



THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN REVITALIZING NATIONALISM AMONG TEENAGERS AMID THE RISE OF THE KOREAN WAVE PHENOMENON

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Abstract

Keywords:

1. Character Education
2. Korean Wave
3. Teenage Nationalism
4. Globalization
5. Cultural Identity

Globalization, driven by advances in information and communication technology, has accelerated the spread of Korean popular culture (the Korean Wave) to various countries, including Indonesia. This phenomenon has had a significant impact on the mindset, lifestyle, and cultural preferences of adolescents, which in turn has the potential to influence their attitudes toward nationalism and national identity. This study aims to analyze the influence of the Korean Wave phenomenon on adolescent nationalism and to examine the urgency of character education as an effort to revitalize nationalist values amid the rapid flow of global culture. The study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. Data were obtained through a literature review of various relevant scientific sources and were then analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques, including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results indicate that the Korean Wave has a positive impact in the form of increased openness to global culture, creativity, and foreign language proficiency. However, on the other hand, this phenomenon also influences changes in lifestyle, cultural preferences, language use, consumption patterns, and a tendency to idolize foreign cultures, which has the potential to diminish appreciation for national culture. Therefore, character education plays a strategic role in strengthening nationalist values by instilling a love for the homeland, respect for Indonesia's cultural diversity, and a reinforcement of national identity. This study is expected to serve as a reference for educators, parents, and policymakers in formulating character education strategies that are adaptive to the challenges of globalization without neglecting the nation's identity.

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A. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, globalization has become a rapidly growing phenomenon that affects almost all aspects of people's lives in various countries. Advancements in information and communication technology have accelerated the globalization process, meaning geographical boundaries are no longer an obstacle in the exchange of information, culture, the economy, or technology (Agus & Zulfahmi, 2021). This condition allows people to interact more intensively with various cultures and values from all over the world. Thus, globalization not only broadens access to information but also drives increasingly rapid social and cultural changes.

In Indonesia, globalization brings various impacts, both positive and negative. On the one hand, globalization opens up opportunities to acquire knowledge, technology, and innovations that can support the nation's progress. However, on the other hand, the flow of globalization also presents challenges to the preservation of national identity. Changes in mindset, lifestyle, and how people interact are occurring more rapidly as a consequence of openness in information and communication (Rais et al., 2018). Many teenagers have begun adopting ways of dressing, speaking, socializing, and lifestyles influenced by foreign cultures. If not accompanied by the ability to filter incoming values, this condition has the potential to shift the cultural values and national character that have long served as the identity of the Indonesian people (Julianty, 2022).

One tangible form of globalization's influence on culture is the development of popular culture, which spreads through digital media and social media platforms. The most prominent phenomenon in recent years is the Korean Wave or Hallyu, namely the spread of South Korean popular culture encompassing music (K-Pop), dramas (K-Drama), films, culinary arts, fashion, cosmetics, and lifestyles. The popularity of the Korean Wave in Indonesia continues to rise, especially among teenagers, who make up the largest group of digital media users. Interest in Korean culture is fundamentally a natural part of the cultural exchange process in the era of globalization. However, a high intensity of Korean cultural consumption can lead to fanatic behavior in some teenagers, such as excessively idolizing artists, imitating lifestyles, and appreciating foreign cultures more than their national culture (Valenciana & Pudjibudojo, 2022). If this condition is not balanced with the strengthening of character education and national values, there are concerns that it could affect the nationalism and love of the younger generation for Indonesian culture.



The Korean Wave (Hallyu) has developed into a form of global popular culture whose spread is supported by advancements in digital technology and social media (Ri'aeni, 2020). Korean popular culture encompasses not only music (K-Pop) and dramas (K-Drama) but also films, culinary arts, fashion, cosmetics, and lifestyles that are increasingly favored by the global community, including Indonesia. The high popularity of the Korean Wave is reflected in a Twitter report released on January 26, 2022, which showed that Indonesia is one of the countries with the largest number of K-Pop fans in the world based on the number of unique authors. Furthermore, the 2022 Global Hallyu Status Report published by the Korea Foundation noted that the number of Korean Wave fans has reached approximately 178 million people spread across 118 countries. This data indicates that Korean popular culture has become a global phenomenon with strong appeal, especially among teenagers.

