

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AS AGENTS OF SOCIALIZATION IN THE INTERNALIZATION OF JAVANESE CULTURAL VALUES THROUGH THE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE OF TRADITIONAL SNACK EXHIBITIONS AND CULTURAL ARTS PERFORMANCES (A CASE STUDY AT SDI MA'ARIF KOTA BLITAR)

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Abstract: This qualitative case study is motivated by concerns regarding the erosion of Javanese cultural values due to globalization and the influence of technology impacting Generation Z. The research aims to understand the strategic role of teachers as socialization agents in internalizing these values through the Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance at SDI Ma'arif, Blitar City. The method used is qualitative case study, with data collection techniques employing participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The results reveal four teacher roles: (1) as Contextual Designer, (2) Participatory Facilitator, (3) Role Model, and (4) Reflection Partner. The process of internalizing values such as mutual cooperation, respect, and harmony occurs through the dynamic stages of Transformation, Transaction, and Transinternalization. This confirms that the effectiveness of character education heavily relies on the teacher's ability to design authentic and meaningful experiential learning. Therefore, this culture-based practice is recommended as an integrated model to strengthen students' cultural resilience.

Keywords: Teacher's Role, Socialization Agent, Internalization, Javanese Cultural Values

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization, characterized by the high mobility of information, people, and culture, has created a complex social space and a condition of hyperreality (Ritzer & Dean, 2015). In the Indonesian context, this phenomenon brings paradoxical consequences for local cultures. On the one hand, it provides opportunities to introduce and promote the richness of the archipelago's cultural heritage on the international stage. On the other hand, local cultures, along with their inherent values and norms, face serious challenges in the form of marginalization, commodification, and, most alarmingly, generational erosion (Sutarto, 2018). Children and adolescents, as digital natives, interact more frequently with values disseminated through global media than with values derived from oral traditions and everyday practices within their immediate environments (Prensky, 2019). This condition potentially gives rise to a generation that is detached from its own cultural roots (cultural disembeddedness).

The city of Blitar, known as Kota Patria, is home to numerous sites and traditions deeply rooted in Javanese culture (Widodo, 2019). Preliminary observations in several elementary schools indicate a declining trend in students' understanding and appreciation of the Javanese language, behavioral ethics (tata krama), and elements of material culture such as traditional cuisine and performing arts. If left unaddressed, this situation may lead to a crisis of cultural identity among future generations. From the perspective of the sociology of education, schools are not neutral institutions; rather, they are arenas in which socio-cultural reproduction takes place (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2020). Schools

possess a latent function as secondary agents of socialization with significant potential to transmit and internalize social and cultural values from older generations to younger ones.

In this context, the role of teachers becomes central. Teachers are not only responsible for the transfer of cognitive knowledge (transfer of knowledge), but more importantly, for the transfer of values and the transfer of culture (Haryanto, 2017). Teachers serve as cultural transmitters and strategic agents of change (Freire, 2021).

However, the problem often lies in the methods employed. Value education that is doctrinal and text-based frequently fails to engage students' affective and psychomotor domains. Values that are merely memorized for assessment purposes tend to dissipate easily and are not internalized in real-life actions (Lickona, 2016). Therefore, more contextual, participatory, and experiential approaches are required. Learning processes that allow students to experience, practice, and reflect on values through meaningful activities are believed to be more effective in facilitating internalization (Dewey, 2015).

SDI Ma'arif Kota Blitar has introduced an innovative initiative through its regular program, "Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance." This activity is not merely a ceremonial event, but is designed as the culmination of an integrated thematic learning process conducted over one semester. This program is particularly worthy of in-depth study, as it provides an empirical space to examine how teachers, as agents of socialization, perform their strategic roles and how the abstract values of Javanese culture are transformed into concrete learning experiences that can be internalized by students.

Based on the above discussion, this study is formulated to address two main research questions: (1) What are the strategic roles of teachers as agents of socialization in the educational practice of the Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance at SDI Ma'arif Kota Blitar? (2) How does the process of internalizing Javanese cultural values occur through this educational practice? The objectives of this study are: (1) to analyze and describe the strategic roles of teachers as agents of socialization in the activities of the Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance, and (2) to analyze and explain the process of internalizing Javanese cultural values among students through these activities.

METHOD

This study adopts an interpretive paradigm with a qualitative approach. This approach is chosen because it aligns with the objective of understanding social phenomena specifically the role of teachers and the internalization of values holistically, in depth, and within their natural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research design employed is an intrinsic case study, as the researcher seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular case (the activities at SDI Ma'arif Blitar) without the intention of generalization, although the findings may offer insights applicable to similar contexts (Stake, 2015).

Research Site and Participants: The study was conducted at SDI Ma'arif Kota Blitar during the period of October–November 2025. The site was selected purposively based on the following criteria: (1) the school has a flagship program rooted in Javanese culture that has been implemented on a regular basis; (2) it demonstrates a strong commitment to character education grounded in local wisdom; and (3) it is willing to provide adequate access for research purposes.

