

## Cultivation of Social Character Through Local Wisdom "Pamali" as the Basic Capital of Sustainable Development



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### ABSTRACT

This study elaborates on the local wisdom of *pamali* as a manifestation of unwritten cultural norms that represent prohibitions or taboos that apply in traditional societies. *Pamali* is believed to have metaphysical consequences if violated, which is often interpreted as the arrival of catastrophe. The main objective of this study is to reveal the philosophical and ecological dimensions of *pamali* culture and its relevance in strengthening social character and sustainable development. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with the literature study method as the main instrument for data collection. The results of the study show that *pamali* not only functions as a social control mechanism, but also as an educational tool that instills moral, spiritual, and ecological values to the next generation. In the context of sustainable development (*Sustainable Development Goals*), the values contained in the *pamali* tradition can be conceptualized as cultural capital that plays a strategic role in forming a collective awareness of the importance of environmental conservation. Therefore, the internalization of *pamali* values can be a cultural basis in building social character that is rooted in local wisdom and oriented towards ecological sustainability.

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## Introduction

Social Science Education (PIPS) is one of the subjects that must be taught at the school level. Through PIPS, students are expected to be able to develop knowledge and skills that are useful for them in their daily lives. PIPS plays a very essential role in relation to the formation of quality Indonesian human resources, this can be seen from the mission carried out by PIPS, which is to provide knowledge so that students are able to understand the surrounding environment both in their capacity as individuals and as social beings, as well as as provisions to continue their studies to a higher level. The mission refers to the development of intellectuals, attitudes, and morals of students, so that the essence of PISP learning focuses on the aspects of *knowing, doing and caring*. Giving the above conceptual analysis, PIPS learning should refer to the pattern of optimal development of students' potential through debriefing and providing free opportunities for students to learn, so that they are able to develop knowledge, attitudes, values, morals, and social skills. This condition allows students to practice and develop critical thinking skills and culture in responding to social life in society. PIPS' noble hopes and mission in relation to the development of students to become qualified human beings and have future insights, seem to be far from expectations. The reality that seems to be happening in the field, shows that the pattern and development of PIPS learning still refers to a mere pattern of knowledge transfer. The teacher only tries to transfer the knowledge in his head to the student's head, without providing adequate opportunities for the student to develop his potential. This condition gives birth to opinions and assumptions among students, that PIPS is a boring subject and does not challenge students to learn. Many teachers assume that PIPS learning is teaching students facts and historical knowledge. This assumption resulted in PIPS being less popular and becoming a "second class" subject in the eyes of

students and students' parents. In addition, PIPS learning, especially in schools, is still colored by a rigid methodological approach, so that learning activities become passive and less supportive of the learning culture among students.

Learning conditions such as the above, making PIPS less able to provide something "meaningful" to students. Looking at the mission carried out by PIPS, the learning developed by teachers should refer to the development of pragmatic-practical knowledge to students to condition the development of "creative dialogue" during learning. Regarding the development of critical thinking skills, Forbes (Suwama, 1991) puts forward the statement, whether teachers have prepared students to be able to live a dynamic life, or only prepare students with narrow insights. Answering this problem, Forbes (1988) views that social studies education has potential for efforts to develop students' critical thinking skills, through the creation of an active-critical, creative, open, functional and applicative student learning climate.

Given conceptual, empirical, and perspective analysis in relation to the development of critical thinking in social studies education learning as explained above, it seems that what is troubling is the low quality of social studies education. On the other hand, there is an increasingly felt urgent challenge to improve the quality of human beings as a resource for Indonesia's development, opening up opportunities for social studies education to take on more roles. For this reason, an in-depth study is needed to find alternatives to improve the quality of both the process and the results in the learning dimension. The above study of anxiety and challenges raises a number of very interesting problems to be studied in depth, namely what and how critical thinking in the format of social studies education in schools can be linked to cultural results in the form of symbols that students can study carefully. This is the substance of this short work, so that in the next discussion it will be more focused on the study of the essence and substance of critical thinking in social studies education learning.

## Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with the literature analysis method as the main foundation in the data collection and processing process. This approach aims to examine in depth various relevant literature sources in order to obtain a complete and comprehensive understanding of *the phenomenon of pamali* culture in a social and ecological context. This method not only serves as a means to describe and explain the object of study, but also to verify the validity of information based on documented empirical facts, not mere opinions or assumptions (Ramdhan, 2021). The selection of this method allows researchers to construct a systematic and argumentative framework of thought in understanding the values contained in the *pamali* tradition. The main purpose of this study is to reconstruct *pamali* culture as a treasure of local wisdom that has significant potential in shaping the social character of the community and contributing to sustainable development. By exploring the philosophical meaning and social function of *pamali*, this paper is expected to be able to offer a new perspective in interpreting the relationship between local culture, social morality, and environmental conservation agenda.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Pamali as the Basic Capital of Sustainable Development

Pamali is an unwritten law that applies in several areas in the form of prohibitions and taboos that if violated will cause catastrophe for the violator. According to Danadibrata (2009), in his dictionary it is mentioned as a prohibition that if prohibited will bring harm. Pamali is a prohibition or taboo consisting of speech taboos, deed taboos and object taboos. Pamali which is closely related to efforts to cultivate the character of love for the environment is a taboo of deeds. Through the taboo of deeds, the next generation in certain areas are trained to try to preserve their natural environment so that it remains sustainable and does not result in adverse disasters.

People who have a tradition of pamali in the area live in harmony side by side with nature, they are aware that nature should not be destroyed and must be preserved. According

to Luthfi and Elan (2021), there are several examples of "pamali" that are commonly used to educate the community to be able to protect the environment and the preservation of the surrounding nature, including the following:

- a. Trees that have been cut down will not be replanted.
- b. Pamali caught fish using poison or portas and stun
- c. Pamali enters the forbidden forest
- d. Pamali cutting down trees in the forbidden forest
- e. Pamali grows crops and harvests not in the month
- f. Pamali harvest on an unfortunate day

In essence, pamali is the most powerful weapon to discipline the next generation of the nation who can preserve the surrounding natural environment. This is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable development is an important agenda of UN member countries, one of which is Indonesia. The agenda is outlined into 17 goals, namely zero poverty, no hunger, healthy and prosperous living, quality education, gender equality, clean water and decent sanitation, clean and affordable energy, decent jobs and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reducing inequality, sustainable cities and settlements, responsible consumption and production, handling climate change, ocean ecosystems, land ecosystems, peace, justice and resilient institutions, and partnerships to achieve goals. From the seventeen goals, it can be seen that the main goal of sustainable development itself is an effort to build people and be responsible for the environment. So it is hoped that by planting the values contained in pamali it can become the basic capital to build public awareness in sustainable development.

In this context, local values such as *pamali* have a very strong relevance as a cultural instrument that can harmonize people's daily life practices with the principles of sustainable development. The *pamali* tradition, which teaches certain prohibitions such as not to cut down trees indiscriminately, not to pollute water sources, or not to damage sacred places in nature, has indirectly internalized the principles of conservation and ecological responsibility long before the concept of sustainable development was formally recognized. This shows that Indonesia's indigenous peoples have actually implemented sustainable practices based on local values and spirituality. Therefore, the integration of *pamali* values in development policies, educational curricula, and community empowerment programs can be a strategic bridge between local wisdom and the global agenda. This approach not only strengthens the nation's cultural identity, but also becomes a contextual solution in an effort to achieve the SDGs goals in a more inclusive, rooted, and sustainable manner. Thus, *pamali* is not only relevant as a tool of social control, but also as an ecological paradigm that is full of meaning in shaping a civilized and environmentally sound future civilization.

## 2. Pamali in Strengthening Social Character

Pamali is often considered just an ancestral myth and taboo, but in fact pamali has an important purpose and function in society. There are many values contained in the pamali tradition. For this reason, this research is considered important to be carried out. Therefore, the pamali tradition can be relevant to the value of character education. Character education is in the form of moral and social values. These values will have a positive impact on the younger generation who are starting to leave the local culture. Instilling character education through local culture is also an effort to maintain the existence of culture so that it does not become extinct. Character education is an important thing in building human resources who have positive character. Character formation must be done from an early age. The formation of character in children is the basic foundation for building a nation to become more advanced (Adri et al., 2020).

The community must know the character of the nation and then must apply it in daily life. The way to convey it to the community is through the education process. This process does not only convey knowledge, but must reach its value (Anggraeni, 2018). Character education needs to be applied to the younger generation through formal or non-formal education

(Rachmadyanti, 2017) so that it becomes a habit. Habits that are continuously carried out then become a social character that is inherent in oneself. Social character develops and undergoes changes, but in development permanent patterns are formed, so that they are distinctive and unique characteristics for each individual. According to Gunarsa (2000), factors that can affect a person's social character include: (1) Biological factors, which are related to physical conditions which include the state of digestion, respiration, blood circulation, nerve glands, and others. (2) Social factors, namely society, namely other people around individuals, customs, regulations, language, and so on that apply in that society. (3) Cultural factors, namely that culture grows and develops in society and of course the culture of each different place will also have different cultures. The development and character formation of each person cannot be separated from the culture of the society in which the child is raised. As well as the values contained in *pamali* which is one of the sources of hereditary cultural characters that have been taught since childhood, including the childhood of generation Z (Dewantara and Nurgiansah, 2021).

