

Character Education Management Based on Sumang Local Wisdom: Insights from Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh

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Abstract: This study aims to describe and analyze the planning, implementation, supervision, and effectiveness of character education through Sumang local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh, as well as the effectiveness of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh. The research method used in this study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive analysis research type. The data collection methods used in this study include participatory observation, interviews, observation, and documents, records, or archives. The data sources in this study are divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. The primary data was collected from the school principal, the vice principal in charge of curriculum, school teachers, school staff, the committee, and 3 students. The results of the study reveal that the planning of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is carried out through a curriculum that is aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum. The implementation is conducted through the integration of character values into the subjects of Akidah Akhlak and Citizenship Education. Subsequently, supervision is carried out by compiling reports in the form of personal books on examination implementation and students' learning outcomes or report cards. In this regard, the effectiveness of the implementation of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is in accordance with the madrasah's vision, a well-directed learning process, and changes in students' behavior.

Keywords: Management; Character Education; Sumang Culture; Gayo Ethnic Education.

INTRODUCTION

Education in Aceh is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students possess spiritual religious strength, self-control, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed for themselves, society, the nation, and the state (Qanun no. 11, 2024). Thus, Islamic education in Aceh is based on Islamic Sharia. Various efforts are made by parents so that their children can complete Central Aceh education up to higher levels; thus, it is clear that education is a very valuable pillar of life for

society. However, education will also not succeed if it is not accompanied by good management, which is better known as management (Igor, 1990).

Management, especially in relation to culture in a particular region, still includes the processes of planning, implementation, and control of activities related to local cultural heritage to achieve desired outcomes, whether to preserve, develop, or promote it. This also involves consideration of principles, value systems, and traditions upheld by the local community. Therefore, management is very important for a community or society in managing its customs and traditions, so that the culture of a region can be preserved and passed on to future generations.

Based on this, management in the governance of Sumang culture with a focus on character education is considered an effort to shape the character of the Gayo ethnic community. The focus of character education management is on developing positive character traits such as integrity, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, and cooperation through curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular approaches. In general, the components of character education management include planning, which covers the preparation of a character-based curriculum (Bujangga, 2022), determining the values to be developed, and designing learning methods. Organization includes forming implementation teams such as teachers, parents, and the community, and distributing responsibilities. Implementation includes integrating character education into learning, school culture, and daily activities. Evaluation involves monitoring students' character development through observation, attitude assessment, and reflection (Saadah et al., 2026). Based on this, special strategies are needed, namely through role modeling, habituation, and environmental reinforcement. This indicates that character education management requires a holistic and collaborative approach between schools, families, and communities. With careful planning and continuous evaluation, character education can shape generations with noble character and positive contributions to society.

Currently, there is a degradation of Gayo cultural values, especially Gayo Sumang customs, in daily life (Rishna, 2024), which is largely influenced by the advancement of science and technology. According to American futurologists John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, lifestyles around the world show similarities, namely the 3Fs: food, fashion, and fun (Zain, 2021). These three aspects have permeated the Gayo generation, causing them to forget aspects of their own culture. More specifically, within the school environment during break times, students leave the classroom to play, rest, and buy snacks; some sit in the school yard with male and female students sitting close together, and they do not hesitate to do so in front of others, including teachers within the school environment. In the past, students would not even dare to sit together with male

students; when encountering a passing teacher, students would feel afraid, even avoiding the teacher to prevent direct encounters, and would feel ashamed to greet them. This was due to a high sense of respect and deference toward teachers. This condition is caused by strict forms of education that can no longer be applied to students, such as reprimands, slaps, pinches, and punishments. Government policies prohibit such forms of education, allowing students to freely do what they want without considering the risks they may face.

