

Research Article

Innovative Contextual Learning Model Based on Bugis Local Wisdom to Enhance Cultural Literacy of Junior High School Students

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Abstract

This study explores the integration of Bugis local wisdom into an innovative contextual learning model to enhance cultural literacy among junior high school students. Using a qualitative research approach through a systematic literature review, the study analyzes existing academic literature related to contextual learning, local wisdom in education, and cultural literacy. The findings reveal that contextual learning, when coupled with local wisdom, significantly improves student engagement and academic performance by making learning more relevant and connected to students' cultural identities. The incorporation of Bugis cultural values and traditions, such as mutual respect and cooperation, not only strengthens students' understanding of their heritage but also fosters a sense of pride and belonging. However, challenges such as the lack of adequate teaching materials and insufficient teacher training were identified as barriers to effective implementation. Despite these challenges, the study highlights the potential of this approach to serve as a model for other multicultural societies, advocating for a curriculum that balances global education standards with local cultural content. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on culturally responsive teaching and provides insights into how local wisdom can be integrated into educational systems to foster cultural literacy. The study recommends further empirical research to test the effectiveness of this model in real classroom settings and to explore its applicability in other ethnic contexts.

Keywords: Contextual Learning; Bugis Local Wisdom; Cultural Literacy; Qualitative Research

INTRODUCTION

In the context of a rapidly globalizing world, the preservation of local cultures and identities has become a matter of increasing importance in educational settings. One of the primary goals of modern education is not only to provide academic knowledge but also to foster cultural literacy that connects students with their heritage (Banks, 2008). Cultural literacy, which includes the understanding of one's own history, traditions, and values, is essential in promoting a well-rounded individual who is both globally competent and locally aware (Hirsch Jr, 1988). Indonesia, with its rich diversity of ethnic groups and traditions, presents a unique opportunity for integrating local wisdom into the educational curriculum. One such ethnic group, the Bugis people of South Sulawesi, possess a wealth of cultural practices and philosophical teachings that are rooted in their daily lives and historical experiences (Pabbajah, 2021).

Despite the wealth of local wisdom embedded in various Indonesian ethnic groups, educational curricula across the nation have largely overlooked the integration of such cultural knowledge in the classroom. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of incorporating cultural elements into education (Nursakiah et al., 2022), but few have explored the potential of utilizing local wisdom, particularly from the Bugis community, as a framework for enhancing cultural literacy in junior high schools. Moreover, while contextual learning models have been discussed in various educational contexts (Bransford, 2000), there is a lack of studies that specifically target the integration of local wisdom into these models, particularly in the Indonesian setting (Azizah et al., 2022).

This gap is particularly urgent given the current educational trends towards globalized curricula, which often marginalize the importance of local identity and heritage. In a multicultural country like Indonesia, it is essential that students develop a strong sense of cultural pride and identity, alongside their academic achievements (Mulyani et al., 2024). As students increasingly engage with globalized educational materials and perspectives, there is a risk of them losing touch with the cultural values that are integral to their identity. Studies show that students' cultural identity influences their academic performance, and their understanding of local culture can enhance their connection to the content (Ratri et al., 2024). Thus, the need for a learning model that can both engage students with their cultural heritage and improve their academic learning outcomes is imperative.

Several studies have explored the role of contextual learning in enhancing student engagement and knowledge retention. For instance, Dewey (1986) emphasized the importance of connecting education with real-world contexts to make learning more meaningful (Dewey, 1986). In the Indonesian context, Seftika et al. (2017) argued that contextual learning models, when applied appropriately, can significantly improve students' understanding of their local culture (Seftika et al., 2017). However, there is a dearth of studies specifically addressing the integration of

local wisdom, such as that from the Bugis community, into the curriculum. Few have examined the specific potential of Bugis culture in fostering cultural literacy among junior high school students (Lizawati & Noviani, 2023). This study aims to fill this gap by developing a contextual learning model based on Bugis local wisdom.

