



## **Integration of Kaili Cultural Values in the Development of Learning Resources in Elementary School: A Naturalistic Qualitative Approach**

Herlina<sup>1</sup>, Ayu Cahyani Amiruddin<sup>1</sup>, Arif Firmansyah<sup>1</sup>, Surahman<sup>1</sup>, Raveenthiran Vivekanantharasa<sup>2</sup>, Amran Rasli<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Tadulako, Sulawesi Tengah, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>The Open university of Sri Lanka, Colombo, Sri Lanka

<sup>3</sup>Inti International University, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

Corresponding author email: [herlina@untad.ac.id](mailto:herlina@untad.ac.id)

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### **Abstract**

The advancement of information and communication technology has brought major changes in the world of education, including the use of learning resources. However, globalization also has the potential to distance students from local cultural values. This study aims to explore the development of learning resources based on Kaili local culture in learning in grade IV of Elementary School using naturalistic qualitative methods. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies with research subjects consisting of teachers, students, principals, and cultural figures at elementary school Sunju. The results of the study indicate that the learning resources used still do not accommodate local culture, while students are more familiar with foreign cultures than Kaili culture. Teachers have difficulty integrating local culture due to limited teaching materials. The principal supports the development of learning resources based on local culture, but training is needed for teachers so that its implementation is more effective. These findings indicate that the development of learning resources based on local culture can enrich students' learning experiences and strengthen their cultural identity, although it still faces challenges in implementation. This study emphasizes the importance of the role of education in preserving local culture through the development of relevant and contextual learning resources.

Keywords: Elementary School; Kaili Local Culture; Learning; Naturalistic Qualitative

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The advancement of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including in the world of education. The rapid development of technology allows information to be accessed easily and quickly by anyone, including students in elementary schools (Wong & Oh, 2023; Jeon et al., 2024; Mathias & Standal, 2025). However, on the other hand, this progress also brings major challenges, especially related to changes in culture and local values that are increasingly eroded by the flow of globalization. In the context of education, information and communication

technology has contributed to innovation in learning, including the development of a more diverse curriculum, methods, and learning resources. However, globalization mediated by technological advances also has the potential to distance students from local cultural values. Foreign cultures that are easily accessible via the internet and social media are often more interesting than local cultures that are part of the nation's identity. As a result, children in elementary school age are more familiar with foreign cultures than their own regional cultures.

Education plays an important role in maintaining, preserving, and developing culture. The national education system should not only focus on academic aspects, but also play a role in character building and preserving local cultural values (Jumriani et al., 2021; Qotrunnada & Susilowibowo, 2021; Chou et al., 2022). also emphasized that education plays an important role in helping children understand cultural tools, so it is important to include cultural elements in learning so that students do not lose their cultural roots. Learning resources are an important component in the learning process. explains that learning resources are anything that can be used to facilitate the student learning process (Akhmar et al., 2023; Arar et al., 2023; Jana et al., 2024). adds that the main purpose of learning resources is to help students understand and master new concepts and skills more deeply and meaningfully. In the context of culture-based education, learning resources that accommodate local wisdom will provide a more contextual learning experience for students (Susanti, Inderawati, & Sitinjak, 2017; Quiñonez & Mendoza, 2024).

Based on the results of initial observations conducted at SDN Sunju, it was found that the use of learning resources in learning is still not optimal. Teachers still tend to rely on textbooks as the only source of learning, without developing or utilizing other more contextual learning resources. In fact, the local area, especially the local Kaili culture, has a lot of potential that can be used as learning resources that enrich students' experiences and instill local cultural values. Learning resources based on local culture can be an alternative solution to bridge the needs of character-based and culture-based learning (Fernando & Yusnan, 2022; Jamaluddin et al., 2022; Herdi et al., 2023; Prawiyogi et al., 2023). stated that learning resources based on local culture prioritize student activities with the various cultural backgrounds they have. Through this approach, students not only gain knowledge.

