

Identifying Local Wisdom as the Basis of Learning Theory

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Abstract

Local wisdom is the result of thoughts, experiences, and cultural practices of the community that are inherited from generation to generation and become a guideline in social life. In the context of education, local wisdom has great potential as a foundation for the development of contextual learning theories and practices. This research aims to identify various forms of local wisdom that can be used as the basis for learning theory and explain its relevance in the development of education oriented to the needs of students and the socio-cultural environment. The research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. Data was obtained from various scientific sources in the form of books, journal articles, policy documents, and research results related to education based on local wisdom. Data analysis is carried out through data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that the values of mutual cooperation, deliberation, respect for nature, experiential learning, and intergenerational inheritance of knowledge are relevant forms of local wisdom as the basis for the development of learning theories. Local wisdom can strengthen constructivist theories, contextual learning, social learning, and humanistic learning theories. Therefore, the integration of local wisdom in learning can increase the relevance of education while supporting the preservation of local culture.

Keywords: local wisdom, learning theory, contextual education, local culture, constructivism.

Introduction

Education is a process that cannot be separated from the social and cultural context of the society in which it takes place. Every society has a system of values, norms, and knowledge that develops through long experiences in interacting with the natural and social environment. This value system is known as local wisdom which is an important part of the cultural identity of a community (Sedyawati, 2014). In its development, local wisdom not only functions as a guideline for people's lives, but also has the potential to be a relevant source of learning in the educational process (Tilaar, 2015).

Local wisdom can be understood as knowledge, beliefs, norms, customs, and various social practices that develop in a community and are inherited from generation to generation. Local wisdom is born from the experience of the community in facing various life challenges so that it contains values that have been tested in real life (Geertz, 1983). Therefore, local wisdom has characteristics that are contextual, adaptive, and close to the lives of students.

In the context of modern education, learning often emphasizes more on academic aspects and pays less attention to the potential of local culture in the student environment. As a result, the learning process becomes less meaningful because students have difficulty connecting the subject matter with their daily life experiences (Johnson, 2019). This condition shows the importance of developing learning that is rooted in the social and cultural reality of society.

The theory of constructivism asserts that knowledge is built through individual experiences and interactions with the surrounding environment (Piaget, 1972). In this perspective, local wisdom can be a source of authentic learning experiences because it comes from the real life experienced by students. Learning that utilizes local wisdom allows students to build knowledge based on experiences that are close to their lives (Bruner, 1966).

In addition to constructivism, contextual learning theory also emphasizes the importance of connecting learning materials to the real situations faced by students. Learning will be more effective when students are able to understand the relationship between the concepts learned and daily life (Johnson, 2019). Local wisdom provides a variety of real contexts that can be used as a means of meaningful learning.

In Indonesia, cultural diversity produces various forms of local wisdom that can be used in learning. The tradition of mutual cooperation, deliberation, traditional agricultural systems, customary-based environmental management, and various forms of regional art are examples of local wisdom that contains high educational values (Suastra, 2017). These values can be the

basis for the development of learning theories and practices that are in accordance with the characteristics of Indonesian students.

Previous research has shown that the integration of local wisdom in learning can improve students' learning motivation, learning outcomes, and critical thinking skills. Learning based on local wisdom helps students understand the material more deeply because it is directly related to their experiences and culture (Parmin et al., 2021). The findings show that local wisdom has great potential to be developed as the basis for learning theory.

On the other hand, globalization and technological developments have caused a shift in cultural values in society. Many young generations are increasingly distant from local culture and are more familiar with global culture than their own regional culture (Tilaar, 2015). This condition raises concerns about the sustainability of various forms of local wisdom that have been the identity of the community.

Education has a strategic role in maintaining the sustainability of local wisdom through the learning process. By making local wisdom the basis of learning theory, schools not only function as a place for knowledge transfer but also as a means of cultural preservation (UNESCO, 2021). Therefore, it is important to identify local wisdom that is relevant to learning theory.