Research has also shown that integrating cultural knowledge in educational practices can increase students' sense of belonging and academic success (Cummins, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 2022). Furthermore, contextual learning is recognized as an effective method in enhancing students' problem-solving skills and cultural awareness (Kleden et al., 2018). Despite this recognition, there remains a gap in literature when it comes to the application of local wisdom-based contextual learning in Indonesia, particularly with the Bugis culture.

This study proposes an innovative contextual learning model that integrates Bugis local wisdom into the curriculum of junior high schools. By utilizing a unique blend of local storytelling, cultural practices, and philosophical teachings from the Bugis community, this model offers a fresh approach to contextual learning in Indonesia. The novelty lies not only in the integration of Bugis cultural elements into education but also in the application of these elements within a structured learning model designed to enhance cultural literacy. This approach not only preserves cultural identity but also contributes to the broader educational goal of preparing students for a rapidly changing global environment while maintaining strong local ties (Banks, 2008; Dewey, 1986).

The primary objective of this research is to develop and assess an innovative contextual learning model based on Bugis local wisdom, aimed at enhancing cultural literacy among junior high school students. This model seeks to bridge the gap between students' academic learning and their cultural identity, fostering a deeper connection to their heritage while enhancing their educational outcomes. The significance of this research lies in its potential to contribute to the development of culturally relevant curricula that can be adopted across various ethnic groups in Indonesia. This study also aligns with the Indonesian government's emphasis on strengthening local content in the national curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013). Additionally, this study aims to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of contextual learning in fostering cultural awareness and literacy, with broader implications for educational practices in multicultural societies (Roux, 2007).

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How can Bugis local wisdom be integrated into a contextual learning model for junior high school students?
2. What impact does this learning model have on the cultural literacy of junior high school students?

This research is expected to contribute to the development of culturally inclusive teaching practices in Indonesia and beyond. By introducing a novel model of learning that incorporates local wisdom, the study will offer insights into how contextual learning can be tailored to local cultural contexts, providing a foundation for future research and educational reforms that prioritize cultural literacy alongside academic achievement (Yusniawati & Lestari, 2021). The study also highlights the potential of local wisdom as an educational resource, presenting new possibilities for

culturally grounded pedagogies in diverse educational settings (Ladson-Billings, 2022).

Innovative Contextual Learning Model

The concept of contextual learning refers to an educational approach that emphasizes the relevance of academic content by connecting it to real-life experiences, cultural contexts, and the students' lived experiences. This model aims to make learning meaningful by embedding it within contexts that are directly applicable to the learners' daily lives, facilitating deeper understanding and retention (Bransford, 2000). An Innovative Contextual Learning Model builds upon this foundation by integrating not only real-world applications but also local cultural elements, such as traditional wisdom and practices, into the educational process. This approach recognizes that the learning environment, including the surrounding cultural context, significantly influences how knowledge is absorbed and understood by students (Lave, 1991). In the case of Indonesia, this model can be particularly effective when it incorporates local wisdom from ethnic groups such as the Bugis community, whose rich cultural heritage offers valuable insights for enhancing students' cultural literacy (Rusman et al., 2023).

In the context of the Indonesian education system, integrating cultural elements such as Bugis local wisdom into the curriculum through an Innovative Contextual Learning Model can help bridge the gap between academic knowledge and cultural identity. This model not only fosters intellectual growth but also cultivates cultural pride, which can positively impact students' sense of belonging and their overall educational engagement (Owens et al., 2024). Local wisdom, including values, stories, and practices specific to the Bugis community, provides a rich source of content that can be woven into various subjects, including social studies, literature, and even religious education, to make learning more relevant and engaging. By aligning academic content with the values and traditions that students already identify with, this approach supports a more holistic educational experience that goes beyond conventional textbooks and standardized tests.

