



Local Wisdom as a Moral Ecology: Rethinking Character Education in Indonesia's Cultural and Global Contexts

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how the values of local wisdom can be integrated in character education to form a generation with integrity, especially in the midst of the increasingly strong influence of globalization. This research also seeks to explore the relevance of local wisdom values in the context of education in Indonesia, and how it can support the formation of students' character. This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of literature study research (library research). Data was collected through a literature review of various relevant scientific journals, books, and articles. This study examines works that discuss character education, local wisdom, and the impact of globalization on education, as well as identify integration models that can be applied in the character education curriculum in Indonesia. The results of the study show that local wisdom values such as mutual cooperation, discipline, and honesty can be integrated in character education to strengthen student morale. This integration helps students understand and appreciate their culture, as well as build integrity. Key challenges include the influence of globalization and the lack of educators' understanding of local wisdom in the existing educational curriculum. This study introduces a new model to integrate local wisdom in character education, which can be applied in various schools in Indonesia. This research also contributes to the development of a character education curriculum based on local culture, as well as offers new insights to align education with traditional values that are relevant in the era of globalization.

Introduction

Globalization has had a major impact on people around the world, including Indonesia. On the one hand, globalization facilitates the rapid development of technology and information, but on the other hand, local cultural values are often overlooked (Pacheco, 2020; Suharyanto, 2024; Alauddin et al., 2025). Character education becomes very important in this context, because character is the moral foundation that determines how individuals interact with society (Chowdhury, 2018). In the midst of the rapid flow of global information, the young generation needs to be trained to have solid integrity, which can be obtained through character education that absorbs relevant local values (Harmadi et al., 2022; Luthfi, 2024; Asror et al., 2024). Therefore, this research aims to explore how the values of local wisdom can be integrated in character education to form a generation with integrity in the era of globalization.

Character education in Indonesia is very urgent to be integrated with local wisdom, considering the many challenges faced by the current young generation, especially in maintaining indigenous cultural identity in the midst of the increasingly strong globalization trend

(Syahrudin & Haris, 2025). Character education is not only about fostering morality, but also about forming positive attitudes and integrity that are needed in daily life (Iksal et al., 2024; Hidayat & Janan, 2023; Sanjani, 2024). Therefore, there is a need for an educational model that is able to combine local wisdom with character education, so that the younger generation can grow up with a deeper understanding of the nation's noble values and be able to deal with them wisely (Yusuf et al., 2024). This research is expected to provide guidance related to the integration of local wisdom in character education in Indonesia.

Research on character education in Indonesia is mostly still focused on universal theories that are global without considering local cultural values that are very relevant to Indonesian society (Tohri et al., 2022; Tohri et al., 2022; Alhamuddin et al., 2025). Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of character education in general, but have not reviewed how diverse local wisdom can be used to improve character education (Abdullah et al., 2019). Most character education literature in Indonesia tends to ignore the role of local wisdom in shaping the morality and integrity of students, even though integrating local values in character education can have a very big impact on the formation of a nation's character with integrity (Hasanah et al., 2023; Mulyana, 2024; Rafsanjani, 2025).

Research on character education based on local wisdom has been carried out by several researchers, but it is still limited in scope and depth. For example, Hidayati (Hidayati et al., 2020) shows that education based on local culture can strengthen the character values that exist in students, such as discipline, honesty, and respect. Research by Bretag (Bretag & Mahmud, 2015) also found that the application of local values can have a positive impact on the formation of student integrity. However, these studies are still limited to one or two specific local values, while Indonesia has a large number of diverse cultural values from various regions (Drake, 2019).

This research offers novelty by exploring how the values of local wisdom from various regions in Indonesia can be holistically integrated in character education to form a generation with integrity. Another novelty of this research is the emphasis on understanding how to integrate local wisdom values in the character education curriculum in schools, which has not been widely explored so far (Hikmawati et al., 2021). This research will also explore the challenges and opportunities that exist in the implementation of character education based on local wisdom in Indonesian schools, with a focus on cultural diversity in Indonesia.

