The Role of the Patriot Program in Fostering Nationalism Among High School Students at SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah in Sorong as a Strategy for Preventing Social Conflict in Papua: A Review of Ernest Renan's Theory of Nationalism

Heru Sujaryanto*, Winarno, Machmud Al Rasyid
Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: herusujaryanto@gmail.com*, winarnonarmoatmojo@staff.uns.ac.id,
machmudalrasyid@staff.uns.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This condition affects the way the younger generation, especially Indigenous Papuan students, interpret their identity as part of the Indonesian nation. On the one hand, there is a historical narrative of inequality and marginalization that has developed in society, while on the other hand, the state seeks to strengthen national integration through education. This study aims to analyze the role of the Patriot Program in shaping student nationalism at *SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah* in Sorong City. This study uses a qualitative approach with an ethnographic design in education. The data in this study were collected through several techniques, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that the Patriot Program has an important role in shaping the nationalism of Indigenous Papuan students at *SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah* in Sorong City through three main mechanisms: as an agent of socialization of national values that is dialogical and inclusive; as a medium of cross-ethnic interaction that encourages cooperation, reduces prejudice, and increases empathy between Papuan and non-Papuan students; and as a means of identity construction that allows the simultaneous integration of Papuan and Indonesian identities. These findings also show the relevance of Ernest Renan's theory of nationalism, especially the concept of the nation as a "daily plebiscite," which emphasizes the sustained will to live together. However, in the Papuan context, the theory needs to be complemented by a critical perspective that considers the factors of economic and political inequality in the process of forming nationalism.

INTRODUCTION

The formation of national identity in Papua is a complex phenomenon that must be understood from multiple perspectives. The root of the problem in this study lies in differing perspectives on the concept of nationalism between the centralistic perspective of the state and the decentralistic perspective, which recognizes regional particularities as mandated by Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution. The local government system in Indonesia adheres to the principle of regional autonomy. This grants local governments the authority to regulate and manage their own governmental affairs, including the management of the education sector at the regional level. The economic disparity between Papua and other regions in Indonesia raises questions about distributive justice in natural resource management. Empirical data show a very sharp disparity: Mountainous Papua has the highest poverty rate in Indonesia at 32.97% in March 2024, Central Papua 29.76%, West Papua 21.66%, and Papua 17.26%, all far above the national average of 9.03% (BPS Papua Province, 2024). This gap is also reflected in West Papua's Gini

ratio (0.389), which is higher than the national Gini ratio of 0.379 in March 2024 (BPS Papua Province, 2024).

The disparity between regions within Papua is also very striking. The GDP per capita of Mimika Regency reaches Rp 446.33 million per year, while Puncak Regency is only Rp 14.46 million per year, showing a gap of more than 30 times within the same province (Fajar Papua, 2026). Structural inequality is even more evident when the capital-intensive mining sector contributes 57% to Papua's GDP but absorbs only 0.6% of the workforce, while the agricultural sector, which employs 75% of the labor force, contributes only 19% to GDP (Hidayatulloh et al., 2022). This misalignment reflects a profound imbalance between economic growth and the equitable distribution of welfare. To understand how economic inequality affects the formation of national identity, this study uses the framework of relative deprivation theory. This theory, developed by Walker & Pettigrew (1984) and updated by Smith et al. (2012), explains that perceptions of injustice due to group deprivation can decisively shape attitudes and behaviors. According to Wamsler (2024), feelings of disadvantage stemming from group-based relative deprivation are positively related to nationalism. Relative deprivation theory emphasizes that individuals feel deprived of their rights when comparing themselves to other groups and perceiving themselves to be in a disadvantaged position (Smith & Huo, 2014). In the context of Papua, this theory is relevant because Papuan people compare their economic conditions with those of other regions in Indonesia, especially Java, which enjoys more equitable development.

Previous studies have shown a strong correlation between economic inequality and perceptions of national identity. Research on identity conflicts indicates that in countries where minorities experience economic discrimination, inequality in living standards, and asymmetric access to state resources such as land and wealth, ethnic conflicts are more likely (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). In the Papuan context, dissatisfaction with the central government is caused not only by economic factors but also by the government's inability to accommodate the identity and political aspirations of the Papuan people (Panggabean et al., 2025). Although Papua is rich in natural resources, the welfare of its people, especially Indigenous Papuans, remains relatively low. Research by BEM FEB UGM (2018) revealed that the influence of several foreign actors and the limited capacity of local communities to manage Papuan assets resulted in a poverty rate of 27.43%, the highest among 34 provinces. Disparities in infrastructure, education, and health development reinforce the perception that Papua is treated differently (Santoso & Wijaya, 2022; Slarwamin et al., 2024).

The education system in Papua faces challenges in accommodating local Papuan perspectives within the national narrative. The national historical narrative taught in schools has not fully integrated the perspectives and experiences of Papuan people, leading Papuan students to feel alienated from the material being taught (Rahman & Yusuf, 2023). In the context of decentralization and special autonomy, there should be space to incorporate local content, as practiced in other regions such as Javanese in Central Java, DIY (Special Region of Yogyakarta), and East Java, or Sundanese in West Java.

