

**Development of a Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple-Based Edu-Tourism
Program for Introducing Chinese Culture in Makassar**

Ria Riski Marsuki

riariskimarsuki@unhas.ac.id

Dian Sari Unga Waru

diansariungawaru@unhas.ac.id

Andi Filsah Muslimat

andifilsahmuslimat@unhas.ac.id

Fakhriawan Fathu Rahman

fakhriawanfathurahman@unhas.ac.id

Leni Cahyati

lenichyt@unhas.ac.id

Khafifa Fuji Lestari

khafifafujilestari@unhas.ac.id

Khairil Anwar

khairilanwar@unhas.ac.id

Rizqi Awalia Ilma Amir

rizqiawaliailma@unhas.ac.id

Universitas Hasanuddin

ABSTRACT

This community service activity aims to develop a culture-based educational tourism program at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple as a medium for introducing Chinese culture to the public. This activity is a follow-up to research conducted by students of the Mandarin Language and Chinese Culture Study Program, which analyzed the symbolic meanings of architectural elements, ornaments, and ritual practices at Qing Ping Gong Temple. The method used in this activity was descriptive qualitative with a community service approach. The results show that the educational tourism program was able to improve participants' understanding of Chinese cultural values, particularly those related to symbolism, philosophy, and ritual practices found at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong. In addition, this activity provided students with contextual learning experiences through an experiential learning approach. This program has the potential to become an innovative culture-based learning model through direct visits, while also strengthening collaboration between higher education institutions and the community in preserving local culture, particularly temples in Makassar City.

Keywords: Educational Tourism; Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple; Chinese Culture; Community Service

INTRODUCTION

Community service is an essential part of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education because it provides opportunities for universities to apply knowledge directly to society. Through community service activities, higher education institutions do not only function as centers of teaching and research, but also as agents that contribute to cultural preservation, social education, and community empowerment. In the field of cultural studies, community service can be directed toward introducing local cultural heritage to the public through educational and participatory activities. This is important because cultural heritage does not only need to be documented academically, but also needs to be introduced, understood, and appreciated by wider society.

Makassar is one of the cities in Indonesia that has a long history of cultural interaction. As a coastal and trading city, Makassar has become a meeting point for various ethnic groups, religions, and cultural traditions. One of the cultural communities that has contributed to the multicultural identity of Makassar is the Chinese community. The presence of Chinese culture in Makassar can be seen through various cultural expressions, including religious practices, architectural forms, rituals, festivals, and temples. Temples are important cultural spaces because they do not only serve as places of worship, but also represent the identity, history, values, and collective memory of Chinese communities. Oja (2014) explains that vihara and Chinese cultural practices in Makassar function as spaces of cultural interaction and identity formation, especially in the context of the Chinese community after the reform era.

In cultural studies, temples can be understood as part of physical culture. Koentjaraningrat (2009) explains that culture consists of ideas, activities, and artifacts or physical cultural products created by humans. In this sense, a temple is not merely a religious building, but also a cultural artifact that contains symbolic and philosophical meanings. Its architecture, spatial arrangement, ornaments, statues, colors, and ritual objects reflect the values and worldview of the community that built and uses it. Eberhard (1986) also emphasizes that many elements in Chinese culture, including animals, colors, plants, and objects, contain symbolic meanings that are closely related to beliefs, hopes, morality, and social values. Therefore, temples can become rich cultural texts that can be read, interpreted, and used as learning media.

Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple in Makassar is one of the cultural sites that has strong potential as a source of cultural learning. As a Taoist temple, Taokwan Qing Ping Gong contains various elements related to Chinese philosophy and religious practice. Taoism emphasizes harmony, balance, and the relationship between

humans, nature, and the universe. Kohn (2001) explains that Daoism is not only a religious tradition but also a cultural and philosophical system that influences various aspects of Chinese life, including art, ritual, ethics, and spatial order. Similarly, Fowler (2005) states that Taoist philosophy introduces important concepts such as Dao, balance, simplicity, and harmony, which are reflected in religious practices and cultural symbols. These values can be observed through the temple's altar arrangement, ritual practices, symbolic ornaments, and the use of particular colors and objects.

