

## Analysis of Islamic Character Education in Malay Culture in Early Childhood and Primary School

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### Abstract

Character is a component of values in the standard view of behaviour in life. Any excellent character education programme should aim to develop good moral habits in students, not just instruct them on right and wrong. The problems of contemporary life can be met via character education founded on local wisdom principles. Society can instil values of independence, humanity, and devotion in students by imparting Islamic values through Malay culture. In this article, the author employs a descriptive qualitative research method with secondary data collection based on a case study approach. The study is focused on Islamic character education within Malay culture for early childhood and elementary school children. This is because Malay culture still firmly upholds Islamic religious values and customs, which can significantly influence the character development of children. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of Malay cultural character education for early childhood and elementary school children can be achieved through the following methods: 1) Organizing group games to instil character traits through Malay culture, 2) Implementing BMR (Riau Malay Culture) learning, 3) Education based on local wisdom, 4) Incorporating local wisdom values into character education within Riau Malay Culture, 5) Implementing Riau Malay Culture Local Content Learning (MULOK BMR).

**Keywords:** *Character education, Islamic values, Melayu Culture, Early childhood*

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### Introduction

Regarding social norms, character is an essential aspect of values (Alfiyanto et al., 2023; Jahroh & Sutarna, 2016; Maemonah, 2012). This trait or attitude is expected to play a role in shaping students into contributing members of society (Raharjo, 2010). Character education encourages the development of problem solvers who can overcome ethical problems in Society (Suyitno, 2013). Regarding this, it can be shown that character education prepares students to have the skill to be involved in solving problems related to value problems in the surrounding environment (Siti Irene Astuti, 2010). The principles of humanity, autonomy, and divinity can be instilled in students through character education based on the local wisdom of the community (Suyanta, 2013).

Therefore, the purpose of character education is not only limited to instilling knowledge about right and wrong but must also include the formation of positive routines (habituation) so that the desired behaviour becomes a habit (Tamjidnor & Nazri Ismail, 2022) because the ultimate goal of education is to form a good person who is also intellectually capable (bright) (Samrin, 2016). It is expected that unfavourable traits such as naivety, denial of responsibility, hypocrisy, preference to graduate, lack of work ethic, lack of shyness, and so on can be overcome with the help of character education (Richter & Klaus Holzinger, 2007).

Education of the character or personality itself as much as possible since they are still young because, at that time, it was still easy to shape their character. Similarly, the symbols taught in early childhood character education are simplified so as not to burden children at their stage of development (Sudaryanti, 2015; Wardani et al., 2020). Habit formation in everyday life can be a means of character development (Suyanto, 2015).

In this case, the author focuses on Islamic character education found in Malay culture. The character of the Malay tribe can be applied in the process of child development because the Malay tribe is still very thick with Islamic customs, which can form a surface. Malay culture, or the Malayu tribe itself, is on the peninsula of Southeast Asia, ranging from Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore to Indonesia. West Kalimantan and most of Sumatra, including Aceh, North Sumatra, Riau, Jambi, and Palembang, are home to many members of Indonesia's Malay ethnic group. Malays are spiritually related to Islam as this religion has improved their social and cultural practices (Alhamdu, 2018).

Islamic Character Education is character education based on Islamic religious teachings. As we know, Islam is a religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Islam includes instructions about human life; these teachings are harmonized and refer to the Qur'an, Hadith, and human reason, but the findings of reason cannot contradict the Qur'an and Hadith.

Cultivating Character Education in early childhood and elementary schools certainly has great urgency both in the context of religion and state, especially in Indonesia (Aprilina Wulandari & Fauzi, 2021). Especially since the majority of the population is Muslim. One of the reasons for the importance of Islamic character education in the nation's next generation is religious diversity (Astuti et al., 2021). Indonesia has a variety of religions and beliefs, but most of the population is Muslim. Therefore, Islamic character education is integral to religious and moral education for most of the country's colours (Ainiyah, 2013). In addition, the urgency of Islamic character education is to strengthen Islamic identity, introduce religious teachings, educate a generation of piety, support morals and ethics, strengthen moral and civic development, and respect existing religious and cultural differences (Alam et al., 2023).

Culture abounds in Indonesia, as do opportunities to develop unique forms of indigenous technology. We must keep this high ideal alive so that our culture does not perish along with its accumulation of knowledge. The students should be socialized in the growth of high values through their educational experience (Sobri et al., 2019). BPS data (2013) shows that Indonesia has more than 633 significant tribes. Each tribe has their local wisdom in the form of life views, knowledge and life tactics related to settlement.

## **Method**

In the article discussed, researchers apply qualitative descriptive research methods using secondary data preparation methods based on case studies. A case study (collective case study) is an assessment carried out by procedures including 1) determination of topics. In this case, the author chooses claims regarding character or attitudes in Malay children that aim to improve good texture in Malay children of the archipelago; 2) Determining the case study, the author chose Islamic character education in early childhood and elementary school to be the unit of analysis in the research because Malay culture is synonymous with Islam. In analyzing this case, the author used literature from previous studies. Library materials designed through various references critically examine and focus on supporting propositions and ideas (Fadli, 2021).

## **Results and Discussion**

In the research of Sulistiwa et al. 2019 related to the Implementation of Character Education through Malay Culture in Early Childhood in Paud Cendana, researchers used an approach method to children so that they always dare to argue and are not afraid during the implementation of playgroups. There are five areas of development discussed in the material and curriculum to encourage positive character building in early childhood through exposure to Malay culture, namely 1) moral and religious values, 2) cognitive, 3) physical, 4) social-emotional; and 5) fields that are all related to the development of religious character, namely a) language; b) discipline; c) honesty; d) independence; and e) the spirit of nationality and love of the motherland.