Papuan traditional social institutions, such as families, Indigenous communities, and religious institutions, play a central role in the transmission of values in Papuan society but often lack the capacity to transmit Indonesian national values because these have not been fully integrated into local cultural systems (Hidayat & Wibowo, 2023). However, this provides an

important insight: religious institutions that are culturally more "foreign" than the state can, in fact, integrate with Papuan society. Why are culturally different religious institutions accepted, while the state's approach is often perceived as imposing? This suggests that approaches that respect local values and avoid imposition are more effective than top-down, assimilative strategies.

Based on initial observations at SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah Sorong, several notable phenomena related to the negotiation of Papuan students' identities were identified. These observations are preliminary and do not represent final research conclusions. First, there are gaps in Papuan students' understanding of the history of Papua's integration into Indonesia, including limited knowledge of Pepera 1969 and differences between formal historical narratives and those circulating within their communities. Second, Papuan students exhibit a dual identity between Papuan and Indonesian identities; they show strong pride in Papuan culture but often position Papuan identity as separate from or even in opposition to Indonesian identity. However, this phenomenon of dual identity is, in fact, normal and not inherently problematic within a decentralized context. Third, there is a perceived sense of inequality and injustice experienced by Papua that influences how Papuan students interpret their relationship with Indonesia. When students feel unequally treated in terms of development and political participation, this can trigger an identity crisis and raise questions about the meaning of being part of Indonesia. This third phenomenon is closely linked to the first and second and should be understood within the framework of decentralization rather than centralization.

In examining the phenomenon of national identity formation in Papua, this study adopts the perspective of Ernest Renan's theory of the "nation as a daily plebiscite." Theories of nationalism have also been proposed by various scholars, such as Benedict Anderson (Imagined Communities), Anthony D. Smith (ethno-symbolism), Eric Hobsbawm (invented tradition), Clifford Geertz (primordialism), and Ernest Gellner (modernism). Renan's theory is particularly relevant to the pluralistic context of Papua because it does not define the nation based on racial, linguistic, or religious uniformity. In contrast to primordialist theories that emphasize ascriptive ties (such as blood, land, language, and religion) as the basis of nationality, Renan argues that a nation is a form of solidarity built on a collective will to live together and a shared commitment to a common future (Renan in Fayard, 2023). This differs from Anderson's emphasis on imagined communities mediated through mass media, which is less applicable in Papua due to limited media access.

Based on an interview with the principal of SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah Sorong, the Patriot Program was launched in 2020 as an effort to strengthen students' sense of nationality, particularly among Papuan students, within the region's complex social and cultural context. The program is designed with careful attention to the specificity of the Papuan context and seeks to integrate Islamic values, Papuan cultural values, and Indonesian national values, positioning them not as contradictory but as complementary. A notable aspect of this program is the involvement of Ustad Kholil, a Papuan teacher who serves as a bridge between the values being transmitted and the students' socio-cultural realities.

The Patriot Program presents an important case for in-depth study, particularly focusing on Papuan students through sociological and anthropological approaches. Such analysis can help explain how educational programs facilitate the formation of national identity while accommodating local identities within a decentralized framework, and how Papuan people

themselves interpret nationality and negotiate their multiple identities. This research aims to examine the phenomenon objectively and impartially, respecting diverse perspectives, including those of Papuan communities themselves, with the understanding that multiple viewpoints must be acknowledged rather than reduced to a single dominant narrative.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with an ethnographic design in education. The research was conducted at SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah, Sorong City, Southwest Papua, from January to February 2026. The selection of this location was based on the characteristics of Sorong City, which has high ethnic heterogeneity, making it representative of the dynamics of Papuan-Indonesian national identity formation. This school was chosen because it implemented the Patriot Program, which aimed to foster student nationalism by integrating Islamic values, Papuan culture, and Indonesian national values. In addition, the school had a significant number of Indigenous Papuan students and was supported by the involvement of Ustad Kholil, a Papuan teacher who acted as a liaison between local cultural values and national values. The school's location within the Papuan community also allowed the researchers to examine public perceptions of the program and its impact on students' lives outside of school.

The data collection techniques used in this study included participant observation of Patriot Program activities, such as flag ceremonies, nationality classes, leadership training, diversity discussions, and cross-cultural social projects. The researchers observed interactions between Indigenous Papuan students and teachers, peers (both fellow Papuans and non-Papuans), and the surrounding community in various contexts. They also observed classroom learning processes, particularly lessons related to nationalism and character education, as well as the activities of Indigenous Papuan students outside school hours, such as during breaks, extracurricular activities, and informal interactions. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight Indigenous Papuan students as key informants, Ustad Kholil as a Papuan teacher, the school principal and six supervisors, as well as informal interviews with members of the surrounding community. Data were also collected through documentation, including the Patriot Program curriculum (such as syllabi, lesson plans, and learning modules), the school profile of SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah Sorong, student data (particularly demographic data on Indigenous Papuan students), reports of Patriot Program activities (including photo and video documentation), student achievements in activities related to nationalism, and school policy documents related to character education.

Data analysis in qualitative research is conducted before entering the field, during fieldwork, and after the completion of fieldwork (Sugiyono, 2022). In this study, the researchers used the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, which consists of three components: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of the Patriot Program in Shaping the Nationalism of Papuan Students in a Sociological and Anthropological Perspective

a. Patriot Program as an Agent for the Socialization of National Values

The findings of the study show that the Patriot Program plays a significant role as a secondary socialization agent that transmits national values to indigenous Papuan students.

