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## Articles

### Toponymy of the Rural Settlement Gnjili Potok

Jelisavka Bulatović <sup>a,\*</sup>, Goran Rajović <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Academy of Technical – Art Professional Studies, Serbia

<sup>b</sup> Cherkas Global University, Washington, USA

#### Abstract

Local knowledge refers to the understandings, skills, and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their environment. Place names (toponyms) can be considered an important mirror of the local knowledge and perceptions about the surrounding living space. A review of the geographical literature on toponyms, as emphasizes, highlighted several aspects of the study of toponyms – linguistic and five geographical (cartographic, political-geographical, historical-geographical, cultural-geographical, theoretical-methodological) – and two approaches in toponymic research as a means of identification, communication and orientation and as a source of research). It was noticed that toponyms are not recognized as a relevant research topic in the geography of our area, but also as a source of data in research. We notice that the treatment of toponyms has been improving in recent years. Therefore, we believe that in that context, our modest contribution will not be out of the question. Thus, in this paper, based on field research and literature, the toponymy of the rural settlement is presented Gnjili Potok.

**Keywords:** Gnjili Potok, rural settlement, toponymy, research.

#### 1. Introduction

Toponyms, also known as place names, are the names of certain geographical place (Chu et al., 2009) and represent a subjective interpretation of the living environment by the local inhabitants at the time of naming (Conedera et al, 2007). In this respect, three types of information can be extracted from toponyms: spatial locations, temporal information and landscape (Calvo-Iglesias et al., 2012). Toponyms also remain relatively consistent over time, and many have survived transformations of the external environment (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010). This paper seeks to investigate the toponymy of the rural settlement of Gnjili Potok (municipality Andrijevića) from the perspective of onomastics and socio-linguistics. There has been no study of the toponymy of the considered geo-space, almost so far, except for partial data, which they presented in their monographic publications Rajović (1995) and Rajović and Rajović (2010) and a personal invitation for future researchers to look at this topic from a scientific and professional point of view. Thus, the authors of this text came up with the idea to present the mentioned scientific issues through field research. As Tentand and Blair (2011) point out, previous research on toponyms does not offer a single comprehensive, universal classification, nor does it propose a classification that applies to

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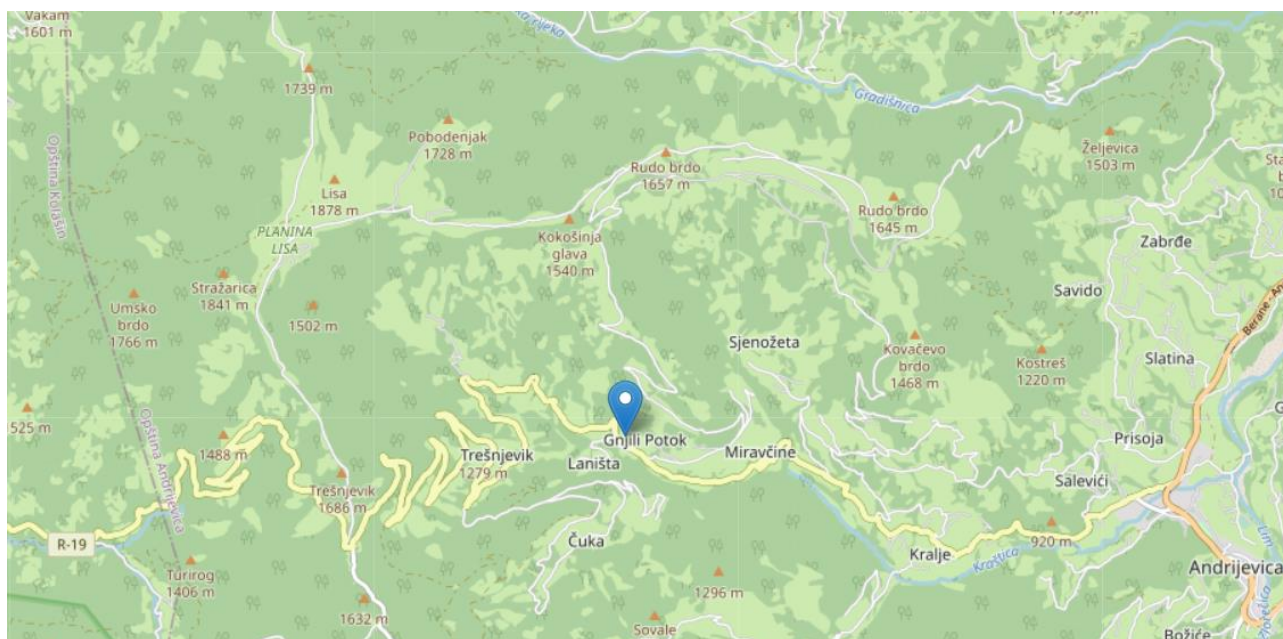
\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [jelisavka.bulatovic@gmail.com](mailto:jelisavka.bulatovic@gmail.com) (J. Bulatović), [dkgoran.rajovic@gmail.com](mailto:dkgoran.rajovic@gmail.com) (G. Rajović)

