



INTEGRATING ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL VALUES INTO LOCAL CONTENT CURRICULUM AT MTS MIR'ATUL MUJAHID, KAMPUNG BAJO, KOLAKA

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ABSTRACT

Islamic education plays a vital role in shaping students' character, particularly within environments grounded in religious values. This study aimed to explore the integration of Islamic educational values within the local content curriculum at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid in Kampung Bajo, Kolaka. Employing a qualitative approach and a descriptive method, data were gathered through classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis. The findings revealed that local content subjects at the madrasah incorporated core Islamic values such as noble character, independence, responsibility, and environmental awareness. These values were implemented through the contextual integration of Kampung Bajo's local culture with Islamic principles, thereby creating meaningful and relevant learning experiences for students. The study concluded that local content serves as an effective vehicle for instilling Islamic educational values within the school setting.

Keywords: Islamic education; Local content; Integration curriculum

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamentally important for every human being, particularly for children. It is not merely a symbol of prosperity or a luxurious phenomenon; rather, education constitutes a basic human necessity and a central aspect of human life. It plays a pivotal role in societal and individual development, enabling individuals to interact within a structured society governed by norms, values, and traditions. Moreover, education empowers individuals to engage meaningfully with others, fostering intellectual enrichment, noble values, and dignified conduct for future generations. As noted by al-Qarashi (2003), the essential role of education lies in the transformation of a newborn - who is not yet fully human in the cultural sense - into a complete human being through the process of learning.

Islam places a profound emphasis on the importance of education. Islamic scholars have identified two primary components that influence human development through education:

fitrah (innate disposition) and environmental factors. By nature, human beings are cultured creatures. Although individuals are born without explicit knowledge of what is good or bad, beautiful or ugly, or right or wrong, they are endowed with a range of physical and spiritual faculties that equip them to become cultured and moral beings (Aly, 1999). The Qur'an highlights this natural human potential in many verses, emphasizing both the physical and spiritual capacities endowed by Allah SWT. From the physical perspective, humans are equipped with sensory faculties that serve as instruments for acquiring knowledge. This is articulated in Surah al-Nahl (16:78):

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ
وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

Translation:

And God brought you out of your mother's womb in ignorance, and He gave you hearing, sight, and heart, that you might be grateful.

As social beings, humans are naturally inclined toward interaction and coexistence within a structured social environment. Such interaction is essential for survival, development, and well-being. Humans not only need others to share ideas, emotions, and experiences, but also rely on their environment to foster healthy social relationships. Therefore, a peaceful, respectful, caring, and collaborative community becomes an ideal social setting in which individuals can thrive both personally and collectively. The success of such a society depends heavily on education – an instrument of transformation capable of instilling values, guiding behavior, and shaping character. Education becomes the primary vehicle for cultivating a society that is educated, faithful, and conscious of its responsibilities before God. In this context, what is now often referred to as civil society or madani society – a community governed by ethical norms, inclusiveness, mutual care, and accountability – is essentially rooted in a robust and value-driven educational process (Nata, 2010).

This educational process manifests in both formal and non-formal formats. Formal education involves structured, hierarchical instruction that takes place within recognized educational institutions, such as schools and madrasahs, and follows a predetermined curriculum established by national authorities. Non-formal education, on the other hand, refers to educational activities outside the formal school system, often community-based, flexible, and oriented towards lifelong learning. Both are essential in nurturing a well-rounded individual who contributes meaningfully to society. Within the framework of formal education, the curriculum functions as the foundation for teaching and learning. It is a comprehensive design that guides educators in planning, implementing, and evaluating instructional activities. The curriculum encompasses clearly defined educational goals, content standards, learning methods, assessment tools, and ethical values that students are expected to acquire. In madrasahs, or Islamic secondary schools, the curriculum is tailored not only to meet national educational standards but also to incorporate Islamic teachings that shape students' moral and spiritual character (Central Curriculum Research & Development Agency, 2023).

The curriculum serves as a critical instrument in realizing educational equity. It ensures that every learner, regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, or physical ability, has access to quality learning experiences. With the development of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum), the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture has reformed educational structures to be more flexible, student-centered, and relevant to local contexts. This curriculum encourages active learning through exploration, project-based activities, and reflection, with a strong emphasis on accommodating students' individual needs and cultural backgrounds. It has already begun to be adopted in schools across the nation, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs is gradually introducing it into madrasahs as well (Alfahan & Nadhif, 2023).