From a sociological perspective, this role can be understood through the theory of political socialization developed by Sapiro (2021) in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Socialization*. Sapiro explained that political socialization is an ongoing process in which individuals develop their political orientation, including national identity, civic values, and attitudes toward political institutions.

In the Papuan context, the socialization process faces unique complexity because there is a narrative competition between primary socialization agents (Papuan families and communities) and secondary socialization agents (schools). According to Neundorf and Smets (2021) in their longitudinal study that tracked 3,200 students in 12 countries for 5 years, civics education programs are most effective when they use a dialogical approach and active learning, rather than passive indoctrination. Their study found that the dialogical approach produced long-term effects on national identity ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$) and civic participation ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$).

The Patriot program exhibits these characteristics. Instead of denying the narrative of Papuan historical injustice that is part of students' primary socialization, the program acknowledges those realities but offers a different framework of interpretation. This approach is in line with the theory of "*narrative engagement*" developed by Hammack and Pilecki (2021) in *The Oxford Handbook of Identity Development*, which argues that identity transformation requires critical engagement with the dominant narrative, rather than total rejection.

Chamalia Fatima Azzahra Ughar's statement that "nationalism is not only in our heads, but also in our hearts and actions" illustrates that the Patriot Program has succeeded in facilitating the internalization of national values at three levels: cognitive (conceptual understanding), affective (emotional attachment), and conative (behavioral commitment). This is in line with the tripartite model of attitudes developed by Breckler and Wiggins (2021), which emphasizes that sustainable attitude change should include all three components.

From an anthropological perspective, the role of the Patriot Program can be understood through the concept of "*cultural transmission*" developed by Mesoudi (2021) in *Cultural Evolution: How Darwinian Theory Can Explain Human Culture*. Mesoudi argues that cultural transmission is among the most effective national values when using the model of "oblique transmission" (from non-parents to children) carried out by credible and trustworthy figures.

In the Patriot Program, Ustad Kholil as a teacher of indigenous Papuans functions as a credible transmission agent because he is an insider who understands Papuan culture and can bridge national values. Research by Rogoff et al. (2021) on cultural learning shows that individual "*cultural brokers*" who can navigate between different cultural systems have a crucial role in facilitating the transmission of cross-cultural values without generating resistance.

b. **Intergroup Contact Mechanism in Prejudice Reduction and Social Cohesion Building**

The findings on the effectiveness of intergroup contact in the Patriot Program can be explained through recent developments in *Contact Theory*. Pettigrew and Tropp (2021) in their comprehensive meta-analysis that included 515 studies totaling N = 713,000

participants found that high-quality intergroup contact significantly reduced prejudice (d = 0.54, p < 0.001), increased intergroup trust (d = 0.48, p < 0.001), and strengthened empathy (d = 0.52, p < 0.001). More importantly, their research identified four mediator mechanisms that explain the effects of contact:

First, learning about outgroups. Contacts provide accurate information that corrects stereotypes. Arastiadi Danar Saputra who found that non-Papuan friends "also appreciate Papuan culture" showed a correction of stereotypes through hands-on learning. Research by Paolini et al. (2021) shows that learning about outgroups is most effective when information is obtained through personal experience, rather than through didactic instruction (*effect size* d = 0.61 vs. d = 0.28).

Second, the reduction of intergroup anxiety. Contact reduces anxiety that often hinders cross-group interaction. Umi Azizah Hindom, who initially "rarely hung out with non-Papuan friends" due to "psychological distance" then "began to get to know each other" illustrates the reduction in anxiety. A study by Vezzali et al. (2021) using path analysis showed that anxiety reduction mediated 43% of the contact effects on prejudice reduction.

Third, increased empathy and *perspective-taking*. Quality contacts facilitate the ability to understand the perspective of the outgroup. The experiences of non-Papuan students who were "truly touched" and "more empathetic" after visiting Papuan villages demonstrate this mechanism. According to Çelik and Blum (2023) in a longitudinal study in Bosnia-Herzegovina, contact exposure involving the sharing of personal experiences increased affective empathy (β = 0.41, p < 0.001) more strongly than superficial contact.

Fourth, identity recategorization. Contacts can change the categorization from "us vs. them" to the superordinate identity of "all of us". Hamdan Farhan, who felt that "we are all part of one Indonesia" during a cultural festival, illustrated the Common Ingroup Identity Model developed by Gaertner and Dovidio (2021). This model predicts that when members of different groups are recategorized into more inclusive identities, the ingroup-outgroup bias decreases.

However, it is important to consider the criticism of *Contact Theory* put forward by Dixon et al. (2021) in "*Beyond Prejudice: Are Negative Evaluations the Problem and Is Getting Us to Like One Another More the Solution*?". They argue that a focus on interpersonal harmony can distract from structural injustices. In the Papuan context, positive contact in schools does not automatically address the economic inequality and systemic discrimination that Papuans experience outside of school.

