

# Local Wisdom as Pedagogical Capital in Islamic Education: A Critical Integrative Review from the Global South

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## ABSTRACT

Islamic education in the Global South is embedded in local traditions, communal practices, and historically shaped power relations, yet local wisdom is often treated as cultural decoration rather than as a substantive pedagogical resource. This study examines how local wisdom is conceptualized, operationalized, and contested in the transmission of Islamic values and proposes a more contextual and ethically reflexive pedagogical framework. A critical integrative review was conducted on 32 Scopus-indexed journal articles published between 2015 and 2025. Following PRISMA-guided selection procedures, the studies were analyzed through thematic coding, conceptual clustering, and critical synthesis, with attention to pedagogical mechanisms, institutional contexts, moral authority, gender, and power relations. The findings reveal two dominant conceptualizations: local wisdom as a peripheral cultural context and as pedagogical-moral capital that shapes students' moral habitus. Values were transmitted most effectively through role modelling, habituation, communal rituals, affective relationships, and school-community practices. However, uncritical integration may reproduce hierarchy, conformity, gender bias, exclusion, and hidden forms of authority. Institutional autonomy, curriculum flexibility, educator reflexivity, and community participation strongly influenced the depth of integration. The study concludes that local wisdom should be positioned not as symbolic local content but as a critically examined pedagogical resource. A reflexive, dialogical, and culturally responsive approach is therefore needed to strengthen ethical agency, contextual relevance, and socially just Islamic education.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in the Global South never operates in an abstract space separate from the social and cultural contexts in which it is implemented (Abubakar et al., 2023; Irwandi et al., 2025). The practice of Islamic education always takes place within a cultural landscape steeped in local traditions, social relations, and power structures that shape how religious values are understood, internalized, and practiced in students' daily lives (Ahmad & Mujani, 2019; As Sabiq et al., 2022; Habiburrahim et

al., 2021). In this context, Islamic education is envisioned in a fundamental tension between demands for global standardization through formal synchronization, state regulation, and discourses of value universalism, and educational practices that are factually embedded in the local wisdom of Muslim communities (Ball, 2016; Kim & Taylor, 2017; Suyatno et al., 2022; Wibowo, 2025). This tension positions local wisdom not as an additional or peripheral element, but rather as a primary arena for value transmission, where Islamic values are negotiated, interpreted, and lived out contextually in the social lives of Muslim communities in the Global South (Maswati et al., 2025; Sidik et al., 2025).

From the beginning, Islamic education has been understood not only as a process of transmitting religious knowledge, but as a moral and cultural project aimed at shaping the personality, social ethics, and value orientations of students (Rohmatulloh et al., 2023). Within this framework, Islamic education serves as a strategic arena for value transmission, namely the process of internalizing normative Islamic values such as trustworthiness, justice, social responsibility, piety, and concern for others into students' daily awareness, attitudes, and practices (Achyani et al., 2025; Aliyah et al., 2024; Bali & Susilowati, 2019). Therefore, the success of Islamic education cannot be reduced to cognitive achievement or mastery of religious material alone, but must be measured by the extent to which these values are internalized, practiced, and reflected upon sustainably in social life (Arthur et al., 2017; Biesta, 2013).

In global academic discourse, Islamic education is often represented through a normative and formalistic approach that emphasizes doctrinal transmission, universalism, and curricular uniformity (Chaplin, 2018; Kim & Taylor, 2017; Maksum, 2017). While intended to preserve religious authenticity and educational standards, this perspective frequently overlooks the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which Islamic education operates (Ashraf et al., 2021; Dodlek, 2024). Consequently, learning may become detached from students' lived experiences and lose its transformative potential for developing reflective moral awareness (Apple, 2019; Giroux, 2018; Yağdı, 2025). This reflects a broader epistemic tension between the universality of Islamic values and local contextualization, particularly in the Global South, where education is shaped by traditions, social relations, power structures, and cultural practices (Ahmad & Mujani, 2019; Heldiansyah et al., 2025; M. A. Nasir, 2019). The resulting dichotomy creates ongoing pedagogical challenges between preserving universal values and ensuring local relevance (Banks, 2016; Kim & Taylor, 2017; Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009).

