



Revitalizing Character Education Through Local Culture using Project-Based History Learning in Lampung

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Character education;
Lampung culture;
Project-Based Learning;
Cultural pedagogy;
history education.

Abstract: This study explores the integration of Project Based Learning with indigenous Lampung cultural values, namely *piil pesenggiri* (honor), *nemui nyimah* (hospitality), and *sakai sambayan* (cooperation), as a strategic approach to strengthen character education in Indonesian senior high schools. Employing a qualitative literature review and thematic analysis of scholarly publications, policy frameworks, and ethnographic research from 2010 to 2024, the study synthesizes culturally responsive pedagogical practices that foster integrity, empathy, responsibility, and civic mindedness. The findings suggest that embedding local cultural wisdom within project-based learning enhances student engagement, facilitates the internalization of moral values, and promotes the development of twenty first century competencies alongside a strong sense of community belonging. A conceptual framework is proposed that maps Lampung cultural values onto the core phases of project-based learning to provide educators with practical and contextually relevant guidance. The study emphasizes the importance of teacher preparation, collaboration with local communities, and culturally grounded curriculum design. This model contributes to national character education objectives while supporting the preservation and relevance of local cultural traditions within formal educational systems.

Kata Kunci:

Pendidikan karakter;
Budaya Lampung;
Pembelajaran berbasis proyek;
Pedagogi berbasis budaya;
Pendidikan sejarah.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji integrasi Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek (Project Based Learning) dengan nilai-nilai budaya lokal Lampung, yaitu *piil pesenggiri* (kehormatan), *nemui nyimah* (keramahtamahan), dan *sakai sambayan* (gotong royong), sebagai pendekatan strategis untuk memperkuat pendidikan karakter di sekolah menengah atas di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan kajian literatur kualitatif dan analisis tematik terhadap publikasi ilmiah, kerangka kebijakan, dan penelitian etnografis dari tahun 2010 hingga 2024, studi ini mensintesis praktik pedagogis yang responsif secara budaya yang mendorong integritas, empati, tanggung jawab, dan kesadaran berwarga negara. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mengintegrasikan kearifan budaya lokal dalam pembelajaran berbasis proyek meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa, memfasilitasi internalisasi nilai-nilai moral, dan mendorong pengembangan kompetensi abad ke-21 bersamaan dengan penguatan rasa kebersamaan dalam komunitas. Sebuah kerangka konseptual diusulkan untuk memetakan nilai-nilai budaya Lampung ke dalam tahapan inti pembelajaran berbasis proyek guna memberikan panduan praktis dan kontekstual bagi para pendidik. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya persiapan guru, kolaborasi dengan komunitas lokal, dan perancangan kurikulum yang berakar pada budaya. Model ini berkontribusi pada tujuan pendidikan karakter nasional sekaligus mendukung pelestarian dan relevansi tradisi budaya lokal dalam sistem pendidikan formal.

Article History:

Received : 30-09-2024
Revised : 20-12-2024
Accepted : 28-12-2024
Online : 28-12-2024



<https://doi.org/10.31764/pendekar.v7i4.32990>



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A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's education system is currently navigating the dual forces of globalization and rapid digital transformation. These shifts offer new opportunities for innovation in education, yet they also present critical challenges, particularly regarding the marginalization of national identity and traditional cultural values in formal education (Herlina et al., 2024; Urbaite, 2024). To respond to these concerns, character education has been positioned as a national priority, as outlined in Indonesia's National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, which calls for the holistic development of learners who are ethically grounded, intellectually competent, and socially responsible (Republic of Indonesia, 2003).

Although character education is mandated by national policy and rooted in Pancasila, the philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state, its practical implementation in the classroom is not effectively realized. As highlighted by Pratiwi (2021), character education is frequently reduced to abstract moral ideals that lack relevance to students' everyday lives. This gap underscores the need for pedagogical approaches that are both meaningful and contextually grounded. In response to these challenges, educators and scholars have increasingly adopted culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogies. These frameworks emphasize the integration of students' cultural backgrounds, values, and lived experiences into the design of teaching and learning (Gay, 2018; Paris & Alim, 2017). Such integration not only strengthens student engagement and identity development but also ensures that education reflects the realities of diverse student communities.