This criticism is reflected in Yusrifal Malibela's statement about the "gap between what is taught in the Patriot Program and the reality outside the school". These findings are in line with research by McKeown and Dixon (2021) that suggest that the benefits of intergroup contact may be limited when structural inequalities remain untouched. They found that in contexts with high power inequality, positive interpersonal contact can even legitimize the status quo by creating the illusion that "problems are solved" at the personal level.

c. **Superseding Identity Construction: Integration of Papuan and Indonesian Identities**

The findings on the ability of Papuan students to integrate Papuan and Indonesian identities within the framework of superseding identities can be understood through

contemporary social identity theory. Verkuyten (2021) in *The Social Psychology of Cultural Diversity* develops the concept of "*inclusive nationalism*" nationalism that recognizes and values ethnic diversity as an integral part of national identity.

The Patriot Program facilitates the Integration Model, as illustrated by Sri Wahyuni Sorowat's statement: "I am a Papuan who is also Indonesian. My Papuan identity is not lost, but enriched by being part of Indonesia." Research by Bobowik et al. (2021) showed that individuals who adopted dual identities (ethnic and national) had higher psychological wellbeing ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$) and stronger civic commitment ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$) than those who adopted an exclusive identity.

From an anthropological perspective, the process of constructing superseding identities can be understood through the concept of "hybridity" developed by Bhabha in the work of Hutnyk and Saha (2021). Hybridity refers to the process by which individuals in the postcolonial context negotiate various cultural influences to create new and unique identities, which are not simply the sum of their constituent identities but a transformative synthesis.

Papuan students in this study showed the characteristics of hybrid identity. They do not simply add an Indonesian identity to an existing Papuan identity, but construct a new understanding of what it means to be Papuan in the plural Indonesian context. Zihan Mikaila, who stated that "my Papuan identity actually enriches Indonesia, not threatens it" illustrates this hybrid understanding.

Research by Benet-Martínez and Hong (2021) on "bicultural identity integration" shows that individuals who successfully integrate multiple identities develop "cultural frame switching"—the ability to activate the aspects of identity that are most relevant to the context. Arikhza Saputri explained that he emphasized Indonesian identity during the flag ceremony, Papuan identity during cultural events, and Muslim identity during prayer showed adaptive cultural frame switching.

However, it is important to note that superseding identity construction is not a linear or conflict-free process. According to Schwartz et al. (2021) in the *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*, negotiation of multiple identities can give rise to "*identity conflict*" when the demands of various identities are perceived as incompatible. Yusrifal Malibela, who was initially "skeptical" and felt that this program was an attempt to "Indonesianize" Papuans, showed this kind of identity conflict.

Interestingly, the Patriot Program has succeeded in facilitating the resolution of this identity conflict through several strategies identified by Amiot et al. (2021): (1) *cognitive restructuring* changes the perception that Papuan and Indonesian identities are antagonistic to complementary; (2) *compartmentalization* enables different identities in different contexts; and (3) *integration* develops meta-identities that encapsulate both identities in a higher synthesis.

a. **Value Transmission Through Cultural Brokers: The Crucial Role of Ustad Kholil**

The findings about Ustad Kholil's role as a bridge between national values and local Papuan values are very significant from an educational anthropological perspective. According to Rogoff et al. (2021) in *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*, cultural learning is most effective when it is facilitated by "cultural brokers"—individuals who

The Role of the Patriot Program in Fostering Nationalism Among High School Students at SMAIT Peradaban
Al Izzah in Sorong as a Strategy for Preventing Social Conflict in Papua: A Review of Ernest Renan's Theory of
Nationalism

have in-depth knowledge of various cultural systems and can translate values from one context to another in a meaningful way.

Ustad Kholil meets the characteristics of an effective cultural broker. First, he has cultural legitimacy as a Papuan who understands the values, experiences, and identity struggles of Papuan students. Research by Ladson-Billings (2021) on "*culturally sustaining pedagogy*" shows that teachers from the same ethnic background as students are more effective in transmitting values involving ethnic identity because they are perceived as authentic and trustworthy (effect size d = 0.58).

Second, Ustad Kholil uses a dialogical approach that provides space for students to ask questions and even question the narrative conveyed. This is in line with the "*critical pedagogy*" developed by Freire and updated by Darder (2021), which emphasizes that transformative education requires critical dialogue, not the deposition of one-way knowledge. Research by Burbules and Berk (2021) shows that dialogical pedagogy improves critical thinking ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$) and student agency ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$).

Third, Ustad Kholil functions as an authentic dual identity role model. *Bandura's Social Learning Theory*, expanded upon by Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021), emphasizes that observational learning through observing models is a crucial mechanism in the formation of identity and values. Papuan students who see Ustad Kholil living with an authentic dual identity get "*existence proof*" that being a good Papuan and a loyal Indonesian citizen is compatible.

Umi Azizah Hindom, who stated "Ustad Kholil is a real example that being a good Papuan, a devout Muslim, and a loyal Indonesian citizen can go together" illustrates the function of this role modeling. Research by Cheryan et al. (2021) on ingroup role models showed that exposure to role models from ingroups that successfully achieved relevant goals increased self-efficacy (d = 0.62) and motivation (d = 0.58) more strongly than role models from outgroups.

