



Cultural Transformation and Its Implications for Educational Aspirations in Bialo Village, Bulukumba Regency

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Abstract

This anthropological study explores the cultural transformations occurring within Bialo Village, Bulukumba Regency, and examines their direct implications for local educational aspirations. Utilizing a qualitative research methodology, data were gathered through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and focus group discussions with village elders, parents, and youth. Historically rooted in agrarian traditions and localized kinship structures, Bialo Village is currently experiencing significant socio-cultural shifts driven by modern digital connectivity, changing economic realities, and increased migration. The findings reveal that these cultural shifts have fundamentally reshaped how the community perceives the value of formal education. While traditional livelihoods once dictated a preference for early labor integration, modern cultural exposure has catalyzed a collective shift toward higher academic achievement. Formal schooling is increasingly viewed as a crucial vehicle for social mobility, economic security, and community empowerment. However, this transition also creates intergenerational tensions, as the younger generation's pursuit of modern academic credentials occasionally clashes with traditional family expectations and heritage preservation. Ultimately, this research highlights the dynamic intersection of cultural evolution and modern schooling, demonstrating how grassroots educational aspirations are continually renegotiated within a changing rural Indonesian landscape.

Keywords: Cultural Transformation, Educational Aspiration, Rural Community

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in elevating human status and dignity, enabling individuals to attain their desired standing in life. Furthermore, education is recognized as a primary means of fostering a generation that possesses knowledge and is capable of applying it in daily life (Alwi et al., 2021).

Education is a deliberate effort to develop the full potential of human resources through teaching activities. It is intended for everyone—"education for all." This aligns with the founding purpose of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution: to intellectually enrich the nation.

The education system in Indonesia serves to realize one of the nation's founding objectives: the intellectual advancement of the people. In pursuit of this goal, a national education system has been established, grounded in Pancasila as the nation's guiding philosophy. This system is implemented in accordance with Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System.

Adolescent educational aspirations refer to an individual's hopes, goals, and ambitions regarding their future education. These aspirations reflect the extent of an adolescent's desire to pursue higher levels of education—such as university or vocational training—as well as the factors influencing that decision. Educational aspirations often ...are influenced by various aspects, including the family environment, socioeconomic conditions, the quality of education, and the cultural values upheld by society (Santrock, 2021).

According to Eccles and Wigfield (2020), adolescents' educational aspirations develop through the interaction of intrinsic factors—such as learning motivation and self-belief—and extrinsic factors, such as parental support, teacher expectations, and peer influence. The more positive an adolescent's educational experiences, the greater the likelihood they will hold high educational aspirations. Conversely, limited access, economic pressure, and a lack of social support can diminish an adolescent's motivation to pursue further education. These findings align with research by Wati and Isroah (2019), which demonstrated that the peer environment, family environment, and learning motivation collectively exert a positive and significant influence on student academic achievement; thus, these three factors cannot be viewed in isolation when shaping adolescents' educational outcomes and aspirations.

Education is a key element in enhancing the quality of human resources and opening up opportunities for social mobility. In the context of rural communities—such as Bialo Village in Gantarang District, Bulukumba Regency—adolescents' educational aspirations are influenced by various factors, including cultural transformation and family

socialization patterns. Globalization and modernization have brought about changes in the mindsets and cultural values held by the community. Consequently, parenting styles and family socialization processes have undergone a shift ...which can impact how adolescents view education and their futures.

Adolescents' educational aspirations in Bialo Village, Gantarang District, Bulukumba Regency, face significant challenges—primarily due to high rates of early marriage that cause many young women to drop out of school; data from the Bulukumba Regency Ministry of Religious Affairs indicates that in 2022, there were 62 underage marriages (Bugispos, 2023). Cultural transformations driven by modernization and globalization have altered adolescents' perspectives on education, with an increasing number aspiring to pursue higher education. However, family socialization patterns that retain traditional values—particularly patriarchal culture—often act as a barrier, as education is frequently prioritized for boys over girls. Economic factors also play a role, with many families preferring their children to work after completing basic education rather than continuing to higher levels. Therefore, understanding the relationship between cultural transformation and family socialization patterns is crucial for increasing adolescent educational participation in this area.