The main purpose of this research is to explore how the values of local wisdom can be integrated in character education in Indonesia to form a generation with integrity in the era of globalization. This research aims to identify various relevant local values and how to effectively integrate them in the character education curriculum. In addition, this study also aims to provide recommendations on educational models that can be applied in Indonesian schools by combining local wisdom and character education.

Theoretically, this research can contribute to the development of character education theories, especially those based on local values that are relevant to the Indonesian context. In addition, this research is also expected to provide practical benefits for educators and education policymakers to design educational curricula that are more contextual and accommodate local values in character education. This research also contributes to providing insight for the wider community about the importance of character education based on local wisdom in shaping the integrity of the young generation.

Local wisdom contains values that are very relevant to character education, such as mutual cooperation, discipline, and respect for others (Hidayati et al., 2020). By integrating local

values in character education, the young generation in Indonesia is expected to have an attitude that is not only competent, but also virtuous (Sakti et al., 2024). Local wisdom can also be the basis for the formation of a sense of nationalism and pride in one's own culture, which is very important in maintaining the nation's identity in the midst of growing globalization (Sakti et al., 2024).

This research is relevant for education in Indonesia because of the cultural diversity that exists in this country. Indonesia has a plethora of different ethnicities, religions, and cultures, each of which has local values that can be used to enrich character education (Hermansyah & Gunawan, 2021). Therefore, this research seeks to contribute by offering ways to integrate diverse local wisdom into character education in Indonesia, so that character education can be more relevant and in accordance with the needs of the pluralistic Indonesian society (Susilo et al., 2022).

Through this research, it is hoped that a character education model based on local wisdom can be found that can be applied in Indonesia. The integration of local wisdom in character education is not only important to preserve culture, but also to strengthen the morality and integrity of the younger generation (Mulyana, 2024). Therefore, it is important for schools in Indonesia to realize the importance of local wisdom in educating students, especially in this era of rapid globalization (Layli et al., 2023).

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of literature study research, which aims to explore and analyze the existing literature regarding the integration of local wisdom in character education. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to delve deeper into complex phenomena, understand the meaning contained in the available data, and examine the perspectives in the literature on topics relevant to this research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The literature study in this study is focused on the collection and analysis of documents containing theories, concepts, and results of previous research related to character education based on local wisdom, with the aim of formulating an effective model for integrating local values in the character education curriculum in Indonesia (Tohri et al., 2022).

The main data sources in this study are various relevant scientific publications, including academic journals, books, research reports, and articles that discuss character education, local wisdom, and globalization in the context of education. The references used are selected based on their relevance and contribution to the discussion of the topic, as well as their availability in sources accessible through Google Scholar and other academic databases. The literature selection process involves searching for documents that have been published in the last five years to ensure that the information used is current and relevant to the development of globalization and character education (Chalkiadaki, 2018).

The data collection technique used is a documentation technique, namely by collecting data from various existing publications regarding character education and local wisdom. Data collection is carried out by searching and reviewing related literature through various available databases and libraries, such as journals indexed in Google Scholar, as well as relevant research reports. The collected data will then be analyzed thematically to identify the main patterns or themes that emerge related to the integration of local wisdom in character education. This technique is in accordance with a qualitative approach that focuses on in-depth analysis of data obtained from various literature sources (Cunningham et al., 2017).

The data analysis method used in this study is thematic analysis. This approach is used to identify themes that emerge from the collected literature, which is then analyzed to reveal the

relationship between local wisdom values and character education in Indonesia. Through thematic analysis, this study will try to compile findings that can provide a deeper understanding of how local wisdom can be integrated in character education to create a generation with integrity in the era of globalization (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, this analysis will consider various perspectives and results of previous research to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of local wisdom in character education in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

The current literature-based study, which is synthesised on the basis of thirty-eight scholarly works published between 2015 and 2025, finds a consistent pattern through which the central role of the local wisdom is highlighted as a moral guideline and a pedagogical base of the Indonesian education. Instead of acting as a space of cultural heritage, local wisdom is an active epistemology that informs moral thinking, identity development, and civic education among students. The corpus under review re-conceptualises the local wisdom as a whole as not an object of nostalgia and strictly speaking as a backward-looking object of the past, but as a progressive model of promoting integrity and moral standing in the globalised age.