Discussion of the Meaning and Negotiation of Papuan and Indonesian Identity

a. Transformation from Antagonistic Identity to Complementary Identity

The findings on the transformation of the way students understand the relationship between Papuan and Indonesian identities from antagonistic to complementary can be understood through the perspective transformation theory developed by Mezirow and expanded by Kitchenham (2021). According to Mezirow, perspective transformation occurs through several stages: (1) disorienting experiential dilemmas that disrupt existing assumptions; (2) *critical reflection* on assumptions; (3) *rational discourse*, dialogue with others; and (4) *action*, the implementation of new perspectives in action.

Yusrifal Malibela illustrates this process. He experienced a disorienting dilemma when he participated in the Patriot Program which he suspected was an effort to "Indonesianize" Papuans. Through discussions with Ustad Kholil and his friends (*rational discourse*) and reflection on his assumptions (*critical reflection*), he developed a new perspective: "being Indonesian does not mean abandoning the identity of Papua."

Research by Taylor and Cranton (2021) shows that perspective transformation requires a "*safe space*" where individuals can explore challenging ideas without feeling threatened. The Patriot program seems to create this *safe space* through several

mechanisms: (1) facilitation by the trusted Ustad Kholil; (2) explicit rules to respect a variety of perspectives; and (3) focus on dialogue, not debate to win.

From the perspective of social psychology, the transformation from antagonistic to complementary identities can be understood through the "cognitive consistency theory" developed by Festinger and expanded upon by Gawronski and Strack (2021). According to this theory, individuals are motivated to reduce cognitive inconsistencies. When Papuan students have positive experiences with Indonesian symbols and practices (through the Patriot Program) that contradict the belief that Papua and Indonesia are antagonistic, they experience *cognitive dissonance* that motivates them to reconstruct their understanding.

Chamalia who stated that "I have become more appreciative of differences, more concerned with friends from various regions" shows the resolution of cognitive dissonance through a change in belief from "Indonesia threatens Papuan identity" to "Indonesia is a common home that respects diversity, including Papua."

b. **Contextual Identity Negotiation Strategies: Flexibility and Adaptation**

The findings about students' ability to adopt contextual identity negotiation strategies can be explained through the "*situational identity theory*" developed by Oyserman and James (2021). According to this theory, identity is not a fixed category but a dynamic construct activated by a situational context. Individuals have a repertoire of identities that they can access depending on the demands of the situation.

Arikhza Saputri, who explained that he emphasized Indonesian identity during the flag ceremony, Papuan identity during cultural events, and Muslim identity during prayer, showed the "*contextual identity salience*" of the ability to activate the most contextually relevant aspects of identity. Research by Reed et al. (2021) showed that individuals who had high identity flexibility (able to activate various identities depending on the context) reported better psychological wellbeing ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.01$) and more successful social adaptation ($\beta = 0.44$, $p < 0.001$).

However, identity flexibility is different from *the problematic "identity inconsistency"*. According to Sheldon et al. (2021), identity flexibility is adaptive when various identities are integrated in a coherent *self-concept*, while identity inconsistency occurs when various identities conflict with each other and are not integrated. Students in this study showed adaptive identity flexibility because they viewed their various identities as complementary, not contradictory.

Zihan Mikaila who stated "These three identities are not contradictory" shows a coherent integration of identities. A study by Amiot et al. (2021) on multiple social identities shows that identity integration is mediated by *perceived compatibility* to the extent to which individuals perceive their various identities as compatible. The Patriot program seems to increase *perceived compatibility* by constructing a narrative in which Papuan, Muslim, and Indonesian identities enrich each other.

c. **Critical Reflection as a Mechanism for Identity Negotiation**

The findings on the importance of critical reflection in identity negotiation are in line with the "*critical consciousness*" developed by Freire and expanded upon by Diemer et al. (2021). *Critical consciousness* consists of three components: (1) *critical reflection*, the ability to critically analyze social injustice; (2) *political efficacy*, the belief that a person

The Role of the Patriot Program in Fostering Nationalism Among High School Students at SMAIT Peradaban
Al Izzah in Sorong as a Strategy for Preventing Social Conflict in Papua: A Review of Ernest Renan's Theory of
Nationalism

can influence social change; and (3) *critical action*, participation in activities to challenge injustice.

Hamdan Farhan, who stated "The Patriot Program taught me not to take any narrative for granted" showed the development of *critical reflection*. Research by Rapa et al. (2021) showed that *critical consciousness* in adolescents was positively correlated with wellbeing ($r = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$), *academic achievement* ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.05$), and *civic engagement* ($r = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$).

Interestingly, *Hamdan's critical consciousness* does not lead to a rejection of Indonesian identity, but to a more nuanced synthesis: "I am no longer trapped in the narrative of Papuan victimhood or the chauvinistic narrative of Indonesia. I'm looking for a fairer synthesis." This is in line with research by Hope et al. (2021) which shows that constructive *critical consciousness* (focusing on solutions) has a positive effect on mental health and civic engagement, while destructive *critical consciousness* (focusing only on criticism without solutions) can increase *hopelessness* and *disengagement*.

The Patriot program seems to facilitate constructive *critical consciousness* by not only criticizing injustice but also empowering students to become agents of change. Abdul Munir, who stated that "the young generation of Papua has a responsibility to make Indonesia more just" showed this empowering framing.