Furthermore, there is a lack of habituation of Sumang cultural wisdom values within families, as indicated by the decline in practices such as greeting and showing respect to teachers at school and to parents when arriving at the school gate. The flow of globalization and modernization has forced its way into the school environment. Moreover, interactions among female high school students who do not hesitate, in front of a teacher, to address male students using terms as if they were husband and wife. This is supported by research (Lestari, 2012) which states that one of the causes of the declining existence of Sumang in society is the dating culture trend among adolescents. This violates the values of Sumang culture, as these adolescents do not respect the teachers present before them, lack a sense of shame, are impolite, or lack proper manners toward teachers. Not only that, young people can no longer distinguish between what is appropriate and what is not (Saputra & Zulmaulida, 2023), due to the influence of television shows, smartphone use, and social media.

In line with the findings of research by (Munawarah, Ikhsan, & Ghafur, 2023) Gayo Sumang serves as a driving force for the moral and ethical development of early childhood, as evidenced by positive values that impact moral and character development. Other studies also reveal that the implementation of character education based on local wisdom (Gayo ethnic group) at public junior high schools in the Ketol District has begun to develop well through the concept of a hidden curriculum and influences student development, although it is not programmed into the potential/ideal curriculum (Juwandi et al., 2024). Meanwhile (Syukri, 2018) explains that the implementation of Sumang culture is highly relevant in restoring the character of the Gayo community, as it is a tradition and a means that can lead the Gayo community to noble character. Efforts to re-actualize Islamic educational values in Sumang culture within the Gayo community include maintaining the local Gayo language within families, applying Sumang as habits within families, intervention by reje in implementing Sumang culture, forming traditional villages as models of Sumang-based cultural villages (Hamda et al., 2023), promoting (Fathonah & Halwa, 2022) and facilitating scientific publications related to local wisdom (Evanirosa, 2020).

Based on the above studies, Sumang education is defined as all efforts to advance morals, ethics, character, intellect, physical, and spiritual aspects by prohibiting, controlling, and preventing all immoral acts, actions, and speech (Syukri & Sabariah, 2021). Therefore, as educational institutions, it is necessary to implement character education based on local wisdom by internalizing Sumang culture within education (Putra et al., 2025). The changes occurring today are essentially inseparable from parental upbringing and teaching within families (Susana, 2022). One medium of character education within the family is found in Sumang culture, which teaches and instills Islamic education in children from an early age (Hidayat, 2018).

Based on the above problems, it can be concluded that there are several indicators of issues. First, the weakening role of parents in shaping children's character, meaning that supervision and teaching of Sumang cultural values within families have significantly declined, as indicated by reduced supervision of children's social interactions, weak control over technology use, and declining discipline in teaching manners and ethics according to Gayo customary norms. Second, the degradation of Sumang cultural values due to modernization, meaning that globalization and technological advancement have shifted Gayo community social practices. Third, the erosion of the Gayo language and cultural identity within families, replaced by the Indonesian language. Fourth, the increase in individualism and the weakening of social solidarity, meaning that shifts in parenting and interaction patterns within families have led to reduced practices of togetherness and familial values, causing Sumang cultural values that emphasize respect for parents, teachers, and the community to fade. Fifth, the lack of awareness of the urgency of character education management, meaning that the absence of a systematic character education management system within families has caused Sumang cultural values to no longer serve as the primary reference in shaping the morals of the younger generation. This is evident from the lack of integration of character education into parenting patterns.

These issues collectively underscore the need to implement an integrated character education program rooted in the local wisdom and cultural values of the Sumang people at State Senior High School 1 Central Aceh, so that the moral and character development of students can once again be guided by Gayo norms, ethics, and social practices that value discipline, solidarity, and cultural identity. Based on the above explanation, it is important to examine how the local wisdom values of Sumang culture can be managed within the character education system to maintain cultural identity while forming generations with noble character. The aim is to cultivate values such as integrity, responsibility, discipline, and mutual respect in daily life (Hidayati et al., 2022; Palunga, R., & Marzuki, 2017). Therefore, the inculcation of character values is incorporated

into lesson plans in Islamic educational institutions or madrasahs with the intention of shaping positive character, and the success of character education depends on collaboration between schools, families, and communities in applying positive values in daily life (Zaki et al., 2022).