Previous studies have shown that temple ornaments and architectural elements contain important philosophical values. Fajri, Syarif, and Hildayanti (2019), for example, found that ornaments and interior decorations in Chinese temples in Makassar are not merely aesthetic elements, but also function as symbolic communication that represents cultural values and beliefs. Usman, Saleh, and Mannahali (2023) also highlight that Chinese cultural knowledge in Makassar, including fengshui, is closely related to cross-cultural understanding because it reflects how Chinese communities interpret space, balance, and harmony in daily life. These studies indicate that Chinese temples in Makassar have strong educational value, especially for introducing Chinese culture, philosophy, symbolism, and intercultural understanding.

However, the educational potential of temples has not been optimally utilized. In general, many people still view temples only as places of worship for Chinese communities. This limited perception causes the wider public to overlook the cultural, historical, and educational dimensions of temples. Some people may also feel hesitant to enter temples because they assume that temples are exclusive religious spaces. In fact, temples can become open cultural learning spaces when introduced through appropriate educational programs. This condition shows the need for an innovative approach that can bridge religious space, cultural learning, and public education in a respectful and meaningful way.

Educational tourism, or edutourism, is one approach that can be used to address this need. Ritchie, Carr, and Cooper (2003) explain that educational tourism combines travel experiences with learning objectives, allowing participants to gain knowledge through direct engagement with places, people, and cultural objects. In cultural education, edutourism provides an opportunity for participants to learn not only through explanation, but also through observation, interaction, and reflection. This approach is relevant for temple-based cultural learning because participants can directly observe architectural forms, symbolic ornaments, ritual spaces, and cultural practices in their authentic context.

The concept of experiential learning also supports the development of temple-based edutourism. Dewey (1938) argues that meaningful learning occurs when individuals are directly involved in experience and then reflect on that experience. Kolb (1984) further explains that experiential learning involves a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active

experimentation. In the context of Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, participants can gain concrete experience by visiting the temple, observing its cultural elements, listening to explanations, discussing symbolic meanings, and reflecting on the cultural values represented in the temple. Through this process, learning becomes more contextual, interactive, and meaningful.

In addition to supporting learning, temple-based edutourism also contributes to cultural preservation. UNESCO (2003) emphasizes the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage through education, awareness, and community participation. Cultural heritage can survive when society recognizes its value and participates in preserving it. Therefore, introducing Chinese cultural heritage through edutourism can help strengthen public awareness of multiculturalism and cultural diversity in Indonesia. This is especially important in Makassar, where Chinese culture is part of the city's historical and social development.

Based on this background, the Mandarin Language and Chinese Culture Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, developed a community service program based on educational tourism at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple. This activity was designed as a follow-up to previous student research that examined the symbolic meanings of architectural elements, ornaments, and ritual practices at the temple. The program aimed to introduce Chinese culture to participants through direct visits, cultural explanation, observation, and interactive learning. By using Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple as a learning site, this activity was expected to improve participants' understanding of Chinese cultural values, especially those related to symbolism, Taoist philosophy, ritual practices, and the historical presence of Chinese communities in Makassar.

Therefore, this community service activity is important for three main reasons. First, it provides a contextual learning model that connects academic knowledge with real cultural practices. Second, it supports the preservation and promotion of Chinese cultural heritage in Makassar. Third, it strengthens the role of higher education institutions in developing community-based cultural education. Through the development of a Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple-based edu-tourism program, this activity is expected to become an innovative model for introducing Chinese culture while promoting tolerance, multicultural awareness, and appreciation of local cultural diversity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chinese temples are important cultural spaces that represent the historical, social, and religious identity of Chinese communities. In Indonesia, temples are not only used as places of worship but also function as cultural heritage sites that preserve values, symbols, traditions, and collective memories of the Chinese diaspora. The existence of temples in various Indonesian cities, including Makassar, reflects the long process of migration, adaptation, and cultural interaction between Chinese

communities and local society. Therefore, temples can be understood as cultural spaces that contain educational values and can be used as learning media for introducing Chinese culture to the wider public.

