

# Application of the Locality Approach in History Learning: A Case Study of 'Pamali' Cultural Values in Social Studies Education in West Nusa Tenggara



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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the application of the locality approach in history learning through the integration of *Pamali* cultural values in West Nusa Tenggara. The locality approach is seen as a contextual strategy that links the learning process to the socio-cultural environment of students, thereby strengthening the relevance of education to the formation of local identity and character. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design carried out in one of the junior high schools in East Lombok Regency. Data was collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of curriculum documents and lesson plans. The results of the study show that *the Pamali values* that live in Lombok society, such as the prohibition of actions that damage social harmony and the environment, have great potential in fostering students' moral awareness, discipline, and social responsibility. The integration of these values in history learning provides space for students to understand the meaning of past events contextually and reflectively. In addition to enriching social studies learning content, the application of this locality approach also strengthens the dimension of character education based on local wisdom that is relevant to the spirit of Pancasila and the goals of national education. The implications of this study emphasize the need for curriculum innovation that is responsive to the regional cultural context, in order to create a history learning model that has character, inclusiveness, and is oriented towards strengthening national identity in the global era.

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## Introduction

History education has a fundamental role in shaping the historical awareness, national character, and cultural identity of students. Through history learning, students are expected to be able to understand the roots of the nation's journey and internalize the noble values inherited by previous generations. However, in practice, history learning in schools is often textual and oriented towards memorizing chronological facts that are independent of the socio-cultural life context of students. This condition creates a gap between learning materials and the reality of students' lives, especially in areas with high local cultural richness such as West Nusa Tenggara (NTB). This disconnect impacts learners' lack of ability to interpret history as part of meaningful life experiences rooted in their cultural identity.

In the context of social studies education, the locality approach is a strategic alternative to bridge the gap between national education and local cultural reality. This approach emphasizes the importance of linking the learning process to the values, norms, and social practices that live in the society in which students are located (Mahpudz, 2024). By using local culture as a learning resource, teachers can present a contextual and reflective learning experience, while strengthening the relevance of education to real life. In line with the opinion of Thresia et al. (2024), locality-based learning allows learners to develop a more meaningful

understanding of the values of humanity, togetherness, and social responsibility that are part of their daily context.

The phenomenon of globalization and digitalization of education today creates a paradox between technological progress and the preservation of cultural values. Globalization gives rise to the homogenization of values that often erode the uniqueness of local culture and weaken the identity of the younger generation (Somantri, 2023). In this context, locality-based education is an important strategy to balance the demands of modernity and the preservation of the nation's cultural identity. Education that is rooted in the values of local wisdom, such as "Pamali" in Lombok society, not only serves as a transmission of knowledge, but also as a means of inheriting morals, ethics, and social responsibility (Zulkarnaen & Hakim, 2023).

Pamali cultural values have a central position in the social system of the Lombok people. In the practice of daily life, *Pamali* contains prohibitions or taboos that are moral, aiming to maintain the harmony of relationships between individuals, between humans and nature, and between humans and spiritual values. A study conducted by Lestari (2023) shows that *Pamali* functions as a social mechanism to foster discipline, moral awareness, and environmental concern among the younger generation. These values are particularly relevant to the mission of history education that emphasizes the formation of ethical awareness and responsibility towards social life.

Unfortunately, local wisdom values such as *Pamali* are still rarely systematically integrated into formal learning, including in the social studies and history curriculum in schools. Uniform and national-centralistic learning often ignores local potential as a source of learning. According to Thabroni (2022), education that ignores the local cultural context will lose its relevance in shaping students' character and identity. This shows the need for a new paradigm in history learning that combines global knowledge with local cultural values so that education becomes more meaningful and rooted in the social reality of students.