Referring to this, an in-depth study is needed regarding how to manage effective and efficient management activities, cooperation, communication, and, importantly, good leadership of the madrasah principal within Islamic educational institutions integrated with the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh. This research contributes to the development of character education strategies that are not only based on modern theories but also respect and preserve local wisdom. In addition, the results of this study can serve as a reference for educational policymakers, particularly in integrating local cultural values into formal education curricula.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using qualitative descriptive analysis research, which is based on the intention to describe social and concrete realities so that they are consistent with the research objectives. This study uses information obtained from research targets or respondents through data collection methods such as interviews, dialogues, observations, documentation, and others. The primary data consist of the madrasah principal, vice principal for curriculum affairs, madrasah teachers, educational staff, committee members, and students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh (as subjects, respondents, and data sources). From these primary sources, the researcher seeks to obtain data on the management of character education based on the local wisdom of Sumang culture in the madrasah.

After all data were collected, the data were classified into patterns, themes, or categories, then edited and sorted. The required data were then categorized into several cover terms to answer the research questions. After all processes were completed, the data were analyzed using descriptive analysis, while data that were less relevant to the research questions were set aside. The data analysis approach proposed by (Miles et al., 2020) is relevant to this study. This analysis model consists of three main stages, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2020; Miles & Huberman, 1984). The techniques for examining data validity use credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Moleong, 2013, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Planning of Character Education through Local Wisdom Values

Based on the results of observations conducted, it was found that the planning of character education at MAN 1 Central Aceh is carried out by preparing learning curricula such as teaching modules, daily journals, and annual programs of the Merdeka Curriculum, as well as integrating character values into the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education. Not only that, curriculum development in the planning of character education is developed by considering local wisdom values that are aligned with character values and by involving the community, such as parents and community leaders. This is in accordance with the results of an interview with the Head of the Madrasah, Mr. RB, who stated:

“Character education planning through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is well planned, systematic, and directed, namely by planning and managing the curriculum such as preparing teaching/learning modules in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum, as well as developing learning materials that are integrated into the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education.”

This is in line with what was conveyed by the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs, Mrs. SLW, who stated:

“In Sumang culture, there are rules including in walking, speaking, seeing, and sitting. At Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh, it is necessary and mandatory to make good planning in the implementation of character education so that through the learning process, students’ character can be formed.”

This is also in line with what was conveyed by Mrs. SDR as a teacher of Aqidah Akhlak, who stated:

“The planning of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is well planned, systematic, and directed, namely by planning and managing the curriculum such as learning modules by preparing annual programs in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum, integrating character into subjects through local wisdom values, involving the community and parents in character education, and developing the curriculum during the learning process.”

The interview results above are in accordance with the vision and mission of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh and are in line with what was presented by Mr. AZ, who stated:

“The vision of the madrasah is to enhance the appreciation and practice of Islamic values, to realize individuals with noble character, to develop digital-based teaching and learning activities, to develop learning effectively and efficiently, to realize a madrasah that excels in research, academic and non-academic fields, to realize innovative learning through digital platform classes, scientific exploration, school tutoring, official and non-official programs, and to prepare graduates who are able to compete in official higher education institutions and favorite public universities both nationally and internationally. Meanwhile, the mission of the madrasah is the realization of a madrasah that excels in faith and piety (IMTAQ), science and technology (IPTEK), and innovation through Merdeka Belajar.”

Meanwhile, Mrs. MTN as the madrasah committee member, when interviewed, stated:

“Curriculum development is carried out by teachers during the learning process. In its implementation in the classroom, teachers provide examples of exemplary behavior contained in local wisdom. This development can take the form of daily assignments, class discussions, and learning materials provided by Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education (PKN) teachers.”

Based on the interview results above, it is known that the planning of character education at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh has been well planned, and the preparation of planning stages through implementation is carried out systematically and in a directed manner. Meanwhile, curriculum development is found in learning materials in the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education (PKN), which are based on the Merdeka Curriculum and then developed by teachers by integrating them with the local wisdom values of Sumang culture.

