Community-Based Citizenship Education: Civic Obedience and Moral Learning from Kampung Pitu

Triyanto[1], Widya Noventari[1], R. Bariq Maulana[2] and Abd Razak Bin Zakaria[3]
[1]Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia
[2]MTs Negeri 1 Gunungkidul, Gunungkidul, Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia
[3]Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

try@staff.uns.ac.id

Abstract: Citizenship education scholarship increasingly calls for integrating local knowledge, yet remains dominated by state-centered, school-based models. This ethnographic study examines how civic obedience — voluntary, internalized compliance with communal norms — and moral learning are produced in Kampung Pitu, an indigenous Javanese community in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, which has for generations restricted settlement to seven households. Data were generated over 4 months of fieldwork (May–August 2026) through observation of 6 ritual events, 18 in-depth interviews, and document analysis, analyzed following Miles, Huberman, and Saldáña's interactive model with credibility established through triangulation, member checking, and negative-case analysis. Civic values are transmitted through five reinforcing mechanisms — mythic-historical narrative, cosmological sanction, ritual, codified precept, and elder authority — sustained by an ethics of community and divinity that Kohlberg's individually oriented model captures only partially. We propose a three-layer model — cosmological legitimation, mnemonic pedagogy, and reciprocal enforcement — formalized as four testable scope propositions (P1–P4) specifying when community-based citizenship education reproduces itself or erodes, and examine the rights-based and generational tensions the rule generates.

Keywords: Civic Obedience; Community-Based Citizenship Education; Customary Norms; Indigenous Citizenship Education; Social Capital

1. Introduction

Rapid modernisation has been accompanied by a widely documented weakening of civic life: declining engagement and eroding shared moral commitments (Putnam, 2000; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). Cross-national assessments report declining civic participation and institutional trust (Schulz et al., 2018), while polarisation intensifies (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). In Indonesia these pressures surface as weak internalisation of national values and attrition of local knowledge (Banks, 2017; Firdaussy et al., 2024). Evidence converges on a pattern: the strongest civic-learning effects arise from authentic participation within learners' own communities (Jerome et al., 2024; Rubin, 2024).

Citizenship education has long been positioned as the primary mechanism through which individuals are socialised into civic roles (Crick, 1998; Kerr, 1999). School-based models are limited because civic learning is embedded in daily social relations and cultural practice (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Torney-Purta et al., 2001), motivating community-based citizenship education (CBCE), which treats local social structures as the primary pedagogical space for internalising civic values (Lee, 1999; Banks, 2017; Rubin, 2024). Customary norms, ritual, ancestral authority, and social sanction function here as a hidden curriculum shaping civic disposition.

At the centre of CBCE lies how communal processes generate compliance and moral learning. We use *civic obedience* to denote voluntary, internalised compliance with communal norms and legitimate authority, sustained by moral conviction rather than coercion. It is not civil disobedience, nor mere behavioural conformity; it is closer to normative commitment to legitimate authority, distinctive here because its object is an uncodified communal norm rather than state law. Obedience has attracted markedly less analytical attention than participation, rights, and critique (Crick, 1998; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

Kohlberg (1984) argued that compliance indexes the developmental structure of moral reasoning: at the conventional level individuals obey because they understand rules as constitutive of social order (Power et al., 1989), so authentic civic obedience is a product of moral learning through shared life rather than formal instruction (Veugelers, 2011). Kohlberg's scheme has been criticised for privileging an ethics of autonomy and underrepresenting moral idioms organised around community and the sacred (Gilligan, 1982; Snarey, 1985; Shweder et al., 1997; Haidt, 2007) — a critique bearing directly on this case, where obligation is articulated through ancestral covenant and cosmological consequence. We therefore use Kohlberg as an interpretive lens, read alongside Shweder et al.'s (1997) tripartite ethics of autonomy, community, and divinity.

In indigenous societies civic norms are embedded in ancestral tradition, customary law (*hukum adat*), cosmological ritual, and belief systems encoding collective obligations (Firdaussy et al., 2024; Limerick, 2023).