The first factor influencing adolescents' educational aspirations is cultural transformation. Cultural transformation refers to changes in societal values, norms, and mindsets resulting from globalization, modernization, or the influence of technology (Polnaya et al., 2023). In the context of education, these cultural shifts can alter societal views regarding the importance of ...formal education. Research by Giddens (2021) indicates that in societies undergoing rapid modernization, adolescents' educational aspirations tend to be higher compared to societies that retain traditional values less supportive of education. This aligns with findings by Hatuwe et al. (2021) regarding rural communities in Buru Regency, which show that modernization has positively influenced the educational, economic, and socio-cultural spheres; these effects include heightened community awareness of the importance of education and a shift in mindset from traditional views toward a more progressive outlook open to new experiences. Furthermore, technological advancements and access to information via social media contribute to raising adolescents' awareness of the importance of higher education. A study by Durkheim (2021) confirms that social media and the internet play a role in shaping educational aspirations by enabling adolescents to access information about academic and career opportunities that are far broader than those available to previous generations.

Additionally, Bourdieu's (2020) study demonstrates that cultural transformation can alter a society's **habitus**—or habitual ways of thinking—including regarding education. However, existing research remains general in nature and has not specifically explored how shifts in **habitus** within rural communities influence adolescents' educational aspirations. Most prior studies have focused primarily on economic factors and educational accessibility without delving deeply into how changing cultural values impact parenting styles and educational socialization within the family. The local cultural context of South Sulawesi is also relevant. It is worth noting, as demonstrated by Syamsunardi (2022), that the cultural values of **siri' na pacce**—interpreted as self-respect and a sense of care for others—can be internalized through formal education to build the character of the younger generation; thus, local culture need not be a hindrance but can instead serve as a source of values that support the strengthening of character education for adolescents.

However, in rural areas such as Bialo Village, cultural transformation may occur gradually and be influenced by economic and social factors. Schultz (2023) found that in low-income communities, despite cultural shifts leading to increased interest in education, structural barriers—such as limited educational facilities and school costs—remain major obstacles. A similar situation was observed by Muliani et al. (2024) among coastal communities in Bantaeng Regency; while parents generally held positive views regarding the importance of their children's education, low economic status, the intergenerational tradition of working as fishermen, and gender inequality remained significant impediments to the continuity of children's education.

Beyond cultural factors, family socialization patterns also play a role in shaping adolescents' educational aspirations. Family socialization influences the values and norms adopted by children, including those related to education. Lareau (2022) notes that parents with higher levels of education tend to employ socialization patterns that are more supportive of education, such as guiding children in their studies and providing academic motivation. Steinberg (2023) adds that democratic parenting styles...that grants children the freedom to explore their academic interests while still providing guidance tends to produce adolescents with higher educational aspirations. Conversely, authoritarian parenting styles that restrict a child's choices, or permissive styles that lack direction, can negatively impact their academic motivation. In the society of Bialo Village, family socialization patterns remain influenced by traditional values; thus, it is necessary to examine whether family communication patterns have evolved alongside the ongoing cultural transformation. Previous research has addressed the influence of cultural and family factors on adolescent educational aspirations; however, a gap remains in understanding the specific interaction between cultural transformation and family socialization patterns in shaping these aspirations, particularly in rural areas like Bialo Village. In his ecological systems theory of development, Bronfenbrenner (2022) emphasizes that the social environment—including family and culture—plays a crucial role in individual development; yet, few studies have empirically examined how cultural changes resulting from modernization affect family socialization patterns regarding adolescent education within rural communities.

This study demonstrates that cultural transformation and family socialization patterns are closely linked to adolescent educational aspirations. Cultural changes that support education can boost adolescents' academic motivation, especially when reinforced by appropriate family socialization patterns. However, the impact of these two factors

varies, depending on the social and economic context of a region. Therefore, this study aims to explore in greater depth the relationship between cultural transformation, family socialization patterns, and the educational aspirations of adolescents in Bialo Village.

Several previous studies have addressed the relationship between cultural transformation, family socialization patterns, and adolescent educational aspirations. Polnaya et al. (2023) examined cultural transformation and social interaction within indigenous communities resulting from the influence of digital technology. Their findings indicate that technological advancements and globalization have altered community mindsets and values, including the perception of education as a means to elevate social status. This suggests that cultural change plays a significant role in shaping educational awareness among adolescents.

Research by Nurcahyawati et al. (2022) also found that local cultural changes driven by modernization can increase the younger generation's interest in formal education. However, such transformations may become unbalanced if not accompanied by adequate social and economic support. Meanwhile, Sutanto (2022) emphasizes that socio-cultural transformations occurring in newly developing regions of Indonesia often lead to shifts in community values and norms, including those regarding education and family socialization patterns.