Based on previous research, it shows a gap in this study, seen from the variables used, in previous research conducted in 2021 focused on student history through the use of local history of the Siak Kingdom as a learning resource in high school, while this study examines the development of learning resources based on local Kaili culture in learning in elementary school (Nurdiansyah, 2021; Fajrie et al., 2024). The gap is also seen when viewed from the focus of the research, where previous research examined the influence of local history on historical awareness in high school and paid attention to local history learning methods and challenges in its implementation (Artasia et al., 2022; Cadiz et al., 2024; Jeon et al., 2024). While this study focuses on the integration of local culture in the development of learning resources for elementary school students and analyzes how local Kaili culture can be used as part of learning, as well as obstacles in its implementation. These two studies also use different research methods, thus showing a gap where the previous study used the qualitative naturalistic inquiry method to understand how local history is taught and its impact on students' historical awareness. While this study uses the qualitative naturalistic method, but with a more exploratory approach in developing learning resources (Aisyah, & Noviyanti, 2016; Herdi et al., 2023).

So, in terms of the research gap, this study offers a novelty in introducing the development of learning resources based on local Kaili culture, which not only focuses on the transfer of historical knowledge, but also how local culture can be integrated into learning as part of character education and the identity of elementary school students (Worachak et al., 2023; Cahayu et al., 2024). And this research was conducted at the elementary school level, which has different challenges, because students at this level are still in the exploration stage and forming an initial understanding of their local culture and identity (Burns, 2015; Banoğlu et al., 2023; Kiraga, 2023). Then the novelty in this study also contributes to the development of a local culture-based curriculum, in line with the Merdeka curriculum which provides flexibility for schools to include local cultural values in learning.

The results of this study have broad implications in the world of education, especially in

increasing students' awareness and pride in the local Kaili culture and encouraging more contextual and creative learning (Huda et al., 2017; Laksana, 2024). For teachers, this study provides insight into developing culture-based teaching materials and innovations in more interesting learning methods. Schools can act as centers for preserving local culture through the integration of cultural values in academic and extracurricular activities and collaboration with local communities. In education policy, this study serves as a reference for the development of local culture-based curricula, the provision of more contextual learning resources, and ongoing teacher training. Thus, this study supports the preservation of local culture through more relevant and meaningful education for the younger generation (Irjayanti & Lord, 2024; Wahyudi & Edward, 2024).

In the era of globalization, local culture-based education is crucial to prevent the erosion of cultural identity, especially for elementary school students who are vulnerable to exposure to global culture (Abdulrahman et al., 2024; Susana et al., 2024). This study aims to preserve Kaili culture by developing contextual learning resources so that students not only gain academic knowledge, but also understand and appreciate local cultural values. In addition to addressing the gap in culture-based teaching materials, this study supports character education through the integration of Kaili culture, such as mutual cooperation (*Sintuvu*), traditional arts, and local history (Perrotta et al., 2018; Bukoye & Abdulrahman, 2023). In line with the Merdeka Curriculum, this study provides guidance for schools and teachers in optimizing local culture-based learning to strengthen student identity and the effectiveness of education in the region.

This study aims to explore the development of learning resources based on local Kaili culture in learning in grade IV of Elementary School. By using a naturalistic qualitative approach, this study will explore how local Kaili culture can be integrated into the learning process and how teachers and students respond to the application of learning resources based on local culture (Muliana et al., 2023; Lanawaang & Mesra, 2024; Trisahid et al., 2024). The naturalistic qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the phenomenon in depth in a natural context. Through observation, interviews, and documentation studies, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of how local culture can be an integral part of learning resources in elementary schools (Widianingsih et al., 2023; Majeed et al., 2024). With this research, it is hoped that the world of education, especially in areas that have cultural richness such as Kaili, can integrate cultural elements in learning so that they not only produce students who are academically intelligent, but also have awareness and concern for their local culture (Abimantara & Sinaga, 2024; Lamuda et al., 2024).

