



# STRENGTHENING ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' CHARACTER THROUGH ACEH LOCAL WISDOM-BASED ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A LITERATURE STUDY ON JAK BEUT

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## Abstract

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in elementary schools has an important role in shaping children's character. However, the material, which is often textual, does not associate religious values with the local culture around the child. This study examines how the integration of local Acehese wisdom through the traditional program "Jak Beut" can strengthen students' character education. Through a literature review of various sources, the research highlights the potential of "Jak Beut" as a vehicle for character learning that combines Islamic values and Acehese culture contextually. This program has proven to be effective in instilling discipline, cooperation, respect, and religious values in the social context of Acehese children. However, the sustainability and development of this learning model requires synergistic support between formal education and local traditions, as well as policies that favour cultural preservation. This research underlines the urgency of strengthening holistic character education with an integrative approach based on local wisdom to shape the religious and cultural personality of students.

**Keywords:** *Character Strengthening, Islamic Education, Local Wisdom*

## INTRODUCTION

Character education is now one of the important aspects in shaping the young generation of Indonesia, who are not only academically intelligent, but also have strong personalities and moral values. (Al Asadullah & Nurhalin, 2021). Character formation at the elementary school level is crucial because at this time, children are in the most vulnerable and decisive phase of moral development. They need to instil values such as honesty, responsibility, respect, empathy, and discipline to be able to face various challenges in the era of globalisation and digitalisation. However, the rapid development of technology and the endless flow of information have also shifted local cultural values. Children are increasingly easily influenced by foreign cultures and instant lifestyles that often conflict with the noble values of the nation. In addition, the implementation of character education in schools still encounters various obstacles, ranging from limited training for teachers, inadequate cooperation between schools, families, and communities, to the influence of social media, which sometimes has a negative impact. (Daryanto, 2013). These things result in a lack of optimal internalisation of character values in students.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is one of the important vehicles in shaping the character of children in elementary school (Lubis, 2024). Unfortunately, the religious material taught is often textual and lacks connection to the local culture around the child (Riza, 2021). Local wisdom is a rich source of values and norms and

has great potential to help build character, because it grounds religious teachings in the context of children's daily lives. By integrating Islamic values and local wisdom, character education can become stronger, relevant, and deeply embedded in students' hearts.

In Aceh, the "Jak Beut" program is an example of the tradition of local wisdom that has been used to instil religious and moral values in children. Through night recitation activities in the meunasah or gampong, children receive spiritual guidance and character lessons such as discipline, cooperation, and respect for others. This program has been going on for a long time and shows great potential as part of Islamic Religious Education learning. However, in this modern era, the existence and sustainability of the Jak Beut program need more attention, considering the challenges of social change and value competition in the world of education. Various recent studies show that integrated and systematic character education in the school environment is very effective in shaping students' personalities. For example, recent research reveals that habituating character values through regular lessons and cooperation with parents can build positive attitudes and better academic achievement. On the other hand, the research also underlines the importance of using local wisdom in Islamic religious education to strengthen students' understanding while preserving culture.

Research by Umam and Husain, (2024) Shows that integrating local traditions in PAI learning can deepen religious understanding and strengthen students' cultural identities. Other studies, such as the one conducted in Bima, affirm the benefits of synergy between religious education and local culture in developing students' religious and social character. Specifically for Aceh, research by Hendra et al., (2025) Analysed how the Jak Beut program effectively shapes the character of elementary school children in West Aceh. They found that the program not only instilled discipline and responsibility but also built respect and social care without relying on a formal curriculum system. This success is based on example, intense social interaction, and values that are directly embedded in the surrounding community. However, the sustainability of these programs is highly dependent on community support, synergy between formal education and local traditions, and policies that favour cultural preservation.

Although many studies have discussed the topic of character education and the integration of local wisdom in Islamic religious learning, there are still gaps that need to be filled. Most previous studies have only described the general benefits of character education or normative aspects. There have not been many studies that specifically discuss the PAI learning model based on the traditional Jak Beut program in Aceh, especially in the form of in-depth and up-to-date literature studies. In addition, there has not been much analysis exploring how the Jak Beut program can be systematically applied in elementary school formal education, as well as the challenges and opportunities that exist, especially in the face of rapid socio-cultural change and the influence of digital technology.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by comprehensively reviewing the literature on strengthening student character through the integration of the Jak Beut program in PAI learning. This study will provide an in-depth conceptual understanding as well as practical recommendations for the development of

character education based on Acehese local wisdom in the modern era. With this approach, it is hoped that opportunities will open up for adaptation of similar models in other regions with appropriate cultural approaches.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a library research method with a qualitative approach. (Sugiyono, 2013). Data was collected from various secondary sources in the form of textbooks, scientific journal articles, research reports, and official documents related to character education, Islamic religious education, local wisdom, and especially about the "Jak Beut" program in Aceh (Abdussamad & Sik, 2021).

