

## Efforts to Strengthen Nationalist Character Education through Education and Community Empowerment Institutions in the Indonesia-Malaysia Borderlands

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### Abstract

*Border communities between countries are the frontline of a country. However, this is sometimes neglected by the government of a country. The position of border communities can be used as an illustration of the face of a country. The different levels of economic, social and cultural life of two neighboring countries sometimes become opportunities and threats between neighboring countries. The urge to fulfill economic, educational and cultural needs is sometimes the reason why people still love their homeland or leave their homeland, or the choice of still living in their homeland but economically, socially and culturally in neighboring countries. This research aims to describe the efforts made by the Government of Indonesia to see how efforts are made to maintain, foster and instill the value of the nationalism character of the border people. The research setting is in the border region of West Kalimantan. The research was conducted using a qualitative approach with a case study design with various information through observation and interviews and documentation. Data analysis using qualitative methods. The results showed that there were at least four (4) activities carried out to instill the character of nationalism to the border community, first by socializing cross-border stakes, border community economic programs, a series of commemorations. Indonesia's independence day, and socialization through educational channels by conducting socialization to school students at the junior and senior high school levels.*

**Keywords:** Character Education, Community Empowerment, Borderlands.

### Introduction

It is not easy to unite ethnic groups into a common identity in a country, the case in Nigeria tribal groups have a stronger identity than state identity, and ethnic loyalty is deeper (Davis & Kalu-Nwivu, 2001). Several studies have shown that tribes in several countries have their own distinctiveness with cultural demonstrations. Language is one of the identities of nationalism, the protection of language as a national character is happening in Vietnam against the influence of globalization ("Changes in Vietnamese Language Due to Globalization and Localization," 2021). Maintaining and preserving and exposing an ethnic group that has a culture from a country, for example in Tuvan (Russia), can be used as a strategy to improve the regional economy as well as love for ethnicity and state development (Madyukova, 2018). Positive examples such as, Ethnic identity on the Vietnam border with China, the Jinlong Zhuang ethnic group is well preserved with strong character values is an example of strong character conditions (Shi, 2021).

The phenomenon of being active in another country but not being part of the country where citizens are active is one proof of love for the country of origin (Zack & Landau, 2022). Border issues, such as the border between Poland and Germany, are not far from economic competition (Ciok, Dolzblasz, Leśniak, & Raczyc, 2008), the state will facilitate the people on the border to become part of the country by providing development facilities and other access. Unique to Mexican migrants in the United States, dual citizenship can occur, due to strong cultural ties and the need to improve life in the United States (Gómez, 2003). Dual citizenship usually occurs in border areas where citizens have a strong sense of dual identity and seek privileges based on their citizenship status (Kambo & Yani, 2024), this can reflect and accelerate the decline of nationalism and state-based identity (Spiro, 2006), however, dual citizenship is not always an indicator of declining nationalism, as states can also utilize it to strengthen sovereignty. This suggests that dual citizenship and sovereignty can interact in complex ways (Pogonyi, 2011). Under conditions of conflicting interests for a state's territory and the people within it, even crimes such as ethnic cleansing will be committed to achieve political goals Croatia (Arnaut Haseljić, 2020), annexation of territory, division of regions, so that people without citizenship status in the current era will be vulnerable to acts of inhumane injustice by other states or nations (Karim, 2021), face violations of rights and threats to the security of the individual himself (Kingston, 2017; Mohsin, 2020), as citizenship is essential for the protection of human rights, providing security, identity, and empowerment (Kaveri, 2017).

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Likewise, government attention, that the lack of government attention to border areas in Indonesia has led to a waning sense of Indonesian nationalism among border residents (Suaka & Temaja, 2020). Based on this study, it is very important to educate citizens in the border arena so that there is a spirit of belonging and feeling part of the country, it is necessary to instill a high spirit of nationalism.