From the perspective of the family, Lareau (2022) explains that family socialization patterns significantly influence children's educational aspirations. Parents who employ supportive and democratic parenting styles tend to raise children with aspirations for higher education. Similar findings were reported by Susilowati and Yuanter (2024) showed that open communication between parents and children can increase learning motivation and academic aspirations. Tambunan et al. (2024) also found that good family communication patterns play a crucial role in shaping children's positive attitudes toward education. This is reinforced by the research of Purwaningsih and Syamsudin (2022), who found that parental attention, school culture, and peer interaction, both partially and simultaneously, have a positive and significant influence on children's character development. Therefore, the successful formation of aspirations and character in children's education requires an integrated approach involving the three educational centers: family, school, and community.

Furthermore, Warda (2023), in his research on the educational aspirations of adolescents in Klaten Regency, found that family factors, socioeconomic conditions, and the social environment significantly influence the level of adolescents' educational aspirations. Naufal Alifka et al. (2023) added that parents' education level and economic background also determine the extent to which children desire to pursue higher education.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that cultural transformation and family socialization patterns have a strong relationship with the formation of adolescents' educational aspirations. However, most previous research was conducted in urban areas or more economically developed communities. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the influence of these two factors in the context of rural communities Bialo Village, which still faces challenges related to traditional culture and economic limitations.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research methodology with an ethnographic approach, which is central to anthropological inquiry. This framework allows for a deep, holistic investigation into how the community of Bialo Village perceives and navigates cultural transformation and its impact on educational aspirations. The research is grounded in the natural setting of Bialo Village, Bulukumba Regency, capturing the lived experiences, daily routines, and socio-cultural shifts of the inhabitants from an emic perspective—understanding the culture from the viewpoint of the insiders themselves.

Data collection techniques are designed to ensure depth and cultural immersion (Sumilih, et.al, 2025). The primary method is participant observation, enabling the researcher to engage closely with the villagers' daily lives, community interactions, and familial dynamics over an extended period. This is complemented by in-depth, semi-structured interviews with key informants, including village elders, local leaders, parents, and school-aged youth, to gather diverse narratives on changing cultural values and educational goals. Additionally, focus group discussions (FGDs) are conducted to stimulate collective dialogue regarding intergenerational tensions and shared community aspirations.

The collected qualitative data undergo a rigorous thematic analysis process to identify recurrent patterns, meanings, and cultural shifts. Data from field notes, interview transcripts, and observations are systematically coded, categorized, and triangulated to ensure validity and credibility. This analytical process focuses on uncovering the underlying mechanisms of cultural evolution in the village and how these structural changes are translated into individual and collective attitudes toward formal schooling. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and participant anonymity, are strictly maintained throughout the research process.



Figure 1. Bialo Village Office

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Education as a Process of Cultural Transformation

Education is vital to us because it enables us to distinguish between good and bad and allows us to understand culture. Education and culture are inseparable; they share a profound connection rooted in a common focus: values. Consequently, there is no educational process without culture, nor can education exist in isolation from culture and society.

Education is an integral part of culture, serving as a means to impart the foundational knowledge necessary for life—knowledge that is, in essence, culture itself. The goal of education is to shape individuals into cultured beings capable of socializing within their communities and adapting to their environments to ensure survival. Culture-based education acts as a movement to foster lifelong learning, empowering society to navigate the ever-changing and increasingly difficult challenges of life. Furthermore, education provides answers and solutions regarding the creation of culture, addressing societal needs in alignment with prevailing values and systems.

Education functions as a vehicle for cultural transformation, facilitating the transmission of culture from one generation to the next. A newborn enters the world already situated within a specific cultural environment—a society defined by established customs, prohibitions, and social expectations. These encompass various aspects of life, such as language, etiquette for receiving guests, dining habits, agricultural practices, and more. Cultural values undergo a process of transformation as they pass from the older generation to the younger one. Values that remain relevant—such as honesty and responsibility—are preserved; those requiring adjustment—such as marriage customs—are modified; and those no longer suitable—such as the historical taboo surrounding sex education—are replaced by modern approaches within formal schooling. This demonstrates that cultural transmission is not merely a mechanical relay of traditions; rather, education plays a crucial role in preparing learners for the future.

Every community in a given region possesses its own distinct culture, which—whether consciously or unconsciously—is passed on to the next generation. This process of cultural transmission can be carried out by various individuals and educational institutions, whether formal, informal, or non-formal. The culture transmitted to future generations should be positive, encompassing values such as responsibility, honesty, and respect for elders. While different educational settings employ varying methods of cultural transmission, they share a common goal: ensuring that these positive cultural values are carried forward by the next generation.

