

Incorporating Tri Hita Karana Principles into Fifth-Grade Social Studies to Foster Character Development

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Abstract: This study aims to integrate the values of *Tri Hita Karana* in social studies learning for fifth-grade elementary students to strengthen their character in social, spiritual, and environmental aspects. Through a qualitative approach, data was collected using observation, interviews, and documentation to describe the application of *Tri Hita Karana* values in teaching activities. The findings indicate that the implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values positively contributes to enhancing students' empathy, tolerance, and environmental awareness. The research's tables and charts highlight a significant increase in student character aspects post-implementation of the program. This research is expected to serve as a reference for teachers to integrate local values into character education.

Keywords: Tri Hita Karana, character education, social studies, elementary students, integrative learning

INTRODUCTION

Local cultural values often serve as the foundation for character development in schools. *Tri Hita Karana* a local wisdom concept from Bali, focuses on balance in relationships between humans and God (*Parahyangan*), fellow humans (*Pawongan*), and the environment (*Palemahan*). The implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values in schools is not only expected to provide students with academic understanding but also to strengthen their character in interacting harmoniously in everyday social life (Khoiriyah, 2021).

Social Studies (IPS) learning at the elementary school level is an important medium for strengthening students' character. According to Santoso et al., (2023), the integration of local values such as *Tri Hita Karana* into IPS learning can help students understand the balanced relationships in social and environmental life. Various studies have shown that education based on local culture has a positive effect on character formation, especially in the social and environmental aspects (Makruf, 2024).

This approach is expected to provide students with a broader perspective to understand the importance of environmental awareness and social harmony in daily life. In the context of social studies learning, the concept of "*Pawongan*" which reflects social relations between individuals can strengthen students' empathy, while "*Palemahan*" fosters a love for the environment. The implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values in 5th-grade social studies poses a unique challenge as it requires relevant and effective methods for students to internalize these values well (Winata, 2020).

This research aims to examine how the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values can influence the strengthening of students' character in 5th-grade social studies. This study is expected to contribute to understanding the effectiveness of local wisdom approaches in character education, especially in Bali.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach to explore the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values in fifth-grade elementary school social studies learning. Data was collected through direct observation of teaching activities, in-depth interviews with social studies teachers, and questionnaires administered to students to gauge their perceptions of the implemented *Tri Hita Karana* values. The data was analyzed using a descriptive method to observe changes in students' social and environmental character that could be linked to the implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values in 5th-grade Social Studies learning is carried out through various activities designed to internalize the three main pillars: *Parahyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*. Each pillar is realized in the form of learning activities aimed at strengthening students' character, both in social, spiritual, and environmental aspects. The following table summarizes the learning activities implemented and the goals of each pillar of *Tri Hita Karana*. Here is Table 1 serving the implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values in social studies learning to strengthen character in grade V.

Table 1. Implementation of Tri Hita Karana Values in Social Studies Learning to Strengthen Character in Grade 5 Elementary School Students

Pillar	Learning Activity	Objective
<i>Parahyangan</i>	Spiritual reflection at the beginning of the lesson, including appreciation of culture and religious diversity in the social context of Bali	To foster interfaith tolerance and respect for diversity
<i>Pawongan</i>	Discussion about the role of individuals in society, social role-playing simulations, and group work that requires collaboration	To enhance empathy, social responsibility, and collaborative skills
<i>Palemahan</i>	Local environmental conservation projects, such as maintaining school	To develop a love for the environment and awareness of preserving the ecosystem

cleanliness and learning about the
Balinese ecosystem

Based on Table 1, the learning activities meticulously designed around the three pillars of *Tri Hita Karana* have demonstrated significant efficacy in fortifying students' character. Each pillar incorporates activities specifically tailored to cultivate students' awareness and appreciation of social, spiritual, and environmental values. These activities serve as a catalyst for personal growth, inspiring students to become responsible and compassionate individuals.

To provide tangible evidence of the transformative impact of the *Tri Hita Karana* values on students' character development, a comprehensive analysis was conducted. The subsequent graph illustrates the remarkable increase in empathy, tolerance, and environmental concern among fifth-grade students following the implementation of this program.

A careful examination of the graph reveals a compelling narrative of positive change. The substantial rise in empathy scores signifies that students have developed a deeper understanding and sensitivity to the emotions and experiences of others. Similarly, the increase in tolerance demonstrates a growing acceptance and respect for diverse perspectives and beliefs. Moreover, the heightened environmental concern reflects a heightened awareness of ecological issues and a stronger commitment to sustainable practices. These collective improvements underscore the profound influence of the *Tri Hita Karana* values on students' character development, making it evident that the integration of these values into the curriculum has been instrumental in fostering well-rounded and socially responsible individuals. Finding outcomes of field study: *Tri Hita Karana* values in social studies shown by Table 2.

