



Maintaining and Maintaining Local Wisdom of Sundanese Culture as One of the Indonesian National Identity

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Abstract

The Sundanese people are part of the people living in Indonesia, the majority of whom are in West Java and its surroundings. Sundanese people have a number of distinctive cultures such as politeness, humility towards others, respect for elders and love for younger people. Spiritual balance is maintained and maintained by carrying out traditional ceremonies, while social balance is by working together to maintain it. However, as time goes by, it is feared that this culture will experience decline and is even vulnerable to extinction. Therefore, in this research, a study was carried out on maintaining and preserving the local wisdom of Sundanese culture, which is part of the identity of the Indonesian nation. The method used is literature study, namely searching various written sources in the form of books, archives, magazines, articles and other relevant scientific works. The results of the study show that in maintaining and maintaining the local wisdom values of the Sundanese people, each individual needs to be aware of how important it is to preserve Sundanese culture so that it does not become extinct. The preservation of this culture, the role of regional beautification and the Indonesian government is also very necessary.

Keywords: local wisdom, Sundanese people, national identity, self-awareness, the role of government.

1. Introduction

The Indonesian nation is a society with diversity in various aspects of life and culture. This is evident in the wide range of cultural diversity within its society, as seen in the thousands of cultures found across Indonesia. In general, culture is a way of life that develops and is shared collectively, passed down from one generation to the next. Culture is the product of human creativity and emotion, which serves as a source of wealth for the Indonesian nation. Recognizing that Indonesia is a pluralistic society, we can see the existence of various ethnic groups in the country. Each ethnic group has its own distinct cultural characteristics (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

The Sundanese people are one of the many ethnic groups living in the Indonesian archipelago (Indrawardana, 2013). Moreover, the Sundanese community also possesses unique cultures and local wisdom. The development and preservation of cultural values and local wisdom are guaranteed by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, 1945, Article 32, Paragraphs 1 and 2, which state: 1) The state advances Indonesia's national culture amid world civilization by ensuring the freedom of society in maintaining and developing its culture. 2) The state respects and preserves regional languages as part of the national cultural heritage (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

Culture or local wisdom reflects the nation's personality and should be preserved to resist negative influences from outside (Mahardika & Darmawan, 2016). The local wisdom of the Sundanese people is also part of Indonesia's national identity. However, in this millennial era, Sundanese cultural traditions have started to decline and be forgotten due to the cultural shift towards Westernization. As a result, many Sundanese people today feel ashamed to speak or even practice Sundanese culture, viewing it as an outdated tradition (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

Based on this explanation, several issues arise, such as: 1) What is the description of the local wisdom of the Sundanese people? 2) What is the correlation between local wisdom and national identity? 3) What are the challenges and efforts to preserve the values of Sundanese local wisdom as a national identity? (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

Pratama et al. (2022) conducted this research to study the characteristics of the Sundanese people's local wisdom in shaping civic moral attitudes. The method used was ethnopedagogy through a descriptive qualitative approach by analyzing secondary data sourced from journal articles and books. The study results reveal that the local wisdom of the Sundanese people holds profound meaning. Brata (2016) explored the connection between local cultural wisdom and the national identity of Indonesia. The findings showed that, selectively, many aspects of local wisdom could be elevated

as cultural assets of the nation and could serve as a unifying force and a fundamental element in strengthening the identity of the Indonesian nation. Widiatmaka (2022) examined strategies for maintaining the existence of local wisdom as national identity in the disruptive era. It was stated that one of the challenges posed by the disruptive era to the existence of local wisdom in Indonesia is the diminishing pride in local culture, leading many, especially the youth, to abandon local wisdom in favor of foreign cultures.

Based on the problem statement and previous studies, this research discusses the local wisdom of the Sundanese people as a national identity. The research focuses on the idea that the local wisdom in question is a socio-cultural condition of the Sundanese people, which is one of Indonesia's cultural treasures that should be preserved as it represents the national identity of Indonesia.