One promising context for the application of these ideas is Lampung Province, where indigenous values provide a strong foundation for character education. Cultural principles such as *piil pesenggiri* (honor and self-respect), *nemui nyimah* (hospitality), and *sakai sambayan* (cooperation) are deeply embedded in everyday life and closely align with national educational ideals. These values promote empathy, respect, civic responsibility, and social harmony, making them highly relevant to the broader aims of character education in Indonesia (Anggraini & Fitriarsi, 2022; Minandar, 2018; N. Rahmawati et al., 2023). Building on this cultural foundation, Paris & Alim (2017) emphasize that culturally sustaining pedagogy does more than simply recognize students' cultural identities; it actively nurtures and revitalizes those identities through classroom practice. When applied to the Lampung context, this approach can promote more authentic, respectful, and relevant learning experiences that deepen students' moral understanding and civic responsibility.

Parallel to these developments, Project-Based Learning (PBL) has emerged as a widely recognized student-centered approach that promotes inquiry, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving. It fosters essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, and independent learning, skills that contribute not only to academic achievement but also to students' moral and ethical development (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006; Thomas, 2000). Its foundation in sociocultural theory, particularly the work of Vygotsky (1978), highlights the importance of cultural context and social interaction in the learning process. Project-Based Learning also aligns with established theories of moral development. As emphasized by Kohlberg (1984) and Lickona (1996), engaging students in ethical dilemmas and reflective experiences is essential for fostering higher levels of moral reasoning. Expanding on this perspective, Noddings (2013) introduces the ethic of care, which highlights the importance of empathy, emotional connection, and mutual respect as integral to meaningful and morally grounded learning.

Empirical studies in Indonesia affirm the integration of local cultural values into PBL. As'ari et al. (2022) found that incorporating religious and cultural narratives into project-based Islamic history lessons significantly increased student motivation and engagement. Similarly, Y. Rahmawati & Taylor (2018) found that contextualizing science instruction with local socio-cultural themes enhanced reflective thinking and strengthened students' sense of identity. Despite these positive outcomes, Lampung cultural values remain largely underutilized in formal education. They are often confined

to symbolic or ceremonial roles rather than being meaningfully embedded into everyday classroom practices. To support this integrative framework, Table 1 summarizes the theoretical foundations that inform the alignment between educational policy, cultural values, and project-based pedagogy.

Table 1. Theoretical Foundations for Culturally Embedded PBL in Character Education

Theory / Framework	Key Focus	Relevance to Study
National Education Policy (Republic of Indonesia, 2003)	Character education & Pancasila values	Serves as the national mandate for moral and civic learning
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Gay, 2018)	Cultural identity in instruction	Enables integration of Lampung values in teaching
Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (Paris & Alim, 2017)	Preserving cultural practices through education	Promotes continuity of local traditions in curriculum
Project-Based Learning (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006; Thomas, 2000)	Inquiry-based, collaborative learning	Provides structure for value-based, real-world learning
Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978)	Culture as a medium of learning	Supports culturally grounded student engagement
Moral Development Theory (Kohlberg, 1984; Lickona, 1996)	Ethical reasoning & dilemmas	Shapes moral depth of project tasks and decisions
Ethics of Care (Noddings, 2013)	Empathy and relationships	Strengthens affective dimension of character education

Considering these theoretical foundations and contextual needs, this study seeks to explore how Lampung cultural values can be systematically embedded within Project-Based History Learning to enrich character education in a way that is locally grounded, pedagogically sound, and nationally relevant. By drawing on culturally sustaining pedagogy and the principles of PBL, the study aims to offer a model that bridges educational policy, local wisdom, and classroom practice to foster students' academic growth and moral development.

B. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative conceptual research design that draws on systematic literature review methods as outlined by Synder (2021), to construct a culturally grounded Project-Based Learning (PBL) model rooted in Lampung values. The primary objective is to integrate theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and local cultural insights into a coherent pedagogical framework that supports character education. Relevant materials were identified through a comprehensive document analysis of academic journal articles, policy papers, ethnographic studies, and curriculum guidelines published between 2010 and 2024. The literature search used targeted keywords, including "Lampung culture," "character education," "project-based learning," and "culturally responsive pedagogy", across databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and national repositories. Applying thematic relevance and methodological rigor as selection criteria, 32 peer-reviewed articles, six policy documents, and eight ethnographic sources were selected for in-depth analysis. Eligible sources explicitly addressed at least one of the following areas: character formation, Lampung local wisdom, or the PBL model in Southeast Asian educational contexts.

Data were analyzed via inductive thematic coding as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006), allowing themes to emerge organically from the literature. The coding process was structured around four key domains: (1) Lampung cultural values, (2) PBL principles, (3) character education constructs, and (4) implementation strategies. To ensure credibility, two Lampung-based education experts participated in peer debriefing sessions, reviewing coded themes for cultural accuracy and pedagogical relevance. A synthesis matrix was then constructed to map the relationships among cultural values, pedagogical processes, and anticipated character outcomes.

As part of this synthesis, a conceptual framework was developed to illustrate how Lampung cultural values align with specific phases of the PBL process and promote corresponding character

traits. For example, *piil pesenggiri* (honor and self-respect) is cultivated through independent inquiry and ethical decision-making; *nemui nyimah* (hospitality) emerges in collaborative planning and peer interaction; while *sakai sambayan* (cooperation) is realized in group-based problem-solving and collective project presentations. This framework serves not only as a product of thematic integration but also as a pedagogical tool to guide culturally embedded character education practices. Teachers are positioned as cultural facilitators who support critical reflection and value internalization (Gay, 2018), while community members serve as intergenerational cultural informants, enhancing authenticity and relevance (Paris & Alim, 2017). Through this collaboration, formal education becomes more closely connected to students' cultural identity, supporting a character education approach that is transformative, sustainable, and aligned with national values.

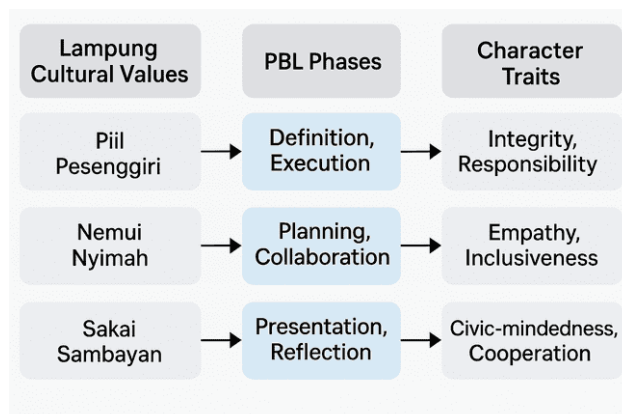


Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Culturally Grounded PBL

Methodological triangulation was achieved by incorporating diverse data types, peer-reviewed studies, government frameworks, and ethnographic accounts, thereby offering a comprehensive portrayal of the cultural-educational landscape. Member checking with two local educators further validated the cultural interpretations, ensuring contextual accuracy and relevance. To strengthen reliability, an audit trail documented each step of the literature selection, coding procedures, and synthesis process, while a secondary reviewer cross-checked coding consistency to mitigate subjective bias. Direct quotations and documented cultural practices were used throughout to preserve interpretive authenticity. Although this research does not involve primary fieldwork, its rigorous conceptual development and transparent methodological procedures provide a solid foundation for subsequent empirical investigations and practical classroom applications.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings present a conceptual framework that integrates Lampung cultural values into Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a culturally grounded approach to character education. Derived from a rigorous thematic synthesis of literature, the findings are structured across five interrelated dimensions: the pedagogical significance of local values, their alignment with PBL stages, the character traits developed, implementation feasibility, and theoretical contributions.

