

## Communal-Spiritual Ethnoparenting Model Based on Sunda Wiwitan Indigenous Knowledge in Early Childhood Character Formation and Cultural Transmission

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### ABSTRACT

Early childhood parenting in indigenous communities should be understood as a cultural educational process that extends beyond household care. This study examines Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting practices, values transmitted to young children, and community strategies for responding to modernization while sustaining cultural identity. A qualitative design using Spradley's ethnographic method was employed. Data were gathered through participant observation, in-depth interviews with customary leaders, parents, and community members, and a literature review on culturally grounded parenting and early childhood education. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation, repeated observation, member checking, and an audit trail. The findings show that Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting operates as a communal-spiritual parenting model connecting family, customary leadership, rituals, agriculture, oral tradition, local arts, and the natural environment. Values transmitted to children include respect for parents and ancestors, religiosity, gratitude, simplicity, responsibility, social solidarity, cultural identity, and ecological harmony. The community adapts to modernization by filtering technology, supporting education, documenting culture digitally, and strengthening customary leadership. This study contributes an indigenous knowledge-based model for local-wisdom early childhood education.

### INTRODUCTION

Early childhood care requires the involvement of parents, teachers, educational institutions, and the wider community so that children's growth and development can be stimulated consistently. Parenting programs in early childhood education help align childrearing practices at home and school, particularly by strengthening parents' knowledge of stimulation, communication, habituation, and collaboration with teachers (Apipah *et al.*, 2023). In Islamic early childhood education, (Nasution *et al.*, 2021) show that parenting activities for parents and teachers can introduce practical methods of approach, habituation, and service during the golden age. These findings indicate that parenting is not merely a domestic activity; it is an educational process shaped by institutional, cultural, and spiritual contexts. This broader understanding of parenting provides an entry point for examining how indigenous communities educate young children through culturally inherited practices rather than through formal parenting programs alone.

Indonesia's multicultural setting makes the study of parenting more complex because childrearing cannot be fully understood through general psychological categories alone. Every community carries its own values, language, symbols, social expectations, and moral boundaries that shape how adults care for children. Parenting contributes to character formation because children receive guidance, rules, habituation, and role modelling from adults around them. In a multicultural society, however, the meanings of respect, independence, obedience, responsibility, and social participation are not neutral; they are interpreted through cultural worlds. Saputri and Nasution (2023) found that democratic parenting through communication, rules, and discussion can support children's confidence, independence, and social skills. In indigenous communities, parenting is also embedded in collective memory, ritual practices, kinship relations, ecological knowledge, and local spirituality.

Ethnoparenting is a useful concept for reading this relationship between culture and parenting. It refers to ways in which parents and communities nurture, educate, care for, and socialize children based on the value system of a particular ethnic or cultural group (Rachmawati, 2020; Suratman, 2021). The concept emphasizes that parenting is not limited to the fulfilment of physical needs or the application of universal techniques; it is also a process of transmitting moral, spiritual, social, ecological, and cultural identities. In many indigenous societies, childrearing involves extended families, elders, customary leaders, and the natural environment as living learning spaces.

Recent Indonesian studies provide an important basis for this article. Rachmawati (2020) formulated an Indonesian ethnoparenting model built on four core values: belief in God, human identity, care for nature and the environment, and mutual cooperation with community involvement. Suratman (2021) showed that Malay Sambas parenting transmits values through *tunjuk ajar*, *pantang larang*, *kemponan*, and cultural traditions practiced from early childhood. Prawening and Aprida (2021) demonstrated that family traditions, religious consistency, flexible parenting patterns, and daily habituation can shape a stable family parenting culture. Their finding is relevant to Cisungsang because it shows that tradition and flexibility can coexist in daily parenting; however, Cisungsang differs because parenting is not only located in the nuclear family but also organized through customary leadership, agrarian rituals, and communal obligations. Andriani and Rachmawati (2022) further explain that mixed-ethnic families prioritize religious values, tolerance, extended-family involvement, and the social environment in forming children's cultural identity, while Fitroh *et al.* (2025) show that local ethnoparenting can develop young children's social skills through solidarity, cooperation, independence, friendliness, politeness, and good manners.

