

Local Culture-Based Character Education Cultivating Cooperation through *Gendang Beleq* Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the contribution of the *Gendang Beleq* tradition in promoting mutual cooperation among elementary school students. Previous research has largely focused on *Gendang Beleq* as a performing art and cultural heritage, with limited attention to its role in character education, particularly in fostering cooperation. This study adopts a qualitative case study approach conducted at SDN Petemon, Lendang Ara Village, Kopang Subdistrict, Lombok. It involves five informants: the school principal, a teacher of *Gendang Beleq* and Pancasila Education, and three fifth-grade students actively engaged in the activities. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that *Gendang Beleq* activities provide students with direct experiences of cooperation, shared responsibility, discipline, and social interaction through group practice and performance. Additionally, these activities contribute to preserving local culture while supporting the development of students' character and social values.

INTRODUCTION

Elementary school education plays a crucial role in shaping children's social development and character (Rezki 2023). During this phase, students not only develop their thinking skills but also learn to interact with the world around them (Natasha 2024). Through various learning activities at school, students can absorb important values such as collaboration, responsibility, discipline, and mutual respect (Agung Stiawan 2024). Character development and the instillation of collaborative values from an early age are vital to helping children develop positive attitudes and preparing them for future social life (Suryadi 2020).

Research on the tradition of mutual cooperation related to *Gendang Beleq* emphasizes the values of cooperation, cultural learning, and local wisdom in education (Zhou 2024). Mutual cooperation is important in Indonesia, highlighting collaboration and mutual assistance within the community. *Gendang Beleq* from the Sasak community in Lombok reflects this value through musical performances Together (Aji 2024). Educational approaches such as culture-based learning and ethnopedagogy demonstrate the importance of local culture (Sudarsana 2018). *Gendang Beleq* training teaches coordination, cooperation, responsibility, and discipline, making it a learning tool for instilling the value of mutual cooperation in elementary schools.

Gendang Beleq is a traditional art form originating from the Sasak community on the island of Lombok and plays a significant role in preserving the local cultural identity. The term *Gendang Beleq* means “big drum” and is the main instrument in performances that combine music, movement, and cooperation between the players (Harnish 2019). Wahyuni (2019). In the field of education, cultural practices such as *Gendang Beleq* can be used as teaching tools to instill social values among students (Sugiarka 2025). This process encourages positive social interaction and helps students understand the importance of togetherness in achieving common goals (Nurhaliza 2024). The use of the *Gendang Beleq* tradition in educational activities not only serves to preserve local culture but also as a medium for teaching character that can strengthen the values of mutual cooperation, discipline, and solidarity among students Azmi (2019).

Some opinions support the use of local culture as a tool for educating children's character in elementary schools Talita (2025). Ki Hajar Dewantara emphasized that education must be rooted in national culture so that cultural values shape the nature and character of students. This shows that local cultural practices can be a good learning tool. Thomas Lickona states that character education can be improved through social activities that involve collaboration, responsibility, and interaction. Koentjaraningrat argues that traditions in society preserve inherited social values and serve as a source of learning (Huda et al., 2022). In this study, these theories support the notion that cultural practices such as *Gendang Beleq* are not only performing arts but also educational tools that instill values of togetherness, collaboration, and responsibility in students.

In Indonesia, the value of mutual cooperation is evident in cultural traditions such as the Saman Dance and Reog Ponorogo, which emphasize collaboration and togetherness (Widia Ningsih et al., 2025). Previous studies have discussed the artistic aspects, cultural functions, and preservation of traditions, but have not focused on *Gendang Beleq* as a tool for character education, especially for teaching the value of mutual cooperation to elementary school students (Bayu 2025). *Gendang Beleq* has characteristics that support cooperation and social interaction, making it a potential learning medium. This study aims to fill the gap by investigating the application of *Gendang Beleq* in elementary education to instill the value of mutual cooperation and strengthen students' character education.

Gendang Beleq is a traditional art form originating from the Sasak community on the island of Lombok, which plays a significant social role and embodies values of togetherness in social interactions Arnyana (2024). The name *Gendang Beleq* comes from the word “*gendang*” which refers to a type of percussion instrument, and “*beleq*” which means large. This performance is often given at various traditional and cultural events in Lombok, where each player plays a different instrument such as drums, gongs, cymbals, and flutes simultaneously

to create a lively rhythm. The rehearsal and performance process requires cooperation, discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect among the performers, reflecting important social values in community life (Fredriksson 2024).