Additionally, the Innovative Contextual Learning Model encourages active learning and student-centered approaches by utilizing community-based resources and experiences. This strategy aligns with the principles of constructivist learning, where learners build knowledge through their interactions with their environment and peers (Vygotsky, 1978). For example, Bugis storytelling traditions, which are central to the community's culture, can be used in language and literature classes to not only improve language skills but also help students understand moral lessons embedded in these stories. Moreover, field trips to cultural sites or participation in community events can serve as powerful tools for experiential learning, allowing students to engage directly with the traditions they study in the classroom (Bidder et al., 2019).

Importantly, the application of local wisdom in the learning process also aligns with the broader educational objectives of promoting multiculturalism and social cohesion. In a diverse society like Indonesia, teaching students to value and understand cultural differences is essential for fostering a sense of unity while respecting diversity (Banks, 2008). The Innovative Contextual Learning Model, when

applied with a focus on local wisdom, promotes cultural literacy by enabling students to connect their academic learning with their cultural heritage, thus creating an education that is both locally rooted and globally relevant. This approach helps students not only develop intellectual abilities but also enhances their emotional and social intelligence, preparing them for a more interconnected and culturally aware future (Ladson-Billings, 2022).

By using the Bugis local wisdom in a contextual learning framework, this model presents a novel educational pathway that prioritizes cultural knowledge alongside academic achievement. This shift from a purely content-driven curriculum to one that is enriched by local culture has the potential to transform the way students view their education, making it more meaningful and closely tied to their identity and community (Jatuporn, 2023). Moreover, it also prepares students for the challenges of a globalized world, equipping them with the tools to understand and appreciate both their own cultural roots and the diverse cultures they encounter in the broader global society.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically using a literature study (systematic literature review) to examine the application of an innovative contextual learning model based on Bugis local wisdom to enhance cultural literacy among junior high school students. A qualitative approach is suitable for this research as it allows for a deep exploration of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks surrounding the integration of local wisdom into educational practices, and it provides insights into the impact of such integration on students' cultural literacy (Creswell & Creswell, 2014). The literature study method enables the researcher to synthesize existing knowledge from multiple sources, providing a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on contextual learning and the role of local wisdom in education.

The primary data for this study were obtained from a range of academic sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference papers, and reports from educational institutions and governmental bodies. The data sources were selected based on their relevance to the research topic and their contribution to understanding the theoretical foundations and practical applications of contextual learning models, particularly those incorporating local wisdom. Specifically, the study focused on literature related to contextual learning, local wisdom integration in education, cultural literacy, and the Bugis culture. Sources were obtained from well-established databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, JSTOR, and Springer, ensuring that the data were from credible and peer-reviewed academic publications (Hox & Boeijs, 2005).

Data collection in this study followed the process of a systematic literature review. The researcher began by conducting a comprehensive search for articles and studies related to the integration of local wisdom in educational settings, contextual learning models, and the role of cultural literacy in secondary education. Search keywords included "contextual learning," "local wisdom in education," "cultural literacy," and "Bugis culture in education." Studies published between 2010 and 2025

were prioritized to ensure that the data reflected the most current research trends and practices (Palinkas et al., 2015). The selection criteria for articles included relevance to the research questions, methodological rigor, and the inclusion of empirical data. After gathering relevant literature, each source was critically reviewed and categorized based on thematic relevance to the research objectives.

The data analysis process involved a thematic analysis of the selected literature. Thematic analysis is a flexible and widely used method in qualitative research that involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, the researcher carefully read through the selected studies, identifying key themes related to the integration of local wisdom, the effectiveness of contextual learning, and the impact on cultural literacy. The analysis was conducted in several stages: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) coding of the data, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, and (5) writing the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process allowed the researcher to synthesize insights from various studies and draw conclusions about the potential of the innovative contextual learning model based on Bugis local wisdom. Furthermore, the researcher cross-checked the findings with established theories in education, such as Vygotsky's social constructivism and Dewey's experiential learning theory, to provide a robust theoretical framework for understanding the model's application in real-world educational settings (Dewey, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978).