International research confirms that parenting is culturally situated because values, parental control, children's adjustment, and socialization practices vary according to cultural expectations and collective family meanings (Calzada *et al.*, 2012; Cheung and Lim, 2022; Lu, 2023; Rudy and Grusec, 2006). Studies of culturally adapted parenting programs and indigenous parenting contexts also show that childrearing support should respect local identity, language, community knowledge, and intergenerational relationships (Caplan *et al.*, 2020; Cardona *et al.*, 2012; Knauer *et al.*, 2017). These studies are important, yet Indonesian indigenous parenting is rarely discussed as a living educational system for early childhood

character formation, leaving the link among indigenous knowledge, spirituality, ecological ethics, and parenting under-documented.

Kasepuhan Cisungsang in Banten Kidul is an important site for examining this gap because the community continues to maintain agrarian traditions, customary leadership, oral knowledge, and ancestral teachings that interact with Islam. Located in Cisungsang Village, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province, the community is part of the broader Kasepuhan Banten Kidul network associated with Pajajaran historical narratives. Customary leadership is organized around the figure of Abah and the baris kolot, who guide social life, rituals, agricultural practices, and the continuity of ancestral norms. In relation to early childhood parenting, Abah and the baris kolot function as moral reference points: parents and children observe how elders make decisions, regulate ritual participation, correct social behaviour, and maintain the boundaries of adat in everyday life.

The core values of Kasepuhan Cisungsang are summarized in *tatali paranti karuhun*, an ancestral guideline that regulates human relationships with God, other people, ancestors, and nature. These values are expressed in rice cultivation, the care of *leuit* or rice barns, customary forest management, rituals such as *ngaseuk*, *mipit*, *ngareremokeun*, and *Seren Taun*, and local arts. Children grow up in an environment filled with cultural symbols and practical experiences. They learn not only from verbal explanations but also from observing adult behaviour, participating in communal work, and witnessing ritual events.

At the same time, Cisungsang is not isolated from social change. Modernization enters through formal education, electricity, digital devices, social media, agricultural technology, changes in housing forms, shifts in language use, and labour mobility. These changes challenge the continuity of traditional parenting because children's time may be increasingly shaped by gadgets, popular culture, and formal schooling. The research gap addressed in this study is therefore the limited documentation of how Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting operates as an early childhood educational system and how it adapts to modernization without losing its cultural and spiritual core.

This study aims to: (1) analyze the forms and characteristics of Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting in Kasepuhan Cisungsang; (2) identify the cultural, spiritual, social, and ecological values transmitted to young children; and (3) explain the community's strategies for responding to modernization in the parenting process. The novelty of the study lies in the concept of a communal-spiritual ethnoparenting model, which reads parenting as a relational system connecting family, customary community, spirituality, ecology, and adaptive cultural transmission in early childhood education.

## **METHODS**

This research used a qualitative approach with an ethnographic method. Ethnography was selected because the study did not only aim to describe parenting behaviour but also to understand the cultural meanings that underlie those practices from the perspective of the Kasepuhan Cisungsang community. This approach enabled the researcher to enter the social life of the community and pay attention to symbols, language, actions, values, and social relations that shape childrearing practices.

The research was conducted in Kasepuhan Cisungsang, Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. This location was selected because it is one of the customary centres of

Kasepuhan Banten Kidul that still maintains agrarian traditions, the annual *Seren Taun* ritual, and a living structure of customary leadership. Informants were selected purposively, including customary leaders, *kokolot*, parents with young children, and community members involved in customary activities. Selection considered cultural involvement, the ability to provide relevant information, and willingness to share experiences openly.

Data collection techniques included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and literature review. Observation focused on daily community activities, interactions between parents and children, children's involvement in customary events, ritual settings, agricultural practices, and communal work. In-depth interviews explored informants' understanding of parenting values, the role of parents, the role of customary leaders, experiences of modernization, and strategies for maintaining tradition. Literature review was used to strengthen the conceptual framework of ethnoparenting, culturally responsive early childhood education, Sunda Wiwitan, and Kasepuhan Banten Kidul.