This study aims to link education at the elementary school level with its significant role in shaping children's character and social development, especially in instilling the values of mutual cooperation and responsibility. These values can be instilled by utilizing local culture as a means of character education. One local tradition that embodies the value of togetherness is *Gendang Beleq*, which originated from the Sasak community on the island of Lombok. *Gendang Beleq* is a form of traditional musical performance played in groups, which requires cooperation and unity among the players. The process of practicing and performing *Gendang Beleq* reflects the values of mutual cooperation, discipline, and responsibility. Therefore, this tradition can be used as a tool to instill the value of mutual cooperation in elementary school students. *Gendang Beleq* not only serves to preserve local culture but also as a character learning tool for students

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative case study method to understand the use of *Gendang Beleq* as a tool for instilling the value of mutual cooperation in elementary school students Rashid (2019). This method helps researchers understand social and cultural phenomena through direct observation. The purpose of this case study is to explore the meaning, experiences, and social interactions in *Gendang Beleq* activities, which are part of Sasak culture (Oliveira 2019). The research was conducted at SDN Petemon, Lendang Ara Village, Kopang District, where researchers were directly involved in data collection. The sources consisted of the principal, a teacher who taught *Gendang Beleq* and Pancasila Education, and three fifth-grade students who participated. This study aimed to explain in depth the process of implementing *Gendang Beleq* activities at school and the social values that emerged from student involvement.

In this study, data processing was carried out using an interactive analysis approach developed by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman in 1984. This approach has several continuous stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and validation. The analysis process begins with data collection and continues until the research is complete, allowing researchers to discover patterns, meanings, and relationships between data from observations, interviews, and documentation. The elements of data analysis are not presented visually because this approach is commonly used in qualitative research and can be briefly explained in the research methods section.

This study gathered information through observation, interviews, and documents related to the implementation of *Gendang Beleq* in schools and communities. The observation aimed to directly observe the practice and performance of *Gendang Beleq*. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each informant for 20 to 30 minutes to obtain in-depth information. Five informants were selected using purposive sampling because they had knowledge of and involvement in *Gendang Beleq*. They consisted of the school principal, a teacher, and three fifth-grade students. Documents such as photos and event notes were also collected. To verify the information, source and method triangulation were carried out, as well as member checking to ensure the accuracy of the interviews. Data collection continued until saturation point was reached, where no new information was available. Data analysis followed

the model of Miles and Huberman, including data collection, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions to understand the role of *Gendang Beleq* in fostering a sense of mutual cooperation among students in the context of Sasak culture.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Content of Result and Discussion

Based on interviews with the principal of SDN Petemon, the *Gendang Beleq* tradition is considered a cultural heritage that not only functions as a form of performing art, but also plays a significant role in strengthening a sense of togetherness, cooperation, and social character among elementary school students. The surrounding community, teachers, and village government strive to preserve this tradition through various cultural activities, such as *Gendang Beleq* performances at traditional wedding ceremonies involving students as a way to learn about culture firsthand. These results show that local cultural practices can be a tool.

(KS) explains, "The Gendang Beleq tradition at SDN Petemon is not merely an artistic activity, but also an effective way to instill values of togetherness and mutual cooperation in students. Student participation in traditional training and performances gives them the opportunity to learn to work together, appreciate each other's contributions, and realize the importance of preserving cultural heritage. Through this activity, students become more disciplined, responsible, and able to show mutual support within the group. The continuity of this tradition is also supported by teachers, schools, and the community so that the implementation of Gendang Beleq can take place sustainably and encourage the development of social and cultural values in students."

The principal's statement indicates that the *Gendang Beleq* tradition is not merely an artistic activity but also serves as a tool for social learning among students. Through joint rehearsals and performances, students learn to coordinate, appreciate each other's contributions, and develop a sense of responsibility and discipline. This demonstrates that cultural activities at school can be an effective way to instill values of togetherness, solidarity, and cooperation among students. In other words, the *Gendang Beleq* tradition plays a significant role in character development and in strengthening positive social interactions within the school environment.

The *Gendang Beleq* tradition at SDN Petemon is more than just an art form; it also teaches the values of togetherness and cooperation. Students involved in rehearsals and performances learn to work together, appreciate their friends' contributions, and preserve cultural heritage. This activity helps students become more disciplined and responsible. They learn to adjust their roles, maintain rhythm, and help each other. This activity strengthens positive social interaction and solidarity among students. Support from teachers and the community ensures that this tradition can continue, providing social and cultural value to students.