A temple is one form of physical culture because it contains visible cultural elements such as architecture, spatial arrangement, ornaments, statues, ritual objects, and symbolic decorations. According to Koentjaraningrat, as cited by Aliefuddin, cultural products are not only seen in ideas and social practices but also in physical forms created by humans. In this context, temples represent physical cultural heritage because their buildings and ornaments reflect philosophical meanings, religious beliefs, and social values. The architectural elements and decorations in temples usually have specific symbolic meanings, such as dragons as symbols of strength and protection, the color red as a symbol of happiness and good fortune, and the color gold as a symbol of prosperity and dignity.

The symbolic meanings found in temple architecture and ornaments show that temples can serve as rich sources of cultural learning. Fajri, Syarif, and Hildayanti (2019) explain that temple ornaments and interior decorations contain philosophical values that reflect the worldview of Chinese culture. These symbols are not merely decorative elements, but also function as visual communication that conveys religious, moral, and cultural messages. Through direct observation of temple elements, learners can understand how Chinese cultural values are represented in physical and artistic forms. In addition to architectural and symbolic aspects, temples are also closely related to religious and ritual practices. Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, for example, is associated with Taoist beliefs, which emphasize harmony, balance, and the relationship between humans, nature, and the universe. Taoism introduces important concepts such as Dao, yin and yang, and the pursuit of balance in life. These concepts are reflected in various ritual practices, spatial arrangements, and symbolic objects found in Taoist temples. Therefore, studying temples provides an opportunity to understand not only the physical aspects of Chinese culture but also its spiritual and philosophical dimensions.

Educational tourism, or edutourism, is an approach that combines tourism activities with learning experiences. This approach allows participants to learn directly from cultural objects, historical sites, and social environments. In cultural education, edutourism is considered effective because it provides contextual, interactive, and experiential learning. Participants do not only receive information through lectures or written materials but also observe, experience, and interact directly with cultural objects. As a result, learning becomes more meaningful and easier to understand.

T

he concept of experiential learning is highly relevant to temple-based edutourism. Through direct visits to cultural sites, students and community members can connect theoretical knowledge with real cultural practices. Experiential learning encourages participants to build understanding through direct experience, reflection, observation, and discussion. In the context of Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, participants can observe architectural elements, identify symbolic

meanings, understand ritual practices, and reflect on the role of the temple as a cultural and religious space.

Temple-based edutourism also contributes to cultural preservation. By introducing the symbolic, historical, and philosophical values of temples to the public, this program can increase awareness of the importance of preserving local cultural heritage. Many people still perceive temples only as places of worship, while their educational and cultural potential remains underutilized. Through an edutourism program, temples can be introduced as cultural learning spaces that promote tolerance, multicultural understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity. In the context of Makassar, Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple has the potential to become an educational tourism site that introduces Chinese culture to students and the wider community. The temple contains various cultural elements that can be studied, including Taoist philosophy, temple architecture, ritual practices, symbolic ornaments, and the history of the Chinese community in Makassar. Therefore, the development of a temple-based edutourism program is relevant as an innovative model of culture-based learning. This program not only supports the preservation of Chinese cultural heritage but also strengthens collaboration between universities and the community in promoting local cultural education.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This community service activity employed a descriptive qualitative method with a community-based service approach. This design was used to describe the process of developing and implementing a culture-based educational tourism program at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple in Makassar. The activity focused on introducing Chinese culture through direct observation, cultural explanation, and interactive learning experiences. The activity was conducted at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, one of the Chinese temples in Makassar that contains various cultural, architectural, symbolic, and ritual elements related to Chinese culture and Taoist beliefs. This temple was selected because it has strong educational potential, especially in introducing the symbolic meanings of ornaments, altar arrangements, spatial layout, ritual practices, and Chinese philosophical values. The participants in this activity were students of the Mandarin Language and Chinese Culture Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University. They were involved as participants in the educational tourism program and as learners who connected classroom-based cultural knowledge with direct field experience. The temple administrators were also involved as community partners who supported the implementation of the activity by providing access, cultural information, and explanations related to temple history and practices.