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a naturalistic qualitative method, which aims to explore and understand phenomena naturally without manipulative intervention. This method was chosen in order to explore in depth how Kaili local culture can be integrated into learning resources in grade IV of Elementary School, as well as how teachers and students respond to its implementation. The naturalistic qualitative approach emphasizes the study of phenomena in natural conditions. In this study, the researcher acts as the main instrument directly involved in the process of data collection and analysis (Furqon et al., 2024; Moreno-Cely et al., 2021). This study is exploratory-descriptive, which aims to describe, understand, and analyze the phenomenon of the development of learning resources based on local Kaili culture at SDN Sunju in depth.

The subjects of this study were determined by purposive sampling, namely based on certain considerations that are relevant to the focus of the study. The subjects involved in this study included grade IV teachers who were responsible for the learning process (Abdulrahman et al., 2024; Sirait & Ratti, 2024; Yomantas, 2021). Grade IV students who were the main users of learning resources based on local Kaili culture, as well as cultural figures or local Kaili communities who had a deep understanding of Kaili culture and could provide insight into cultural values that could be integrated into learning.

This research was conducted in several stages as follows, the preparation stage begins with literature study, observation, and determining informants. Then the data collection stage, at this stage

conducting field observations, then conducting in-depth interviews with subjects and collecting related documents (Kwon et al., 2025; Simbolon et al., 2025; Triani et al., 2024). Furthermore, the data analysis stage begins by organizing the data obtained through interview transcripts, observation notes, and related documents. Then identifying the main patterns or themes that emerge from the main data. And compiling research results based on the findings that have been analyzed.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher himself (human instrument), who was tasked with observing, interviewing, and analyzing data. In addition, several additional instruments were used. Such as participatory observation, by directly observing how learning takes place, then recording the activities of teachers and students in using learning resources, and identifying the extent to which local Kaili cultural elements have been integrated into learning (Abdaoui et al., 2024; Peralta et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2023). The next research instrument was an in-depth interview, using a semi-structured interview technique with teachers regarding the use of learning resources. Then with students to find out their understanding of local culture. And the last instrument used in this study was documentation, by collecting teaching materials, curriculum, and learning resources used and documenting the results of interviews and observations in the form of notes or audio recordings (Ahmad et al., 2024; Moeis et al., 2023).

Data analysis in this study uses the (Miles and Huberman model., 1994) (Ndatyapo et al., 2024) which consists of three main stages. First, data reduction by sorting and selecting relevant data from the results of observations, interviews and documentation. Then grouping data based on categories that are in accordance with the focus of the study. Second, data presentation by compiling data in the form of narrative descriptions and making research findings in the form of tables or diagrams if necessary. Third, drawing conclusions by analyzing the findings to gain a deeper understanding and concluding how local Kaili culture-based learning resources can be developed and implemented in learning at SDN Sunju.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of the research conducted by this researcher are modifications to e-learning scrabble based on ethnomathematics with Lampung design nuances that can improve creative thinking skills and student learning outcomes in number material using applications. In Indonesia, learning activities are usually carried out using printed activity sheets. Therefore, researchers innovate by creating electronic activity sheets based on applications used for students studying number material. Along with advancing information technology, teaching materials used in the learning process are developed and innovated to improve education.

This research was conducted at SDN Sunju, where the majority of teachers and students are from the Kaili Tribe. Based on the results of initial observations and interviews with teachers and students, it was found that the use of learning resources in learning was still not optimal, especially in promoting local culture as part of the learning process. The curriculum used in this school is the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, but the teaching materials used are still oriented towards national culture in general and have not explored much local culture.