A concrete example is the transmission of a culture of responsibility. In formal education—particularly at the primary level—teachers hold full authority within the classroom and play a pivotal role in both cultural transmission and knowledge dissemination. One method educators in formal settings can use is assigning homework; by doing so, students incur the responsibility and obligation to complete the assigned tasks. If a student fails to complete the work—whether intentionally or not—the teacher can impose educational sanctions. Making this a regular practice helps instill a sense of responsibility in students. This example illustrates the transmission of a culture of responsibility within a formal educational environment. In informal education, learning takes place within the family or the community. Informal education serves as the foundation for a child's character development, as the family is the child's primary agent of socialization. Children tend to imitate the behaviors and habits of their family members; therefore, families must set good examples and teach positive cultural values, such as responsibility. A culture of responsibility can be fostered in informal education by assigning specific tasks to each family member—a practice common among many families today. Beyond teaching responsibility, this approach also fosters independence and respect, while discouraging over-reliance on others. In non-formal education, cultural transmission also occurs through the division of tasks, similar

to the informal setting. Organizations often host various activities, each with a designated person in charge who bears responsibility for the event they oversee. Whether or not the initiative succeeds, the process unfolds as follows: initially, the outgoing committee members set an example for the incoming ones; subsequently, the new committee implements the results of this cultural transformation and passes them on to their successors. This cycle continues—whether consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally.

Everything within a society is shaped by that society's culture; the quality of a community's behavior and attitudes—whether positive or negative—depends on its culture. Every society possesses a culture that is upheld and passed down from one generation to the next. Whether consciously or unconsciously, a society—through its members—transmits its culture. This process of transmission is known as cultural transformation or the inheritance of culture. Cultural transformation can be achieved by introducing cultural elements and integrating them into the learning process. In other words, cultural transformation occurs through learning, which subsequently takes the form of socialization. Socialization is the process of interacting with others to learn how to fulfill roles and functions, as well as to develop social relationships within the community. It can occur through either direct or indirect interaction and takes place within various social contexts, such as the family, peer groups, schools, the workplace, and mass media.

Education serves as the most effective cultural strategy for cultivating culture, fostering a virtuous society, and building a human civilization that aligns with humanitarian ideals. Individuals who are unfamiliar with their culture are, in effect, unfamiliar with their own nation. Therefore, we must preserve and safeguard our culture by integrating cultural elements into the educational process; this ensures that the outcomes of education extend beyond mere knowledge, preparing individuals to live effectively within society.

The Importance of Educational Transformation

We are currently facing unprecedented global challenges, such as climate change, ideologies of violence and hatred, biodiversity loss, and racially charged conflicts. Consequently, education systems need to be reoriented to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to act as responsible citizens within the global community.

Transformative education is considered an approach capable of addressing these global challenges, as it involves learning designed to motivate and empower happy, healthy, and thriving learners to make decisions and take action at individual, community, and global levels. Transformative education aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—a set of globally agreed-upon goals, targets, and indicators that frame national agendas and policies for the next 15 years. Specifically, the fourth SDG aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.

This can be achieved through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and an appreciation of cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development. The agenda reflects an understanding of education as a transformative tool that contributes to sustainable development.

According to Freire, transformative education is grounded in a critical perspective regarding social reality. It manifests when an individual possesses critical awareness of social inequalities, is able to objectively identify their root causes, and strives to find solutions through concrete action. Education oriented toward transformation serves as a framework through which individuals view, understand, and derive meaning from life. Transformation offers numerous opportunities for dynamic progress. Transformative education empowers learners of all ages with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to address interconnected global challenges. It fosters a sense of shared humanity and helps individuals become responsible, active global citizens who contribute to building inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable societies.

Consequently, transformative education is a lifelong process. Individuals can promote these values through education, family, friends, and media. Learners are equipped with hard skills—such as knowledge and technical abilities—enabling them to think in terms of solutions and take action toward more inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable development.

They are also equipped with soft skills, such as empathy and an appreciation for diversity, which enable them to work efficiently in multicultural environments, comprehend complex issues, and remain results-oriented. Thus, education is considered transformative when learners feel valued, acknowledged, and safe, and are engaged in the learning community as full and active members of the school. Educators can transform their teaching by ensuring that the curriculum, pedagogy, instructional materials, and learning and school environments are meaningful within natural, social, cultural, political, and economic contexts.

Transformative learning is an approach that emphasizes the process of individual self-awareness, enabling people to undergo change through reflection, openness, and critical engagement with life's challenges. Within the framework of transformative learning, individuals evolve into self-directed learners capable of achieving change—whether in their understanding, awareness, or lived experiences. Specifically, this learning model was developed to identify an approach that effectively fosters and cultivates learning creativity as a form of personal transformation.