This part is qualitative and quantitative analysis, where the data is displayed based on the five dimensions (1) distribution of reviewed studies; (2) prevailing local-wisdom values; (3) mechanisms underlying moral internalisation; (4) systemic challenges; and (5) the impacts and regional implementation models of local wisdom in character education.

Distribution and Focus of Reviewed Studies

The dissemination of the results of the research as shown in Table 1 indicates a very clear intellectual curve. The theme of earlier studies was mostly on the documentation or classification of local wisdom but the current studies have turned to the concept of theoretical elaboration and pedagogical innovation. Among 38 studies reviewed, 15 (39.5) studies tested to identify the moral values inherent in local culture; 9 (23.7) studies tested practical models of integration; 6 (15.8) studies tested measurable effects of local wisdom on the behavior of students; 5 (13.2) studies tested theoretical and philosophical underpinnings; and 3 (7.8) studies tested curriculum and policy implications

These statistics reveal a sharp rise in the scholarly attention during the last five years especially in reaction to the changes in education systems like Kurikulum Merdeka which encourages the use of culturally based pedagogues. In its turn, this has resulted in a paradigm shift in academic discourse, as the development of moral integrity through education has been viewed as the focus of teaching local wisdom rather than as its peripheral concept.

Table 1. Distribution of Reviewed Studies on Local Wisdom Integration (2015–2025)

Category	Focus of Study	Number of Studies (n=38)	Percentage (%)	Representative Sources
A	Identification of local wisdom values relevant to character education	15	39.5	Hidayati et al. (2020); Iskandar & Hamdani (2017); Haq et al. (2022)
B	Pedagogical implementation and learning models	9	23.7	Muchtar & Bundu (2024); Rodliyah et al. (2014); Sakti et al. (2024)

C	Impact analysis on students' moral and social behavior	6	15.8	Martoredjo et al. (2022); Bretag & Mahmud (2015)
D	Theoretical and philosophical exploration	5	13.2	Mulyana (2024); Gunawan (2022); Chowdhury (2018)
E	Policy, curriculum, and teacher training perspectives	3	7.8	Yusuf et al. (2024); Rouzi et al. (2025)

This distribution confirms the fact that scholars are no longer at the descriptive level. The accumulating literature that is focusing on implementation and evaluation is a harbinger of the paradigm shift to praxis, when local wisdom is no longer understood as cultural knowledge but as a tool of moral change.

Dominant Local Wisdom Values in Character Education

The synthesis of the reviewed literature revealed ten recurrent values that dominate Indonesian educational discourse. As summarized in Table 2, *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) appeared in 32 out of 38 studies (84%), confirming its enduring status as the moral backbone of Indonesian society. *Jujur* (honesty) and *disiplin* (discipline) were highlighted in 29 (76%) and 25 (66%) studies respectively, both representing moral values crucial to academic integrity and perseverance.

Responsibility (*tanggung jawab*, 58%) and environmental care (*cinta lingkungan*, 47%) follow closely, emphasizing social and ecological accountability. Meanwhile, regional moral constructs like *siri' na pacce* (honor and compassion, 32%), *mapalus* (mutual reciprocity, 18%), and *Tri Hita Karana* (balance between human, nature, and divinity, 13%) reveal Indonesia's plural moral ecology—a network of values that, while diverse in expression, converge toward communal harmony and ethical responsibility.

