



RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURAL VALUES IN 21ST CENTURY HISTORY LEARNING

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: July 1 2026 Accepted: July 12, 2026 Keywords: Cultural Values, History Learning, Local Wisdom *Corresponding Author: arifwahyuhidayat@uibu.ac.id	Abstract: History learning in the 21st century faces increasingly complex challenges along with the development of information technology, globalization, and rapid social change. In this context, the integration of cultural values is a crucial aspect for strengthening national identity, building student character, and increasing the relevance of history learning to real life. This article aims to examine the implementation of cultural values in 21st-century history learning through a qualitative descriptive approach and literature review. The study results indicate that cultural values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, nationalism, local wisdom, and respect for diversity can be integrated through various learning strategies, including project-based learning, contextual learning, the use of digital technology, and the exploration of local history. The implementation of cultural values in history learning not only enhances students' understanding of historical events but also shapes character appropriate to the demands of modern society. However, its implementation still faces various challenges, such as limited local culture-based learning resources, teacher competency, and the increasingly dominant influence of global culture. Therefore, synergy is needed between schools, the community, and the government in developing a history learning model oriented towards preserving cultural values in the digital age.

INTRODUCTION

The development of science and technology in the 21st century has brought significant changes to various aspects of life, including education. Advances in information technology allow for broader and faster access to knowledge, but also present challenges in the form of the erosion of local cultural values due to the rapid flow of globalization. In this situation, education plays a strategic role in preserving and passing on cultural values to the younger generation. History learning plays a crucial role in shaping students' identity, character, and national awareness. Through history learning, students not only gain knowledge about past events but also understand the values contained therein as guidelines for their social, national, and state lives. In this context, history learning serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge about past events but also as a medium for instilling cultural values, character, national identity, and 21st-century skills necessary for modern society (Muhtarom, 2022). One such challenge is the declining interest of the younger generation in local history and culture due to the increasing influence of global culture through various digital media. History plays a strategic role in shaping students' historical awareness and national identity. Through history learning, students can understand the nation's journey, appreciate cultural heritage, and develop a critical attitude toward various social phenomena occurring in their surroundings. However, the development of globalization, marked by the rapid influx of foreign cultures, often leads to a decline in the younger generation's understanding of local culture and the values of wisdom passed down from their ancestors. This situation raises concerns about a cultural identity crisis among the younger generation if education fails to effectively integrate cultural values into the learning process (Santoso, 2022).

Cultural values are a set of beliefs, norms, traditions, and customs that develop within a community and are passed down from generation to generation. These values encompass various teachings regarding mutual cooperation, tolerance, responsibility, cooperation, respect for diversity, and a love for the social and cultural environment. In history learning, cultural values can be integrated through the study of local history, regional figures, community traditions, and various historical events that reflect the nation's character. The integration of cultural values in history learning is expected to make learning more contextual and meaningful for students because it is directly related to the reality of their lives (Syahputra, 2019).

The importance of implementing cultural values in history learning also aligns with the demands of 21st-century education, which emphasizes the development of critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration (the 4Cs). History learning that links material to local cultural values can encourage students to critically analyze various historical events, understand the relationship between the past and the present, and discover the relevance of cultural values in addressing contemporary social issues. According to Agustinova (2022), history learning is not only oriented toward mastering historical facts but also toward developing students' character and competencies as cultured citizens. Several studies have shown that implementing cultural values in history learning has a positive impact on student character development. Research on the internalization of a culture of tolerance in history learning indicates that cultural values can be instilled through learning that emphasizes social, ethnic, and religious diversity, thus fostering a tolerant attitude in social life. Furthermore, research on the implementation of multicultural values in history learning reveals that history learning can serve as a means to strengthen national awareness and appreciate diversity as the richness of the Indonesian nation (Aziz, 2018).

On the other hand, the reality of history learning in schools still presents various obstacles. Learning often focuses on memorizing facts, dates, and historical figures, thus providing little opportunity for students to understand the values inherent in historical events. As a result, history learning is perceived as less engaging and unrelated to students' daily lives. This situation demands learning innovations that integrate cultural values into

history learning materials, methods, and media to make them more relevant to the needs of 21st-century students (Ambarnis, 2023).

