

Ethnopedagogy and the Transmission of Historical Memory in the Chinese Diaspora Community in Pupuan, Bali

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Abstrak. This study addresses the importance of understanding how minority communities preserve identity and transmit values within dominant socio-cultural contexts. It focuses on the Chinese diaspora community in Pupuan, Bali, examining the transmission of historical and cultural values through an ethnopedagogical approach and collective memory. The Chinese community in Pupuan, a minority established since the colonial period, maintains its identity through oral traditions, ritual practices, and historical symbols while engaging dynamically with Balinese society. The research employed a qualitative interdisciplinary method combining interpretative ethnography and historical analysis. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, document studies, and cultural artifact analysis. Pupuan Village, Tabanan Regency, served as the primary research site. Thematic interpretation and historical reconstruction were used to analyze cross-generational processes of memory transmission. The findings reveal that ethnopedagogical practices, such as family-based education, ritual continuity, and storytelling, function as key mechanisms for sustaining cultural identity and resilience. These processes are reinforced by collective memory (Halbwachs) and highlight the community's negotiation of marginalization, as explained by subaltern and postcolonial perspectives. The study concludes that the Chinese community in Pupuan demonstrates how local wisdom and memory can act as powerful tools of cultural sustainability. The implications suggest the need to integrate minority histories into local history education and to promote multicultural learning that acknowledges plural identities in Indonesia. This research contributes theoretically to studies on ethnopedagogy and collective memory, and practically to policies on cultural preservation and inclusive education.

Keywords: Ethnopedagogy; Historical Memory; Chinese Diaspora

1. Introduction

The Chinese community has long been integral to Indonesia's social history, with their presence spread across many regions [1] They enrich the nation's cultural diversity language, cuisine, and more. However, they often fail to receive equitable representation in the national historical narrative. In many contexts, the history of the Chinese community

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has undergone processes of symbolic erasure in public discourse and formal education, leading to intergenerational gaps in recognizing their own cultural roots.

This situation highlights the crucial importance of ethnopedagogical practices that is, educational systems rooted in culture and local values. The term "ethnopedagogy," as developed by Leontiev (1999) and later contextualized in postcolonial studies by Gayatri Spivak and Paulo Freire, refers to mechanisms of learning and value transmission carried out by communities based on their indigenous knowledge systems. In traditional societies, ethnopedagogy is conducted informally through family, rituals, mother tongue, folk stories, and cultural symbols that embody historical and moral knowledge. In the context of a minority community such as the Chinese in Pupuan, Bali ethnopedagogy also functions as a form of cultural resistance against dominant cultural hegemony.

Research by Hoon (2009) [2] shows that Chinese communities across Indonesia, including in rural areas, develop hidden transcripts stealth forms of cultural transmission to maintain their existence. These include ancestral religious practices, cultural festivals like Cap Go Meh, and the use of Hokkien or Mandarin languages. In the case of the Pupuan Chinese community, these aspects have not been examined in depth, even though they hold vast potential for studies on collective memory and subaltern histories.

The concept of collective memory, as articulated by Halbwachs (1992) [3], posits that memory is not merely individual but socially constructed through institutions, spaces, and cultural practices. In this regard, the Pupuan Chinese community preserves its history and identity through social spaces such as temples, family homes, and communal activities that hold unofficial historical narratives. This aligns with "history from below" historiography, which seeks to reconstruct the experiences of marginalized groups in official historical discourse [4] [5].

Previous studies, such as Susanto (2017) [6] on the Chinese community in Singkawang, West Kalimantan, indicate that ethnopedagogical practices such as teaching the mother tongue, folk tales, and ancestral rituals serve as bulwarks of cultural continuity. Meanwhile, local research notes that the Chinese in Bali have often struggled with ambivalent identities due to assimilation pressures, especially during the New Order era. However, few studies specifically investigate the transmission of historical memory through ethnopedagogy in rural settings like Pupuan, Bali.

Beyond enriching academic literature, this study holds practical significance within the context of multicultural education in Indonesia. By exploring ethnopedagogical practices and the dynamics of collective memory within the Chinese community, it contributes to preserving minority cultural heritage and strengthening cultural identity amid homogenizing and globalizing forces. Especially within a national policy framework that increasingly acknowledges diversity such as the Cultural Advancement Act (UU No. 5/2017) this research provides essential empirical and theoretical foundations to support the preservation of subaltern cultural communities in Indonesia.