One of the hallmarks of the Independent Curriculum is the integration of local content (*muatan lokal*), which reflects the diverse cultural, historical, and ecological contexts of each region. Local content learning fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of local traditions, languages, crafts, and practices. It not only promotes cultural preservation but also connects students with their heritage, making learning more meaningful and relevant to their lives (Bahri, 2021). Through local content, students are trained to respect differences and recognize the values of community engagement, cooperation, and social justice – values that resonate with the principles of Islamic education. At Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Mir'atul Mujahid in Kampung Bajo, Kolaka, the local curriculum is designed with great attention to the socio-cultural landscape of the Bajo community. Known as a coastal and seafaring ethnic group, the Bajo people possess unique cultural traditions, beliefs, and practices that are deeply rooted in their daily lives. In constructing the Kurikulum Operasional Satuan Pendidikan (KOSP) or Operational Curriculum of the Education Unit, the madrasah considers these local values and integrates them with the core teachings of Islam. For instance, lessons on environmental stewardship are framed through Islamic principles of *khalifah fil ardh* (stewardship of the Earth), while community cooperation is reinforced through both religious and traditional practices of mutual aid (*gotong royong*).

By contextualizing Islamic educational values within the local culture, MTs Mir'atul Mujahid aims to create a more grounded, holistic learning experience. Students are not only exposed to formal religious teachings but also learn to embody these teachings in their everyday lives through their interactions with the environment, elders, peers, and community members. This approach is highly effective in character development, as it aligns abstract religious principles with concrete cultural practices. Moreover, it bridges generational knowledge, where elders become key cultural transmitters, and students emerge as agents of continuity and transformation within their society. In conclusion, the integration of Islamic educational values within local content subjects at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid in Kampung Bajo Kolaka exemplifies a model of education that is both contextually grounded and spiritually enriched. It reflects a dynamic curriculum that does not treat learners as passive recipients of knowledge but as active participants in shaping a just, moral, and culturally aware society. Such a model proves that local content can be more than supplementary; it can be a central pillar in building moral awareness, community identity, and intellectual competence among students. Therefore, ongoing support for curriculum development that reflects both national standards and local wisdom is essential to creating future generations that are academically excellent and ethically grounded.

2. METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research method aimed at explaining, interpreting, and describing phenomena as they occurred naturally in the field (Yusuf, 2014). The use of this method allowed the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the implementation of Islamic educational values within local content subjects at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo, Kolaka, Southeast Sulawesi. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the researcher sought to explore the perspectives of educators and students and to interpret the meaning of their experiences within a specific cultural and religious context. The research process was carried out in three main phases: the preparation stage, the fieldwork stage, and the data analysis stage. During the preparation stage, the researcher developed a comprehensive research plan, selected the research location, formalized research permits with the relevant authorities, conducted preliminary field observations, selected and assigned informants, and prepared the necessary instruments such as interview guidelines and observation sheets. This stage was critical in ensuring that the research design was aligned with the objectives and that the fieldwork would run smoothly.

In the fieldwork stage, the researcher entered the field and began collecting data through several techniques, namely participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted at the madrasah to understand the contextual application of local content learning. The researcher observed how educators incorporated Islamic values into their teaching and how students responded to such integration. These observations were recorded in field notes and later used to support the analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected educators and students. These interviews provided the researcher with direct insights into the practical implementation of the local content curriculum and the perceived effectiveness of embedding Islamic values within it. The interviews were guided by a series of open-ended questions but allowed for flexibility so that informants could elaborate on their responses. The researcher took care to build rapport with the participants, creating a comfortable environment to encourage honest and reflective responses. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and stored securely for analysis.

In addition, the researcher collected documentation data, including curriculum outlines, lesson plans, activity reports, and photos of learning activities. These documents helped validate and enrich the findings obtained through interviews and observations. Once all data were collected, the data analysis stage began. The researcher used a descriptive and interpretive approach to analyze the data, organizing the information thematically based on recurring patterns. The analysis involved several steps, including data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. During the data reduction phase, irrelevant information was filtered out to focus on significant findings related to the research questions. In the data display phase, findings were organized into categories and themes, such as the incorporation of local culture, religious values, and pedagogical strategies. Finally, in the conclusion-drawing phase, the researcher interpreted the patterns and constructed a narrative that addressed the main objectives of the study.

The credibility and validity of the data were ensured through triangulation, member checking, and prolonged engagement in the field. Triangulation was achieved by cross-checking

information obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking involved verifying the accuracy of interview data with the informants to ensure that their perspectives were accurately captured. Prolonged engagement in the field helped the researcher gain a more nuanced understanding of the cultural and social context of the madrasah. Through these methodological steps, the study was able to produce a rich and grounded account of how Islamic educational values were integrated into local content subjects at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo, providing a model for culturally responsive and faith-based education.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo possesses significant potential for development due to its geographically strategic location. Situated on the outskirts of the city, the madrasah is easily accessible by various modes of transportation and is surrounded by a peaceful and conducive learning environment. Despite these advantages, the madrasah faces certain challenges, particularly stemming from a shift in cultural values. The influence of metropolitan lifestyles has begun to permeate the lives of students, and although the surrounding community provides many positive influences, it also exposes students to potentially negative social behaviors.

