

IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL WISDOM-BASED LEARNING IN DEVELOPING CHARACTER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of local wisdom-based learning in developing students' character at SD IT Iqro Medan. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects included fourth and fifth grade teachers and 20 students. The results show that the integration of local values such as cooperation, responsibility, discipline, politeness, and respect for cultural heritage increased students' average character score by 28.6%. Teachers acted as facilitators and role models in contextual and interactive learning. These findings indicate that local wisdom-based learning is effective in fostering positive student character while instilling love for culture and national identity.

Keywords: Character of Students, Local Wisdom-Based Learning, Pancasila Student Profile

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi pembelajaran berbasis nilai kearifan lokal dalam membentuk karakter siswa di SD IT Iqro Medan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas guru kelas IV dan V serta 20 siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi nilai-nilai lokal seperti gotong royong, tanggung jawab, disiplin, sopan santun, dan penghormatan terhadap budaya meningkatkan rata-rata karakter siswa sebesar 28,6%. Guru berperan sebagai fasilitator dan teladan dalam pembelajaran yang kontekstual dan interaktif. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran berbasis kearifan lokal efektif menumbuhkan karakter positif siswa sekaligus menanamkan rasa cinta terhadap budaya dan identitas bangsa.

Kata kunci: Karakter Siswa, Pembelajaran Berbasis Kearifan Lokal, Profil Pelajar Pancasila

INTRODUCTION

Elementary education plays a strategic role in shaping students' character and personality. At this level, students not only learn cognitive aspects but also begin to internalize moral, social, and cultural values that will serve as a foundation for their future lives. In this context, character education becomes an essential part of the national

education process. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, through the Pancasila Student Profile policy, emphasizes six main character dimensions, namely faith and devotion to God, global diversity, cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity. However, in practice, character development in elementary schools often remains suboptimal because learning still focuses on academic achievement and does not fully integrate local cultural values that are close to students' daily lives (Iswatiningsih, 2021).

Local wisdom refers to noble values that grow, develop, and are maintained by communities as guidelines for behavior and interaction with the social and natural environment. Local wisdom not only includes traditions, customs, and local languages but also reflects ways of thinking, acting, and value systems that form a community's identity. Ramadani and Fitriasia (2023) explain that local wisdom values can serve as a source of character education because they contain teachings on honesty, responsibility, care, and cooperation. Therefore, integrating local wisdom into the learning process in elementary schools becomes a strategic effort to instill character from an early age through meaningful learning experiences.

The implementation of learning based on local wisdom provides opportunities for students to recognize and love their regional culture while internalizing character values through real-life contexts. For example, community cooperation activities can be adapted into collaborative school activities to foster teamwork, tolerance, and empathy. Research conducted by Darmayanti et al (2022) indicates that integrating local cultural values such as *siwaliparri* (cooperation) and *metawe* (mutual respect) in elementary schools strengthens students' social character and increases their engagement in project-based learning activities. This demonstrates that learning rooted in local wisdom can naturally cultivate students' moral and social awareness through contextual experiences.

Furthermore, the local wisdom-based learning approach aligns with the 21st-century education paradigm, which emphasizes the importance of contextual learning. In this approach, knowledge is not taught separately from the social and cultural context in which students live. Ramlan et al (2023) reveal that local Sundanese cultural values such as politeness, respect for parents, and love for peace, when internalized in learning activities, can shape students with noble character who respect differences. Therefore,

teachers play a critical role as facilitators in connecting learning content with local wisdom values in students' surroundings.

However, various studies also show that implementing local wisdom-based learning still faces significant challenges. Annissabrina et al (2024) found that some elementary school teachers do not have a deep understanding of how to integrate local values into teaching and learning processes. In addition, the availability of teaching materials containing local cultural elements remains limited, and the curriculum often does not explicitly guide teachers to link these values with thematic learning. This situation causes the application of local wisdom values to be largely symbolic and not fully internalized in daily classroom practices.

In fact, local wisdom-based learning is not only a means of preserving culture but also a contextual character education platform. Values that are alive in the community, such as cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and social care, form an important foundation for developing students with integrity and global competitiveness without losing their national identity. Therefore, this study is aimed at describing the implementation of local wisdom-based learning in shaping the character of elementary school students, focusing on implementation strategies, supporting and inhibiting factors, and its impact on students' behavior and attitudes. The results of this study are expected to provide practical contributions for teachers and educational institutions in designing learning that is more contextual, meaningful, and rooted in Indonesian cultural values.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at providing an in-depth description of the implementation process of local wisdom-based learning and its influence on character development in elementary school students. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand educational phenomena contextually and holistically by exploring the meanings behind teachers' and students' actions in learning activities oriented toward local cultural values (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study was conducted at SD IT Iqro Medan, an integrated Islamic elementary school that seeks to incorporate cultural and religious values into its learning activities.

The research subjects consisted of fourth and fifth grade teachers and 20 students who were directly involved in thematic learning activities based on local wisdom. The subjects were selected using purposive sampling, considering that the participants had

direct experience and involvement in the learning practices that were the focus of the study (Sugiyono, 2022). The research was conducted over three months, covering initial observation, learning implementation, and reflection on the results of the application.

