



Cultural literacy of gen z generation in elementary school

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Abstract

Cultural literacy is a crucial aspect in raising public awareness of cultural diversity and maintaining cultural identity amid globalization. However, challenges such as the dominance of foreign cultures, the lack of cultural education in schools, and low community participation in local cultural activities remain significant problems. This study aims to analyze the level of cultural literacy in society, identify the influencing factors, and provide strategic recommendations for improving cultural literacy. This research employs a quantitative method with a survey approach by distributing questionnaires to Generation Z respondents. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics related to education levels, involvement in cultural activities, and the influence of media on cultural literacy. The findings indicate that cultural literacy levels vary depending on education and engagement in cultural activities. Respondents with higher education levels tend to have a better understanding of local culture. However, participation in cultural activities remains low, with most individuals learning about culture through social media and digital platforms rather than direct experiences. Furthermore, this study finds that attitudes towards foreign cultures vary, with some groups more accepting of global culture than their local culture. Based on these findings, strategies to enhance cultural literacy should include integrating cultural education into curricula, increasing access to cultural activities, and utilizing digital media as a more effective educational tool. These measures are expected to raise public awareness and involvement in cultural preservation, ensuring that cultural identity remains intact in the face of globalization.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, Constructivism, and Ki Hadjar Dewantara Education Concept.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural literacy plays a crucial role in fostering public awareness of cultural diversity and its inherent values. Understanding culture not only helps individuals adapt to their social environment but also strengthens national identity and enriches civic knowledge, Afrilyanti (2024). However, in the era of globalization, the challenges of cultural preservation are increasing. The growing influence of foreign cultures, the lack of cultural education in schools, and low public participation in local cultural activities are key factors contributing to declining cultural literacy (Suryani, 2021).

Research by Prasetyo (2022) indicates that most young generations are more familiar with global popular culture than their regional

culture. This is due to technological and digital media developments that offer more foreign cultural content than local cultural content. Technology and social media used by the millennial generation as a form of adaptation to the digital world to access foreign culture and promote their own culture include *Instagram*, *TikTok* and *YouTube*, which have thousands of channels that discuss domestic and foreign culture Rahayuningsih, F. (2022). Additionally, limited access to quality cultural literature and a lack of interest in learning about history and local wisdom are also significant issues (Hidayat, 2020).

This study's urgency lies in the need to enhance public awareness of cultural literacy to preserve national identity and heritage Arifin, Z. (2019). Without concrete efforts to

improve understanding and participation in local culture, future generations risk becoming increasingly alienated from their cultural roots (Wijaya, 2023). Therefore, this research aims to measure the level of cultural literacy in society and identify the factors influencing it to provide strategic recommendations for improving cultural literacy in Indonesia.

The novelty of this study lies in the use of a survey-based questionnaire method, which not only measures the level of understanding of local culture but also examines public participation in cultural activities and the impact of digital media on cultural perceptions Woolfolk, A. (2004). Unlike previous studies that focused more on formal education aspects in improving cultural literacy (Rahmawati, 2019), this research integrates a broader approach by considering social, technological, and active participation factors in culture. Thus, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for formulating policies and cultural education strategies that are more effective and relevant to current conditions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a quantitative approach using a survey method through questionnaire distribution. The population of this study consists of Generation Z individuals aged 17-20 years. The sample is determined using purposive sampling to ensure diverse respondent representation. The questionnaire consists of several sections, including:

1. Respondent identity, including age, gender, education level, and cultural experience. Meanwhile, to narrow the scope of the research, the samples taken were students with different cultural backgrounds from various regions in Indonesia, such as from West Java, Central Java, and Sumatra, as well as different social backgrounds with

different experiences related to their respective regional cultures.

2. Understanding of local culture, measuring respondents' knowledge of their regional culture
3. Attitudes towards foreign cultures, assessing the extent to which respondents accept or reject foreign cultural influences.
4. Participation in cultural activities, measuring respondents' engagement in festivals, workshops, and cultural discussions.

The collected data is analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to provide an overview of the level of cultural literacy in society. Furthermore, correlations between factors such as age, education, and cultural engagement with cultural literacy levels are examined. The data processing steps include:

1. **Data Cleaning:** Checking the completeness of returned questionnaires and removing incomplete or inconsistent responses.
2. **Data Coding:** Assigning numerical codes to respondents' answers for statistical analysis.
3. **Data Tabulation:** Entering coded data into software such as Microsoft Excel or other data analysis tools.
4. **Statistical Analysis:** Using descriptive statistics like mean, median, mode, and standard deviation to summarize findings.
5. **Interpretation and Presentation:** Presenting data in tables, graphs, or diagrams to facilitate understanding.

