



The Role of Traditional Games in Promoting Health and Cultural Values among Youth: A Community-Based Approach in North Sumatra

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Abstract.

Background

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 63 of 2014, Scouting Education is a mandatory extracurricular activity in both elementary and secondary schools. This activity is expected to serve as a platform for character development among students. However, the competencies of teachers who are the primary facilitators of Scouting activities—remain inadequate. Many teachers lack sufficient knowledge and practical skills related to Scouting. This issue is also evident in the Medan Deli Scout Front Group, which, despite having an established Scout troop, faces similar challenges in the competencies of its scoutmasters.

Objectives

This community service program aims to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in Scouting, enabling them to effectively implement character education through Scouting activities in schools. The goal is to empower teachers to become competent Scout leaders capable of designing and leading meaningful Scouting experiences for students.

Methods

The program was carried out through training that included both theoretical and practical components. The theoretical sessions involved the delivery of material and simulation-based learning, while the practical sessions incorporated field activities such as role-playing and ceremonial drills. Two core themes were emphasized during the training: leadership and the Scout ceremony as educational tools.

Results

Through this program, participating teachers demonstrated improved abilities in planning and conducting Scouting activities aligned with character education goals. They became more confident and skillful in integrating leadership exercises and ceremonial practices into their school-based Scouting programs.

Conclusion

The training successfully equipped teachers with the necessary competencies to serve as effective Scout leaders. By enhancing their understanding and practical capabilities, the program supports the broader objective of fostering student character development through quality Scouting education in schools.

Keywords: Traditional Games, Youth Empowerment, Health Promotion, Cultural Preservation.

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INTRODUCTION

In the current landscape of education, numerous challenges have emerged, particularly as a result of the accelerating pace of globalization (Sharma, 2024). One significant issue is the influx of external cultural values that are often incompatible with the nation's own traditions and norms. These changes have led to a noticeable decline in moral behavior and social conduct among students, as they become increasingly influenced by foreign values and digital content that lack alignment with Indonesia's cultural and religious foundations (Yeganeh, 2024).

This cultural dissonance is clearly reflected in the increasing incidents of student violence, particularly in major urban centers such as Jakarta. School brawls have become disturbingly common and are even normalized by youth peer groups (Fazel et al., 2014). Students who refuse to participate are often ostracized, indicating how deeply such behavior has become embedded in school culture. Alarmingly, these acts of violence span from elementary to university levels and often stem from trivial disputes, indicating a lack of emotional maturity and conflict resolution skills (González et al., 2021).

Although formal education exists even in urban areas, it is not always sufficient to shape student character independently. Environmental factors, including peer influence and social surroundings, often exert a stronger influence than classroom learning (Silva-Laya et al., 2020). As such, knowledge gained in school must be reinforced through real-life applications and positive environmental engagement. Without this integration, the internalization of moral and ethical values becomes difficult for students (Mebert et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the rapid spread of information technology, particularly the internet, has brought both benefits and risks. While it can be a tool for education, it also presents a serious challenge to student behavior and mental health. Students who spend excessive time online tend to exhibit more individualistic tendencies, social withdrawal, and reduced empathy for their environment (Jiang et al., 2018; Konrath et al., 2011). There is growing concern that continued overexposure to the digital world may degrade traditional social structures and interpersonal values (Kokkinos et al., 2014). Additionally, Indonesia has faced international scrutiny due to internet-related moral issues, further highlighting the negative impacts of unsupervised digital exposure (Futri & Naruetharadhol, 2025).

While the government has made efforts to regulate cyberspace such as implementing internet censorship, enacting cyber laws, and blocking harmful websites these initiatives have not significantly curbed the prevalence of harmful online behavior (Zickafoose et al., 2024). Users have become increasingly adept at circumventing these regulations, rendering such interventions less effective (Diepeveen et al., 2013; Mohr et al., 2013). Therefore, broader supervision is needed, not only in cyberspace but also within daily life. This responsibility must be shared among all societal components educators, parents, institutions, and communities—to foster environments that support positive character development (Cholifah & Faelasup, 2024; Umaschi Bers, 2006).

In response to these pressing challenges, it is essential to cultivate educational strategies that instill moral, religious, and cultural values in youth. One such approach is through structured extracurricular programs like Scouting, which can develop leadership, discipline, empathy, and community awareness. The *Kursus Mahir Dasar* (Basic Skills Course or KMD), organized annually by the Scout unit at STOK Binaguna, serves as a practical training program for prospective Scout leaders. This initiative is not merely a routine activity but an effort to produce educators capable of guiding students through character-building activities that align with national values and social harmony (Widiastuti, 2015).

