

# How Elementary Students Come to Know About the Culture of Yogyakarta: Levels of Learning Experience

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to explore how Indonesian elementary students come to know about the culture of the city and region of Yogyakarta, in south central Java, by looking at the different levels of their learning experience. The researchers used a descriptive study design. The subjects of the study were teachers and students from the Tegalorejo and Giwangan state elementary schools in Yogyakarta. The techniques of data collection were observation and testing, and our method of data analysis employed descriptive statistics. The findings of the study revealed that the learning experience of our elementary students, as they underwent the process of learning about the culture of Yogyakarta, tended to involve both internalization and actualization. This means that students first began to understand and appreciate the importance of this culture and its values, and then went on to behave in accordance with these cultural values.

**Key words:** elementary students, learning experience, Yogyakarta's cultural values, internalization and externalization

## 1. Introduction

After learning, ideally learners will gain the learning experience as stated in the learning objectives. Learning experience is a series of activities which is experienced and meaningful for each learner in the learning activities in accordance with the methods or learning models used by teachers to achieve learning objectives. Taba (in Zais, 1974, p. 350) stated, "learning experiences, and not the content as such, are the means for achieving all objectives besides those of knowledge and understanding." Learning experiences usually reflect and indicate the quality or level of learning outcomes.

Learning experience in an educational context based on the culture of the city and region of Yogyakarta can be in a variety of activities that students do in learning activities ranging from recognition, appreciation, internalization, and actualization to activities in creating and forming new values. Learning activities done and experienced by learners vary according to the Yogyakarta's cultural values which students need to give and do according to the formulation of learning objectives. It is in line with Sanjaya's view (2005, pp. 81–82) that learning in the context of a competency-based curriculum need to pay attention to the following principles; the learning process is a process of forming an environment that can shape or change the cognitive structure of learners, is related to the type of knowledge to learn, and should involve the role of the social environment. Here, what is trying to be produced is graduates which are competent in their field and reflect the character of the nation.

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What are the cultures of the city and region of Yogyakarta that need to be used as teaching materials? Based on Provincial Regulation of Special Region of Yogyakarta, Number 5 of 2011 on the Management and Implementation of Cultural Based Education, Yogyakarta’s cultural values contain values (spiritual, personal–moral, social, and Yogyakarta’s nationalism), artifacts (performance literature, painting, fashion, craft, architecture, and culinary), and custom (social–identity, economy–welfare, and politics–power), which are developed, applied, recognized, believed, and agreed upon to be implemented by every citizen of Yogyakarta. These values, according to Ekowarni E. (2010), are the supreme values which are the guides of life (*guiding principles*) used to achieve the degree of humanity, more useful life, peace, and happiness.

Students’ learning experience on cultural values of Yogyakarta in detail can be visualized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 Students’ Learning Experience on Yogyakarta Cultural Values**

Cultural values	Learning experience				
	Introduction	Appreciation	Internalization	Actualization	Creation
Supreme values					
Artifacts					
Custom					

Based on Table 1, we can understand the quality of students’ learning experiences according to its level and the types of values of the culture of the city and region of Yogyakarta achieved by students. Similarly, we can obtain information about the learning experience profile of the students in the application of Yogyakarta’s cultural values in daily activities.

In fact, not all students gain learning experience as desired by the teachers and the school in all subjects, including local subject in the form of cultural values of Yogyakarta. Why does this happen? One reason is teachers are less effective in providing learning activities which are meaningful and relevant to the needs and characteristics of students. Teachers emphasize theoretical aspects rather than real day practice or experience. Consequently, student’s involvement in learning activities becomes less intensive.

There are some examples of learners’ behavior suspected as a result of less effective implementation of learning activities by teachers, namely that students are busy with themselves (playing games on their cell phones), students are more interested in playing with their cell phones than listening to the teacher’s description, and that students cheat on their friend’s work rather than doing their own work. These behaviors clearly do not reflect the quality of the students' learning experience desired by many parties.

Considering variety of cases that have emerged lately, The Government has actually made efforts to improve teachers' capacity in organizing more quality learning activities, especially with regard to optimizing the implementation of curriculum based on local wisdom. For instance, Government of Yogyakarta Special Region has issued Provincial Regulation of Special Region of Yogyakarta Number 5 of 2011 on Management and Implementation of Cultural Based Education. However, the results are not quite encouraging.

This study focuses on students’ learning experience on the cultural values of Yogyakarta. In particular, the research problem to be answered through this research is to know the level of students’ learning experience on Yogyakarta culture.

## 2. Research Methods

This research uses descriptive research design with the aim to reveal and describe the level of students' learning experiences (including recognition, appreciation, internalization, actualization, and creation) about the cultural values of Yogyakarta (values, artifacts, and custom). Subjects were teachers and students, 28 students from Tegalrejo State Elementary School and 26 students from Giwangan State Elementary School Yogyakarta. The technique for collecting data is observation and tests. Observation is used to observe the behavior of students in implementing Yogyakarta's cultural values in class and school. The test is used to measure the level of students' learning experience on Yogyakarta's cultural values. The technique of data analysis is descriptive statistical analysis (mean) to measure the level of students' learning experiences in applying the cultural values of Yogyakarta, which includes aspects such as recognition, appreciation, internalization, actualization, and creation.

