Negotiation Of Cultural Identity And Values In Macassan Traditional Games In Indonesia

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Article Info	Abstract
	Traditional games have been neglected for more than thirty-two years. However, since the implementation of the decentralization era commencing at the beginning of 2003, it began the establishment and appreciation of local ethnic and cultural identities across Indonesia. Traditional games since have been proposed to be one of the activities within the school contexts. Despite many schools reject to accommodate this activity, some pro-preservation and maintenance of local culture and identities propose this traditional game to the Department of Education to be included as one of the extracurricular activities in schools, particularly in primary school contexts. In this paper, we intend to share the stories of the four school principals in promoting traditional games across the school communities. They convince others about the importance of the games and values for children. We involved in several games activities with the principals and they share with us their values of traditional games on many occasions. This paper also describes the implication of the traditional games that have a robust impact on the establishment of social-cultural skills and identities of communities. It implicates the shed light on how teachers and students can apply traditional games effectively in extra-curricular learning and become aware of values embedded in the games. It suggests that the paper provides insight into how teachers in primary education can better prepare students to establish their local identities and further contributes to the debates on cultural identities and traditional games.

Introduction

Historically, Since January 2001, the Indonesian government declares the end of the centralization. During centralization, there is a strong motto of having one national cultural dominant among Indonesian society. This period marks the initiative for decentralization. With the spirit of decentralization, the government allows the change of structure, politics, and more importantly the cultural transformation. Besides, this reform allows the development and revitalization of local ethnics and cultural transformation among the Indonesian community. Thus, there are approximately more than 700 local languages and more than 1340 ethnics existed across the Indonesian archipelago. Beginning this year, all those ethnic identities are recognized and revitalized since then, locally, regionally, and internationally.

To revitalize local ethnics identities from different cultural backgrounds, one of the ways to place them as one of the local curriculum subjects taught in Indonesian primary schools. There are many types of local ethnic identities such as clothes, visual arts, rituals, ceremonies, local foods, cultural celebrations, local languages, local songs, and traditional games. To develop such traditional ethnic and identities, the government has put in place the policies that it is up to the school communities to choose the types of indigenous activities to be included in their curriculum.

Since then we are, the researchers, are interested to find out the types of local and ethnic identities to revitalize in schools. Through several different occasions, we have met some of the school principals who have a strong commitment to revitalizing local identities that represent local cultures in their schools. In fact, in the region where we live, numerous local cultural activities are taught as part of their local curriculum including *Macassan* (local language of Makassar people), traditional dances and arts, indigenous songs, and traditional games. Five schools among them chose to teach traditional games as part of their local curriculum.

Researchers note that several educators and ethnographers comments on the importance of traditional games. For example, Ramani, Daubert, and Scalise, (2019) in their studies have raised our awareness of how significant traditional games as part of traditional ethnic identities that the degree of communities lifestyles. They convinced on maintaining traditional games as a medium to build numerical skills for children in the community. We can see that these ethnographers concern about placing traditional games not only as an educational tool but also as symbols of cultural identities that exist among modern society.

For another ethnographer, such as Edwards (2017) and Deming at.al (2017), they view traditional games as recreational activities that stimulate emotion and enjoyment of children as a form of the appreciation of traditional culture. Also, they believe traditional games as forms of social interactional skills that can build children's skills socially and psychologically. These researchers have exhibited that traditional games can form people's socio-cultural identities among communities.

Researchers encounter along the way of the research that many Indonesian ethnographers have limited attention to the cultural identities in traditional games. As a result, not much study has been conducted in the area of traditional games. We notice a study by Jufri & Wirawan (2018) focus on the relationship between traditional and entrepreneurship skills. They identify aspects of traditional games that can stimulate children s emotion to build the spirit of entrepreneurship among them. This study, we categorize as a way to build children's socio-cultural identities through traditional games.

Understanding the change, the limited availability of publication, and the struggle of teachers to place traditional games in their extracurricular activities trigger us to conduct a study on the issue of traditional games and cultural identities. We expect we can attract policymakers and traditional game activists to pay more attention to the issue of traditional games before they disappear among us due to the enormous modern games are available online. Therefore, we negotiate access and have regular meetings with the four principals of primary schools who have worked hard to realize and place traditional schools as part of their curricula activities.