all cultures, but nevertheless sets out several guidelines that should be considered in analysis, such as name, location, source of naming and linguistic elements (morphology, syntax and semantics). According to Basso (1990) „place names are arguably among the most highly charged and richly evocative of all linguistic symbols. Because of their inseparable connection to specific localities, place names may be used to summon forth an enormous range of mental and emotional associations – associations of time and space, of history and events, of persons and social activities, of oneself and stages in one’s life. And in their capacity to evoke, in their compact power to muster and consolidate so much of what a landscape may be taken to represent in both personal and cultural terms, place names acquire a functional value that easily matches their utility as instruments of reference“. Thus, we have adapted the "Toponymy of the rural settlement Gnjili Potok" for the needs of this research – using research: Cruse (2000); Anderson (2007), Riemer (2010), Tort and Reinoso (2014), Milenković and Stamenković (2019).

## 2. Methodology

The methodology of scientific research of toponyms is best developed in toponymy, a linguistic branch under the auspices of onomastics, a scientific discipline that deals with names. when geographical names are considered in a spatial context, especially when determining their connections to spatial functions, geographical research is of particular importance. Also, geographers, along with linguists, are indispensable when standardizing foreign geographical names in various geographical and geographic-cartographic publications (eg atlases) as well as in all other texts in which geographical names are used (Faričić, 2011).



**Fig. 1.** Rural settlement Gnjili Potok on google map

Source: [Rural settlement..., 2020](#)

The core of the methodological procedure used in this research is the geographical (spatial) method and it included geo-space rural settlement Gnjili Potok and environment (see [Rajović, 2009](#); [Rajović, Bulatović, 2012](#); [Rajović, Bulatović, 2013](#); [Rajović, Bulatović, 2014](#); [Rajović, Bulatović, 2015](#); [Bulatović et al., 2019](#); [Bulatović, Rajović, 2020](#)). The method of observation was supposed to provide insight into the social environment, through direct observation with participation, as well as the creation or use of the following sources: oral, written and biographical (see [Barma, Mitra, 2015](#); [Verma, 2018](#); [Bulatović et al., 2019](#); [Bulatović, Rajović, 2020](#); [Zhao et al., 2020](#); [Bulatović, Rajović, 2020](#); [Bulatović, Rajović, 2021](#)).

### 3. Results and discussion

Place names have attracted the interest of many researchers in geography. For decades, geographers have been collecting and categorizing place names, studying their origins, and understanding their meanings (Wright, 1929; Zelinsky, 1997; Nash, 1999). As suggested by Carter and McKenzie (1987), place names transform space into knowledge that can be read. The social, cultural, and political implications of place names have been widely studied (Azaryahu, 1990). The naming of places, then, is not an isolated semiotic activity but rather a form of spatial inscription that has considerable material implications as one among many ‘apparatuses of identification’ (Caplan, Torpey, 2001). Place names are also important in creating and maintaining emotional attachments to places, even in the face of physical alienation from these very same places (Kearney, Bradley, 2009). Associated intertextually with larger cultural narratives and stories, toponymic inscriptions serve as a ‘means of situating people in places’ and assisting the public in making moral and ethical judgments about themselves and others (see Carbaugh, Rudnick, 2006; Rose-Redwood, 2010).