Table 2. Dominant Local Wisdom Values Integrated in Character Education

No	Local Wisdom Value	Frequency in Studies	Core Ethical Meaning	Region of Origin	Educational Application
1	<i>Gotong royong</i> (Mutual Cooperation)	32/38 (84%)	Solidarity, empathy, teamwork	Java, Minahasa	Group projects, peer mentoring
2	<i>Jujur</i> (Honesty)	29/38 (76%)	Integrity, truthfulness	Nationwide	Academic honesty programs
3	<i>Disiplin</i> (Discipline)	25/38 (66%)	Consistency, perseverance	Java, Sunda	Structured daily routines
4	<i>Tanggung jawab</i> (Responsibility)	22/38 (58%)	Accountability	Bugis, Banjar	Student leadership roles
5	<i>Cinta lingkungan</i> (Love for Nature)	18/38 (47%)	Sustainability, care	Bali, Papua	Eco-school initiatives
6	<i>Siri' na pacce</i> (Honor and Compassion)	12/38 (32%)	Honor, empathy	South Sulawesi	Moral reflection activities

7	<i>Adil dan arif</i> (Justice and Wisdom)	9/38 (24%)	Fairness, discernment	Lombok, Kalimantan	Debate-based learning
8	<i>Mapalus</i> (Reciprocity)	7/38 (18%)	Equality, cooperation	North Sulawesi	Community service projects
9	<i>Tri Hita Karana</i> (Harmony with Nature and God)	5/38 (13%)	Spiritual balance	Bali	Environmental education
10	<i>Adat Sasi</i> (Traditional Environmental Control)	3/38 (8%)	Conservation ethics	Maluku	Sustainability projects

These values are very regular in the occurrence of moral interdependence that represents a collective cultural orientation. All these values are not fixed codes of morality but a dynamic moral conversation of the individual the community and the environment. This living ethics represents moral DNA of Indonesian education as a source of ethical reservoir where pedagogical practices obtain the meaning and cultural authenticity.

Mechanisms of Moral Internalization

The reviewed studies arrive at the three dominant pedagogical processes, namely, experiential participation, narrative engagement, and reflective moral practice. In experiential models, the students learn by engaging in community activities that replicate the pre-modern communal practices. An example is the Tudang Sipulung in South Sulawesi and the sambatan in Central Java, which act as group project frameworks, which help instill empathy, responsibility, and humility (Mughtar and Bundu, 2024).

Instead, narrative-based teaching is based on the use of storytelling, folktales, and proverbs as cultural texts to learn the moral concepts (Hidayati et al., 2020; Sakti et al., 2024). These stories personify moral concepts making values approachable using characters and situations that students can easily identify. At the same time, reflective models such as moral journaling, group reflection, and classroom dialogue allow the learner to connect cultural values with his or her experience (Haque et al., 2022).

These mechanisms combined together turn moral education into indoctrination to interpretation. Learning will be a dialogic process where learners not only internalise, but also remake moral meanings in respect to their modern lives, which is relevant to socio-cultural learning theories that focus on the meaning-making as a communal process.

Systemic Challenges

Although it has the potential to be transformative, the incorporation of local wisdom is faced with structural and cultural obstacles which are constant as outlined in Table 4. The problem that has been identified most of the time, 58★ of the studies, is the loss of local identity during the influences of globalization. The digital era forces youth culture into the quest of cultural homogenization, often replacing the ethos of the community with a consumerist ethos (Gunawan, 2022).

Another important issue (50 percent) relates to the insufficient abilities of educators to contextualize local wisdom to the pedagogical practice (Rouzi et al., 2025). Most of the teachers rely on standardised exams and textbooks that are made globally, hence they are able to afford minimal exposure to culturally-based instruction. Besides, systemic inequity in the access to culturally relevant education is highlighted by curriculum rigidity (39 %) and urban-rural differences (37%) (Suastra, 2010). All these issues indicate the need to reform the institution, train teachers, and be more flexible in the curriculum, to help legitimize indigenous knowledge systems as a source of knowledge.

Table 3. Major Implementation Challenges

Category	Description	Frequency (n=38)	Illustrative Evidence
Globalization Pressure	Cultural dilution via digital influence	22 (58%)	Decline in local language use
Teacher Competence Gap	Lack of pedagogical contextualization	19 (50%)	Inadequate training and materials
Curriculum Rigidity	Limited curricular flexibility	15 (39%)	Centralized learning standards
Urban–Rural Divide	Disparities in local culture preservation	14 (37%)	Rural schools maintain stronger traditions
Policy and Institutional Gaps	Lack of collaboration and coordination	9 (24%)	Weak local policy support
Student Perception Bias	Perception of local culture as outdated	8 (21%)	Found mostly in urban contexts

These challenges reaffirm that moral pedagogy cannot operate in isolation; it is embedded within broader socio-cultural and institutional systems. Without deliberate educational policies that empower teachers and communities, local wisdom risks being commodified as symbolic heritage rather than transformative ethics.

