

Understanding How Local Wisdom Shapes Social Skills: A Microethnographic Study in Indonesian Elementary Classrooms

Ari Yanto^{1*}, Sapriya², Enok Maryani³ and Mubiar Agustin³

^{1,2,3,4} Elementary Education, Faculty of Education, Indonesian University of Education

*corresponding author: ariyanto05@upi.edu

Abstract. This study aims to understand how Indonesian local wisdom values, such as gotong royong (cooperation), musyawarah (shared decision-making), and tepa selira (empathy), shape the social skills of elementary school students through daily learning practices. The study was conducted in three public elementary schools in Cirebon Regency, West Java, involving 21 students and 4 teachers as participants. Using a microethnographic approach, this study examined the social dynamics, discourse patterns, and participation structures that mediate social interactions in the classroom. Data were collected over eight weeks through classroom observations, video recordings, and semi-structured interviews with teachers and students. The analysis shows that local wisdom values function as cultural tools that strengthen empathy, social responsibility, and prosocial communication among students. Teachers play a crucial role in internalizing these cultural values through contextual pedagogical strategies that foster social awareness and collaboration. These findings contribute to the global discourse on culture-based social pedagogy by demonstrating how the integration of local values can enrich the social-emotional learning approach in multicultural elementary education contexts.

Keywords: local wisdom, social skills, contextual learning, basic education.

How to Cite:

INTRODUCTION

Basic education not only functions to develop cognitive abilities but also to develop social skills, which are an essential foundation for active participation in 21st-century society. Skills such as empathy, collaboration, communication, and social responsibility are at the heart of social-emotional learning (SEL), which is globally recognized as an indicator of digital age readiness (OECD, 2023; Trilling & Fadel, 2009). However, various studies show that schools in many countries, including Indonesia, still emphasize academic achievement, while the development of social-emotional competencies is not optimal (Bai et al., 2025). National surveys reveal that the social skills of elementary school students in Indonesia are in the average category, with self-control being the weakest (Yulistiani et al., 2021). This situation demonstrates the need for a more contextual learning approach rooted in local culture so that social skill development is not separated from the realities of students' lives.

In the Indonesian context, local wisdom provides a rich cultural foundation for developing contextual social skills. Values such as cooperation, collective decision-making, and empathy and tolerance have long been pillars of social life (Kibtiyah et al., n.d.; Widiasmoro, 2023). These values function as "cultural tools" that mediate how children understand, evaluate, and act in social relationships (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). In line with the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2018), integrating local wisdom into learning not only enriches the

learning context but also fosters social and moral awareness relevant to students' environments. Empirical studies show that local values-based learning can increase empathy, cooperation, and constructive conflict resolution among elementary school students (Istianti & Halimah, 2025; Niman, 2024).

However, most of this research still focuses on the macro level, such as integrating local wisdom into the curriculum or strengthening character, without examining how these cultural values are manifested at the micro level in classroom interactions (Rachman et al., 2024). This gap represents a significant research gap in the study of culture-based education. As Alexander (2020) emphasized, pedagogical culture is shaped through everyday classroom practices through the ways teachers and students interact, negotiate, and construct shared social meaning. The lack of microethnographic research examining how teachers mediate local values in classroom discourse and participation structures has left the mechanisms of internalization of cultural values and the development of social skills largely unexplored. Thus, a more in-depth approach is needed to understand how local wisdom values operate in the context of everyday educational interactions.

Cirebon Regency in West Java serves as a relevant context for this research. As a multicultural region influenced by Javanese, Sundanese, and Islamic cultures, Cirebon has a social value system that emphasizes harmony, empathy, and togetherness. Traditions such as mutual cooperation, deliberation and consensus, and (mutual understanding) are not only practiced in community life but also serve as moral capital that can strengthen social dynamics in schools (Abidin, 2023; Japar et al., 2020). However, little research has empirically explored how these values are implemented, mediated, and interpreted by teachers and students in everyday learning practices. By understanding how these local values are represented in classroom interactions, the cultural logic underlying social learning processes in elementary schools can be revealed.

This study aims to understand how local wisdom shapes elementary school students' social skills through everyday learning practices. Using a microethnographic approach, this study examines two main focuses: (1) how local cultural values are manifested in classroom discourse and participation structures, and (2) how teachers act as cultural mediators who internalize these values through contextual pedagogical strategies.