In relation to borders, nationalism is sometimes coupled with economic interests, poor countries exploited by colonials become a problem in itself (Serna & Tito Añamuro, 2020). The border is not just a physical symbol, but an arena of struggle for interests involving various national and global dynamics (Starr, 2006). The activities of border residents in maintaining nationalism by participating in political, social, educational and economic activities, opening Indonesian shops and using their own currency (Wahyudi, Affandi, Darmawan, & Wahyu, 2021). In order to foster the identity of nationalism among residents of the border region (Muslim, Muklis, Romus, Malau, & Rachmadi, 2023; Papadopoulos, 2015; Sørensen, 2016; Veselkova & Horvath, 2011). The problem of borders, which means that we are in different territories, related to ownership, membership, recognition, separation, between "us" and "them" between regions, this is an important content and becomes a sociological and political area (Kurzewska, 2019; Newman, 2006; Paasi, 2012). Efforts made in relation to character education in the border area with Malaysia in Sanggau district are carried out through education with the learning process (Darma et al., 2020), because education is used to strengthen nationalism, especially among the border communities of Indonesia-Malaysia (Suriadi, Supriyatno, Mursidin, & Serli, 2022; Venken, 2014; Wahyudi, Setyowati, Usmi, & Huda, 2024)

The next challenge is that interaction with global changes and information flows can change the nation to be fragile (Fatimah, 2020), weakening the national identity of a nation (McInturff, Neyestani, & McInturff, 2015) there are also indications that the younger generation still lives in the country's territory but culture and behavior have been eroded by the cultural identity of other countries. The national identity of the younger generation is threatened by the increasing influence of foreign cultures in the era of globalization (Rahmi, Nabiilah, & Nelwati, 2024). Globalization causes the destruction of local cultural identities and the development of bicultural identities, resulting in identity confusion in the younger generation (Doku & Asante, 2011). The State Defense awareness program plays a role in youth character education, this program will increase patriotism, the formation of national identity and national integration, solidarity, discipline, leadership, and nationalism (Adianto, Sulistiyanto, Pudjiatmoko, & Ali, 2019; Fortuna & Khadir, 2022; Yunita & Mufidah, 2022)

Character education oriented towards national values can help overcome social problems and is essential for developing the next generation (Pradana, Mahfud, Hermawan, & Susanti, 2020). The reality is still limited, recent efforts to strengthen nationalism, such as those carried out in Indonesia, still rely on conventional methods such as lectures and discussions, which may not adequately address the challenges posed by modernization and globalization (Batubara et al., 2023; Randabunga & Mariyam, 2023). there is a special program for border character education for high school students in Sanggau which borders Malaysia (Aunurrahman, 2018), special character education programs for border students are carried out through the learning process. Meanwhile, according to (.et al., 2018) in Sebatik district there is one character education institution for border communities that handles Indonesian migrants in Malaysia with a state defense program and national character education.

Transnational fandom allows for cultural communication between countries or the introduction of national culture from one country to another (Jaworowicz-Zimny, 2023). The influence of the intersection of cultures including language can shape linguistic culture into an identity trend that results in the transformation of society (Butina, 2022). The positive occurrence of intercultural encounters between countries is the occurrence of transnationalism with the intersection of culture, socio-politics and cross-border relations (Bofua, 2022). The country that is visited is usually a more established country, if the immigrant eventually becomes a citizen in the place visited to be an advantage for the country, but a demographic disadvantage for the country left behind by its people. Migrants who eventually become settlers can become interdependent, affecting food, education and citizenship (Macklin, 2020). Settlers such as the case of the Ottoman emperor accepting Circassians and eventually being utilized as military (МИРЗОЕВА & АПАЖЕВА, 2022). As is the case in Singapore, the problem of underpopulation is a problem in Singapore, so as a country it has a flexible policy towards migrants, economic interests and maintaining its character as a cosmopolitan city (Solomon, 2019). It is a given that every country will defend and protect its citizens in various ways.

