

## NATIONALISM STUDY OF PRIMARY STUDENTS IN THE FRONTIER AREA OF SEBATIK ISLAND–NORTH KALIMANTAN

Prima Gusti Yanti<sup>1</sup>, Nini Ibrahim<sup>2</sup>, Fauzi Rahman<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA, Jakarta, Indonesia, <sup>3</sup>Universitas Indraprasta PGRI, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Email: <sup>1</sup>prima\_gustiyanti@uhamka.ac.id, <sup>2</sup>niniibrahim13@yahoo.com, <sup>3\*</sup>fauzierachman20@yahoo.com

Article History: Received on 06<sup>th</sup> November 2019, Revised on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Published on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020

### Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** This research aimed to determine the nationalism level of primary education students in the frontier area.

**Methodology:** This research method was quantitative. Data collection was done by distributing questionnaires with nationalism contents. The questionnaire consisted of points that had 12 questions and used a Likert scale.

**Main Findings:** The results of this research implied that border students do not really understand the history of the nation's struggle. In fact, that history can increase patriotism. Border region students must always increase their nationalism because they are the next generation who will guard the land of the frontier area and maintain the honor of the nation.

**Applications of this study:** This research was done in the Sebatik Tengah area which was directly adjacent to Malaysia.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The findings showed the lowest of nationalism level of elementary students is to understand the history of the nation's struggle (16%), the spirit of showing national identity (65%), and the spirit of patriotism brings together children on the border area (74%).

**Keywords:** *Nationalism, Primary Education Students, Frontier Areas, The History of the Nation's Struggle, National Identity, The Spirit of Patriotism.*

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesian people living on the frontier have complex problems (Bunell, Muzaini, & Sidaway, 2006). Physically they live very far and remote from the capital city of Jakarta. As a matter of fact, it is not uncommon for them to stay far and isolated from their own provincial capital. However, they are very close to neighboring countries. Even having the language, the culture and physical characteristics are almost the same as the population in neighboring countries (Ekowarno, 2016).

In this era of globalization, the issue of developing border regions (between countries) especially in the northern part of East Kalimantan (the expansion of the province is now called the province of North Kalimantan) is increasingly crucial and needs serious attention from the government both at the central and regional levels. All this time it must be realized that socio-economic development in the frontier region tends to be neglected. Even the border area is often called the "backyard". For example in Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan, which is directly adjacent to Malaysia; there are about 30% of illiterate society and about 5 – 10% of elementary school children who have dropped out. A similar condition is more concerned in the district of Puring Kencana, Kapuas Hulu District, where children prefer to study in Malaysia than schools in their own country. 2011 school year there were 13 children who entered ELEMENTARY schools in Puring Kencana, while 83 other children chose a Malaysian- This is due to the limitation of education facilities and infrastructure in Indonesia so that the children of Indonesia More school to Malaysia (Sarawak) whose school facilities are more good and free of charge (Darmadi, 2013; Pamera, 2015).

With the occurrence of the Indonesian and Malaysian conflicts about the Ambalat block, better awareness and commitment emerged from the government (central and regional) to change the face of the frontier as a "front page". This change in paradigm requires policy changes concerning both the priority of establishing development programs and the amount of allocated budget accelerating the construction of this border (Bufon, 2015; Dzurek, 1999; Saleh, 2011).

One of Indonesia's frontier areas is Sebatik Island. Sebatik Island is the gateway to Indonesian territory on the island of Borneo. This island is in the province of North Kalimantan. The ownership status of the island is divided into 2. The northern area covering 187.23 km<sup>2</sup> is owned by Malaysia, while the southern portion covering 246.61 km<sup>2</sup> is owned by Indonesia. In fact, it is not surprising that there is a house where the living room is located in the territory of Indonesia and the kitchen is in the territory of Malaysia. Thus, international issues often arise about the ownership of Sebatik Island. This issue often makes relations between Indonesia and Malaysia heated up (Basundoro, 2014).

Sebatik Island has special problems related to frontier areas. Such a picture of Indonesia's frontier area in general, Sebatik Island also experienced the same thing. In terms of infrastructure development, Sebatik island is underdeveloped just like most other frontier areas. The road from the port to the capital of its sub-district has been found landslides yet it has not been

handled. Besides, it will soon enter the rainy season (the author went to the Island in August), the rainy season is going to expand the landslide. Sebatik Island is also economically more dependent on Tawau (Malaysia) since it is a close distance. Moreover, all needs can be obtained easily in Tawau ([Abdullah & Sari, 2014](#); [Eilenberg & Wadley, 2009](#); [Nilasari, 2014](#)).