In response to this evolving context, the madrasah has intensified efforts to foster moral and ethical development, particularly through activities aimed at preserving cultural values. These initiatives include enhancing the quality of educators and educational personnel, improving school facilities and infrastructure, and establishing collaborative partnerships with students' parents or guardians. One of the primary efforts involves organizing student self-development programs that are carefully aligned with both student needs and community expectations.

As part of this study, the researcher conducted an interview with Mr. Muh. Ikromullah, a local content subject teacher at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo who holds a degree in Marine Affairs. According to him, the local content-based curriculum is a flagship program of the madrasah. It is designed to help students become more familiar with the culture, dominant professions, and daily lives of their coastal community.¹

Bajo Culture and Language

One of the central elements of this program is the inclusion of Bajo culture and language in the local content curriculum. This subject covers the local language, customs, traditional practices, and the historical background of the Bajo tribe, aiming to preserve and reinforce the cultural identity of this coastal community. Students are introduced to the Bajo language as a unique form of communication passed down from their ancestors, and they are also familiarized with traditional customs, such as the ceremonial practice of *cera' leppa*.

This cultural education is not only aimed at preservation but is also integrated with core Islamic educational values. For example, students are taught that preserving language and

¹Muh. Ikromullah (30 years old), Teacher, MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo, interviewed on November 15, 2024.

culture reflects shukr (gratitude) to Allah SWT for the blessings of identity and heritage. The value of amanah (responsibility) is conveyed through the notion that traditions and customs must be safeguarded and transmitted to future generations. Furthermore, the value of ukhuwah Islamiyah (Islamic brotherhood) is fostered through the communal spirit demonstrated in collective cultural events, including weddings and other rituals, all of which emphasize mutual assistance and solidarity. Through this contextual and value-laden approach, the madrasah not only cultivates cultural awareness among its students but also reinforces their moral character and Islamic identity in a manner that is both relevant and meaningful to their lived experiences.

Marine and Fisheries Education

One of the key topics taught in the local content curriculum at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo is Basic Knowledge about Marine Ecosystems. This subject encompasses a broad understanding of marine ecosystems, sustainable fishing practices, and the processing of marine products. The content is designed to provide students with both ecological literacy and practical skills that are contextually relevant to their coastal environment. In this learning module, students were introduced to the ecological importance of preserving marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangrove forests, and various other coastal habitats. These ecosystems were presented not only as environmental assets but also as vital sources of life and livelihood for the coastal communities in which the students live. Students learned about the intricate balance of marine ecosystems and the potential consequences of environmental degradation.

A significant part of the material involved environmentally friendly fishing practices. Students were taught about alternative fishing techniques that avoid the use of destructive tools or methods, thereby preserving aquatic biodiversity and ensuring long-term resource sustainability. These techniques reflect a local wisdom approach to environmental stewardship, balancing traditional knowledge with contemporary ecological awareness. Moreover, the curriculum included hands-on training in the processing of marine products to enhance students' entrepreneurial skills. Activities such as making shredded fish (abon), salting fish, or crafting items from marine waste were integrated into the lessons. These practices aimed to increase the economic value of local marine resources and inspire students to see opportunities in resource management and small-scale industries. Importantly, the teaching of marine ecosystem knowledge was not limited to practical and scientific aspects but was also integrated with Islamic religious values. Students were taught that the preservation of the natural environment is an essential aspect of fulfilling their role as khalifah (stewards) on Earth, as commanded by Allah SWT. This theological framing emphasized that caring for marine ecosystems is part of a larger spiritual and moral obligation.

The concept of amanah (trust) was conveyed through lessons on environmentally responsible fishing, reinforcing the notion that natural resources are divine trusts that must be protected and used wisely. Additionally, the values of independence and creativity were cultivated through training in marine product processing, empowering students to become self-reliant while adhering to halal principles in food preparation. Lastly, the value of shukr (gratitude) was instilled by encouraging students to recognize the blessings inherent in the sea's abundance and to manage these gifts with wisdom and moderation. By linking local environmental knowledge with Islamic values, the madrasah succeeded in delivering a holistic

educational experience that was both spiritually meaningful and socio-economically relevant. This integrated approach not only enriched students' academic knowledge but also nurtured their moral and ethical development in alignment with their cultural and religious context.