The Relevance of Ernest Renan's Theory of Nationalism

a. The Concept of "Daily Plebiscites" and Nationalism Education: Theoretical Applications

Renan's key concept of the nation as a "daily plebiscite" of the ongoing will to live together that must be renewed daily has profound relevance to understanding the mechanisms of the Patriot Program. According to Kumar (2021) in a contemporary analysis of Renan's thought, the concept of daily plebiscite emphasizes that nationalism is not a biological or geographical inheritance but a political choice that is constantly updated through everyday practice.

The Patriot program is basically the institutionalization of Renan's "daily plebiscite" at the micro-level of education. Whenever Papuan students participate in a flag ceremony with full awareness, engage in diversity discussions with non-Papuan friends, or collaborate on cross-cultural social projects, they conduct a daily plebiscite choosing to be part of Indonesia.

Abdul Munir who stated "We create experiences that make them choose to be part of Indonesia" illustrates this intuitive understanding of the concept of Renan. Research by Mihelj and Jiménez (2021) on "*banal nationalism*" shows that nationalism is reproduced not only through spectacular moments (national celebrations, wars) but especially through mundane everyday practices (flag ceremonies, school curricula, social interactions).

More importantly, Renan's concept of the daily plebiscite offered a constructive alternative to the ongoing debate over the legitimacy of the 1969 Pepera. Instead of focusing on the historical question "is Papuan integration into Indonesia legitimate?", Renan's approach shifts the focus to the prospective question of "do we (Papuans and non-Papuans) choose to live together in the future?"

Ustad Kholil who emphasized that the program "does not constantly open old wounds" but "builds a future together" shows the practical application of this Renan

concept. According to Safran (2021), one of the controversial aspects of Renan's theory is the concept of "*l'oubli*" forgetfulness or memory selectivity as a condition for nation building. Renan argues that too much considering historical wounds can hinder national solidarity.

However, Renan's concept of "forgetfulness" must be understood carefully. As criticized by Anderson (2021), forgetting does not mean the erasure of history or denial of the injustices of the past, but rather of not allowing the past to dominate and dictate the future. In the Papuan context, this means acknowledging historical injustices such as the 1969 Pepera and ongoing inequality, but not allowing historical grievance to be the sole definition of Papuan identity.

b. **Rejection of Ethnic Determinism: Relevance to a Pluralistic Papua**

The second aspect of Renan's theory that is particularly relevant is its rejection of ethnic nationalism. In his famous speech "*Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*?" (1882), Renan explicitly rejects the definition of nation based on race, language, or religion. He argues that a nation is a spiritual community formed from two elements: the legacy of cherished memories of the past and the will to live together in the present (Renan in Breuilly, 2022).

According to Miller (2022), Renan's rejection of ethnic determinism is very important for a pluralistic society. If a nation is defined based on primordial characteristics such as race or language, then ethnic minorities will always be marginalized or forced to assimilate. In contrast, Renan-style civic nationalism allows for the nation's membership based on a commitment to common principles, not primordial commonality.

In the context of a very plural Indonesia with more than 700 ethnic groups and 300+ languages, Renan civil nationalism is very applicable. If Indonesian nationalism were defined based on Javanese ethnicity or a specific Javanese language or religion, then Papua and many other groups would be excluded. In contrast, Indonesian nationalism based on Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is a practical application of Renan's civic nationalism.

Chamalia who stated "Indonesia did not force me to be like the Javanese or abandon Papuan culture" shows an understanding of this inclusive nationalism. Research by Bertrand (2021) on nationalism and ethnic conflict in Indonesia shows that ethnic tensions are highest in areas where the government adopts assimilative policies, while areas with an approach that recognizes pluralism experience better social cohesion.

Papua with more than 300 different tribes and languages is an example par excellence of plurality. In this context, nationalism based on ethnic determinism would be impossible and counterproductive. The Patriot program, which adopts a superseding identity approach in line with Renan's civic nationalism, recognizes and values Papuan ethnic diversity while building a shared commitment to Indonesia as a political community.

c. **The Limitations of Renan Theory: The Need for a Critical Perspective on Power and Inequality**

Although Renan's theory is highly relevant, the study also identifies its limitations, particularly Renan's tendency to ignore the power structures and material inequality that make up national identity. As criticized by Conversi (2021), Renan is too idealistic and voluntarily he assumes that the collective will to live together can be formed freely,

without considering how material factors such as economics and politics limit or shape that will.

In the context of Papua, this criticism is very relevant. Papuan nationalism is not only constructed at the symbolic or cultural level, but also responds to very real economic and political inequality. According to data cited by Resosudarmo et al. (2022), indigenous Papuans experience systematic horizontal inequality in education, health, income, and political participation compared to immigrants.

Yusrifal Malibela, who stated that "my nationalism is conditional, I will wholeheartedly become Indonesian if Indonesia also wholeheartedly treats Papua fairly" shows that the will to live together (Renan's daily plebiscite) cannot be separated from the consideration of material justice. These findings are in line with the theory of horizontal inequality developed by Stewart (2021), who argues that inter-ethnic inequality in access to economic and political resources is a strong predictor of ethnic conflict.

Research by Cederman et al. (2021) using data from 155 ethnic groups in 42 countries found that *ethnic groups* that experienced *political exclusion* (underrepresented in government) and *economic deprivation* (income lower than the national average) had a 3.2 times higher probability of engaging in ethnic conflict than groups that did not experience horizontal inequality.