As the frontier area, of course, the content of nationalism turns into great concern and becomes a problem that must be maintained by the Indonesian government. Nationalism is national self-esteem and self-identity that must be improved and guarded by the government. Moreover, economic interaction with Malaysians is very high. This economic interaction will affect the nation's sense of nationalism. There are 3 things that make nationalism in Sebatik need to be a concern, namely (1) the Sebatik population has a very high economic dependence on Tawau-Malaysia compared to Nunukan; (2) Sebatik Island has a backwardness in terms of infrastructure, economic, social, political and human resources compared to the territory of Malaysia; (3) the central and regional governments have not seriously developed this area ([Blanchard, 2005](#); [Saleh, 2011](#)). The people of Sebatik Island are the closest people to the border, there is even a living room in Indonesia and the kitchen in the Malaysian area. This resulted in the social identity of most of the community. This is the case because many people depend on livelihoods or economics in Malaysia. The population of this area is a lot of palm oil plantation workers in Malaysia. Between Sebatik and Tawau (Malaysia) is an intertwined marketing area. Tawau is a market of the Earth and fisheries of the people of Sebatik, conversely economic activity in Tawau to influence the economic activity of the people of Sebatik ([Siburian, 2012](#)). Therefore, the societal blend is very high that has an effect on the social and economic attachment of both countries.

Indonesian nationalism needs to be maintained because society is very plural due to ethnicity, language, and religion. For border areas requires a higher sense of nationalism because of its more influence. Aside from internal influences, it also has outside influences such as from neighboring countries. Nationalism for the border area should be strengthened because it is the defense of the nation to safeguard unity and unity due to the high density of ethnic, language, religious, and high dependence in the field of economics feared will eroded student nationalism.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Nationalism is a political understanding and attitude of the people of a nation that has a common culture, areas, and ideals. Therefore, the society of a nation can feel the existence of loyalty for the nation. The nationalism of a nation can be strengthened by the existence of a bond of equality of race, language, history, and religion. However, nationalism can establish awareness and loyalty towards the nation and state regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, and origin group ([Hendrastomo, 2007](#)).

Furthermore, Billig state that nationalism was so important to be embedded in every individual society of a country because it is the most successful ideology in world history ([Kaufmann & Conversi, 2007](#)). Therefore, the attitude of nationalism must be planted early so as to form a character of the next generation who love and respect the homeland ([Nurhayati, 2013](#)). Furthermore, nationalism is an ideology built on national coordination and practice built on group solidarity and a unit of legitimate political sovereignty ([Anderson, 1983](#); [Malesevic, 2013](#)).

Nationalism studies are carried out on students. Students are human beings who are in the learning process. Students come to school for a variety of purposes, especially to gain knowledge in addition to obtaining moral values. Students are those who are specifically given by their parents to attend learning held at school with the aim of being human beings who have knowledge, skills, experience, personality, morals, and independence ([Ali, 2010](#)). These students, one day he will become a young man, become a young generation, and then become an adult. They will become human beings who will have their social functions. If they are in the border area, they will be people who have the obligation to protect their area.

The roles and responsibilities of the young generation are one of the points states that youth role is as social control which can be achieved by strengthening national insight. In other words, a sense of nationalism is the main thing young people must possess as an effort to become social control in society. The young generation in this globalization era gets a very strong influence from outside cultural values so that many attitudes and behaviors are not in line with the values of the nation's character ([Maftuh, 2008](#)).

A load of nationalism of the young generation has also faded a lot now, experiencing erosion, due to global, social, economic and other influences. However, for the frontier region, the charge of nationalism is very essential in order that the dignity of the nation is well preserved. One of the ways is to embed the content of nationalism in students at border schools.

The students who were studied in this study were primary education students, namely elementary and junior high school. Primary education is education that provides knowledge and skills, fosters the basic attitudes needed in the community, and prepares students to attend secondary education. Primary education is held to provide the basic provisions needed to live in the community in the form of developing basic attitudes, knowledge, and skills ([Dewantoro, 2017](#)). Primary education is a series of educational activities to meet basic learning needs ([Abdallah, 2015](#); [Haggis, 1991](#)).

## METHOD

The research method of this study was quantitative. Data collection was done by distributing questionnaires with nationalism contents. The questionnaire consisted of points that had 12 questions and used a Likert scale (The instrument was adopted from Yanti and Ibrahim (Yanti & Ibrahim, 2019). Data were obtained from primary education students. Basic education according to the ISCED standard consists of primary education (first level of primary education) or elementary and secondary education (second level) or junior high school (according to the World declaration on education for all in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990).