Indonesian scholarship documents local knowledge's role in transmitting moral codes across generations (Arjaya et al., 2024; Tohri et al., 2022; Sakti et al., 2024), and social capital (Putnam, 2000) provides the infrastructure for voluntary compliance. What remains undocumented is the concrete process through which local knowledge generates civic obedience in Indonesian indigenous communities.

This gap is visible in Kampung Pitu, Gunungkidul, which maintains a tradition — held by oral history to be centuries old — restricting settlement to seven households (Purwanto et al., 2021; Sekarsih & Priyambodo, 2022; Vitrianto, 2023). Existing scholarship (searches of Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, 2000–2025) approaches Kampung Pitu through sociological, anthropological, and heritage-conservation lenses (Kurniasari, 2023; Sekarsih & Priyambodo, 2022); none examines it through citizenship education or moral learning theory.

Responding to that gap, this study applies a CBCE framework to civic obedience and moral learning in Kampung Pitu, resting on CBCE (Crick, 1998; Lee, 1999; Banks, 2017), moral development theory (Kohlberg, 1984) read critically alongside plural moral ethics (Shweder et al., 1997), and Putnam's (2000) social capital. Four questions guide the analysis: (1) Which civic values are encoded in the seven-household tradition? (2) Through what mechanisms are civic obedience and moral learning produced and transmitted intergenerationally? (3) What rights-based, gendered, and generational tensions does this order generate? (4) How can the resulting practice be theorised as a model of CBCE?

The study makes four contributions: an explicit working definition of civic obedience extending CBCE to a Javanese indigenous setting; empirical documentation of civic obedience produced outside formal institutions; a three-layer model of cosmological legitimation, mnemonic pedagogy, and reciprocal enforcement, formalised as four testable scope propositions (P1–P4); and a critical examination of the rights costs of communal obedience that resists the uncritical culturalism to which Indigenous Citizenship Education scholarship is vulnerable (Veugelers & Wu, 2026).

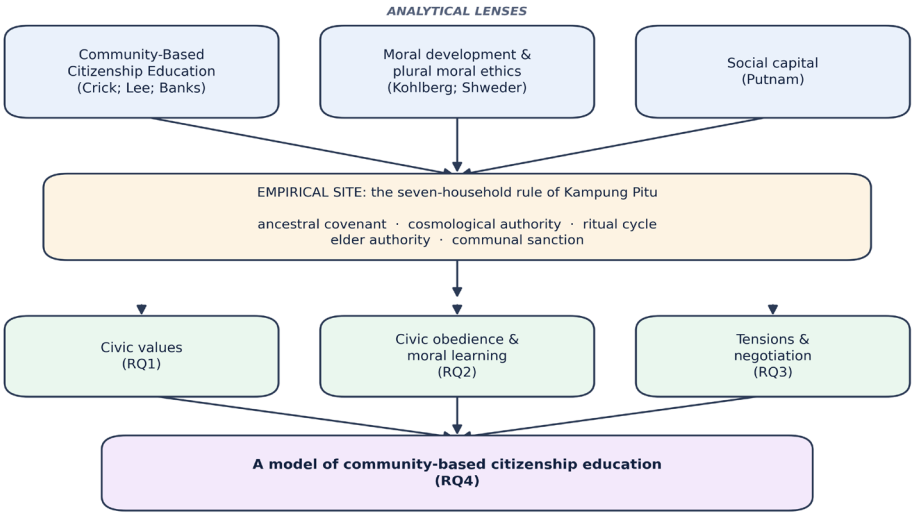


Figure 1: Analytical framework of the study.

2. Method

2.1 Design and Rationale

The study employed a qualitative design with an ethnographic case-study orientation (Spradley, 1980; Creswell & Poth, 2018), because how a communal norm is learned, justified, and enforced requires direct, repeated on-site presence to interpret, rather than self-report instruments alone. The single-case design is justified theoretically: Kampung Pitu is an extreme, long-surviving instance of uncodified civic regulation suited to concept elaboration, not prevalence estimation.

