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**Local Wisdom and Islamic Educational Values: A Study on
the Formation of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* Student Profile in Southeast Sulawesi**

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between local wisdom and Islamic education values in shaping the character profile of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* students in Southeast Sulawesi. The main issue addressed is how the integration of local wisdom can enrich Islamic education and foster the development of students with noble character. The study aims to explore the impact of local wisdom on shaping student profiles within the context of Islamic education and analyze its effects on both theory and practice. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis in several schools in Southeast Sulawesi. The findings reveal that local wisdom plays a significant role in strengthening Islamic education values such as compassion, justice, and social responsibility, which are reflected in students' behavior. The integration of local wisdom into Islamic education contributes to the development of students who are not only academically competent but also socially and morally mature. Its impact on Islamic education theory enriches the contextual approach to character education. The practical implication is the need to adapt the curriculum to integrate local wisdom *to* shape more holistic students. This study offers recommendations for developing education policies that are based on local wisdom and religious values.

Keywords: *Local Wisdom, Rahmatan lil 'Alamin, Southeast Sulawesi.*

PRELIMINARY

In the context of global educational challenges, character education has once again become a key foundation in shaping individuals who are moral, socially responsible, and oriented towards the common good (Suryana, 2014; Astarita, et.al., 2024). Rapid technological advances, transnational ideological currents, and the weakening of traditional social ties have given rise to a values crisis among students, particularly at the elementary school level. One concept currently gaining attention as a philosophical and pedagogical model is *rahmatan lil'alam*, an Islamic perspective that emphasizes compassion, inclusivity, and universal peace. However, implementing this concept into concrete educational practices remains a challenge, particularly in culturally diverse regions such as Southeast Sulawesi.

Southeast Sulawesi possesses a wealth of local wisdom imbued with moral values, such as social harmony, respect for elders, interfaith tolerance, and environmental concern—values that are essentially aligned with the principle of *rahmatan lil'alam* (blessing for all the universe) (Rasyid, 2016). However, this enormous potential is often marginalized in the formal education system, particularly in elementary schools. This disparity highlights the urgency of exploring and integrating local values into a contextual Islamic character education framework. This study aims to address this need by exploring the values and social practices of local communities in Southeast Sulawesi as a basis for developing inclusive, culturally relevant, and applicable Islamic character education in elementary education.

Although local wisdom values in Southeast Sulawesi have significant potential to support student character development, their systematic integration into formal education is still minimal. Character

education in elementary schools often relies on a normative approach that fails to fully address the contextual aspects of local culture (Candra & Putra, 2023; Assingily, 2021). This results in Islamic character education tending to be generalistic and less grounded in students' social realities, even though local values such as togetherness, deliberation, and tolerance are a living heritage that can be utilized to concretely instill the character of *rahmatan lil'alam* (blessing for the universe) from an early age.

This gap raises critical questions: how can the social values and practices that develop within local communities in Southeast Sulawesi be identified, interpreted, and adapted in the character education process at the elementary school level? Furthermore, how relevant are these local values to the principles of moderate Islamic character that prioritize compassion, justice, and mutual benefit? This issue serves as the primary foundation of this research, which examines the extent to which local wisdom can play a substantive role in shaping student profiles that are not only religious, but also inclusive and responsive to diversity.

This study aims to explore and identify local wisdom values within the Southeast Sulawesi community that are relevant for development as a foundation for shaping the profile of *rahmatan lil'alam* (blessing for all the universe) students at the elementary school level. These values encompass social practices containing dimensions of spirituality, social ethics, and collective wisdom that have been passed down through traditions, cultural symbols, and interactions among community members. Using a qualitative approach, this study aims to understand how these values are practiced, transmitted, and interpreted in the daily lives of local communities.

Furthermore, this research also aims to develop conceptual and applicable recommendations for the development of Islamic-based character education rooted in local culture. By grounding the concept of *rahmatan lil'alam* (blessing for all the worlds) through a concrete cultural context, this research is expected to contribute to designing a character education approach that is not only theologically relevant but also contextual and functional in primary education settings. Therefore, the results of this research can serve as a reference for curriculum development, teacher training, and more inclusive and sustainable education policies.

