

EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF SCHOOLS WITH A CULTURE-BASED LEARNING APPROACH

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Abstract: *The following article discusses The Efforts To Improve The Quality Of Schools With A Culture-Based Learning Approach, Education means the care for the development of the students that they grow in line with their culture. In other words, any education should pay attention to the culture of the students. Today's curriculum tends to ignore this that the students are alienated from their own culture and are feeling that they are not part of the process of the education. The time the students are appreciated is the time when the education is done properly.*

Key Words: *learning, education, culture.*

Introduction

Human life cannot be separated from culture because in everyday life, humans are almost always involved with their surrounding environment, both physical and non-physical, which eventually creates a culture. Culture is gradually formed over a long period of time and through a systematic process. Through this process, it is expected that a specific culture can shape a well-organized community and create a prosperous society, both externally and internally.

Culture has been present since humans were created. Habits that shape human behavior and personality are inherited from generation to generation. Culture is a product of human intellect, at least when approached etymologically. In order for culture to be preserved and passed down through generations, there is a need for a cultural intermediary between generations. One way to do this is by embedding cultural values in the field of education, whether it be in informal, formal, or non-formal education.

Culture-based education is the realization of the democratization of education through expanding educational services for the benefit of the community. Culture-based education becomes a movement to raise awareness in society to continue learning throughout life in order to overcome the

changing challenges of life. The concept and implementation of culture-based education have similarities with community-based education, as written by Zubeidi (2005:132).

Culture-based education is a mechanism that provides opportunities for everyone to enrich knowledge and technology through lifelong learning. The emergence of the culture-based education paradigm emphasizes two major streams. First, it stems from the assumption of modernism, which has reached its culmination point and tends to bring humans back to natural (organic) aspects. Second, modernization itself demands the creation of democracy in all dimensions of human life. Based on these factors, education must be managed more optimally by providing ample space for community participation with cultural values (local policies) as part of the goals and content of education. As an implication, education becomes a collaborative effort involving the participation and role of cultural wisdom and values within the system. Participation in this context involves cooperation between citizens and the government in planning, implementing, maintaining, and developing educational activities in schools.

DISCUSSION

Based on the introduction, the following points will be discussed:

1. Understanding Culture-Based Education. The concept of education, according to H. Horne, is "a continuous process of higher adjustment for developed human beings, both physically and mentally, who are free and conscious of God, as manifested in the intellectual, emotional, and human aspects of individuals." Similarly, according to Ahmad D. Marimba, education is "conscious guidance or leadership by educators in the physical and spiritual development of the educated individual towards the formation of a prominent personality." Furthermore, according to Law No. 20 of 2003, education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning processes for students to actively develop their potential in terms of spiritual and religious strength, character building, self-control, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for themselves, society, nation, and state. This law serves as the basis for the establishment of the education process in Indonesia.

Culture, according to Tyler (1871), is "a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." Meanwhile, another definition states that culture is the complete pattern of human behavior and its products that encompass patterns of thought, language, action, and artifacts, and heavily rely on individuals' ability to learn and transmit their knowledge to future generations through various tools, languages, and reasoning patterns.

Culture-based education is a mechanism that provides opportunities for everyone to enrich knowledge and technology through lifelong learning. The emergence of the culture-based education paradigm is triggered by two major streams. First, it stems from the assumption of modernism, which has reached its culmination point and tends to bring humans back to natural (organic) aspects. Second, modernization itself demands the creation of democracy in all dimensions of human life. Based on these factors, education must be managed more optimally by providing ample space for community participation with cultural values (local policies) as part of the goals and content of education. As an implication, education becomes a collaborative effort involving the participation and role of cultural wisdom and values within the system. Participation in this context involves cooperation between citizens and the government in planning, implementing, maintaining, and developing educational activities. As a collaboration, it is assumed that the community with its culture has aspirations that must be accommodated in the planning and implementation of an education program that is rooted in the values of its own culture.

Furthermore, the era of decentralization-autonomy also results in increased freedom for the community to design and implement education according to its own needs. As a result, efforts to implement culture-based education are becoming more prevalent.

In the traditional view, education is seen as an activity aimed at achieving goals or as a path to achieving goals that exist outside the education process itself. For example, Aristotle sees education as a means to help achieve happiness, a better life, and a final state. This means that education is understood as a tool to achieve a goal, with the assumption that the process is separate. On the other hand, according to Leo Tolstoy, education does not have a primary goal outside of education itself. The goal to be achieved in education comes from the process itself, namely the process of "understanding" the existing reality. Thus, education is closely related to culture. This concept encompasses all the values within the culture of the existing society.

