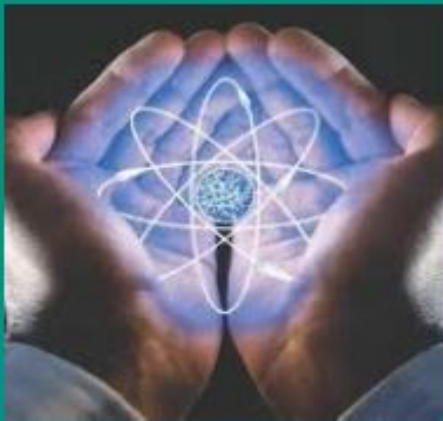


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# Academia Open



*By Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo*

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# Preserving Papuan Language to Foster Social Tolerance in Children

**Sherly Gaspersz, sherlygaspers91@gmail.com, (1)**

*Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Victory Sorong, Indonesia*

**Marissa Swanda Tupamahu, marissa@gmail.com, (0)**

*Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Victory Sorong, Indonesia*

**Fretty Matahelumual, fretty@gmail.com, (0)**

*Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Victory Sorong, Indonesia*

<sup>(1)</sup> Corresponding author

## Abstract

**General Background:** Language preservation is essential in maintaining cultural identity and fostering intercultural harmony, particularly in multicultural regions like Sorong City, Papua. **Specific Background:** The decline in regional language use, such as the Moi language, threatens local wisdom and social cohesion, especially among younger generations. **Knowledge Gap:** Limited community-based initiatives integrate trilingual education with cultural tolerance training in non-formal learning settings. **Aims:** This study aimed to implement and evaluate the *Lestarian Bahasa Papua* (LABEPA) Movement at the Egad Kairos Learning House to strengthen children's basic vocabulary in Moi, Indonesian, and English while promoting social tolerance. **Results:** Conducted through staged activities—preparation, socialization, training, testing, and monitoring—the program improved children's vocabulary mastery from 45% (pre-test) to 78% (post-test). Interactive methods, including singing, games, and cultural storytelling, enhanced engagement and comprehension. **Novelty:** LABEPA uniquely combines trilingual learning with cultural and tolerance education in a playful, community-driven approach, supported by tailored teaching tools such as illustrated dictionaries and flipbooks. **Implications:** The findings suggest that culturally grounded, multisensory language programs can effectively enhance linguistic skills and social values, offering a scalable model for language preservation and tolerance education in other multicultural contexts.

## Highlights:

- Improves children's vocabulary in Moi, Indonesian, and English.
- Promotes cultural awareness and social tolerance.
- Uses engaging, play-based and multimedia learning methods.

**Keywords:** Language Preservation, Social Tolerance, Trilingual Education, Cultural Identity, Community Learning

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## Introduction

Education is a conscious effort to enhance the life of the nation's children through both formal and non-formal education.[1] Learning houses serve as one of the places to provide non-formal education services with various information sources as a manifestation of literacy concern for the library users.[2] Ideally, learning houses can be utilized to meet the learning needs of students by using a variety of indoor and outdoor learning media, as well as gaining learning experiences from various inspiring groups.[3] Learning houses are an important support for formal education and play a crucial role in the development of human resources.[4] Therefore, awareness in the development of human resources and the existence of Sorong City as a gateway to Papua Land as well as a transit icon for tourism areas, various sectors continue to synergize in improving literacy and numeracy skills for its community.[5] Efforts to improve literacy and numeracy skills in children are also carried out by a learning community called Rumah Belajar Egad Kairos in Sorong City, founded by a Papuan woman named Ansri Nauw, S.Pd, located at Jl. Tanjung Dofior RT 01 / RW 01, Klabulu Village, Malaimsimsaa District, Sorong City, Southwest Papua Province. This learning house has been established since 2017 and is still active to this day. At first, the learning house had only 10 children under its guidance and now it has reached 50 children from various backgrounds at the elementary and junior high school levels.