Very little literature is devoted to the classification of toponyms, especially that of toponym specifics. It is somewhat surprising that Kadmon (2000) eschews any attempt at developing or discussing an effective toponym typology. For the design of any effective typology, “to make available common standards for form and accuracy in the recording of placename information,” the Toponymy Interest Group of The American Name Society recommends that a clear distinction be made between required types of information and desired types. It identifies four types of information as required for placename studies: the name, the type of feature (i.e. toponym generic) its location, and the source of information (see Tentand, Blair, 2011).



**Fig. 2.** View of the northeastern part of the rural settlement Gnjila Potok - where they meet: nature and history, culture and art, value and tradition

Toponyms conditioned by physical-geographical properties of soil – geographical names in toponymy: Gnjili Potok, Trešnjevik, Trešnjevička small river (valley as a water flow and fields and meadows along it); Orničica, Radmilica, Radmilički Potok – Radmilički Stream; Bregovi (apelativ bank, which means elevated ground, the height of the lower hills and mountains, moved to mikrotoponim and became a proper name for fields and pastures. All such named sites are located on the hill – Brdo); Velja Dolina (the appellation of valleys, which means lowered soil between two elevations, with great length, has become a mikrotoponim and names fields that have such a soil



configuration and localities under forests and pastures with the same position); Dolovi – huge land holdings; Vrh iz Gaja – Summit from Gaja; Ravni Lom, Jame – Pits; Klisura – Gorge; Krš – Karst; Provalije – Chasm; Struge (a place recessed by the flow of water); Brnjovka, Butrinjak, Vranjak, Pelinovica, Jovovica, Osoja, Gvozda, Ljuban. The relief stratification of the rural settlement of Gnjili Potok is also reflected in the toponymy. It should be noted that the toponym Korito can be classified into two more categories, that is, toponyms that denote the shape and surface properties of the soil, as well as toponyms determined by the relation to other toponyms.



**Fig. 3.** Mountain Ljuban – the place where man is closest to heaven (residents of the rural settlement Gnjili Potok also have the hereditary right to Katun Ljuban). (Kom Vasojevicki – view from Ljuban) ([Simonović, 2016](#))

Thus, toponyms motivated by the names of marshes belong to this group of toponyms: Bare – Swamp; Barice – Ponds; Barice Novovića – Ponds Novovića; Lugovi Rajovića – Alluvial plains Rajovića; Lugovi Novovića – Alluvial plains Novovića; Lugovi Labovića – Alluvial plains Labovića; Lugovi Milićevića – Alluvial plains Milićević; Luka Milićević (port floodplain land by the water), Otočić – water that appears periodically; Barake – flats made of planks. The second subgroup of toponyms consists of geographical names for karst terrains: Dolovi – land under beautiful meadows; Do – any depressions in the karst; Klanac, Klisura – Gorge; Krše Mićaševe – Stone Mićaševe; Litica – Cliff; Vala – Valley.

Toponyms with regard to soil distribution, shape and appearance: Obod – Steep land; Kotlina – Basin; Krčevine – Cleared Forest; Korita – Troughs; Kuburka, Koševine – Mowed Meadows; Kopavine – land turned into agricultural; Kraj – Landscape; Krčevine, Luka – This is how the fields at the end of the river are named. Due to their position, they are very fertile; Kućište – according to the respondents, there were the first settlements in these localities; Lanište, Lašćić – small a meadow surrounded by forest; Laz – a meadow surrounded by forest; Lomovi Vukotića, Dragojevi Lomovi, Preslo – a valley between two hills; Prolaz – Passage; Prlog – the first houses were once inhabited in this place; Ravni Lom, Njive Đinovića – Fields Đinovića; Rudi Brijeg – Rudi Shore; Zanos – a place with strong gusts of wind; Trebljevine, Dobri rt – Nice land property of

exceptional quality; Žar – Embers; Izvor Perinka – Source Water Perinka; Izvor Novovića – Source Water Novovića; Osredak, Izvor Lomovi – Source Water Lomovi; Izvor Njive Đinovića – Source Water Fields Đinovića, Oldinjak, Jazbine (the name names the localities under fields, forests and pastures, and is motivated by the position and appearance of the soil. The ground was lowered, and the terrain was intersected by numerous depressions, holes, burrows, which, according to the locals, were dug by badgers). Toponyms belonging to this group are most often created by metaphorization. Part of the toponyms was created by metaphorizing the names for body parts, part of the objects that are in everyday use.