Based on the results of the observation, this study found that the textbooks used by teachers and students are still general and do not highlight the richness of local culture, the methods applied in learning have not utilized local culture-based learning resources as the main media in learning. Facilities and infrastructure are still limited, so that local cultural learning cannot be carried out optimally. And student awareness of local culture is still low, because they are more familiar with popular culture obtained from social media compared to their own culture.

Based on the results of interviews with various parties, including teachers, students, principals, and local cultural figures, it was revealed that the development of learning resources based on local Kaili culture is very necessary to improve students' understanding of their cultural heritage. Teachers stated that the available teaching materials have not explicitly accommodated local culture, so more contextual and relevant teaching materials are needed. In addition, many teachers are not yet accustomed to using alternative learning resources based on local culture, so they need guidance in integrating them into

learning. From the students' perspective, the majority are not yet familiar with the local Kaili culture in depth, including traditional houses, arts, and traditions of the community, because they are more interested in foreign cultural content that they access via the internet. The principal expressed his support for the development of learning resources based on local culture, because it is in line with the school's vision in forming the character of students who respect their culture, and emphasized the need for training for teachers so that the implementation of local culture-based learning is more effective. Meanwhile, local cultural figures emphasized that many aspects of Kaili culture have the potential to become teaching materials, such as the Souraja Traditional House, Sintuvu Culture, Palu Ngataku Songs, Pamonte Dance, Rego, as well as traditional musical instruments such as Santu, Kakula, Lalove, Gimba, Ganda-ganda, and Pare'e. They hope that education based on local culture can be instilled from an early age so that the younger generation continues to recognize, appreciate and preserve the rich culture of their region.

Data collection in the form of a documentation study found that the documentation analyzed was in the form of textbooks, curriculum, and local cultural reference materials. The results of the documentation study showed that the independent curriculum provides flexibility for schools to develop learning resources based on local culture, but not many schools have optimized.

That teachers have difficulty integrating Kaili local culture into learning due to limited teaching materials that explicitly accommodate regional culture. This is in line with Vygotsky's view in Santrock (2007) which emphasizes that education plays an important role in helping children understand cultural tools. Therefore, learning resources are needed that not only support academic achievement but also strengthen students' cultural identity. In this case, learning resources based on local culture can be a solution to provide a more contextual and meaningful learning experience for students.

The results of the study also showed that students were more interested in foreign cultures than their own local culture. This is reinforced by the finding that most students are not yet familiar with Kaili culture in depth, such as the Souraja Traditional House, Sintuvu Culture, Palu Ngataku Song, Pamonte Dance, Rego, and traditional musical instruments such as Santu, Kakula, Lalove, Gimba, Ganda-ganda, and Pare'e. This condition shows the influence of globalization which is increasingly shifting the awareness of the younger generation towards their local culture. Therefore, education has an important role in building students' awareness and love for regional culture through a local culture-based learning approach.

In Support and Challenges in the Implementation of Local Culture-Based Learning Resources, the principal expressed his support for the development of local culture-based learning resources, because it is in line with the school's vision in forming the character of students who respect their culture. However, the principal also highlighted the need for training for teachers so that they are better prepared to implement local culture-based learning resources effectively. This finding indicates that although there is awareness of the importance of local culture-based education, implementation in the field still faces challenges, especially in the readiness of educators.

In addition, interviews with cultural figures showed that Kaili culture has many aspects that can be used as learning resources. This shows that the integration of local culture into learning not only allows students to understand their own culture, but also becomes an effective strategy in preserving culture. This approach is in line with Supriadi's (2012) view which emphasizes that local culture-based learning resources prioritize student activities with their cultural background, so that they not only gain academic knowledge, but also understand and internalize the cultural values of their region.

However, this study also revealed that there are still limitations in terms of facilities and infrastructure that support local culture-based learning in schools. The use of teaching materials is still dominated by textbooks that emphasize national cultural diversity in general, without providing sufficient space for local regional culture. Therefore, the development of contextual local culture-based learning resources is important so that students have an emotional and intellectual attachment to their culture.