As a country with diverse cultures, languages, and traditions, Indonesia faces challenges in maintaining its national identity amidst the rapid flow of global culture. The high intensity of Korean cultural consumption by teenagers drives the emergence of various changes in lifestyles, consumption patterns, entertainment preferences, and ways of expressing themselves. Several studies show that some teenagers have begun adopting elements of Korean culture, such as dressing styles, the use of Korean terms, consumption patterns of cultural products, and a tendency to idolize Korean public figures (Desma, 2018). This phenomenon is a natural part of the cultural exchange process in the era of globalization. However, if not balanced with a strong understanding of national values, this condition has the potential to reduce appreciation for local culture and affect the formation of national identity in the younger generation.

Various previous studies have examined the Korean Wave phenomenon from diverse perspectives. Valenciana and Pudjibudojo (2022) highlighted the impact of the Korean

Wave on the behavior of Indonesian teenagers, while Prasanti and Dewi (2020) focused more on the influence of Korean popular culture on the social lives of the younger generation. Nevertheless, most studies are still oriented towards identifying the positive and negative impacts of the Korean Wave. Research specifically examining character education as a strategy to strengthen teenagers' nationalism in the face of global popular culture influence remains relatively limited. Therefore, this study offers a different perspective by positioning character education as a strategic approach to strengthening nationalistic values without neglecting openness to global culture.

Character education plays an important role in shaping the personalities of students so that they are able to filter various foreign cultural influences critically, selectively, and responsibly. Through the internalization of values such as patriotism, tolerance, responsibility, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and appreciation for Indonesia's cultural diversity, character education is expected to be able to strengthen national identity amidst the rapid flow of globalization. Based on this background, this study aims to: (1) analyze the influence of the Korean Wave phenomenon on youth nationalism; and (2) examine the role of character education as a strategy in revitalizing nationalistic values among teenagers. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of character education studies and serve as input for educators, parents, and policymakers in designing educational strategies capable of strengthening national identity without hindering the younger generation's openness to the development of global culture.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive library research method. The qualitative approach is utilized to understand, interpret, and explain in depth the Korean Wave phenomenon and the urgency of character education in strengthening youth nationalism through the analysis of various relevant scientific sources. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words that are systematically analyzed to understand a social phenomenon (Calvin & Sukendro, 2019). Therefore, this study does not aim to test hypotheses, but rather to provide a comprehensive understanding of the importance of character education in facing the challenges of cultural globalization.

The research data are secondary data obtained through a literature review. Data

sources were collected from national and international scientific articles, books, proceedings, and scientific documents discussing the Korean Wave, character education, youth nationalism, and cultural globalization. The literature search was conducted through several databases, including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and SINTA, using the keywords Korean Wave, Hallyu, character education, youth nationalism, cultural globalization, as well as combinations of these words. The literature used prioritizes relevant publications that have undergone a scientific process (peer-reviewed) and were published within a timeframe appropriate to the development of research in the field.

Data analysis was conducted using the content analysis technique. The analysis stages include: (1) identification and selection of literature relevant to the research focus; (2) classification of sources based on research themes, namely the Korean Wave phenomenon, youth nationalism, and character education; (3) content analysis to identify concepts, findings, and relationships between themes; and (4) synthesis of the analysis results to obtain a comprehensive conclusion regarding the role of character education in revitalizing youth nationalism amidst the influence of the Korean Wave. To enhance the validity of the study, the researcher compared and triangulated information from various scientific sources to obtain a more objective and accountable interpretation.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the Korean Wave Phenomenon Attracting Fans in Indonesia

The Korean Wave (Hallyu) is a phenomenon of the spread of South Korean popular culture that has developed globally since the late 1990s through various cultural products, such as music (K-Pop), television dramas (K-Drama), films, culinary arts, fashion, cosmetics, and various digital contents. The development of information technology, social media, and streaming services has accelerated the spread of this culture, enabling it to reach people in various countries, including Indonesia (Ri'aeni, 2020). The high popularity of the Korean Wave indicates that popular culture functions not only as entertainment but also as an instrument of soft power capable of influencing cultural preferences, lifestyles, and consumption behaviors of society, particularly teenagers.