**Table 1.** Ethnographic research design and analytical procedure

Stage	Main activity	Data source	Analytical output
Field entry	Permission, rapport, contextual observation	Community setting and customary events	Field orientation and cultural map
Descriptive exploration	Participant observation and descriptive interviews	Parents, elders, community members	Initial domains of parenting practice
Focused exploration	Focused interviews and document review	Customary leaders, parents, local cultural records	Categories of values and transmission mechanisms
Spradley analysis	Domain, taxonomic, componential, and theme analysis	Observation notes, interview notes, literature	Ethnoparenting themes and cultural interpretation
Validation	Triangulation, member checking, audit trail	Multiple informants and techniques	Credible and confirmable findings

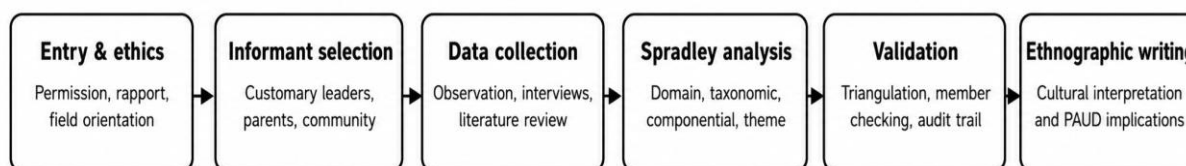
The main research instruments were an observation guide, an interview guide, field notes, and a document review sheet. In qualitative inquiry, the researcher also functioned as the primary instrument because interpretation depended on sustained engagement with the field, sensitivity to cultural meanings, and reflexive awareness of the researcher's position. To increase the trustworthiness of the instruments and data interpretation, the questions and observation focus were aligned with the research objectives and refined through repeated field encounters.

Data analysis followed James P. Spradley's ethnographic procedures, including informant selection, ethnographic relationship building, participant observation, descriptive interviews, domain analysis, focused interviews, taxonomic analysis, componential interviews, theme analysis, verification, ethnographic writing, and cultural interpretation (Spradley, 1997). Data were analysed gradually to identify cultural domains, value categories, relations among categories, and major ethnoparenting themes. The analysis moved from broad descriptive

observation to focused interpretation of recurring cultural meanings related to parenting, value transmission, and modernization.

Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, technique triangulation, repeated observation, member checking, and an audit trail. Source triangulation compared information from customary leaders, parents, elders, and community members. Technique triangulation compared observation, interview, and literature data. Member checking was used by confirming key interpretations with informants, while the audit trail documented decisions during data reduction, categorization, and theme formulation. These procedures supported credibility, dependability, and confirmability in the ethnographic analysis.

Figure 1 presents the research workflow used to make the ethnographic process transparent and replicable.



**Figure 1.** Ethnographic research workflow.

## RESULT

The findings are organized around the three research objectives: the forms of ethnoparenting, the values transmitted to young children, and the community's adaptation to modernization. The data show that Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting in Kasepuhan Cisungsang works through a network of family, customary authority, ritual, agriculture, oral knowledge, arts, and ecological practice.

**Table 2.** Main analytical domains of Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting

Analytical domain	Observed practice	Value orientation	Relation to research objective
Communal parenting	Children are supervised by parents, relatives, neighbours, elders, and customary functionaries.	Respect, social responsibility, belonging	Forms and characteristics of ethnoparenting
Spiritual parenting	Prayer, gratitude, respect for ancestors, and ritual participation are introduced in daily life.	Religiosity, moral consequence, gratitude	Values transmitted to children
Ecological parenting	Children observe farming rules, rice rituals, forest ethics, and care for leuit.	Ecological harmony, patience, limits	Values and mechanisms of transmission
Oral-practical transmission	Stories, proverbs, arts, games, ritual observation, and role modelling are used as learning media.	Cultural identity, memory, manners	Mechanisms of value transmission
Adaptive	Formal education,	Balance between	Response to

parenting	technology filtering, and digital documentation are accepted selectively.	adat and change	modernization
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### Socio-Cultural Setting as a Parenting Ecology

Kasepuhan Cisungsang is an indigenous Sundanese sub-ethnic community within the Kasepuhan Banten Kidul network. Social life is characterized by strong ties to rice agriculture, customary leadership, oral traditions, and communal rituals. Abah occupies an important position as a customary leader who provides direction in social, ritual, and agricultural matters. The baris kolot, gandek, indung beurang, and other customary functionaries help maintain ancestral rules. This social structure means that childrearing occurs in an environment with clear collective norms and customary authority.

Agrarian life functions as a primary learning space for children. Rice is not treated merely as a food commodity but as a symbol of life, blessing, and spiritual relation. Rituals related to rice, including *ngaseuk*, *mipit*, *nganyaran*, *rasul pare di leuit*, and *Seren Taun*, create a cultural calendar through which children encounter gratitude, hard work, order, and respect for nature. Children observe adults following planting times, protecting leuit, and obeying customary rules. Parenting therefore occurs through repeated and meaningful social experiences.