Data of elementary students were from grade V and VI of Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school (SDN 01), Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary school (SDN 04), and Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary School (SDN 05). For junior high school level, data was obtained from Sebatik Tengah 1 Middle School (SMPN 1).

The Selection of Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary School (SDN 01), Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary school (SDN 04), and Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary school (SDN 05) is because these elementary schools are the closest to the stake or stick. For information in the Sebatik area, there is no Cross Border Post, there are only stakes or sticks guarded by the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI).

### Data Analysis

Data obtained from the dissemination of the questionnaire were processed and analyzed and inferred conclusions were subsequently reported. As for the measures undertaken by researchers in analyzing the data i.e. check the number of the questionnaire, provide a number code on each questionnaire and then tabulate the existing data. Once that is done testing the validity and reliability of the instrument.

The formula used to measure validity is as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

$R_{XY}$  = Correlation coefficient

X = Score per item

Y = Total Score

n = number of test takers

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data obtained from elementary and junior high school students in Sebatik Tengah showed a diverse percentage. For question number 1, students know the state emblem; there were no elementary students who answered 100%. This means there were still many students who did not know the state emblem, even in Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school (SDN 01) there were 84% of students who still did not know it. In fact, the state emblem is made as a mirror of culture Nation thus giving rise to defense the great of all citizens (Lestyarini, 2012).

Question number 2, students understand the history of struggle. This point shows that the student should appreciate his own history of the struggle of his country in the past (Barton & McCully, 2012). The percentage obtained from students was very concerning which is 16%. This means that there were a lot of students of Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary School (SDN 01) who did not understand the history of the nation's struggle, while in Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary school (SDN 04) the percentage was 58%. In contrast, Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary School (SDN 05) received a percentage of 80%. The percentage of SDN 05 is rather surprising if we take a look at the infrastructure of this school. This school is built on land with uneven contour, the low height which is rather steep. In fact, additional school space was obtained from community donations by allowing schools to use village meeting rooms.

Question number 3, students memorize the anthem of Indonesia Raya. This point was so important because the symbolic patriotism scale combines pride in being a citizen with pride in the flag and anthem (Huddy & Khatib, 2007). From the data obtained there were still students who did not memorize the national anthem even though the average percentage was 90% and above. For this question, Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary School (SDN 01) obtained the highest percentage as much as 96%.

Question number 4, students have the loving spirit for the homeland which unites children at the border area, the percentage acquisition was not optimal. The percentage of Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school (SDN 01) only reached 74%. It was lower than Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary School (SDN 04) and Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary school (SDN 05) that already have a good rate. However, it is all not yet optimal because basically, the loving spirit for the homeland is very important for students to maintain the nation's self-esteem.

Question number 5, students are proud of the Indonesian language. Many Indonesian people are more proud to use a foreign language (Assapari, 2014). In fact, all Indonesian people should be proud of the Indonesian language, moreover, for people in the border areas (Maier, 2005). The percentage results turned out that not all elementary students were proud to use the Indonesian language. Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school (SDN 01) only got 86%, Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary school (SDN 04) got 89%, and Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary school (SDN 05) reached 96%. This may be due to the language often used in everyday life which are Bugis and Malay so that Indonesian language is somewhat neglected.

Question number 6, students are willing to sacrifice for the sovereignty of the nation, Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school (SDN 01) just get a percentage of 88%. The location of this school is the closest to the borderline between Indonesia and Malaysia, even the distance of this school to the stake is not more than 500 m. There are even students who live in the Malaysian area. The house consists of 2 areas, a living room in the Indonesian territory and a kitchen in the Malaysian territory. For this reason, students of Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school (SDN 01) need to get higher character development. Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary school (SDN 04) and Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary school (SDN 05) obtained the same percentage of 94%. The condition of these schools from the stake is a bit far around 3-4 km, yet sacrifices character for the sovereignty of his people was rather high.

Question number 7, students firmly maintain the national identity, from the data, obtained the percentage was not optimal. The result in Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary school and 04 Elementary schools were only 88% which still has not reached the maximum number. On the contrary Sebatik Tengah, 05 Elementary School obtained a lower percentage as much as 85%. Thus, the percentage of students maintains national identity is still not optimal.