From the above discussion, it is undeniable that there is a strong connection between education and culture. Education is the "process" (culture) of humans to develop their qualities towards improvement. Culture-based education is the realization of the democratization of education through expanding educational services for the benefit of the community. Culture-based education becomes a movement to raise awareness in society to continue learning throughout life in order to overcome the ever-changing and increasingly challenging aspects of life. Conceptually, culture-based education is an educational model based on the principle of "from cultural concepts, driven by culture, and to create a new culture that is more distinctive and valuable than the previous culture."

Education with a cultural concept means that education provides answers and solutions to the creation of culture based on the needs of society, with its values and systems. Culturally-based education means that society, as the owner of culture with all its value systems, is placed as the subject/actor of education, not the object of education. In this context, all elements surrounding society can actively contribute to the creation of a culture that encompasses the society itself. Indonesia, as a country with considerable potential in educational development, must adapt to the current conditions. The need for a more diverse education format has become our "obligation" together in our efforts to realize it.

Efforts to liberate education from values that have dominated the creativity of students have necessitated a transformation and the introduction of new concepts about education. It is important to provide full opportunities for

students to develop their abilities according to their talents. This will have positive implications for their natural growth and development.

2. Context of Culture-Based Education. Education is a topic that is constantly discussed and debated. These discussions seem endless because concrete solutions to address education issues in Indonesia are never found, and new problems always arise. However, various parties continue to think about the best way to improve the education system in Indonesia. This is understandable considering that education is a fundamental aspect of human resource development (HRD) and greatly influences the level of a nation's civilization. When education fails, a country will struggle to progress. For example, the current problems faced by Indonesia, such as corruption and various social issues, can be attributed, in part, to the failure of education in shaping individuals with character and morality. Even after years of implementing reforms, the education system has not been able to produce intelligent citizens capable of formulating an ideal education system for Indonesia. Looking at these facts and the current output of education, it can be concluded that educational reform is necessary in Indonesia. Reform is crucial to prevent incorrect paradigms from dominating the education system. The constitution mandates that one of the nation's goals is to enhance the intellectual life of the nation. Therefore, education must be directed towards enlightening the nation's life, embodying the country's aspirations. Demographically, the large population in Indonesia should be an asset that sets it apart from other countries. If the population, in addition to being large, possesses superior and cultured human resources, progress will belong to this nation.

a. Integration of Education and Culture. Culture is a fundamental element in comprehensive education development. Good education not only develops intellect but, more importantly, cultivates intellectualism rooted in culture. Since the establishment of this nation, the founding fathers recognized that education is one means to appreciate the diversity of national culture. Therefore, revitalizing education must incorporate cultural values that support educational quality. In Japan, their education system is well-crafted, integrating local cultural values without necessarily conforming to global education standards. Nevertheless, the education standards in Japan can compete with global standards because their focus on educational development is grounded in local cultural values, making it a benchmark for global education. In contrast, Indonesia has borrowed educational experiments from global standards, neglecting the authenticity

of local cultural values. Authentic culturally-based education has been marginalized as it strives to meet global standards. The presence of a new education system has brought more negative side effects than benefits, resulting in the complex issue of improving education quality that is solely focused on chasing global standards, often driven by mere numerical achievements. Anthropologists such as Theodore Brameld observe a close connection between education, society, and culture. Education and culture are closely related as they both concern values. Humans, society, and culture are three interrelated dimensions. Thus, education cannot be separated from culture and can only be realized within a society. If culture has three important elements: culture as a way of life (order), culture as a process, and culture with a specific vision (goals), education, in this formulation, is essentially a process of acculturation. Hence, there is no education process without culture and society, and conversely, culture, as a process, cannot exist without education. Cultural and educational processes can only occur through the relationships among individuals in a specific society. Consequently, a culture without an education process would lead to the extinction of that culture. Education detached from culture would alienate the subjects being educated.

b. Culture for Education. Culture, in terms of values, is the essence of education. This culture is not static but responsive and evaluative with inherent elements. Koentjaraningrat formulated seven cultural elements: religious systems and ceremonies, societal systems and organizations, knowledge systems, language, arts, livelihood systems, and technology and equipment systems. Separating education from culture is a policy that hinders cultural development and betrays the existence of education as a process of cultural development. The cultural values that form the essence of education are noble values that have thrived within society. They contain messages of life and morality, resulting in a society with character. Universal values and cultural elements can be found in language, technology, social organizations, knowledge systems, and arts. For example, in the field of technology, we can see historical remnants and traditional architecture, such as various traditional houses. Social organizations can be observed in living organizations like the subak system in Bali. When culture becomes the essence of education, education can effectively address societal issues because what is learned is derived from the society itself. For instance, instead of adopting farming theories from Japan, which may not be suitable for Indonesia, we should

determine good farming practices based on our own context. When education is integrated with culture, there is a mutual benefit. For example, education can teach cultural values through cultural arts such as dance and storytelling, thereby contributing to cultural preservation.