2.2 Research Setting

Fieldwork was conducted in Kampung Pitu, Padukuhan Nglanggeran Wetan, Kalurahan Nglanggeran, Kapanewon Patuk, Gunungkidul Regency, Yogyakarta. The settlement occupies roughly seven hectares on the eastern summit of the Nglanggeran Ancient Volcano (Purwanto et al., 2021). Fieldwork ran for 4 months (May–

August 2026), comprising 6 site visits totalling approximately 5–6 hours of formal, scheduled ritual and communal-event observation. This figure denotes observation-session time specifically, not cumulative field presence: it excludes the 18 audio-recorded in-depth interviews (40–90 minutes each, totalling approximately 12–27 hours of recorded interview data) conducted during and around these visits, and the informal interaction surrounding each session. It is this combined corpus of observation and interview data — not observation time alone — that grounds the study's credibility claims (§2.7).

2.3 Participants and Sampling

Informants were recruited purposively and then by snowball referral, with maximum variation sought across role, generation, and residential status. Because the seven-household rule requires some descendants to leave, we deliberately interviewed 2 out-migrated descendants and treated their accounts as a search for disconfirming evidence. Recruitment continued until no new coding categories emerged. Table 1 summarises the 18 informants; all identifiers are pseudonymous.

Table 1: Profile of informants.

Code	Role / position	Sex	Age band	Residential status
IN-01	Customary elder (*sesepuh*)	1 M	65-74	Resident household head
IN-02	Ritual custodian (*juru kunci*)	1 M	55-64	Resident household head
IN-03 – IN-07	Resident household heads	5 M	40-64	Resident
IN-08 – IN-12	Spouses / women of resident households	5 W	35-60	Resident
IN-13 – IN-15	Young people (15–25 y.o.)	2 M, 1 W	15-25	Resident
IN-16 – IN-17	Out-migrated descendants	1 M, 1 W	30-45	Non-resident
IN-18	Village officials / tourism managers	1 M	35-50	Non-resident
Total	**18 informants**			

2.4 Data Generation

Three techniques were combined: participant observation of 6 communal and ritual occasions (*Rasulan, Tingalan, Ngabekten*, communal labour, and daily routines), recorded in field notes following Spradley's (1980) observational progression; 18 in-depth interviews (40–90 minutes each) in Javanese and Indonesian, audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, addressing the rule's origin, content, and perceived change; and document/artefact analysis of customary precepts (*petuah*), ritual sequences, and village records.

2.5 Operationalising the Constructs

Because “civic obedience” and “moral learning” are abstractions, each was translated into observable indicators before fieldwork and refined iteratively (Table 2). This delimits the claims the data can support: the study interprets informants' articulated reasons for compliance; it does not measure moral stage, and no standardised instrument was administered.

Table 2: Operationalisation of core constructs.

Construct	Working Definition	Observable Indicator	Primary Data Source
Civic obedience	Voluntary, internalised compliance with communal norms and authority	Sustained conformity absent monitoring; spontaneous justification	Interviews; observation
Moral learning	Acquisition of moral codes through participation in communal life	Accounts of when/from whom the norm was learned; children’s participation	Interviews; observation

Construct	Working Definition	Observable Indicator	Primary Data Source
Civic virtues	Dispositions oriented to the common good	Mutual aid, reciprocity, ecological care	Observation; documents
Cosmological legitimation	Grounding of norm authority in ancestral/sacred order	Appeal to covenant, sacred site, or consequence	Interviews; ritual observation
Social capital	Trust, reciprocity, dense networks enabling compliance	Frequency of mutual aid; density of kin/ritual ties	Observation; interviews

2.6 Data Analysis

Analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman and Saldáña (2014). We coded manually, compiling codes, categories, and excerpts in a spreadsheet-based codebook. First-cycle descriptive and in vivo coding preserved emic terms; second-cycle pattern coding aggregated these into the value clusters and mechanisms in Table 3. Two authors independently coded a subset; discrepancies were resolved through discussion until consensus.

2.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was pursued against Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria. *Credibility* rested on repeated engagement across the 4-month fieldwork period, triangulation, member checking with 7 informants, peer debriefing, and negative-case analysis. *Transferability* is supported by thick description. *Dependability* rests on an audit trail. *Confirmability* was supported by a reflexive journal.

3. Results

3.1 Kampung Pitu as a Communal Pedagogical Space

The historical and geographical account below draws on published scholarship (Purwanto et al., 2021; Sekarsih & Priyambodo, 2022; Vitrianto, 2023); interpretive claims in §3.2–§3.5 derive from the present fieldwork and are anchored to an informant code or dated field note.