Cisungsang also demonstrates a dynamic relationship with modernity. Stilt houses and the use of *hawu* are remembered as part of tradition, but some residents now use permanent houses, gas stoves, electronic devices, and digital media. Formal education is accepted and encouraged for both boys and girls, from early childhood education to higher education. The community does not necessarily see tradition and modernity as opposing poles. Rather, members try to maintain core customary values while accepting changes considered beneficial and compatible with social harmony.

### Forms and Characteristics of Communal-Spiritual Ethnoparenting

The primary form of Cisungsang ethnoparenting is community-based childrearing. Children are not only the responsibility of biological parents but are also under the moral supervision of extended families, neighbours, elders, and the wider community. In daily life, children learn appropriate behaviour through advice, correction, examples, and repeated habits. A good child is understood not only as academically capable but also as someone who keeps manners, respects elders, and participates in social life. This communal pattern was reflected in the explanation of one parent, who described childrearing as a shared responsibility within the community: “Here, children are not raised only by their mother and father. When they play, join communal activities, or attend customary events, elders and neighbours also remind them how to speak, behave, and respect older people. Children learn because they see many adults doing the same things every day” (*parent informant, interview*).

The second characteristic is spiritual parenting. The Kasepuhan Cisungsang community combines Islamic identity with Sunda Wiwitan customary teachings. In childrearing, children are introduced to prayer, gratitude, respect for ancestors, and awareness that human life is connected to the Creator. Customary rituals are not merely cultural celebrations but also

media for teaching harmony between religion, adat, and social responsibility. This spirituality strengthens children's understanding that human actions have moral consequences and should be directed toward the common good.

The third characteristic is ecological parenting. Children are introduced to nature as part of life rather than as a resource to be exploited. Concepts such as *leuweung kolot*, *leuweung titipan*, *leuweung tutupan*, and customary farming rules show the presence of ecological ethics. Children learn that forests, water, rice, and land are governed by rules of use. Participation in farming activities helps children understand seasonal cycles, patience, collective labour, and limits in using natural resources. The ecological dimension of parenting was also emphasized by a customary elder, who connected children's learning with respect for rice, water, forests, and ancestral rules: "Children must know that rice, water, forests, and the earth are not only things to be used. They are part of life that must be respected. Through rituals and farming activities, children learn gratitude, patience, and the rules inherited from the ancestors" (*customary elder, interview*).

The fourth characteristic is oral and practical transmission of knowledge. Cultural values are not mainly taught through textbooks but through stories, proverbs, *pantun*, myths, games, arts, and direct practice. Parents and elders explain the meaning of behaviours, prohibitions, and rituals. Children learn from folk narratives, from witnessing *Seren Taun*, from seeing adults cooperate in preparing ceremonies, and from participating in everyday activities. This demonstrates a pedagogy of experience and role modelling.

The fifth characteristic is character formation through habituation. Parenting aims not only to produce obedient children but also responsible, courageous, simple, independent, and respectful persons. These values are cultivated through routines: seeing parents work, following customary rules, helping at home, appreciating food, and maintaining relationships with neighbours. Thus, *Cisungsang* ethnoparenting may be understood as a culture-based system of character education.

### **Cultural Values and Mechanisms of Transmission**

The first strong value is respect for parents, elders, and ancestors. Respect is not limited to polite speech; it also includes willingness to listen to advice, obey customary rules, and acknowledge the contribution of previous generations. Children are introduced to *Abah*, *baris kolot*, and customary functionaries as moral examples. In customary activities, they observe how community members give honour to elders and follow their direction. This practice builds awareness that communal identity is sustained through intergenerational continuity.

The second value is cooperation and solidarity. Customary activities, agriculture, and *Seren Taun* require collaboration among many people. Children learn that major tasks are completed not individually but through shared roles. Cooperation teaches care, social responsibility, patience, and a sense of belonging. For early childhood education, this value is important because children are introduced to cooperation, sharing, waiting for turns, and respecting the roles of others.

The third value is religiosity and gratitude. In the agricultural cycle, harvest is understood not only as the result of human work but also as God's gift and nature's blessing. *Seren Taun* becomes a collective educational medium through which gratitude is expressed in prayer,

symbolic offerings, arts, and togetherness. Children learn to appreciate food, respect farmers' work, and avoid excessive use of resources.