The primary research participants (informants) consisted of one principal, one curriculum coordinator, and three teachers who served as coordinators and persons in charge of the program. Supporting informants included 15 actively participating students (from Grades IV, V, and VI), six parents, and two community figures/cultural activists from Blitar who were involved as resource persons.

Data Collection Techniques – Passive Participant Observation: The researcher was present and directly observed various activities, ranging from teachers’ planning meetings, classroom learning processes related to exhibition preparation, art rehearsals, the day of the exhibition, to post-activity reflections. Observation notes focused on teacher–student interactions, students’ attitudes and behaviors, language use, and the social situations that emerged (Spradley, 2016).

Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted with all categories of informants using flexible interview guidelines. Questions for teachers focused on motivation, planning, strategies, evaluation, and their perspectives on cultural values. Interviews with students emphasized their experiences, feelings, challenges, and understanding of the values gained. Interviews with parents and community figures were conducted to obtain external perspectives on the impact and significance of the activities (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Context Description: The Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance as a Medium for Cultural Education

The activity titled “Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance” at SDI Ma’arif Blitar is an annual program integrated into the local content subjects of Javanese Language and Arts and Culture. The program involves all students in Grades IV, V, and VI. Each grade is assigned a different theme of traditional Javanese snacks (e.g., Grade IV: Jajan Pasar; Grade V: cassava-based snacks; Grade VI: traditional beverages).

The process spans approximately two months, beginning with small research projects on the history and philosophy of the snacks, cost calculation, cooking practice, and the design of exhibition booths. In parallel, the Cultural Arts Performance showcases outcomes from extracurricular and arts learning activities, such as Javanese dance. The exhibition is open to the public and attended by parents, local community members, and officials from the local education office.

From the perspective of the sociology of education, this activity reflects project-based learning rich in social interaction. Over the two-month period, students engage in collective work that requires role distribution, cooperation, responsibility, and shared decision-making. These interaction patterns represent a micro-scale social structure in which values of gotong royong (mutual cooperation), discipline, and social solidarity hallmarks of Javanese culture are reproduced within the school context. In this sense, the school functions as a space for social learning that prepares students to participate in broader social life.

The traditional snacks displayed serve not merely as consumable products but also as social symbols containing historical, philosophical, and economic meanings. Each snack theme reflects the relationship between Javanese society and the natural environment, economic conditions, and evolving social relations. Through this approach, students learn to understand culture as a socially constructed product transmitted across generations and continuously reinterpreted through social interaction. Within the framework of symbolic interactionism, this activity helps students recognize that cultural identity is formed through processes of meaning-making attached to cultural symbols.

The Cultural Arts Performance, featuring Javanese dance and other artistic outputs, functions as a space for expression as well as cultural legitimation within the school’s public sphere. Art is positioned as a medium of social integration that strengthens students’ self-confidence and provides social recognition of their abilities and cultural identities. When traditional arts are performed publicly, local culture acquires symbolic value equal to that of modern cultural forms, enabling students to perceive their culture not as inferior or outdated.

The involvement of parents, local community members, and education officials further expands the meaning of this activity as a community-based social practice. The presence of these social actors strengthens the school's social capital through the development of networks, trust, and collective participation. The school does not stand apart from society but becomes a space for intergenerational dialogue and collaboration in cultural preservation. Thus, this activity affirms the school's role as a center for the production and reproduction of local culture that contributes to shaping the social and cultural identities of younger generations.

The Strategic Role of Teachers as Agents of Socialization

Data analysis crystallizes four main teacher roles that operate simultaneously and reinforce one another.

1. Teachers as Contextual Designers

This role emerges at the earliest stage and is fundamental. Teachers do not merely implement top-down programs but design activities by considering students' characteristics, the school environment, and Blitar's local cultural richness. The design process is collaborative among teachers and even involves external experts.

Value Embedding: Each stage of the activity is deliberately designed to embed specific values. Group work cultivates *sambatan* (mutual assistance); presentation stages foster *pangajab* (respect) and *andhap asor* (humility); and production stages develop *titi* (meticulousness) and *ulet* (perseverance).

Community Involvement: Teachers invite traditional snack artisans and local artists to share their expertise, demonstrating openness and positioning the community as a learning resource. This enhances the cultural legitimacy of the program.

2. Teachers as Participatory Facilitators

Throughout the process, teachers shift from being the sole source of knowledge (sage on the stage) to becoming guides (guide on the side). Teachers create a safe space for students to experiment, discuss, and even fail.

Technical and Cultural Guidance: Teachers assist with technical issues (e.g., incorrect dough texture) while also serving as sources of cultural meaning (e.g., the symbolic meaning of green in *klepon* as fertility).

Conflict Mediators: When group conflicts arise, teachers do not immediately resolve them but facilitate dialogue to reach collective solutions, thereby teaching the values of *rukun* (harmony) and *tapa slira* (empathy).

3. Teachers as Role Models

Role modeling is the most powerful form of value socialization (Bandura, 2015). In every interaction, teachers consistently practice the values they aim to instill.

