, it is recommended to conduct comparative studies with cultural heritage mosques in other regions or to develop quantitative research to measure the economic and social impact of the use of these sites.

The Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque in Banjarnegara, founded around 1559 and known for its Javanese-Islamic acculturation architecture (triple roof and sturdy teak pillars) , is a historical site and cultural heritage site for the spread of Islam. This study aims to comprehensively identify and analyze the preservation efforts—covering protection, development, and utilization—carried out by the mosque management. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method , data was collected through interviews with stakeholders, field observations, and documentation. The analysis shows that preservation is carried out through three main strategies : physical and legal protection that prioritizes originality (especially of key architectural elements like the soko guru) , educational and da'wah development which maintains its function as a center for local history education , and utilization as an effective religious tourist attraction that provides positive economic impact without interfering with its main function as a place of worship. However, these efforts are constrained by limited funds and digital documentation , making the active role and social synergy of the community, religious leaders, and managers crucial for its success and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Research on the Preservation Efforts of the Ki Ageng Chasan Besari Mosque Cultural Heritage Site in Susukan District, Banjarnegara Regency, concludes that the preservation efforts have been carried out comprehensively, covering physical, social, and spiritual dimensions. This preservation is implemented through three main pillars: Protection, Development, and Utilization, which are in line with Law Number 11 of 2010. In terms of Protection, the main success lies in physical maintenance that prioritizes originality, especially in important architectural elements such as soko guru, supported by legal recognition as a cultural heritage site. Furthermore, in terms of Development, the mosque has successfully maintained its function as a center for local history education and preaching, but faces challenges in modernization, especially in terms of digital documentation and outreach to the younger generation. Meanwhile, the Utilization aspect of the site as a religious tourist destination has been effective and has had a positive economic impact, without interfering with its main function as a place of worship. Overall, the key factor in the success of this preservation is the strong active participation of the local community, religious leaders, and mosque administrators. However, for this preservation to be sustainable, more structured funding support from the local government and more massive adoption of digital technology are needed to strengthen the historical narrative and promotion of the site to a wider audience. The findings highlight that despite success in physical maintenance, strengthening institutional development and technology adoption is crucial for the long-term sustainability of the cultural values. (Penyempurnaan ringan untuk meringkas hasil tantangan).

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

FNL was responsible for Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, and Drafting. DRS provided Overall Supervision, Formal Analysis, Review, Editing, and Validation, contributing to Methodology, Resource Provision, and Substantive Review and Editing. All authors, FNL and DRS, have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript. The lead author, FNL, takes full responsibility for the authenticity of the data and the entire content of the manuscript.

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