2. Method

This study employs a historical research method combined with several cultural studies theories. The stages of the research are as follows. First, Heuristics. The heuristic stage involves the activity of uncovering historical traces. This is carried out through three approaches: (a) observation, which refers to efforts to gather information through site visits to the research location [7]. This study employs two types of observation: participatory and non-participatory. Participatory observation involves attending Balinese traditional ceremonies conducted by the Chinese community in Pupuan village. Ideally, participatory observation requires the researcher to become part of the research subjects. The second type

is non-participatory observation, which involves documenting the social activities of research subjects through video and photography ; (b) Interview, which involves collecting information directly from the research subjects. In historical research, this method is often referred to as oral history [8] ; (c) document, which aims to gather information from printed media. Written documents may include books, magazines, newspapers, personal notes, colonial archives, memoirs, diaries, family records, and so on.

Second, Source Criticism. This stage involves the codification of sources. In this study, Dutch colonial archives, oral histories, vintage photographs, and personal diaries are considered primary data sources [8]. Meanwhile, information obtained from books, journal articles, magazines, and online media is classified as secondary data.

Third, Interpretation. This stage seeks to interpret the meaning between one fact and another. The data, once codified into primary and secondary sources, are analyzed, objectified, and dialectically interpreted to form a preliminary understanding of the research findings [9]. Essentially, interpretation is a transitional phase toward historical writing or historiography. At this point, the researcher begins to form a rough outline of the future writing. In order to give social meaning to the raw data, both primary and secondary, the researcher must employ imagination in crafting a preliminary narrative that is grounded in social reality [7].

This stage integrates several cultural theories. The first is Jürgen Habermas' theory of Communicative Action, which in sociology of education is seen as influential in shaping thought, which then translates into speech, action, habit, and eventually character aiming to realize transformative, emancipatory, and democratic social goals [10]. The second is Michel Foucault's theory of Discourse, particularly from his book *Discipline and Punish*, which explores the techniques of power associated with the emergence of new forms of knowledge and how humans become objects within modern society. Power, according to Foucault, is omnipresent, and truth exists only within the struggle of power relations. Therefore, society forms its own "truth groups," which permit the emergence of discourses [11]. The third is Paulo Freire's theory of Critical Pedagogy. As a prominent Brazilian educator, Freire argues that critical education can help marginalized communities become aware of their social realities, thus initiating change in the systems and structures that oppress them. His model emphasizes self-liberation through a process of "critical consciousness." At its core, critical education is a philosophy that prioritizes empowerment and liberation. Fourth, Historiography. The final stage of historical research is historiography, which involves refining interpretations made during the previous stage. Typically, this stage applies the 5W + 1H principle (Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How) to produce a comprehensive narrative. In this study, the writing method used is deductive, starting with specific discussions and concluding with broader generalizations [7].

3. Results Discussion

Due to the economic surplus experienced by the Chinese community in Pupuan, this, on one hand, can be seen as a compensation for their power deficit when interacting with the Balinese Hindu population, and simultaneously as an attempt at infiltration into the social structure of the community. This infiltration process occurs particularly within the educational dimension. In order to achieve those aims, the following section describes several media that can be used to actualize an educational model from an ethnopedagogical

perspective within which local wisdom values present in, and preserved by, the residents of Pupuan Village are embedded [12]

3.1 Societal Community Organization Model

Non formal education can be practiced through numerous community-based avenues. One effective medium is active participation in social or civic organizations and other local social activities. In Pupuan, several such community organizations serve as platforms for transforming and transmitting local wisdom values essential for individuals and groups to maintain mutual understanding, empathy, and tolerance among different ethnicities, aiming toward the shared ideal of harmonious communal living.

One example of these social organizations is locally known in Balinese as *sekaa*, specifically *Sekaa Teruna–Teruni* (STT) found in each *banjar dinas* in Pupuan. In addition to STT groups, there is also a civic youth organization called Karang Taruna “PAJAR” (an acronym for *Pemuda dan Pelajar*, youth and students), chaired by I Gde Subagia Eka Putra with I Gde Arya Saputra SE as vice chair, I Wayan Andi Puspa as secretary, and Ni Luh Sri Astuti as treasurer, supported by various sections to facilitate organizational operations.

Through these community organizations, both STT and Karang Taruna “PAJAR”, youths from both Balinese and Chinese ethnic backgrounds who join are able to blend and engage jointly in social activities supporting development across various sectors in Pupuan. This ethnic mixing fosters educational experiences while accelerating processes of mutual respect, understanding, tolerance, democratic values, and awareness that collaborative “*apik*” (good) teamwork is necessary for functional community life and organizational efficacy.