It is within this context that the concept of local wisdom (*kearifan lokal*) emerges as an important discourse in the study of Islamic education. Local wisdom refers to collective knowledge, meaning systems, moral values, and social practices that develop historically within a particular community and are passed down across generations (Dadze-Arthur, 2017; Gunara et al., 2019). In Muslim societies, local wisdom is not external to religion but often serves as a cultural medium through which Islamic values are interpreted, negotiated, and concretely practiced in everyday life (Azra, 2004; Hefner, 2008; Waston, 2018). Thus, local wisdom has the potential to serve as an epistemic bridge between normative Islamic teachings and the social realities of students.

Local wisdom in this study is understood as a historically accumulated system of knowledge, values, norms, and social practices that guides community life and provides moral references for social interaction (Hadi, 2017). Within Islamic education, local wisdom is important because it functions as a cultural medium through which religious values become meaningful, relatable, and applicable to learners' everyday experiences. Meanwhile, values transmission refers to the pedagogical process through which beliefs, moral principles, attitudes, and ethical orientations are communicated, internalized, and reproduced across generations through educational interactions and social practices. The notion of the Global South employed in this article goes beyond geographical classification and refers to societies shaped by histories of colonialism, cultural hybridity, unequal power relations, and ongoing struggles for epistemic recognition. These characteristics make the Global South a particularly relevant context for examining how Islamic values are negotiated through local cultural frameworks and educational practices.

Educational literature, including Islamic education, shows a strong tendency to marginalize local wisdom as a peripheral element. Many studies position it merely as cultural background, folklore, or

additional pedagogical ornamentation, rather than as a substantive epistemic and pedagogical resource (Chaplin, 2018; Sahin, 2018). Within a global educational framework dominated by Western paradigms, modern rationality, and the logic of standardization, local knowledge is often considered particular, unsystematic, and incompatible with the demands of modernity and educational accountability. This reduction risks producing an Islamic education that is abstract, normative, and detached from students' daily moral experiences. Consequently, the transmission of values occurs superficially and instrumentally without forming a sustainable moral habitus (Ashraf et al., 2021; Bourdieu, 1996).

Several recent studies demonstrate that the integration of local wisdom in Islamic education has the potential to strengthen the internalization of values, the relevance of learning, and the sustainability of pedagogical practices. When Islamic values are transmitted through practices aligned with local cultural structures, such as role models, social habits, community traditions, and affective relationships, students tend to more easily understand, internalize, and reflect these values in real life (Arifin et al., 2018). From this perspective, local wisdom can be understood as pedagogical and cultural capital that enables Islamic education to function contextually and meaningfully.

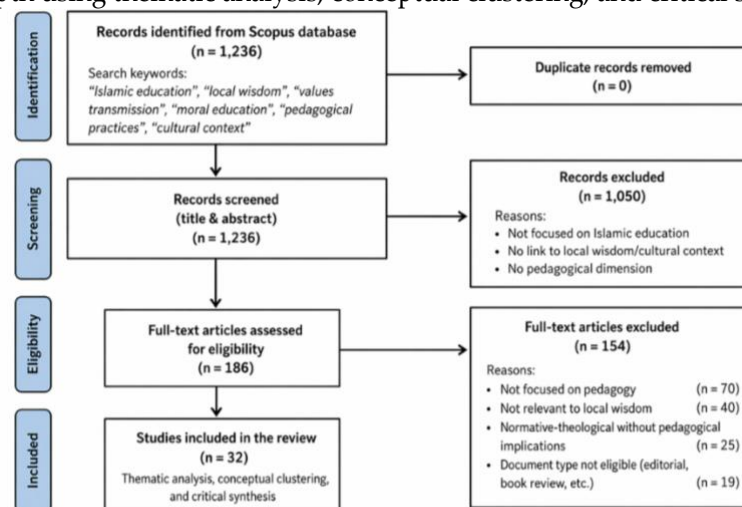
Local wisdom is not inherently emancipatory, as some cultural practices may reproduce patriarchal, hierarchical, exclusive, or discriminatory values that conflict with Islamic principles of justice and equality (Baltaeva, 2015; Oh, 2017; Yusuf et al., 2025). Without critical engagement, its integration may reinforce unequal power relations and restrict critical dialogue. Therefore, local wisdom should be viewed both as a pedagogical resource and as a domain requiring reflective critique and negotiation (Biesta, 2013; Giroux, 2018; Sahin, 2018). Despite growing scholarship, the literature remains conceptually, methodologically, and contextually fragmented, with limited critical synthesis of how local wisdom intersects with value transmission, authority, gender, and institutional dynamics in the Global South (Gunara et al., 2019; Snyder, 2019).