The problem of borders is not only economic, but there is also the problem of access to education Achieving good

higher education students are willing to do cross-country mobility (Rizvi, 2022). Furthermore, with the movement of studying, working, there will be intercultural contact and this process can be mutually beneficial or even detrimental. Humanly speaking, people will choose to settle in a place with a better life. This will be detrimental to countries with a less established level of life. So there are cases of Mexicans in America (Gómez, 2003), ethnic cleansing in Croatian politics (Arnaut Haseljić, 2020). West Kalimantan shares a direct land border with Malaysia, and there are pockets of communities that are geographically contiguous and have direct access to neighboring countries. This access includes education, culture, economic traffic, passport-free facilities for residents on the border, free entry and exit if only for a day. This condition is a challenging thing for the Indonesian government in relation to maintaining a sense of love for the country, especially the spirit of nationalism in the border people. This research aims to explore information related to the efforts that have been and are being made by the Government to foster and strengthen the sense of nationalism character of citizens living in the border.

## Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design with a variety of information through observation and interviews and documentation that is measured in accordance with what is found in the field (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Moleong, 2019), this research aims to describe in depth the efforts to strengthen nationalist character education through formal and non-formal education channels and the role of community empowerment institutions in the Indonesia-Malaysia border area with various characteristics of local wisdom. The focus of this research is to emphasize the values of nationalism instilled through the curriculum and activities related to the abilities in each school, the role of formal schools and non-formal education in the formation of the character of nationalism, as well as the relationship with the role of local institutions in supporting character education, community empowerment programs that instill the values of nationalism, subjects in this study, teachers, principals, community leaders, administrators and members of community empowerment, as well as related agencies that accommodate related activities in the border region. Data collection techniques, conducted by in-depth interviews with informants conducted with teachers, students, and administrators of community empowerment institutions to explore their perspectives on nationalist character education. Interview questions focused on the process, challenges, and outcomes of strengthening nationalist character with programs aligned with community empowerment, observing learning activities in schools and community empowerment programs related to nationalism, field notes were used to document (Creswell, 2007) relevant interactions and dynamics and collecting secondary data in the form of curriculum documents, reports on empowerment agency activities, and education policies in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region.

## Results and Discussion

This research specifically takes place in Sebunga Village, located in Sajingan Sub-district, Sambas Regency, which is one of the areas located on the direct border with Malaysia. This region has a strategic position adjacent to the cross-border route, making it one of the important gateways in trade and social relations between Indonesia and Malaysia. Sebunga Village covers an area of approximately 65 km<sup>2</sup>, which mostly consists of agricultural land, forests and residential areas.

The village community is largely dependent on the agricultural sector and cross-border economic activities to fulfill their daily needs. To support community development and empowerment, Sebunga Village has several active empowerment institutions, such as the Community Empowerment Agency (LPM) and small business groups that focus on local economic development. These institutions play an important role in mobilizing local potential and improving the welfare of residents through various targeted programs and initiatives. In this study, at least four activities were identified that aim to improve the nationalism character of communities in border areas.

### *Socialization of Public Understanding of State Border Patrols*

The community's understanding of the importance of national border patrols was built through a program that specifically involved the village youth organization as the main driving force. The preparatory phase began with collaboration between the village government, TNI officers, and Aruk Cross Border Post (PLBN) officers. The focus of this stage was the initial identification of the community's level of understanding, especially among the youth, of the function of the boundary markers as a symbol of state sovereignty. Socialization was conducted