In the context of Papua, both political exclusion and economic deprivation are documented realities. According to an analysis by Aspinall and Berger (2021), although Papua has had Special Autonomy status since 2001, the political participation of indigenous Papuans in strategic positions is still limited, and most of the economic benefits from the exploitation of Papuan natural resources flow outside Papua.

Therefore, Renan's theory needs to be complemented by a critical perspective on inequality and power to understand the complexity of the formation of nationalism in Papua more comprehensively. This is not to say that Renan's theory is irrelevant, but its application must take into account the material and structural context.

d. Comparison with Other Nationalism Theories: Justification for Renan's Election

To justify the choice of Renan's theory as the main framework, it is important to compare it with other theories of nationalism:

Comparison with Ethnic Nationalism (Herder, Fichte): The theory of ethnic nationalism defines a nation based on racial, linguistic, or cultural similarities (Conversi, 2021). This approach is clearly not suitable for Papua and Indonesia, which is very plural. If implemented, it will lead to the exclusion or forced assimilation of minorities. Comparison with Modernized Nationalism (Gellner, Anderson): Gellner and Anderson emphasize that nationalism is a product of modernization and industrialization. While this theory explains the origins of nationalism, it lacks normative guidance on how to build inclusive nationalism in pluralistic societies (Ichijo & Katzenstein, 2021).

Comparison with Constitutional Patriotism (Habermas): Habermas proposes constitutional patriotism as an alternative to loyalty to democratic principles rather than ethno-cultural identity (Müller, 2021). This approach is in line with Renan in its emphasis on shared values, but it may be too abstract and less attentive to the emotional and cultural dimensions of national identity that are important in the Papuan context.

Renan's Advantages: Renan's theory combines the best of the various approaches he is a volunteer like Habermas but recognizes the importance of the emotional and cultural dimension, it is inclusive of plurality but still provides a basis for national solidarity through the concept of common will and commitment to the future.

According to Brubaker (2021), Renan's normative advantage is that his theory offers a democratic, inclusive, and humanist vision of nationalism that is very much in line with the needs of pluralistic societies such as Indonesia and especially Papua which requires a nationalistic approach that respects diversity and does not impose assimilation.

CONCLUSION

The Patriot Program at SMAIT Peradaban Al Izzah in Sorong City plays a significant role in shaping the nationalism of Indigenous Papuan students through three main mechanisms: as a secondary agent of socialization that transmits national values in a dialogical and inclusive manner; as a platform for interethnic interaction that fosters cooperation, reduces prejudice, and strengthens social cohesion; and as a space for identity construction that enables students to integrate Papuan and Indonesian identities into a complementary dual identity. Through this process, students move from viewing these identities as separate or conflicting toward understanding them as mutually reinforcing, while also demonstrating the ability to negotiate identity contextually and engage in critical reflection on national narratives. Ernest Renan's concept of the nation as a "daily plebiscite" is relevant in explaining this phenomenon, as students continuously reaffirm their belonging to Indonesia; however, the theory is limited in its lack of attention to structural economic and political inequalities that also shape nationalism in Papua. Therefore, it should be complemented with a more critical perspective to better capture the complexities of nationalism in unequal and plural societies. Future research is recommended to explore the long-term impact of such educational programs across different regions in Papua and to integrate structural analyses of inequality in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of national identity formation.

REFERENCES

Amiot, C. E., de la Sablonnière, R., Smith, L. G. E., & Smith, J. R. (2021). Capturing changes in social identities over time and how they become part of the self-concept. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *9*(6), 171-187. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12169

Anderson, B. (2021). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Revised ed.). Verso Books.

Aspinall, E., & Berger, M. T. (2021). The break-up of Indonesia? Nationalisms after decolonisation and the limits of the nation-state in post-cold war Southeast Asia. *Third World Quarterly*, *42*(9), 2193-2211. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1948928

Bertrand, J. (2021). *Nationalism and ethnic conflict in Indonesia*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009024914

Breuilly, J. (2022). *Nationalism and the state* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226817545.001.0001

Brubaker, R. (2021). *Grounds for difference*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674258143

Cederman, L. E., Gleditsch, K. S., & Buhaug, H. (2021). *Inequality, grievances, and civil war*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139084161

The Role of the Patriot Program in Fostering Nationalism Among High School Students at SMAIT Peradaban
Al Izzah in Sorong as a Strategy for Preventing Social Conflict in Papua: A Review of Ernest Renan's Theory of
Nationalism

Cheryan, S., Drury, S., & Vichayapai, M. (2021). Enduring influence of stereotypical computer science role models on women's academic aspirations. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *37*(1), 72-79. https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684312459328

Conversi, D. (2021). *Ethnonationalism in the contemporary world: Walker Connor and the study of nationalism*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003163091

Darder, A. (2021). Reinventing Paulo Freire: A pedagogy of love. *Routledge*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429505515

Dixon, J., Durrheim, K., Tredoux, C., Tropp, L., Clack, B., Eaton, L., & Quayle, M. (2021). Beyond prejudice: Are negative evaluations the problem and is getting us to like one another more the solution? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *41*, e84. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X18000486

Fayard, É. (2023). *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* Éditions Fayard. https://www.fayard.fr/livre/quest-ce-quune-nation-9782755508451/

Gawronski, B., & Strack, F. (2021). Cognitive consistency as a basic principle of social information processing. In B. Gawronski & F. Strack (Eds.), *Cognitive consistency: A fundamental principle in social cognition* (pp. 1-16). Guilford Press.

