



## How Sociodrama-Based Heroism Learning Shapes Primary School Students' National Character: A Qualitative Study

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** - This study aims to describe how sociodrama-based heroism learning shapes the character of friendship in elementary school students through contextual, participatory, and local history-based learning experiences.

**Methodology** - This study uses a qualitative, phenomenological design. The research subjects included students in grades IV, V, and VI of SDN Sungai Miai 5 Banjarmasin, who served as actors and spectators in the sociodrama, and the class teacher, who served as a supporting informant. Subjects were selected purposively based on students' involvement in learning activities. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and learning documentation. Data analysis was carried out thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and meaning drawing.

**Findings** - The study's results indicate that sociodrama learning shapes students' national character, as reflected in historical awareness, exemplary heroic figures, patriotism, social awareness, responsibility, and nationalistic attitudes. Students' emotional involvement in acting out local historical events encourages the interpretation of heroic values as experiences directly lived and reflected on, not merely understood cognitively.

**Contribution** - This study makes conceptual and practical contributions by confirming that local history-based sociodrama is a relevant learning strategy for strengthening elementary school students' national character through meaningful, contextual learning experiences. These findings broaden understanding of national character education practices and can serve as a reference for teachers in designing more meaningful, contextual, and sustainable history learning in elementary schools.

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of national character in elementary school students faces serious challenges amidst increasingly rapid and complex social change. The development of digital technology, the early penetration of social media, and widespread exposure to global culture have shifted how children interpret self-identity, togetherness, and national values. Various educational reports indicate a decline in social awareness, empathy, and pride in national identity among the younger generation, including at the elementary school level, which should serve as the foundation for character formation (Hidayat, 2025; Prihatmojo & Badawi, 2020; Sagala et al., 2024). This situation makes strengthening national character not merely a normative agenda, but rather an urgent and strategic need.

This phenomenon is further contextualized by the fact that learning in elementary schools remains dominated by a cognitive approach focused on academic achievement and mastery of material. National values such as patriotism, historical awareness, social and national awareness, civic responsibility, and the exemplary role models of national figures are often reduced to memorizing facts and textual narratives (Dewanto et al., 2023). Several studies show that students can name national heroes but struggle to relate the values of struggle and sacrifice to the realities of their daily social lives (Afwan et al., 2020; Aristya et al., 2022; Maulani et al., 2025). This gap between knowledge and internalization of values highlights a fundamental problem in the practice of character education in elementary schools.

The increasing symptoms of social apathy and the weakening of collective solidarity among school-age children further strengthen the urgency of this research. Individualistic digital environments tend to foster interaction patterns that lack empathy and social reflection (Dwistia et al., 2024). Without appropriate pedagogical interventions, students may grow as individuals detached from national values and from an awareness of belonging to the broader national community (Hamad et al., 2023; Hasibuan & Ritonga, 2024). In this context, elementary schools play a crucial role as strategic spaces for instilling national values in a meaningful and sustainable manner. Character education policies in various countries, including Indonesia, emphasize the importance of a contextual, reflective, and experience-based learning approach. The 21st-century curriculum demands learning that not only transfers knowledge but also shapes students' attitudes, values, and civic identity (Rohmah et al., 2025). However, implementation in the field still faces challenges, including limited learning models that can bridge national values with students' concrete life experiences.

Sociodrama, as a dramatic learning approach, offers pedagogical potential relevant to these challenges. Sociodrama allows students to actively engage through social roles, interactions, and collective reflection, so that the values learned are not limited to the symbolic level. Previous research has shown that sociodrama is effective in enhancing students' empathy, tolerance, and social skills (Lestari et al., 2024; Wardani, 2016). However, these studies still position sociodrama as a strategy for developing general social attitudes, rather than as a medium for internalizing heroic values and national character.