The results of the literature review indicate that there are several characteristics of the Korean Wave that serve as the main attraction for Indonesian teenagers. First, the diversity of the content presented is one of the main factors increasing public interest in Korean culture. Various entertainment options, ranging from music, dramas, films, and

reality shows to digital content, provide diverse experiences tailored to fans' interests (Simanjuntak, 2021). Dynamic music, engaging choreography, and innovative visual concepts make the Korean Wave highly competitive compared to entertainment products from other countries.

Second, the visual quality displayed in Korean dramas and films is also a strong attraction. Good cinematography, appealing location selections, structured plotlines, and high production quality provide a different viewing experience for audiences (Aji & Dipa Nugraha Suyitno, 2021). Furthermore, the appearances of actors and actresses, supported by a professional entertainment industry, contribute to forming an attractive visual image, thereby further increasing teenagers' interest in Korean culture.

Third, the stories presented in Korean dramas generally highlight themes of family, friendship, life struggles, and romance, packaged emotionally so that they are easily accepted by various groups. According to Davesa (2021), the presentation of stories capable of building emotional closeness is one of the reasons for the high loyalty of audiences to Korean dramas. Additionally, the active interaction of Korean idols through social media also strengthens the emotional relationship between artists and their fans. Their presence on various digital platforms provides an opportunity for fans to follow their idols' activities directly, thereby increasing psychological attachment.

Despite having various attractive characteristics, the influence of the Korean Wave cannot be viewed one-sidedly. A high intensity of Korean cultural consumption can have different impacts on each individual, depending on their ability to filter the cultural values they receive. Therefore, critical thinking skills are needed so that teenagers can enjoy global culture without losing their cultural identity and national values.

The Influence of the Korean Wave on Youth Nationalism in Indonesia

The analysis results show that the Korean Wave influences various aspects of Indonesian teenagers' lives, especially cultural preferences, language use, lifestyles, appearances, and consumption patterns. However, this influence is not always negative. On the one hand, the Korean Wave opens up opportunities for teenagers to learn about foreign cultures, enhance creativity, and study international languages and cultures. On the other hand, the high intensity of Korean cultural consumption has the potential to affect teenagers' appreciation for local culture if not balanced with the strengthening of national identity.

One aspect experiencing change is language use. The increasing interest of teenagers in Korean dramas and K-Pop music encourages some of them to learn the Korean language as a form of appreciation for the culture they like (Wulanjari & Suwanda, 2018). This phenomenon is fundamentally a positive thing as it can improve foreign language skills. However, if this interest is more dominant than the appreciation for the Indonesian language as a national identity, then efforts are needed to reignite pride in the national language.

Furthermore, the Korean Wave also influences teenagers' cultural preferences. The high consumption of Korean entertainment causes some teenagers to be more familiar with Korean music, films, and popular culture compared to traditional Indonesian arts (Fitriah et al., 2023). This condition does not necessarily indicate a loss of nationalism, but it can be an indicator of declining appreciation for local culture if not balanced with cultural and national education.

Another influence is seen in perceptions regarding physical appearance. The beauty standards and dressing styles displayed by the Korean entertainment industry encourage some teenagers to make them a reference for their appearance (Niswah & Zahro, 2021). In fact, some teenagers have begun using Korean cosmetics, fashion, and lifestyles as a form of self-identity (Ariani, 2015). This phenomenon shows that the media plays an important role in shaping perceptions of a person's ideal image, so strengthening self-confidence and appreciation for the diversity of the Indonesian people's physical characteristics are needed.

Changes also occur in food consumption patterns. The popularity of Korean culinary arts encourages a growing number of Korean restaurants and food products favored by Indonesian teenagers (Iswati, 2019). The presence of Korean cuisine enriches the public's consumption choices as part of global cultural exchange. Nevertheless, it is important to continue cultivating a love for traditional Indonesian culinary arts as part of the national cultural wealth that needs to be preserved.