1. Pedagogical Significance of Lampung Cultural Values

The core values of *piil pesenggiri* (honor and dignity), *nemui nyimah* (hospitality), and *sakai sambayan* (mutual cooperation) are not merely symbolic but serve as ethical pillars that have long shaped Lampung society. These values have historically guided social conduct, leadership, and conflict resolution (Salim & Ruslan, 2021). In today's educational context, they provide a culturally embedded foundation to counter rising concerns such as moral disorientation, excessive individualism, and the weakening of local identity (Amatullah & Komariah, 2021). Their continued relevance highlights the opportunity to transform these values into meaningful educational content.

Integrating Lampung cultural values into Project-Based Learning (PBL) enhances both moral and cognitive dimensions of student learning. As emphasized by Banks (2015), validating students' cultural identities within the curriculum fosters deeper engagement and personal growth. Through culturally situated projects, students are encouraged to reflect on ethical issues, collaborate across differences, and act with integrity. This approach is in line with Lickona's (1996) vision of character education and the broader UNESCO (2015) call for culturally relevant pedagogy. By drawing on local wisdom as a living resource, educators not only preserve cultural heritage but also equip students with values that resonate in both local and global settings.

2. Synergy with the Project-Based Learning Framework

Lampung cultural values, namely *piil pesenggiri* (honor and dignity), *nemui nyimah* (hospitality), and *sakai sambayan* (cooperation), align meaningfully with the five core stages of Project-Based Learning (PBL): problem definition, planning, execution, presentation, and reflection. Specifically, *piil pesenggiri* supports ethical decision-making and personal accountability during inquiry and implementation phases. *Nemui nyimah* fosters inclusive communication and mutual respect in group planning, while *sakai sambayan* reinforces teamwork and collective responsibility throughout the project's execution and presentation. This alignment illustrates the practical and moral relevance of indigenous values in fostering student-centered learning environments (Hikmawati & Suastra, 2023; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The pedagogical coherence of this integration is grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of cultural tools and social interaction in shaping cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). Further, it resonates with Gay's (2018) culturally responsive pedagogy, which advocates for embedding students' cultural identities within instructional frameworks to enhance engagement and moral agency. This approach transforms learners from passive recipients of prescribed values into active co-constructors of ethical understanding through culturally anchored inquiry, dialogue, and reflection (Banks, 2015; Rogoff, 2003).

Empirical studies further validate the effectiveness of this synergy. Shofyana et al. (2022) demonstrated that integrating local wisdom into PBL significantly improved students' problem-solving competencies in post-pandemic English classrooms. Similarly, Zaki et al. (2024) reported that a culturally enriched PBL model (PBLM-e) in Makassar effectively cultivated 21st-century competencies, particularly critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative skills, among junior high school students. Complementing these findings, Akirav (2023) emphasized that embedding regional values in social studies education not only enhances moral reasoning but also deepens students' sense of cultural identity and civic engagement.

3. Character Development through Culturally Embedded Tasks

Culturally grounded Project-Based Learning (PBL) supports the development of both cognitive and affective domains by integrating moral values into experiential learning. Instructional adaptations such as *Pesenggiri Pride*, *Adat Court of Justice*, and *Tapis for Tomorrow* demonstrate that students can internalize integrity through ethical inquiry, practice empathy through peer-based collaboration, and cultivate civic-mindedness via community engagement and cultural expression. These models underscore the transformative potential of local wisdom when positioned as the foundation for character-oriented instruction.

These outcomes resonate with Lickona's (1996) framework of moral education, which highlights the importance of promoting ethical behavior and responsibility in schools, as well as Noddings (2013) ethic of care that emphasizes relationships and emotional connections as essential to moral development. When aligned with national character education goals, this approach affirms that values-based learning is most effective when rooted in students' cultural contexts. To visualize these

interconnections, Table 2 synthesizes the alignment between character traits, instructional practices, and relevant Lampung cultural values.