The value of heroism itself is a central element in the formation of national character because it encompasses dimensions of historical awareness, moral exemplarity, patriotism, social and national awareness, and social responsibility. Educational literature shows that learning about heroism is often studied primarily at secondary and tertiary levels, while the meaning of heroism among elementary school students is rarely explored in depth (Pangestu et al., 2021; Prabowo, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2023). However, the elementary school stage is a crucial period for the formation of children's moral and social identities. Limitations of previous research are also evident in the dominance of quantitative approaches that focus on measuring learning outcomes or character attitude scores. Such approaches fail to capture the process by which students internalize values, emotional experiences, and subjective meanings during character learning. Consequently, understanding how heroic values truly "come to life" within students remains fragmentary.

Although various studies have examined the use of sociodrama methods in learning, most have focused on general social skills development and have not specifically explored how heroic values are internalized into national character in elementary school students. Furthermore, the dominance of quantitative approaches

in previous research has not enabled a deep understanding of students' subjective experiences, reflective processes, and the dynamics of value internalization during learning.

Therefore, this study fills this gap by presenting a phenomenological approach to deeply understand how sociodrama-based learning experiences within the context of local history shape students' national character. This study makes a scientific contribution by offering a new understanding of sociodrama as a reflective pedagogical space that not only develops social skills but also strengthens the internalization of heroic values and national identity in the elementary school context.

Furthermore, this research contributes to enriching character education studies by presenting students' voices and narratives as the primary subjects of learning. Students' experiences, reflections, and interpretations of heroism learning provide a more authentic picture of the process of national character formation in the classroom. This contribution is crucial to developing character-learning models that are more responsive to students' social and cultural realities. Given the contextual urgency, the limitations of previous research, and the potential of sociodrama as a value-learning strategy, this study aims to analyze in depth how sociodrama-based heroism learning shapes the national character of elementary school students through their experiences, interactions, and reflections during the learning process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study used a qualitative, phenomenological design. This design was chosen to deepen understanding of students' experiences, meanings, and reflections on sociodrama-based heroism learning. The phenomenological approach enabled researchers to explore the process of internalizing national character values that emerge from students' social interactions, roles, and learning experiences, a process that a quantitative approach cannot adequately reveal.

### **Participants**

The study was conducted at SDN Sungai Miai 5, Banjarmasin, with 15 primary participants, comprising fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders. The student participants were aged between 10 and 12 years and represented upper-grade elementary students with varying levels of academic ability and classroom participation. The selection of six interview participants was based on criteria including (1) active involvement in sociodrama activities, (2) ability to express reflections verbally, and (3) representation from each grade level (IV–VI). In addition to the students, three class teachers (grades IV–VI) were involved as supporting informants to provide pedagogical context and strengthen data triangulation. All participants were selected purposively based on their active involvement in the learning process. The number of participants in this phenomenological study was considered sufficient to achieve data saturation, as no new significant themes emerged from additional data, consistent with qualitative research standards.

### **Data Collection**

Data analysis was conducted using iterative thematic analysis. The process began with a verbatim transcription of interview data and field notes from observations. The researchers then conducted open coding to identify meaningful units related to students' experiences of heroism learning. These initial codes were subsequently grouped into axial categories based on similarities and conceptual relationships. Furthermore, categories were synthesized into broader themes that represent patterns of national character formation, guided by predefined indicators (historical awareness, heroism values, patriotism, social awareness, and civic responsibility). The final stage involved interpretative analysis, where themes were critically examined to construct meanings aligned with the phenomenological perspective. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied data triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing with fellow researchers.

### **Instruments**

The research instruments included an observation guide, a semi-structured interview guide, and a document analysis sheet. All instruments were developed based on five indicators of national character: historical awareness, exemplary figures and heroism, patriotism, social and national awareness, and civic

responsibility. The instruments were used flexibly to allow for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and meanings. The research instruments were developed through a systematic process, including literature review, alignment with national character indicators, and adaptation to the sociodrama learning context. Prior to use, the instruments were validated by two experts in elementary education and character education to ensure content validity and clarity of indicators. Revisions were made based on expert feedback, particularly to refine overlapping indicators and ensure that each observation and interview item represented distinct aspects of national character.

