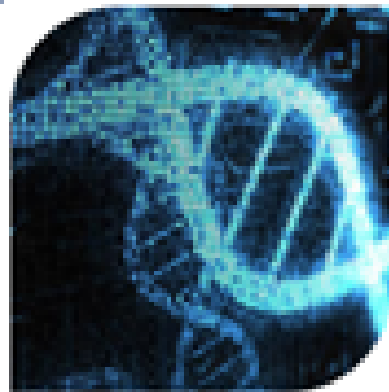


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Home Current Archives About Submissions Announcements Contact

Q Search

Home / Archives / Vol. 2 No. 1 (2025): Journal of Social Science and Education Research

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Make a Submission

ABOUT JOURNAL

- Editorial Team
- Reviewers
- Contact
- Focus and Scope
- Peer Review Process
- Open Access Statement and Policy
- Publication Ethics and Misconducts
- Plagiarism Policy

Articles

The Role of Training and Competence in Improving Employee Performance with Motivation as a Mediating Variable

Muchammad Maksum

The Concept of the Congregation as an Educational Media for Community Unity in Tafsir Fi Zhilalil Qur'an

Toto Santi Aji

41-48

PDF

Accounting Practices in the Pogogut Tradition in Kotamobagu City

Tasya Ramandania Putri Panai, Tri Handayani Amaliah, Mahdalena Mahdalena

1-14

PDF

Strengthening 21st-Century Collaborative Competencies Through Local Culture Based Contextual Learning: A Participatory Education Study in the Setu Babakan Area

Menul Teguh Riyanti, Bambang Triwardoyo, Ekananda Haryadi

49-55

PDF

Transformation of Gempolkrep Sugar Factory's CSR Communication Strategy from Top-Down to Bottom-Up Communication Strategy

Olivia Ridheta Citrawijaya, Glen Aviara Samanda, Dwi Ananda Amalia, Juan Filbert Fernando

26-40

PDF

Transformation of Traditional Teachers into Educational Influencers in Schools

Mesrawati Rifai

15-25

PDF

Indexing and Abstracting

Article Processing Charge

INDEXING

INDEX COPERNICUS
INTERNATIONAL

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SUBMISSIONS

- Author Guidelines
- Reviewer Guidelines
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- Licence
- Manuscript Template

INFORMATION

For Readers

For Authors

For Librarians

VISITOR

Strengthening 21st-Century Collaborative Competencies Through Local Culture Based Contextual Learning: A Participatory Education Study in the Setu Babakan Area

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Abstract

Setu Babakan, a Betawi cultural heritage area in Jakarta, holds significant potential for supporting contextual learning based on local culture. This study aims to explore how participatory learning models in Setu Babakan can strengthen students' 21st-century competencies, particularly in collaboration, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. The research method used was a qualitative case study approach, involving observations and in-depth interviews with educators, area managers, and students participating in cultural education programs at the site. Findings indicate that participants' active involvement in cultural activities such as batik-making, playing traditional musical instruments, and direct interaction with traditional leaders fostered improved social skills, cross-cultural understanding, and critical reflection on local identity. Furthermore, the culture-based education program in Setu Babakan has been shown to support meaningful, relevant, and contextual learning within students' lives. The study concludes that integrating local wisdom into the learning process through a participatory approach in cultural areas can be an effective strategy for fostering 21st-century competencies while preserving urban traditional heritage. Recommendations are made for local governments and educational institutions to expand collaboration with local cultural centers as strategic partners in educational innovation.

Keywords:

Contextual Learning,
Local Culture,
21st-Century Competencies,
Participatory,
Setu Babakan.

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INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, education demands that students develop critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, as well as collaboration and cultural literacy. In the face of globalization and technological advancements, it is crucial for national education systems to remain rooted in local cultural values. This ensures that the younger generation nurtures a strong sense of identity and character. One effective approach to achieving this is through culture-based contextual learning, which connects learning materials to the social realities and cultural environments of students.

Setu Babakan, located in Jakarta, is a Betawi cultural village that not only plays a significant role in preserving the Betawi culture but also serves as an invaluable and authentic resource for participatory learning. This area offers various educational activities such as batik-making, traditional music, and Betawi wedding simulations, which serve as interactive platforms for learning. These activities engage students in

cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of learning, allowing them to connect deeply with their heritage while also developing essential skills.

This research was conducted to explore how local culture-based learning at Setu Babakan can enhance students' 21st-century competencies. It also examines how students' active participation in the learning process can promote meaningful learning experiences. By engaging in these culturally rich and contextually relevant activities, students not only deepen their understanding of Betawi culture but also strengthen critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills that are vital in the modern world.

The theoretical basis of this study is rooted in the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach, which emphasizes linking subject matter to students' real-life contexts, thus making learning more engaging and relevant. Integrating local culture into education, as highlighted by Gay (2010), increases motivation and fosters a sense of belonging to one's cultural identity. Moreover, this approach supports character education through the understanding of local wisdom values, as pointed out by Tilaar (2004). The research also aligns with the 21st-century competency framework, which includes critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and cultural literacy, as outlined by Trilling and Fadel (2009). Through experiential learning in the local cultural context, students can develop these competencies effectively.