Although interest in local wisdom within Islamic education has increased, existing studies largely examine it descriptively and normatively, focusing on cultural values and their compatibility with Islamic teachings rather than its role as a mechanism of values transmission. Consequently, the literature remains fragmented and offers a limited critical understanding of how local wisdom shapes moral formation, pedagogical practices, and power relations in Islamic education across the Global South. To address this gap, this study employs a critical integrative review that synthesizes and critically evaluates existing scholarship. The novelty of the study lies in conceptualizing local wisdom as a dynamic form of pedagogical and moral capital that influences students' moral habitus, while providing theoretical and practical insights for integrating local wisdom into Islamic education. Accordingly, the study addresses four questions concerning the conceptualization of local wisdom, its role in values transmission, its operationalization in pedagogical practices, and the influence of institutional contexts on its integration within Islamic education, particularly in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Southern Thailand.

## 2. METHODS

This study employed a critical integrative literature review design to identify, analyze, and critically synthesize scientific literature addressing the relationship between local wisdom, value transmission, and pedagogical practices in Islamic education. This approach was chosen because it allows for the integration of empirical and conceptual findings across contexts, while simultaneously opening up space for reflective evaluation of the theoretical frameworks, epistemic assumptions, and methodological tendencies that dominate Islamic education studies. The literature selection process followed the PRISMA guidelines, which include identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion. An initial search through the Scopus database yielded 1,236 articles. After screening based on titles and abstracts, 1,050 articles were excluded for being irrelevant to the focus of Islamic education, not linking local wisdom, or lacking a clear pedagogical dimension. A further 186 articles were then evaluated through full-text review. At this stage, 154 articles were eliminated for being normative-theological without pedagogical implications, irrelevant to the transmission of values, or not

meeting the publication type and language criteria. Ultimately, 32 articles that met all inclusion criteria were analyzed in depth using thematic analysis, conceptual clustering, and critical synthesis.



Notes: The selection process followed PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021).

**Figure 1.** PRISMA Flow Diagram: Selection of Studies for the Critical Integrative Review

The primary data source was the Scopus database, chosen for its reputation as an international academic database with rigorous journal selection standards and broad multidisciplinary coverage. The literature search was conducted using a combination of keywords and Boolean operators, including: "Islamic education," "local wisdom," "values transmission," "moral education," "pedagogical practices," and "cultural context." This search strategy was designed to capture conceptual and terminological variations in the cross-disciplinary literature, in line with the finding that Islamic education studies are spread across the fields of education, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies with terminology that is not always uniform (Bramer et al., 2017).

The study focuses primarily on the context of the Global South, particularly Indonesia, without precluding the inclusion of articles from other contexts with significant theoretical contributions. In this research, the Global South is operationalized based on the empirical context of the study, the location of the educational institutions discussed, and the socio-cultural and postcolonial settings that serve as the locus of analysis. The publication period was limited to 2015–2025 to ensure the freshness and relevance of the findings, in line with the current dynamics of Islamic education characterized by issues of religious moderation, curriculum globalization, and the negotiation between local values and global standards. The type of documents was limited to English-language peer-reviewed journal articles to maintain academic quality and methodological comparability. Inclusion criteria included: (1) articles explicitly discussing Islamic education; (2) studies linking local wisdom or cultural context to the educational process; (3) empirical or conceptual studies with pedagogical implications; and (4) Scopus-indexed publications.