**Table 1.** Observation Instrument Grid

National Character Indicators	Observed Aspects	Focus of Observation
Historical awareness	Understanding the context of characters and events	How students represent events and heroic figures in sociodrama roles
Exemplary figures and heroism	Behavior that exemplifies heroic values	Expression of courage, honesty, willingness to sacrifice, and responsibility during the performance
Patriotism	An attitude of pride and love for the nation	Enthusiasm, emotional expression, and positive attitudes towards national values in the scene
Social and national awareness	Social interaction and cooperation	Empathy, cooperation, and sensitivity toward others in group interaction
Responsibilities as a citizen	Social role awareness	Awareness of roles, discipline, and accountability in completing assigned tasks

**Table 2.** In-depth Interview Instrument Grid

National Character Indicators	Focus Questions	Purpose of Data Mining
Historical awareness	The meaning of events and heroic figures	Revealing students' understanding of the meaning of struggle and its relevance today
Exemplary figures and heroism	Values exemplified by the figure	Exploring moral values and attitudes that students consider important
Patriotism	Feelings and attitudes towards the nation	Identifying students' sense of pride, love for their country, and emotional attachment
Social and national awareness	Views on cooperation and caring	Knowing the changes in social attitudes after participating in sociodrama
Responsibilities as a citizen	Reflection on roles and obligations	Explore students' awareness of their responsibilities as part of society

**Table 3.** Document Analysis Instrument Grid

National Character Indicators	Document Type	Focus of Analysis
Historical awareness	Sociodrama scenario, student reflection notes	The suitability of learning content with historical and heroic values
Exemplary figures and heroism	Student reflection notes	Student statements about the exemplary values they understand
Patriotism	Teaching Module	Integration of the value of love for the homeland into learning objectives and activities
Social and national awareness	Teacher reflection notes	Description of changes in social attitudes and student interactions
Responsibilities as a citizen	Student reflection notes	Students' understanding of social roles and responsibilities

### Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using iterative thematic analysis. The analysis process began with data transcription, initial coding, theme grouping, and interpretation of meanings. Emerging themes were analyzed using national character indicators as the primary analytical lens. The validity of the findings was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, as well as data confirmation with supporting informants.

### FINDINGS

The themes presented in this section were generated through a systematic thematic analysis process. Initial codes derived from interview transcripts, observations, and documents were grouped into conceptual categories such as “experiencing history,” “role immersion,” and “emotional engagement.” These categories were then synthesized into broader themes representing dimensions of national character formation, including historical awareness, internalization of heroic values, patriotism, social awareness, and civic responsibility. This analytical process ensures that each theme is grounded in empirical data and reflects students’ lived experiences.

The sociodrama-based heroism learning at SDN Sungai Miai 5 Banjarmasin was designed as a series of pedagogical experiences integrated with the commemoration of National Heroes' Day, highlighting the struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry in defending Indonesian independence in South Kalimantan. This activity was not only conducted as a classroom lesson but also culminated in a sociodrama performance witnessed by the entire school community. This context provided an authentic and meaningful learning space, where heroic values were not only learned conceptually but also experienced in real-life social situations.

The sociodrama involved student representatives from grades IV, V, and VI, selected purposively by the teacher based on student readiness and engagement. The learning process began with an introduction to Brigadier General Hasan Basry and the historical context of the South Kalimantan people's struggle. This was followed by a class discussion to provide a conceptual foundation before students entered the sociodrama preparation phase. The preparation phase included role assignments, simple dialogue development, and scene rehearsals that required active participation, cooperation, and character development. Through this process, students begin to realize that learning carries responsibility not only individually but also collectively as representatives of their respective classes.

The sociodrama performance held in commemoration of National Heroes' Day was the culmination of the students' learning experience. Both the actors and the audience were emotionally engaged in the scenes of struggle, allowing the values of courage, unity, sacrifice, and responsibility to be understood as lived experiences rather than merely abstract concepts. Teachers viewed students' emotional involvement as a crucial factor in understanding the value of heroism, and they served as facilitators, providing space for reflection and independent learning. This overview of the implementation provides an important foundation for understanding the findings in the following subchapters, which outline the process of developing students' historical awareness, exemplary figures, patriotism, social awareness, and civic responsibility.