The Urgency of Character Education Amidst the Korean Wave Phenomenon

The research findings indicate that character education holds a strategic position in strengthening youth national identity amidst the rapid flow of cultural globalization. Character education does not aim to restrict teenagers' access to foreign cultures but equips them with the ability to respond to various cultural influences critically, selectively,

and responsibly. Thus, teenagers can still enjoy global cultural developments without losing their identity as Indonesian citizens.

Character education also plays a role in instilling moral values, ethics, responsibility, tolerance, honesty, and a sense of patriotism. UNESCO emphasizes that character education aims to form individuals capable of internalizing human values, appreciating cultural diversity, and participating responsibly in community life. These values serve as an important foundation in building nationalism that is adaptive to the changing times.

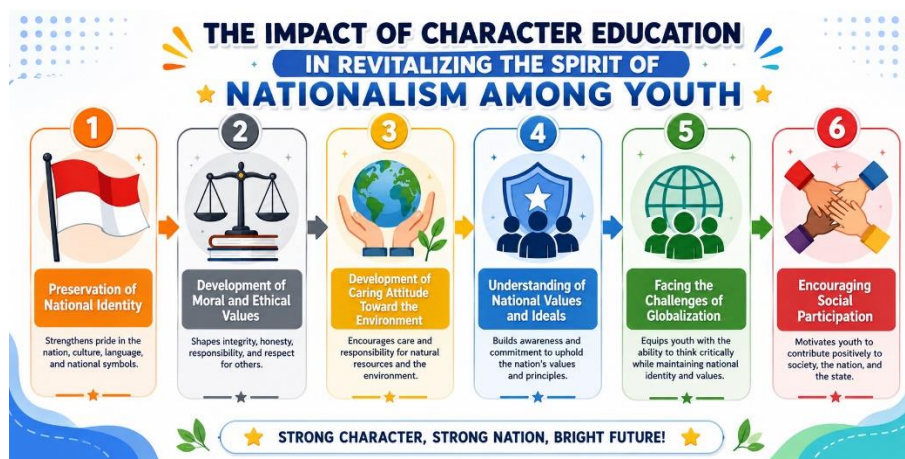
Besides strengthening cultural identity, character education also functions to develop critical thinking skills in facing global popular culture. Teenagers are encouraged not only to be cultural consumers but also to be capable of evaluating the values embedded in every foreign cultural product. Through this process, they can adopt positive values, such as discipline, hard work, creativity, and professionalism, without having to ignore Indonesian cultural values.

The Role of Character Education in Revitalizing Youth Nationalism

Character education has a strategic role as an effort to revitalize youth nationalism amidst the increasing influence of global culture (Asrofi, 2020). The internalization of character values, such as patriotism, responsibility, integrity, mutual cooperation, and appreciation for diversity, becomes an important foundation in shaping a younger generation with a strong national identity. Through character education, teenagers not only understand the importance of maintaining the nation's culture but are also able to develop a proportionally open attitude towards foreign cultures.

The implementation of character education can be carried out through various contextual learning strategies, such as discussions on the impacts of globalization, analysis of the Korean Wave phenomenon, project-based learning highlighting local culture, and the utilization of digital media to introduce the richness of Indonesian culture. This approach allows students to develop critical thinking skills, strengthen cultural literacy, and foster a sense of pride in their national identity.

Thus, character education is not positioned as an effort to reject foreign cultures, but rather as a means to build teenagers' abilities in filtering, adapting, and utilizing positive values from global culture without losing the nation's identity. This approach is expected to be able to create a younger generation with a global perspective while still upholding the values of Pancasila, Indonesian culture, and the spirit of nationalism in community life.



Character education plays a highly strategic role in revitalizing youth nationalism amidst the increasing influence of global culture, including the Korean Wave phenomenon. The study results show that character education functions not only as a means of personality formation but also as a medium for internalizing national values capable of strengthening the national identity of the younger generation (Asrofi, 2020). Through a planned educational process, teenagers are guided to understand that openness to global culture does not have to eliminate their love for their own nation's culture and identity.

