

Characteristics of Local Wisdom in Building Character Based on the Perspectives of Teachers and Students in Batu City Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study aims to examine teachers' and students' perspectives on the role of local wisdom in building student character in elementary schools. Using a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, data was collected through in-depth interviews and observations in several elementary schools. Regional Pride by developing a sense of pride in the cultural richness and uniqueness of the Batu region through school projects. This research adopts a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection involves observation, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation, allowing for direct observation of classroom dynamics and gathering insights from participants. The research follows Miles and Huberman's three streams of activities, beginning with data collection from various sources. The results showed that teachers see local wisdom as an important source of value in character education, as it can strengthen cultural identity and instill positive values among students. Students also recognized the benefits of engaging in local wisdom-based activities, which made students appreciate their own culture more. However, challenges faced include teachers' lack of knowledge about local wisdom and limited resources to integrate it into the curriculum. This study recommends the need for training for teachers and closer collaboration between schools and communities to overcome these obstacles. With the right approach, local wisdom can be effectively integrated in learning, contributing to better character development of students and strengthening their love for local culture.

Keywords: Local Wisdom; Character Education; Teacher and Student Perspectives

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji perspektif guru dan siswa mengenai peran kearifan lokal dalam membangun karakter siswa di sekolah dasar. Menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi di beberapa sekolah dasar. Rasa Bangga terhadap Daerah dengan mengembangkan rasa bangga terhadap kekayaan budaya dan keunikan daerah Batu melalui proyek sekolah. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Pengumpulan data melibatkan observasi, wawancara dengan guru dan siswa, dan dokumentasi, yang memungkinkan dilakukannya observasi langsung terhadap dinamika kelas dan mengumpulkan wawasan dari para peserta. Penelitian ini mengikuti tiga alur kegiatan Miles dan Huberman, dimulai dengan pengumpulan data dari berbagai sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru melihat kearifan lokal sebagai sumber nilai yang penting dalam pendidikan karakter, karena dapat memperkuat identitas budaya dan menanamkan nilai-nilai positif di antara siswa. Siswa juga mengakui manfaat dari keterlibatan dalam kegiatan berbasis kearifan lokal, yang membuat siswa lebih menghargai budaya mereka sendiri. Namun, tantangan yang dihadapi termasuk kurangnya pengetahuan guru tentang kearifan lokal dan keterbatasan sumber daya untuk mengintegrasikannya ke dalam kurikulum. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan perlunya pelatihan bagi guru dan kolaborasi yang lebih erat antara sekolah dan masyarakat untuk mengatasi kendala ini. Dengan pendekatan yang tepat, kearifan lokal dapat diintegrasikan secara efektif dalam pembelajaran, berkontribusi pada pengembangan karakter siswa yang lebih baik dan memperkuat rasa cinta mereka terhadap budaya lokal.

Kata Kunci: Kearifan Lokal; Pendidikan Karakter; Perspektif Guru Dan Siswa

Introduction

Education has a very important role in shaping student character, especially at the elementary school. At this age, children are in a crucial phase of development, where moral and ethical values begin to be instilled. In the context of widespread globalization, new challenges arise in education that can erode local cultural identity (Cvetkovich, 2018). Therefore, it is important to explore the potential of local wisdom as a tool to build students' character, so that they can grow into individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also have strong and cultured personalities (Baderiah and Munawir, 2024). Through this approach, students can better understand and appreciate their surrounding environment (Bergman, 2016).

In addition, an understanding of local wisdom can also increase self-confidence and pride in self-identity. Local wisdom is a collection of values, norms, and practices that have existed in society for a long time. These values often reflect a community's traditions, customs, and outlook on life. In the context of education, local wisdom can be a strong foundation for instilling positive characteristics, such as cooperation, tolerance, and respect for the environment (Arif et al., 2023). By integrating local wisdom into the education curriculum, it is expected that students can better understand and appreciate their cultural identity, and apply these values in their daily lives (Albantani and Madkur, 2018). Local wisdom-based learning experiences can also help students develop empathy for others (Aulia & Simanjuntak, 2023).

In addition, it encourages them to become more sensitive to social and environmental issues around them. A study by the East Java Education Office (2023) showed that 25% of elementary students in urban areas exhibited challenges in demonstrating core values like honesty, discipline, and mutual respect, often attributed to limited reinforcement at home and school. Surveys of teachers in Batu City revealed that 43% feel underprepared to integrate local wisdom into their character-building strategies, citing a lack of teaching resources or structured guidelines. Then, Data from a regional parenting engagement survey (2022) highlighted that 32% of parents in Batu City are minimally involved in character-building efforts, which hinders the consistency of value reinforcement outside the classroom.