The value of character is the attitude of the community who has trust and can be used as an example and basic capital for the community. This belief is inherited from generation to generation. This belief is in the form of a *pamali* tradition that governs the local community and outsiders. The *pamali* tradition is not a rule created by the ancestors, just meaningless prohibitions, but this *pamali* tradition is a moral and social value. These moral and social values consist of the following:

a. Discipline

The value of discipline can be seen from attitudes that show obedient behavior to the system applicable order or regulation. If a person has a disciplined attitude, then other characters will emerge in the form of good attitudes (Octavia & Sumanto, 2018; Lestari & Rohani, 2017; Lizawati, 2016; Wuryandani et al., 2014). Disciplined attitudes that need to be the moral basis for oneself, for example, such as obeying the applicable rules.

b. Caring for the Environment

The attitude of caring for the environment can be seen from behavior that heeds or pays attention to the surrounding nature. The attitude of caring for the environment is illustrated by not disturbing or damaging the surrounding nature. Protecting the environment by managing it properly, not damaging the ecosystem, and making improvement efforts so that it will provide benefits that can be felt continuously is an attitude of caring for the environment (Purwanti, 2017; Rianto, 2015). The attitude of caring for the environment that needs to be the moral basis for oneself is as well as it is forbidden to throw garbage carelessly, and not to damage the environment.

c. Humble

The value of humility is illustrated by behavior that does not show arrogance or feel that oneself is superior to others. Humility can reflect a person's interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence (Ningrum et al., 2015). One example is such as the prohibition of excessive jewelry.

d. Kesopanan

Politeness in language can be interpreted as one of the social abilities that allows people to interact with others and be accepted in a certain culture (Sudartini, 2010). One example is such as prohibiting rude speech. Politeness as an attitude that needs to be the moral basis for oneself, which is related to manners, good behavior, and manners.

The *pamali* tradition not only functions as a belief system that is inherited from generation to generation, but also as an instrument of character education that is rich in moral and social values that are contextual to people's lives. These values include discipline, caring for the environment, humility, and decency, which collectively form the ethical foundation of behavior. Discipline is reflected in compliance with customary prohibitions that form an orderly and responsible character. The value of caring for the environment can be seen from respect for nature through the prohibition of destroying forests, littering, or disturbing ecosystems, which basically instills ecological awareness from an early age. Humility, as a

manifestation of interpersonal and spiritual intelligence, is reflected in the prohibition of showing luxury or arrogance, which fosters equality and social solidarity. Meanwhile, politeness is an important pillar in establishing harmonious social relationships, as can be seen from the prohibition of speaking rudely or acting inappropriately in public spaces. These four values not only function to maintain social order, but also become relevant cultural capital in building the character of the young generation that is civilized, adaptive, and based on local wisdom.

## Conclusion

One form of local wisdom that grows and develops in Indonesian society is *the pamali* tradition, which is an unwritten customary norm that is formed through collective habits and carried out based on individual awareness to create harmony and social order. Although not formally documented, *pamali* contains a strong value system and has been proven to be able to direct community behavior in a sustainable manner. This tradition not only reflects social norms, but also holds noble moral values, especially in terms of concern for the environment and the common life system. Moral values such as preserving nature, not destroying resources, and upholding respect for others and the environment, are integral parts of *the teachings of pamali*. Therefore, *pamali* has great potential as cultural capital in building collective awareness of the importance of environmental preservation and sustainable development. In addition, this tradition also contains relevant social values in the process of forming the character of the younger generation. Thus, the local *wisdom of pamali* can be used as an important foundation in character education, especially in forming students who have social sensitivity, moral integrity, and ecological responsibility in community life.

The integration of *pamali* values in the world of education, especially through a learning approach based on local wisdom, is a relevant strategy in responding to the challenges of globalization that often erode the nation's cultural identity and noble values. In this context, character education is not enough to be oriented only to cognitive mastery, but must also be able to instill affective and psychomotor dimensions rooted in local culture. The *pamali tradition* with all its symbolic prohibitions can be used as a pedagogical tool to instill the values of responsibility, discipline, empathy, and social and ecological concern to students. This is in line with the spirit of the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes the importance of strengthening the profile of Pancasila students, where the dimensions of noble character, mutual cooperation, and global diversity are the main foundations. Thus, the preservation and internalization of *the pamali* tradition not only strengthens local cultural identity, but also contributes significantly to building a generation with strong character and sustainability.

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