

## THE ROLE OF CHILDREN'S LITERACY IN SHAPING LOCAL CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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### Abstract

*In the rapidly evolving era of globalization, children in Indonesia face significant challenges in preserving their local cultural identity. Several factors contribute to this, including low interest in literature based on local culture and the strong influence of global culture, which dominates children's media and education. Local culture-based literacy is a solution to strengthen children's cultural awareness and local identity. This study aims to analyze the role of local culture-based literacy in shaping children's cultural identity amidst globalization. Additionally, it seeks to identify the challenges in implementing such literacy and explore potential solutions. The research method used is a literature review, collecting relevant scholarly articles on local culture-based literacy and children's cultural identity. This study examines existing research findings to identify factors influencing the effectiveness of cultural literacy in strengthening children's cultural identity in the globalization era. The results indicate that local culture-based literacy positively shapes children's cultural identity. This literacy enhances pride in local culture, despite challenges such as low reading interest in culturally-based materials, limited access, and the influence of global culture, which remain significant obstacles. Furthermore, the use of technology and educator training can serve as solutions to address these challenges.*

## INTRODUCTION

Children's literacy is a fundamental aspect of individual and societal development. Strong literacy skills encompass reading and writing abilities and understanding cultural values passed down through texts and narratives (Snow, 2020). Amidst the rapid flow of globalization, children's literacy can serve as a means to maintain and strengthen local cultural identity, particularly in culturally diverse nations like Indonesia. A study by (Santoso et al., 2021) revealed that early exposure to culture-based literacy increases children's awareness of their cultural roots, enabling them to identify with local culture despite being in an increasingly globalized environment. Furthermore, literacy that introduces local cultural values early on helps shape stronger character traits in adapting to changing times. In the fast-

paced global context, culture-based literacy is a protective barrier against the erosion of cultural identity among younger generations. This underscores the importance of education emphasizing cultural diversity to preserve local cultural richness.

Education plays a strategic role in shaping a literate generation with strong cultural awareness. When integrated with cultural aspects, children's literacy provides a deeper understanding of local heritage, strengthens self-identity, and fosters pride in regional culture (Rahman, S., 2022). (Dewi & Susanto, 2020) research highlights the importance of children's storybooks based on local culture in shaping children's perspectives and values from an early age. Thus, literacy education develops technical skills and introduces values and traditions that define a nation's identity. Children exposed to culture-based literacy tend to appreciate local wisdom and safeguard their ancestral heritage. This is particularly crucial given the challenges of maintaining local culture amid the increasingly integrated globalization process.

Cultural identity is a social construct continuously evolving through interactions between individuals and their environment (Hall, 2019). In the globalization era, local cultures face significant challenges due to the intensified penetration of foreign cultures through social media, films, and other digital platforms (Wahyudi, 2021). Globalization influences children's thinking, speaking, and behaving, potentially shifting their local cultural identity if not counterbalanced by strengthening local culture-based literacy (Irawan, 2023). As global cultural influences expand, children become increasingly exposed to foreign values, shaping their self-perception and understanding of their communities. Therefore, educating them through literacy reinforces their knowledge of local culture, preventing them from losing their cultural roots. A strong cultural identity can withstand the pressures of globalization if continuous efforts are made to introduce it through appropriate literacy and education programs.

Despite its potential, implementing cultural literacy faces challenges. Research by (Hasanah et al., 2022) indicates that children's interest in reading local culture-based literature remains lower than in popular literature, which often adopts foreign cultural influences. Additionally, limited access to books and local culture-based literacy materials hinders the development of children's cultural identity (Putri & Handayani, 2021). The prevalence of foreign media content, which is more accessible and engaging for children, often leads to local culture-based literature being perceived as less appealing. This issue is exacerbated by the lack of resources in many schools to provide high-quality books and materials emphasizing local cultural values. Therefore, addressing these challenges requires collaboration between governments, educational institutions, and communities to provide literacy materials rich in local culture.

Culture-based literacy enhances reading and writing skills and helps children understand and internalize local cultural values. According to (Prasetyo, 2020), children frequently exposed to local culture-based literacy develop a better understanding of their region's history and traditions, positively influencing their cultural identity formation. Children gain a deeper appreciation of their origins through literacy by introducing folklore, local legends, and historical figures. This helps them learn more about their culture and strengthens their love and pride in their cultural identity. Culture-based literacy is key to fostering a generation that is intellectually capable and rich in knowledge and appreciation of local heritage.

Technological advancements enable literacy media to become more engaging for children. Digital books, interactive educational apps, and local culture-based animated videos have been proven to enhance children's engagement in literacy (Suryani, 2023). A recent study by (Widodo, H., 2022) suggests that integrating technology into cultural literacy can effectively reach more children and increase their interest in local heritage. Utilizing apps and digital media also makes local culture education more engaging and comprehensible for children in the digital era. Thus, technology is a supporting tool and an effective medium for transforming local cultural literacy into a more modern and accessible format. This presents an opportunity to introduce and strengthen local cultural identity innovatively.