Theoretically, this research contributes to expanding the study of culture-based social pedagogy by demonstrating how local wisdom can enrich the social-emotional learning framework in non-Western contexts (Lee et al., 2025; Markowitz & Bouffard, 2025). Practically, the research findings are expected to have implications for teachers and policymakers in

designing learning that not only develops social and emotional skills but is also deeply rooted in the cultural values of the community. By positioning local wisdom as a living pedagogical resource, this research confirms that the formation of empathy, collaboration, and social responsibility will be more meaningful when education is rooted in the moral ecology of the local community.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study used a qualitative approach with a microethnographic design to deeply understand how Indonesian local wisdom values, particularly mutual cooperation, deliberation, and empathy, shape elementary school students' social skills through everyday learning practices. The microethnographic approach was chosen because it allows for contextual analysis of social practices and discourses that emerge naturally in the classroom without external intervention (Erickson, 2011; Green & Bloome, 2004).

Research Participants

The study was conducted in three public elementary schools in Cirebon Regency, West Java, representing the diversity of Sundanese, Javanese, and Islamic cultures that emphasize social harmony and collectivity (Suteja, 2024). The location selection was carried out purposively based on the criteria of active involvement in local value-based learning, openness to collaborative research, and the relevance of the cultural context to the study focus. The study participants consisted of 21 fourth-grade students and four class teachers selected through a purposive sampling technique, considering active involvement in collaborative learning activities and willingness to participate voluntarily. The research was conducted for eight weeks in the even semester of the 2025 academic year.

Data Collection

Data were collected through participant observation, video recordings of classroom interactions, and semi-structured interviews with teachers and students. Observations were conducted to document social dynamics, collaborative practices, and the internalization of cultural values within the learning context. Video recordings were used to capture detailed verbal and nonverbal expressions in social interactions, while in-depth interviews explored participants' interpretations of their social experiences. Field notes were compiled to complement the data with contextual descriptions and the researcher's analytical reflections.

Data Analysis

All data were analyzed inductively and interactively using a microethnographic analysis framework (Green & Bloome, 2004), through data transcription and segmentation, open coding, thematic categorization, and theoretical interpretation of the mediating mechanisms of cultural values in the development of students' social skills.

The validity and credibility of the research results were maintained through triangulation of techniques and sources, member checking with participating teachers, and an audit trail of the entire analysis process. Ethical research principles were strictly applied, including obtaining informed consent from schools, teachers, and parents, maintaining participant anonymity, and ensuring data confidentiality. The identities of schools and individuals were disguised to protect privacy. This approach ensured that the resulting interpretations authentically represented social interactions that reflected local cultural values and their contribution to the development of elementary school students' social skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Internalization of Local Wisdom Values

An analysis of three elementary schools in Cirebon Regency shows that local wisdom values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and tepa selira function as cultural mediation tools that strengthen social cohesion and empathy among students in daily learning practices. Classroom interactions demonstrate that these values are not simply taught verbally but are mediated through collaborative practices, reflective discussions, and empathy-based conflict resolution guided by teachers. These findings affirm the role of teachers as cultural brokers (Green & Bloome, 2004), bridging cultural values with socio-emotional educational goals.

Table 1 summarizes the main thematic categories that emerged from the field data coding process using the constant comparative method.

Table 1. Key Themes, Social Practices, and Implications for Social Skills

Main Theme	Subtheme	Empirical Description	Data Sources & Techniques	Impact on Social Skills
Mutual Cooperation	Group Project Collaboration	Students share roles and resources in completing tasks	Classroom observation, student and teacher interviews	Develops self-awareness, interaction skills, and responsible decision-making

Deliberation	Problem-Solving Discussion	Students are trained to express opinions and listen to peers	Classroom observation, video recordings, interviews	Enhances empathy, social awareness, self-management, and communication skills
Empathy and Tolerance	Emotional Control & Respect for Differences	Teachers emphasize the importance of understanding others' feelings before reacting	Classroom observation, teacher and student interviews	Strengthens empathy, social awareness, self-management, and responsible decision-making
Teacher's Role	Modeling Social Behavior	Teachers demonstrate local values in daily practice	Observation, lesson plan, documents, teacher interviews	Internalizes cultural norms through imitation and habituation

These findings confirm that classroom discourse serves as a means of internalizing values, while participatory structures (collaborative projects, group discussions) serve as practical mechanisms that foster prosocial behavior. This aligns with Matusov (2015) concepts of cultural tools and socio-cultural scaffolding, which emphasize the role of social interaction in the internalization of cultural values. Local wisdom is implemented as socio-cultural scaffolding that fosters prosocial behavior from an early age (Rogoff et al., 2018).