Implementation of Character Education through Local Wisdom Values

At Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Central Aceh, the application of Gayo Sumang values is a philosophy that encompasses ethics, manners, and morality of the Gayo community into the curriculum as well as various school activities, which can be described as a planned approach to comprehensive character education. In the implementation of character education carried out by MAN 1 Central Aceh, the four Sumang cultural values (Sumang Perceraken, Sumang

Kenunulen, Sumang Pelangkahen, and Sumang Penengonan) are integrated into learning materials and processes.

Based on the interview with the Head of the Madrasah, it was revealed that:

“The implementation of character education at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is carried out in various ways in the form of learning and activities that contain the meaning of character education. During the teaching and learning process, teachers arrange seating by separating male and female students, with the aim that they do not sit close to each other or even make physical contact.”

This is also in line with what was conveyed by Mr. JE as an educational staff member, who stated:

“In the teaching module for Aqidah Akhlak, there is material taught about habituating commendable behavior. I always insert the values of Sumang culture during the teaching and learning process, with the aim that students can apply them in the culture of the Gayo community.”

In addition, the implementation of character education at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is marked by the existence of the “Sapa Pagi” program held before lessons begin. This activity is similar to a short religious talk (kultum) lasting approximately 7 minutes, in which the speaker delivers knowledge, insights, and lessons to students. This is in line with what was conveyed by Mrs. SLW, who stated:

“The learning programs here are diverse, one of which is the Sapa Pagi Program, similar to a kultum. This learning is carried out by presenting speakers from various backgrounds, such as traditional leaders, community members, and religious scholars, who provide material on religious knowledge, general knowledge, and even culture, especially Gayo culture. The aim is to equip students with religious knowledge, general knowledge, and cultural understanding present in the Gayo community.”

Other implementations of character education include extracurricular activities such as Scouts, *OSIM*, *Rohis*, *Youth PIK*, *Paskibra*, Marching Band, Wall Magazine, *PKS*, and Art Studio. However, extracurricular activities that support character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture are shown in activities such as *Rohis*, Scouts, and Art Studio (dance and *didong* practice activities). Based on the interview results above, it can be concluded that local wisdom of a region is appropriate to be used as a compulsory subject in educational institutions. This is also welcomed by the leadership of MAN 1

Central Aceh, who stated that Gayo local wisdom, namely Sumang culture, is worthy of being a compulsory subject in the madrasah as a support for the implementation and strengthening of character education, so that students know and understand their own culture, and so that Gayo culture remains preserved.

Supervision of Character Education through Local Wisdom Values

Supervision is the final stage in management within an organization to achieve its goals. Based on the interview with the Head of the Madrasah, it was explained that:

“The supervision carried out by teachers is of several kinds. First, supervising students’ daily behavior and morals within the madrasah environment. Second, supervising and monitoring students’ development from the beginning of the semester, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Third, teachers provide supervision notes in the form of students’ personal books, which contain information about students’ learning activities at home and activities considered positive.”

This is in line with what was conveyed by Mrs. SDR and Mr. AZ in the interview, namely:

“The form of supervision carried out by teachers is in the form of assessments such as mid-semester exams, semester exams, daily tests, and assigned tasks.”

In supervision, in addition to teachers, the active role of the community and parents is needed in monitoring or supervising students in the process of character formation. The role of the madrasah committee also greatly influences the implementation of character education at MAN 1 Central Aceh. The interview results with the Head of the Madrasah stated that:

“One of the functions of the school committee is to supervise extracurricular programs at the school, such as clubs, sports activities, and arts.”

Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh carries out supervision of character education by evaluating learning programs, student learning outcomes through tests and examinations, and strengthening character through intracurricular and extracurricular activities as well as the participation of parents and the community. This is in line with what was conveyed by Mrs. SLW, who stated.

“Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh conducts supervision or assessment of the implementation of character education by evaluating

learning programs, student learning outcomes through tests and examination results, as well as strengthening character through intracurricular and extracurricular activities and the participation of parents and the community.”

In addition, in supervision or evaluation, follow-up actions must be taken by both teachers and the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs as feedback on the implementation of character education. Based on the interview conducted with Mrs. SDR, it was stated that:

“In supervision, follow-up actions need to be carried out, namely evaluating previously prepared programs, holding meetings related to program improvement in character education, and preparing improvement programs in accordance with strengthening character education.”

