

## **THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE INHERITANCE OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUES BETWEEN GENERATIONS IN THE ERA OF MODERN SOCIAL CHANGE**

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### **Abstract**

The family is the first and main social institution in the life of an individual which plays an important role in the process of inheriting social and cultural values between generations. Values such as norms, traditions, language, beliefs, and patterns of social behavior were first introduced and instilled through interaction in the family environment. This article aims to examine the role of the family in transmitting social and cultural values from one generation to the next as well as the challenges faced in the context of modern social change. This research uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach to various scientific sources in the form of books and articles in national and international journals. The results of the study show that the family plays a role as the primary socialization agent that shapes the character, cultural identity, and social attitudes of individuals from an early age. However, the flow of globalization, technological developments, and changes in family structure also affect the effectiveness of the process of inheriting these values. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the role of the family through intergenerational communication and adaptation of cultural values to remain relevant to the times.

**Keywords:** Social and cultural values, inheritance of values, between generations

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The family represents the most fundamental and universal social institution in human society, playing a central role in shaping individual personality, attitudes, and behavioral orientations. From birth, individuals first engage in social interaction within the family environment, making the family the primary arena for early socialization. Beyond its biological function, the family operates as a key social institution responsible for transmitting social

norms, cultural values, and moral principles that ensure the continuity and stability of society across generations (Grusec & Hastings, 2021).

Social and cultural values constitute a system of abstract principles that guide patterns of thought, behavior, and interaction within a community. Social values reflect shared judgments about what is considered appropriate, desirable, and ethical, while cultural values encompass symbolic systems, traditions, customs, and collective meanings that shape group identity. The transmission of these values does not occur spontaneously but is achieved through long-term social learning processes, particularly through sustained intergenerational interaction within the family context (Kagitcibasi, 2020).

From the perspective of social construction theory, social reality is continuously produced and reproduced through the internalization of socially inherited norms and meanings. The family serves as the earliest and most influential setting in which individuals internalize these realities. Through everyday communication, language use, behavioral modeling, and routine practices, children learn to interpret and navigate the social world. Consequently, the family functions as a primary mechanism for embedding social and cultural values that shape individual identity and social orientation (Burr, 2020).

The intergenerational transmission of values within families typically occurs through informal and implicit processes rather than through explicit instruction. Parents and caregivers rarely articulate values directly; instead, children acquire them through observation, habituation, emotional reinforcement, and daily interaction. Empirical studies indicate that parenting styles, family communication patterns, and emotional closeness significantly influence the effectiveness of value internalization, particularly in fostering responsibility, honesty, discipline, and respect for others (Bornstein, 2021).

In addition to transmitting social values, families play a critical role in preserving and reproducing cultural values. Culture extends beyond material artifacts to include systems of meaning embedded in social practices. The use of native languages at home, participation in traditional rituals, and engagement in religious or customary ceremonies exemplify how families function as cultural carriers. Through these practices, younger generations develop an awareness of their cultural heritage and a sense of collective identity rooted in shared history and tradition (Trommsdorff & Kornadt, 2020).

However, the process of intergenerational value transmission within families faces increasing challenges amid rapid social transformation. Globalization, modernization, and the expansion of digital technologies have introduced new value systems that may conflict with long-established cultural norms. The widespread availability of global content through digital media exposes younger generations to diverse lifestyles and ideological perspectives, potentially reshaping their value orientations and weakening attachment to local traditions (Livingstone & Third, 2021).

Changes in family structure and function further complicate this process. The rise of nuclear families, increased parental participation in the workforce, and reduced time for intergenerational interaction can limit opportunities for effective value transmission. Research suggests that diminished family communication may contribute to generational value gaps, increasing the likelihood of cultural dissonance and identity fragmentation among younger family members (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020).