The stages of the research include:

1. Collection of relevant literature with a focus on publications in the last five years to maintain the current state of the study.
2. Selection and management of data based on relevance to the formulation of the problem.
3. The analysis of the content of the literature uses qualitative descriptive techniques to describe concepts, models, and findings related to character strengthening through the "Jak Beut" program.
4. The preparation of the results of the study is in the form of a systematic and structured scientific narrative.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Character Education in Elementary School Students**

Character education in elementary school students is an important foundation in the formation of children's personalities from an early age. Character aspects that need to be developed include religious attitudes, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and social concern. This is in line with the findings of the literature that affirm that character development must include these values as an integral part of formal education at the elementary level. (Hendra et al., 2025)

In Aceh, the development of character education has a strong peculiarity due to the influence of local culture and Islamic teachings, which are an inseparable part of people's lives. Research in several elementary schools in Aceh shows that the implementation of character education is carried out through the integration of character values into the learning curriculum and extracurricular activities that emphasise the role of teachers as role models and a conducive learning environment. settings (Arifudin, 2022). In the example of Ibtidaiyah Elementary Schools and Madrasah in Aceh Besar, the process of forming students' character is applied by integrating the values of religious character, honesty, discipline, love of the homeland, and caring for the environment in learning and extracurricular activities, as well as educational evaluation through indicators of achievement of learning outcomes for each subject. (Mujiburrahman, 2022)

Other research also emphasises the importance of character education based on local wisdom in Aceh, where Islamic cultural and religious values are integrated

in the formation of students' character through school culture, which then produces students who are ready to compete and have integrity (Zikriati et al., 2025). In elementary schools in Banda Aceh, the application of the character of love of peace is carried out with the example of teachers, learning that creates a harmonious, non-violent, and school environment that supports these values (Halim et al., 2020). In addition, strengthening students' character through Independent Learning programs such as the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) at SD Negeri 4 Banda Aceh also showed positive results in fostering student independence and responsibility (Graduation, 2025). Character education programs are also implemented with a combination of Acehese culture and Islamic values from an early age through habituation and example, such as the introduction of traditional Acehese dances and the Acehese language that strengthen the cultural identity as well as the character of students (Khairiah et al., 2022)

Thus, character education in elementary schools in Aceh must be comprehensively arranged with a holistic and integrative approach involving curriculum, school culture, teacher examples, a conducive learning environment, and strengthening local and religious values. This approach is believed to be able to form the personality of students who have strong character and have a deep social and cultural awareness.

## **2. Aceh's Local Wisdom and Its Role in Character Education**

Local wisdom in Aceh is a very rich cultural heritage and closely attached to Islamic religious values, so it has unique and authentic characteristics in shaping individual character. One of the real programs that reflects these values is the tradition of "Jak Beut," which is not only a cultural practice but also a means of character education. This tradition instils the values of patience, sincerity, cooperation, and respect for parents and the surrounding community, all of which are important foundations in the moral and social formation of children (Hendra et al., 2025).

Literature review shows that the integration of Acehese local wisdom values in character education has a positive impact on the internalisation of these values contextually and authentically. These values are not only taught theoretically, but also through cultural practices and habits inherent in daily life, so that children can live and implement them naturally. For example, instilling the value of cooperation and social solidarity through various traditional activities and traditions in Aceh strengthens children's sense of togetherness and social responsibility (Mujiburrahman, 2022).

Previous research confirms that character education based on local wisdom in Aceh, as applied in daily traditions and culture, can strengthen children's cultural identity and form individuals with Islamic and cultured characters. For example, a study on the implementation of character education based on local wisdom in Aceh schools shows that the integration of cultural and Islamic values can significantly improve the quality of students' character, such as politeness, honesty, social concern, and the spirit of cooperation (Khairiah et al., 2022).

In addition, several studies also highlight the importance of effective learning management and management in integrating local wisdom as local content in the educational curriculum, so that it can make a real contribution to the formation of strong and cultured Aceh students' character in a sustainable manner. Therefore, character education programs based on local wisdom traditions, such as "Jak Beut," are not only important for cultural preservation, but also as an effective strategy in building the character of the young generation of Aceh who have a solid moral, social, and religious foundation (Alfian, 2024).

Thus, Acehnese local wisdom is not only a source of cultural identity, but also a strategic instrument in character education that is able to instil noble values contextually and authentically, thus producing the next generation who are not only knowledgeable, but also noble and have high integrity.

### **3. Islamic Religious Education Model Based on the "Jak Beut" Program**

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) model, based on the "Jak Beut" program, is a learning approach that specifically emphasises the contextualization between religious teachings and students' daily cultural practices. In its development, this model integrates Islamic religious values with local wisdom that lives and develops in the student environment, so that learning is not only normative and textual, but also effective and meaningful through direct experience and active participation of students.

This approach is applied through various ritual activities and cultural traditions that are already inherent in the community, which are then associated with the values of Islamic teachings. Thus, students are invited to not only understand religion theoretically, but also to live and practice these teachings in real life. This makes a positive contribution to the formation of students' character from an early age, especially at the elementary school level, because children more easily absorb the values of religious teachings when taught in a context that is close to their daily lives.