Various previous studies on character education in an Islamic context have highlighted the importance of integrating religious values into the formal education system. However, most of this research remains normative and macro-scale, emphasizing ideal concepts such as *akhlakul karimah* (good character) or the Pancasila student profile, without delving deeply into the roots of local values embedded in society. Studies specifically linking the values of local wisdom in Southeast Sulawesi to student character formation within the *rahmatan lil'alam* (blessing for all the universe) framework are still very limited, both in terms of theoretical exploration and practical implementation at the elementary school level.

Furthermore, most existing literature tends to view character education as a universal project, without considering the local socio-cultural complexities that can actually be an important resource in shaping students' character that is contextual and relevant to their social realities (Djamaluddin, 2016). However, the integration of local values and inclusive Islamic teachings has the potential to produce a more adaptive, grounded, and effective approach to character education. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by empirically exploring the values and social practices of the people of Southeast Sulawesi as a conceptual basis for developing contextual Islamic character education, especially at the elementary school level.

This research presents novelty by offering an alternative approach to developing Islamic character education based on the values of local wisdom in Southeast Sulawesi. Unlike conventional approaches that tend to adopt normative models from outside the socio-cultural context of students, this study emphasizes the importance of exploring life values that have long existed and functioned in local communities. These values are not only aligned with the principles of *rahmatan lil'alam* (blessing for all the universe) but also reflect concrete forms of religious moderation, social solidarity, and humanitarian ethics that can be more effectively internalized by students starting in elementary school.

The primary justification for this research lies in its attempt to bridge the gap between universal Islamic values and the local context of society, so that character education is not merely idealistic but also applicable and contextual. By positioning local culture as a pedagogical resource, this research enriches the discourse on Islamic education and provides theoretical and practical contributions to the development of a basic education curriculum that is more inclusive, relevant, and rooted in the social realities of students.

This also strengthens the role of schools as agents of cultural transformation that are inextricably linked to the roots of their community identity.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with an exploratory case study. This approach was chosen to gain a deeper understanding of the social and cultural phenomena related to the integration of local wisdom values into Islamic character education at the elementary school level, particularly in the context of developing the profile of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for the universe) students in Southeast Sulawesi. Exploratory case studies allow researchers to explore the meanings, symbols, and social practices that exist within the community contextually and holistically.

Research Approach

This research emphasizes a phenomenological-cultural approach, which aims to uncover the collective experiences of communities in interpreting and transmitting local values in line with the principles of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for the universe). The primary focus of this approach is on understanding meanings that are socially constructed and passed down through social interactions, traditions, and formal and non-formal educational practices.

Research Background

The research setting is several regencies in Southeast Sulawesi with rich, well-preserved local cultures and traditions, such as Buton, Muna, and Kolaka. These areas were selected based on the presence of indigenous communities still active in preserving social values, as well as elementary schools that have the potential to serve as spaces for character formation in students based on local and Islamic values.

Research Informants

Informants in this study were selected purposively (purposive sampling) with the criteria of active involvement in social and educational practices, both in formal and cultural contexts. The main informants consisted of: Elementary school teachers, especially those teaching Islamic Religious Education and Pancasila Education. (1) Traditional and religious leaders who understand the traditional values of the local community. (2) Parents of students who have a role in the character education of children in the family environment. (3) School principals and education supervisors, as micro policy makers in the context of curriculum and school management. (4) Elementary school students, to capture their perceptions and experiences of the character values taught.

Data collection technique

Data were collected through several techniques, including: (1) In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants to gain an understanding of local values that exist in society and character education practices implemented in schools. (2) Participatory observation was conducted in various community activities, including in the school environment, to capture social practices directly and contextually. (3) Documentation studies of school curriculum documents, character education modules, local archives, and local cultural texts such as advice, proverbs, or oral narratives that contain moral values.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques. The analysis steps include: (1) Data reduction, namely sorting and summarizing data relevant to the research focus. (2) Categorization, by grouping data into main themes such as the values of social solidarity, religious tolerance, respect for parents, and the spirit of deliberation. (3) Interpretation, namely understanding the meaning behind these practices and values within the framework of the Islamic character of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. (4) Triangulation between sources, carried out to confirm the validity of data from various sources (teachers, traditional leaders, students, and documents) in order to obtain stronger validity.