Despite these challenges, families are also required to adapt constructively to social change without abandoning core cultural values. Adaptation does not imply rejection of modern influences but rather the capacity to critically filter, reinterpret, and integrate new values in ways that remain consistent with local cultural frameworks. In this context, parents assume an increasingly important role as cultural mediators who guide children in developing critical awareness, ethical judgment, and cultural sensitivity (García & Weiss, 2020).

Value education within the family has broader implications for social cohesion and national sustainability. Individuals raised in family environments that successfully transmit positive social and cultural values tend to demonstrate stronger character formation, social responsibility, and adaptability within diverse social contexts. Thus, the family contributes not only to individual development but also to the resilience and continuity of socio-cultural systems at the societal level (Park & Lau, 2021).

Based on this discussion, it is evident that the family occupies a strategic position in the intergenerational transmission of social and cultural values. Despite facing significant challenges arising from social change and globalization, the family remains a central pillar in maintaining cultural continuity and collective identity. Therefore, examining the role of the family in value inheritance is essential for understanding contemporary social dynamics and for formulating strategies aimed at strengthening family functions in the modern era. This introduction provides a conceptual and theoretical foundation for further analysis in this article.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method to examine in depth the role of the family in the inheritance of social and cultural values between generations. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on understanding meanings, concepts, and social processes that are contextual and interpretive. The literature study allows researchers to obtain a comprehensive overview of the theories, concepts, and empirical findings that have been put forward by experts related to family, social values, and culture. Research data is sourced from various relevant written references, including sociology and anthropology textbooks, articles from national and international scientific journals, seminar proceedings, and official documents related to research topics.

The data collection process is carried out through systematic searches on academic databases such as Google Scholar, Garuda, and other reputable journal portals. The keywords used include "family", "inheritance of social values", "cultural values", and "intergenerational". The sources obtained were then selected based on the criteria of topic relevance, author's and publisher's credibility, and relatively up-to-date years of publication to ensure the novelty and validity of the data. After the selection stage, the relevant data is classified and recorded systematically to facilitate the analysis process.

Data analysis is carried out using descriptive-analytical analysis techniques, namely by debunking, comparing, and synthesizing various views and findings of previous research. The researcher identified key themes related to the role of the family as the primary socialization agent, the mechanism of inheriting social and cultural values, and the challenges faced by the family in the context of social change. The results of the analysis are then presented in the form of a coherent and systematic narrative to explain the relationship between concepts in depth. Through this method, the research is expected to be able to provide a strong theoretical understanding of the importance of the role of the family in maintaining the sustainability of social and cultural values between generations in the midst of the dynamics of modern society.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of the literature review that has been conducted, it is found that the family has a very central role in the process of inheriting social and cultural values between generations. As the smallest social unit, the family is the first environment that introduces individuals to the norms, rules, and values that apply in society. This process begins from an early age through daily interactions between parents and children, both in the form of verbal and nonverbal communication. Social values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, good manners, and concern for others are gradually instilled through habituation and example carried

out by parents. Children tend to imitate the behaviors they observe in the family, so parents' attitudes and actions are key factors in the successful inheritance of these values.

The results of the study also show that the family functions as a primary socialization agent that forms the basis of an individual's personality and character. This primary socialization is deep and long-term because it occurs in strong emotional bonds. Social values instilled in the family not only influence individual behavior in the family environment, but are also reflected in social interactions outside the family, such as in school and society. Individuals who are raised in families with consistent instilling social values tend to have good social adaptability as well as an awareness of social norms and responsibilities. Thus, the family contributes significantly to the formation of a harmonious social order.

In addition to social values, the family also plays an important role in inheriting cultural values. Cultural values include belief systems, languages, customs, and traditions that are inherited from generation to generation. In practice, the family is the main space for the younger generation to get to know and understand the local culture. The use of regional languages in daily communication, children's involvement in traditional activities, and participation in religious rituals are concrete forms of inheritance of cultural values that take place in the family. Through this process, children not only get to know culture cognitively, but also live it as part of their identity.