Although this program has received official endorsement evidenced by its recognition by regional leaders such as the Vice Regent of Ponorogo its broader impact on student character development has yet to be thoroughly evaluated. Therefore, this study aims to examine the implementation of the KMD program at STOK Binaguna, focusing on its role in fostering students' social character through Scout-based education and experiential learning.

METHOD

Participant

(Sugiyono, 2017)The participants in this community service program consisted of elementary and secondary school teachers affiliated with the scout movement (*Gugusdepan*) in Medan Deli. These teachers were selected based on their active involvement in extracurricular scouting activities and their potential role as future scout leaders. A total of 25 teachers participated in the program, representing various educational institutions under the supervision of STOK Bina Guna. All participants voluntarily engaged in both theoretical and practical components of the training.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design integrated with participatory action research (PAR) principles, aiming to observe and document the impact of the *Program Kemitraan Masyarakat* (Community Partnership Program) on teacher competency in character education through scouting. The program was structured into two main activities: Traditional Scouting and Outdoor Activity.

Traditional Scouting was implemented through five instructional methods:

1. Orientation – Introduction to character education and scout-based education models.
2. Workshop – Guided development of syllabi and field practice modules.
3. Simulation – Participant presentations of their developed curricula.
4. Games – Character-building and life-skills games using the *Two Stay Two Stray* model.
5. Mentoring – Ongoing support for implementing character and scout education in schools.

Outdoor Activity employed three main methods:

1. Field Practice – Direct implementation of character and scout training with students.
2. Camping – Training participants to conduct and manage open-nature experiences.
3. Mentoring – Assistance in designing and conducting camp-based learning activities.

A flow diagram and detailed activity matrix were developed to visualize and guide the implementation phases, ensuring structured, goal-oriented delivery throughout the program.

Data Analysis

(Anghelo Josué et al., 2023) The concept of saturation in qualitative research is a widely debated topic. Saturation refers to the point at which no new data or themes are emerging from the data set, which indicates that the data have been fully explored. It is considered an important concept as it helps to ensure that the findings are robust and that the data are being used to their full potential to achieve the research aim. Saturation, or the point at which further observation of data will not lead to the discovery of more information related to the research questions, is an important aspect of qualitative research. However, there is some mystification and semantic debate surrounding the term saturation, and it is not always clear how many rounds of research are needed to reach saturation or what criteria are used to make that determination during the thematic analysis process. This paper focuses on the actualisation of saturation in the context of thematic analysis and develops a systematic approach to using data to justify the contribution of research. Consequently, we introduce a distinct model to help researchers reach saturation through refining or expanding existing quotations, codes, themes and concepts as necessary.", "container-title": "International Journal of Qualitative Methods (Arikunto, 2010). Data were collected through observation, participant reflection journals, and facilitator field notes during each stage of the program. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to teacher engagement, knowledge acquisition, and skill application in character-based scouting education. The analysis focused on assessing participant readiness, curriculum development capacity, and practical implementation in both classroom and outdoor settings. The data triangulation process involved cross-verification from multiple sources including pre- and post-activity reflections to ensure reliability and validity of findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

At the outset of the community service program, a pre-test was conducted to evaluate the baseline knowledge of participating teachers regarding Scouting. The results of the pre-test, which involved eight teachers, revealed a generally low level of understanding. Specifically, two teachers scored 40, three scored 45, one scored 50, and two scored 55 out of a possible 100 points. These findings clearly indicated that the participants had minimal prior exposure to Scouting education and practices.

In response to these results, the program proceeded with a structured orientation session. This session aimed to enhance the teachers' comprehension of character education and the fundamentals of Scouting. The orientation began with an overview of Regulation No. 63 of 2014 issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which mandates Scouting as a compulsory extracurricular activity in both primary and secondary education. This foundational knowledge was crucial in helping teachers understand the institutional and legal framework supporting the implementation of Scouting in schools.

The training program was designed to combine theoretical instruction with practical application. The theoretical component covered a wide range of topics, including the basic principles and methods of Scouting, the Scout Movement's motto, foundational metaphors (*kiasan dasar*), the structure of the Scout Front Group (*Gugusdepan*), the role of the advisory council (*Majelis Pembimbing*), and essential Scouting techniques. These techniques encompassed marching and formation drills, cipher systems such as Morse and Semaphore, trail marking, camping skills, and the instillation of patriotism.