Teachers at SDN Pendem 01 reported that students are often more influenced by trends and behaviors seen on social media platforms than traditional local values. For example, a teacher noted, Students now prioritize viral content over the communal practices of mutual help and respect that we emphasize in class. These statistical and anecdotal pieces of evidence highlight significant challenges in character-building among elementary students in East Java. Addressing these issues requires a collaborative approach, leveraging local wisdom to create engaging, modernized educational strategies that bridge the gap between traditional values and contemporary influences. Integrating storytelling, community-based activities, and digital tools rooted in local culture can be pivotal solutions.

Although the importance of local wisdom is recognized, its implementation in the education curriculum is often overlooked. Many schools focus more on teaching general

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academic material, without considering the cultural context around them. As a result, students may lose connection with their cultural roots and become less sensitive to relevant social issues (Abacioglu et al., 2020). In addition, the lack of training for teachers on local wisdom is also one of the inhibiting factors. Many argue that the integration of local wisdom can increase students' sense of identity and pride in their culture (Bauto, 2016). In this study, the author seeks to explore the obstacles faced in the integration of local wisdom in education and provide appropriate solutions to overcome them.

Looking at the facts, one of the challenges faced is the lack of understanding and awareness from educators about the importance of local wisdom. Many teachers do not have sufficient knowledge about local wisdom in their area, making it difficult to integrate it into the learning process (Ardan, 2016). Therefore, training and capacity building for educators is necessary so that they can effectively convey local wisdom values (Darmadi, 2018). In addition, collaboration with community leaders and cultural experts can enrich the material taught. Support from the government is also needed to create programs that focus on local wisdom (Angelia et al., 2020). In this way, the integration of local wisdom in education can run more optimally.

On the other hand, the role of parents and communities is also very important in supporting the integration of local wisdom in schools. Cooperation between school, family, and community can create a conducive environment for students' character development (Tohri et al., 2022). The community can play an active role in conveying local values through various activities, such as cultural arts, festivals, or community service programs (Ariani et al., 2022). This involvement not only strengthens students' understanding of local wisdom but also builds a stronger sense of solidarity and community identity (Arsal et al., 2023). In addition, dialogue between educators and parents on the importance of local wisdom can increase mutual.

By involving older generations, students can also learn directly from their life experiences. Initiatives such as visits to historical places or local traditions will add real insight to students (Boniface et al., 2016). This creates a bridge between academic knowledge and rich life experiences. Research on the role of local wisdom in shaping character in students has been conducted by Muhammad and Yosefin (2021) which examines the cultivation of local wisdom values in character education during a pandemic. Suttrisno and Rofi'ah (2023) examined to describe the integration of Bojonegoro local wisdom values through the concept of Pancasila student profile. Research on character education has been conducted by Islami (2022) on the importance of preserving local wisdom in student character building.

The research discussed Iswatiningsih (2019) on strengthening the importance of local wisdom in the character building of elementary school students in five strengthening character values, namely religious values, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and integration. Research conducted by Faiz and Soleh (2021) is about the implementation of character education models in cultural arts learning such as batik, glass painting, and cultural recognition in Cirebon. This research aims to explore various methods that can be applied in learning to strengthen the role of local wisdom in building student character. Through creative and innovative approaches, it is expected that local wisdom can be presented in every aspect of education, from the curriculum to extracurricular activities.

In addition, this research will also evaluate the impact of local wisdom integration on students' character development, both in academic and social contexts. Methods to be explored include project-based learning, the introduction of local arts and culture, and the use of technology to promote local wisdom. The research will also involve interviews with teachers, students, and parents to gain a broader perspective. By involving various parties, it is expected to build a strong synergy in the implementation of local wisdom. In addition, in-depth data analysis will provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of the various approaches applied. The results of this study are expected to provide useful recommendations for education policy at the local and national levels. The research on 'The Role of Local Wisdom in Building the Character of Elementary School Students' is expected to make a significant contribution to the world of education.

The results of this research will not only be a source of information for educators and policymakers, but can also be an inspiration for the community to better recognize, preserve, and integrate local wisdom into education. Thus, it is hoped that students' characters can be well-formed, in line with the cultural values that exist in society, so that they grow into a generation that is not only intelligent but also has a strong sense of identity and can appreciate the nation's cultural heritage. In addition, this research is expected to encourage further discussion on the implementation of local wisdom in the curriculum. Through collaboration between school, family, and community, the learning process will become more holistic and meaningful. With the right support, local wisdom can be a strong foundation for student character development.