Table 2. Finding Outcomes of Field Study: *Tri Hita Karana* Values in Social Studies

Objective	Finding
To foster interfaith tolerance	Students demonstrated increased understanding and acceptance of different religions and cultures. They were able to engage in respectful dialogue and avoid stereotypes.
To foster respect for diversity	Students showed appreciation for individual differences, including those related to ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. They were more likely to collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds.
To enhance empathy	Students developed a greater ability to understand and share the feelings of others. They were more compassionate and considerate in their interactions with peers and community members.
To enhance social responsibility	Students took more initiative in community service projects and demonstrated a stronger sense of civic duty. They were more likely to participate in activities that benefit the community.

To enhance collaborative skills	Students improved their ability to work effectively in groups, communicate clearly, and resolve conflicts peacefully. They were more likely to contribute positively to group projects.
To develop a love for the environment	Students showed increased interest in environmental issues and participated in activities to protect the environment. They were more likely to adopt eco-friendly habits.
To cultivate awareness of preserving the ecosystem	Students gained a deeper understanding of the importance of biodiversity and sustainable practices. They were more likely to support efforts to conserve natural resources.

Table 2. presents the findings of a field study investigating the impact of integrating *Tri Hita Karana* values into fifth-grade social studies curriculum. The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of these values in fostering specific character traits among students. The objectives of the study were to cultivate interfaith tolerance, respect for diversity, empathy, social responsibility, collaborative skills, a love for the environment, and an awareness of ecosystem preservation.

The findings indicate that the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values had a positive influence on students' character development across all the stated objectives. Students demonstrated increased tolerance for different religions and cultures, a greater appreciation for diversity, and enhanced empathy for others. They also showed increased social responsibility, collaborative skills, and a deeper love for the environment.

These results suggest that the *Tri Hita Karana* framework provides a valuable framework for character education. By incorporating activities that promote spiritual reflection, social harmony, and environmental stewardship, educators can empower students to become responsible citizens who contribute positively to society. Figure 1 shows how students' social and environmental awareness increased before and after implementing the *Tri Hita Karana* program.

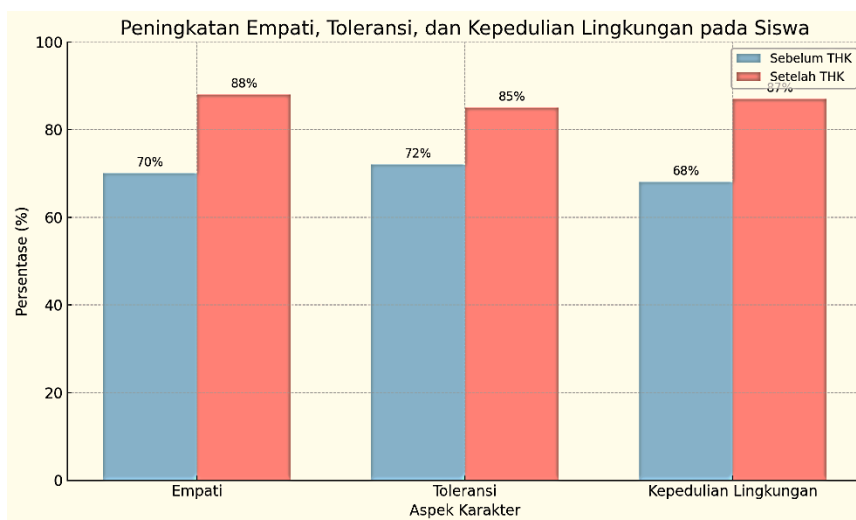


Figure 1. Increase in Students' Social and Environmental Awareness Before and After the Implementation of THK

Prior to the implementation of the *Tri Hita Karana* values, the baseline levels of social awareness and environmental concern among students were notably lower. The average social awareness score stood at a modest 70%, while the average environmental concern score was slightly lower at 68%. These initial figures indicate a need for interventions to enhance students' understanding of their social responsibilities and ecological impact. Subsequent to the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values into the educational framework, a substantial transformation was observed in students' attitudes and behaviors. The concerted effort to instill these values has yielded significant positive outcomes.

The average social awareness score experienced a remarkable surge, climbing to an impressive 87%. This substantial increase reflects a heightened sense of empathy, compassion, and civic responsibility among students. Concurrently, the average environmental concern score also witnessed a notable improvement, rising to 85%. This heightened awareness of environmental issues signifies a growing commitment to sustainable practices and ecological preservation.