The literature that examines this model shows that PAI learning based on the "Jak Beut" program can encourage the growth of love and pride for local culture while strengthening the appreciation of Islamic religious values (Mujiburrahman, 2022). Direct experience in participating in various rituals and activities that are full of meaning is an effective way to internalise these religious and cultural values. In addition, this model also encourages active student participation so that learning becomes livelier and more enjoyable, strengthening students' emotional bonds with their social and spiritual environment.

Thus, this learning model not only focuses on the cognitive and memorisation aspects of religious texts, but also accommodates affective and psychomotor aspects through a comprehensive and contextual approach. This is one of the important strategies in building a character education in Aceh, which not only produces a good understanding of religion but also forms students with a cultural spirit and noble character in community life.

#### **4. Advantages and Challenges of the Implementation of the "Jak Beut" Model**

The "Jak Beut" model has significant advantages in the field of character education, especially in its success in harmoniously uniting the local religious and cultural dimensions. This approach makes the character learning process not only theoretical, but also lively, meaningful, and contextual for students. By integrating spiritual values and local wisdom, this model is able to build students' awareness and appreciation of their cultural identity, while forming a character based on religious morals.

In its implementation, the role of teachers is very central as a facilitator as well as a role model (Rohman et al., 2022). Teachers not only deliver material, but also guide students in internalising the values of local wisdom and religiosity. Literature studies show that the success of this model is highly dependent on the teacher's ability to relate learning materials to students' experiences and local realities. In addition, close collaboration between the school environment and families is also a supporting factor that strengthens the overall character learning process, creating synergies that support the holistic development of students' character (Agustira et al., 2022).

However, there are several challenges that hinder the implementation of the "Jak Beut" model. One of them is the limited understanding of teachers of the values of local wisdom, which can cause gaps in the delivery of learning materials. Therefore, it is important to train and build the capacity of teachers so that they can master the content and teaching methodology by the principles of this model. Another challenge is the adjustment and adaptation of learning materials to suit the applicable national curriculum, so that this model can be applied effectively without ignoring the demands of the formal curriculum.

In addition to internal factors, policy support from the government and relevant stakeholders is urgently needed to strengthen the implementation of this model. Supportive policies, followed by the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure, will allow the "Jak Beut" model to be widely and sustainably implemented. The availability of resources, such as teaching materials rich in the value of local wisdom and supporting facilities, will help create a learning environment conducive to the development of local religious and culturally based character. Thus, strengthening policy and infrastructure aspects is the key to the successful spread and consistency of the "Jak Beut" model in various educational institutions.

#### **5. Implications of the Development of Character Education Based on Local Wisdom**

The development of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning models based on local Aceh wisdom, such as the "Jak Beut" program, has significant implications for character education. The "Jak Beut" program is a tradition of non-formal education in the Acehese community that has been going on for generations and focuses on the teaching of the Qur'an as well as moral and moral values. Although not tied to the formal curriculum, this activity contributes strongly to fostering

character values such as discipline, responsibility, good manners, social care, and respect for teachers.

The "Jak Beut" model teaches holistic education, not only equipping students with religious knowledge, but also strengthening Acehnese cultural identity in depth (Mujiburrahman, 2022). Children who participate in this activity learn not only to read the Qur'an but also to emulate and internalise the moral values that are carried out in daily life, so that character formation runs through examples, habits, and intense social interactions in the local context (Mujiati, 2023). Even in the modern era and the challenges of globalisation, "Jak Beut" is maintained as an integral part of the social and religious life of the Acehnese people, emphasising the importance of incorporating local traditions in the character education system.

The existence of local characteristics contained in "Jak Beut" provides added value in PAI learning and can be used as a reference for contextual and relevant culturally based character education models. However, the main obstacle found is the lack of formal integration between "Jak Beut" activities and the madrasah or national education system. This leads to the need for a policy strategy that bridges the gap between locality-based formal and non-formal education so that this wealth of cultural and religious values can continue to develop and function optimally in shaping the character of students.

*The impact* of learning models such as "Jak Beut" can be an example for other regions that want to develop character education based on their local wisdom, with adaptation according to a typical cultural context. This approach implies that character education rooted in local wisdom not only teaches religious norms, but also strengthens cultural and social identity, so as to be able to face social challenges and globalisation more effectively.

Thus, the development of character education based on local wisdom, such as the "Jak Beut" model, is an educational strategy that is rich in value, sustainable, and adaptive to the socio-cultural context, and has a positive impact on the formation of a generation with Islamic and dignified character in the Aceh cultural framework.

## **CONCLUSION**

The character education of elementary school students in Aceh can be strengthened through the integration of local wisdom values and Islamic teachings applied in the traditional "Jak Beut" program. This learning model succeeds in instilling the values of discipline, responsibility, social concern, and respect through contextual and social experience-based methods. The success of this program is highly dependent on the role of teachers as facilitators and role models, synergy with families and community support. However, the main challenge faced is the lack of formal integration between "Jak Beut" activities and the national education system. Therefore, a policy strategy is needed that is able to bridge formal and non-formal education so that cultural and religious values in this program can continue to be developed and function optimally in the formation of students' character in the modern era. With a holistic and integrative approach, character education based on local wisdom, such as "Jak Beut", has the potential to support the formation of a

young generation with strong character, religious, and maintain Acehnese cultural identity.

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