Several studies have shown a positive correlation between children's literacy and cultural identity formation. A longitudinal survey by (Nugroho & Kartika, 2021) found that children who actively read local culture-based books exhibit more incredible pride in their culture than those who predominantly consume foreign literature. This finding suggests that culture-based literacy can influence children's perception of their culture while fostering pride in their ancestral heritage. Research by (Lestari & Wibowo, 2023) highlights the importance of parental and teacher involvement in instilling cultural literacy in the education process. Support from parents and educators in introducing local culture-based literacy significantly impacts the strengthening of children's cultural identity, as they serve as role models in passing down traditions.

A multicultural literacy approach can balance local cultural identity and openness to other cultures in the face of globalization. A study by (Fadhilah & Sari, 2022) indicates that multicultural literacy enables children to understand and appreciate their culture while developing a broader perspective on global cultural diversity. Through this approach, children learn to love their culture and respect the cultural diversity around them. Multicultural literacy also facilitates inclusive learning, allowing children to celebrate cultural differences as a valuable asset that should be preserved.

The government and educational institutions play a crucial role in reinforcing culture-based literacy. According to (Suyanto, Y., 2022), educational policies encouraging local culture-based school textbooks can increase children's exposure to their cultural heritage. Additionally, community-based literacy programs can help expand children's access to reading materials aligned with their culture (Handayani, 2022). Government initiatives in funding and policy-making to support the publication of local culture-based books and learning materials are essential. This will enrich the educational curriculum and allow children to identify with their local cultural framework.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze how children's literacy contributes to shaping local cultural identity in the era of globalization. This study will also explore the challenges in implementing culture-based literacy and strategies to enhance its effectiveness in Indonesian education. The findings are expected to provide new insights into integrating local cultural literacy into a broader, more applicable education curriculum.

## **METHODS**

This research employs a literature review approach to explore various studies related to children's literacy and the formation of local cultural identity in the era of globalization. The data collection process is done by searching for relevant scholarly articles from journals, books, and published research reports. These sources are selected based on relevance, credibility, and

recency criteria. The researchers will examine and analyze previous studies that discuss the role of culture-based literacy in strengthening children's local cultural identity and the challenges and opportunities faced in its implementation in an increasingly globalized world. All selected literature sources will undergo a qualitative screening process to ensure their quality and contribution to the research topic.

Furthermore, the analysis will be conducted by organizing and categorizing findings from various studies into two main categories: culture-based literacy as a tool to strengthen children's local cultural identity; and the challenges faced in implementing culture-based literacy amid the currents of globalization. These findings will be presented thematically to provide a comprehensive overview of how children's literacy influences the formation of local cultural identity, as well as strategies that have been implemented in various countries, including Indonesia. This analysis is expected to be a foundation for developing more effective educational policies to introduce and preserve local culture through literacy.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Influence of Culture-Based Literacy on the Formation of Children's Local Cultural Identity**

Culture-based literacy significantly impacts the formation of children's cultural identity, especially in the context of globalization, which increasingly dominates social and cultural interactions. Recent research by (Nugroho & Kartika, 2021) found that children more frequently exposed to literature introducing their local culture, such as folklore, legends, and regional history, tend to develop a higher sense of pride in their culture. This indicates that culture-based literacy can strengthen children's connection to their cultural heritage and build a deeper understanding of their cultural identity.

In this context, literacy is a technical reading and writing process and a means to introduce and instill relevant cultural values. Research by (Dewi & Susanto, 2020) emphasizes that through culturally based storybooks, children learn language and acquire valuable local wisdom, such as customs and moral values passed down by society. Local culture-based storybooks allow children to recognize local figures who can serve as role models and introduce them to stories reinforcing their cultural identity. Thus, culture-based literacy helps children feel connected to their communities and understand their role in preserving culture.

Moreover, culture-based literacy allows children to broaden their understanding of the world while maintaining their local cultural roots. Research by (Suryani, 2023) shows that implementing culture-based literacy in the education curriculum helps children integrate local knowledge with a broader understanding of other cultures, enriching their perspective on globalization. Literacy that introduces local culture globally allows children to develop an inclusive cultural identity without neglecting their cultural heritage.

However, despite the many benefits of culture-based literacy, its implementation faces various challenges. One major challenge (Hasanah et al., 2022) identified is children's low interest in local culture-based literature. Children are more attracted to modern stories and media from global cultures, such as foreign films and books. This indicates the need to adapt local culture-based literature to be more engaging and relevant to children's interests today. Therefore, developing more creative and innovative local culture-based storybooks and literacy materials is crucial to capturing children's attention.

