

Vulnerability of the Magersari Heritage Settlement Keraton Kasepuhan, Indonesia for Pandemics: The case of Covid-19

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Abstract

Keraton Kasepuhan is located in the Cirebon City, in the West Java Province of Indonesia. The keraton has a particular settlement area for *abdi dalem* (people who work at the palace) named Magersari. The Magersari area lies together with the keraton building. Today, the Magersari Settlement is of high density, and therefore is very susceptible to COVID-19. Social distancing practices are problematic. The aim of this study is to examine the vulnerability against pandemics such as COVID 19 in the area of Magersari heritage settlement.

The study used qualitative methods through a rationalistic approach to examine the concept of social distancing as practiced in this settlement. The empirical data taken looks at the total house area, total residents, age of residents and house positions in the Magersari settlement. A descriptive analysis is accomplished to ascertain the distance parameters stated by WHO as provision of social distancing for every unit of houses. Then, it is classified from total house area, total residents, and residents' age. The outcomes show which area is highly vulnerable to the pandemics of this nature. The recommendations will help the government of Cirebon City and Keraton Kasepuhan to follow up the efforts to safeguard the areas of Magersari Heritage Settlement of Keraton Kasepuhan.

Keywords: Heritage Settlement- Magersari Keraton Kasepuhan, Vulnerability COVID-19

Introduction

Keraton Kasepuhan is one of the historical heritage of Kingdom in west Java (Agustina, *et al*, 2016). Keraton Kasepuhan is part of the Kasultanan Cirebon and still carries the lineage of the Pajajaran Empire (one of the biggest empires in West Java in the pre-Islamic times) (Agustina, *et al*, 2016). Kasultanan Cirebon is the center from where Islam spread in Western Java. Sunan Gunung Jati acted as *wali* the spreader of Islam and as one of the famous kings from the Kasultanan Cirebon (Agustina, 2017). Ever since the 16th century, Kasultanan Cirebon has been divided into three: namely Keraton Kasepuhan, Keraton Kanoman, and Keraton Kacirebonan (Agustina & Hindersah, 2019). These keratons remain in existence until today. The past history of Kasultanan Cirebon's glory and the spreading of Islam is still maintained in those three keratons.

Those keratons in the Cirebon City are still attractive for its pilgrimage tour until today (Agustina, 2017). The destinations are the tomb of Sunan Gunung Jati and the keraton. Visitors are not only the locals but they also come from various areas and even foreign countries. The number of visitors to the Keraton Kasepuhan are around 4000 people/month (The King of Keraton Kasepuhan: Arif Natadiningrat). Total visitors usually increases sharply when the traditional ceremony is held: one of which is the *esoterik panjang jimat* tradition. The ceremony is based on the Java year Calendar which is in the month of *Mulud* (Agustina, 2017). The Keraton Kasepuhan is the keraton with more professional management compared to the other two (Agustina & Hindersah, 2019). Only Keraton Kasepuhan of the Magersari area is now managed by the keraton party; the other two keratons had given the authority of management of Magersari area to the residents.