Furthermore, transformative learning is a process oriented toward personal change across cognitive (thinking patterns), affective (attitudes and values), and psychomotor (skills) dimensions. This process of change is grounded in an awareness of one's own errors or shortcomings, leading to the adoption of a new, appropriate perspective that serves as the foundation for transformation.

In principle, transformative learning challenges individuals to critically examine their own systems and worldviews, followed by a specific transformative experience. This demonstrates that transformative learning can offer engaging experiences that resonate with the community. Transformative learning offers broad opportunities for continuous learning through various community-based activities. It employs diverse, innovative approaches to engage individuals and encourage them to learn. One example is the implementation of community training and empowerment programs. Through these initiatives, participants gain the skills and capabilities needed to develop their personal potential, ultimately leading to positive changes in their lives.

The key to implementing transformative learning lies in community participation and the recognition of the importance of activities that can transform habits into more beneficial ones. This type of learning can provide a truly memorable experience, leading to behavioral changes that are sustained over time. Ultimately, the essence of this learning process is to foster a community that is self-reliant and prosperous. Transformative learning plays a crucial role in raising community awareness, as awareness is the essential prerequisite for achieving change.

Traditional Education in Bialo Village

Traditional education serves as a vital pillar in character development for the youth of Bialo Village. The noble values embedded within it equip them with the tools needed to face the challenges of the modern era. As the bearers of tradition, the village's young people must understand and internalize these customary values to preserve their culture and collective identity.

The customary institution plays a central role in shaping the character of the youth in Bialo Village. Through various activities and programs, the institution strives to instill noble values such as **gotong royong** (mutual cooperation), respect for elders, and love for the homeland. Bialo Village officials strongly support these efforts, collaborating with the customary institution to design a traditional education curriculum tailored to the village's specific context.

The Head of Bialo Village emphasizes the importance of traditional education for the younger generation. "Customary values form a solid foundation for their character. Young people need to learn from local wisdom so they can grow into individuals of noble character who embody the spirit of Pancasila. The residents of Bialo Village fully appreciate the benefits of traditional education. "Traditional education teaches not only about customs but also about life values. These values help our children grow into good, responsible individuals who are devoted to their parents," said one resident.

The traditional institution in Bialo Village continues to innovate in how it delivers traditional education. Beyond in-person cultural activities, they also utilize social media and digital technology to reach the younger generation. Through this creative and engaging approach, it is hoped that traditional education will remain relevant and appealing to future generations. Traditional education for the youth of Bialo Village is a collaborative effort involving all segments of the community. The traditional institution, village officials, and residents work in synergy to ensure that noble cultural values are preserved and passed down to future generations. In this way, the young people of Bialo Village can grow into a generation with strong character and high moral standards, taking pride in their cultural roots. Traditional education in Bialo Village has had a tangible impact on the younger generation. The noble values instilled—such as kinship, mutual cooperation (**gotong royong**), and respect for the environment—have firmly shaped their character.

In their daily lives, the residents of Bialo Village highly uphold the value of kinship. They respect and assist one another, always prioritizing the common good. The spirit of mutual cooperation is also deeply ingrained; when a resident needs help, others immediately step in selflessly. "It is like a single body; if one part suffers, the others feel it too," remarked a resident. Respect for the surrounding environment is another key teaching in this traditional education. Young people are taught to preserve nature and avoid damaging the ecosystem. They understand that ecological balance is vital to their lives. "We are taught not to cut down trees indiscriminately, not to litter, and not to pollute the river," said a local youth. The Village Head of Bialo expressed pride in the positive character displayed by the village's youth. "They are the next generation who will carry these noble values into the future. We are confident they will become highly moral and responsible citizens," he stated.

Village officials also continue to strengthen traditional education through various activities, organizing training sessions, discussions, and cultural festivals that involve the youth. "We want to ensure that these traditional values remain alive and thrive amidst modernization," said a village official. The dedicated efforts of the village officials and the entire Bialo community in nurturing the character of the younger generation deserve appreciation. Traditional education has become a crucial pillar in shaping individuals of noble character who are prepared to face future challenges.

CONCLUSION

Cultural transformation in Bialo Village, Bulukumba Regency, driven by modernization and technological advancement, has shifted traditional values, placing formal education as the primary means of social mobility and economic status improvement. This shift increases the community's aspirations to pursue higher education, although its realization is still hindered by economic factors and limited educational facilities. Synergy between the local government and community leaders is needed to overcome financial and infrastructural constraints, ensuring this positive change in aspirations can be realized in actual academic achievements. You can develop further analysis by reviewing field data related to specific cultural factors in Bialo Village.

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