Educational and Social Impacts

The findings are summarized in table 3. The greatest impact will be on the improvement of moral behavior (71 %), where students become more honest, emphatic, and ethically responsible (Hidayati et im., 2020; Bretag and Mahmud, 2015). Social cohesion (61 %) and cultural identity (55 %) are also engaged (improved) indicating that local wisdom enhances individual uprightness in the community and attaches to the culture.

Others are an increased environmental consciousness (45 %), especially in programmes based on eco-cultural models (Tri 5 Hita Karana or Adat Sasi) and their civic responsiveness (37 %), as indicated by the involvement of students in community activities. All these results suggest that local wisdom combined with the integration of local wisdom assists in the development of holistic character with both moral, social, and ecological aspects.

Table 4. Reported Outcomes of Local Wisdom Integration

Dimension	Key Indicators	Impact Description	Frequency	Representative Studies
Moral Behavior	Honesty, empathy, ethical conduct	Improved moral awareness	27 (71%)	Hidayati et al. (2020)

Social Cohesion	Cooperation, tolerance	Strengthened solidarity	23 (61%)	Muchtar & Bundu (2024)
Cultural Identity	Pride in heritage	Reinforced national identity	21 (55%)	Mulyana (2024)
Environmental Awareness	Sustainability	Proactive eco-actions	17 (45%)	Martoredjo et al. (2022)
Civic Responsibility	Community participation	Enhanced engagement	14 (37%)	Yusuf et al. (2024)
Spiritual-Ethical Growth	Humility, respect	Deepened moral sensitivity	11 (29%)	Sakti et al. (2024)

These findings suggest that education rooted in cultural wisdom nurtures the whole person intellectually, morally, and socially. Character education thereby becomes not only a school subject but a cultural movement that reconnects learning with ethical living.

Regional Implementation Models

In analyzing the applications shown in Table 5 of the region, it is possible to note the way schools all over Indonesia are innovative in contextualizing moral education. Sambatan Central Java Sambatan model redefines collective work in terms of project based learning model, thus strengthening collaborative practice in Central Java. The Siri' n a Pacce model of South Sulawesi systems the case-based moral reasoning. Tri Hita Karana is included in ecological motifs in Bali and contributes to ecological morals, whereas the Adat Sasi tradition in Maluku helps students to simulate traditional aspects of conservation.

These models support the fact that local wisdom is not a culture-bound dead object but a flexible educational philosophy that can be used to reconcile the tradition with the modern educational demands.

Table 5. Integration of Indonesian Local Wisdom into Contextual Pedagogical Approaches and Their Observed Impacts

Region	Local Wisdom	Pedagogical Approach	Description	Observed Impact
Central Java	<i>Sambatan</i>	Project-based	Communal labor as cooperative learning	Enhanced empathy
South Sulawesi	<i>Siri' na Pacce</i>	Case-based reflection	Moral dialogue rooted in cultural honor	Strengthened integrity
Bali	<i>Tri Hita Karana</i>	Eco-cultural learning	Integrating spirituality and ecology	Improved environmental awareness
North Sulawesi	<i>Mapalus</i>	Service learning	Social farming as civic practice	Increased civic participation
West Nusa Tenggara	<i>Adil dan Arif</i>	Debate and storytelling	Justice explored through folktales	Improved moral reasoning
Maluku	<i>Adat Sasi</i>	Simulation-based	Traditional conservation norms	Strengthened ecological ethics

The results of this paper help us understand how local wisdom, which was, previously, treated as a cultural heritage, has now become an effective pedagogical tool that reshapes the definition of the concept of character education in Indonesia. Incorporation of indigenous values into educational domain is not just a bid to conserve tradition but is a moral rediscovery - a reversion

to moral sources that have long been the source of harmony, empathy and integrity in the Indonesian society. This change can be associated with a wider change in the discourse of education in the last 5 years, as more and more scholars assert that an ecology of character formation cannot be separated off of the moral ecology learners are embedded in. According to the recent literature, there is a newfound acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of culture, place, and pedagogy to influence the moral imagination of globally fragmented, but morally fragmented students in the world.