As its name indicates — *pitu* is Javanese for seven — the settlement has consistently housed only seven households, founded according to oral tradition (not documented chronology) roughly six centuries ago. Residents are predominantly Muslim while continuing customary practices; farming and husbandry remain principal livelihoods, interlinked with tourism over the last two decades (Vitrianto, 2023). The *sesepuh* (elder) and *juru kunci* (ritual custodian) hold moral authority as custodians of ancestral knowledge.

The community's origins are narrated through Eyang Iro Dikromo, a Yogyakarta palace courtier said to have won a contest guarding a heirloom in the sacred *Kinah Gadhung Wulung* tree near Telaga Guyangan, receiving land for his descendants in return (Purwanto et al., 2021; Sekarsih & Priyambodo, 2022). With his brother and followers he established an ancestral covenant: the locality may be inhabited by only seven households, a new household entering only when an existing one is dissolved by death or departure. This cosmological centre consecrates Kampung Pitu as a communal pedagogical space in which civic values are instilled in everyday life (Lee, 1999; Banks, 2017).

3.2 Civic Values Encoded in the Seven-Household Tradition

Analysis shows the customary norm constitutes a complex civic value system rather than a magical prohibition. We identified six interrelated value clusters (Table 3). Informants referred to codified teachings named *Aksara Papat*, *Lima*, and *Pitu*, which are undocumented in published literature; they attributed the four qualities glossed as *suci* (purity), *jujur* (honesty), *langgeng* (permanence), and *lestari* (sustainability) to *wewarah*.

Table 3: Civic value clusters encoded in the seven-household tradition (condensed).

No	Value Cluster	Emic Marker / Practice	Illustrative Evidence (Condensed)
1	Fidelity to collective agreement	The ancestral covenant (*perjanjian leluhur*)	"Iki perjanjian saka leluhur... yen dilanggar, sing rugi kabeh." ["A covenant from the ancestors; if broken, everyone suffers."] (IN-01, *sesepuh*, 12 May 2026).
2	Self-restraint in resource use	Married descendants leave once the quota of seven is full	"Kula kedah medal amargi sampun pitu..." ["I had to leave because the seven were complete—the rule protects this place."] (IN-07, out-migrated, 28 June 2026).
3	Ecological responsibility as civic duty	Guardianship of the *Kinah Gadhung Wulung* tree and Telaga Guyangan (*Aksara Papat*)	"Wit lan telaga iku sing ngrumat awake dhewe..." ["The tree and pond care for us; if we neglect them, life goes with them."] (IN-02, *juru kunci*, 14 May 2026).
4	Honesty and moral integrity	*Suci* and *jujur* as guides to conduct	"Suci lan jujur iku siji..." ["Purity and honesty are one; cheating a person or the land brings the same consequence."] (IN-03, 15 May 2026).
5	Socio-cosmological harmony	*Petungan* (auspicious-day calculation)	"Arep mbangun, arep mantu, kabeh digoleki dinane." ["To build or marry, the day is sought first."] (IN-01, *sesepuh*, 12 June 2026).
6	Solidarity and reciprocity	*Kenduri*, *gotong royong* (mutual aid)	"Nek ana sing mbangun omah, kabeh mudhun..." ["When someone builds a house, everyone comes; no one is summoned."] (IN-04, 19 July 2026).

These clusters align with civic virtues in the citizenship education literature (Crick, 1998; Banks, 2017), distinguished by a communal-religious and ecological character rather than an individual's abstracted relation to the state (Sakti et al., 2024).

Read against Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) typology, the evidence supports a strong *personally responsible* and *participatory* orientation, but not *justice-oriented* citizenship, which requires interrogating and changing unjust structures; no open contestation of the rule was recorded (discussed in §4.3).

3.3 Producing and Transmitting Civic Obedience and Moral Learning

The second finding is that civic obedience is produced through five mutually reinforcing communal mechanisms rather than formal instruction (Table 4).

Table 4: Mechanisms producing and transmitting civic obedience.