Question number 8, students maintain the nation's good name, this one is generally getting high results because the average is above 90%. Elementary school 01 reached 94%, Elementary school 04 reached 97%, and Elementary school 05 reached 94%. However, the figures obtained are still not very optimal. For border areas, surely students are expected to be militant and to love their nation greatly.

Question number 9, students keep the flag flying at the border, it is generally almost getting optimal results since the average percentage is above 90%, namely Elementary school 01 as much as 96%, Elementary school 04 as much as 94%, and Elementary school 05 as much as 92%.

Question number 10, students sacrifice for the sake of the nation, percentage gotten was not optimal. In fact, in Elementary school 01, the percentage was just 67%. Elementary School 01 is very close to stake 3. Students of elementary school 01 must receive special attention as this school is located in the most frontline of the border area. Patriotism souls of students are necessarily needed to guard the homeland. Similarly, the percentage of Elementary school 04 and Elementary school 05 showed non-optimal results. There are still found in students the qualities that do not want to sacrifice for the benefit of the nation.

Question number 11, students show confidence as Indonesian students. Student confidence is still in good numbers, namely Elementary school 01 as much as 82%, Elementary school 04 as much as 91%, and Elementary school 05 as much as 86%. However, those figures are yet not maximal. This shows that there are still many students who are not as confident as Indonesian students.

Question Number 12, students are enthusiastic about showing national identity, students who are passionate about showing the nation's identity are from Elementary school 04 as much as 96%, afterward is Elementary school 05 as much as 83%, and the lowest is Elementary school 01. The Elementary school 01 is, in fact, the closest school to the border location of stake 3, yet the result is the lowest for enthusiasm showing national identity. The students' condition of Elementary school 01 shows that there are many students living in Malaysian areas and many parents of students working in Malaysia. Because of that, sebatik is an Indonesian territory that uses two eyes money at the same time in transactions, Indonesian rupiah and Malaysian ringgit (Siburian, 2012). The students in Sebatik also have a lot of ringgit. In addition, the stalls around the school receive Ringgit and Rupiah.

**Tabel 1:** Nationalism of Elementary Students

No	Study	Sebatik Tengah 01 Elementary	Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary	Sebatik Tengah 05 Elementary	Note
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		school (SDN 01)	school (SDN 04)	school (SDN 05)	
1	Knowing the state emblem	84%	92%	90%	04 is high
2	Understanding his tory of the nation's struggle	16%	58%	80%	05 is high
3	Memorize the anthem of Indonesia Raya	96%	90%	95%	01 is high
4	The loving spirit for homeland unites children on the border area	74%	86%	88%	05 is high
5	Proud of Indonesian language	86%	89%	96%	05 is high
6	Willing to sacrifice for the sovereignty of the nation	88%	94%	94%	05 and 04 are high
7	Firmly maintain national identity	88%	88%	85%	01 and 04 are high
8	Maintaining the nation's good name	94%	97%	94%	04 is high
9	Keeping the Flag flying at the border	96%	94%	92%	01 is high
10	Sacrifice for the benefit of the nation	67%	86%	78%	04 is high
11	Confidence as an Indonesian student	82%	91%	86%	04 is high
12	Spirit of showing national identity	65%	96%	83%	04 is high

\*This instrument was adapted from the article, "National Identity and National Solidarity to the nationalism of primary student in the border areas of North Kalimantan-Indonesia and Malaysia" (Yanti & Ibrahim, 2019).

**Table 2:** Nationalism of Sebatik Tengah Junior High School Students

No	Study	Junior High School of Sebatik Tengah	Note
1	Knowing the state emblem	94%	
2	Understanding the history of the nation's struggle	97%	
3	Memorize the anthem of Indonesia Raya	95%	
4	The loving spirit for homeland unites children on the border area	88%	
5	Proud of Indonesian language	98%	
6	Willing to sacrifice for the sovereignty of the nation	98%	
7	Firmly maintain national identity	95%	
8	Maintaining the nation's good name	97%	
9	Keeping the Flag flying at the border	100%	
10	Sacrifice for the benefit of the nation	97%	
11	Confidence as an Indonesian student	100%	
12	Spirit of showing national identity	95%	

The nationalism results of junior high school students to almost all questionnaire numbers were good and even some got optimal numbers. The results of the questionnaire which had the lowest number were 88% namely the spirit of patriotism unites border children. This spirit of patriotism must be increased by the teachers for the future.