through community-based activities, such as interactive discussions in the village hall and simple simulations. Youth organizations were given the role of conveying important messages about the function of boundary markers to the wider community, with the aim of instilling nationalism values. The proposed program includes map and GPS reading training, simulation of boundary monitoring, and workshops on the importance of state sovereignty. In addition, creative activities such as a short video competition on the theme of nationalism and border protection were designed. By actively involving teenagers in the planning, they felt responsible for the success of the program. This stage also included a proposal to form a "Batas Patriot Team" consisting of youth organization members, with the task of supporting regular monitoring of the patok. TNI and PLBN officers support technical activities, such as field surveillance simulations and the introduction of border regulations. The program is also designed to increase youth pride in their national identity, by incorporating historical values of the nation's struggle. An interesting activity was a joint patrol simulation involving officers and youth. In this simulation, youths are taught how to use a digital map application to track the position of the stakes and report if any damage or shifts are found. In addition, Karang Taruna also organizes community activities such as "Nationalism Day" where people gather to discuss border issues while instilling the value of patriotism. The program was handed over to the youth organization to manage independently with minimal support from the village government. The Patriot Batas Team was officially established as a local entity to maintain the sustainability of the program. They were given the responsibility to continue monitoring the stakes, managing nationalism activities, and mediating between the community and the authorities in submitting reports. The village government provided support in the form of training modules and tools, such as GPS devices and digital maps. With this briefing, the youth organization is expected to continue developing the program so that it has a long-term positive impact, both to increase nationalism and maintain sovereignty in the border area.

**Figure 1. Escort of Border Patok, Aruk area, Sambas Regency**





**Figure 2. Aruk Cross Border Post (PLBN), Sambas Regency**



Economic Improvement Program for MSMEs in Indonesia-Malaysia Border Communities in Sebunga Village, Aruk, Sambas Regency.

The empowerment process starts with the preparation stage, where the village government collaborates with relevant institutions such as cooperatives, cooperative offices, as well as local businesses and youth organizations. Needs identification is done to map local potentials that can be developed. Socialization is provided to educate the youth about the importance of MSMEs and how they can contribute to improving the national economy through local products. Karang Taruna played an active role in collecting data on the potential skills of youth in the fields of handicrafts, processing of crops such as palm sugar, and snack production. This activity was also an opportunity to instill the values of nationalism, by explaining how local products from Sebunga Village can play a role in strengthening Indonesia's economic identity. Partnerships with financial institutions to facilitate access to capital for youth who want to start a business. Technical training programs covering digital marketing and business management, as well as activities to strengthen local and overseas marketing networks, are the main focus. Village governments also work with training institutions and cooperative offices to provide hands-on training to youth who want to develop businesses. The government also facilitates coordination between MSME players and local markets, such as in Sambas and Sarawak, Malaysia, to introduce local products to the international market. Youth are trained to produce quality goods, package products attractively, and market through digital platforms. Local product exhibitions are also held, with the participation of MSME products from Sebunga Village at the Taste of Asia event in Sarawak, Malaysia, being clear evidence of the program's success. In this training, youth are taught the values of nationalism by emphasizing how their businesses help strengthen the country's economy and maintain Indonesia's economic sovereignty. The village government hands over equipment and marketing networks to the community groups, and encourages them to continue developing products based on local potential. In this way, the empowerment program not only brings positive economic impact, but also strengthens the sense of nationalistic pride in the youth of Sebunga Village.

**Figure 3. MSME products from Sambas participated in the Taste of Asia Program at Everrise Sarawak, Malaysia**



Figure 4. A number of MSMEs participated in the Featured Products exhibition at PLBN Aruk, Sambas



Figure 5. Aruk Tourism Market, Indonesia-Malaysia Border, Sambas Regency

*Program through Youth Organization 17 August Activities in the Borderlands*

The celebration of the 78th Indonesian Independence Day at PLBN Aruk is not only an important moment in commemorating the independence day, but also a place to strengthen the spirit of nationality, especially among the younger generation. This can be illustrated in the activities at the preparation stage, this stage is a very important step to determine the success of the activity, as during the 78th Anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia at the Cross Border Post (PLBN) in Aruk, West Kalimantan. At the celebration, preparations began with youth participation by performing a choir from SMP Negeri 1 Sajingan Besar who performed the song "Pelajar", accompanied by Sape musical instruments. The involvement of the younger generation can increase the sense of belonging and pride in local identity. In addition, the event was attended by the Head of Planning and Cooperation Bureau of BNPP, members of the DPRD, as well as elements from Malaysia. This reflects the cross-sectoral collaboration that is important in empowerment community. The participation of various parties is believed to be able to strengthen social networks, creating synergy to achieve common goals.