Under this aspect, the article by Hidayati et al. (2020) offers a conceptual shift in the given debate. Their research demonstrates the role of instilling moral responsibility and integrity in students by incorporating values like honesty and discipline in the university curricula. Nevertheless, the scope of their work is small and they are more likely to be confined in descriptive terms. The results presented in the given study go beyond that perception by showing that the same ethical phenomena replicate on the levels of education and geographic location when the concept of local wisdom is not reduced to a mere topic of study but is turned into the experience of a moral life. This difference is essential: whereas past research also focused on content, the new scholarship supported by the current review has placed an accent on context and process. Character is not instilled by repetition of ideals but nurtured by engaging in communal and culturally reverberant activities that can enable students to live and breathe morality as a collective, lived experience.

The article by Muchtar and Bundu (2024) provides valuable arguments in support of this experiential aspect. The fact that they have adapted *Tudang Sipulung*, which is a traditional deliberative practice, into project-based learning showcases how students internalize the concepts of cooperation and empathy, by having them work directly on culturally significant collaborative efforts. The quasi-experimental data they present substantiate what qualitative insights have a long time implied: moral behavior develops in the most authentic way when learning is socially situated. However Muchtar and Bundu also warn that this success depends on the involvement of the community and the supporting institutions, which appears to be high-pitched by the systemic view provided in the present synthesis. Local wisdom will not thrive in solitude without its social grounds; it will need a pedagogy of engagement that will unite the school, the family life and community life.

On the same note, Sakti et al. (2024) and Layli et al. (2023) contribute to this discussion by studying the narrative and emotional routes in which the local wisdom is passed down. Their works on applying folktales and oral traditions show that storytelling is not just entertainment but it helps to develop moral sense and emotional intelligence. Students who find themselves in moral dilemmas using culturally familiar narratives consider it as what psychologists refer to as vicarious moral reasoning, which leads students to learn about ethics by taking part in the experiences of other people outside themselves. These works give empirical data to the argument that the cultural based moral education brings about both cognitive and affective integration. The difficulty, though, as both scholars admit, is continuity: unless he or she engages with it on a regular basis, the effect of narrative pedagogy becomes the stuff of mere transient excitement. The current research confirms that continuity due to repetition, reflection, and community reinforcement is what alters the moral knowledge to permanent ethical disposition.

Besides observations in the classroom, teacher capacity has proved to be the most incessant factor of success or failure in the application of local wisdom pedagogy. The teacher is referred to as a cultural mediator in both Rouzi et al. (2025) and Yusuf et al. (2024) as the level of moral learning depends on the professional preparedness of the teacher. Rouzi et al. emphasize that

teachers tend to say they will include the local culture, however, most of them do not have pedagogical structures or the confidence to transfer these values into interactive and inquiry-based learning. On the contrary, Yusuf et al. show that with teachers, parents and local leaders co-designing the curriculum, students exhibit the sense of moral ownership and community pride in great extents. Combined with the other above findings, these findings support one of the major findings in the study, that teacher education should shift beyond technical competence to cultural intelligence. It is only through teachers with the knowledge of the ethical texture of their community that can turn the local wisdom of abstract virtue into their moral pedagogy.

The paradoxical nature of globalization also takes a prominent place in the current research. Gunawan (2022) argues that the rapid pace of the digital culture has eroded communal morals, especially among the young people whose morals are becoming more influenced by global consumerism. However, more recent studies are making this story difficult. Research findings like those by Layli et al. (2023) and Pacheco (2020) indicate that the same digital technologies could, when strategically applied to them, become the tools of the cultural restoration. The use of online storytelling, online museums and online archives is starting to bring back young learners to their cultural heritage in interactive and interesting manners. This duality validates the moral danger of globalization as not in technology, but in the lack of cultural mediation. This changing position is the echo of the findings of the current research: incorporating local wisdom in the digital age could not be achieved by defensive seclusion, but by creative adaptation, a blend of tradition and innovative solutions that will preserve the culture in the new forms.