Consequently, such practices culminate in the creation of genuine, quality tolerance. This environment minimizes ethnic stereotypes and prejudices that could drive division or discord, instead strengthening bonds of brotherhood toward equality between the Chinese and Balinese communities in Pupuan. When this occurs, peaceful, harmonious living is achieved naturally, as all community members genuinely appreciate that mutual understanding and tolerance lead to joy, well-being, and a fulfilling communal life.

It is important to emphasize that *Sekaa Teruna–Teruni* (STT) and Karang Taruna “PAJAR” in Pupuan are not political organizations nor affiliates of any political force, but purely social civic institutions. These organizations adhere to a widely embraced ideology *Tri Hita Karana*, comprising three inseparable relationships ; *Parahyangan* (humans with the Divine), *Pawongan* (humans with fellow humans), and *Palemahan* (humans with the environment).

3.2 Ngayah Model

The concept of “*ngayah*” is inseparable from the very essence of work in the Balinese religious cultural context, where such labor is considered a duty dedicated to God (*Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*), performed with sincerity and without expectation of payment. For the Confucian, inspired Chinese community, the essence of work is filial devotion to one’s family and the accumulation of merit (*phala*) in this life and the hereafter. Reflecting this strong work ethic, the Chinese in Pupuan economically outperform the Balinese.

In the Balinese language, “*ngayah*” means performing work for God, government, or esteemed individuals without remuneration . Field observations in Pupuan show that both Balinese and Chinese *krama* (village members) engage in ngayah when preparing religious rituals (*odalan*) in local temples. Tasks may include sewing ceremonial attire (*mejejahitan*) or preparing offerings (*bebantenan*), typically roles within their capability.

After the *ngayah* activities, participants gather for communal prayers providing a space for interethnic blending during worship. This aligns with human religiosity expressed through ritual acts such as praying, offering, dancing, and singing. Through such prayers, they seek blessings from the supernatural entities dwelling in the temple, requesting protection and prosperity. Thus, *ngayah* becomes an educational process: participants learn local wisdom—how worship brings people closer to the divine, the sacred meaning of ritual dances like *Rejang Dewa* (performing spirit of gods), and the lyrical praises chanted by *sekaa santi* participants in *mekidung*. When these experiences are internalized correctly, individuals develop positive outlooks and guiding principles for thinking, speaking, and action. These lessons are then passed down through families to future generations, reinforcing the preservation of local wisdom and the harmony it fosters.

3.3 Metulungan Models

Human beings as social creatures (*homo socialis*) naturally cannot live in isolation without the help of or interaction with others. Therefore, every human is born with the necessity to relate to others in order to optimally develop their potential and to gather collectively within a social community, often within a specific space or region, such as through the establishment of a village.

Field findings indicate that members of the Chinese ethnic group who have become *krama* (citizens) of *desa pakraman* (customary village) in Pupuan actively participate in supporting Balinese villagers during various ceremonies or rituals (*yadnya*), such as *ngaben* (cremation ceremony), weddings, *tiga bulanan* (three-month ceremony), *otonan* (Balinese birthday), and *mesangih* (tooth filing ceremony), among others. This kind of mutual social activity is locally referred to as *ngoupin* or *metulungan*, which means helping fellow community members who are hosting such rituals.

This practice of *ngoupin* can be viewed as a form of non-formal education based on ethnopedagogy, functioning as a medium to strengthen cooperation, solidarity, mutual assistance (*gotong royong*), and interethnic brotherhood (*penyamabrayaan*). It is rooted in a shared awareness among different ethnic groups to nurture social harmony, thereby fostering a peaceful and harmonious coexistence among diverse communities in Pupuan Village.

This view is supported by an interview with Mr. Made Sukarya (64 years old), who stated that Balinese Hindus always actively participate when Chinese residents perform religious rituals, both joyous and sorrowful. He himself had a late wife of Chinese descent. Likewise, when Balinese families organize such events, Chinese community members also come to help (*metulungan* or *ngoupin*).

Jro Raka (56 years old) also explained that Balinese villagers consistently maintain a sense of kinship (*penyamabrayaan*) with the Chinese community, proven by their obligation to attend and support each other during traditional ceremonies, whether in joy or grief. However, he noted that in recent times, the quality of “*ngoupin*” has declined due to modernization, as many now prefer practical approaches—offering goods or money instead of being physically present to help.

From these accounts, it is evident that “*ngoupin*” or “*metetulungan*” continues to serve as a form of social bonding and interethnic engagement in Pupuan Village, especially during important life events. Despite its continued relevance, its intensity has somewhat diminished due to the demands of modern life and increased individual busyness. This shift has led to the substitution of personal involvement with material contributions, such as handing over goods or money through intermediaries who attend the events.