Research method

We have indicated that four school primary school principals who have volunteered to join our discussion on the issues of traditional games. Uniquely, two of the principals are located in the center of the business district area and the others are situated in the suburban area of Makassar city. The four principals are the forefront activists of traditional games and commit to maintaining any traditional and local cultures in the current globalization and modern industrial revolution

We do not find it difficult to meet and invite the four principals to participate voluntarily as a subject of our ethnographic study. We send them invitations informally through WhatsApp's application to invite them to join. After they agree, we establish a regular scheduler meeting with them. We usually met regularly with the principals on the occasions where children in their schools play traditional games. We observe how children play and how they feel and enjoy traditional games. Behind these enjoyments, school principals struggle to place among the curriculum. They told us that most of the schools put in place modern languages like English as one of their extracurricular activities rather than traditional and local cultures.

The four principals have to convince parents and school communities the importance of traditional games as a form of traditional and cultural preservation. Besides, they have met with the policymakers (Regional Department of Education) to allow the school to choose what best suit their schools for extracurricular activities. For them, it is not as easy as it is, because many parents wish to place English and other modern skills for their students' future, and many others want modern music skills rather than traditional games. The four principals often negotiate informally with parents on how important to maintain our cultural identities and to maintain our ancestors' cultural heritage.

Findings

After several meetings and observations, several traditional games they mostly play at their schools: *Allongnggak, Aggalacang, Maddende'*, M*akkaddaro, and Mabboy.* We do not focus on the description of the games below, but more on what the means for them and others. Therefore, they work hard to place traditional games as part of their school policies. We depict the four principals' explanations using their pseudonyms: Pam, Tab, Lay, and Kal.

Pam has worked in different primary schools and has become a principal for 15 years. Pam graduated from a bachelor's degree from the Institute of Teachers' Education and Training in the city. He is in his 50s and has long proposed traditional cultures as part of the school curriculum. On several occasions, Pam told us about the values of traditional games: collaborative work, good character, and tolerance. He comments, "Traditional games can build strong collaborative work, stronger teamwork, especially with students from different ages". Also, "it is a character game, where children are trained to be honest". More importantly, traditional games are "part of a way to respect others, that's tolerance", Pam Said.

Similarly, Tab has worked in different primary schools and has become a principal for 8 years. Tab graduated from a bachelor's degree from the Institute of Teachers' Education and Training focusing on primary education. He is in his 40s and is an activist for the preservation of traditional cultures. On several occasions, Tab told us about the values of traditional games: collaborative work, good character, and tolerance. He comments, "Traditional games can build strong collaborative work, stronger teamwork, especially with students from different ages". Besides, "it is a character game, where children are trained to be honest". More importantly, traditional games are "part of the way to respect others, that's tolerance", Tab Said.

Lay has recently become a principal for primary schools. Lay graduated from a bachelor's degree from the Institute of Teachers' Education and Training focusing on literacy for primary education. He is in his 40s. On several occasions, Lay told us about the cultural values of traditional games: collaborative work, mutual trust, and confidence. He comments, "Fostering mutual trust and time management between group members". Also, "Growing confidence when jumping or throwing deep into the cube". More importantly, traditional games are "Establishing team members to perform better and win the game is important in the traditional games", Lay Said.

Kal has been promoted for a primary school principal for 5 years. Like others, Kal graduated from a bachelor degree in primary education. She is in his 40s and is an activist for the preservation of traditional cultures. On several occasions, Kal told us about the values of traditional games: collaborative work, good character, and physical endurance. She comments, "Working together in a group is more important than others in this traditional game". Also, "Children learn to respect others through this game". More importantly, traditional games are, as Kal uttered: "It increases physical and mental endurance and also friendship."

Discussion

What can we learn from the four participants above is that they share the same cultural values embedded in the traditional games: building teamwork, nurturing positive characters, promoting tolerance, and exercising physical fitness. Tecedor (2016) suggests that repeated activities can establish children's confidence in both inside and outside the school. The traditional game the better they can socialize with others and in turn, it helps to grow their linguistic competence.