**Figure 6. Celebration of Indonesia's 78th Anniversary at PLBN Aruk**

The spirit of nationalism is also reflected in the theme of the 78th Indonesian Independence Day commemoration, "Moving Forward for an Advanced Indonesia", which inspires all levels of society to continue contributing to the progress of this country. The involvement of various parties, including border communities, in this activity shows how important a sense of belonging to Indonesia is, not only in a local context, but also in a national perspective. By involving the younger generation in cultural and social activities, this celebration gives them a space to feel pride in the nation, preparing them to be part of a more advanced Indonesian future. This theme is also part of the strategic preparation for community empowerment. The performance of traditional dances by students from Sajingan Besar Junior High School and Tariu Borneo Bangkule Rajakng (TBRR) signaled the preparation to preserve local culture. Activities as a means to strengthen cultural identity and increase a sense of togetherness among border communities.

**Figure 7. Commemoration of Indonesian Independence Day in Aruk, Sambas Regency**

(If there are pictures of cultural festivals or anything)



#### *Socialization Program to Border Schools about Nationalism*

Nationalism socialization programs in border areas, such as at SMP Negeri 1 Badau and SMAN 1 Sajingan. The first step was to identify the needs of students through an initial survey to understand their understanding of nationalism and the challenges faced due to the influence of foreign cultures. Materials that can be done such as introducing national songs, local traditional games. The goal is to foster a sense of love for the country so that it is proud to be part of the Indonesian nation. Activities carried out in Aruk and Sajingan sub-districts encourage the preservation of local culture as part of national identity. The activities carried out are very relevant to the lives of border students, combining the value of nationalism with local culture, so that education not only increases a sense of nationalism but also builds pride in cultural heritage. As a result, students experienced an increased understanding of nationalism and local wisdom, which was reflected in their enthusiasm in participating in activities involving folk games and national songs. A large part of the results of the assessment was the lack of initial understanding of the concept of nationalism among students, which could be due to the lack of access to quality education in border



areas.

There are at least four activities directed at improving the nationalism character of border residents by influencing the younger generation through education, youth organizations, socialization of patok (residents), and economic activities. As an area adjacent to Malaysia, West Kalimantan needs to instill a catalyst awareness of understanding, awareness, and attitudes towards the pillars of the life of the nation and state (Thamrin, Ghasya, & Pranata, 2023) . The goal is to improve the national character of the community to be part of the Republic of Indonesia. This character needs to be planted, nurtured and developed. National character is manifested in a declarative form, specified by the values that groups of people believe in (Ochorowicz) (Sztobryn, 2024) , where border communities in Indonesia participate in maintaining national identity and nationalism through various community activities (Bria & Lam, 2022)

At least the activities have been carried out have something in common with activities carried out by other countries in an effort to hold tightly to citizens at the border. That is by providing facilities and empowerment. One of the efforts not to neglect the citizens of the border region is to develop infrastructure such as markets, border area planning roads (Borzooie, Lak, & Timothy, 2021; Rahim, Kasikoen, Supartoyo, & Setiawan, 2024) , this is an effort to reduce poverty because it is less noticed as a result of the distance from the city. Infrastructure development, communication networks make economic development increase so as to strengthen the border position stronger, in terms of trade, consumption, to reduce poverty in the long run (Crkvenčić & Crkvenčić, 2003; Warr, Menon, & Yusuf, 2010) , therefore, community participation through skills training and capacity building can increase empowerment and reduce poverty (Osei-Kufuor & Koomson, 2014).