Based on this description, the implementation of cultural values in 21st-century history learning is an important issue to examine. The integration of cultural values not only plays a role in preserving the nation's cultural heritage but also supports the development of students' character, national identity, and 21st-century skills. Therefore, research on the implementation of cultural values in history learning is necessary to understand how cultural values are applied in the learning process and their contribution to the formation of student character and competence in the era of globalization.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article uses a qualitative research method with a library research approach. Data were obtained from various scientific sources, such as books, journals, research articles, educational policy documents, and other relevant sources discussing cultural values, history learning, and 21st-century education. Data analysis was conducted through several stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This approach was used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of cultural values in history learning and their relevance to the needs of 21st-century education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1) The Concept of Cultural Values in Education

Cultural values are a set of principles, norms, beliefs, customs, and behavioral patterns that develop within a society and are passed down from generation to generation. In the context of education, cultural values play a crucial role as they form the foundation for shaping the character, identity, and personality of students. Education serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge but also as a medium for cultural inheritance, aiming to maintain the continuity of society's noble values. Through the educational process, students are introduced to various aspects of culture that reflect national identity, enabling them to understand, appreciate, and implement these values in their daily lives.

The concept of cultural values in education stems from the understanding that humans are social beings living within a specific cultural environment. Each individual learns how to think, behave, and act through the socialization process that occurs in the family, school, and community. Therefore, education is a strategic instrument in instilling cultural values that align with societal norms and expectations. Cultural values taught through education include religious values, mutual cooperation, tolerance, honesty, responsibility, discipline, hard work, and respect for others. These values serve as guidelines in shaping students' behavior so they can interact harmoniously with their social environment. From an educational perspective, culture and education are closely related and influence each other. Culture serves as a source of values and learning materials, while education serves as a means of preserving and developing culture. Schools, as formal educational institutions, have a responsibility to integrate cultural values into the learning process. This integration can be achieved through the curriculum, learning activities, and extracurricular activities that provide students with direct experiences. Thus, education not only produces individuals who are academically intelligent but also possess a strong cultural awareness.

Cultural values in education also serve as a means of character formation. Character is a moral quality reflected in a person's attitudes and behavior. In an increasingly complex society driven by technological developments and globalization, cultural values-based education is crucial for strengthening the identity and morals of the younger generation. By introducing local and national cultural values, students can understand their cultural roots and thus avoid being easily influenced by foreign cultures that conflict with the nation's noble values. Culturally grounded character education also helps students develop empathy, social awareness, and a sense of responsibility for their surroundings. In addition to playing a role in

character formation, cultural values in education also support the creation of an inclusive and harmonious learning environment. Indonesia, as a country with diverse cultures, ethnicities, religions, and languages, requires an education system that instills values of tolerance and respect for differences. Education that teaches multicultural values can help students understand that diversity is a wealth that must be preserved. Through learning that values differences, students learn to coexist peacefully and develop attitudes of mutual respect and cooperation in community life.

The application of cultural values in education can be achieved through various approaches. Teachers, as agents of education, play a central role in instilling cultural values in students. In addition to delivering subject matter, teachers also serve as role models, demonstrating behavior that reflects cultural values. Teachers' exemplary behavior in being honest, disciplined, polite, and responsible will positively influence students' character development. Furthermore, the use of contextual and culturally based learning methods can enhance students' understanding of the cultural values inherent in their environment. In the era of globalization, strengthening cultural values in education faces various challenges. The rapid flow of information and the development of digital technology allow for the influx of various foreign cultures, which can influence the mindset and behavior of the younger generation. This situation demands that educational institutions be more active in instilling cultural awareness in students. Education must equip the younger generation with the ability to filter external cultural influences without losing their cultural identity. In this way, students can be open to global developments while maintaining the cultural values that are part of their identity.