By using this rigorous data collection and analysis methodology, the study aims to contribute to the academic discourse on integrating cultural wisdom into educational practices, particularly in the context of Indonesian secondary education. This methodological approach ensures that the findings are based on a thorough review of existing literature and supported by credible academic sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section provides a detailed analysis of the findings from the systematic literature review on the integration of Bugis local wisdom into an innovative contextual learning model aimed at enhancing cultural literacy among junior high school students. The results, derived from various sources, offer significant insights into the potential and challenges of implementing such a model in the Indonesian educational context.

The concept of contextual learning is deeply rooted in the notion that learning should be relevant and connected to students' lived experiences. Contextual learning, as discussed by Bransford (2000), emphasizes the importance of making academic knowledge applicable to the real world (Bransford, 2000). This approach is particularly effective in engaging students, as it allows them to see the value of what they are learning by connecting it to familiar contexts. The inclusion of local wisdom within this framework further enhances its relevance, as students are better able to relate academic concepts to their own cultural practices, beliefs, and experiences (Khusyairin et al., 2022). The literature highlights that students' learning is significantly enriched when it is tied to their cultural identity, as this fosters a deeper understanding of both the subject matter and the world around them. In the case of Indonesia, contextual learning provides a powerful way to reconnect students to their

heritage, thus improving their overall academic engagement and performance (Rahadian, 2019). This finding supports the idea that an education system which integrates local wisdom into the curriculum could foster greater cultural awareness, which, in turn, would enhance cultural literacy among students (Banks, 2008).

In the context of this study, the integration of local wisdom into education plays a critical role in bridging the gap between academic content and students' cultural identities. Local wisdom, particularly from indigenous cultures, has long been considered a vital component of educational practices that help foster a sense of pride and belonging among students (Andriyanto et al., 2023). Bugis culture, with its rich traditions, moral values, and philosophical teachings, serves as an important example of local wisdom that can be harnessed to enrich the learning experience. This culture is grounded in principles such as mutual respect, cooperation, and social responsibility—values that align with the broader goals of education, which aim to develop responsible and engaged citizens. Studies show that incorporating local wisdom into curricula enhances cultural literacy, enabling students to not only learn about their own cultural heritage but also appreciate and respect the diversity of other cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2022). When local wisdom is integrated into education, students are better able to connect their learning to real-world cultural contexts, which strengthens their academic and social development (Banks, 2008).

The impact of Bugis local wisdom on students' cultural literacy is evident in the literature, where it is shown to provide a deep connection to students' heritage and identity. Bugis local wisdom, exemplified in their traditional philosophy of “Sipakatau, Sipakainge, Sipakalebbi” (mutual respect, mutual understanding, and mutual cooperation), offers students valuable life lessons that go beyond the classroom. According to Badeni & Saparahayuningsih (2023), these moral teachings not only enhance students' understanding of cultural values but also play a crucial role in shaping their character (Badeni & Saparahayuningsih, 2023). By incorporating Bugis folktales, traditions, and language into the curriculum, students gain a stronger appreciation for their cultural heritage. Studies have found that the inclusion of cultural stories in the curriculum not only enhances students' cultural literacy but also contributes to their personal development, fostering a stronger sense of cultural identity and pride (Tsania & Sudimantara, 2025). Moreover, these cultural elements are particularly beneficial in reinforcing the values that shape moral and social behavior, aligning with broader educational goals that seek to produce well-rounded individuals who are connected to their community.