This curriculum was developed using the Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 58 of 2009 as a guideline and emphasizes Malay culture. Character education proved effective in the study group activities across multiple dimensions, including religious observance, discipline,

honesty, independence, and patriotism. Playgroup leaders analyze methodologies to shape children's personalities using Malay values. Games, cuisine, dance, music, and people from Malay culture serve as inspiration for lessons. Paud Cendana uses a curriculum that emphasizes teaching good character to children through cooperative group projects. Teachers must understand this information strongly to plan collaborative learning activities with the curriculum (Sulistiawati et al., 2019).

Referring to the findings of the study carried out at Muhammadiyah Ukui Elementary School, the author can conclude that in supporting the running of the Government Program on Character Education, elementary schools in the Riau area, including Muhammadiyah Ukui Elementary Schools implement BMR (Riau Malay Culture) teaching to educate students about social and cultural introduction in the environment around the Riau community. The implementation of BMR learning is carried out because Malay Culture believes in God, and the degree of students in life is a mandate given to their parents. So, to make children civilized, moral, and beneficial to the nation and nation, moral education must also be provided by parents by instilling character using BMR learning.

The concept of character education in learning Riau Malay Culture (BMR) is related to the character of children's attitudes as stated in the form of teaching points. Juk ajar refers to the seven noble ethical perspectives in Riau Malay culture and is closely related to the moral and character education parents instil in their children.

The curriculum used by SD Muhammadiyah Ukui is a curriculum that prioritizes Islamic character education that is insightful and enlightened. Coupled with the implementation of BMR Education, the strengthening of Character Education at SD Muhammadiyah has become more complete and perfect. Thus, the education unit's ideals can be realized by giving a child good ethics and Islamic and global insight. Excellent education in science must be balanced with the polite behaviour of students, and this is my routine habituation of applying *yaumiyah* charity books as a form or form of school in controlling children's daily worship at home (Waluyo et al., 2023).

In the research conducted by Syamsijulianto et al., researchers used a literature study research method that used previous research results and considered relevant expert points of view. The entry of the era of globalization provides a change in the identity of the local wisdom of the community. This means local knowledge is vital for the district's traditions. The way to keep it is through education. Character education is carried out to instil values to shape students' personalities in line with values recognized by the community as the successors of the nation's generation. Character education in Malay elementary schools is still poorly implemented. The Malay community borders are enticing and contain local wisdom with noble values when examined further. They should be used to shape students' personalities in harmony with the values that apply to the community. Religious, fond of reading, responsible, independent, and socially caring are characters based on local wisdom that can be applied to character education in elementary schools. This character education can be used as a life guide for students and become something that should be done (Syamsijulianto et al., 2022).

In this study, researchers used qualitative method field research. The implementation of Riau Malay character education was carried out through the application of speaking culture, the value of language and literature through folklore, the performance of the value of dance and woven art, and the implementation of traditional games. The value preserved in character education in schools is related to religion, morality, discipline, responsibility, mutual respect, honesty, independence, compassion, social care, confidence, hard work, creativity, fair, democratic, friendly, aesthetic, peace-loving, curiosity, tolerance, example, honest, respect for the creation of others. Environment, teacher ability, and facilities and infrastructure Support factors for implementing character education refer to the local wisdom of Riau Malay culture (Ulfa & Nurhasanah, 2023).

Based on research conducted by Naratiba et al., the implementation of character education based on local wisdom in learning Riau Malay culture at SD Negeri 183 Pekanbaru uses the presentation of local content of Riau Malay Culture (MULOK BMR), which is a subject with a value system,

containing history, patterned life, customs also related to the daily behaviour of the Riau people. From the research results, the application of character education has been carried out very well. It can be seen from the eight character values that are the focus of the research on 18 national characters, including religion, discipline, honesty, social care, responsibility, independence, care for the environment, and respect for achievements. All students must consistently apply the "big eight" and all 18 government-mandated characters. However, the surrounding environment strongly influences this character education program, including family, community, and school (Naratiba et al., 2021).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the research that the author conducted, it can be concluded that so that Malay culture in the form of wisdom is not extinct, it is essential to preserve and plant and disseminate it to students through the learning process using several ways, namely: 1) Organizing playgroups to shape children's character through Malay culture by harmonizing the formation of religious, honest, disciplined, independent characters, jagan national spirit with love of the motherland; 2) Applying BMR (Riau Malay Culture) learning related to children's ethics with related to teaching points; 3) Education based on local wisdom that contains many noble values and can build the character of students appropriately in values recognized in the community; 4) The value of character education of Riau Malay Culture on local wisdom applying speaking adab, language and literature values, woven arts and dance values, and traditional game values; 5) Applying the teaching of Riau Malay Culture Local Content (MULOK BMR) is a subject that contains history, value systems, and habits of life patterned or traditional by the people of Riau. Using Malay culture to cultivate character education in early childhood and elementary school can build positive character in children, such as religious, honest, disciplined, independent, socially caring, and others. Of course, with support from schools, families, and the community.

The cultivation of Islamic character education in early childhood and elementary school, including essential subjects, also has a significant impact in the future, both for children as the nation's next generation, for religion, and for the state. Which aims to introduce religious teachings to children, foster love for Allah and His Messenger, strengthen morals and ethics, educate a pious generation, overcome modern challenges, strengthen Islamic creed and identity without reducing respect for followers of other religions, develop social and humanitarian awareness, and so on.

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