Instruments and Procedures

The instruments used in this activity included observation notes, documentation, and informal discussion guidelines. Observation was used to record participants' responses, involvement, and learning activities during the program. Documentation was used to record important moments of the activity, including the introduction session, temple observation, and participants' interaction with cultural objects. Informal discussion was used to obtain participants' reflections and responses after observing the cultural elements of the temple. The procedure of the activity consisted of several stages. The first stage was preparation. In this stage, the team identified the cultural potential of Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, prepared educational materials, and coordinated with temple administrators. The materials were developed based on the symbolic, architectural, philosophical, and ritual elements found in the temple.

The second stage was the implementation of the educational tourism program. The activity began with an introduction to the history of Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, Taoist concepts, and Chinese cultural values. Participants were introduced to the basic ideas of Taoism, including the concept of Dao, harmony, balance, and the relationship between humans, nature, and the universe. After the introductory session, participants were guided to observe the temple environment directly, including the altar, ornaments, statues, colors, lanterns, spatial arrangement, and ritual objects. The third stage was reflection and discussion. In this stage, participants discussed the meanings of the cultural symbols they observed during the visit. They were encouraged to connect the explanations given by the team and temple administrators with their own observations. This stage allowed participants to develop a deeper understanding of Chinese cultural values through direct experience and reflection.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed descriptively through several stages. First, the data obtained from observation, documentation, and informal discussion were organized based on the focus of the activity. Second, the data were categorized into several main themes, including the implementation of the educational tourism program, participants' understanding of Chinese cultural symbols, the role of the temple as a culture-based learning space, and the impact of the activity on students. After the data were categorized, the findings were interpreted by connecting participants' responses and field observations with the objectives of the program. The analysis focused on how the educational tourism activity helped participants understand Chinese cultural values, symbolic meanings, Taoist philosophy, and ritual practices at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple. Finally, the results were presented in a descriptive narrative form. The interpretation emphasized the role of direct experience in improving participants' cultural understanding and the potential of temple-based educational tourism as an innovative culture-based learning model. Through this analysis, the activity was evaluated not only as a community service

program, but also as a learning model that integrates cultural education, experiential learning, and local heritage preservation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple is one of the many Chinese temples located in Makassar City. Taokwan Qing Ping Gong itself is a place of worship for Taoist followers. Taoism is believed to have originated in ancient China and later developed among Chinese communities, particularly those living in Makassar City. In Taoist teachings, many deities are worshipped, also known as *Sen* or *Sien*. Inside Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple, images of the deities believed in by Taoist followers are clearly visible.

Implementation of the Culture-Based Educational Tourism Program

The implementation of the educational tourism program at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple was carried out through a contextual learning approach that integrated theoretical understanding with direct experience. The activity began with an introductory session on Taoism as one of the belief systems that developed within Chinese cultural traditions. At this stage, participants were introduced to the basic concepts of Taoism, such as the concept of *Dao* (道) as the way of life, the principle of yin-yang balance, and the value of harmony between humans and nature.

In addition to the introduction to the basic concepts of Taoism, participants also received an explanation of the history of the arrival of Taoism and Chinese culture in Indonesia, particularly in Makassar City. The development of the Chinese community in Makassar is closely related to maritime trade routes that had existed since the royal and colonial periods. The existence of temples serves as historical evidence of the migration and acculturation process of Chinese culture in the coastal area of Makassar.