The locality approach in history learning requires teachers to play the role of facilitators who are able to contextualize historical material with the cultural values that exist around students. In the context of NTB, teachers can take advantage of *Pamali* values to instill moral meaning behind local and national historical events. For example, social prohibitions in *the Pamali* tradition can be used as an analogy to understand the norms of certain historical events, such as respect for ancestors, community solidarity, and respect for nature. According to Subroto (2023), learning history that links local values to historical events can increase empathy, social awareness, and a sense of belonging to the nation's culture.

Although various studies have highlighted the importance of integrating cultural values in learning, studies that specifically examine the application of *Pamali values* in the context of formal education are still very limited. Most previous research has focused only on the anthropological or folkloristic dimensions of *Pamali* (Mustafa & Hartati, 2022), without linking it to the practice of learning history in schools. This gap is the basis of this research, which seeks to explore how *Pamali values* can be implemented pedagogically in social studies learning to strengthen students' character while enriching their understanding of locality-based history.

This research focuses on the application of the locality approach in history learning through a case study in one of the junior high schools in East Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. A qualitative approach with a case study design was chosen to allow researchers to explore in depth the dynamics of the application of *Pamali* values in the context of daily learning. Data collection techniques are carried out through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of curriculum documentation and learning implementation plans (RPP). Through this approach, it is hoped that a complete picture of how teachers internalize *Pamali* values in learning and how students respond to the process.

Preliminary results from the field study show that the application of *Pamali* values is able to create a more meaningful and reflective learning atmosphere. Students show increased awareness of the importance of social morality, responsibility, and discipline in daily life. In

addition, teachers stated that the integration of local cultural values helps revive students' enthusiasm for learning about history lessons, as they feel that the material is close to their life experiences. These results strengthen the view that contextual history learning is able to increase the relevance, motivation, and internalization of students' character values (Santoso & Wijayanti, 2023).

Thus, this research not only has a theoretical contribution to the development of a locality approach in social studies education, but also provides practical implications for the development of a curriculum based on local wisdom. The integration of *Pamali* values into history learning has the potential to become an effective and contextual model of character education. This model can be replicated in various other regions of Indonesia that have similar local cultural richness, as part of a national strategy to strengthen national identity through value-based and culturally based education. Finally, this article seeks to affirm the position of history education as a vehicle for the formation of character and identity through the integration of local values. In the context of a multicultural society like Indonesia, this kind of approach is an important foundation for the development of people who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also deeply rooted in the cultural and moral values of their nation. Thus, locality-based history education becomes a strategic instrument to create a generation that is resilient to face globalization without losing its own cultural roots.

## Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a *case study design* which aims to understand in depth the process of applying the locality approach in learning history through *Pamali cultural values* in West Nusa Tenggara. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allowed researchers to explore participants' meanings, values, and perceptions holistically in their social and cultural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study design is considered the most appropriate because it focuses on intensive exploration of a specific phenomenon, namely the practice of *integrating Pamali* values in social studies learning activities in junior high school. This research is not intended to produce statistical generalizations, but rather to understand the social-pedagogical dynamics that occur in the local educational environment. This approach also adopts an ethnopedagogic perspective (Sutisna, 2023), which places local culture as a source of knowledge and a medium for character formation in the formal education process. Thus, this study seeks to bridge two epistemological domains: modern education science and traditional cultural wisdom.

The context of this research is in one of the Junior High Schools (SMP) in East Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province — an area that culturally still strongly maintains the *Pamali tradition* as part of the social system of the Sasak community. The research subjects involved social studies teachers, principals, and ten grade VIII students who were purposively selected based on their active involvement in history learning that integrates local values. The data collection technique was carried out through three main instruments, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were carried out to directly observe the dynamics of learning in the classroom as well as the interaction between teachers and students in the application of *Pamali* values. In-depth interviews are used to explore participants' understanding, perceptions, and experiences of the application of local values in learning. Meanwhile, the document analysis includes a review of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), syllabus, field notes, and teaching materials used by teachers in integrating local cultural values. Field data were collected over a three-month period (February–April 2025) with the principle of triangulation of sources and time to obtain a rich and accurate picture of the phenomenon being studied (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019).