The data collected included primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from classroom observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and documentation of learning activities based on local wisdom. Secondary data consisted of supporting documents such as lesson plans, school profiles, and records of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), which focuses on character development through local cultural values. Data collection techniques included participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and visual and written documentation. Observations were conducted to examine students' behaviors and teachers' strategies in integrating local cultural values such as cooperation, politeness, discipline, and respect for parents. Interviews were conducted openly with teachers and selected students to explore their understanding and perceptions of learning activities containing local values, while documentation was used to complement empirical evidence from the observed learning activities.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2019). During data reduction, collected data were selected and grouped according to themes such as implementation strategies, cultural values highlighted, and changes in students' character behavior. Data display involved organizing the data into narrative descriptions and descriptive matrices for easier understanding, while conclusion drawing was conducted repeatedly to ensure the accuracy of interpretations. Data validity was maintained through source and technique triangulation by comparing observation, interview, and documentation results to increase the credibility of the findings.

Furthermore, data validity was reinforced through member checking with teachers and the school principal to ensure alignment between the researcher's interpretations and actual field experiences. Research ethics were also observed by obtaining official permission from the school and ensuring the confidentiality of participants' identities. The collected data were used solely for academic purposes, in accordance with educational research ethics. With this design, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture

of how local wisdom-based learning is implemented at SD IT Iqro Medan and its contribution to character development in elementary school students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted over three months at SD IT Iqro Medan, focusing on the implementation of local wisdom values in thematic learning activities and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation of learning activities. Based on the observations and interviews, it was found that teachers consistently integrated local cultural values such as cooperation, politeness, responsibility, and teamwork into various learning activities.

Teachers applied a contextual approach by adapting lesson materials to local culture themes, such as “Hidup Rukun di Lingkungan Sekitar” and “Cinta Tanah Air” In these activities, students were invited to discuss local community practices, such as mutual assistance and deliberation in problem solving. Additionally, teachers assigned students to create mini projects such as local culture exhibitions, traditional games, and social activities with the school community. These activities aimed to foster respect, empathy, and collaboration among students.

The results of the observation on students’ character development are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Observation Results of Students’ Character Development

Observed Character Aspects	Before	After	Improvement
	Implementation (%)	Implementation (%)	(%)
Cooperation (Teamwork)	54.5	87.2	32.7
Responsibility	58.0	85.5	27.5
Politeness and Empathy	62.3	90.1	27.8
Discipline	65.4	88.7	23.3
Respect for Local Culture	60.2	92.0	31.8
Average Improvement in Student Character	60.08	88.7	28.6

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the implementation of learning based on local wisdom values has a positive impact on the improvement of students’ character. Before implementation, the average positive character score of students was only 60.08 percent, whereas after integrating local values it increased to 88.7 percent. The aspects showing the highest improvement were cooperation and respect for local culture,

indicating that learning activities incorporating local cultural elements can strengthen students' sense of identity and togetherness.

The results of the study demonstrate that local wisdom-based learning is effective in shaping students' character at SD IT Iqro Medan. Teachers play a crucial role as facilitators and models in instilling local cultural values through contextual and interactive learning activities. This aligns with Iswatiningsih (2021), who states that character education based on local wisdom can reinforce students' religious, nationalistic, independent, cooperative, and integrity values in elementary school learning.

The significant improvement in cooperation and respect for local culture shows that learning focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on affective and social development. For example, the value of cooperation is reflected when students work in groups to create cultural products, while the value of responsibility is evident in the timely completion of individual and group assignments. Learning activities connected to the surrounding cultural context also increase students' motivation, as they feel close to the values being taught and can see their application in everyday life.

These findings support the study by Ramadani and Fitriisa (2023), which emphasizes that integrating local values such as honesty, discipline, and social care into learning can enhance the quality of students' social interactions and strengthen national cultural identity. In addition, local wisdom-based learning helps students understand character not merely as a moral concept but as concrete behavior in their social environment. Thus, the internalization of local cultural values becomes more meaningful because it is based on direct experience.

However, teachers still face several challenges, such as limited learning resources relevant to the local context and the need for further training to develop local culture-based learning designs. This is consistent with Annissabrina et al (2024), who note that the main obstacles in implementing local wisdom-based education in elementary schools are teachers' lack of readiness and insufficient integration of local values into the formal curriculum. Therefore, support from schools and education offices is essential so that teachers have clear guidelines and adequate facilities to develop learning rooted in local culture.

Overall, the results of this study affirm that learning based on local wisdom values is not only a means of cultural preservation but also an effective strategy for character

development in elementary school students. Learning that incorporates local cultural values fosters students' moral, social, and spiritual awareness while simultaneously strengthening national identity in the younger generation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that local wisdom-based learning at SD IT Iqro Medan is effective in developing the character of elementary school students. The integration of values such as cooperation, responsibility, discipline, politeness, and respect for local culture increased the students' average character score by 28.6 percent. Teachers play a crucial role as facilitators and role models in contextual and interactive learning processes. Thus, the implementation of local wisdom values has been proven to strengthen character, foster cultural appreciation, and support the development of the Pancasila Student Profile.

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