The managers of learning houses realize that learning support does not only come from within but also continues to synergize with various parties to enhance learning experiences that positively impact children both in knowledge and character, fostering a love for each other and for the nation of Indonesia. It is undeniable that learning houses also follow the developments of the globalization era which brings advancements in science and technology.[6] Stakeholders in the field of education should acknowledge that the teaching of cultural identity must continue to be carried out. Cultural education needs to be implemented by educational institutions from an early age to produce an advanced society that is not alienated from its own culture.[7] Cultural education can be carried out by preserving regional languages as the mother tongue of certain ethnic groups, which are increasingly being swallowed by the progress of the times. It must be acknowledged that regional languages are part of the national culture guaranteed by the state.[8] The existence of language as a means of communication and as a unifying tool in social functions necessitates the preservation of regional languages, fostering a love for the unifying Indonesian language, and encouraging mastery of foreign languages as well.[4] Efforts to preserve local wisdom, particularly regional languages, should be undertaken. Regional languages in Indonesia have different traits and characteristics from one another, and they are beginning to be forgotten, so the extraordinary wealth is slowly disappearing without us realizing it.[9] Realizing the importance of this matter, the team implementing the community service activity collaborates to conduct a service activity titled, 'Movement to Preserve the Papuan Language (LABEPA)' in order to maintain Social Tolerance among Children at the Egad Kairos Learning House in Sorong City.[10]

The purpose of the LABEPA movement activities is to carry out a learning process that strengthens local wisdom by instilling values in children, fostering a love for the Unifying Language, Indonesian, preserving regional languages, and the spirit of learning foreign languages.[11] The foreign language referred to is English, which serves as a foundation because English is now the most widely used language in the world and exists as an international language.[12] Thus, children grow up ready to face the developments of the globalization era without becoming alienated from local languages and cultures, as well as from the foreign world.[13]

## Method

This community service program will be held at the Egad Kairos Learning House in Sorong City targeting children. This service activity is carried out through a training pattern to enhance language skills in children by introducing basic vocabulary in three languages, namely the local language (Moi language), Indonesian, and English. Furthermore, awareness of local Papuan wisdom will be instilled in children so that they can understand social tolerance in living in the multicultural society of Sorong City.



The stages of implementation of the activities in the community service program titled "Preserving the Papua Language Movement (LABEPA) to Foster Social Tolerance among Children at the Egad Kairos Learning Center" are as follows:

## **1. Activity Preparation Stages At this stage, the team performs several tasks:**

- a. Initial Observation and Interview
- b. Discussion with the Team for Determining the activity materials.
- c. The team presents the materials, resources, and tools required for the Community Service activity.
- d. The team coordinates with partners (Egad Kairos Learning House) to prepare the learning space for the Community Service activity.

## **2. Stages of Socialization**

- a. The team carried out socialization of the PkM plan to the partners.
- b. The team conveyed the achievement targets in the PkM activities with the partners.

## **3. Training Stages**

- a. The team conducts a preliminary test to facilitate the division of study groups.
- b. The team conducts training through the LABEPA Movement.
- c. The team provides materials in the Illustrated Dictionary and Flipbook.
- d. The team teaches English about Parts of Speech.
- e. The team introduces Papuan culture.
- f. The team administers a final test related to the materials studied using quizzes.
- g. The team provides reinforcement to maintain social tolerance by creating "Creative One Posters."

## **4. Monitoring Stages**

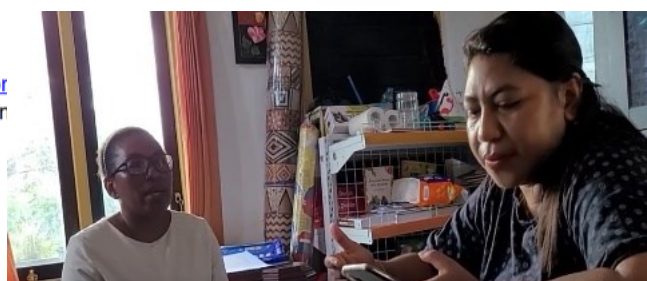
At this stage, the team carries out systematic monitoring from the beginning to the end of the service activities, which must be consistently implemented in the LABEPA movement.

## **5. Stages of Action Plan**

After the service activities took place, the team certainly carried out observations related to the mastery of basic vocabulary in the three languages that the children had learned. Furthermore, for the tutors, there was assistance provided by the team in using the teaching module, which has been presented in the form of a flipbook, so that in the future, the tutors can manage the learning process effectively and efficiently.