Language and Attitude Modeling: Teachers intentionally and consistently use Javanese *krama* when interacting with students, parents, and guests. *Andhap asor* (humility) is demonstrated when teachers ask for students' opinions or apologize for minor mistakes.

Modeling Appreciation: Teachers provide sincere and specific praise for students' efforts rather than solely for final outcomes, modeling the value of *ngajeni* (respect).

4. Teachers as Reflection Partners

This role is crucial in transforming experience into meaningful learning. Teachers guide students to reflect on what they have experienced, felt, and learned.

The Process of Internalizing Javanese Cultural Values

1. Transformation Stage: From Values to Activities

At this stage, teachers transform abstract values into a series of physical and social activities

accessible to students. Gotong royong is translated into task-sharing during the making of gethuk. Creativity and harmony are embodied in decorating exhibition booths attractively while maintaining traditional themes. This transformation avoids purely verbalistic value instruction.

2. Transaction Stage: Negotiating Meaning through Social Interaction

This stage represents the core of socialization, where values are acquired through interaction (Vygotsky, 2020). A “negotiation” of meaning occurs between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves.

Discussion and Argumentation: When determining selling prices, discussions arise regarding honesty (not deceiving) and fairness (not exploiting customers), with teachers mediating these discussions.

Collaborative Learning: More skilled students teach others how to wrap lupis, bringing the value of *tulung tinulung* (mutual help) to life through peer interaction.

Public Interaction: Serving and communicating with visitors of different ages becomes both a test and a direct practice of *tatakrama* (etiquette) and *pangajab*. Initial shyness gradually diminishes through repeated interactions.

3. Transinternalization Stage: From Understanding to Embodiment

The final stage occurs when values that have been experienced and understood become integrated into students’ identities. This is indicated by:

Habitual Behavior: Students spontaneously help clean other classes’ booths (*sambatan* as habit) and use *krama* when addressing parents.

Pride and Self-Identification: Students display pride in their work and in the culture they represent.

Reflective Ability: In reflective journals, students articulate in their own words the importance of cooperation and patience, indicating that the values have been internalized and “owned.”

Internalized Javanese Cultural Values

This study identifies five core values most strongly internalized:

Mutual Cooperation (*gotong royong* / *sambatan*): Evident in students’ group work patterns from planning to evaluation, emphasizing collective achievement.

Respect and Etiquette (*pangajab*, *andhap asor*): Manifested in polite communication and respectful behavior toward teachers, parents, and visitors.

Harmony and Aesthetic Balance (*hamemayu hayuning bawana*): Reflected in clean, orderly, and aesthetically arranged exhibition spaces and performances.

Meticulousness, Patience, and Perseverance (*titi, ulet, krea*): Developed through cooking processes and repeated artistic practice.

Creativity within Tradition: Shown in innovative presentation without losing traditional essence, illustrating that tradition can evolve dynamically.

Discussion: The Synthesis of Theory and Findings

The findings reinforce and extend existing theories. First, the identified teacher roles align with Berger and Luckmann’s (2022) theory of socialization agents, while offering operational specificity within cultural education contexts. Teachers function not only as significant others but also as architects of learning experiences.

Second, the three-stage internalization process (Transformation–Transaction–Transinternalization) enriches more linear models of value internalization (Mulyana, 2016). The Transaction stage emphasizes dialogical and socially constructed learning, consistent with Freire (2021) and Vygotsky (2020). Values are not imposed but constructed through interaction.

Third, the effectiveness of the exhibition and performance as educational media can be explained through experiential learning theory (Dewey, 2015) and project-based learning (Thomas, 2017). The activity fulfills authentic learning principles by serving real purposes, engaging the community, and producing authentic outcomes conditions that foster deep and lasting value internalization.

Finally, this study demonstrates that multicultural education and character development (Lickona, 2016) need not always adopt a cosmopolitan orientation. Endogenous approaches that revitalize local wisdom can form a strong identity foundation for engaging with globalization. Teachers, through their strategic roles, are the key drivers of this process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that:

Teachers at SDI Ma'arif Kota Blitar play complex and multidimensional strategic roles as agents of socialization for Javanese cultural values. The four roles Contextual Designer, Participatory Facilitator, Role Model, and Reflection Partner operate synergistically within a learning ecology deliberately designed for value internalization. These roles shift dynamically from behind-the-scenes planners, to active partners in the learning process, and ultimately to reflective companions who guide students' meaning-making.

The internalization of Javanese cultural values particularly mutual cooperation, respect, harmony, meticulousness, and creativity through the educational practices of the Traditional Snack Exhibition and Cultural Arts Performance occurs through a dynamic and multi-layered cyclical process consisting of the Transformation Stage (values translated into activities), the Transaction Stage (negotiation of meaning through social interaction), and the Transinternalization Stage (meaning-making, habituation, and embodiment of values until they become part of the self). This process emphasizes first-hand experience and the social construction of meaning.

Authentic project-based and locally grounded educational practices, such as those implemented at SDI Ma'arif, have proven effective as media for value internalization because they connect learning with real-life contexts, engage students' full range of potentials (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor), and build bridges between schools and their cultural communities.

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