Table 2. Character Outcomes Fostered through Culturally Grounded Project-Based Learning

Character Trait	Instructional Practice	Associated Cultural Value	Educational Significance
Integrity and Accountability	Ethical research, historical inquiry, independent task ownership	<i>Piil Pesenggiri</i> (Honor, Integrity)	Supports principled decision-making and personal responsibility (Lickona, 1996)
Empathy and Respect	Interpersonal role-play, collaborative dialogue, community engagement	<i>Nemui Nyimah</i> (Hospitality, Respect)	Fosters interpersonal understanding and cultural sensitivity(Noddings, 2013)
Civic-Mindedness and Cultural Pride	Public presentations, creative projects, interaction with local stakeholders	<i>Sakai Sambayan</i> (Cooperation, Mutual Aid)	Encourages social responsibility, cultural identity, and public engagement(Hikmawati & Suastra, 2023; Ladson-Billings, 1995)

4. Practical Feasibility and Implementation Considerations

The effective implementation of culturally grounded Project-Based Learning (PBL) requires careful attention to several interconnected aspects. Among the most crucial is teacher readiness. Instructors must not only master the design and facilitation of PBL but also demonstrate cultural competence to meaningfully embed local wisdom into classroom instruction. Without this dual expertise, efforts to cultivate cultural identity and ethical values through PBL risk becoming superficial or disconnected from students' lived experiences (Evcimik & Oruc, 2023). Flexibility within the curriculum is also essential. Because PBL involves sustained inquiry, iterative reflection, and complex project cycles, rigid timetables often constrain its pedagogical effectiveness. Adopting modular or interdisciplinary curricular structures can offer more adaptable learning environments that support deeper engagement without compromising academic objectives. Such flexibility enables students to explore culturally rich themes over extended periods while meeting core learning outcomes (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006; Thomas, 2000).

Assessment practices must evolve in tandem with instructional shifts. Traditional forms of evaluation are often inadequate for capturing character traits such as empathy, responsibility, or civic-mindedness. To reflect the holistic nature of character and competency development, educators must incorporate alternative assessments, including reflection journals, performance-based tasks, and community feedback mechanisms. These tools allow for a more authentic evaluation of students' moral and social growth (Bell, 2010). These implementation components are synthesized in Table 4, which outlines practical strategies along with corresponding policy recommendations. The table serves as a roadmap for school leaders, educators, and policymakers aiming to adopt this culturally grounded PBL framework. It highlights the need for systemic support to ensure sustainable integration of local cultural values into contemporary education.

Table 3. Key Implementation Strategies for Culturally Grounded PBL

Area	Description	Recommendation
Teacher Readiness	Teachers need PBL and cultural pedagogy skills rooted in Lampung traditions.	Provide targeted training and cultural competency programs.
Community Links	Local collaboration ensures authenticity and cultural continuity.	Establish school-community partnerships with cultural stakeholders.
Curricular Flexibility	Flexible and interdisciplinary formats support project phases effectively.	Adopt modular/project-based curriculum and adjust timetables.
Assessment Tools	Holistic tools (e.g., journals, rubrics) capture affective and civic growth.	Develop national guidelines for alternative character assessments.

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study introduced and conceptually validated a pedagogical model that integrates Lampung cultural values into Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a meaningful approach to character education in Indonesian secondary schools. By aligning core local values such as *piil pesenggiri* (honor and integrity), *nemui nyimah* (hospitality and respect), and *sakai sambayan* (cooperation and mutual assistance) with the phases of PBL, the model creates a structured learning pathway that supports ethical reasoning, cultural identity, and active student engagement. The findings from systematic literature analysis suggest that embedding these values into experiential learning allows students to internalize moral principles through culturally relevant and meaningful contexts. This approach fosters essential traits, including empathy, responsibility, and civic-mindedness, while reinforcing the significance of local heritage in formal education.

In practical terms, the successful implementation of this model depends on teacher professional development, curriculum flexibility, and collaboration with community stakeholders. The model provides a replicable framework for other culturally diverse regions seeking to strengthen character education through localized wisdom. Theoretically, it contributes to the advancement of culturally sustaining education by demonstrating how indigenous ethical systems can be effectively integrated into modern classroom practices. Ultimately, this culturally grounded PBL model positions culture not only as content but as a method and context for learning. It empowers students to develop values through inquiry, collaboration, creativity, and reflection grounded in their cultural roots, offering a vision of education that is both locally meaningful and globally relevant.

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