A no less significant branch of the literature deals with the ecological aspect of local wisdom. Martoredjo et al. (2022) give convincing reasons, that the indigenous ecological values like Tri Hita Karana in Bali and Adat Sasi in Maluku are practical models in developing the aspects of environmental responsibility. In their statistics, they reveal that students enrolled in eco-cultural programs demonstrate concrete behavioral shifts, which are sustainable waste management and reforestation techniques. Nevertheless, their assessment also portrays a serious flaw that such impacts are usually in the short term, which disappears after the program is over. It is based on this that the current research proposes that character education based on sustainability must be integrated into the school culture as a whole and not limited to project cycles. This strategy is echoed by the vision of Education Sustainable Development (ESD) offered by UNESCO that requires moral and ecological integration via the process of continuous and community based learning.

The recent works have also helped us to have a better understanding of the connection between local wisdom and cultural identity. Such a view is illustrated by Mulyana (2024) and Hasanah et al. (2023), who show that urban students tend to feel culturally alienated because of the dominance of the cosmopolitan values, and including local cultural content into the curriculum allows them to regain a sense of belonging and moral orientation. However, the two studies also run the risk of idealizing cultural identity and making it uniform and fixed. The evidence that is synthesized to the present research gives a more detailed picture: local wisdom can act more as a dialogical identity, one that is inclusive, dynamic, and can be reinterpreted. Moral education based on local culture needs in multicultural societies to seek not the homogeneity that is reasserted, but rather the empathy that cuts across difference, the reaffirmation of shared moral humanity by means of plural traditions.

The other issue that has been repeated is the urban-rural divide which has been discussed in a detailed manner by a number of scholars such as Tohri et al. (2022). Through their study of

Sasak communities in West Nusa Tenggara, it is demonstrated that rural schools through their closeness to living traditions can more easily support the inclusion of local wisdom in their pedagogy. Urban schools, in their turn, face the problem of the lack of unity with the community-based moral practices. This inconsistency is supported by the results of the given synthesis, where the educational decentralization is required to be made in response to contextual diversity. Local adaptation should be made available in national curricula, with schools having the opportunity to convert national moral objectives into practices that are culturally-relevant. This decentralization does not disintegrate the system instead it makes it stronger; as it bases national identity in realities of locality which have been lived.

The literature of the field has methodological shortcomings that have always been persistent and should be subjected to critical examination. Many studies such as those by Bretag and Mahmud (2015), Hidayati (2020), and Muchtar and Bundu (2024) are largely based on self-reported tools or one-pre/one-post designs that lack control groups. Despite the fact that these designs produce descriptive data which are valuable, they have inherent limitations to causal inference. As a result, there is an urgent need to have stronger mixed-method and longitudinal designs that can monitor the behavioral patterns throughout the time and differentiate between the temporary attitudinal changes and permanent moral change. It is on this note that the current study identifies the possibilities and the weaknesses of the available evidence base, thus mapping out a clear methodological path forward to be followed in the future research.

These empirical evidence can also be integrated through a socio-cultural learning framework. Both Haq et al. (2022) and Ferguson et al. (2021) argue that moral development is more of a socio-interactive than just a cognitive phenomenon, which occurs by means of dialogue, imitation, and active participation. Their propositions echo Vygotsky who claims that instruction is a cultural mediating action, meaning that local wisdom performs as both the moral content, and the relational scaffolding of values that are also co-produced. Based on this, teaching of local wisdom goes beyond imparting of inert doctrines, it is a pedagogical process, which seeks to instill moral agency among the community, making education an ontological practice of ethical becoming as opposed to moral indoctrination.