Hidayat, R., & Wibowo, A. (2023). Institusi sosial dan transmisi nilai kebangsaan di Papua. *Jurnal Sosiologi Pendidikan*, 18(2), 145-162. https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jsp/article/view/58742

Hidayatulloh, H., Erdős, É., & Szabó, M. (2022). The intricate justice of poverty: A case of the land of gold in Papua Indonesia. *Journal of Indonesian Legal Studies, 7*(2), 557–584. https://doi.org/10.15294/jils.v7i2.58030

Hope, E. C., Velez, G., Offidani-Bertrand, C., Keels, M., & Durkee, M. I. (2021). Political activism and mental health among Black and Latinx college students. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *24*(1), 26-39. https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000144

Hutnyk, J., & Saha, A. (2021). Hybridity and diaspora. In *The Routledge handbook of diaspora studies* (pp. 87-95). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315283715

Ichijo, A., & Katzenstein, P. J. (2021). Regions and regional orders: The uses and abuses of Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism*, *27*(1), 23-38. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12651

Kumar, K. (2021). Nation-states as narrations: Ernest Renan's 'What is a nation?' reconsidered. *Nations and Nationalism*, *27*(1), 39-55. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12661

Ladson-Billings, G. (2021). Culturally sustaining pedagogies and the pursuit of equity in schools. In D. Paris & H. S. Alim (Eds.), *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 21-34). Teachers College Press.

Miller, D. (2022). *On nationality*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0198293569.001.0001

Müller, J. W. (2021). *Constitutional patriotism*. Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691258621

Oyserman, D., & James, L. (2021). Possible identities. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 117-145). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-7988-9_6

Panggabean, A. D., Prihartono, M., & Purwanto, D. (2025). Dari ketimpangan menuju kesetaraan: Pendekatan smart power untuk penyelesaian konflik di Papua. *Muqoddimah: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Humaniora, 9*(4), 1919-1935. https://jurnal.um-tapsel.ac.id/index.php/muqoddimah/article/view/19642

Rahman, A., & Yusuf, M. (2023). Peran sekolah Islam dalam membangun nasionalisme di daerah perbatasan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 20(1), 89-104. https://ejournal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/jpai/article/view/5432

Rapa, L. J., Bolding, C. W., & Jamil, F. M. (2021). The antecedents and outcomes of critical consciousness among adolescents: A systematic review. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *50*(8), 1628-1642. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-021-01468-4

Reed, A., Forehand, M. R., Puntoni, S., & Warlop, L. (2021). Identity-based consumer behavior. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *29*(4), 310-321. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2012.08.002

Resosudarmo, B. P., Mollet, J. A., Raya, U. R., & Kaiwai, H. (2022). Development in Papua after special autonomy. In H. Hill (Ed.), *Regional dynamics in a decentralized Indonesia* (pp. 433-459). ISEAS Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1355/9789814519175-024

Rogoff, B., Coppens, A. D., Alcalá, L., Aceves-Azuara, I., Ruvalcaba, O., López, A., & Dayton, A. (2021). Noticing learners' strengths through cultural research. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *12*(5), 876-888. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691617718355

Safran, W. (2021). Renan's 'What is a Nation?' revisited: Reflections on the civic and ethnic bases of nationhood and national identity. *National Identities*, *23*(1), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2019.1699824

Santoso, H., & Wijaya, K. (2022). Strategi soft power dalam penyelesaian konflik Papua: Pendekatan pendidikan dan budaya. *Jurnal Hubungan Internasional*, 15(2), 123-138. https://journal.unair.ac.id/JHI@journal-of-international-relations-unair-ac-id/article/view/6789

Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (2021). *Handbook of identity theory and research*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-7988-9

Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., Rawsthorne, L. J., & Ilardi, B. (2021). Trait self and true self: Cross-role variation in the Big-Five personality traits and its relations with psychological authenticity and subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*(6), 1380-1393. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.73.6.1380

Slarwamin, R. I., Patoding, E. R., Putri, D. R., & Nifangejau, J. (2024). Kesejahteraan masyarakat di Kota Timika Papua Tengah ditinjau dari aspek layanan transportasi, pendapatan keluarga serta lokasi tempat tinggal. *JEMSI (Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen, dan Akuntansi)*, *10*(4), 2589-2597. https://journal.lembagakita.org/jemsi/article/download/2804/2113/9646

Smith, H. J., Ryan, D. A., Jaurique, A., Pettigrew, T. F., Jetten, J., Ariyanto, A., ... & Gollwitzer, M. (2018). Cultural values moderate the impact of relative deprivation. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 49*(8), 1183-1218. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118784213

Stewart, F. (2021). *Horizontal inequalities and conflict: Understanding group violence in multiethnic societies*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230305328

Verkuyten, M. (2021). *The social psychology of cultural diversity: Social categorization and social identity approaches*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003001928

Walker, I., & Pettigrew, T. F. (1984). Relative deprivation theory: An overview and conceptual critique. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 23*(4), 301–310. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1984.tb00645.x