2. Research Methods

This study was conducted using a literature review method, where the author searched for various written sources, including books, archives, magazines, articles, and relevant journals. Through this review, it is hoped that the information obtained from the literature study can be used as a reference to strengthen the existing arguments and provide a reference for solving the current issues, particularly regarding the decline of Sundanese culture, which has become a problem among the youth in this millennial era (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

This study employed a literature review method, which involved searching and analyzing various written sources, including books, articles, journals, and archives, related to Sundanese culture and its significance to national identity. The chosen method allows for an in-depth understanding of how previous researchers have examined the local wisdom of the Sundanese people, especially in the context of modern challenges such as cultural shifts and globalization.

To ensure a comprehensive review, a variety of academic and historical sources were examined, focusing on both the current state of Sundanese cultural preservation and historical developments. Additionally, secondary data were gathered to support arguments about the relationship between local wisdom and national identity, as well as the efforts made by local and national stakeholders to preserve these cultural values. By synthesizing existing knowledge, the research aims to provide a clearer picture of the challenges faced by the Sundanese culture in the millennial era and identify potential strategies for maintaining and revitalizing local wisdom. The literature review approach not only provides a theoretical framework but also contextualizes the decline of Sundanese traditions within broader socio-cultural trends.

3. Analysis and Discussion

3.1. Local Wisdom of the Sundanese Tribe

Local wisdom represents the maturity of society at the local community level, reflected in the attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives that foster the development of local potential and resources (both material and non-material). These can be used as strengths in bringing about positive change (Kalidjernih, 2010). Local wisdom is also a conceptual idea that exists within society, continuously growing and evolving in the community's consciousness. It functions to regulate various aspects of life, from the sacred to the mundane (Mahardika & Darmawan, 2016).

Based on the definition of local wisdom, the local wisdom of the Sundanese people refers to individuals who possess good character as a guide to living virtuously. This character includes:

- 1) Cageur (healthy)
- 2) Bageur (kind)
- 3) Bener (right)
- 4) Singer (skilled)
- 5) Pinter (smart/intelligent)

These values are reflected in daily life through good morals and ethics, such as clean and healthy living (physically and spiritually) and discipline in following rules as part of being a good citizen (Widiatmaka, 2022). Sundanese culture is known for emphasizing proper etiquette and good behavior. Some of the notable characteristics of Sundanese people include:

- 1) Someah (friendly)
- 2) Amis budi (always smiling)
- 3) Respect for elders

This reflects the core values of Sundanese society (Saeful & Saputra, 2020). Additionally, Sundanese culture is unique in many ways. The people of West Java, also known as "Tatar Sunda," are generally recognized for being religious. This is represented through the sayings:

- 1) Silih asih (mutual love)
- 2) Silih asah (mutual sharpening of skills)
- 3) Silih asuh (mutual protection) (Manan, 2019)

The Sundanese also exhibit other key cultural traits, such as:

- 1) Politeness and humility towards others
- 2) Respect for elders

3) Care for the younger generation

Spiritual balance is maintained through traditional ceremonies, while social harmony is upheld through gotong royong (mutual cooperation). The Sundanese language also teaches different levels of speech for addressing elders, peers, and younger individuals (Saeful & Saputra, 2020)

3.2. Correlation of Local Wisdom of Sundanese People with Indonesian National Identity

The word "identity" comes from the word identity, meaning characteristics, signs, or self-identity that are attached to someone or something that differentiates them from others. Meanwhile, "national" refers to the distinctive characteristics of groups that have similar characteristics, both physical, such as culture, religion, language, and non-physical, such as desires, ideals and goals. So, "national identity" is a characteristic possessed by a nation that philosophically differentiates that nation from other nations. It was further explained that the birth of a nation's national identity has its own characteristics, characteristics and uniqueness, which are largely determined by the factors that support the birth of that national identity (Wibowo & Wahono, 2017).