3. Implementation of Culture-Based Education.

The concept of culture-based education is an education system designed to meet national education standards enriched with comparative and competitive advantages based on noble cultural values. It aims to actively develop the potential of learners, making them excellent, intelligent, visionary, aware of their environment and cultural diversity, and responsive to global developments. The quality standards of culture-based education include: content standards, process standards, graduate competency standards, standards for educators and educational personnel, infrastructure standards, management standards, funding standards, and educational assessment standards (Government Regulation No. 19/2005).

- a. Content Standards: These include the basic framework and curriculum structure of culture-based education integrating cultural values with science, education, technology, humanities, arts, sports, and social activities.
- b. Process Standards: Emphasizing active participation of learners while considering their uniqueness, values of freedom to create, courtesy, order, happiness, togetherness, justice, and mutual respect.
- c. Graduate Competency Standards: These encompass attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Further provisions regarding attitudes, knowledge, and skills are regulated by the Governor's Regulation.
- d. Educator and Educational Personnel Standards: Meeting the principles of professionalism and understanding of noble cultural values; educators and educational personnel are required to develop understanding and apply noble cultural values. Failure to fulfill these obligations may result in administrative sanctions.
- e. Infrastructure Standards: Including Minimum Service Standards (SNP) along with facilities and infrastructure to support the implementation of culture-based education. The provision of infrastructure is the responsibility of the regional government (Pemda) to support the implementation of culture-based education in international standard schools, special schools, and inclusive education. The regional government assists in providing facilities and infrastructure to support the implementation of culture-based education and oversees the

assistance.

- f. Education Management Standards: These standards are used as the basic framework for education governance in formal, non-formal, and informal paths based on culture. Formal education management is conducted through basic and secondary education levels by implementing school-based management. Non-formal education management is carried out by applying community-based management. Informal education is managed independently by families and/or the community.
- g. Funding Standards: The funding standards consist of investment costs, operational costs, and personnel costs. The regional government is responsible for financing to support the implementation of special education services within its authority. The regional government assists in financing to support the implementation of culture-based education in formal, non-formal, and informal education units conducted by the community.
- h. Assessment Standards: Education assessment includes mechanisms, procedures, and assessment instruments for assessing student learning outcomes. Assessment is conducted using continuous evaluation and authentic evaluation approaches with various methods. Continuous evaluation is the evaluation of learning outcomes followed by follow-up actions, utilizing evaluation data to improve learning programs, address weaknesses in learning, and provide guidance to students who need it. Authentic evaluation is competence-based evaluation, where students are considered to have learned correctly and well when they can implement their learning outcomes and apply their skills in daily life. The focus of authentic evaluation includes evaluating students' ability to analyze learning materials and events around them, integrate what they have learned, demonstrate creativity, teamwork skills, and express themselves verbally and practically.

4. Culture-Based Learning

Learning is a combination of human elements, materials, facilities, equipment, and procedures that collectively influence the achievement of learning goals (Aqib, 2002:41). Culture-based learning is a learning process that integrates culture as part of the learning experience and creates a learning environment that emphasizes culture. In culture-based learning, culture becomes a method for students to transform their observations into creative forms and principles about nature, enabling students to go beyond mere imitation or passive acceptance of information. Instead, they play an active role in creating meaning, understanding, and significance from the acquired information.

3.1 Conclusion

1. Culture-based education in learning is highly beneficial for the initial understanding of the learning process and outcomes. Students acquire contextual learning experiences and preconceived materials to understand scientific concepts within their local culture.
2. Learning about culture, through culture, and with culture is a method that allows students to demonstrate their understanding or meaning created in a subject through various cultural expressions.
3. The integration of culture in learning can enrich the local culture, which, in turn, develops and strengthens the national culture, encompassing both local and ethnic cultures.
4. Culture-Based Learning is a strategy that creates a learning environment and designs learning experiences that integrate art and culture as fundamental parts of the learning process. It recognizes art and culture as essential elements for education, expression, communication of ideas, and knowledge development. Culture-based learning aims to make learning meaningful and contextual by relating it to the cultural community in the field of study and the cultural community from which students originate, making learning engaging and enjoyable.
5. Culture-based learning is a different approach compared to subject-based

learning strategies commonly used by teachers in many schools. It emphasizes achieving integrated understanding rather than mere deep understanding.

Recommendations:

1. As a prospective teacher, it is important to consider culture as a means in the educational process. Education based on culture means providing answers and solutions to the creation of culture based on the needs of the society, while adhering to the values and systems within it.
2. Considering Indonesia as a country with significant potential in educational development, it is necessary to adapt to the current conditions. The need for a more diverse educational format has become our collective "obligation" in realizing it.
3. Efforts should be made to liberate education from values that have often hindered students' creative thinking. We must strive to provide a new concept of education that allows students to fully develop their abilities according to their talents. This will have a positive impact on their natural growth and development. This is one of the hopes with the implementation of culture-based education.

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