Representation of Local Values in Classroom Interactions

Teacher-student and student-student communication patterns show that local values emerge through concrete discursive practices, not just moral slogans. Figure 1 illustrates a conceptual model of integrating local wisdom into classroom interactions.

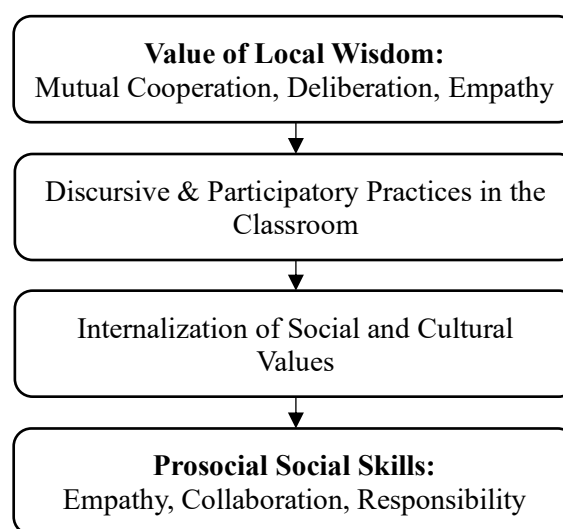


Figure 1.
Conceptual Model of Local Wisdom Integration in Classroom Interactions

The research results show that local wisdom values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and empathy or tolerance are consistently manifested in daily classroom interactions, both in discourse and in patterns of student participation. These values are enacted through concrete actions, dialogic interactions, and structured situational experiences embedded in learning activities.

The principle of mutual cooperation was evident in group-based learning, where students spontaneously divided roles, shared resources, and ensured active participation from all members. One student stated:

“Let's just help so it gets done quickly, because mutual cooperation means working together, not being ordered by one person.” (IF.A1, student, interview, September, 2025).

The teacher who facilitated this activity emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in every project:

“I always remind students that every assignment must be done together, and nothing should be done alone. This is part of the spirit of mutual cooperation.” (IF.G1, teacher, interview, September 2025).

These statements indicate that the classroom practice of gotong royong nurtures students' collaborative attitudes and shared responsibility, which are central to developing interpersonal and self-management competencies.

The value of deliberation emerged when students encountered differing opinions during discussions. They were trained to express their ideas respectfully and listen actively to peers. One student explained:

“If a friend has a different opinion, we first listen to their reasons, then choose the best solution.” (IF.SF, student, interview, October 2025).

This perspective was reinforced by the teacher, who regularly facilitated reflective dialogues:

“When there are differences of opinion, I direct students to discuss, listen, and find solutions together. This process teaches them deliberation in practice.” (IF.GC, teacher, interview, October 2025).

Such dialogic interactions foster empathy, communication skills, and social awareness dimensions emphasized in the social-emotional learning (SEL) framework.

The principle of tepa selira or empathy was expressed in students' emotional interactions, particularly when responding to peers' difficulties. One student recounted:

“When a friend is sad because they can't answer a question, I comfort them and encourage them to continue with us. The teacher said it's tepa selira, that we should care about our friends.” (IF.SD, student, interview, September 2025).

The teacher reinforced this value through consistent emotional modeling:

"I always show how to calm down a friend who's angry or sad. By watching me, students learn to manage their emotions and care for others." (IF.GA, teacher, interview, October 2025).

Observations and lesson plan documents supported these findings, indicating that teachers intentionally designed activities such as collaborative projects, cultural storytelling, and moral discussions to integrate local values into everyday learning. These classroom interactions directly encouraged the development of students' social skills, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2020).

Consequently, classroom interactions functioned as an arena for cultural socialization, where students internalized social norms through lived practice and reflective dialogue. Evidence from student and teacher interviews consistently demonstrated that local values are not merely theoretical content but serve as guiding principles for prosocial behavior, shaping a collaborative, empathetic, and responsible classroom culture.

Teachers as Cultural Mediators

Data analysis revealed the central role of teachers as cultural mediators who integrate local wisdom values into contextual pedagogical practices. This finding emerged consistently from the triangulation of participant observation data (12 learning sessions), in-depth interviews with four teachers, and analysis of lesson planning documents. Teachers function not merely as transmitters of academic knowledge but also as cultural brokers, bridging traditional values with contemporary socio-emotional competencies.