Based on this description, this research aims to identify various forms of local wisdom that can be used as the basis for learning theories and explain their relationship with various learning theories that develop in the world of education.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with *the library research method*. Literature studies were chosen because the research focuses on the study of concepts, theories, and results of previous research related to local wisdom and learning theory (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The research data sources consist of scientific books, national and international journal articles, education policy documents, and research results relevant to the topics of local wisdom and learning. The literature used mainly comes from publications in 2015–2025 to be in line with the latest developments in education studies (Zed, 2018). The data collection technique was carried out through literature search using scientific databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ, and Garuda. The keywords used include "local wisdom", "local wisdom", "learning theory", "culture-based learning", and "contextual education" (Snyder, 2019). Data analysis is carried out through several stages, namely data reduction, theme categorization, interpretation of meaning, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources by comparing various relevant research results (Miles et al., 2019).

Research Results

The results of the literature review show that there are several forms of local wisdom that have strong relevance to learning theory.

Table 1. Identifying Local Wisdom as the Basis of Learning Theory

Yes	Forms of Local Wisdom	Key Values	Relevance of Learning Theory
1	Gotong Royong	Collaboration	Social Learning Theory
2	Deliberation	Democracy and communication	Social Constructivism
3	Customary environmental management	Environmental care	Contextual Learning
4	Inheritance of traditional knowledge	Learning through experience	Constructivism
5	Oral traditions	Communication and reflection	Humanistic

Studies show that gotong royong is one of the most widely found forms of local wisdom in various regions in Indonesia. The value of cooperation contained in mutual cooperation is in line with the theory of social learning which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process (Bandura, 1986).

Deliberation as a culture of shared decision-making also has relevance to the theory of social constructivism. Through deliberation, students learn to express opinions, respect the views of others, and build knowledge collectively (Vygotsky, 1978).

Customary-based environmental management shows that local communities have ecological knowledge that develops through long experience in interacting with the environment. This knowledge can be used as a context in learning so that students are able to understand the relationship between academic concepts and real life (Suastra, 2017).

The tradition of inheriting knowledge from generation to generation shows that the learning process does not always take place in a formal environment. Knowledge can be gained through observation, hands-on practice, and life experiences relevant to constructivist theories (Piaget, 1972).

Discussion

The results of the study show that various forms of local wisdom are closely related to modern learning theories. These findings reinforce the view that education cannot be separated from the socio-cultural context of the society in which education takes place (Tilaar, 2015).

The value of mutual cooperation found in various Indonesian cultures is in accordance with the theory of social learning developed by Bandura (1986). The theory explains that individuals learn through observation, imitation, and interaction with others. In the practice of mutual cooperation, individuals learn to work together, share responsibilities, and solve problems collectively.

Deliberation also has strong relevance to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social constructivism. According to this theory, knowledge is built through social interaction and communication. Deliberation provides a space for students to exchange ideas, develop arguments, and build mutual understanding through dialogue.

Customary-based environmental management shows a relationship between local wisdom and contextual learning. Contextual learning emphasizes the importance of connecting subject matter with students' real lives (Johnson, 2019). Through the use of local wisdom, students can understand academic concepts more meaningfully because they are directly related to their environment.

In addition, the tradition of intergenerational inheritance of knowledge shows compatibility with the theory of constructivism which emphasizes experience as the primary source of learning (Bruner, 1966). Students learn through direct involvement in various cultural activities that develop in the community.

Local wisdom also has relevance to humanistic learning theory which emphasizes the importance of developing human potential as a whole. Values such as respect for others, environmental concern, and social responsibility contained in local wisdom can help shape the character of students (Rogers, 1983).

Thus, local wisdom not only functions as a source of learning but can also be a philosophical foundation in the development of learning theories that are in accordance with the Indonesian cultural context. The integration of local wisdom in education can strengthen cultural identity while improving the quality of learning.

Conclusion

Local wisdom has great potential to be used as the basis for learning theory because it contains educational values that are relevant to various modern learning theories. The results of the study show that mutual cooperation, deliberation, customary-based environmental management, oral traditions, and intergenerational knowledge inheritance have a strong

relationship with constructivist theories, social constructivism, contextual learning, social learning theory, and humanistic theory.

The use of local wisdom in learning can increase the relevance of education, strengthen students' cultural identities, and create a more meaningful learning experience. Therefore, the development of curriculum and learning based on local wisdom needs to be encouraged as part of efforts to build contextual and sustainable education.

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