The data analysis process is carried out interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification as proposed by Miles et al. (2019). Data reduction was carried out by selecting and grouping important information that is relevant to the research focus, especially those related to the form of application of

*Pamali values*, teachers' strategies in integrating these values, and their impact on students' character. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of descriptive and thematic narratives to facilitate interpretation. The conclusion drawing stage is carried out in a reflective and continuous manner during the research process, taking into account the empirical findings and the underlying theoretical framework. The validity of the data is guaranteed through triangulation techniques, both triangulation of sources (teachers, students, documents), methods (observations, interviews, documents), and data collection time. In addition, a *member checking process* was also carried out with participants to ensure the validity of the interpretation and avoid subjective biases of researchers. This approach makes the research not only methodologically valid, but also has contextual depth in understanding the relationship between education, cultural values, and the formation of students' character in the local area.

## Results and Discussion

The findings of the study show that the application of the locality approach through the integration of *Pamali* cultural values in history learning has a significant influence on the dynamics of learning in schools. In general, social studies teachers in schools where the research is located have developed contextual pedagogical practices by using the cultural values of the Sasak people as a learning resource. The classroom is not only a space for the transfer of historical knowledge, but also an arena for the formation of morals and character. In the observation process, it was found that teachers use local narratives rooted in *the Pamali tradition* as a bridge to relate national history material with the socio-cultural reality of students. For example, when discussing the theme of the struggle and solidarity of Indonesian society during the colonial period, the teacher associated it with *the Pamali* tradition which emphasized the importance of maintaining harmony and collective responsibility. This makes learning more lively, meaningful, and relevant to students' daily experiences.

The concrete form of applying *Pamali values* in history learning appears in three main dimensions: moral, social, and ecological values. Moral values are seen through the cultivation of awareness about the consequences of behavior that violates social norms, such as impolite acts or underestimating the value of mutual cooperation, which is likened to a form of "pamali" in the modern context. Social values are reflected in teachers' efforts to instill the importance of respect, togetherness, and solidarity as part of the spirit of nationality inherited by historical figures. The ecological value arises when teachers associate *the Pamali* tradition that prohibits the destruction of nature with ecological awareness in the history of nation building. Through this approach, students not only understand historical facts, but also internalize the moral messages and social responsibility behind these events. The results of interviews with students show that they feel that learning history has become closer to their lives and helps to understand the values that are still practiced in the home and society.

Teachers' pedagogical strategies in integrating *Pamali values* can be categorized into three main patterns: narrative-reflective, participatory-dialogical, and contextual-collaborative. The narrative-reflective pattern is carried out through the delivery of local historical stories associated with *Pamali values* to trigger students' moral reflection. The participatory-dialogical pattern is seen when teachers open a discussion room and ask students to tell about their experiences related to social rules in the family or community that reflect *Pamali* values. Meanwhile, a contextual-collaborative pattern emerges in learning projects that involve students in tracing local history, for example through interviews with community leaders about *Pamali* practices and their relationship with the value of mutual cooperation in village history. These three patterns show that the locality approach is not indoctrinative, but participatory, building awareness from within students through their socio-cultural experiences. This is in line with the views of Banks (2017) and Gay (2018) who emphasize the importance of *culturally responsive teaching* in building equitable, inclusive, and socially meaningful learning.

In terms of impact, the application of *Pamali* values makes a real contribution to strengthening students' character and increasing their historical awareness. The interview data showed that students became more aware of the moral meaning behind each historical event and were able to relate it to the values of daily life, such as honesty, responsibility, and respect for others. Teachers also reported that this approach improved students' discipline and empathy, as they realized that every action had moral consequences as taught in *the Pamali* concept. Indirectly, these local values become an effective instrument in building sustainable and contextual character education. This is in line with the findings of Santoso & Wijayanti (2023) that learning history based on local wisdom is able to strengthen students' emotional attachment to national values and foster critical awareness of social life in their environment.