**Fig. 4.** Njive Đinovića (Fields Đinovića) – Did the ancient peoples live here?(see [Bulatović, Rajović, 2021](#); [Bulatović, Rajović, 2020](#)).

Toponyms belonging to this group often illustrate the morphological appearance of the soil (Kulino Prlo – rocky terrain; Gropa – collected stones; Obod – the outer part of the hill, Zaoglina – land in the form of a circular flow; Kamenjari – fields where nothing grows); Strane Novovića – Parties Novovića. Toponyms related to soil composition and characteristics: Gnjilišta – bays with fertile land; Ilovača – clay; Kamenje – blocks of stone, Ploče – rocks. Majdan (a site where there is a rich deposit of building stone). Toponyms according to plant names: Bor – Pine; Jele – Dishes; Jelar – land under a fir forest; Jove Alder; Jagodnjak – land holding under strawberries; Velja Bukva – Big Beech; Crešnje – the name is motivated by cherry; Trešnje – Cherries; Lučica – land overgrown with pine; Ljišnjak – Hazelnuts; Divljaka – Wild Apple; Kruševi Lazi, Trnovi – land under the thorn; Paprat – Fern; Dumače – land under ferns; Divljaka – Wild Pear; Brstov do – land under willow and poplar... Žuti Jablan na Ljubanu – *Trollius europaeus*, one of the most beautiful flowers of high mountains, which is sung in folk songs, grows on Ljuban. Toponyms according to animal names: Stražarica, Tatarka, Žunjaci – woodpecker habitat; Orlice – eagle habitat; Vučji Kamen (According to the locals, there used to be a dense forest here where wolves multiplied. Today, there are fields and meadows on this slightly elevated site). Toponyms according to the names of animals usually have a protective meaning, and in the rural settlement of Gnjili Potok the most common zoonyms are motivated by the names of birds. High and steep peaks are



very often motivated by the appellation eagle. Toponyms with explicit reference to animal and plants were given according to what people used to see in their everyday life, thus names can be considered indicators of the former presence of certain species (Aybes, Yalden 1995; Boisseau, Yalden 1998; Gruezo, 1999; Hough, 2008). The toponyms referring to nature are labelled as phyto-toponyms, when they refer to plants, and zoo-toponyms in the case of animals. Plant common names used in toponyms depict also the usage of the species as food, medicine, fabric or for other activities (Gruezo, 1999; Fagúndez, Izco, 2016). Place names related to nature are not only a legacy of the former presence of species, but also provide insights about the traditional usage and interaction with the environment.



**Fig. 5.** Locations (Toponyms) that he is proud of, clean air that abounds – make the southeastern part of the rural settlement Gnjili Potok a unique ecological point and a kind of oasis of nature

Toponyms created under the influence of human labor. Cultural – historical toponyms: Banjšor, Bulac, Gvozda, Macurski Put – Macurski road; Dukovka, Tatarka, Krkline, Zaoglina, Latinski Krš – Latinski Stone; Rutinka, Perinka, Radmilica. If we carefully analyze these toponyms, according to Rajović (1995), we can assume that ancient peoples from the Greek, Roman and Slavic periods lived here, until today. Toponyms as a reflection of economic activity of the population: Gomilice – Small piles; Kaldrme – stone road; Krivi puti – Winding paths; Krstače – intersections; Lazi, Medenjak, Međe – borders; Dzada – road; Katunište, Močnjak, Plandišta – shade for livestock; Solila – a place where cattle are salted; Katuni, Torovi – cattle pen; Utrine – land left for cattle grazing. The population of the rural settlement of Gnjilo Potok was mainly engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, and this left its mark on toponymy. Especially interesting apelativ Plana – pasture (preserved in the toponym Plandišta), Jaz – appellation gap "drainage channel". „Livestock "are toponyms“: Torovi – cattle pen; Solila – places where cattle salt. Possession boundaries are indicated by micro – toponyms: Granice – borders; Medenjak and Međe – borders. Toponyms Podovi means – gardens on several new ones, and toponyms that contain an appellation Babovina refer to arable land, something similar to floors. Pojište (the microtoponym is motivated by the verb pojiti and thus means the places where shepherds once watered cattle), Appellate Gomilica means the collected stones formed by clearing the soil. Krčevina denotes the appellation lazina, while based on toponyms Garevine we learn that once fertile areas were obtained by burning (Paljić), Kolibište (the names indicate the places where the huts were, i.e. they are motivated by the appellation of the huts "simple, temporary shelter, residence, house ..., usually