## Building Historical Awareness Through Role-Playing

Sociodrama-based heroism learning, with the theme "The Struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry," demonstrates students' historical awareness through direct and reflective role-playing. Historical awareness, in this context, does not emerge as the ability to remember the chronology of events, but rather as an understanding of the meaning of the struggles and sacrifices experienced by figures and communities in the past. Through involvement in sociodrama, students experience history as a human event laden with values and emotions, rather than simply a factual narrative.



**Figure 1.** Sociodrama Practice Process



**Figure 2.** Sociodrama Performance

Observations during rehearsals and performances indicate that students are beginning to view historical events as "real" and "experienced by people like them." When portraying the fighters and the Banjar people, students demonstrate an effort to understand the struggle, including the limitations, threats, and tensions they face. This understanding is evident in the way students adapt their expressions, dialogue, and storyline to align with the context of the struggle for independence.

Historical understanding is also strengthened through analysis of learning documents, particularly the sociodrama scenario and student reflection notes. The scenarios, developed in collaboration with their teachers, included the background of the events, the conflicts surrounding the struggle, and the affirmation of the values of unity and loyalty to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). In their reflection notes, students not only recounted the events they learned about but also began to express their understanding of the reasons behind the struggle and their significance for life today. This demonstrates a shift from history as a story of the past to history as a source of learning values.

In interviews, several students revealed that deepening their role-playing skills made them realize that independence was not achieved instantly and was inseparable from the sacrifices of many. However, this awareness, beyond mere verbal statements, was evident in students' reflections on their learning experiences.

*"When I just read, I know the story. But when I act it out, I feel the struggle was tough and not easy."* (Student Interview, Grade V)

Students' historical awareness also developed through their understanding of their region's role in the national struggle. By highlighting Brigadier General Hasan Basri as a local hero, students began to realize that national history occurred not only in the regions frequently mentioned in textbooks, but also in the social and geographical environments close to their own lives. This understanding strengthens students' sense of connection to history and fosters pride in their local identity as part of the Indonesian nation.

The post-performance reflection process provides an important space for students to reinterpret their sociodrama experiences. In reflective discussions, students connect past struggle events to current life conditions, such as the importance of maintaining unity, respecting independence, and adhering to national values. This reflection demonstrates that the historical awareness they develop goes beyond understanding events to encompass the meaning and relevance of history in everyday life.

Phenomenologically, the findings in this sub-chapter reveal the essence of students' learning experiences: a shift in their perspective on history, from mere knowledge to be memorized to a meaningful experience to be felt and reflected upon. Through their immersion in the social drama "The Struggle of Brigadier General

Hasan Basry," students develop a historical awareness rooted in experience, emotion, and reflection, enabling them to understand history as part of life, relevant to their national identity and responsibility.

### **Internalization of Exemplary Figures and Heroic Values through Role Representation**

Sociodrama-based heroism learning, grounded in the theme of Brigadier General Hasan Basry's Struggle, demonstrates students' internalization of exemplary character values and heroism. Students do not understand heroic values as symbolic or remote attributes of the figure, but rather as attitudes and actions that can be emulated and realized in everyday life. This internalization process occurs through role representation, allowing students to experience the hero's values directly.

Observations during rehearsals and performances indicate that students strive to adapt their behavior, expressions, and dialogue to the character they are portraying. When portraying Brigadier General Hasan Basry or the people's fighter, students not only imitate the dialogue but also strive to display assertiveness, courage, and responsibility. These efforts demonstrate that students are beginning to understand the exemplary character as concrete behavior rather than merely abstract traits described by the teacher.

The interpretation of heroic values is also evident in the analysis of learning documents, particularly in the sociodrama scenarios and student reflection notes. The scenarios emphasized courage in decision-making, loyalty to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), and a spirit of unity in the face of threats. In their reflection notes, students wrote about their impressions of the characters they portrayed and the values they considered important, such as courage, selflessness, and compassion. This indicates that students are beginning to identify heroic values as behavioral guidelines.