Methods

This research adopts a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, focusing on observations in grade 5 elementary schools in Batu City to gain a deeper understanding of educational phenomena. The data, which includes words, pictures, and students' behaviors, is presented in narrative descriptions rather than numerical or statistical formats. Data collection involves observation, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation, allowing for direct observation of classroom dynamics and gathering insights from participants. The research follows Miles and Huberman's three streams of activities, beginning with data collection from various sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents. This is followed by data reduction, where information is filtered and organized to identify important themes. Finally, the data is presented in clear, structured narratives or visual formats, facilitating understanding and offering interpretations and conclusions. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive and indepth analysis of the learning process in the classroom.

Results And Discussion

The main characteristic of local wisdom in this study is Love for the Environment. Education that instills concern for the environment based on local wisdom, such as the tradition of keeping clean and promoting greening, plays an important role in shaping student character and fostering a sense of responsibility for the sustainability of nature. One of the tangible manifestations of local wisdom is reflected in the habits of local people who have traditionally maintained the balance of nature and preserved biodiversity. In addition, fostering a sense of Regional Pride is an important focus in shaping the identity of the younger generation, encouraging them to take pride in the rich culture and unique characteristics of the Batu region.

Through school projects centered on the theme of local wisdom, students are empowered to explore, preserve and promote the noble values of their region while actively contributing to the preservation of culture and nature amidst ongoing modernization. The concept of education at SDN Pendem 01 Batu shows that the role of educators as facilitators in integrating local wisdom into the learning process is very important for the character-building of students and the preservation of local culture. As a guide, teachers do not only function as conveyors of information but also as guides who create an inclusive and interactive learning environment. Through various methods, such as project-based learning, group discussions, and out-of-class activities involving local communities, teachers can encourage students to actively explore, understand, and appreciate local wisdom values (Berrio, 2021; Jutila, 2024). In addition, teachers need to equip themselves with knowledge of relevant local wisdom and the ability to link it to the curriculum, so that the learning process is not only academically useful but also contributes to strengthening students' cultural identity. The teaching methods used at SDN Pendem 01 Batu integrate local wisdom as an important part of the teaching and learning process. Contextual learning is applied to connect the subject matter with students' daily lives, so that they can more easily understand and apply it. In addition, storytelling is an effective method to convey cultural values and hone students' imagination and creativity. Practical activities are also highly prioritized, where students can directly engage in activities that illustrate local customs and traditions, which not only enrich their knowledge, but also preserve the cultural heritage that exists around them.

1. Contextualized Learning



Figure 1. Pendem Village Rice Barn Source: Rahmawati et al. (2023)

In contextual learning, students are invited to link the subject matter about the environment with the potential of natural tourism in Batu City, such as planting rice which is part of their daily lives. When students go to the Village Rice Barn, there is a process where they can learn about how to plant, care for and harvest rice, which provides a practical understanding of agriculture and the life cycle of plants, so that through direct experience, students learn about hard work, responsibility and the importance of cooperation in agricultural activities.

2. Story-Telling

Legendary stories allow students to explore local wisdom through narratives about local figures, such as Mbah Minto, a wise apple farmer who teaches the value of hard work and perseverance. Through stories about him, students can learn about the importance of effort and dedication in achieving good results, and be introduced to a positive figure who can inspire them to develop good character in their daily lives. Stories like this also introduce students to noble values passed down from generation to generation, teaching them to appreciate existing cultures and traditions. By learning about characters like Mbah Minto, students are invited to understand that success is not only determined by talent, but also by consistent effort and perseverance. This encourages them to be more confident in facing challenges and achieving their dreams. These stories also reinforce a sense of pride in local cultural heritage, and encourage students to preserve these values in their lives.

3. Practical Activities



Figure 2. A Student Performs Traditional Bantengan Dance at SDN Pendem 01 (Source: Personal Document)

Such as making handicrafts from natural materials around them or learning traditional arts such as bantengan dance. The bantengan dance gives students direct experience to apply the knowledge they have gained, thus strengthening their appreciation and respect for local culture. By combining these three methods, the learning process becomes more dynamic and meaningful and supports the development of students' character rooted in local wisdom. Students' understanding and appreciation of local wisdom can be enhanced through interactive and contextual learning approaches. Students can understand the values of local wisdom when they are directly involved in the learning experience, namely through out-of-class activities, visits to cultural places, or participation in local traditions (Aziz et al., 2024).