The factors that support the birth of the Indonesian national identity include objective factors and historical factors (Hurri & Munajat, 2016). Objective factors include geographic-ecological and demographic factors, while subjective factors include historical, social, political and cultural factors of the Indonesian nation (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

From this explanation, of course we can describe the correlation between the culture of the Sundanese people, which is one of the cultures owned by the Indonesian state, which is also one of the national identities that we must preserve (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

3.3. Obstacles and Efforts to Preserve the Value of Local Wisdom of the Sundanese Community as the Identity of the Indonesian

The influence of Western culture, which is currently trending among teenagers, including in the use of local languages, significantly impacts efforts to preserve the local wisdom of the Sundanese people as part of Indonesia's national identity. This is certainly not an easy task in the millennial era.

One of the regional languages in Indonesia is Sundanese, spoken by the Sundanese people both in the province of West Java and beyond. Despite being the second most spoken regional language in Indonesia after Javanese, Sundanese remains vulnerable to extinction.

A phenomenon seen among some of our youth is their reluctance, for various reasons, to use their regional language. In the context of Sundanese, for instance, some younger generations in Tatar Sunda Kiwari are beginning to experience this reluctance. They are hesitant, even embarrassed, to speak Sundanese. Others feel insecure and lack confidence when using the Sundanese language. If this trend continues to grow, it will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the future existence of the Sundanese language (<https://ayobandung.com>, accessed July 2020).

In essence, the Sundanese language holds the same importance as Indonesia's national language and international languages. Regardless of this, preserving a regional language requires awareness from the speakers of that language. Therefore, to address this issue, it is necessary to promote and educate the public on the importance of using local languages. One approach is to create activities within communities or specific environments that introduce and implement the use of Sundanese language and culture. This was exemplified by the Mayor of Bandung in 2012, through the implementation of Regional Regulation No. 09 of 2012 on the Use, Maintenance, and Development of the Sundanese Language, Literature, and Script, commonly referred to as "Rebo Nyunda" by the Sundanese community in Bandung (Saeful & Saputra, 2020).

This program designates Wednesday as the day for speaking Sundanese in all educational, governmental, and community activities. The Bandung City Government launched the "Rebo Nyunda" program, which began on November 6, 2013, with the goal of preserving regional language and culture. Rebo Nyunda is part of the thematic day's initiative by Bandung Mayor Ridwan Kamil to encourage the city's residents to love Bandung. The thematic days include: free bus Monday; smoke-free Tuesday; Rebo Nyunda Wednesday; English Thursday; cycling Friday; culinary night Saturday; and car-free day Sunday (Darmayanti et al., 2012).

The implementation of this regulation is concrete evidence of the government's efforts to preserve and maintain Sundanese culture, especially in Bandung City, as part of Indonesia's national identity.

4. Conclusion

In preserving the value of local wisdom of the Sundanese people as part of the national identity of Indonesia, it is crucial that every individual becomes aware of the importance of cultural preservation. Without such efforts, these rich traditions risk extinction in the face of modernization and globalization. Cultural preservation should not only be seen as the responsibility of the Indonesian Government, but as a shared obligation for all levels of Indonesian society, particularly within the Sundanese community.

Preserving local wisdom is more than just maintaining customs and traditions; it is about safeguarding the identity and values that have been passed down for generations. By understanding the historical and moral significance

embedded in the local wisdom of Sundanese culture, individuals can contribute to strengthening national unity while honoring their heritage.

In addition to language preservation, maintaining cultural practices in daily life, such as traditional ceremonies and moral values, can ensure that local wisdom remains relevant in modern society. Schools, community leaders, and families all play a crucial role in passing down these traditions to younger generations.

It is hoped that regional languages in Indonesia, including Sundanese, will continue to thrive and be preserved for future generations. This hope can only be realized if those who speak and use these languages have the awareness and commitment to actively maintain and protect them. One way to achieve this is by making the regional language the primary language within family environments, ensuring it is spoken and valued at the heart of daily life.

Moreover, fostering pride in local culture and encouraging its use in public spaces, education, and media will further strengthen the preservation efforts. By nurturing a strong connection to their roots, Sundanese people can ensure that their cultural identity remains vibrant and alive, contributing to the diverse and pluralistic identity of Indonesia as a whole.

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