Another very important effort to shape national identity is to facilitate the merging of cultures both traditional and modern (Ergashev & Farxodjonova, 2020) and most importantly facilitated to show themselves in the cultural industry, cultural festivals, which flow in social society (Popkov & Tyugashev, 2019) Next is to facilitate activities in the form of exploring local cultural values. It is necessary to think about the touch of indigenous peoples in relation to regional development strategies (Basri, 2020) , this is because indigenous peoples already have their own systems, norms, and territories that must be accommodated. Culture, tradition, history whether the same or different in an area protected by the state that stands from a common struggle, the people in it call it a shared identity called the homeland (Sahin, 2019) . Culture is one way to establish borders between citizens (the case of Mexico and America) (“Crossing Borders, Reinf. Borders,” 2020) . Building identities within local communities can contribute to economic, social and territorial development (European case)(Gouridis, 2021) , as well as national security and identity (Fukuyama, 2018; Yufriadi, 2023)

The next pathway that is no less important in shaping the character of nationalism in the Borderlands is education. Education in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region should instill strong nationalism values while maintaining and respecting local culture as an important part of their identity. Similarly, education across Indonesia needs to emphasize national values while preserving local traditions as a fundamental aspect of the nation's identity (Meliono, 2011) . In this case, education is not only a means to instill state ideology, but also to strengthen social ties and broader cultural identity(Fikri & Akmaluddin, 2024) , playing an important role in the formation and strengthening of national identity, serving as a tool for social cohesion, state building, and transmission of state ideology (Bodrožić, 2023; Moser, Francisco, Pinheiro, & Nunes, 2024) . Global education becomes one of the processes of strengthening the quality of a country, but there will also be cultural erosion as a result of the implemented education program (Sperandio, Hobson, Douglas, & Pruitt, 2009) , it can cause cultural homogenization, but nationalism emerges as a counterforce to preserve national identity (Jaakkola, Henno, & Mäkelä, 2024) , so this path is a powerful one to instill the character of nationalism. Boarding school education at the border is one of the alternatives to deal with children of labor working at the border to educate character with 3t education services (Hanim, 2018) . High school students on the Indonesia Malaysia border have known the prevention of the dangers of radicalism (Imran & Ramadhan, 2023) . At least with the education planned through the National Curriculum, the cultivation of the character of nasinalism can be included in at least three lessons. History education, Indonesian language education, Sociology, and civic education. Education through history education lessons is a powerful way to convey idiological messages to citizens(Wiszewski, 2021). The value of bhineka tunggal Ika has become a motto and a way of life for Indonesian people, especially the border communities of Indonesia Malaysia, and this value is what unites the nation (Dewantara et al., 2022)



The formation of the character of nationalism in border areas is closely related to the understanding of sociology, especially in terms of social identity. As revealed (Hermanto & Muryantini, 2021) social identity, which is a term widely used in sociology to indicate identity based on predetermined social roles, or in broader social groups such as groupings of gender categories or ethnic and national categories. Stets and Burke (R. Aulia & Haryanto, 2020) added that in social identity there is a process of social comparison in which individuals who are similar to themselves are classified as in-groups, while individuals who are different from themselves are classified as out-groups. However, social identity in the border context is often not only formed through relationships between individuals, but can also be formed through a sense of solidarity between different social groups. Social identity can be formed when a sense of solidarity owned by individuals with different backgrounds can work together harmoniously thanks to their complementary roles (D. Aulia, 2025). It can be shown that in border areas, the shared identity created among the community is strongly influenced by the relationship between communities, as well as the relationship of influence from neighboring communities. Border communities often have to deal with two or more different social systems, including culture, language and norms on both sides of the border country. This creates complex social dynamics. This phenomenon often gives rise to multiple identities, or even the creation of new cultures that combine elements from both countries, thus creating space for transnational cultures that combine local and international elements (Sulistyaningtyas, 2008)