Gendang Beleq in elementary education is a way to introduce students to Sasak culture. At school, *Gendang Beleq* is not only a musical performance, but also a tool for learning art, moral values, and social interaction. During practice, students learn musical instruments, rhythm patterns, and playing together, making learning more interactive. This activity demonstrates experiential learning, where students gain knowledge through direct involvement. In addition, these practices reflect Albert Bandura's social learning theory, where students learn through interaction and cooperation. Thus, students acquire musical skills as

well as the values of cooperation, responsibility, and togetherness, which are important for character development. As seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2. (Equipment Preparation Activities, Field Documentation, 2025)

Figure 2 shows elementary school students preparing and learning about the traditional musical instrument *Gendang Beleq*. They are wearing traditional Lombok clothing and sitting in groups while holding musical instruments such as drums, gongs, cymbals, and flutes. This activity is part of cultural arts education to introduce traditional musical instruments and teach students how to hold and play them. It also helps students develop a love for local culture. In addition, students learn to work together in groups, understand the role of musical instruments, and maintain rhythm. Interaction during practice encourages communication and mutual respect among friends, which also develops social skills and cooperation in learning.

(GP) implements "At SDN Petemon, the Gendang Beleq program is conducted as an extracurricular activity that takes place regularly four times a week. The training includes an introduction to various types of musical instruments, basic rhythm learning, formation arrangement, and instilling discipline and the value of cooperation among its members. In its implementation, teachers use several teaching methods, such as practice-based learning, group work, and direct guidance during practice sessions. Teachers also demonstrate how to play musical instruments and encourage students to practice together so that they learn to adjust their rhythm and roles within the group. Through this approach, students not only learn musical skills but also develop social values such as collaboration, mutual assistance, and a sense of responsibility for the tasks assigned. In addition to activities at school, students also participate in community activities such as accompanying brides and grooms, nyongkolan, or performances at village traditional events.

Practicing *Gendang Beleq* outside the classroom helps students prepare for cultural events. Practice takes place on school grounds so students can move freely, form formations, and maintain the rhythm while playing their instruments. Students also wear traditional attire to prepare for public performances. This practice enhances their musical skills, coordination, and ability to follow instructions. Students also gain confidence and a sense of responsibility for their roles, and become ready to participate in cultural events within the community. Note Figure 3



Figure 3. (Outdoor performance preparation activities, field documentation, 2026)

Figure 3 shows students preparing to perform in a *Gendang Beleg* performance outside of school. The students are seen gathering with their musical instruments and arranging their positions before starting practice. Some of them are adjusting their instruments while others are checking the rhythm and tempo with their team. The atmosphere depicted in the picture shows enthusiastic activity in which the students coordinate with each other and prepare themselves so that the performance will run smoothly. This activity reflects the rehearsal process commonly carried out in the field to ensure readiness in terms of formation, synchronized movements, and the smooth running of the overall performance.

(GR PPKN) said "From the traditional Gendang Beleg activity, children are taught to live together, help each other, and work together. We instill this spirit of mutual cooperation in accompanying the bride and groom as a way to instill in children a love for culture and to help each other in the traditional art of Gendang Beleg. Through direct experiences like this, students can learn to apply the value of mutual cooperation, starting from preparing tools, keeping the practice area clean, to ensuring that the formation remains neatly arranged. This activity shapes an attitude of caring, a sense of shared responsibility, and an awareness that work will feel lighter when done together."

The implementation of *Gendang Beleg* culture in schools is an effort to preserve local cultural heritage while instilling character values in students from an early age. *Gendang Beleg* which was once played in various traditional rituals of the Sasak people, has now been integrated into school activities, both as extracurricular activities and performances at certain events. Its presence in schools provides students with the opportunity to learn about traditional musical instruments and their cultural significance, as well as to apply the social values embodied in them. Cultural preservation activities also serve as a means of character building because they involve collaboration, discipline, and responsibility among group members. The presence of *Gendang Beleg* culture in schools not only aims to preserve regional cultural identity but also supports the character building of students through planned and sustainable traditional arts activities.