In interviews, students revealed that portraying heroes helped them better understand why the characters were considered worthy of emulation. This understanding went beyond simply identifying the characters and developing an awareness of emulating certain values in their own lives.

*"I learned from that character that being a leader requires courage and never giving up. At school, I want to be more courageous in taking responsibility."* (Student Interview, Grade VI)

The process of internalizing heroic values was also strengthened through the collective experience of sociodrama. When students worked together in groups, they learned that struggles are not fought individually, but rather through togetherness and mutual support. This experience helped students understand that a hero's exemplary character lies not only in personal courage but also in the ability to maintain unity and work for the common good.

The post-performance reflection provided an important space for students to reinterpret the heroic values they experienced. In reflective discussions, students linked the heroic characters' attitudes to behaviors they could apply at school and in their communities, such as being honest, helping friends, and carrying out tasks diligently. This reflection demonstrated that heroic values were beginning to be understood as moral attitudes relevant to everyday life, not just those of the past.

From the teacher's perspective, this learning process demonstrated that students more easily emulated heroic values when they were directly involved in the roles and situations of struggle than when these values were conveyed verbally.

*"The children not only mentioned heroic values, but also began to demonstrate courage and responsibility after participating in the drama."* (Grade 5 Teacher Interview)

Phenomenologically, the findings in this sub-chapter reveal the essence of students' experiences in interpreting exemplary characters and heroic values. Through the role-playing of Brigadier General Hasan Basry's Struggle in the sociodrama, students not only learn about the hero but also experience the process of becoming "like" him within the confines of their childhood experiences. This process marks a shift from understanding the value of heroism to embracing it and internalizing it as part of their attitudes and identity.

## The Emergence of Patriotism through Emotional Engagement

A sociodrama-based heroism lesson on the theme "The Struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry" demonstrated the emergence of patriotism in students through emotional engagement during role-playing and performances. In this context, students understood patriotism not as a slogan or abstract obligation, but rather as an emotional attachment to the nation that grew from their experience of the struggle for independence. Emotional engagement became the primary medium bridging historical understanding with love for the nation.



Figure 3. Sociodrama Performance



Figure 4. Sociodrama Performance

Observations of the rehearsal and performance process revealed that students experienced a range of emotions while portraying the heroes and the Banjar people, including tension, emotion, and pride. These emotions emerged when students recognized the limitations and threats of the struggle and realized that the independence they enjoy today was achieved through sacrifice. This emotional experience made the value of patriotism easier for students to understand and experience.

An analysis of learning documents, particularly student reflection notes after the performance, showed that students began to express pride in their nation and appreciate the heroes' struggles. In their reflections, students not only recounted the story but also expressed their feelings about their nation and independence. This indicates that patriotism is beginning to develop as an affective awareness rather than just normative knowledge.

In interviews, several students stated that portraying heroes gave them an emotional connection to their nation and country. This feeling arose because they felt "involved" in the struggle, even if only through dramatic roles.

*"During the play, I felt sad but also proud. It made me feel that Indonesia is important and must be protected."*  
(Student Interview, Grade VI)

The students' emotional involvement was further strengthened when the performance was presented to the entire school community on National Heroes' Day. This situation provided a social context that strengthened their sense of nationalism, as students not only expressed their patriotic values for themselves but also shared them with others. This situation made patriotism a shared and collective experience.

Post-performance reflections showed that students began to connect their love for their country with concrete attitudes and behaviors in their daily lives, such as respecting national symbols, maintaining unity, and being disciplined. Although still in its infancy, this interpretation suggests that patriotism is beginning to be understood as an attitude that can be expressed in action rather than simply a fleeting feeling.

Phenomenologically, the findings in this sub-chapter reveal the essence of students' experiences in developing patriotism through emotional engagement. Through the social drama "The Struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry," students experience patriotism as a feeling of pride, emotion, and attachment to the nation that grows from a deep appreciation for the struggle to maintain independence.

## **Developing Social and National Awareness through Collective Performances**

The sociodrama of heroism presented in the National Heroes' Day commemoration performance demonstrated the development of students' social and national awareness through collective performance experiences. This awareness emerged not only from classroom learning but also from social interactions when students played historical figures and faced an audience of the entire school community. This situation made learning about heroism a social experience involving shared responsibility and an awareness of the individual's role within the community.