Overall, the concept of cultural values in education emphasizes that education is not only a process of intellectual development, but also a process of transmitting and strengthening cultural values. Through education, cultural values can be instilled in the younger generation as a foundation for living in society. Implementing cultural values in education will produce individuals who possess not only academic competence but also character, integrity, and a strong social and cultural awareness. Therefore, integrating cultural values into every aspect of education is a crucial step in developing a generation capable of preserving national identity while adapting to changing times.

2) Implementation of Cultural Values in History Learning

History learning plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and instilling the cultural values that constitute a nation's identity. History serves not only as a means of understanding past events but also as a medium for passing on values, norms, and traditions that have developed in society. Through history learning, students can understand how cultural values are formed, developed, and passed down from one generation to the next. Therefore, implementing cultural values in history learning is a strategic step in strengthening national identity while building the character of the younger generation based on the nation's culture. Implementation of cultural values in history learning can be achieved through the integration of historical material with various cultural elements present in society. Teachers can link historical events to the cultural values underlying them. For example, in learning about the Indonesian struggle for independence, students not only learn the chronology of events and the figures involved, but also understand the values of mutual cooperation, unity, nationalism, and the spirit of sacrifice that were the main strengths of the nation's struggle. In this way, students can see that history is not just a collection of facts, but also a means to understand noble values that are relevant in today's life.

In addition to learning materials, the implementation of cultural values can also be achieved through the use of learning resources based on local culture. Utilizing local history allows students to become more connected to their social and cultural environment. Through the study of traditions, historical sites, folklore, and cultural relics in their region, students can recognize the cultural identity that is part of their lives. This approach not only enhances historical understanding but also fosters a sense of pride in the regional cultural heritage that

forms part of the national cultural heritage. The learning methods used also play a crucial role in instilling cultural values. Teachers can employ active learning models such as group discussions, history projects, field studies, and problem-based learning. Through these activities, students are trained to apply cultural values such as cooperation, tolerance, responsibility, and mutual respect. For example, when students conduct research on regional history in groups, they learn to collaborate in gathering information, respect each other's opinions, and take responsibility for assigned tasks. These values are part of the culture that needs to be developed in everyday life.

The implementation of cultural values in history learning can also be achieved through the use of innovative technology and learning media. Technological developments enable teachers to present various historical sources in digital form, such as documentary videos, digital archives, virtual museums, and interactive learning applications. Through these media, students can learn about various cultural heritages in a more engaging and contextual way. In addition to increasing interest in learning, the use of technology also helps students understand the importance of cultural preservation amidst increasingly modern developments. Furthermore, history learning that integrates cultural values can support the strengthening of character education. Values such as honesty, discipline, hard work, tolerance, patriotism, and social concern can be acquired through an understanding of various historical events. When students study the struggles of heroes or the success of communities in maintaining cultural traditions, they can learn relevant moral lessons to apply in their daily lives. Thus, history learning not only produces cognitive knowledge but also shapes attitudes and behaviors consistent with the nation's cultural values.

The implementation of cultural values in history learning also faces several challenges. Globalization and the development of information technology have introduced various foreign cultures, influencing the mindsets and lifestyles of the younger generation. In some cases, local culture has become less popular than popular culture developed through digital media. Therefore, teachers need to develop creative and relevant learning strategies to ensure cultural values remain engaging for students. Furthermore, support from schools, families, and communities is also needed to create an environment conducive to the sustainable internalization of cultural values. Therefore, implementing cultural values in history learning is a crucial effort to instill cultural identity, strengthen students' character, and maintain the sustainability of the nation's cultural heritage. Through the integration of historical materials, the utilization of local history, the use of active learning methods, and the support of educational technology, cultural values can be effectively transformed into the younger generation. History learning oriented towards cultural values not only helps students understand the past but also equips them with the attitudes and character necessary to face future challenges without losing their identity as Indonesians.