## **Results and Discussion**

The LABEPA Movement activities have been carried out at the Egad Kairos Learning House in Sorong City.[14] The entire series of activities has been assessed to run smoothly as it was conducted according to the scheduled timeline.[15] The LABEPA Movement implemented for children has created an interesting and enjoyable atmosphere in the learning process. The LABEPA movement began with observations and interviews with partners regarding the learning experiences that children have gone through so far. Next, the process of material preparation and coordination with resource persons as well as the completeness of the PkM activities. Then, the team gradually carried out the socialization of the LABEPA program to the children and also the tutors, which was followed by training and measuring the children's learning outcomes before and after learning by conducting pre-tests and post-tests. Subsequently, the team assisted partners in implementing the LABEPA Movement during the teaching and learning activities held every Saturday and Sunday from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM WIT.





**Figure 1.** Observation and Interview

A pre-test was conducted for children to assess their ability to recognize the diversity and local cultures present in their surroundings. The pre-test consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions. After the pre-test was carried out, an average score of 45% was obtained. This aligns with the fact that the learning center has not yet established a minimum mastery standard. However, if compared to the conditions in formal education, it is considered not to have reached the standard and is not declared passed. Based on these test results, the team will carry out activities in a phased manner.



**Figure 2.** Pre Test

The material presented to the children consists of:

## 1. Language and Tolerance

In this section, children are taught to recognize the diversity that exists around them. The city of Sorong is often referred to as Sorong City Together, also known as a multi-ethnic place filled with various tribes, religions, and cultures within it. Children are also taught to appreciate diversity with the motto 'Sa deng Ko Satu' as a manifestation of the Indonesian national slogan Bhineka Tunggal Ika, which means that although we are different, we remain one. And the Indonesian language serves as a unifying tool for all of us.



## Figure 3. Language and Tolerance

### 2. Moi Language Class

The moi language class is taught to children during training. The material is presented in the form of learning while singing. The children are also taught to recognize greetings in the moi language, which is the regional language of the native Moi tribe in Sorong city. In addition, the children also learn about my family, recognize numbers, and objects around them in the moi language. This learning is presented in the form of songs so that children can more easily grasp the basic vocabulary they are learning.

### 3. This is our Culture

After getting to know the diversity and local languages, children are introduced to cultural stories from the land of Papua. A short film screening about Raja Ampat, which is a famous icon or tourist destination that has gained worldwide recognition, is presented. This cultural material is packaged using a bilingual concept (Indonesian and English) so that children can have a deeper learning experience in gaining knowledge in the learning home class. Thus, children who have difficulties in learning additional English (who need to take paid tutoring, but are hindered by financial issues) can have the same learning experience as their peers.



Figure 4. *This is our Culture*

After undergoing training, the team conducted tests again to measure the progress of student learning outcomes. Consequently, the results of the post-test indicated a success rate of 78%. This result demonstrates a significant achievement in learning using several interesting methods. In line with this, when the learning methods are engaging, the children's enthusiasm for learning also increases.

## Conclusion

The LABEPA movement has been packaged attractively with a learning method that includes playing and singing. This does not cause boredom for children while learning. As a result, there has been an increase in knowledge about the language and culture of Papua as well as foreign languages. Based on the community service activities that have been conducted at the Egad Kairos learning house, it can be concluded that the LABEPA movement activities have an impact on: the increase in children's knowledge shows an improvement in knowledge about the languages and cultures surrounding them, specifically in the land of Papua (Moi language) of the indigenous people of Sorong city. Children also understand basic vocabulary in three languages through teaching using a trilingual dictionary and flipbook. Children's participation in learning activities has increased. There is an interactive learning atmosphere through playing, singing, and watching short films. Children's social tolerance shows their ability to understand the



importance of religious tolerance. Group discussions help children better understand cultural differences. In the future, it is hoped that language and culture training activities will continue in the form of workshops for tutors to provide reinforcement and learning experiences before teaching children with available teaching materials and diverse methods. A culture tour can be initiated with partners to visit several cultural and diverse spots in the Sorong Raya area. Thus, it can encourage every learner to appreciate diversity, allowing them to grow into harmonious learners.

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