3.4 Traditional Game Models

Traditional games can also serve as educational media to introduce and instill local wisdom values. Several local games in Bali, which are also known in the community of Pupuan Village, include *magoak-goakan*, *mengkeb-engkeban*, *meong-meyongan*, *selodor selodoran*, and so on. Within these traditional games lie values that are part of local wisdom. These values should rightly be preserved and nurtured for the next generation, especially in light of the rapid influence of modern developments that endanger the mental growth of today's youth.

The values contained within the aforementioned traditional games include fostering togetherness, mutual cooperation, harmony, teamwork, honesty, courage, a sense of responsibility, and more. However, these values have deteriorated due to scientific and technological advancements, which have promoted individualistic tendencies. Field facts show that children in Bali, including those in Pupuan Village, are now introduced early on to technology-based games such as PlayStation, Game Boy, tablets, iPads, cell phones, notebooks, the Internet, and various television content, many of which are not educational. As a result, many display odd behaviors, including acts of sadism that they imitate and practice within their closest families and/or peers at school.

One particular traditional game in Pupuan is sacred and is only performed during *piodalan* or *pujawali* ceremonies at Puseh temple (the ancestral temple) of *Desa Pakraman* Pupuan. This game is called “*Rejang Ayunan*.” In “*Rejang Ayunan*,” participants demonstrate courage as they hold a rope and swing right and left sometimes above, sometimes below. This posture symbolizes and teaches that life is circular: at times we are on top, and other times we are beneath. Thus, “*Rejang Ayunan*” also conveys the meaning that humans must be aware and patient life continuously rotates (*niyasa kauripan*), much like a wheel (*cakra*). For this reason, this sacred game remains preserved by the villagers (*krama*) of *Desa Pakraman* Pupuan.

3.5 Tradition of *Mesatua* (Storytelling)

Mesatua, or traditional storytelling, is a cultural tradition that today can be considered nearly extinct. In the past, storytelling (*mesatua*) was a regular routine practiced by parents, especially before bedtime to lull their children to sleep. These stories are vitally important to preserve because they often contain local wisdom values, moral teachings (*susila*), *karmaphala* (the law of cause and effect), heroism, and life struggles.

Through these stories or *satua*, messages and cultural values are stored in a child's memory and later implemented in their daily life and social environment. When a child listens to stories told by their parents or grandparents, it is imbued with meaning not only the narrative itself, but also the affection and emotional bonding between parent and child.

Field interviews in Pupuan Village with Mr. Ketut Rumantya (age 74) revealed that although telling stories (*mesatua*) was not done every night, and the stories were no longer about legends, mythology, *Tantri* tales, and Balinese folk stories, he still once in a while narrated personal family experiences or ancestral stories to his children. From this insight, it is implied that through such stories, children are expected to awaken an awareness that the life journey of their family holds valuable lessons, and that they should honor their ancestors, who are rightfully regarded as heroes.

This approach aligns with teachings of Confucianism and Buddhism, which encourage respect for one's elders and ancestors. In Chinese cultural tradition, respect based on age and kinship must be upheld firmly. Hence, paternalistic family education plays a critical role in preserving respectful values in each individual. Once internalized, these values enable individuals to interact socially without awkwardness and to form mutually respectful relationships across ethnicities, contributing to lasting harmony in society.

Hinduism similarly teaches the importance of respect among individuals through the principle of *Tat Twam Asi* (humanity). It also prescribes respect for authority and spiritual guidance as taught through the concept of *Catur Guru* ; First, *Guru Swadhyaya* respect and devotion to God (Ida Sang Hyang Widhi) ; second, *Guru Rupaka* respect to biological parents ; third, *Guru Wisesa* respect to government leaders ; fourth, *Guru Pengajian* respect to educators who impart knowledge.

Another value embedded in *satua* is wisdom and discernment. As Haryono (1994: 45) noted, wise people recognize that the best life is one lived according to moral and ethical norms, which serve as the basis for behavior in society. Therefore, storytelling (*mesatua*) is highly significant and should be revived to restore the emotional bonds disrupted by daily routines and the rise of modern technology that has replaced parental roles in nurturing and educating children. By reviving *mesatua*, children are expected to internalize the noble values rooted in local wisdom contained in these tales, fostering character development and creating both verbal and non-verbal dialogue between children and parents ultimately nurturing love and affection in the family.

3.6 Model of Cultural Rituals in Public Spaces

Cultural rituals performed by both ethnic groups in Pupuan serve as a medium for instilling local wisdom values, so that feelings of togetherness and brotherhood can be maintained, progressing toward social harmony. When the Balinese community celebrates cultural or religious rituals such as *odalan* at the temple, members of the Chinese ethnic group who have become residents (*krama*) of Desa Pakraman Pupuan also participate in the preparations and join in the prayers [13].