The collaborative aspect which is inherent in moral learning is equally decisive. Yusuf et al. (2024) show that programs developed in cooperation with teachers, parents and community elders are those that promote increased moral involvement and responsibility in learners. However, their conclusions point out that these initiatives require administrative flexibility and localized fiscal resources to be adopted to bring about sustainability. These observations support the conclusions of the current research stating that local wisdom is only thriving in cooperative ecologies where moral education is shared among institutional boundaries. In that way, schools cannot take the moral burden upon themselves in society; they should be the components of a great culture.

This is further extended by emerging scholarship in early childhood education. Sakti et al. (2024) unravel the fact that the inclusion of cultural rituals and folktales in preschool environment fosters empathy, self-control, and team play. Such observations confirm the principle of development-psychological nature, according to which the moral dispositions are most flexible in the process of early childhood. It, therefore, instills local wisdom in this early life stage and provides a base upon which ethical continuity is maintained in later school life. However, there is a gap in the literature that is related to the lack of longitudinal follow-ups, and thus, future research that would focus on how these early interventions influence subsequent moral reasoning and civic participation is necessary.

There is another level of complexity with the meeting of local wisdom with religious education. According to Rouzi et al. (2025) and Iksal et al. (2024), indigenous and religious ethics can be used together, however, with gentleness, to enhance the moral perspectives of the students. On the other hand, conflicts can also be witnessed in cases where traditional customs are in conflict with the doctrinals. The current debate thus recommends a dialogical style of inter-faith and inter-cultural awareness and not rivalry. The coincidence of spiritual and cultural ethics in a pluralistic country like Indonesia is not accidental; it has to be developed pedagogically, through dialogue, empathy and being inclusive.

In the modern literature, there is a consistent trend: the efficacy of the local wisdom based education is achieved only when the system, participative, and contextual. The empirical evidence of Sumartias et al. (2020), Harmadi et al. (2022), Martoredjo et al. (2022), and Mulyana (2024) will always show that the moral and civic outcomes are significantly increased when schools work alongside the communities, empower teachers as cultural agents, and provide the flexibility of the curricula. When these conditions are not in place the local wisdom continues as an ornamental, aesthetic act which has no transformative content. It is on this basis that a paradigm shift is required: in lieu of a tokenistic inclusion, there has to be structural integration; local wisdom has to be integrated no longer at the fringes, but at the heart of educational design. These insights re-establish one of the major facts: local wisdom does not exist in opposition to modernity but it is its moral basis. Restructured in light of the modern concept of pedagogy, it would prepare learners to face the complexity of the world around without losing moral ground. In this point of view, it is argued that modernity does not have to be inseparable with tradition; quite on the contrary, the depth of cultural roots enhances the extent of moral vision. In this, education becomes more than a medium of intellectual progression, it is a process of becoming moral, humanful in a world that is becoming more and more in need of humanity.

Conclusion

As expected in the Introduction section, this research succeeded in achieving the goal that has been set, which is to explore how local wisdom values can be integrated in character education to form a generation with integrity in the era of globalization. The results and discussions presented in this chapter show that local wisdom, such as mutual cooperation, discipline, perseverance, and respect for nature, has great potential to be applied in character education in Indonesia. In addition, the challenges faced, such as globalization and the lack of understanding of local wisdom among educators, have also been identified, as well as models that can be applied to overcome these challenges.

This study shows that there is a compatibility between the expectations expressed at the beginning of the research and the findings obtained, namely that the integration of local wisdom can strengthen the formation of character with integrity. Thus, this research makes a significant contribution in understanding the role of local wisdom in character education and provides practical recommendations for the application of these values in the educational curriculum.

The prospects for the development of the results of this research are very large, especially in the context of developing a character education curriculum based on local wisdom in Indonesia. Further development may involve empirical studies to test the effectiveness of the application of a character education model based on local wisdom in schools. In addition, the application of this research in the next stage can include the implementation of training programs for educators, the development of character education modules based on local wisdom, and the evaluation of the long-term impact on changes in student attitudes and

behaviors. Further research can also explore the relationship between local wisdom and character education in a more specific local cultural context, to provide more detailed and contextual recommendations for education policymakers in Indonesia.

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