Observations of the performance process indicated that students began to understand that the struggle for independence was not merely an individual act, but rather the result of collective effort involving many parties. This understanding was reflected in the way students portrayed scenes of togetherness, mutual assistance, and unity between the heroic figures and the Banjar people. Through this experience, students understood that national values grow from solidarity and concern for others.

Analysis of learning documents, particularly student reflections after the performance, demonstrated an awareness that they were part of the school community and the nation. In these reflections, students expressed pride in contributing to meaningful school activities that many felt were meaningful. This demonstrates that students' national awareness is not only individual but also social, growing through the experience of sharing meaning with others.

In interviews, students stated that performing in front of friends, teachers, and other school members made them feel a sense of responsibility to convey the message of the struggle effectively. This sense of responsibility encouraged them to be more serious in portraying their characters and in understanding the story's meaning.

*"I felt a sense of responsibility because there were so many people watching. So I had to portray the struggle earnestly."* (Student Interview, Grade 6)

The collective performance experience also helped students realize that national values are not only about love for one's country, but also about mutual respect and cooperation in diversity. During the rehearsal and performance process, students from various grades and backgrounds learned to coordinate, adapt their roles, and support each other to ensure the performance went smoothly. This experience strengthened students' social awareness by having them work in a group toward a shared goal. From the teacher's perspective, the sociodrama performance during the National Heroes' Day commemoration provided students with a meaningful, contextual way to learn about nationalism.

*"When the children perform together, and the entire school community watches, they learn that nationality is about togetherness and responsibility."* (Grade 4 Teacher Interview)

Phenomenologically, the findings in this sub-chapter reveal the essence of students' experiences in building social and national awareness through collective performance. The Sociodrama of the Struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry serves not only as a medium for learning history but also as a social space where students experience nationality as a practice of living together.

## **Strengthening National Commitment and Responsibility as Citizens**

Learning about the heroic sociodrama titled "The Struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry" strengthens students' national commitment and civic responsibility. National commitment, in this context, is not interpreted as a forced normative obligation, but rather as an awareness that grows from the experience of understanding and experiencing the struggle to maintain independence. Through active involvement in the sociodrama, students begin to understand themselves as part of the nation with a responsibility to uphold national values.

Observations during rehearsals and performances indicate that students demonstrate seriousness and discipline in carrying out their assigned roles. This attitude reflects a growing sense of responsibility, not only for their individual roles but also for the overall success of the performance. This experience serves as an early form of civic learning, where students learn that each role contributes to the common good.

Analysis of learning documents, particularly students' written reflections after the performance, indicates that students are beginning to connect the values of heroism with their obligations as citizens. In their reflections, students wrote about their understanding of the importance of maintaining unity, obeying rules, and behaving in a disciplined manner to respect the heroes' struggles. This demonstrates that national commitment is beginning to be understood as an attitude that must be manifested in concrete actions, even in everyday life.

In interviews, students revealed that portraying heroic figures gave them a sense of moral responsibility to the nation and the state. This sense of responsibility emerged not as a burden, but as a conscious effort to behave better at school and in the community.

*"If a hero fought for the country, I too must be responsible, for example, by obeying the rules and studying diligently."*  
(Student Interview, Grade 5)

Strengthening national commitment was also evident in the way students interpreted the struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry as an example of steadfastness and loyalty to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). This understanding encouraged students to view nationality not merely as an identity but as a commitment that demands consistent behavior in everyday life. Thus, civic responsibility is understood as part of students' self-identity. From the teacher's perspective, sociodrama learning provides a space for students to learn about citizenship contextually and reflectively.

*"The children not only learn about the obligations of citizenship, but they also begin to understand why they must be responsible."* (Grade 6 Teacher Interview)

Phenomenologically, the findings in this sub-chapter reveal the essence of students' experiences in developing national commitment and civic responsibility. Through the sociodrama "The Struggle of Brigadier General Hasan Basry," students shifted from understanding national values as concepts to internalizing them as moral commitments.