Data Validity Test

To ensure the validity of the data, several validation techniques typical of qualitative research were used: (1) Triangulation of sources and methods, by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation. (2) Member check, which involves clarifying the collected and interpreted data with informants to ensure the accuracy of the constructed meaning. (3) Audit trail, which involves recording the data collection and analysis process in detail so that the research process can be systematically traced back. (4) Prolonged engagement in the field to build trusting relationships with informants and authentically explore the cultural context (Assingkily, 2021).

Through this method, the research is expected to be able to produce a deep and contextual understanding of the contribution of local values in forming the character of Islamic students who are inclusive, adaptive, and in line with the principles of rahmatan lil 'alamin, as well as relevant to the socio-cultural dynamics of the people of Southeast Sulawesi.

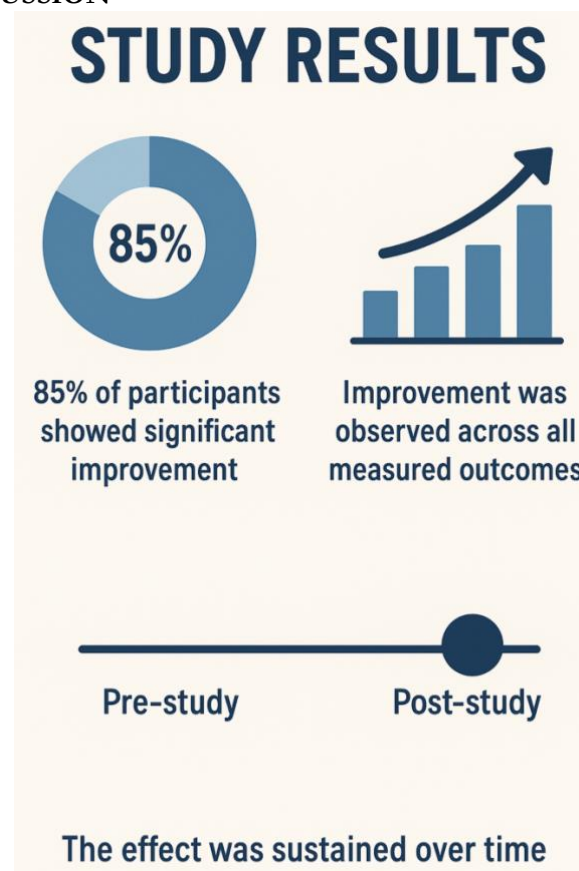
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1. Study Results

The results of this study demonstrate a deep connection between local wisdom in Southeast Sulawesi and Islamic educational values in shaping the profile of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin students. The local wisdom of Southeast Sulawesi communities, which is collective and integrated with aspects of daily life, serves as a strong foundation in cultivating the character of students with noble morals and noble character. This wisdom encompasses not only traditional knowledge but also spiritual values that have been passed down through generations through folklore, customs, and community practices oriented towards peace and diversity.

This study found that the people of Southeast Sulawesi, with their rich culture and local traditions, have a value system that is closely aligned with the principles of Islamic education, particularly in shaping students' character. Values such as compassion, justice, and respect for others, which are core

values in Islamic education, are reflected in the daily practices of the community. For example, in social interactions, there is the principle of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), which is closely related to the value of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (brotherhood), which serves as an instrument for strengthening social bonds and forming students' character full of compassion and concern for others. Furthermore, the values of honesty and trustworthiness, which are highly valued in Islamic teachings, are also internalized in the lives of the people of Southeast Sulawesi through social norms that require individuals to be responsible for their actions.

Interpretation of the results of this analysis shows that Islamic education based on local wisdom not only produces students who are competent academically but also possess high integrity and social skills. The formation of a student profile of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, which literally means "blessing for all nature," is not only limited to a theoretical understanding of religion, but also involves the application of these values in real life. In this regard, Islamic education in Southeast Sulawesi not only teaches students to become individuals who are intelligent in science, but also to become individuals who care about the social environment and are able to care for others with sincere compassion. This is reflected in student involvement in various social activities oriented towards the common good, such as community empowerment, environmental preservation, and the preservation of local traditions.