From the coding and thematic analysis process, four main strategies used by teachers in their teaching practices were identified:

First, storytelling based on local culture serves as a primary medium for instilling collectivist values. Teachers deliberately incorporate narratives from legends or folk tales, such as the story of Sunan Gunung Jati about mutual assistance, into the learning context. One teacher (P3) explained:

"I don't jump straight into the material. I start with a relevant local story. Children understand the concept of mutual cooperation more easily when it's connected to a familiar figure." (Teacher Interview, October 2025).

This practice reflects what Bruner (1996) calls a narrative mode of knowing, in which moral understanding is constructed through the interpretation of collective stories.

Second, reflective dialogue is facilitated through group discussions that emphasize the principle of deliberation. Observations show that teachers consistently allocate time for collective reflection at the end of learning activities, encouraging students to evaluate their collaborative process. The structure of these dialogues is open-ended, allowing students to express diverse perspectives while practicing active listening and reaching consensus. This finding aligns with the concept of dialogic pedagogy (Salminen et al., 2021), which emphasizes learning as a process of co-construction of meaning.

Third, collaborative projects are designed as authentic learning experiences that require intensive coordination. A representative example is a class gardening project, in which students had to negotiate role allocations, manage limited resources, and make collective decisions. One student (IF.S7) reflected on her experience:

At first, I wanted to do it alone, but it turned out to be difficult. Eventually, I learned to ask friends and ask for help.” (IF.S7, Student Interview, October 2025).

Fourth, emotional modeling is carried out by teachers through explicit demonstrations of self-control and empathy in everyday interactions. Video recordings show how teachers respond calmly to student conflict, verbalize feelings, and guide the conflict resolution process. This practice serves as an apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 2020), where students internalize social-emotional norms through modeling behavior.

Differential Impact on Social-Emotional Competence

Table 2 presents a cross-case synthesis of pedagogical strategies and their impact on specific dimensions of students' social skills, with triangulation methods used to validate each finding.

Table 2
Teacher Pedagogical Strategies and Impact on Students' Social Skills

Pedagogical Strategy	Representative Classroom Practice	Impact on SEL Dimensions
Local cultural storytelling	The narrative of <i>Sunan Gunung Jati</i> about mutual assistance as an advance organizer	Self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making
Reflective dialogue	Post-group activity discussion using a deliberation protocol	Communication skills, self-management, social awareness
Collaborative project	Creating a classroom garden based on role distribution and collective decision-making	Self-management, communication skills, responsible decision-making
Emotional modeling	Teacher demonstrates empathetic response and emotional regulation during conflict mediation	Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness

These findings confirm and extend the theory of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which emphasizes that authentic learning occurs through participation in culturally meaningful communities of practice. The teachers in this study not only taught social skills explicitly, but also created communities of practice where social norms were internalized through legitimate peripheral participation. Students learned to become competent community members through gradual engagement in authentic sociocultural practices.

Furthermore, the dialogic pedagogical strategies implemented by teachers reflect a dialogic and democratic learning epistemology (Alexander, 2020). In this paradigm, knowledge is not transferred unidirectionally but is co-constructed through an equal exchange of perspectives. Teachers position themselves not as sages on the stage, but as facilitators orchestrating the process of co-constructing meaning.

DISCUSSION

Local Wisdom as a Cultural Mediation Tool in Social-Emotional Learning

The central finding of this study demonstrates that the local wisdom values of mutual cooperation, deliberation, and mutual respect serve as cultural mediation tools that transform classroom interactions into arenas for the socialization of socio-emotional values. Unlike SEL approaches, which are decontextualized and often mechanistically adopted from Western contexts (Martinez et al., 2024; Owen et al., 2025), this study demonstrates how local values can operate as indigenous pedagogical resources that are organically integrated into everyday learning practices.

The value of mutual cooperation, for example, is not merely taught as an abstract concept but is enacted through collaborative participation structures that demand positive interdependence among students. This finding enriches Vygotsky & Cole (2018) perspective on socio-cultural scaffolding by demonstrating that cultural tools are not only language or symbols, but also collective values embedded in the social practices of a community. When a student states, *“Let’s just help so it gets done quickly, because mutual cooperation means working together,”* the statement reveals an internalization of values that goes beyond explicit instruction; students have adopted the cultural script of mutual cooperation as the default mode in group work.