Effectiveness of Character Education through Local Wisdom Values

Effectiveness in Islamic educational institutions or madrasahs is a measure of how far targets or objectives are achieved in realizing the vision, mission, and goals of educating students. Character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is effective in improving the quality of graduates or producing students with character. This is in line with what was conveyed by Mrs. HDY as a Civic Education teacher, who stated:

“The implementation of character education at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh has been effective through Sumang cultural values. First, the achievement of goals in accordance with the vision of MAN 1 Central Aceh, namely realizing individuals with noble character and increasing the appreciation and practice of Islamic values. Second, the quality of the learning process. Third, students’ behavior has improved over time, such as increased respect, speaking politely, dressing according to regulations, and obeying all school rules. Fourth, learning has been integrated with Sumang cultural values in the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education. Fifth, community and parental participation in supporting the implementation of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture.”

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation studies, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh is in accordance with the vision of the madrasah. The behavior of students at MAN 1 Central Aceh also shows character education values, including honesty,

discipline, politeness, manners, tolerance, faith, and independence. A good, directed, and systematic learning process that integrates learning content with local wisdom values of Sumang culture both inside and outside the classroom can improve the quality of learning, so that students apply good behavior, do not violate Sumang culture, and become individuals with character. Changes in students' behavior after participating in character education through local wisdom values of Sumang culture integrated into learning in the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education include increased respect for teachers and others, as well as the ability to apply Sumang cultural values in daily life. Furthermore, extracurricular activities such as Scouts, Rohis, and Art Studio are integrated or linked with local wisdom values of Sumang culture during the activities. Community and parental participation also supports the implementation of character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture. Based on this, there are several supporting factors. This is in line with what was conveyed by Mrs. SLW as the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs in the interview, who stated:

“The supporting factors for the effectiveness of character education implementation at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh include the commitment of the madrasah, including the head of the madrasah, teachers, staff, and educational personnel to implement character education. In addition, a quality curriculum and qualified teachers. Community participation also strongly supports the implementation of character education, as well as adequate resources in the form of facilities, technology, and teaching materials to support the implementation of character education. Furthermore, a positive school culture is also a supporting factor. Student involvement in the learning process and extracurricular activities to develop character. Finally, effective supervision and evaluation to monitor progress and effectiveness in implementing character education.”

CONCLUSION

Local wisdom has a strong relationship with culture and contains perspectives and rules that provide guidance for society in determining actions such as daily behavior. However, the exemplary values contained in local wisdom have gradually begun to erode due to various factors, one of which is the lack of attention from parents and teachers in introducing character values contained in local wisdom. The local wisdom referred to in this study is Sumang culture. Sumang custom is part of Gayo custom that has begun to erode from its cultural roots, especially among the younger generation of the Gayo ethnic group. The conclusion that can be drawn is that in terms of planning character education through the local wisdom values of Sumang culture at Madrasah

Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh, it has been well planned, systematic, and directed, so that its implementation is carried out through integration of local wisdom values of Sumang culture into the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak and Civic Education. In addition, there are the Sapa Pagi program, extracurricular activities, and Gayo traditional ceremonial programs at every admission and graduation of madrasah students. Thus, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh continues to apply the local wisdom of Sumang culture within the madrasah environment, particularly in strengthening student character. In terms of supervision, teachers play an active role in supervising and monitoring students' behavior, morals, self-development, and academic intelligence so that educational objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Therefore, based on the results of this study, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Central Aceh can pioneer the inclusion of Gayo Customary Studies as a compulsory subject so that the existence of Gayo customs is not eroded from Gayo culture, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Central Aceh Regency is expected to plan local content subjects on Gayo customs starting from *MIN*, *MTsN*, *Aliyah*, and Higher Education. Recommendations that can be provided to traditional leaders, community leaders, religious leaders (*Tengku*), and village officials (*sarakopat*), as well as other community figures, to help them implement character education based on Sumang culture in the Central Aceh region.■

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