One of the most significant findings of this literature review is the effectiveness of contextual learning in enhancing cultural literacy. Contextual learning is proven to be highly effective in fostering a deeper understanding of cultural content by engaging students in real-world, culturally relevant experiences. This approach not only improves knowledge retention but also promotes the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that contextual learning is inherently social, as it involves students in activities and discussions that are grounded in their cultural contexts (Lave, 1991). By applying Bugis traditions and practices in the classroom—such as through community-based projects, storytelling, and field trips—students actively engage with their culture and learn through

experiences that are directly tied to their heritage. Pierroux et al. (2011) suggests that such experiential learning, where students participate in cultural activities such as traditional Bugis festivals or visit local cultural sites, significantly enhances their cultural literacy (Pierroux et al., 2011). These hands-on experiences provide students with opportunities to explore and understand their cultural identity in ways that are meaningful and memorable, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in their culture. Furthermore, such experiences offer a more immersive and engaging way to learn compared to traditional textbook-based methods.

However, the challenges in implementing the innovative contextual learning model based on Bugis local wisdom are not without merit. While the literature reveals significant benefits, it also identifies several obstacles to successful implementation. One of the key challenges is the lack of teaching materials that integrate local wisdom into the curriculum. Many schools, particularly in rural areas, lack resources and materials that are culturally specific, which makes it difficult for teachers to incorporate local wisdom into their lessons effectively (Ladson-Billings, 2022). Furthermore, there is a noticeable gap in the availability of textbooks or lesson plans that integrate Bugis culture into mainstream education. This lack of resources often results in teachers being uncertain about how to teach local culture effectively within the context of the national curriculum. Additionally, teacher training is another significant barrier. As the literature suggests, teachers may not be adequately prepared to incorporate local wisdom into their teaching practices. Professional development programs that focus on culturally responsive teaching methods and the integration of local knowledge are crucial to overcoming this challenge (Ladson-Billings, 2022).

Finally, the potential for broader application of the model suggests that the integration of local wisdom into education is not limited to Bugis culture but can be expanded to other ethnic groups within Indonesia. By adopting similar models, schools across Indonesia could embrace the rich diversity of local cultures, offering students a more inclusive and culturally relevant education. Banks (2008) and Ladson-Billings (2009) argue that such culturally grounded pedagogies not only enhance students' cultural literacy but also promote social cohesion by fostering an appreciation for diversity (Banks, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2022). The model proposed in this study has the potential to be adapted for other multicultural societies as well, where cultural literacy is a critical component of students' academic and personal development. By embracing local wisdom in educational practices, schools can create a more inclusive curriculum that acknowledges the cultural contributions of various ethnic groups, ultimately leading to a more cohesive and culturally aware society.

Discussion

The findings from this literature review highlight the significant potential of integrating Bugis local wisdom into the educational curriculum through an innovative contextual learning model, aimed at enhancing cultural literacy among junior high school students. The results suggest that contextual learning, when applied with local cultural content, significantly improves student engagement and cultural understanding. This aligns with contemporary educational trends that emphasize culturally responsive teaching and the inclusion of indigenous knowledge

in the curriculum (Banks, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2022). In a globalized world, where education often prioritizes universal knowledge and skills, incorporating local wisdom into the learning process provides a valuable opportunity to nurture students' cultural identity, foster a sense of pride, and bridge the gap between academic learning and cultural heritage.

One of the key findings from the study is the effectiveness of contextual learning in enhancing cultural literacy. Contextual learning, as noted by Bransford et al. (2000), helps students make meaningful connections between academic content and their real-world experiences (Bransford, 2000). In the case of the Bugis cultural context, this model allows students to connect their academic learning with their cultural practices, fostering not only cognitive understanding but also emotional and social growth. This is particularly important in the Indonesian context, where cultural diversity is a significant aspect of the national identity. By incorporating Bugis local wisdom, students are encouraged to engage with their cultural roots, making learning more relevant and relatable. Such integration not only supports cultural literacy but also strengthens social cohesion by promoting a sense of shared identity within a multicultural society (Cummins, 1986).