The Chinese community also embraces Hindu-inspired symbols, such as *sanggah*, *Jro Gede*, *taksu*, and *Ratu Nyoman*, while at the same time preserving ancestral traditional worship through practices at ash altars (*meja abu*) or statues (*cetya*). Additionally, they engage in cultural mimicry by adopting Balinese customs, for example by arranging offerings (*banten*), erecting *penjor* during Galungan, preparing *lawar*, and participating in *mekiis/melasti* before Nyepi. Their involvement and mingling during public cultural or religious rituals foster mutual cultural understanding. This often leads to cultural borrowing especially among the Chinese community who imitate Balinese habits (*habitus*).

One notable example of a ritual performed by the Chinese is the funeral ritual. When a Chinese family experiences a loss, the Balinese community feels a shared sorrow referred to as “*nyama madelodan*”, and attends the funeral to offer prayers. They wish that the departed soul is accepted by God in accordance with their virtuous deeds, and that the grieving family is granted strength and resilience to continue living well.

This practice aligns with statements by Jro Raka (56), former *Bendesa Adat* of *Desa Pakraman* Pupuan, who explained that when a Chinese person passes away, Balinese people attend the funeral, bringing gifts such as rice, sugar, coffee, incense, or white cloth. They also accompany the deceased to the cemetery, and sometimes *sekaa angklung* (traditional musical group) plays during the procession. This behavior reflects the strong familial bond (*penyamabrayaan*) between both ethnic groups. The reverse also applies when a Balinese person dies, the Chinese community reciprocates in the same manner [14].

Jro Raka further noted that when the Chinese wish to bury their deceased, a family member, along with an officer or member of the “*Karang Semadhi*” organization, consults with the *Bendesa Adat* of *Desa Pakraman* Pupuan to determine an auspicious time for the burial. This indicates a harmonious and respectful relationship, as the Chinese community consistently seeks advice from the Balinese adat leader on suitable days for burial rites. Through joint funerary attendance, each ethnic group acknowledges their kinship and

fosters local wisdom values such as togetherness, mutual assistance (*gotong royong*), caring and nurturing (*saling asah, asih, asuh*), and solidarity, foundational pillars for social harmony in Pupuan Village.

Similarly, wedding rituals among both Chinese and Balinese become venues for interethnic gatherings. They provide warm settings for greeting each other, fostering connections based on their respective beliefs, and engendering mutual understanding of each other's traditions. Furthermore, cultural assimilation is evident when the Chinese community adopts Balinese cultural elements that align with their own values for instance, erecting *penjor* during Galungan, making *lawar* for Penampahan Galungan, preparing offerings (*banten*) at the *Jro Gede* shrine in their homes, and other activities borrowed from Balinese culture. Conversely, the Balinese have begun incorporating the use of Chinese style incense (*hio*) in their worship ceremonies, recognizing it as an essential ritual medium [15].

The adoption of Chinese copper coins (*kepeng*) as ritual paraphernalia in certain sacred buildings or temples in Pupuan further enhances the aesthetic appearance of these structures. Based on the above descriptions, public cultural rituals serve as a medium for transmitting local wisdom values across both the Chinese and Balinese communities. They foster tolerance, democratic interaction, and a sense of brotherhood, thus maintaining harmonious life in Pupuan Village up to the present day.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the transmission of historical memory in the Chinese diaspora community of Pupuan, Bali, occurs primarily through ethnopedagogical practices rooted in oral storytelling, ritual continuity, and syncretic traditions, which function as informal yet powerful mechanisms of intergenerational knowledge transfer. These findings answer the research question by showing that memory is preserved not through formal institutions but through everyday cultural practices, allowing the community to sustain identity, resilience, and agency amidst pressures of assimilation and marginalization. The significance of these practices lies in their adaptive hybridization of Chinese and Balinese elements, which demonstrates cultural creativity as a strategy of survival and resistance. The study also highlights the political dimension of memory transmission, where oral histories act as counter-narratives to dominant historiography and foster critical awareness among younger generations. The implications of this research suggest that national education and cultural heritage policies must integrate minority perspectives to promote inclusivity and multicultural understanding in Indonesia. For future research, comparative studies with other diaspora or minority communities, as well as interdisciplinary approaches combining ethnopedagogy with digital memory preservation, are recommended to further explore the dynamics of cultural sustainability and the evolving role of memory in shaping social identity.

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