Figure 1. Introduction to the History of Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple

This introductory stage served as a conceptual foundation before participants conducted direct observations in the temple environment. After the presentation session, participants were invited to observe various architectural elements, ornaments, and spatial arrangements found inside the temple. The observation activities included an introduction to the main altar, dragon symbols, the use of red and gold colors, lanterns, and the arrangement of the worship space. The observation results showed that participants were able to understand symbolic meanings more easily when they received direct explanations at the site. For example, the color red was understood as a symbol of good fortune and happiness, while gold was interpreted as a symbol of prosperity and well-being. This finding is in line with studies on the philosophy of temple ornaments in Makassar, which explain that temple ornaments and interior decorations function as forms of symbolic communication containing certain philosophical values.

Furthermore, the activity continued with an observation of the spatial arrangement and the function of the altar. Participants did not merely observe the physical form of the altar, but also understood the relationship between spatial arrangement and religious ritual practices.



Figure 2. Observation of Spatial Arrangement and Altar Function

The final stage of the activity allowed participants to directly tour the temple in order to observe and understand the functions, the use of certain symbols, and the forms of reverence practiced by Taoist followers. This activity showed that the temple does not only function as a place of worship, but also serves as a space for transmitting cultural values and the identity of the Chinese community. The implementation of the program showed that the educational tourism approach was able to create a more interactive and contextual learning process. Learning did not only take place through the transfer of information, but also through direct experience, which enabled participants to construct a deeper understanding of culture.



Improvement of Participants' Cultural Understanding

The results of the activity showed an improvement in participants' cultural understanding after taking part in the educational tourism program. Before the activity was conducted, most participants had limited knowledge of temples and Chinese culture. Temples were generally understood only as places of worship for the Chinese community, without deeper knowledge of the symbolic meanings and philosophical values contained within them. After participating in the activity, participants began to identify the meanings of various cultural symbols found in the temple. They understood that the dragon symbol represents strength and protection, while the use of red reflects hopes for good fortune and happiness. In addition, participants also began to understand the concepts of harmony and balance, which are important elements in Taoist philosophy.

The improvement in understanding was also reflected in participants' changing perspectives toward the temple. Previously, the temple was viewed only as a religious ritual space. However, after the activity, participants understood that the temple also has social and cultural functions as a center for preserving the identity of the Chinese community. This is in line with studies on the dynamics of vihara identity and Chinese culture in Makassar, which show that temples are spaces of cultural interaction and representations of post-reform Chinese ethnic identity. From a learning perspective, the direct experience gained by participants during the observation had a stronger impact than theoretical learning in the classroom. Participants did not merely receive information verbally, but also built their understanding through visual interaction and empirical experience. Therefore, the learning process became more meaningful and easier to understand.

Impact of the Activity on Students

This educational tourism activity had a significant impact on students of the Mandarin Language and Chinese Culture Study Program. From an academic perspective, students improved their cultural analytical skills, particularly in interpreting symbols found in the temple environment. Students were able to connect theories learned in the classroom with cultural realities encountered in the field. This process strengthened their critical and contextual thinking skills. From

an affective perspective, this activity also helped build students' awareness of the importance of preserving local culture and cultural diversity in Indonesia. Students gained a deeper understanding that Chinese culture is part of Indonesia's cultural richness and has important historical and social values.