## DISCUSSION

### Sociodrama Learning as a Meaningful Experience in National Character Education

Based on the national character indicators used in this study (historical awareness, exemplary heroic values, patriotism, social awareness, and civic responsibility), sociodrama-based heroic learning has been proven to create meaningful learning experiences for elementary school students. These indicators develop in an integrated manner through student involvement in the preparation, performance, and reflection processes of the sociodrama, so that learning is oriented not only toward mastering historical knowledge but also toward developing national attitudes and values.

Regarding the historical awareness indicator, sociodrama helps students understand the events of Brigadier General Hasan Basri's struggle as a historical experience that is contextual and relevant to their lives. Through role-playing, students construct a reflective understanding of history rather than simply memorizing facts. This aligns with recent research findings showing that drama- and role-playing-based learning can enhance the meaning of historical values and events by engaging students in symbolic and narrative processes (Kara & Kayıran, 2024). Sociodrama serves as a bridge between local history and students' sense of nationalism.

Indicators of exemplary heroic values develop when students portray figures of warriors and civilians, allowing them to learn to emulate attitudes of courage, sacrifice, and responsibility through dramatic action. This process allows heroic values to be understood as a social practice rather than simply a normative concept. This finding aligns with studies confirming that sociodrama is an effective medium for character learning, as it provides students with the opportunity to take the perspective of characters and internalize values through role-playing (Faqih, 2019).

Regarding the patriotism indicator, students' emotional involvement during sociodrama plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of patriotism. The experience of performing as class representatives in a National

Heroes' Day performance strengthens a sense of pride and ownership of the nation's struggle. Previous research has shown that drama learning that involves emotions and reflection on values can strengthen students' national attitudes and commitment to national identity (Pratikno & Masita, 2018). This confirms that patriotism is more effectively developed through affective experiences than solely cognitive approaches.

Sociodrama also contributes to the development of social awareness, as reflected in students' ability to work together, appreciate others' roles, and understand struggle as a collective endeavor. The rehearsal and performance process creates a social environment that fosters empathy, solidarity, and sensitivity. This finding supports research showing that the sociodrama method positively affects students' social awareness by fostering authentic, collaborative social interactions (Abdulah, 2019).

In terms of civic responsibility, students begin to associate heroic values with concrete behaviors, such as discipline, commitment to their roles, and awareness of conveying the message of struggle to the school community. Sociodrama provides a meaningful context for civic learning because the value of responsibility is directly experienced through the social roles students undertake. This aligns with research findings that drama learning in an educational context can strengthen attitudes of responsibility and civic awareness through authentic and reflective learning experiences (Korompis, 2025).

Overall, the sociodrama learning in this study demonstrates that dramatic experiences can fully integrate indicators of national character. Sociodrama serves not only as a strategy for learning history but also as a vehicle for contextual and sustainable national character education. Through cognitive, emotional, and social engagement, students develop a deeper understanding and attitude toward nationalism, making learning about heroism a truly meaningful experience.

### **Conceptual Synthesis: A Model of National Character Formation through Sociodrama**

The findings of this study indicate that sociodrama learning forms a structured pedagogical process in developing the national character of elementary school students. Sociodrama functions not only as an active learning method but also as a meaningful learning experience that integrates cognitive, affective, and social dimensions. This is supported by research showing that experiential learning and active student involvement are more effective at fostering character values than informational and one-way learning approaches (Saputra & Tunnafia, 2024).

The first stage in this conceptual model is the contextualization of history through local events. The use of Brigadier General Hasan Basri's struggle as the theme for the sociodrama serves as a cognitive foundation and a source of national identity for students. Learning history linked to local context is believed to increase historical awareness and a sense of belonging to the nation, as students study events that are close to their social and cultural environments. In line with this, local history plays a crucial role in fostering national awareness and an understanding of students' national identity (Miskawi et al., 2025).