The fourth value is harmony with nature. Cisungsang people teach that humans must maintain balance with forests, fields, water, and rice. Children are introduced to prohibitions and procedures that regulate the relationship between humans and nature. From the perspective of early childhood education, these customary rules may be read as traditional ecological education because children learn not only the names of plants and animals but also ethical ways of relating to the environment.

The fifth value is cultural identity. Through language, arts, rituals, and ancestral stories, children recognize themselves as part of Kasepuhan Cisungsang. Arts such as *angklung buhun*, *dogdog lojor*, *sisindiran*, *rengkong*, *karinding*, *pencak silat*, and *wayang golek* function as spaces for value socialization. When children participate in or witness these arts, they learn symbols, rhythm, language, and communal togetherness.

The sixth value is balance between adat and change. Cisungsang people do not reject school, technology, or interaction with the outside world, but they seek to filter change so that it does not damage the core of adat. Children learn that becoming modern does not require abandoning tradition. Parenting helps them negotiate two spaces at once: the customary community and the broader modern society.

**Table 3.** Cultural values, transmission mechanisms, and early childhood learning meanings

<b>Value transmitted</b>	<b>Main mechanism</b>	<b>Empirical indicator</b>	<b>Meaning for early childhood education</b>
Respect for parents, elders, and ancestors	Advice, correction, ritual observation, customary authority	Children observe adults honouring Abah and baris kolot.	Develops manners, listening, and intergenerational awareness
Mutual cooperation and solidarity	Participation in communal work and Seren Taun preparation	Children witness shared roles in ritual and agricultural activities.	Develops cooperation, empathy, turn-taking, and belonging
Religiosity and gratitude	Prayer, harvest ritual, family habituation	Children learn that food and harvest are blessings, not merely commodities.	Builds gratitude, care, and moral-religious awareness
Harmony with nature	Farming rules, forest categories, leuit practice	Children are introduced to limits in using land, water, forests, and rice.	Supports ecological literacy and responsible behaviour
Cultural identity	Language, arts, oral stories, ritual symbols	Children encounter <i>angklung buhun</i> , <i>dogdog lojor</i> , <i>sisindiran</i> , and local narratives.	Strengthens identity, language, memory, and cultural confidence
Balance between adat and change	Selective technology use, schooling, digital documentation	Children learn to attend school and use media without	Encourages adaptive identity and critical cultural negotiation

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abandoning adat.

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### Community Strategies in Responding to Modernization

Modernization affects several domains of childrearing. The first is language. Indonesian is increasingly used because of formal schooling and wider communication, while local Sundanese terms remain important for transmitting respect, humour, ritual meaning, and ancestral memory. The second is technology. Gadgets and social media open access to information but may reduce children's participation in oral storytelling, local games, and outdoor activities. The third is formal education. Schooling is valued, but it needs to remain connected with local identity so that children do not experience adat as something distant from learning.

The community's response is selective rather than resistant. Parents and elders try to filter technology use, maintain ritual participation, encourage children to attend school, and use digital documentation to preserve songs, rituals, arts, and historical narratives. Customary leaders also remain important because they provide moral boundaries for what may change and what should be protected. This strategy shows that ethnoparenting is not static; it adapts to new conditions while preserving the core values of *tatali paranti karuhun*.

**Table 4.** Modernization challenges and community adaptation strategies

<b>Modernization domain</b>	<b>Potential risk for ethnoparenting</b>	<b>Community adaptation strategy</b>
Language shift	Loss of local terms, oral stories, and ritual meanings	Bilingual use of Indonesian and local Sundanese in family and community life
Digital technology	Reduced interaction with elders, outdoor play, and oral tradition	Filtering gadget use and documenting rituals, songs, arts, and historical narratives
Formal education	Separation between school knowledge and local identity	Encouraging schooling while integrating local stories, arts, ecology, and customary values
Housing and lifestyle change	Weakening of shared domestic spaces and traditional routines	Maintaining ritual participation, family habituation, and community gatherings
Economic mobility	Reduced time for children to participate in agrarian life	Strengthening ceremonial calendars, communal work, and elder involvement

## DISCUSSION

### Ethnoparenting as a Community-Based Educational System

The findings show that Cisungsang ethnoparenting is not merely a traditional parenting style but a community-based educational system that connects family, adat, religion, ecology, and social change. This interpretation is consistent with the Indonesian ethnoparenting model, which positions belief in God, human identity, environmental care, and cooperation as core values in parenting across Indonesian cultural communities (Rachmawati, 2020). In

Cisungsang, these core values appear through respect for *tatali paranti karuhun*, collective responsibility for children, agricultural rituals, and daily habituation in family and community life.