This criterion is important for distinguishing between normative Islamic studies and Islamic education studies oriented toward practice, policy, and the formation of students. The literature selection process followed the PRISMA guidelines in a concise manner, encompassing identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion. The initial search yielded 1,236 articles, which were screened through title and abstract review, followed by full-text evaluation. The selection process was conducted in a step-by-step and reflective manner to ensure conceptual alignment with the study objectives, resulting in 32 articles meeting all criteria and being subjected to in-depth analysis in the final stage. This approach ensured traceability and transparency in data source selection and minimized selection bias that often arises in non-systematic narrative reviews.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the 32 Articles Included in the Review

| No. | Author(s) (Year)           | Research Method        | Local Wisdom Focus                                         |
|-----|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Abubakar et al. (2023)     | Qualitative Study      | Islamic family education                                   |
| 2   | Ahmad & Mujani (2019)      | Historical Analysis    | Malay mosque traditions                                    |
| 3   | Arifin et al. (2018)       | Case Study             | Islamic school organizational culture                      |
| 4   | Arizona et al. (2025)      | Mixed Methods          | Integration of Islamic values and local wisdom             |
| 5   | As Sabiq et al. (2022)     | Survey                 | Pesantren environment                                      |
| 6   | Ashraf et al. (2021)       | Qualitative Interviews | Global citizenship education                               |
| 7   | Bali & Susilowati (2019)   | Qualitative Study      | Religious school culture                                   |
| 8   | Chaplin (2018)             | Ethnography            | Campus da'wah culture                                      |
| 9   | Chalik et al. (2017)       | Experimental Study     | Religion and cultural perceptions                          |
| 10  | Fauzi et al. (2023)        | Case Study             | Pesantren local wisdom                                     |
| 11  | Gunara et al. (2019)       | Ethnography            | Indigenous knowledge systems                               |
| 12  | Hadi (2017)                | Qualitative Study      | Dayah education                                            |
| 13  | Huda et al. (2017)         | Textual Analysis       | Traditional Islamic wisdom                                 |
| 14  | Irwandi et al. (2025)      | Case Study             | Integration of Sharia and education                        |
| 15  | M. Suud et al. (2025)      | Experimental Study     | Ta'awun culture in pesantren                               |
| 16  | Maswati et al. (2025)      | Qualitative Study      | Pancasila Student Profile                                  |
| 17  | Nasir (2019)               | Ethnography            | Slametan tradition                                         |
| 18  | Nasir & Rijal (2021)       | Qualitative Study      | Religious moderation                                       |
| 19  | Nurhidayah & Choiri (2024) | Survey                 | Pesantren environment                                      |
| 20  | Nursalim et al. (2024)     | Qualitative Study      | Religious character development                            |
| 21  | Pulungan et al. (2025)     | Cultural Analysis      | Mandailing Onang-Onang tradition                           |
| 22  | Rekan et al. (2025)        | Qualitative Study      | Islamic soft skills                                        |
| 23  | Rohmatulloh et al. (2023)  | Case Study             | Energy-saving ethics                                       |
| 24  | Sah & Fuad (2024)          | Qualitative Study      | Moderate pesantren character                               |
| 25  | Sirojuddin et al. (2025)   | Case Study             | Pesantren curriculum integration                           |
| 26  | Suyatno et al. (2022)      | Qualitative Study      | Progressive Islamic education                              |
| 27  | Dube & Zheba (2025)        | Literature Review      | Modern Islamic pedagogy                                    |
| 28  | Tambak et al. (2021)       | Qualitative Study      | Internalization of Islamic values                          |
| 29  | Sidik et al. (2025)        | Case Study             | Character education in madrasah                            |
| 30  | Heldiansyah et al. (2025)  | Cultural Analysis      | Islamic calligraphic ornaments                             |
| 31  | Sahin (2018)               | Critical Analysis      | Islamic education and culture                              |
| 32  | Zabidi et al. (2021)       | Zabidi et al. (2021)   | Integration of Islamic values into environmental education |