Educational Tourism as a Culture-Based Learning Model

Based on the results of the activity implementation, this program shows potential to be developed as an innovative culture-based learning model. An educational tourism-based learning model has several main characteristics, namely interactive, contextual, and authentic. The interactive characteristic can be seen from participants' active involvement throughout the activity, whether through observation, discussion, or direct interaction with the cultural environment. The contextual characteristic is reflected in the use of the temple as a real learning resource that enables participants to connect theory with cultural practices directly. Meanwhile, the authentic characteristic is reflected in the use of original cultural objects as learning media, such as altars, ornaments, ritual symbols, and the spatial arrangement of the temple. The use of authentic objects provides a deeper learning experience compared to text-based learning alone. In the context of cultural education, the educational tourism approach also contributes to the preservation of local culture. Through this activity, the younger generation not only gains cultural knowledge but also develops awareness to appreciate and preserve the cultural diversity that exists in Indonesia. Therefore, temple-based educational tourism programs have the potential to be developed sustainably, both as a learning model in higher education and as a cultural educational tourism program in society.

CONCLUSION

The community service program based on educational tourism at Taokwan Qing Ping Gong Temple successfully served as a contextual and interactive cultural learning medium. The activity, which began with an introduction to Taoism and the historical development of Chinese culture in Indonesia and continued with direct observation of cultural elements in the temple, was able to improve participants' understanding of Chinese culture more comprehensively. The results of the activity showed that participants experienced an improvement in their understanding of the symbolic meanings of ornaments, Taoist philosophy, religious ritual functions, and the position of the temple as a cultural and historical space for the Chinese community in Makassar. In addition, this activity also had a positive impact on students, particularly in developing cultural analysis skills, academic communication, and multicultural awareness. This program proves that the educational tourism approach can become an effective culture-based learning model because it is able to integrate theory and direct experience. In the future, this learning model has the potential to be developed more widely through integration into cultural learning curricula and the development of local culture-based educational tourism.

REFERENCES

- Aliefuddin, M. N. (2017). *Makna arsitektur Klenteng Teng Swie Bio di Kecamatan Krian, Sidoarjo*. Universitas Airlangga.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed.). Pearson.
- Burhanudin, D. (2017). Klenteng Kuno Boen Bio di Surabaya: Nilai dan makna ajaran Khonghucu. *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan*, 15(1), 149–176.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Macmillan.
- Eberhard, W. (1986). *A dictionary of Chinese symbols: Hidden symbols in Chinese life and thought*. Routledge.
- Fajri, S. A. N., Nur Syarif, A. N., & Hildayanti, A. (2019). Filosofi ornamen dan dekorasi interior pada Klenteng Xian Ma di Kota Makassar. *TIMPALAJA: Architecture Student Journals*.
- Fowler, J. D. (2005). *An introduction to the philosophy and religion of Taoism: Pathways to immortality*. Sussex Academic Press.
- Halim, S., & Truna, D. S. (2022). Taoisme dan Konfusianisme di Indonesia. *Ideology Journal*, 8(1).
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Koentjaraningrat. (2009). *Pengantar ilmu antropologi*. Rineka Cipta.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice Hall.
- Kohn, L. (2001). *Daoism and Chinese culture*. Three Pines Press.
- Little, S., & Eichman, S. (2000). *Taoism and the arts of China*. Art Institute of Chicago.
- Oja, B. (2014). *The dynamic of vihara identity and Cap Go Meh as the cultural interaction space: Study of Buddhist-Tionghoa in Makassar*. Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Ritchie, B. W., Carr, N., & Cooper, C. (2003). *Managing educational tourism*. Channel View Publications.
- RRI Makassar. (2025). *Klenteng Xian Ma: Saksi bisu perjalanan sejarah Makassar*.
- Salman, I. O. (2022). *Etika agama Konghucu: Studi interaksi sosial antara pengurus dan pengunjung di Klenteng Xiang Ma di Kota Makassar*. Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar.
- UNESCO. (2003). *Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage*. UNESCO.
- Usman, M., Saleh, N., & Mannahali, M. (2023). Fengshui bagi kehidupan masyarakat Tionghoa di Kota Makassar dalam pembelajaran pengetahuan lintas budaya. *Jurnal Cakrawala Mandarin*.