Patriotism is attributed to the feeling of having, self-improvement, and the desire to retain the group, making the group seem more attractive (Druckman, 1994). This is what should be improved on the students. A high sense of belonging makes them want to maintain and preserve their homeland of various disorders including interference from other countries. Thus, patriotism is an expression of the individual in the face of the meaning of its national identity (Spielmann, Maguire, & Charters, 2018). The school is a place to foster and develop patriotism. Thus, certainly, teachers should be prepared to be able to develop patriotism in order to improve the national identity of Students.

The optimal result of the questionnaire is to keep the flag flying at the border area and be confident as an Indonesian student. These results may be influenced by the situation of Indonesia's independence celebration because the research team took the data on August 15<sup>th</sup>. 2018. At that time the junior high school students were preparing for the Independence Day celebration. They were practicing in line marching to take part in a marching competition in Sebatik Sub-district. In addition, they were training to prepare for the flag ceremony for this year Independence Day celebration was centered in Sebatik Tengah.

When the research in junior High School (SMP) was conducted outside factors to support patriotism because celebrating the nation's independence. In addition, the results of instruments that differ considerably from the results of elementary school Instruments (SD) occurs because the maturity of junior high school students has been increased from SD, the Souls love the homeland has begun to grow. They already realized that his homeland had to be kept and maintained. Junior high school students have undergone a formal developmental cognitive level, namely being able to think abstract using certain symbols and able to operate formal logic rules that are not tied to the concrete object, junior high school students already Capable of conducting analysis, attracting generalization, ability to develop logical reasoning. In addition, there is improved intellectual function, memory capability in language and conceptual development. Meanwhile, improved language proficiency is the basis for cognitive development (Putro, 2017).

Age characteristics of teenagers or junior high school students are still looking for themselves, then the teacher's job is to provide a conducive learning environment for the positive character to be internalized in students, especially in border students are characters forming Nationalism. The school also gives support by giving and preparing the development of students' character by preparing the learning process that supports the development of special nationalism characters for students at the border (Mulyatiningsih, 2011). It is because the child develops based on the environment in which they develop because of different trajectories of their brain development and behavior patterns. The source of individual differences is inevitability. Therefore, taking into consideration individual differences is crucial such as socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental (Foulkes & Blakemore, 2018). This is the basis that students of border areas have their own characteristics and education for them also needs specificity as well.

## CONCLUSION

The results of students' nationalism in the frontier area need to be maintained and guarded because these students will be the vanguard of national defense. They will certainly get a lot of influence from various border conditions, such as culture, economics, and politics and so on. However, as an Indonesian child, nationality and national identity must always be maintained and enhanced.

The survey results obtained in the Sebatik Tengah area towards elementary and junior high school students showed varied results. Junior high school students already showed better results, this might be happened due to the situation and conditions as well as the atmosphere of Independence Day so that the sense of nationality is increasing. On the contrary, when we interviewed the school stakeholder, the principal said he did not have a special program to increase the sense of nationalism because he is still new at the school (a month). Meanwhile, the teachers did not have a special program in the learning process besides being in accordance with the applicable curriculum.

The survey results of students' nationalism in elementary school imply that the best results questionnaire of those three schools surveyed was Sebatik Tengah 04 Elementary School. Out of 12 questions, 7 of them were the most prominent questions from other schools. This Elementary School 04 is indeed participating in a partnership program held by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This school partner is an elementary school in Semper, East Jakarta. Elementary School 04 received guidance from its partner school. Occasionally the principal of Elementary school 04 goes to Jakarta to monitor the implementation of activities in the partner school, at times the principal of partner school comes to Elementary school 04 to monitor the implementation of activities, find solutions, map the potential of the school, and so on.

## SUGGESTION

The overall survey results especially to elementary school students, those schools require guidance, program formation, planning, and implementation of learning that have a high level of nationalism, not just curriculum, syllabus, indicators, and learning tools specifically used for frontier areas.

## LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This article based on nationalism research of primary students in the Kalimantan Utara (North Kalimantan) border area with Malaysia. Based on the results of the study, items still found to support nationalism that was not optimal. Therefore, to improve this, a companion book was made in the process of learning Indonesian in elementary and junior high schools based on the 2013 curriculum that contained nationalism. The companion book is used in the border area.

## IMPLICATION

This research will contribute to the knowledge of the concept OF the nationalism level of primary education students in the frontier area.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thanks to DRPM Direktorat Jenderal Penguatan Riset dan Pengembangan Kemenristekdikti for the support and the opportunity to carry out of our research the program on 2019-2020. We also say thank Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengembangan Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. HAMKA Jakarta for the guidance and support during this research program until the final report stage.

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