The findings also intersect with Suratman's (2021) study of Malay Sambas ethnoparenting, which shows that *tunjuk ajar*, *pantang larang*, *kemponan*, and local traditions are used to transmit values from early childhood. The main similarity lies in the use of oral tradition, social prohibition, community participation, and religious-cultural meaning as parenting media. The difference is in cultural context: Sambas parenting is framed by Malay-Islamic customs, whereas Cisungsang parenting is embedded in Kasepuhan agrarian cosmology, Sunda Wiwitan traditions, and the annual *Seren Taun* ritual.

Community involvement in Cisungsang parenting also supports cross-cultural studies showing that parenting practices are shaped by cultural values, social norms, and collective family expectations (Calzada *et al.*, 2012; Cheung and Lim, 2022; Lu, 2023; Rudy and Grusec, 2006). Prawening and Aprida (2021) show that strong religious commitment, flexible parenting, and repeated family habits can create a stable parenting culture. Similarly, Andriani and Rachmawati (2022) found that parenting in mixed-ethnic families is strengthened by religious values, tolerance, extended-family involvement, and the surrounding social environment. These studies support the Cisungsang finding that children are shaped not only by parents but also by elders, customary leaders, neighbours, ritual spaces, and the ecological environment.

### **Spirituality, Ecology, and Children's Cultural Identity**

The spiritual and ecological dimensions of Cisungsang ethnoparenting show that childrearing is connected to how the community interprets nature, rice, food, and blessing. These findings support studies on Sunda Wiwitan and indigenous communities that place the relationship among God, ancestors, humans, and nature at the centre of social life (As *et al.*, 2020; Hidayat *et al.*, 2020; Sodikin, 2022). In the parenting process, spirituality is not transmitted only through verbal instruction; it is experienced through gratitude practices, ritual participation, respect for elders, and children's observation of how adults treat rice, forest, water, and land.

*Seren Taun* functions as a cultural learning space that brings children into contact with gratitude, cooperation, arts, and community history. Previous studies confirm that *Seren Taun* functions as local wisdom, customary communication, and a means of preserving Kasepuhan Cisungsang culture (Halimah and Guntara, 2017; Malik, 2017; Septiyansah, 2023). The present findings extend those studies by showing that *Seren Taun* is also a parenting space: children learn by observing, imitating, participating, asking questions, and experiencing collective responsibility in age-appropriate ways.

The identity dimension of Cisungsang parenting also resonates with Andriani and Rachmawati's (2020) argument that children's cultural identity is formed through the surrounding socio-cultural environment. In Cisungsang, identity is not transmitted as an abstract concept but through language, terms of respect, ritual symbols, farming practices, arts, and interaction with elders. Therefore, ethnoparenting becomes a process through which children learn who they are, where they belong, and how they should relate ethically to people, ancestors, and nature.

### **Modernization, Language, and Adaptive Cultural Transmission**

Modernization does not eliminate Cisungsang ethnoparenting, but it changes the spaces through which values are transmitted. Studies on Kasepuhan Banten Kidul and Cisungsang show that indigenous communities continue to negotiate formal education, modern technology, changing economic relations, and wider social mobility (Mutaqin & Iryana, 2018; Noorbani, 2023; Nur *et al.*, 2021). Suratman (2021) similarly warns that modern parenting should not abandon traditional parenting that remains meaningful for contemporary families. This confirms that the challenge is not to reject modernity but to select, reinterpret, and integrate it without weakening the core of local values.

Language shift is a critical challenge in this adaptation. Indonesian helps children enter national education and broader communication, but the local Sundanese language stores terms, metaphors, prohibitions, humour, oral stories, and ritual meanings that are difficult to replace. If local language use decreases, the transmission of indigenous knowledge may also weaken. A bilingual strategy is therefore needed: Indonesian can support national participation, while local Sundanese can maintain cultural intimacy, oral tradition, and children's attachment to the community. Research on heritage language maintenance similarly suggests that family language decisions influence children's access to cultural meanings and identity resources (Hao, 2022).