The second stage is the internalization of values through role-playing (sociodrama). In sociodrama activities, students portray heroic figures and community members, allowing them to experience heroic values such as courage, sacrifice, and responsibility directly. This role-playing process allows students to internalize values through action and emotion rather than simply through conceptual understanding. Classroom-based research in Indonesia shows that sociodrama and role-playing methods are effective in instilling character values by fostering empathy, emotional engagement, and social understanding among students (Revonita et al., 2025).

The third stage is the reinforcement of values through social interaction and collective responsibility. Performing sociodramas during National Heroes' Day commemorations adds a broader social dimension, as students represent their class before the entire school community. This activity fosters a sense of responsibility, cooperation, and awareness of their role within the school community. Research on character education confirms that student involvement in meaningful social activities strengthens national character and citizenship attitudes (Nurlita et al., 2019).

The fourth stage is reflection and the interpretation of national values. Reflection allows students to connect sociodrama experiences to everyday life and reinterpret heroic values within the context of

citizenship. Recent studies in character education have shown that reflection plays a crucial role in transforming learning experiences into relatively permanent attitudes and behaviors, as it provides students with space to interpret and recognize the values they encounter (Ni'mah et al., 2025; Pudjiastuti et al., 2025).

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications of Sociodrama Learning in National Character Education**

The findings of this study confirm that sociodrama learning contributes to the development of students' national character through active learning experiences involving roles, emotions, and social interactions. This finding aligns with empirical evidence that role-playing strategies in civics learning can increase student cooperation and engagement in the learning process, which are essential for developing national character. Research on its use in elementary grades indicates that this strategy is effective in strengthening students' ability to collaborate and understand social roles in civics learning, which is conceptually relevant to the sociodrama learning used in this study (Hasibuan et al., 2025).

Sociodrama also provides students with a space to experience national values in concrete, meaningful ways, enabling them to understand citizenship not only as a theoretical concept but also as a reflective social experience. In practice, teachers act as facilitators, supporting students in understanding the meaning of national character values through guidance and reflection, rather than simply delivering material informatively. This approach supports student-centered learning, with students as the primary actors in constructing the meaning of national character learning.

The implementation of sociodrama as part of the commemoration of National Heroes' Day has practical implications for planning experiential learning in elementary schools. The integration of dramatic activities into national commemoration moments provides a strong social context, allowing students not only to play roles in the classroom but also to feel a sense of social responsibility within the school community. Such learning can strengthen a school culture that supports the collective and sustainable formation of national character values.

The performance experience also fosters students' sense of responsibility for their social roles, reflected in their direct involvement as class representatives and interactions with the school audience. This type of social role-play aligns with other findings suggesting that role-playing can improve students' social skills and competencies, which are essential components of civic character education (Mustika & Amelasasih, 2024).

Overall, the sociodrama learning at SDN Sungai Miai 5 Banjarmasin serves as a model for other schools to adopt to strengthen national character education. Changes in the teacher's role, students' emotional involvement, and the social context of the performance are important factors that educational practitioners need to consider when designing experiential and meaningful learning.

Practically, these findings imply that teachers can integrate sociodrama into history and civics learning as a strategy to facilitate experiential and reflective character education. Curriculum developers may consider incorporating local history-based dramatic activities into character education frameworks. For educational institutions, integrating performance-based learning into national commemorations can serve as a sustainable model for strengthening school culture and collective national identity.

This study extends previous research on sociodrama by positioning it not only as a method for enhancing social skills but as a pedagogical approach for deep character internalization. Unlike prior studies that emphasize behavioral outcomes, this research highlights the experiential, emotional, and reflective dimensions of learning, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how national character is formed through meaningful engagement with historical narratives.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that sociodrama-based heroism learning contributes to the formation of elementary students' national character through experiential, emotional, and reflective learning processes. Through engagement in local history-based role-playing, students develop historical awareness and begin to internalize heroic values, which are reflected in emerging attitudes of patriotism, social awareness, and civic responsibility. The findings highlight that students' lived experiences, interactions, and reflections during

sociodrama play a central role in shaping their understanding of national identity. This study contributes to character education by positioning sociodrama as a meaningful pedagogical space that integrates cognitive, affective, and social dimensions in elementary learning contexts.

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