One of the main roles of character education is to strengthen awareness of national identity. Character education helps teenagers to know the nation's history, appreciate cultural diversity, understand the values of Pancasila, and foster a sense of pride as part of the Indonesian nation. This awareness becomes an important foundation in forming a sense of belonging to the nation, enabling teenagers to maintain their national identity amidst the rapid flow of global culture.

Furthermore, character education contributes to shaping the morals and ethics of students. Values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, integrity, empathy, and mutual respect are parts of the character that need to be instilled from an early age. The strengthening of these values will form a younger generation that possesses not only intellectual intelligence but also moral intelligence in responding to various cultural influences received through digital media. Thus, teenagers have the ability to select and adopt positive values without losing their true identity as Indonesian citizens.

Character education also plays a role in fostering patriotism. Love for the nation is not only manifested through national symbols but is also reflected in the concern for preserving local culture, the proper use of the Indonesian language, appreciation for

diversity, and active participation in community life. Through contextual learning, students are encouraged to understand that preserving the nation's culture is a form of responsibility as citizens as well as part of the effort to strengthen nationalism.

In addition, character education introduces various national values, such as mutual cooperation, unity, tolerance, and the spirit of diversity. These values serve as an important provision for teenagers to understand that Indonesia's cultural diversity is a national wealth that must be safeguarded together. This understanding helps teenagers view foreign cultures as part of global dynamics without reducing their appreciation for national culture.

In facing the era of globalization, character education also functions to develop critical thinking skills. Teenagers are guided to be capable of evaluating every piece of information and culture received so that they do not merely follow developing trends. Critical thinking skills enable them to adopt positive values from foreign cultures, such as discipline, work ethic, creativity, and innovation, while rejecting values that contradict the norms, culture, and character of the Indonesian nation. With this approach, character education does not become a means to limit interaction with global culture, but rather builds teenagers' abilities to respond to globalization wisely.

Furthermore, character education encourages the growth of social participation as a form of implementing national values in daily life. Activities such as communal work (*kerja bakti*), community service, volunteer activities, preservation of regional culture, and involvement in various social programs become media for teenagers to actualize the values of responsibility, care, and the spirit of mutual cooperation. Such participation strengthens the relationship between individuals and society while enhancing the sense of belonging to the nation and state.

Based on the results of this discussion, it can be understood that character education is an effective strategy in revitalizing youth nationalism amidst the growing Korean Wave phenomenon. Character education does not aim to reject the existence of foreign cultures, but rather to form a younger generation capable of filtering, adapting, and utilizing positive values from global culture without losing their national identity. With a strong character, teenagers are expected to become citizens with integrity who possess a love for their homeland, appreciate Indonesia's cultural diversity, and actively contribute to nation-building in the era of globalization.

D. CONCLUSION

The Korean Wave phenomenon is a form of global popular culture dissemination that is growing rapidly along with advancements in information and communication technology. The research results indicate that the Korean Wave influences various aspects of Indonesian teenagers' lives, such as cultural preferences, language use, lifestyles, perceptions of appearance, and consumption patterns. This influence is not entirely negative, as it also provides opportunities for teenagers to learn about international cultures, enhance their creativity, and broaden their cross-cultural horizons. However, if the intensity of foreign cultural consumption is not balanced with the strengthening of national identity, this condition has the potential to reduce appreciation for local culture and national values.

This study emphasizes that character education plays a strategic role in revitalizing youth nationalism amidst the rapid flow of cultural globalization. Through the internalization of values such as patriotism, responsibility, mutual cooperation, tolerance, integrity, and appreciation for Indonesia's cultural diversity, character education is able to shape a younger generation capable of filtering, adapting, and utilizing positive values from global culture without losing the nation's true identity. Thus, character education is not interpreted as an effort to limit the influence of foreign cultures, but rather as a strategy to strengthen national identity while simultaneously building a generation with a global perspective and a Pancasila-based character.

The findings of this study imply that the strengthening of character education needs to be carried out sustainably through synergy among families, schools, communities, and the government. This collaboration is expected to create an educational environment that supports the formation of teenagers who are open to global cultural developments yet retain a strong commitment to the preservation of national culture, Pancasila values, and the spirit of nationalism.

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