Mechanism	Pedagogical Form	Basis of Enforcement	Moral-Psychological Reading
1. Mythic-historical narrative	Oral curriculum: the story of Eyang Iro Dikromo and the covenant, told from early childhood	Authority of ancestral origin; narrative identity	Moral identity formation; ethics of community
2. Cosmological sanction	Belief that exceeding seven households brings *bala* (misfortune)	Moral-cosmological rather than legal-formal sanction	Surface: harm avoidance. Fuller: ethics of divinity (Shweder et al., 1997)
3. Periodic ritual	*Rasulan, Tingalan, Ngabekten*: recurring collective renewal	Public, embodied reaffirmation; reputational stake	Embodied, participatory moral learning
4. Codified precepts and taboos	*Aksara Papat/Lima/Pitu*; prohibitions on *wayang kulit* and entering sacred sites in specified states	Behavioural boundaries constitutive of identity	Conventional reasoning: rules as constituents of social order

Mechanism	Pedagogical Form	Basis of Enforcement	Moral-Psychological Reading
5. Elder authority and succession	Custodianship and transmission of customary knowledge; designation of a successor	Legitimate moral authority; planned reproduction	Legitimacy-based normative commitment

Read through Kohlberg (1984), fear of *bala* — read alone, preconventional reasoning oriented to avoiding punishment — appears when informants describe what would happen if the rule were broken. Yet asked why they themselves comply, the dominant register differed: the norm was defended as guardian of social order and respect owed to an ancestral agreement — the pattern Kohlberg associates with conventional reasoning (Power et al., 1989).

Asked what would happen if the rule were broken, informants answered in the idiom of *bala*: “Nek dilanggar, mesthi ana bala...” [“If broken, misfortune comes—the old people have seen it.”] (IN-03, 15 May 2026), narrating harm befalling others in the past (IN-04, 19 May 2026; IN-05, 22 June 2026). Asked why they themselves comply, the same informant shifted register: “Dudu masalah wedi... iki sing nggawe kampung iki isih ana.” [“It is not fear—this keeps this village in existence.”] (IN-03, 15 May 2026). The *sesepuh* and an out-migrated descendant used the same register beyond communal sanction (IN-01, 12 May 2026; IN-07, 28 June 2026).

Three features support reading the second register as operative: the shift occurred within single interviews, not between informants; *bala* was narrated in third person and past tense, while first-person justifications invoked social order and covenant; and the register held for IN-07, non-resident and beyond enforcement — precisely where fear-based compliance should weaken. Only the youngest informant offered a partially divergent account, uncertain about *bala* while fully participating in communal labour (IN-06, 21 May 2026) — taken up in §3.4.

This coexistence is where the Kohlbergian reading reaches its limit: appeals to cosmological consequence invoke a sacred order, not calculations of personal cost. Shweder et al.'s (1997) ethics of autonomy, community, and divinity offer a more adequate vocabulary: compliance is articulated overwhelmingly in the registers of community and divinity, only marginally in the autonomy register Kohlberg's highest stages presuppose (Snarey, 1985; Haidt, 2007). Civic obedience here is a meaningful, internalised allegiance (Veugelers, 2011) whose moral grammar differs from the liberal-individualist grammar citizenship education theory usually assumes.

Social capital — trust, reciprocity, dense networks (Putnam, 2000) — enables voluntary compliance across generations. Moral learning here is embodied and contextual, proceeding through ritual and daily life rather than decontextualised transfer (Firdaussy et al., 2024; Limerick, 2023).

3.4 Tensions, Costs, and Dissent

3.4.1 Modernisation and Generational Change

Pressures from formal schooling, wage labour, and digital media introduce competing moral authorities that may attenuate younger residents' adherence (Kurniasari, 2023). The youngest informant described the rule flatly — “aturan sing wis ana” [“a rule that is simply already there”] — uncertain about its cosmological warrant yet still framing compliance through intergenerational shame (IN-06, 21 May 2026), with participation in communal labour remaining complete. IN-04 reported the same dual position as a parent, unable to compel his town-schooled child, only to counsel her (19 May 2026). Adherence among the young is thus sustained but differently grounded.