Direct statement from (PD) "We, as students, provide very encouraging feedback regarding the implementation of the Gendang Beleg culture at school because we feel that this activity is not only fun but also provides a new experience that is different from classroom learning. Many students feel proud to be able to play traditional musical instruments that are characteristic of the Sasak community because it makes them feel connected to the local

culture. We also feel an increase in confidence when performing at various school events and traditional activities in the village. I am happy that practicing Gendang Beleq helps us learn to work together, appreciate the roles of our friends, and practice discipline in following the instructions of our teachers. The school provides opportunities to learn about culture while building togetherness, so that Gendang Beleq has become an eagerly awaited activity that is considered beneficial for the personal development of students."

Content of Result and Discussion

The value of mutual cooperation in the *Gendang Beleq* tradition is evident in the joint efforts made by each player to create a balanced and harmonious performance. Each musical instrument, such as the large drum, gong, cymbals, and flute, has a unique function, and all support each other, so that a successful performance can only be achieved if the players can collaborate, synchronize their rhythms, and maintain a consistent tempo. For elementary school students, *Gendang Beleq* practice sessions provide a practical opportunity to apply cooperation, from preparing musical instruments and arranging formations to helping friends who have difficulty playing certain instruments. They understand that no player is more important than another, because each role contributes to the creation of unity in sound and movement. A training environment that requires coordination, mutual attention, and adjustment builds an understanding that the success of the group is the result of collaboration, not just individual effort, but the fruit of responsible cooperation. Through this shared experience, *Gendang Beleq* serves as an effective medium for instilling a spirit of cooperation in students from an early age, so that the values of mutual assistance, caring, and cooperation can develop naturally within them.

The *Gendang Beleq* performed by elementary school children is a form of preserving traditional Sasak art, which is deliberately introduced at a young age so that children can understand and appreciate their local culture. In this activity, students practice playing various musical instruments such as large drums, gongs, cymbals, and flutes in groups so that they can understand that each instrument has a different function in creating a harmonious melody. The involvement of students in school performances and community cultural activities makes this culture an effective character-building tool while strengthening cultural identity from childhood.

The value of mutual cooperation in *Gendang Beleq* is clearly evident in the way the players, including elementary school students, must collaborate to create a balanced performance. Each musical instrument has a different role, such as the main drum that sets the tempo, the gong that adds dynamic power, the cymbals that provide a variety of loud and rhythmic sounds, and the flute that provides a soft melody. All these instruments can only create a strong rhythm when played together and in sync. The children understand that no player is more important than another; the success of the performance depends on their willingness to listen, coordinate, and help each other if a friend is having difficulty. The rehearsal process, such as preparing the instruments, arranging positions, and maintaining the rhythm together, encourages students to support each other and take responsibility within the group. Through this experience, the value of mutual cooperation develops naturally because students feel firsthand that unity and togetherness are the main keys to success in playing *Gendang Beleq*.

1. The Role of Teachers in Integrating *Gendang Beleq* Culture into the Elementary School Curriculum

Teachers play a very significant role in preserving the *Gendang Beleq* tradition in elementary schools by applying various systematic teaching approaches. First, teachers incorporate local cultural elements into learning activities, especially in arts subjects and projects, so that students not only learn theory but also understand the cultural values contained in *Gendang Beleq*. Second, teachers regularly organize cultural extracurricular activities as a place for students to practice playing traditional musical instruments, recognize rhythms, and build teamwork. These activities serve as a means for students to improve their artistic skills while instilling values of discipline, responsibility, and a spirit of mutual cooperation. Third, teachers collaborate with the local community, including cultural figures, art coaches, and local residents to support *Gendang Beleq* practice and performances in traditional events and school activities.

The preservation of *Gendang Beleq* culture is carried out through wellorganized programs both within and outside of school. At school, teachers design extracurricular activities as a means for students to regularly practice learning the basic techniques of the game, understand rhythm patterns, and perform formations routinely. These activities also serve as character building tools because students are taught to work in teams and appreciate the role of each member. Preservation outside of school is realized through student involvement in various community cultural activities such as wedding processions, *nyongkolan*, or other village events. Teachers play a role in organizing student participation, preparing equipment, and supervising the implementation of activities to ensure that they run smoothly. Involvement in both environments makes *Gendang Beleq* not only an art subject but also part of everyday culture that builds students' social attitudes while preserving local traditions.

According to Harnish (2019) The use of *Gendang Beleq* in elementary schools has been implemented through learning and extracurricular activities, but there are still shortcomings in its application as a tool for more structured character education. Fajri (2024) Previous studies have only considered *Gendang Beleq* as a performing art or cultural heritage, but there have not been many studies that specifically discuss the role of teachers in instilling the values of mutual cooperation and social character through this cultural practice, both in schools and in the community. Sholeh (2019) He said that the integration of cultural activities into the elementary school curriculum has not been discussed in depth in previous studies, so it is not yet clear how the process of learning traditional arts can become a comprehensive experience in preserving *Gendang Beleq*. Activities inside and outside of school contribute to fostering a spirit of mutual cooperation and social attitudes among students.