Theoretically, the results of this study strengthen the relevance of locality and ethnopedagogic approaches as the foundation of education with character and contextuality. The integration of *Pamali* values shows that education cannot be separated from the cultural ecosystem where students grow and develop. The locality approach makes culture a source of value and meaning, not just an object of learning. Thus, teachers act as mediators who connect local cultural heritage and universal knowledge within the framework of the national curriculum. The practical implication is the need for an education policy that is more open to curriculum flexibility based on regional contexts. This is in line with UNESCO's *Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)* and *Global Citizenship Education (GCED) agenda* (2022), which encourages education based on local values and culture to strengthen social resilience and multicultural cohesion in the global era. In the Indonesian context, the integration of *Pamali* values in NTB can be a micro model for the development of history education that not only educates intellectually, but also forms human beings who are firmly rooted in local wisdom and global competitiveness.

From the pedagogical side, the application of the locality approach also shows an increase in student participation and learning motivation. Classroom observations show that learning activities associated with *Pamali* traditions encourage students to share their own family and community experiences. This creates a more dialogical and participatory learning space. Teachers adapt contextual learning models by emphasizing aspects of value reflection, interpretation of meaning, and intercultural connection. In line with the findings of Gay (2020), local culture-based learning practices help students develop critical thinking skills and social empathy rooted in their own cultural identity.

In the context of the curriculum, this study found that the integration of *Pamali* values has not been explicitly accommodated in formal learning tools. However, teachers show creative initiative by adapting the material according to the local cultural context. This approach shows a form of *curricular adaptation* that is in line with the educational framework based on local wisdom as described by Tilaar (2012), namely education that relies on the socio-cultural reality of the community and functions as a means of inheriting living values. Therefore, the application of *Pamali* values in history learning can be a model for enriching a curriculum that is contextual, flexible, and character-oriented.

Conceptually, the results of this study strengthen the argument that history education plays a strategic role in integrating cultural values into strengthening national character. *Pamali* values are not just traditional prohibitions, but a social ethical system that regulates human relationships with nature, others, and ancestors. Through locality-based learning, this value is reinterpreted as a modern moral education instrument that is able to balance the rationality of knowledge and cultural spirituality. Thus, the results of this study confirm that the locality approach not only enriches the learning methodology, but also becomes an epistemological basis for building a social studies education model that is reflective, inclusive, and rooted in the nation's identity.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the application of the locality approach through *Pamali* cultural values in history learning makes a real contribution to strengthening students'

character and historical awareness. The integration of local values into the learning process not only expands students' understanding of history, but also fosters a sense of belonging to their region's culture and traditions. This approach places learners as active subjects who construct the meaning of learning based on their own cultural experiences.

Furthermore, the application of *Pamali* values shows great potential in shaping social behavior rooted in local ethics. Values such as respect, responsibility, concern for the environment, and awareness of social boundaries are important foundations in building sustainable character education. This proves that local wisdom is not only a cultural heritage, but also a pedagogical resource that is relevant to contemporary educational challenges.

Conceptually, the results of this study enrich the treasures of multicultural and historical education by presenting a more contextual and reflective learning paradigm. The locality approach has been proven to bridge the gap between global knowledge and local values, while strengthening the adaptive power of education to the socio-cultural dynamics of Indonesian society. This kind of approach is in line with the goal of national education in forming human beings who have faith, knowledge, and strong national character.

Thus, it is recommended that policymakers and education practitioners develop a curriculum model that is more open to the local context and regional wisdom values. The value of *Pamali* in West Nusa Tenggara can be used as a concrete example for other regions to integrate local culture in social studies and history learning. This effort will strengthen the foundation of character-based education and diversity which is the main pillar of nation development in the era of globalization.

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