Figure 1. Document of the Qur'anic Boarding School (PPTQ) Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo

Sea-Based Crafts and Creative Economy

Students at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo were taught material related to handicrafts and the processing of marine products. This material aimed to equip students with practical skills in creating handicrafts from natural materials such as seashells and coconut fiber, as well as in processing seafood, including techniques for making salted fish and shredded fish. The learning process was designed to enhance students' ability to utilize local resources creatively, while also contributing to the economic value of the abundant marine products found in coastal communities. The craft-making activities also incorporated cultural elements specific

to the Bajo tribe, allowing students to produce items that reflected both aesthetic appeal and cultural identity.

This subject matter was deeply infused with Islamic educational values. The principle of independence was fostered through practical skill development, encouraging students to become productive and self-sufficient individuals. Responsibility was emphasized by teaching students to utilize natural resources in a sustainable and ethical manner, aligned with the Islamic view of humans as stewards (khalifah) of the earth. Moreover, the values of creativity and gratitude to Allah were integrated throughout the lessons, as students were guided to recognize and appreciate the blessings of local resources and to use them in meaningful and beneficial ways. The processing of marine products such as salted fish and shredded fish also served to instill values of honesty and Islamic work ethics – highlighting the importance of cleanliness, quality assurance, and adherence to halal standards in every step of production.



Figure 2. PPTQ Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo Document

Traditional Water Sports

Students at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo were also taught rowing skills, traditional diving, and coastal community games. These lessons provided students with practical knowledge of water-based activities that are highly relevant to the daily lives of the Bajo people, known for their maritime traditions as fishermen and sailors. The students learned how to row boats efficiently and perform traditional diving techniques to gather marine resources such as shellfish and fish. In addition, traditional games characteristic of coastal communities, which emphasize physical agility and strategic thinking, were introduced to help preserve local cultural heritage. These activities were embedded with Islamic religious education values aimed at shaping students' character. The value of discipline and perseverance was emphasized through physical training that required consistent practice and focus. Responsibility was cultivated through teamwork activities like group rowing and diving, reinforcing the importance of

cooperation and social solidarity. Moreover, students were encouraged to express gratitude and respect for their physical health, recognizing the body's ability to perform such tasks as a blessing from Allah that should be preserved and used wisely.

Through the implementation of local content learning at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo, the madrasah aimed not only to equip students with relevant practical skills but also to internalize meaningful Islamic values. This combination of cultural relevance and moral instruction provided substantial benefits for students' futures. In addition to acquiring knowledge about local culture and traditions, students developed hands-on skills that could be applied in their everyday lives, such as marine product processing and handicrafts. These practical competencies created opportunities for students to pursue careers in marine-based sectors, such as fishing, seafood processing, or small-scale entrepreneurship involving locally sourced products. Furthermore, their understanding of water sports and marine ecosystems positioned them to engage in the tourism industry as eco-tourism guides or coordinators of environmentally friendly marine activities.

Such learning not only added vocational value but also enhanced employability in local industries. It prepared students to participate in creative economies rooted in local wisdom and marine resources. Importantly, these skills were underpinned by a solid moral and spiritual foundation based on Islamic teachings, ensuring that students not only became capable individuals but also responsible, ethical contributors to society. Therefore, the integration of Islamic values into local content education at this madrasah successfully nurtured students' holistic development – academically, professionally, and spiritually.

Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo has incorporated a local content curriculum that is designed with a strong emphasis on Islamic religious education values. This integration is formally documented within the Operational Curriculum of the Education Unit (Kurikulum Operasional Satuan Pendidikan or KOSP), which serves as a practical framework for implementing educational goals contextualized to the school's environment and community. The inclusion of local content that is framed through the lens of Islamic moral and spiritual teachings aims to cultivate students who are not only intellectually and socially competent but also spiritually grounded and culturally aware. By linking education to both Islamic ethics and local wisdom, the madrasah seeks to produce learners who are spiritually intelligent, ethically responsible, and actively involved in the preservation of their cultural heritage.

In the broader context of Indonesia's national education policy, local content (muatan lokal) has been mandated as part of the school curriculum to address the educational needs that are specific to regional contexts. This initiative ensures that education is not entirely centralized, but responsive to the socio-cultural and economic realities of local communities. In this regard, local content subjects in madrasahs function as a bridge between national educational standards and local community identity, creating a balanced approach to student development. Indana and Sholichah (2023) emphasize that the presence of local content subjects in madrasahs allows for greater relevance to the community's values, challenges, and developmental needs. It empowers educational institutions to design learning experiences that resonate with students' lived realities, including their cultural, environmental, and religious surroundings.