However, the results of the study also reveal a shift in the mechanism of inheriting social and cultural values due to social changes that occur in modern society. Globalization and advances in information technology bring about the influence of new values that are often different, even contradictory, to traditional values inherited in the family. Digital media, especially social media, is a very strong alternative source of socialization for the younger generation. Children and adolescents now not only learn values from families, but also from virtual environments that have their own value standards and norms. This condition has the potential to reduce the dominance of the family as the main agent of value inheritance.

Changes in family structure are also factors that affect the process of inheriting values. The increase in the number of nuclear families, the busyness of parents due to economic demands, and the reduction of time together in the family cause the intensity of interaction between family members to decrease. Limited interaction has an impact on reduced opportunities for parents to instill value directly and consistently. As a result, the process of inheriting social and cultural values becomes less optimal and tends to be replaced by external influences, such as the social environment and mass media.

Nevertheless, the family still has great potential to maintain its role in inheriting social and cultural values if it is able to adapt to the changing times. This adaptation can be done through strengthening communication between generations that is dialogical and open. Parents no longer only play the role of rulemakers, but also as companions who understand the social realities faced by children. With effective communication, families can bridge the difference in values between the older and younger generations, as well as help children filter out the influence of outside values that come in.

The results of the study also confirm that exemplary is the most effective strategy in inheriting social and cultural values. Values that are taught verbally without being accompanied by real behavior tend to be less effective and difficult for children to internalize. On the other hand, when parents are able to show consistency between words and actions, it will be easier for children to understand and accept these values as part of themselves. Therefore, the quality of relationships in the family is a determining factor for the success of the value inheritance process.

In the context of character education, the family has a role that cannot be completely replaced by formal educational institutions. Schools do play a role in strengthening and

developing socio-cultural values, but the main foundation is still formed in the family. Synergy between families and educational institutions is important to ensure the consistency of the grades received by children. When the values taught at home are in line with the values developed in school, the process of internalizing values will take place more effectively and sustainably.

This discussion shows that the role of the family in the inheritance of social and cultural values is not only individual, but also has broad social implications. Families that succeed in instilling positive social and cultural values will produce individuals who have social awareness, strong cultural identity, and adaptability in a pluralistic society. On the other hand, the weakening of the role of the family in the inheritance of values has the potential to cause a value crisis that has an impact on increasing social conflicts and weakening social cohesion.

Thus, these results and discussions confirm that although the family faces various challenges due to modern social dynamics, its role in the inheritance of social and cultural values between generations remains highly relevant and strategic. Efforts to strengthen the role of the family through improving the quality of parenting, intergenerational communication, and awareness of the importance of local cultural values are important steps in maintaining the sustainability of social and cultural values in the midst of changing times.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the studies that have been discussed, it can be concluded that the family has a very fundamental role in the process of inheriting social and cultural values between generations. As the primary socialization agent, the family is the first environment that shapes individual character, attitude, and identity through the cultivation of social values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and respect for others. In addition, the family also functions as the main vehicle for the preservation of cultural values through the introduction of languages, traditions, customs, and religious practices that are inherited from generation to generation. The process of inheriting these values takes place in a sustainable manner through daily interactions, parental examples, and intense intergenerational communication.

However, social changes triggered by globalization, modernization, and the development of information technology bring its own challenges for families in carrying out their roles. The reduced intensity of family interactions, the increasing influence of digital media, and shifts in family structure have the potential to weaken the process of internalizing social and cultural values in the younger generation. Therefore, families are required to be able to adapt to the changing times without losing the essence of inherited values. Strengthening open and dialogical communication, consistent examples, and the ability to filter external values are important strategies in maintaining the sustainability of value inheritance. Thus, strengthening the role of the family not only has an impact on the formation of individuals with character, but also contributes to maintaining social cohesion and cultural sustainability in society at large.

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