3.4.2 Tourism

Tourism is simultaneously a livelihood, a revitalisation vehicle, and a risk of commodifying ritual (Vitrianto, 2023). Visitor access to Telaga Guyangan is permitted for a fee, but ritual timing was not adjusted for visitors: a *kenduri*'s date was set by *petungan*, and a visiting group was asked to observe from outside the compound. Informants drew this boundary explicitly — visitors may watch, not join (IN-02, 14 May 2026) — while voicing concern that “one day the children will treat this as mere spectacle” (IN-02, 14 July 2026).

3.4.3 The Rights Cost of the Rule and the Question of Gender

The seven-household rule requires some descendants to leave, in tension with the constitutional freedom to choose residence under Article 28E(1) of the 1945 Constitution. The out-migrated descendant described his departure as accepted rather than endorsed — "the rule was already like that before I was born" (IN-07, 28 July 2026) — and continues to return for *Rasulan* and contribute labour and funds. No informant invoked constitutional entitlement unprompted; the tension is analytical rather than community-articulated. A second question concerns gender: the rule's unit is the *kepala keluarga* (household head), conventionally a man; the offices of *sesepuh* and *juru kunci* have been held exclusively by men (IN-01, IN-02). Women's standing is consequential but differently located — deliberation happens "at the front" among men, while daily practice and its transmission to children is tended by women (IN-05, 22 June 2026) — a division the community does not treat as exclusion but a citizenship-education reading cannot ignore.

3.4.4 Dissent and Non-Compliance

Negative-case analysis sought instances of doubt, evasion, or open disagreement. No case of open contestation was recorded: no informant advocated changing the rule, and no eighth-household attempt was reported. The data contain two weaker forms of divergence: epistemic doubt about cosmological sanction without behavioural departure (IN-06, 21 August 2026), and quiet ambivalence about the cost of departure, expressed by IN-07 as sorrow rather than objection (28 July 2026). Three limits qualify this: anonymity is structurally fragile in a seven-household community; access was mediated by customary authority; and researcher presence may have elicited performances of consensus. The absence of recorded contestation should not be read as evidence of consensus — it is at least as plausibly an artefact of the design's limited capacity to surface dissent, reported strictly as a limit of these data (implications in §4.3).

3.5 A Three-Layer Model of Community-Based Citizenship Education

Synthesising the findings, Kampung Pitu can be theorised as a specifiable mechanism rather than simply an instance of CBCE. Figure 2 presents a three-layer model in which the community functions as a *living civic curriculum*: customary norm, ritual, ancestral authority, and cosmological sanction operate as a hidden curriculum shaping civic disposition across the life course (Lee, 1999; Banks, 2017; Rubin, 2024).

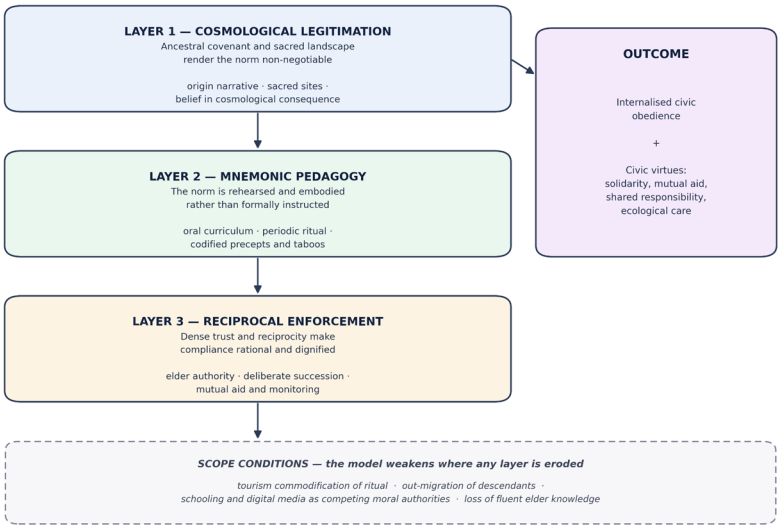


Figure 2: A three-layer model of the production of civic obedience, with scope conditions.