According to Mulyasa (2010), local content learning enables students to explore and develop competencies that are aligned with the natural and socio-cultural context of their environment. This alignment fosters meaningful learning, where students can see the practical relevance of their education in their daily lives. It also allows students to develop a sense of identity and pride in their local culture while instilling the moral teachings of Islam. Learning that is rooted in the students' social context makes the values of religion and tradition more tangible and applicable, thereby strengthening the internalization of character education. Muhaimin (as cited in Nasir, 2013) highlights the essential role of local content in madrasahs, arguing that the curriculum serves not only to enrich students academically but also to elevate the quality of education by making it contextually grounded. In doing so, madrasahs are expected to contribute to the empowerment of local communities, particularly in rural and coastal regions, where educational needs may differ from those in urban settings. The local content curriculum, therefore, becomes a strategic platform for schools to nurture students who are both culturally literate and religiously observant.

More specifically, the local content curriculum implemented at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo is intended to develop multiple aspects of students' character and competence. First, it aims to strengthen students' relationship with their natural and cultural environment by fostering a sense of care, responsibility, and stewardship. This includes understanding the ecological context of Kampung Bajo, a coastal village with rich maritime traditions. Second, the curriculum enhances practical skills related to local livelihoods, such as marine product processing, handicrafts from sea materials, and traditional knowledge systems, thus contributing to economic empowerment and sustainability. Third, it supports moral and behavioral development by promoting values such as discipline, cooperation, gratitude, and responsibility – core principles in Islamic education. These values are not taught abstractly but are embedded within real-life experiences and community practices.

In line with this, the local content curriculum at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid is designed with the following educational goals: (1) to foster students' familiarity with and appreciation of their natural, social, and cultural environment; (2) to build students' skills and knowledge related to regional wisdom and livelihoods; (3) to cultivate moral behaviors that reflect the ethical standards of both Islam and the local community; and (4) to develop students' capacity to identify, understand, and solve problems faced by their community. These goals are aligned with the broader mission of Islamic education, which is to create holistic human beings – *insan kamil* – who are balanced in spiritual, intellectual, and practical domains. Furthermore, the implementation of this curriculum reflects the principles of Merdeka Belajar or the Independent Learning initiative, which emphasizes learner-centered education, contextual relevance, and the development of 21st-century skills. The Ministry of Education and Culture, along with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, has begun promoting this approach within madrasahs, acknowledging the value of localized curriculum frameworks that allow schools to innovate in accordance with their unique conditions (Alfafan & Nadhif, 2023; Bahri, 2021).

Ultimately, the integration of Islamic values into the local content curriculum at MTs Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo serves a dual purpose: preserving local cultural heritage while simultaneously reinforcing Islamic moral education. This dual approach ensures that students are not only prepared to contribute to their community through relevant skills and knowledge

but are also guided by a strong moral compass rooted in Islamic teachings. As such, the curriculum represents a model for culturally responsive and value-based education that can be adapted by other madrasahs seeking to strengthen the role of religion and local wisdom in shaping future generations.

4. CONCLUSION

Learning local content at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo plays a pivotal role in shaping students' character by integrating Islamic educational values with the local wisdom of coastal communities. The curriculum encompasses diverse materials, including Bajo culture and language, marine ecosystem knowledge, environmentally sustainable fishing techniques, handicrafts, and water-based sports. Through this comprehensive content, students acquire not only practical skills relevant to their daily lives but also a profound awareness of environmental stewardship and cultural preservation.

Islamic educational values – such as responsibility, gratitude, independence, cooperation, and care for the environment – are embedded meaningfully across each area of instruction. These values are not taught in isolation but are contextualized through hands-on learning experiences that reinforce moral development alongside skill acquisition. Consequently, students are equipped with the competencies necessary to contribute meaningfully to sectors such as fisheries, tourism, and creative industries. At the same time, they are nurtured to become disciplined, environmentally responsible individuals grounded in Islamic character.

In essence, the local content curriculum at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo serves as an effective model for holistic education – one that cultivates students' practical abilities, enriches their cultural literacy, and fortifies their moral and spiritual foundations. Such an approach not only broadens students' future career prospects but also prepares them to be active, ethical contributors to their communities and society at large. Sincere appreciation is extended to the leadership and all educators at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mir'atul Mujahid Kampung Bajo, Kolaka, Southeast Sulawesi. May all of our efforts, sacrifices, and dedication to the advancement of education in Kampung Bajo be accepted by Allah SWT as an act of worship and serve as lasting rewards for all who contribute.

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