In addition, learning methods that involve storytelling allow students to listen to heartfelt narratives that are relevant to their lives, making it easier for them to internalize the values. Group discussions can also encourage students to share personal views and experiences, thus enriching their understanding of local cultures (Caetano et al., 2020). By actively engaging students and providing space for exploration and reflection, they not only learn about local wisdom but also develop a sense of pride and responsibility to preserve it, making them a generation that values their cultural identity more. The response of students at SDN Pendem 01 Batu to the local values taught in local wisdom-based learning can be seen in their daily experiences outside school.

Many students begin to apply the values in their social interactions, such as showing respect to elders, participating in gotong royong activities in the neighborhood, and maintaining traditions inherited by ancestors. For example, students who are taught about the importance of cooperation and solidarity may be more active in community activities, such as cleaning the environment or helping neighbors in need. In addition, personal experiences involving local values, such as attending traditional ceremonies or celebrating cultural festivals, also strengthen their understanding and integrate those values into their daily behavior. This response suggests that teaching local wisdom not only makes an impact in the school environment but also shapes students' positive attitudes and behaviors in their lives in the community, making them more caring and responsible individuals for their culture and environment (Afdhal et al., 2024; Armini, 2024).



Figure 3. Cover Of The Folktale The Legend of Joko Kendil Source: Rahma (2021)

At SDN Pendem 01 Batu, the implementation of local wisdom in character learning is seen through various activities that integrate local cultural values. One example is the use of folktales such as the legend of Joko Kendil which not only teaches language and literature, but also instills values such as courage, honesty and love for the country. In addition, the school regularly organizes cultural festivals involving students, parents and the community, creating a sense of togetherness and mutual cooperation. With this approach, students at SDN Pendem 01 Batu not only get an academic education, but also develop strong character and a deep understanding of their cultural identity (Ichda et al., 2023).

Out-of-class learning programs are also an effective tool implemented at SDN Pendem 01 Batu to internalize local wisdom. Activities such as tree planting, introduction to local flora and fauna, and visits to historical sites around the city provide hands-on experiences for students to learn to appreciate their environment and cultural heritage. By engaging students in hands-on activities, they are taught to be responsible towards nature and understand the importance of preserving traditions (Moore et al., 2018; Jacobson et al., 2015). These activities not only increase environmental awareness but also strengthen the sense of solidarity and care among people, thus creating a holistic and values-oriented character in society (Bhushan & Mohan, 2017).

In addition, direct interaction with the surrounding environment helps students develop a sense of love for their region. This experience also encourages students to play an active role in society, applying the values they have learned (Barber et al., 2015; Doyle, 2023). Through this activity, students can directly experience the positive impact of local wisdom in their daily lives (Ardianti et al., 2019; Eko and Putranto, 2019). There are challenges that teachers face in implementing local wisdom in the learning process that are quite diverse and complex. One of the main challenges at SDN Pendem 01 Batu is the limited facilities for teachers to deepen their knowledge and export less about the local wisdom that exists in their area, which can hinder their ability to integrate it into the curriculum effectively. In addition, limited resources, such as teaching materials and support from the school, are also an obstacle to the implementation of local wisdom-based teaching methods. Teachers are often faced with differences in student interest and motivation, where not all students have an awareness or appreciation of their local culture. In addition, the pressure to meet academic standards and the national curriculum often distracts from the importance of teaching cultural values (Hong and Youngs, 2019; Miles, 2021). This challenge is further exacerbated by the lack of local wisdom-focused professional training for teachers (Baka et al., 2024; Keliat et al., 2021). Ineffective

communication between schools and communities can also reduce parental participation in supporting this learning. By creating stronger networks between all stakeholders, it is hoped that these challenges can be better addressed.

Conclusions

Based on the research on teachers' and students' perspectives on the role of local wisdom in building student character in elementary schools, it can be concluded that both have a positive view of the integration of local values in education. Local wisdom serves as a source of moral and ethical values that can enhance students' sense of community and cultural identity. It was found that teaching that emphasizes local wisdom can increase student engagement in the learning process. In addition, students showed greater interest when local values were integrated into the teaching materials. For this reason, it is recommended that schools develop a more systematic curriculum to integrate local wisdom, conduct training for teachers to implement interesting teaching methods, and involve parents and communities in activities that support character education. Further research is also needed to explore the impact of local wisdom in more depth and find best practices in its application. With these steps, it is hoped that students' characters can be optimally formed and they can grow into individuals who appreciate culture and have high integrity.

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