The principle of deliberation, realized through reflective dialogue and problem-solving discussions, reflects what (Wegerif, 2013) calls dialogic space an intersubjective space where

meaning is constructed collaboratively through an equal exchange of perspectives. Unlike Western models of deliberation, which tend to be individualistic and competitive, deliberation emphasizes consensus, harmony, and inclusiveness (Ahmad, 2022; Mangundjaya, 2013). These findings provide empirical evidence that deliberative practices based on local culture can develop perspective-taking competencies and cognitive flexibility without sacrificing social cohesion a challenge often faced in individual rights-based character education (Niman, 2024).

The value of *tepa selira*, which is most closely related to empathy, demonstrates how social cognition is shaped by cultural models of personhood (Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, 2014). In the Sundanese cultural context, which emphasizes interdependent self-construal, empathy is understood not merely as a cognitive ability to understand another's perspective (cognitive empathy), but also as a moral responsibility to feel and respond to the suffering of others (affective empathy and empathic concern). When a student states, "*I calmed him down and asked us to continue together. The teacher said that was tepa selira,*" this indicates that empathy is internalized not as an individual choice but as a collective obligation, a finding that expands the dominant theory of empathy developed in individualistic cultural contexts (Decety & Cowell, 2014).

Teachers as Cultural Brokers: Bridging Tradition and Modernity

The role of teachers as cultural brokers in this study expands the concept of culturally responsive teaching Paulick & Palacios (2025) by demonstrating that cultural responsiveness is not simply accommodating cultural differences, but rather actively using cultural values as pedagogical leverage to achieve contemporary learning goals. The teachers in this study demonstrated what Pai (2025) call culturally sustaining pedagogy an approach that not only responds to cultural diversity but also maintains and revitalizes a community's cultural practices.

The teacher's use of a local culture-based storytelling strategy reflects what Bruner (2013) identified as a narrative mode of knowing a way of thinking that focuses on the particularities of human experience, intention, and contextual meaning. By using the story of Sunan Gunung Jati as an advance organizer, the teacher not only makes learning more meaningful but also connects the formal curriculum with the community's funds of knowledge (Llopert & Esteban-Guitart, 2018). This practice is counter-hegemonic because it challenges the dominance of

Western epistemology in the national curriculum, while validating local knowledge as a legitimate source of learning.

Teacher-facilitated reflective dialogue demonstrates the application of dialogic pedagogy (Alexander, 2020) adapted to the local cultural context. Unlike Socratic dialogue, which tends to be agonistic and aims to uncover truth through dialectics, deliberation-based reflective dialogue emphasizes achieving consensus through the assimilation of diverse perspectives. This finding resonates with the concept of relational pedagogy (Noddings, 2015), which places caring relationships as the foundation of learning. However, this study adds a cultural dimension: caring relationships in the Sundanese cultural context are not merely dyadic (teacher-student), but communal, involving all class members as a community of learners who are mutually responsible.

Teacher-designed collaborative projects reflect the principle of situated learning (Patel, 2018), where learning occurs through participation in authentic activities within communities of practice. The classroom gardening project, for example, was not simply a simulation of cooperation, but rather an authentic practice that required role negotiation, resource management, and collective decision-making competencies essential to social life outside of school. These findings confirm Rogoff et al. (2018) argument that social learning is most effective when students engage in guided participation in culturally and functionally meaningful activities.

Teachers' emotional modeling extends Bandura (2014) social learning theory by demonstrating that observational learning does not occur in a cultural vacuum. Teachers' emotional modeling not only demonstrates generic emotion regulation but also communicates cultural scripts about appropriate emotional expression. This finding aligns with cultural psychology research showing that emotional norms (feeling rules and display rules) vary culturally (Uchida et al., 2022), and that effective emotion education must be culturally attuned (Raver et al., 2011).

Internalization Mechanisms of Values: From Participation to Habituation

The conceptual model emerging from this research (Figure 1) suggests that internalization of values occurs through a three-stage process: exposure (exposure to values through storytelling and modeling), engagement (active participation in social practices that embody the values), and embodiment (incorporation of values into an automatic behavioral repertoire). This process aligns with Vygotsky & Cole (2018) internalization theory, which emphasizes that

superior mental functions first emerge at the social (interpsychological) level before being internalized at the individual (intrapsychological) level.