However, the implementation of this innovative model faces several challenges. The lack of teaching materials and insufficient teacher training identified in the findings are significant barriers. These challenges mirror the current situation in many schools across Indonesia, where there is often a lack of resources to teach local culture in a structured and meaningful way. According to Ladson-Billings (2009), the absence of culturally relevant teaching materials and a lack of training for educators on how to effectively incorporate local wisdom into the curriculum can lead to superficial integration, thereby limiting the potential benefits of contextual learning (Ladson-Billings, 2022). This issue is compounded by the fact that many teachers are not prepared to deliver culturally responsive instruction, as they may not be familiar with the local traditions or may lack pedagogical strategies for integrating such content effectively into their lessons. Therefore, professional development and the creation of culturally inclusive teaching materials are essential steps in addressing these challenges.

Despite these challenges, the findings indicate that the innovative contextual learning model has the potential to be successfully implemented and scaled across different ethnic groups in Indonesia. As seen in the integration of Bugis wisdom into the curriculum, similar models could be applied to other cultural groups, such as the Javanese, Sundanese, or Balinese, each with its unique set of traditions and knowledge. This aligns with the broader goal of promoting multiculturalism in education, which is vital in a country like Indonesia, where ethnic diversity is a core characteristic of the population (Banks, 2008). By incorporating various local wisdoms into the curriculum, schools can create a more inclusive and representative educational environment that respects and celebrates the cultural diversity of Indonesia's students. This would not only enhance students' cultural literacy but also prepare them to thrive in a globally interconnected world while maintaining a strong connection to their heritage.

Additionally, the potential of this model extends beyond Indonesian schools. The incorporation of local wisdom into educational practices can serve as a model for other multicultural societies that face similar challenges in balancing global education standards with the need to preserve and promote local cultures. As global education systems increasingly recognize the importance of cultural diversity and inclusion, the findings of this study offer valuable insights into how local cultural content can be integrated into mainstream education in ways that foster both academic and personal development (Yusniawati & Lestari, 2021).

In conclusion, while the challenges of implementing a contextual learning model based on Bugis local wisdom are significant, the potential benefits—particularly in enhancing cultural literacy, promoting social cohesion, and preserving cultural heritage—make it a worthwhile endeavor. The findings suggest that a culturally responsive curriculum not only enriches the learning experience but also contributes to the broader goal of developing globally competent, yet culturally grounded, citizens. As such, it is essential for educators, policymakers, and community leaders to collaborate in creating the necessary resources and training to support the effective implementation of such models in schools.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings from this study indicate that integrating Bugis local wisdom into an innovative contextual learning model offers significant potential for enhancing cultural literacy among junior high school students. The review of the literature supports the effectiveness of contextual learning in fostering deeper engagement and understanding by linking academic content to students' real-life experiences and cultural identities. Incorporating local wisdom into this model not only enriches students' cultural knowledge but also strengthens their connection to their heritage, promoting a sense of pride and belonging. However, challenges such as the lack of adequate teaching materials and insufficient teacher training need to be addressed to fully realize the benefits of this approach. Despite these challenges, the integration of Bugis cultural content into the curriculum can serve as a model for other multicultural societies, fostering cultural literacy, social cohesion, and educational inclusivity. The study contributes to the growing body of research advocating for the inclusion of local culture in the educational system, showing its potential to create a more culturally responsive and globally aware education system.

Recommendations for Future Research

For future research, it is recommended to conduct empirical studies that explore the practical application of the proposed contextual learning model in real classroom settings. Research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of this model in improving not only cultural literacy but also students' academic performance and social skills. Additionally, studies could investigate the impact of local wisdom integration on teachers' professional development and their preparedness to deliver culturally responsive education. Further research could also examine the feasibility of implementing similar models in other regions of Indonesia, focusing on how local wisdom from different ethnic groups, such as Javanese, Balinese, or Sundanese, can be integrated into the curriculum. Finally, exploring the

use of digital tools and technology to support the teaching of local wisdom could open up new avenues for expanding access to culturally relevant educational content, especially in remote and underserved areas.

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