of weaker material – planks)“. Gumno ( the names are motivated by an appellation, without parallels in the Baltic group and in other languages: gumno „flat place on hard grassy soil, where very grain“); Toponyms as a reflection of social and spiritual life: Latinsko cemetery on site Orničice according to Rajović (1995) it is a cemetery of Romanized Illyrians – Ancient Greeks. Based on the oral tradition, the above – mentioned author emphasizes that at the following sites: Mićino Gumno, Dukovka, Garevine Rajovića and Garevine Novovića, Pridori Arsovića, Foothills and Peaks Trešnjevika, there were graves of Serbian soldiers from the First World War (1914–1918), mostly invisible today. At the site Đolevac remains were found Đola (son of the founder Rajovića – Raja), when building a road across Trešnjevika. On Javorovom Brdu – there was a "cemetery" where mostly captured soldiers were buried, most of whom were Russian soldiers (Austro – Hungarian army camp). Lakov grave on Trešnjeviku.

Toponyms of anthroponymic origin: Rudi brijeg – Rudi shore; Rastok, Razdolje, Pridor, Paložak, Parlog, Preslo, Prijevori, Laz – meadow surrounded by forest; Lazi – a larger meadow surrounded by forest; Lašćić – a small meadow surrounded by forest; Lisačka gora – Lisačka forest. Of the toponyms motivated by folk names, I emphasize micro – toponyms: Brijeg Radošev (Radoš) Shore Radošev; Brdo Rajovo (Hill founder Rajovića Rajo) – Hill Rajovo; Luka Rajova (Port founder Rajovića – Rajo) – Port Rajova; Perinka Dragojeva (Dragoje Krstov Rajović), Đolevac (Đole Rajov Rajović), Kagina Ornica (Kaga) – Kagina Lair; Milo Do (Milo Martinović) – Milov Landscape; Rajova Rijeka (Rajo – founder Rajovića) – Rajova River; Mićino Gumno (Mića) – Mićino flat place on hard grassy soil; Marino Počivalo (Mara) – Marino break; Markovac ( Marko Labović), Vujovka ( Vujo), Antovac ( Anto Boža Rajova), Bakin Potok (Baka) – Bakin Stream; Vasovka (Vaso). Most of the toponyms of anthroponymic origin contain the surname of the owner of the land. Thus, with the help of them, we find out which genera inhabited or are still inhabiting the rural settlement of Gnjili Potok (Rajovići, Vukići, Arsovići, Milićevići, Labovići), but we also learn what the genera of recent times are ( Kastratović, Šekler). Toponyms created with the suffix – in a denote abandoned enclosures: Zaoglina, Paljine, Kopavine, Krčevine. Some toponyms are motivated by the nickname: Reljino Katunište (Relja) – Katun Reljin; Cubina Bara (Cuba – Vasilije son of the founder Rajovića – Rajo) – Cubina Swamp; Tokove Ornice (Toko) – Tokov Lair; Đošovka (Milija – Đošo Labović), Kulino Prlo (Kule) – Kulino Steep Land. Relative toponyms: Malo lanište – Small plots of land; Donje gumno – Lower flat place on hard grassy soil; Duboka dolina – Deep valley; Ispod Rupe – Under the Hole; Ograđenica – the name was created by the toponymization of the appellation fences 'land property which is fenced on all sides, fenced and thus separated from the neighboring land property; Mala Livadica – Small Meadow.

This group includes toponyms that are determined by the surrounding objects and other toponyms. Most often, this relationship is expressed by antonymous adjectives (small – large, lower – upper), but also by affixes, prepositions (Under Glavicom).