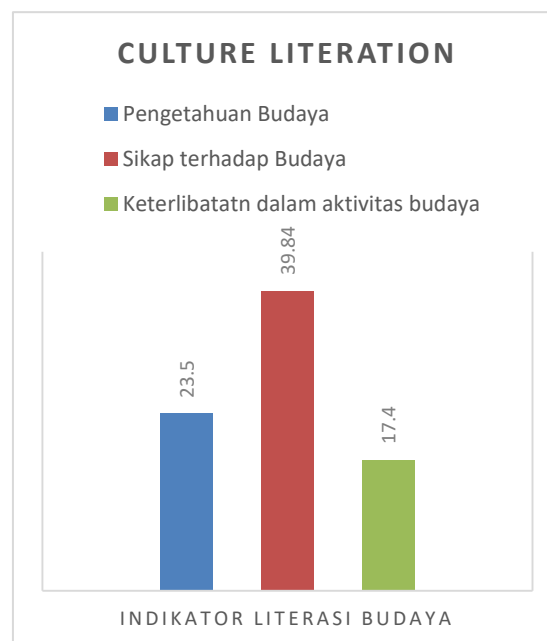
By utilizing this data processing method, the research can produce objective findings that serve as a foundation for formulating strategies to enhance cultural literacy in society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study results indicate that cultural literacy levels vary among respondents, with education level and access to cultural media being significant influencing variables. Respondents with higher education levels tend to have a better understanding of local culture and are more selective in accepting foreign cultural influences (Setiawan, 2021). Moreover, participation in cultural activities such as festivals, art workshops, and cultural discussions also contributes to improving individual cultural literacy (Rahmawati & Surya, 2022).

In today's digital era, the role of media is also an important factor in shaping cultural literacy. Social media, television, and other digital platforms act as sources of cultural information, but on the other hand, they can also be a challenge if not accompanied by critical understanding (Nugroho, 2020). Therefore, more effective education and socialization strategies are needed to improve cultural literacy, for example through culture-based education programs in schools and cultural awareness campaigns in the mass media (Yulianti, 2023). With this research, it is hoped that the results obtained can provide insight for policy makers and education practitioners in designing more effective programs to improve cultural literacy in society. High cultural awareness will help individuals maintain their cultural identity while adapting to changes in the times wisely.

Based on data obtained from the questionnaire, the level of cultural literacy of the community can be analyzed through several main indicators, namely cultural knowledge, attitudes towards culture and involvement in cultural activities.



1. Cultural Knowledge

The results of the questionnaire showed that 23.5% of respondents had minimal knowledge of local culture, such as customs, traditional arts, and the history of their region. However, most respondents admitted that they were more familiar with foreign culture than local culture, which indicates the influence of globalization on people's cultural knowledge. This data is in line with the findings of Prasetyo (2022), which stated that the younger generation is more exposed to global popular culture than traditional culture due to the dominance of digital media.

2. Attitudes towards Local Culture

From the Likert scale used in the questionnaire, 39.84% of respondents had an attitude of caring about culture such as being less interested in learning culture and preserving it. The remaining respondents,

around 60.16%, showed a neutral attitude or were less concerned about preserving local culture, which could be caused by a lack of access or interest in learning traditional culture. A study by Hidayat (2020) also showed that people's attitudes towards foreign culture tend to be positive, but can risk weakening local cultural identity if not balanced with good education.

3. Involvement in Cultural Activities

Based on the survey results, only 17.4% of respondents actively participate in cultural activities such as festivals, art performances, or cultural discussions. Meanwhile, 82.6% of respondents rarely or never participate in cultural activities, with several causes such as lack of information, limited time, or lack of interest. This finding indicates the need for more interesting educational programs to increase community participation in cultural activities, as proposed by Rahmawati & Surya (2022).

Based on the results of this data, it can be concluded that the cultural literacy of the gen z generation is still low, the use of media in understanding culture has a major impact on the gen z generation, after further follow-up it was found that the current generation is familiar with culture from social media and digital platforms, compared to formal education or direct experience, only around 30% of respondents actively seek cultural information through trusted sources, while the rest rely on popular content that is not necessarily accurate. Nugroho (2020) stated that the media has a dual role: on the one

hand introducing culture to the public, but on the other hand it can cause misinformation if there is no good control.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that public understanding and engagement in local culture vary, influenced by factors such as age, education, and access to cultural information. Although most respondents recognize the importance of local culture, active participation in cultural activities remains low. This indicates that despite good cultural understanding, direct involvement still needs improvement. The influence of digital media on cultural literacy is also a significant factor. Most respondents obtain cultural information through social media and digital platforms, but not all of these sources provide accurate and in-depth information. This indicates the need for further efforts to provide more educational and easily accessible cultural content to the public. From the analysis of the questionnaire data, it was found that there is a positive relationship between education level and involvement in cultural activities with the level of cultural literacy of the community. This means that the higher a person's education level, the more likely they are to understand and appreciate local culture. However, attitudes towards foreign cultures are still diverse, with some people tending to be more exposed to global culture than their own local culture.

Recommendations

To enhance cultural literacy in society, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Integrating cultural literacy material into the education curriculum to strengthen understanding of local culture from an early age.
2. Increasing access and public participation in cultural activities such

as festivals, workshops, and cultural seminars.

3. Optimizing the role of digital media as a cultural education tool by providing informative and engaging content.
4. Encouraging government and cultural community policies to be more active in preserving and promoting local culture.

By implementing these efforts, it is expected that cultural literacy levels in society will increase significantly, ensuring that cultural identity and heritage remain preserved amid globalization.

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