Building positive characters, as Rog (2016) argues that learners can build social interactional skills such as establishing an initial conversation, taking part in the on-going dialogue, and increasing the language use and awareness used by children during the game. Especially, Deming et al. (2017) comment that social-cultural identity can enhance employability and social coordination. The return of developing social identity is the gain of social capital in the long term. As a result, learners who possess socio-cultural identity such as in establishing conversations, managing conversation, decision making in conversation, and taking a turn in the conversation can increase their employability skills for their future.

Every traditional game may contain both social skills and social values. Concerning social values, Türkkahraman (2014) conducted a study on structural and functional aspects of values. Functionally, values can help learners the way they think and they behave, the means of evaluating their own and others, the spirit to help learners to concentrate on useful cultural aspects, and the guide for learners in social lives. For these important components, traditional games can enhance and foster the social skills and values to help learners for their success in their lives in a multicultural and challenging environment.

We can note that schools with a similar setting can adapt traditional games to be part of their curriculum to develop social-cultural values. In the long run, the social interactional values that students gain during traditional can game become social capital (Deming et al., 2017). Social capital is an advantage of building social skills and interaction from an early age. Also, social capital can assist them in a future challenging multicultural environment.

We are aware that traditional games portray the spirit of recreational activities. This means that traditional games can help children to establish their potential social skills and become part of their recreational activities. This finding echoes the earlier study that traditional games provides fund and enjoyment for players and provide fundamental training for social skills (Edwards, 2017). Not only the fund and enjoyment, through traditional games, but they can also build their social interactional competence (Tecedor, 2016) that is fundamental for children for future times.

This traditional game requires all team members to pay attention to time management since every round has a time restriction. Therefore, every team member is trained to be more disciplined and respect the time. This kind of social skill is expected to apply in the social-cultural contexts. The development of children's social skills at an early stage can promote social interactional competence (Tecedor, 2016). Social interactional competence is pivotal for them to establish a successful business and international activities for their future.

These traditional games show socio-cultural values and identities that are essential for children when they interact with others. For example, respecting differences among team members and opponents are important social skills in these traditional games. The establishment of this skill can reduce the gap of social behavior that occurs in society (Türkkahraman, 2014). The individual gain of respect skill that is gained at the children's age can be an asset for a nation. This is also the expectation of the Indonesian Ministry of Education (MoE, 2016). Children will potentially succeed in their social interaction within people from their own and people from the socio-cultural background.

The application of traditional games among these four schools requires supports from all educational stakeholders. Due to the limited guidance of the traditional game, many other schools that are not part of this study have not included traditional games as part of their extracurricular activities. In addition, traditional games

are not assessed formally, but they are played as part of social and outdoor activities to maintain their cultural identities.

The implication is that the schools that apply traditional schools as part of their extracurricular activities can be a model for other schools. As a model, the government is strongly recommended to support in terms of policy and financial support. These kinds of assistance can provide sustainability of the implementation of the games within the school contexts. Also, teachers who facilitate the traditional game can be important resources for the government and community, and they can be resourceful stakeholders that can train other teachers from other schools who wish to use traditional games as part of their extracurricular activities in their schools.

Conclusion

The traditional games can be excellent activities to build children's social-cultural identities and establish students' confidence inside and outside schools. It suggested that schools could revitalize traditional games for an alternative way to reduce children's addiction to the use of current modern technological games. The more the children engage with traditional games, the more they understand who they are, and the better the social interactional skills they can build and the better they understand their local cultures and identities.

We understand that this current study has a limitation. Future studies on policymakers and traditional game activities are important to carry out because policymakers can provide a pivotal policy for schools, children, parents, and all-involved educational stakeholders. The study in a larger setting and longitudinal period is recommended because it can provide a comprehensive understanding of the impacts of traditional games on psychology, cognitive, and employability skills. Despite this limitation, the present study can be used as a fundamental resource for future studies and policymakers.

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