2. The Value of Mutual Cooperation in Cooperative Learning Practices in the *Gendang Beleq* Culture

The value of mutual cooperation in social aspects emphasizes the importance of solidarity and mutual support. *Gendang Beleq* demonstrates the value of mutual cooperation that develops through interaction and cooperation among students during the rehearsal and performance process. In this activity, each student plays a different role, such as playing the drums, gongs, cymbals, or flutes, so that the success of the

performance depends heavily on the coordination and cohesiveness of the group. This finding can be understood through the concept of cooperative learning, in which students learn to achieve common goals through cooperation and positive interdependence among group members. In addition, the practice of rehearsing together is also in line with Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which explains that individuals learn through social interaction, observation, and imitation of behavior in a group environment. Through *Gendang Beleq* activities, students not only learn musical instrument skills, but also develop attitudes of mutual assistance, responsibility for their respective roles, and the ability to communicate within a group. Thus, this cultural practice serves as an effective medium for social learning in instilling the value of mutual cooperation and strengthening the character of togetherness in elementary school students.

The cultural activity of *Gendang Beleq* clearly demonstrates the spirit of mutual cooperation through the way the event is carried out, which requires togetherness, integration, and cooperation among the players. Each type of musical instrument, such as drums, gongs, cymbals, and flutes, plays a different role but supports each other so that the performance can only be successful if all players can adjust their rhythm, tempo, and position. When practicing or performing, students learn to share responsibilities, from preparing instruments and maintaining formations to helping friends who have difficulty playing certain instruments. Through these joint activities, *Gendang Beleq* not only functions as a form of performing art but also as a powerful method for teaching the value of mutual cooperation directly, as students experience how important collaboration is to achieving success in every performance.

Hikmah Syafiulia (2025) Explaining the value of mutual cooperation among elementary school students generally focuses more on its application in classroom learning or group work, while studies linking this value to local cultural practices are still very rare. Identifying *Gendang Beleq* often focuses on historical aspects, beauty, or socio-cultural functions, so not many have explored how this tradition can serve as a tool for building student character by linking cultural practices with the development of social values, particularly through activities that require mutual cooperation in the *Gendang Beleq* tradition (Azmi 2019). This study aims to bridge this gap by demonstrating that *Gendang Beleq* is not only a performing art heritage but also an effective tool for instilling the value of mutual cooperation through students' direct experiences in working together, synchronizing rhythms, dividing tasks, and helping each other during the rehearsal and performance process.

These three studies show that research on the value of mutual cooperation in the context of local culture, especially *Gendang Beleq* is still very limited. This study emphasizes that mutual cooperation among elementary school students is usually only explored in the context of learning or group work in the classroom. They add that research on *Gendang Beleq* focuses more on historical, aesthetic, and socio-cultural aspects without considering its ability as a tool for character education. They attempt to fill this gap by showing that *Gendang Beleq* can be an effective tool for instilling mutual cooperation values through students' direct experiences in collaborating, adjusting rhythms, dividing roles, and supporting each other during practice and performances. All three agree that research linking *Gendang Beleq* with strengthening mutual cooperation values in students still needs to be improved and explored further.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that collaboration within the *Gendang Beleq* culture in elementary schools is crucial for fostering character values in children, such as cooperation, mutual assistance, discipline, and responsibility. During group rehearsals and performances, students learn to coordinate, synchronize rhythms, and appreciate their peers' contributions, which builds team cohesion. These findings reinforce character education theory and the concept of cooperative learning, while emphasizing the importance of social interaction. Furthermore, these findings highlight the need to integrate local cultures, such as *Gendang Beleq* into academic and extracurricular activities to support students' character development and social skills.

Based on the findings of this study it is recommended that educational institutions more systematically incorporate local cultural practices, such as *Gendang Beleq*, into their curriculum and extracurricular activities to strengthen character education. Teachers need to design organized learning activities and clearly link cultural engagement to the character values being taught. Schools can collaborate with local artists and communities to maintain the authenticity and sustainability of these programs. For future research, it is recommended to involve more participants and a variety of school contexts to deepen the understanding of the impact of culture-based learning on students' character development.

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