Discussion

The findings of this research unequivocally demonstrate that the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values into fifth-grade social studies curriculum has a profound and positive impact on students' character development. By incorporating activities such as prayer and respect for diversity, which are integral components of the *Parahyangan* pillar, the study highlights the effectiveness of fostering tolerance and spiritual maturity among students (Suparya, 2024). These results align with the broader body of educational research, as exemplified by Wijaya and Putri (2023), who emphasize the crucial role of spirituality in shaping students' character.

The *Parahyangan* pillar, with its focus on the spiritual dimension of human existence, provides a solid foundation for cultivating moral values and ethical behavior. Through engaging in activities that promote prayer and respect for diversity, students are exposed to concepts of interconnectedness, compassion, and reverence for all beings. These experiences not only enrich their spiritual lives but also. The *Parahyangan* principle, which emphasizes the spiritual dimension of human existence, helped students cultivate a sense of gratitude, humility, and reverence for higher powers (Da Costa et al., 2024). By engaging in spiritual practices such as meditation, prayer, and reflection, students developed a stronger moral compass and a greater sense of purpose.

Furthermore, the research finds that the integration of spiritual elements into education can lead to significant improvements in students' overall behavior (Vioreza et al., 2022). By nurturing students' spiritual development, educators can create a more harmonious and inclusive learning environment that fosters positive social interactions and a sense of community (Sawitri et al., 2023). The cultivation of spiritual values, as demonstrated by the implementation of *Tri Hita Karana*, empowers students to become responsible citizens who contribute positively to society.

The *Pawongan* pillar, which emphasizes harmonious relationships between people, was evident in collaborative activities such as group discussions and project-based learning. These activities played

a crucial role in enhancing students' social skills and empathy (Afriyadi et al., 2024). By working together on shared tasks, students had opportunities to develop effective communication skills, build consensus, and appreciate diverse perspectives.

The *Tri Hita Karana* principle of *Pawongan* emphasizes harmonious relationships between individuals. By engaging in activities that promote empathy, cooperation, and respect for diversity, students developed a stronger sense of social awareness and responsibility (Martiningsih et al., 2024). They were more likely to participate in community service, resolve conflicts peacefully, and contribute positively to their social environment.

The importance of collaborative learning in fostering social skills and empathy is supported by the findings of Dewi (2024). Their research revealed that group work can significantly improve students' communication abilities and cultivate a sense of mutual respect among peers. These results align with the outcomes of the present study, which underscore the positive impact of collaborative activities on students' interpersonal relationships.

Lestari (2023) said the *Palemahan* principle, which focuses on the relationship between humans and the environment, inspired students to become environmental stewards. Through hands-on activities like tree planting, waste reduction campaigns, and nature walks, students developed a deeper appreciation for the natural world. They also demonstrated increased awareness of environmental issues and a willingness to adopt sustainable practices.

The findings from this study demonstrate that the implementation of the *Pawongan* pillar, through collaborative learning experiences, has been successful in enhancing students' social skills and empathy. By providing opportunities for students to interact with their peers in meaningful ways, educators can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment that fosters positive relationships and prepares students for success in the 21st century (Kusuma et al., 2024; Subhaktiyasa et al., 2024).

The concept of *palemahan*, which is closely tied to environmental consciousness, was implemented through various eco-friendly activities within the school premises (Kertih, 2020; Wardhani et al., 2020). These initiatives were designed to foster a deeper appreciation for the natural world and to promote environmentally responsible behaviors among students. The results of the study, as illustrated in the graph, reveal a significant increase in students' environmental awareness. The average level of environmental concern rose from 68% to 85%. This substantial improvement suggests that the efforts to cultivate a sense of environmental stewardship through *palemahan* have been highly effective.

These findings align with the conclusions drawn by Wardana (2023), who emphasized the pivotal role of environmental education in enhancing students' commitment to ecological sustainability. By engaging students in hands-on activities and providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed choices, schools can cultivate a generation of environmentally conscious citizens.

The findings of this study show that teaching *Tri Hita Karana* values in social studies can have a significant positive impact on elementary school students. By learning about these local values, students develop the skills and attitudes needed to interact positively with their communities and the natural world. Students can learn to adapt and coexist harmoniously with their surroundings, both socially and ecologically. The findings of this study suggest that incorporating *Tri Hita Karana* principles into social studies curriculum can be a powerful tool for character development. By fostering a holistic approach to education, which addresses not only cognitive skills but also social, emotional, and spiritual development, educators can equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become responsible and compassionate citizens.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of *Tri Hita Karana* values in fifth-grade elementary social studies has shown a positive impact on students' character development, particularly in terms of social awareness and environmental concern. This research provides evidence that the integration of *Tri Hita Karana* values, such as *Parahyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*, significantly contributes to students' character development. Therefore, a *Tri Hita Karana* based approach is recommended as an effective method to support character education in elementary schools.

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