Toponyms of unclear motivation: Sjedivrana – Sitting Crow; Čosak – quoin; Stranica (Fields, forests and pastures are named after him. The motivation for such an appointment lies in the natural position of these buildings. They are located on one side of a hill); Rutinka (rut – peace); Vir (the name is derived from the appellation vir "a depression in the ground in which water is retained after precipitation"); Mobari – An old custom of helping each other in rural households. Hydronymic appellations and names for swamps are preserved in the hydronyms Lokva – a hollow in the ground filled with water, Rastok – a place where water splits), Slap – the slope of the riverbed in which the water falls, Toponym Zalogajnica means resting place for shepherds, but it is assumed that it is motivated by the appellation lug – a wet place next to the water (see [Bulatović, Rajović, 2020](#); [Bulatović, Rajović, 2021](#)).

#### 4. Conclusion

The function of toponyms was taken over by various geographical terms (for relief, hydrographic, oceanographic and other forms), names of plants and animals, names of ethnic groups, names of owners or persons connected in various ways with the corresponding object in space, prominent real or imaginary (mythological) events but also various other contents from material and spiritual culture ([Faričić, 2011](#)).

Old World toponymy inclines to concentrate more on intensive research with the emphasis being on the etymology and meaning of toponyms ([Coates, 2013](#)). However, most of the wh-questions of intensive toponymy cannot be answered because most toponyms are so ancient that



information on their origins no longer exists. In the New World, on the other hand, more wh-questions can be answered because many of original documents and records relating to the naming of places are still extant (see [Tent, 2015](#); [Qian et al., 2016](#)).

Our research records based on similar research by [Ivšić \(2014\)](#) indicate that predial toponyms enter the pre-slavic layer of Slavic toponymy. Before – Slavic, those toponyms originated in Montenegro, before the arrival of the Slavs, and the surest criterion for their recognition is the testimony in ancient sources (sources originated before the arrival of the Slavs). Pre-slavic toponyms according to [Ivšić \(2014\)](#) can be linguistically and chronologically classified into Roman, Greek, Celtic, Illyrian ... layer. The pre-slavic layer in the toponymy of Montenegro is very diverse, toponyms differ in it by linguistic origin, in chronology, way of origin, and most of all by the knowledge of each individual toponym (see [Perdana, Ostermann, 2018](#); [Krejčí, 2018](#); [Rönneberg et al., 2019](#)).

There is a lot of speculation about pre-slavic toponyms – etymological, palaeographic, but also historical – which should be taken into account in any research of pre-slavic toponyms. Either way he concludes [Rajović \(1995\)](#) the absolute majority of toponyms belong to the Slavic linguistic feature, i.e. the Serbian language (see [Loma, 2015](#)). No toponyms: Banjšor, Bulac, Gropa, Gvozda, Macurski put, Dukovka, Pridor, Tatarka, Krkline, Zaoglina, Latinski krš, Rutinka, Perinka... which belong to pre-slavic toponyms. According to the field research of the authors of this paper, we come to the toponyms, which have survived from the period of Turkish rule: Majdan (tur. *maden* ore), Jaruga (tur. *yarug* a large pit, a crevice, a small valley), Jarak (tur. *yarık* crack; trench, canal), Čair (tr. *çayır* meadow) Budžak (tr. *bucak* corner, remote place)... (see [Duran, 2017](#); [Barbaresi, 2018](#)). Generally speaking as they emphasize [Capar et al. \(2016\)](#), the research shows that toponymy cannot be intended merely as a contextual geographic practice aiming to attribute a specific place name to a predefined geographical space. During the Anthropocene period, the influence of human activities on toponymy has been so intensive that many place names are now coined to mainly indicate the “artificial” man-made features of an intensively anthropized environment. Such “technogenic toponyms” could represent the “written witness” of the Anthropocene during subsequent eras.

The results we have presented in this paper "Toponymy of the rural settlement Gnjili Potok", represent a modest contribution to the study of the "phenomenon of toponymy". On this occasion, we announced only a small number of research facts and conclusions, which we came to by reviewing field research and reviewing the literature. Citing research [Tent and Slatyer \(2005\)](#). [Tent \(2015\)](#) emphasizes that placenames are: reminders of who we are, and whence we came, and are a rich source of information about a region's history. [They] also form an integral part of a nation's cultural and linguistic heritage, [...] [and] in many regions, they reveal the chronology of exploration and settlement (see [Deepadung, 2003](#); [Nurhayati, 2018](#); [Felecan, Felecan, 2019](#)).

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