Alongside the theoretical materials, teachers also participated in practical field sessions to directly apply the knowledge they had acquired. These sessions included activities such as marching in formation, practicing signaling methods, reading trail signs, and conducting camping exercises. Of particular importance were the marching and formation drills, which are essential for organizing and leading Scout training sessions. Teachers were trained to use specific formation styles, such as the circular formation for Cub Scouts (*Siaga*) and the horseshoe formation (*formasi angkare*) for Intermediate Scouts (*Penggalang*), especially for use in opening and closing ceremonies.

The combined theoretical and practical approach proved effective in improving teachers' knowledge and skills, as evidenced by their active participation and improved confidence during training. The results

underscored the value of comprehensive training programs that integrate knowledge, application, and mentoring to prepare educators for their roles in implementing meaningful Scouting education in schools.

Discussion

The initial findings from the pre-test administered to participating teachers highlighted a significant deficiency in their foundational knowledge of Scouting. Of the eight participants, scores ranged between 40 and 55 out of 100, with no teacher achieving a score above 55. These results confirmed the assumption that, despite the institutional requirement for Scouting as a mandatory extracurricular activity under the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 63 of 2014, there exists a concerning gap in teacher preparedness to deliver Scouting-based character education effectively.

The implementation of orientation sessions proved to be a crucial initial intervention. By introducing and contextualizing national policies regarding Scouting education, the program ensured that participants understood both the legal mandate and pedagogical significance of Scouting in Indonesian schools. The inclusion of theoretical materials such as the basic principles of Scouting, the movement's official motto, symbolic language (*kiasan dasar*), and organizational structures provided a necessary conceptual foundation for further practical instruction.

Importantly, the theoretical knowledge was immediately reinforced through hands-on, field-based activities. This combination of theory and practice aligns with experiential learning theory, which posits that knowledge retention and skill development are significantly enhanced when learners are actively engaged in doing, rather than passive recipients of information (Waldner & Olson, 2007). In this context, activities such as marching drills, code deciphering (Morse and Semaphore), and camping simulations were not merely technical exercises but were designed to internalize values such as discipline, cooperation, problem-solving, and patriotism—core to the Scouting philosophy.

The structured practical components, including ceremonial formations such as the circular (*formasi lingkaran*) and horseshoe (*formasi angkare*) arrangements, served as both symbolic and functional aspects of Scout education. They provided teachers with clear models for organizing student activities, enhancing group cohesion, and embedding cultural rituals into educational practices. These aspects are essential in forming social character and leadership among young learners, as supported by previous studies emphasizing the role of structured youth programs in shaping behavior and civic engagement (Chima Abimbola Eden et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the success of these training sessions reflects the importance of continuous professional development for educators, especially in areas outside core academic disciplines. Without proper training and ongoing support, even well-intentioned policies such as mandatory Scouting can become underutilized or misimplemented at the school level. The presence of simulation and mentoring elements in this program addressed this challenge directly, offering participants not only initial training but also sustained guidance in the application of their new competencies within their respective school environments.

Overall, the results suggest that the integration of character education through Scouting—when implemented using a structured, participatory, and contextually relevant model—can significantly enhance teachers' confidence and capability. This, in turn, holds promise for strengthening student development outcomes in alignment with national educational goals (Faradilla et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the KMD (Basic Scout Leadership Course) program by STOK Binaguna has provided valuable experiences and new insights for the participating student-teachers. It has also enhanced their understanding of character education through the Scouting movement. This program has demonstrated that Scouting-based activities, when properly facilitated, can serve as effective tools for instilling character values in students.

Furthermore, the program has shown significant potential to be further developed and implemented by school teachers through the Scout Front Groups (*Gugus Depan*) in Medan. It is recommended that schools establish ongoing communication with the community service facilitators to ensure sustainable mentoring and continuous improvement in character education practices. Such collaboration will contribute to the long-term development of disciplined, responsible, and value-driven students.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

GNT conceived the project design and coordinated the community service activities. R was responsible for the implementation of Traditional Scouting activities. EDZ contributed to data collection and conducted the field simulations. SPZ supported the outdoor activity planning and assisted in participant mentoring. ORZ managed documentation and contributed to the final manuscript preparation. All authors discussed the results, reviewed, and approved the final version of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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