Based on previous research that has been conducted, it shows a gap in this research. Judging from the findings and discussions of these two studies, where the previous study highlighted the lack of innovation in literacy with the dominance of LKS and picture books, as well as the low interest of students in conventional teaching materials, thus recommending the development of digital media based on local wisdom such as flipbook e-storybook (Fajrie et al., 2024; Nurdiansyah, 2021). While this study emphasizes

the importance of learning resources based on Kaili local culture, which has not been accommodated in the curriculum, as well as the challenges of teachers in integrating it. The solution is the development of contextual teaching materials and teacher training. And the previous study emphasized digital transformation, while the second study focused on strengthening students' cultural identity. Thus, this study complements the first study by developing learning resources that are not only digital but also based on local culture for more contextual and meaningful learning.

This study offers novelty in the development of local culture-based learning resources that not only focus on digitalization, but also strengthen students' cultural identity. Unlike previous studies that emphasize digital media innovation in children's literacy, this study emphasizes the integration of Kaili local culture in learning as a strategy for preserving culture through formal education (Hyskaj et al., 2024; Sunarti et al., 2023). With a holistic and contextual approach, learning resources are developed not only as learning media, but also as a means of instilling cultural values in depth, responding to the challenges of globalization that make students more familiar with foreign cultures than their own regions. In addition, this study fills the gap in the limitations of local culture-based teaching materials by proposing an exploratory approach and highlighting the importance of teacher training so that culture-based learning can be implemented effectively. Thus, this study contributes to education by combining cultural identity strengthening and learning resource innovation to create more contextual, meaningful, and relevant learning for students.

This research has broad implications in education, especially in the integration of local Kaili culture in learning resources in elementary schools. For students, this research increases cultural awareness, creates more contextual learning, and encourages exploration of local culture. For teachers, this research enriches insights in developing teaching materials, improves competence in integrating local culture, and encourages learning innovation. From the school and curriculum perspective, this research strengthens the identity of the school as a center for cultural preservation and supports the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. In education policy, this research encourages a more inclusive curriculum, the provision of culture-based teaching materials, and teacher training (Mulugo et al., 2020). Thus, this research contributes to strengthening students' cultural identity and the effectiveness of local culture-based learning.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered for further research. The limited location coverage in one elementary school makes the results not necessarily generalizable to other schools with different cultural backgrounds. In addition, the local culture-based learning resources developed are still in the exploration stage and have not been widely implemented in the formal curriculum (Lu et al., 2024). Teacher readiness is also an obstacle, because they still need further training to be able to integrate local culture-based learning resources optimally. In addition, limited facilities and infrastructure in schools are an obstacle in the implementation of local culture-based learning, especially in the development of more varied learning media (Walton, 2012). Therefore, further research is needed to overcome these limitations and strengthen the effectiveness of local culture integration in education.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that the integration of Kaili local culture in learning resources has great potential to enrich students' learning experiences and strengthen their cultural identity. However, there are challenges in its implementation, such as limited available teaching materials, lack of teacher readiness, and minimal supporting facilities and infrastructure. Therefore, further efforts are needed in the development of local culture-based learning resources, including training for teachers, provision of more contextual teaching materials, and increased cooperation between schools, communities, and cultural figures in preserving local culture through education. With the integration of local culture in learning, it is hoped that students will not only be academically intelligent, but also have awareness and pride in their own culture. To optimize the integration of local culture in education, the development of local culture-based learning resources is needed that include aspects of digital materials and technology to be more relevant and applicable in various subjects. Further research

needs to be expanded to schools with different cultural characteristics to obtain a comprehensive picture and compare the effectiveness of local culture-based learning. Training and mentoring for teachers must be improved through workshops and the provision of practical modules. In addition, policy and infrastructure support from the government and collaboration between schools with cultural and community figures are essential. With these steps, local culture-based learning can be more effective, sustainable, and have a broad impact.

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