In addition, limited access to local culture-based literature is also a barrier to strengthening children's cultural identity. Research by (Putri & Handayani, 2021) shows that many regions in Indonesia lack access to books and learning materials based on local culture. As a result, children in some areas do not receive sufficient exposure to their cultural wealth. To address this issue, collaboration between the government, publishers, and educational institutions is needed to ensure that local culture-based literature is easily accessible to all children in various regions, especially those in remote areas.

On the other hand, digital technology can play a crucial role in facilitating the implementation of culture-based literacy. According to (Widodo, H., 2022), the use of digital applications and e-books that incorporate local culture in an engaging and easily accessible format can be an effective solution to increase children's interest in culture-based literacy. Interactive educational applications and animated videos based on folklore or local legends can introduce local culture in a more enjoyable and easily understandable way for children. Thus, technology can be an effective tool in introducing local culture to children in the digital era.

Strengthening cultural identity through culture-based literacy can also address the challenges of globalization, which increasingly threaten the existence of local cultures. Globalization significantly influences how children think and interact with the world around them. However, by strengthening culture-based literacy, children can understand and appreciate their culture while remaining open to other cultures. (Fadhilah & Sari, 2022) explain that multicultural literacy that combines local literature with an understanding of global cultural diversity can help children build a strong and flexible identity.

The importance of culture-based literacy in shaping children's cultural identity is also reflected in the role of parents and teachers. Research by (Lestari & Wibowo, 2023) shows that parental involvement in introducing local culture to their children is crucial. When parents encourage children to read local storybooks or discuss traditions and customs, children are more likely to develop a deeper understanding of their culture. Teachers also play an essential role in integrating culture-based literacy into the curriculum so that children can learn about local culture in a fun and profound way.

Finally, culture-based literacy is essential for shaping children's cultural identity and contributes to cultural preservation. Through culture-based literacy, children can become agents of change who promote and preserve their culture. By understanding and appreciating local culture from an early age, children will grow into individuals who take pride in their cultural heritage and strive to maintain and pass it on to future generations.

### **Challenges in Implementing Culture-Based Literacy in the Era of Globalization**

The implementation of culture-based literacy in the era of globalization faces several significant challenges that need to be addressed to maximize its impact on children's cultural identity formation. One of the primary challenges identified in research by (Hasanah et al., 2022) is children's low interest in literature based on local culture. Children are more attracted to literature from global cultures, which is more accessible and entertaining. Social media, international films, and other digital platforms provide direct access to various types of global culture, often capturing children's attention more than traditional local culture-based literature, which is less frequently updated.

In this context, culture-based literacy is often perceived as less relevant or appealing to children, who are more exposed to foreign cultures through technology and global media.

Research by (Putri & Handayani, 2021) shows that although children have access to various literacy materials, they tend to consume more international content, such as foreign cartoons and Western storybooks, which are considered more modern and engaging. This poses a significant obstacle in introducing and preserving local culture through literacy among children.

In addition, limited access to local culture-based reading materials is also a significant barrier to implementing culture-based literacy. Research by (Rahman, S., 2022) reveals that access to books and culture-based literacy materials is very limited in many regions, especially in remote areas. Many schools in these areas do not have book collections that include local stories or literary works that depict regional cultural richness. The unavailability of these books prevents children in these regions from being adequately exposed to their local culture, thereby hindering the development of a strong cultural identity.

Another challenge arises from globalization itself. According to (Irawan, 2023), globalization has changed how people think, speak, and act, impacting how children recognize and appreciate their culture. Although many Indonesian children still acknowledge their culture, globalization makes them more open and attracted to foreign cultures, often eroding traditional values taught through culture-based literacy. Children are more exposed to global media and tend to adopt foreign cultural values, sometimes contradicting the traditional values imparted through culture-based literacy.

However, globalization also presents opportunities for the development of culture-based literacy. One such opportunity is using technology to convey local cultural stories and information to children. Research by (Widodo, H., 2022) reveals that using technology in culture-based literacy can solve physical limitations in reading materials by utilizing mobile applications, e-books, and other digital platforms. Technology enables the presentation of more engaging and interactive materials, attracting children's attention and making them more interested in their local culture.

## **CONCLUSION**

Culture-based literacy plays a crucial role in shaping children's cultural identity in the era of globalization. Through literacy that introduces local cultural values from an early age, children can strengthen their connection to their cultural heritage, build pride in their regional culture, and develop a deeper understanding of their identity. Culture-based literacy teaches reading and writing skills and instills values that help children appreciate local wisdom, uphold traditions, and maintain their cultural identity in an increasingly interconnected world.

However, implementing culture-based literacy faces various challenges, such as children's low interest in local culture-based literature, limited access to relevant reading materials, and the strong influence of global culture, which is often more appealing to children. A more innovative approach is needed to overcome these challenges, such as utilizing technology to present local cultural stories in an engaging and interactive format. By addressing these obstacles, culture-based literacy can become an effective tool for shaping a younger generation with a strong cultural identity who values cultural diversity worldwide.

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