## 3. Findings and Discussions

Data on students' learning experiences on Yogyakarta culture are obtained by measuring the ability of students in the aspects or cultural values of Yogyakarta, which includes values, artifacts, and custom. These three aspects or values are viewed or reviewed, seen or studied from a gradual level of learning experience, which consists of recognizing, appreciating, internalizing, actualizing, and creating. Measurements were carried out twice, at the beginning of the lesson and at the end of the lesson, in Tegalrejo State Elementary School and Giwangan State Elementary School Yogyakarta as shown in Tables 2 and 3 as follows.

**Table 2 Description of Yogyakarta's Cultural Learning Experience at the Beginning of the Lesson**

Research sites	Level of learning experience on Yogyakarta's culture at the beginning of lesson					Total
	recognition	Appreciation	internalization	Actualization	creation	
Tegalrejo State Elementary School	40,36	28,21	15,36	6,79	9,29	100
Giwangan State Elementary School	18,95	25,00	35,89	12,10	8,00	100

**Table 3 Description of Yogyakarta's cultural learning experience at the end of the lesson**

Research sites	Level of experience learning Yogyakarta culture at the end of the lesson					Total
	recognition	appreciation	internalization	actualization	creation	
Tegalrejo State Elementary School	01,07	21,07	38,21	21,07	18,57	100
Giwangan State Elementary School	00,00	02,00	06,40	70,00	21,60	100

Based on data in Tables 2 and 3, it can be described that the students' experience on Yogyakarta cultural values at the beginning of lesson in Tegalrejo State Elementary School tends to remain at the level of recognition (40.36%). Meanwhile, in Giwangan State Elementary School, the learning experience of students on the cultural values of Yogyakarta is at the level of internalization (35.89%). Of the two scores, it can be said that the highest level of students' learning experiences on the cultural values of Yogyakarta at the beginning of the lesson at two schools of the study sites is at the level of internalization. This can be achieved undoubtedly because of the perseverance of teachers in facilitating learners with their learning. The perseverance of teachers in this lesson is in line with opinion of Zulfiani et al. (2016, p. 274) which claims that the teachers' creativity is not only in terms of the implementation of science and technology, but also in terms of the development of learning methods, which

are simple but in accordance with the nation's character and materials development for vast knowledge.

Students' learning experience on Yogyakarta cultural values at the end of lesson in Tegalrejo State Elementary School tends to exist at the level of internalization (38.21%). In Giwangan State Elementary School, students' learning experience on Yogyakarta cultural values tend to already exist at the actualization rate (70.00%). Astawan and Rati (2016, p. 331) said that learning which can link instructions to real life is meaningful instructions. In this case, learners can apply what they learn in everyday life.

Students' learning experiences on cultural values of Yogyakarta are already at the level of actualization; and even in Giwangan State Elementary School, students' learning experiences on cultural values of Yogyakarta is no longer at the level of recognition, for the lowest level of their learning experiences are at the level of appreciation.

Based on the scores on the table showing the students' learning experience on Yogyakarta's culture between those at the beginning and the end of the lesson, it clearly shows that the score of learning experience on the cultural values of Yogyakarta at the end of the lesson with non-directive learning method is higher (better) than the one at the beginning of lesson. The level of learning experience of the cultural values on Yogyakarta tends to shift towards higher or better levels in both schools of research sites. For example in Tegalrejo State Elementary School, the score of learning experience on the cultural values of Yogyakarta at the beginning of the lesson still dominantly exists at the level of recognition (40.36%) moving towards the internalization level (38.21%) of the learning experience. In Giwangan State Elementary School, students' experience on the cultural values of Yogyakarta tends to move from internalization level (35,89%) towards the actualization level (70%). This is in accordance with the results of Woolfalk's research (Werdiningsih, 2015, p. 115) that metacognitive abilities begin to develop from the age of 5–7. Primary school-aged children already have the potential to use their metacognitive strategies.

Based on the above findings, it can be said that the level of students' learning experience on the types of Yogyakarta culture taught by teachers tends to be at the level of internalization and actualization in its simple form. One way that teachers can do to encourage students to have that ability is by facilitating and assisting intensively in learning Yogyakarta's culture. Culture of being different in actualizing Yogyakarta's cultural values needs to be developed among students. Krissandi & Rusmawan (2015, p. 467) say that the key to success of an education lies in the quality and the professionalism of the teacher, even though today technology is already sophisticated and an integral part of education.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the above findings and discussions, it can be concluded that the level of students' learning experience on Yogyakarta cultural values is at the level of internalization and actualization. This means that the students have begun to appreciate and behave in accordance with the cultural values of Yogyakarta (such as values, artifacts, and art–culture).

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