Digital technology has ambivalent consequences. It can reduce children's interaction with elders, oral tradition, local games, and agrarian activities; at the same time, it can be used to document rituals, songs, stories, agricultural knowledge, and local arts. This point is consistent with studies of cultural hybridity and technology use in parenting, which suggest that families can selectively use modern media to strengthen rather than replace cultural learning (Febiyanti & Yulindrasari, 2021; Hao, 2022).

### **Implications for Culture-Based Early Childhood Education**

The findings have direct implications for early childhood education. PAUD institutions in and around indigenous communities need to treat families and customary communities as pedagogical resources. Parenting programs should not only deliver general parenting techniques but also dialogue with local values such as responsibility to karuhun, gratitude, cooperation, respect for elders, and ecological balance. Nasution *et al.* (2021) show that approach, habituation, and service can be used as practical parenting methods during the golden age. In Cisungsang, these principles can be contextualized through respectful parent-child communication, habituation in family and ritual life, and adult service in facilitating children's participation in cultural practices.

Values such as cooperation, respect for parents, gratitude, discipline, simplicity, and environmental care can be translated into group play, plant-care projects, visits to leuit, storytelling about Seren Taun, role play on farming activities, and art activities using natural materials. Fitroh *et al.* (2025) demonstrate that culture-based ethnoparenting can develop social skills such as solidarity, cooperation, independence, sociability, friendliness, politeness, empathy, and collaboration. This supports the recommendation that local cultural values should not be treated as additional content, but as a foundation for language, socio-emotional, cognitive, artistic, motor, moral, and religious development.

The integration of ethnoparenting into PAUD must also respect cultural ethics. Certain symbols, prayers, ritual objects, and sacred knowledge should not be used carelessly as teaching materials. Teachers and researchers need to seek consent from customary leaders, involve parents and elders as partners, and distinguish between cultural knowledge that can be shared with children and knowledge that should remain within customary boundaries. This approach prevents the commodification of tradition and ensures that culture-based education remains respectful to the community that owns the knowledge.

### **Theoretical Contribution, Limitations, and Future Research**

Theoretically, this study contributes the concept of a communal-spiritual ethnoparenting model. The model explains that indigenous parenting is not only a set of household practices but a cultural transmission system that links family care, customary authority, ritual participation, ecological ethics, and adaptive responses to modernization. This contribution extends earlier ethnoparenting studies by emphasizing the role of indigenous knowledge and spirituality in early childhood character formation.

This study is limited to the ethnoparenting practices and cultural values of Kasepuhan Cisungsang; therefore, its findings are not intended to be generalized to all Sundanese indigenous communities or all Kasepuhan Banten Kidul groups. Each Kasepuhan has its own history, leadership structure, ritual calendar, and social dynamics. Another limitation concerns the interpretive nature of ethnographic research: although triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail were used, the analysis remains shaped by the field access, informant selection, and cultural boundaries that determine what may be observed and discussed publicly.

Future research may compare Cisungsang with Ciptagelar, Citorek, Cicarucub, or other indigenous communities to identify similarities and differences in the transmission of cultural values. Further studies should also deepen children's perspectives through child-friendly methods such as play observation, drawing, storytelling, photo elicitation, and informal conversation. Developmental or action research is needed to design and test PAUD learning models based on Cisungsang ethnoparenting, especially models that integrate local language, ecological learning, ritual ethics, and family-school-community collaboration.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that Sunda Wiwitan ethnoparenting is practised as a communal-spiritual childrearing system involving families, customary leaders, rituals, oral traditions, arts, agriculture, and the natural environment. The study has answered its objectives by showing that the forms of parenting are communal, spiritual, ecological, participatory, and habituation-based; the values transmitted include respect for parents and ancestors, mutual cooperation, religiosity, gratitude, simplicity, responsibility, cultural identity, and harmony with nature; and the community responds to modernization through formal education, selective technology use, cultural documentation, and maintenance of core rituals. These findings suggest that early childhood education in indigenous contexts should integrate local wisdom by involving parents, elders, schools, arts, and environmental learning as shared sources of children's development. Future research should examine children's own interpretations of ritual participation, local language, technology, and ecological learning, and

may compare Cisungsang with other Kasepuhan communities to refine the communal-spiritual ethnoparenting model.

## DECLARATIONS

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