Thus, this study aims to describe the implementation of local culture-based learning at Setu Babakan and analyze how the participatory learning model in this setting contributes to strengthening students' 21st-century competencies.

METHOD

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study in the Setu Babakan cultural area, South Jakarta. Data were obtained through participant observation, in-depth interviews with teachers, area managers, and students, and documentation of educational activities. Triangulation techniques were used to increase data validity. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1994): data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results indicate that educational activities in the Setu Babakan area have been systematically designed to develop students' 21st-century competencies. Activities such as batik training, traditional Betawi games, traditional theatrical performances, and the creation of Betawi pantun (pantun) serve as reflective media for students to simultaneously develop collaborative skills, critical thinking, and cultural awareness.

Strengthening Collaborative Competencies

During educational activities, students are involved in group work—for example, when working on batik, playing mini tanjidor, or putting together a cultural theater performance. Observations show that students engage in role negotiation, joint decision-making, and coordination to complete tasks. The teacher serves as a facilitator, encouraging open communication among group members. This collaboration not only embodies the value of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) in Betawi culture but also develops collaborative competencies, which are an essential part of the Pancasila student profile and global education standards.

Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

Reflection sessions are held after each cultural activity. Students are invited to discuss the symbolic meaning of Betawi batik motifs, the philosophical values of pantun (pantun), and the relevance of traditional wedding customs to their current lives. These discussions raise critical questions, such as: "What is the meaning of tolerance in Betawi culture?" or "How can the Betawi value of simplicity be applied today?" These activities stimulate critical and reflective thinking skills while strengthening students' argumentative skills, both verbally and in writing.

Cultural Literacy and Local Identity

This local culture-based activity successfully improved students' cultural literacy. Based on interviews, students stated that they "know their own culture better" and are "proud to be part of the Betawi community." They also demonstrated an understanding of values such as courtesy, equality, and social harmony inherent in that culture. This strengthens cultural identity and fosters multicultural awareness, an important aspect of global education in the 21st century.

Implementation of Contextual Participatory Learning

The learning process is not one-way instruction, but is based on active student participation. The teacher acts as a mediator of knowledge, not a center of information. Students explore culture directly—whether through interactions with cultural actors, observing activities, or dialogue with local sources. This model aligns with the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), where learning is directly connected to real life and meaningful local values. Thus, students acquire not only cognitive knowledge but also social and affective skills through interactions across cultural contexts.

Table 1. Observed aspects

Aspect	Indicator	Description
Learning Activities	Active student participation	For example: batik making, playing tanjidor, pantun
Emotional Engagement	Student enthusiasm and expression	Do students appear interested and engaged?
Social Interaction	Student collaboration	In groups or during discussions?
Cultural Reflection	Understanding local cultural values	Can students explain cultural values?
Role of the Educator/Facilitator	Guidelines and directions	Do teachers/facilitators actively facilitate?

Visual Documentation

Students create batik with typical Betawi motifs at the Setu Babakan pavilion.



Figure 1. The activity of learning to make batik with traditional canting in the school environment is to preserve and foster a sense of love.

A group of students playing the tanjidor musical instrument collaboratively



Figure 2. Tanjidor performance activities

Interactive Betawi pantun training



Figure 3. Pantun Competition

Promoting Betawi Pantun Culture, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Presents the MICE TO MEET YOU 2024 Cultural Festival: Nusantara Pantun Goes Global - Vakansi.Co

Betawi traditional dance performance by students



Figure 4. Dance performance activities by students

Source: <https://travel.detik.com/domestic-destination/d-7489848/9-aktivitas-seru-di-setu-babakan-kampung-budaya-betawi-di-jaksel>

Student reflective discussion with cultural managers



Figure 5. Student reflective discussion activity with cultural managers

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Setu Babakan, as a local culture-based educational space, plays a strategic role in strengthening 21st-century competencies, particularly in developing collaboration skills, critical thinking, and reflection, as well as cultural literacy and national identity.

Through a contextual and participatory learning model, students are actively engaged in learning experiences directly connected to their cultural and social environment. This approach provides a new meaning to the learning process, which is no longer abstract and textual, but concrete, contextual, and touches on the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions in a balanced manner.

The research findings indicate that when learning is linked to local cultural values, as found in Setu Babakan:

1. Collaborative competencies develop through group activities in cultural practices.
2. Critical and reflective thinking is honed through the analysis of traditional values and their relevance to the modern context.
3. Cultural awareness and local identity grow as students' appreciation for their own cultural heritage grows.
4. The teacher's role as a facilitator in creating open discussion spaces encourages student participation and independent learning.

The implications of these results indicate that local culture-based learning is not merely a tool for preserving tradition, but rather a strategic tool for building an education that is holistic, contextual, and relevant to the challenges of the global era. Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions and policymakers to encourage the integration of local culture into the curriculum in a structured, sustainable, and community-based manner.

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