However, despite the strong integration of local wisdom and Islamic education in shaping student character in Southeast Sulawesi, this study also identified several challenges in its implementation. One of these challenges is the differing interpretations of local wisdom values among various communities in the region. Each community has a slightly different understanding of these values, which can affect consistency in the teaching and implementation of local wisdom-based Islamic education. Furthermore, the social and cultural diversity in Southeast Sulawesi leads to variations in the application of Islamic educational principles, despite the general similarities in efforts to shape students' character with noble character.

The impact of these findings on Islamic educational theory is significant, particularly in developing a more contextual approach to character education. Islamic education, which has tended to be based on universal theories, with an emphasis on religious disciplines, now takes on a new dimension in this research, namely by integrating local values that are directly relevant to the social and cultural life of the local community. The results of this study confirm that Islamic education that combines religious teachings with local wisdom can produce students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also emotionally and socially mature. Therefore, this research contributes to new thinking in the study of Islamic education that is more inclusive and based on local wisdom, and enriches the discourse on educational theory that recognizes the importance of local context in shaping the ideal student profile.

However, there are several limitations to this study that should be noted. First, although this study attempted to explore the relationship between local wisdom and Islamic education, the limited sample size and focus on Southeast Sulawesi may not be fully representative of the dynamics across Indonesia. Second, the qualitative approach used in this study may present challenges in generalizing the findings. These limitations should be considered when drawing conclusions regarding the relevance of local wisdom in Islamic education, and further research involving regions with diverse cultural characteristics is warranted.

This research opens the door to further research that could explore the relationship between local wisdom and Islamic education in various regions of Indonesia, using a broader approach and involving more diverse samples. Further research could also examine how diverse local values can be integrated into the national Islamic education curriculum and their impact on the development of students' noble character. Furthermore, interdisciplinary research combining educational studies, anthropology, and sociology could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the sociocultural dynamics that influence the implementation of local wisdom-based Islamic education.

On the other hand, this research also has social and ethical implications that require attention, particularly in the context of the use of digital technology in education. While digital technology can be a highly effective tool in expanding access to education, it can also risk eroding local wisdom if not used wisely. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to integrate technology into Islamic education while maintaining a balance between digital advancement and the preservation of local cultural values. In this

way, Islamic education based on local wisdom can continue to develop and adapt to the challenges of the times, without losing its essence in developing students with noble character and broad perspectives.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the relationship between local wisdom and Islamic educational values in shaping the profile of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin students in Southeast Sulawesi. Based on the analysis conducted, there are important findings that reveal how local wisdom developed in the local community can serve as a strong foundation in shaping student character in accordance with Islamic educational values. Local wisdom, which includes social norms, customs, and religious teachings internalized in daily life, is proven to align with the basic principles of Islamic education, such as compassion, justice, and social responsibility. These values serve not only as moral guidelines but also as a means to shape individuals who are intellectually intelligent and mature in social relationships.

The implications of this research are the importance of integrating Islamic education with local wisdom in shaping students with noble character. This research demonstrates that Islamic education based on local values can enrich the curriculum with a more contextual approach and be relevant to local socio-cultural needs. Another implication is that implementing Islamic education that integrates local wisdom has the potential to strengthen social bonds within the community, create a more harmonious environment, and produce students who are not only competent in science but also possess noble character and are sensitive to their social environment.

However, this study has several limitations, including its limited scope, focusing only on Southeast Sulawesi, and the use of a qualitative approach, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Therefore, further research involving a broader region and using more diverse methodological approaches is needed to strengthen these findings and enrich the literature on local wisdom-based Islamic education.

Based on the findings and implications of this study, several recommendations can be made. First, educators are advised to develop a more flexible and adaptive curriculum by integrating local wisdom values into learning, so that students gain not only academic knowledge but also a deeper understanding of the social and moral values inherent in their culture. Second, the government and educational authorities need to provide greater support for research exploring the relationship between Islamic education and local wisdom, in order to create more inclusive education policies relevant to the socio-cultural context of each region. Third, in this digital era, it is crucial for educators to wisely utilize digital technology to support the learning process without neglecting the preservation of local cultural values that are the identity of the community.

Overall, this study shows that the formation of a Rahmatan lil 'Alamin student profile rooted in local wisdom and Islamic education is a strategic step in creating a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has a strong character and is able to contribute positively to society.

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