- **P1:** Civic obedience to an uncodified norm is sustained where cosmologically legitimated, so its authority is experienced as non-negotiable.
- **P2:** Legitimation alone is insufficient: the norm must be rehearsed through recurrent, embodied ritual and narrative, functioning as an oral curriculum.
- **P3:** Compliance becomes voluntary rather than coerced where dense reciprocity makes observance materially and socially rewarding.
- **P4:** Where any layer erodes — through commodification, out-migration, competing authorities, or loss of elder knowledge — compliance shifts toward performance or attrition.

The fourth proposition specifies the model's scope conditions: it states not only how the practice reproduces itself but when it should be expected to fail.

4. Discussion

4.1 Relocating the Site of Civic Learning

The findings support the central CBCE claim that civic learning is not confined to school and may be more durable when embedded in communal life (Jerome et al., 2024; Rubin, 2024). Kampung Pitu constitutes a complete pedagogical system with its own curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and sanction. The analytic unit of citizenship education should include the community's normative order, not only its programmes.

4.2 The Limits of a Liberal Grammar of Moral Development

The case also challenges moral development theory. Applied without adjustment, Kohlberg's stage sequence would score much of this reasoning as conventional at best, and appeals to *bala* as preconventional — a misdescription. Informants articulate not immature self-interest but a moral idiom where sanctity and communal duty are primary goods, coherent through Shweder et al.'s (1997) tripartite ethics (cf. Snarey, 1985; Gilligan, 1982; Haidt, 2007). Curricula treating autonomous rights-reasoning as the telos of civic maturity will misrecognise the civic competence of learners from communal-religious traditions.

4.3 Obedience and Critique: an Unresolved Tension

Democratic citizenship requires both compliance with legitimate norms and the capacity to contest unjust ones. The mechanisms making the seven-household rule effective — cosmological non-negotiability, embodied rehearsal, reciprocal enforcement — are precisely what insulate it from deliberation, imposing a real cost on descendants who must leave. This case is not a template for citizenship education: the transferable lesson is the architecture of learning, not the content of the norm. Whether that architecture can be coupled with critical civic agency, rather than standing in tension with it, is the central design question this case raises (Veugelers, 2011; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

4.4 Implications for Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Policy

Three implications follow: indigenous normative orders as curricular primary sources; pedagogy built on sustained participation with structured reflection on its tensions; and policy supporting elder knowledge and reciprocity while protecting exiting members' rights (Banks, 2017; Tohri et al., 2022; Veugelers, 2011).

5. Conclusion

This ethnographic study examined how civic obedience and moral learning are produced in Kampung Pitu, an indigenous Javanese community maintaining a seven-household rule across generations. First, the norm encodes a coherent civic value system — fidelity, self-restraint, ecological responsibility, honesty, socio-cosmological harmony, and reciprocity — rather than an isolated prohibition. Second, civic obedience is generated through five interlocking mechanisms, underwritten by dense social capital, and organised around the ethics of community and divinity that an individually calibrated stage model captures only partially. Third, the community can be theorised as a living civic curriculum through a three-layer model whose scope conditions specify when such a system erodes.

The study contributes a working definition of civic obedience, extends CBCE to a Javanese indigenous setting, and advances a propositional rather than merely descriptive account. It also declines to celebrate the case uncritically: the mechanisms rendering the norm durable also insulate it from deliberation and impose a real, unequally distributed cost on descendants who must leave. The transferable contribution lies in the architecture of communal civic learning, not the content of any particular rule.

5.1 Limitations and Future Research

Four limitations qualify these conclusions. The study is a single case selected for theoretical relevance, so findings support conceptual elaboration, not generalisation. The analysis interprets articulated reasons for compliance and does not measure moral development; no standardised instrument was administered. The

design is cross-sectional, so claims about intergenerational transmission rest on retrospective accounts. Researching a small community where the sacred is at stake constrains what can be asked, and researcher presence may have encouraged consensus. Future work could pursue longitudinal tracking, comparative study, and explicit testing of P1–P4 where one layer is already eroded.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data Availability

Anonymised transcripts are not publicly available because the community did not consent to open deposit; the audit trail may be inspected on reasonable request to the corresponding author.

AI Declaration

Use of AI tools. Generative AI (ChatGPT, OpenAI, Grammarly) was used only to assist with English language editing. No AI tool was used in data collection, analysis, or interpretation. The authors reviewed and approved all text and take full responsibility for its content.

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