However, this research adds an important dimension: internalization does not occur through unidirectional transmission, but rather through appropriation, a process in which individuals actively interpret and adapt cultural tools to their specific needs and contexts (Berne, 2013). When student IF.S7 stated, *“At first I wanted to do it myself, but it turned out to be difficult. Finally, I learned to ask friends,”* this statement reveals a process of appropriation in which students do not simply comply with collaborative norms but understand their functional value through direct experience.

The formation of an embodied dispositional habitus that produces practices and perceptions without the need for conscious deliberation. Through repeated participation in collaborative practices, reflective dialogue, and empathetic conflict resolution, the values of mutual cooperation, deliberation, and *tepa selira* are gradually internalized as a social habitus a way of thinking, feeling, and acting that becomes second nature. These findings provide empirical evidence for the theoretical argument that effective character education must go beyond cognitive instruction and involve embodied practice (Nath, 2024).

The findings of this study have significant implications for theorizing social-emotional learning in non-Western contexts. First, this study challenges the assumed universality of SEL models developed in individualistic Western contexts, demonstrating that social-emotional competencies may be constructed differently in collectivist contexts. In the CASEL (2020) framework, for example, self-awareness and self-management are positioned as fundamental competencies that precede other social competencies an assumption that reflects independent self-construal. In contrast, in the Sundanese cultural context studied, self-awareness and self-management develop relationally through and for relationships with others, rather than as prerequisites for those relationships.

Second, this research demonstrates that local values are not simply “cultural content” added to a universal SEL curriculum, but can serve as organizing principles that shape the structure, process, and goals of social-emotional learning itself. mutual cooperation, deliberation, and empathy are not simply cultural equivalents of collaboration, communication, and empathy, but rather constructs with unique semantic networks and distinct practice configurations (Shweder et al., 2007).

Third, this study strengthens the argument for an indigenization approach in developing SEL models (Riquelme-Sanderson, 2025). Indigenization is not simply the adaptation of Western models to local contexts, but rather the development of theoretical models rooted in the

cultural psychology of specific communities. The finding that local values can serve as effective cultural mediation tools for developing social-emotional competencies provides empirical evidence for the viability of this indigenous approach.

While this study makes significant theoretical and empirical contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the focus on three elementary schools in Cirebon Regency limits the transferability of the findings to other geographic and demographic contexts in Indonesia. Future research should conduct comparative studies across regions with different cultural diversities to identify more generalizable principles.

Second, the cross-sectional design of this study does not allow for tracking the process of value internalization from a longitudinal perspective. Future research with a longitudinal design could uncover developmental trajectories of social-emotional learning and identify critical periods for specific pedagogical interventions.

Third, although this study identified four primary pedagogical strategies, the analysis did not reveal differential mechanisms explaining why certain strategies are more effective for specific SEL competencies. Experimental or quasi-experimental research with strategy manipulations could provide more robust causal evidence about the relative effectiveness of each strategy.

Fourth, this study focused on the perspectives of teachers and students, but did not involve parents and the community as important stakeholders in values education. Future research using an ecological systems theory approach (Ungar et al., 2013), could explore how values learned in school are reinforced or contested in family and community contexts.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the local wisdom values of mutual cooperation, deliberation, and *tepa selira* function as effective cultural mediation tools in shaping elementary school students' social skills through authentic classroom interactions. These values are not taught as abstract concepts, but rather internalized through collaborative projects, reflective dialogue, and empathy-based conflict resolution, thus developing into dispositions that encourage prosocial behavior. Teachers act as cultural brokers through four transformative strategies, namely local culture-based storytelling, reflective dialogue, collaborative projects, and emotional modeling. The internalization process takes place through three stages exposure, engagement, and embodiment which expands Vygotsky's theory by adding the dimension of cultural appropriation. Theoretically, this study challenges the assumed universality of the individualistic-Western oriented Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) model by showing that social-emotional competencies are constructed differently in collectivistic contexts, where self-awareness and self-management develop

relationally through and for relationships with others, rather than as prerequisites for social competency. Practically, these findings encourage the development of a culturally sustaining pedagogy approach that utilizes local pedagogical resources, making it more culturally appropriate and economically efficient because it relies on existing cultural capital. Although this study is limited by its geographic scope, limited cross-temporal design, and the lack of parental and community perspectives, its contribution is significant in enriching the global discourse on socio-emotional education. These findings emphasize that effective character education must be rooted in the moral ecology of local communities, presenting non-Western perspectives that have been marginalized in international literature, and demonstrating that empathy, collaboration, and social responsibility become more meaningful and sustainable when cultivated through culturally relevant values.

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