3) Challenges of Implementing Cultural Values in History Learning

The implementation of cultural values in history learning is an important effort to instill character, identity, and national awareness in students. Through history learning, students not only learn about past events but also understand the cultural values that have developed in society, such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, nationalism, responsibility, and respect for diversity. However, in practice, the application of cultural values in history learning faces various challenges that affect the effectiveness of achieving these educational goals. One major challenge is the increasingly strong influence of globalization on the lives of the younger generation. The rapid flow of information through the internet and social media has resulted in students being exposed to more foreign cultures than to local or national cultures. This phenomenon often leads to changes in mindsets, lifestyles, and behaviors that are less aligned with the nation's cultural values. As a result, students' interest in studying history and understanding the nation's cultural heritage has waned. They tend to view history as a subject that discusses the past and has no relevance to their modern lives.

Another challenge is students' low motivation to learn history. Many students still view

history as a subject synonymous with memorizing names of figures, dates, and events. This perception makes history learning boring and unengaging. Under these conditions, the delivery of cultural values embedded in various historical events becomes less effective because students' attention is focused solely on the cognitive aspects. In fact, history learning should be able to develop the affective aspect through an understanding of the values, attitudes, and character inherited from the nation's predecessors. Furthermore, teachers' limited competence in integrating cultural values into the learning process is also a significant obstacle. Not all teachers have the ability to connect historical material to the context of students' daily lives. Some teachers still use conventional learning methods that focus on lectures and textbooks. As a result, the learning process provides little space for students to explore the meaning of cultural values contained in historical events. Teachers are required to be creative in designing learning strategies that connect historical facts with the social and cultural realities faced by students today.

Another challenge relates to the limited availability of learning resources based on local culture. Many history materials emphasize national history in general, while local history, rich in cultural values, often receives less attention. Yet, local history holds great potential to help students understand their region's cultural identity. The lack of documentation, teaching materials, and learning media that incorporate local history and culture results in a less than optimal internalization of cultural values. This situation also leads to students' lack of awareness of the cultural heritage found in their surroundings. Differences in students' social and cultural backgrounds also pose a challenge to implementing cultural values in history learning. Indonesia is a country with diverse ethnicities, languages, religions, and traditions. This diversity can be both a strength and a challenge in the educational process. Teachers must be able to convey cultural values inclusively so that all students feel valued and prevent the dominance of one culture. If not managed properly, differences in cultural backgrounds can lead to misunderstandings or even conflict in the learning process.

The development of digital technology presents both challenges and opportunities. Technology provides widespread access to various sources of historical information, but it also opens the door to the emergence of inaccurate or distorted information. Students lacking digital literacy skills can easily receive misinformation. Therefore, teachers need to guide students in selecting valid sources of information while also instilling a critical attitude towards the various historical narratives that develop in the digital space. The family and community environment also influence the successful implementation of cultural values in history learning. Cultural values taught in schools will struggle to be firmly embedded if they are not supported by the surrounding environment. When students do not see the application of values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and respect in everyday life, the internalization of these values becomes less effective. Therefore, synergy between schools, families, and the community is needed to build a culture that supports the development of student character.

Overall, the implementation of cultural values in history learning faces various challenges stemming from globalization, low student interest in learning, limited teacher competency, a lack of local culture-based learning resources, diverse student backgrounds, the development of digital technology, and the influence of the family and community environment. Addressing these challenges requires creative learning innovation, strengthening teacher competency, wise use of technology, and collaboration between various parties so that history learning can become an effective means of instilling cultural values and shaping a generation with character, identity, and a strong historical awareness.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementing cultural values in 21st-century history learning is a strategic step in building student character while strengthening national identity. Values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, nationalism, integrity, and local wisdom can be integrated through

various innovative learning approaches, including the use of local history, project-based learning, and the use of digital technology. The application of cultural values in history learning offers significant benefits, including strengthening national identity, character formation, preserving local culture, and developing 21st-century competencies. However, its implementation still faces various challenges, such as globalization, limited learning resources, and diverse teacher competencies. Therefore, strong collaboration between schools, families, communities, and the government is needed to create history learning that is not only oriented toward knowledge but also able to instill cultural values as a foundation for the lives of young people in the global era.

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