Collective identity at the border as a concept that describes how individuals in society can connect with each other and build a sense of community, even though they may have different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This confirms the important role of education in shaping social solidarity, as education becomes a means to convey national values and introduce the broader identity of the nation (Rahmawati & Hayat, 2024). The process of strengthening a sense of nationalism through the steps of educational activities, socialization of stakes, and economic development (Rahmawati & Dewi, 2021) is very important in order to strengthen ties with the Indonesian state. Moreover, these activities also play a role in efforts to build a sense of social solidarity and a sense of belonging to the homeland, which are needed to achieve common interests in border life. Border communities are often important actors in building peace and stability between bordering countries (Seran, 2018). This is because border communities have cultural and social closeness to neighboring countries, making them key in social diplomacy (Anandra & Kusumawardhana, 2023)

Intercultural interaction in border areas often creates space for the creation of new cultures. Borders are no longer a barrier for each other to be able to interact and exchange cultures between fellow humans (Yolandha & Anggareni Dewi, 2021). This is due to the increasing intercultural contact that occurs, which in turn leads to the addition of various forms of new cultural diversity (Anoegrajekti, 2016). In many cases, identities are constantly changing in interactions between groups in border areas (Rozi, 2013). This makes the identity formed in border areas not static, but will continue to develop through various activities of social interaction, trade, and cultural exchange. This identity is then colored with elements from both bordering countries. Both the government and the community must make continuous efforts to preserve and develop local culture (Santoso, Karim, Maftuh, & Ma'mun, 2023). In this case, the state must play an important role in designing policies that aim not only to strengthen the economy, but also seek to support the preservation and development of local culture as part of sustainable development. Thus, through education and strengthening the local culture-based economy, the border is not only a space for strengthening nationalism, but also a bridge between two different cultures.

The development of national identity on the Indonesia-Malaysia border also considers the importance of local traditions and culture. Therefore, it is important for the government to ensure that development in border areas does not neglect the rights of indigenous peoples, who already have a close relationship with their land and traditions. Furthermore, the government takes mitigation measures so that the rights of indigenous peoples are not violated and marginalized (Oktaviany, Hadi, & Gandryani, 2023). Considering the needs of indigenous peoples in the development process can strengthen their sense of belonging to the Indonesian nation and their sense of nationalism (Santoso, Karim, Maftuh, Sapiya, & Murod, 2023). Therefore, the development strategy of border areas must pay attention to the integration of modernity with the preservation of local culture, so that there is no social gap that can damage the sense of unity and integrity.

## Conclusion

Strengthening nationalism character education in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region is a strategic effort to

illustrate a sense of love for the country, pride in the nation's identity, and commitment to maintaining the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) through empowerment programs prepared by a process of various elements of community leaders and the education sector with the central government that must still pay attention to the concern for the region. Border areas, which often face challenges such as limited access to unequal education, the influence of foreign cultures, and unstable economic education facilities, certainly require a comprehensive approach that involves a lot of strong collaboration between stakeholders. In the formal education pathway, both through schools and non-formal education institutions, it plays an important role by applying a learning approach that is in accordance with character education that originates from this country in the spirit of nationalism and is adapted to the conditions of local wisdom of border area communities. In addition, community empowerment institutions also have an important role in supporting the strengthening of nationalist character. The socialization program on the community's understanding of the boundary markers to be known and maintain the border area even though the Indonesia-Malaysia border communities are still one family or one ethnicity. Economic improvement program by increasing MSMEs with various events. Youth community empowerment through the empowerment of nationalism activities, as well as with a socialization program to border schools about nationalism in junior and senior high schools located in the Indonesia-Malaysia border area. The synergy between formal education and community empowerment is expected to not only increase individual awareness of the importance of maintaining national identity, but also encourage social, economic and cultural development in border areas. Through collaboration involving the government, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local communities, strengthening nationalist character can be realized in a sustainable manner. This effort is expected to give birth to a young generation in the border area that has strong nationalism, as well as the role of community empowerment through activities that bring together and strengthen nationalism, and are able to encourage positive changes for the progress of the Indonesia-Malaysia border area.

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