To ensure credibility and relevance, a quality appraisal assessed source eligibility, methodological transparency, and alignment with the research objectives. Only peer-reviewed Scopus-indexed articles published between 2015 and 2025 were included, yielding 32 studies for synthesis. Data analysis employed an iterative thematic process, treating each article as a unit of analysis. Open coding identified recurring themes, followed by axial coding and conceptual clustering into categories such as the epistemic position of local wisdom, pedagogical actors, moral authority, and educational implications. A critical synthesis examined power relations, gender dynamics, institutional biases, and moral authority, with categories continuously refined through comparative interpretation and a synthesis table developed for transparency (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Cronin & George, 2023; Snyder, 2019).

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Conceptualization of Local Wisdom in Islamic Education

A literature synthesis shows that local wisdom in Islamic education is generally understood as collective knowledge internalized in the social practices, cultural symbols, moral values, and traditions

of local Muslim communities (Arizona et al., 2025; Pulungan et al., 2025). Within this framework, local wisdom represents an expression of lived Islam, namely the way Islamic values are internalized, negotiated, and practiced through social relations, customs, and religious traditions in everyday life. This understanding emphasizes that Islamic education always operates within a specific socio-cultural context and never occurs in a vacuum (Hefner, 2008; Sahin, 2018).

A critical synthesis reveals two main conceptual poles in the literature regarding the meaning of local wisdom. The first pole positions local wisdom as a peripheral element—simply a cultural background, pedagogical ornament, or additional folklore present on the fringes of educational practice. In this approach, local wisdom is treated as an “external context” that does not influence the curriculum structure, learning orientation, or how students construct moral reasoning. This reduction reflects the dominance of a normative-formalistic paradigm that emphasizes the universality of values and standardized pedagogy, thus risking the relegation of students’ lived experiences at the local level to mere pedagogical accessories (Banks, 2016; Chalikh et al., 2017).

This peripheral conceptualization has important pedagogical implications. Islamic education may become an abstract, text-based transmission of values detached from students’ social realities, resulting in shallow internalization and formal obedience rather than reflective moral awareness (Biesta, 2013; Halstead, 2004). It also reinforces the dichotomy between “pure Islam” and “local culture,” reproducing knowledge hierarchies and marginalizing local Islamic practices (Azra, 2004). By contrast, a second perspective views local wisdom as cultural and moral capital that shapes students’ moral habitus through repeated social practices (Bourdieu, 1996). As an epistemic medium, local wisdom contextualizes Islamic values, making them meaningful, relevant, and sustainable (UNESCO, 2017; Hefner, 2008; Suyatno et al., 2022).

This approach challenges the assumption that the universality of Islamic values must always be expressed through a uniform pedagogical format. Instead, Islamic values gain transformative power when mediated by local cultural structures that enable reflective interpretation within the concrete context of students’ lives. Thus, treating local wisdom merely as a cultural ornament will diminish its epistemic and pedagogical potential in Islamic education. The literature synthesis also shows that the interpretation of local wisdom as pedagogical capital is often not accompanied by adequate critical reflection. Several studies tend to romanticize local wisdom as a source of inherently positive values, without questioning its potential for reproducing power relations, social hierarchies, or the exclusive values it embodies. Therefore, the conceptualization of local wisdom needs to be placed within a critical framework that not only affirms its potential but also opens up reflective evaluation: what values are reproduced, by whom, through what mechanisms, and for whose benefit (Apple, 2019; Giroux, 2018).

A critical perspective reveals that local wisdom can unintentionally reproduce the exclusion of minority voices when educational practices privilege the cultural capital and religious interpretations of dominant groups while marginalizing alternative perspectives, minority identities, and less powerful social groups (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Apple, 2019). In Islamic education, this exclusion often operates through the hidden curriculum, shaping perceptions of whose knowledge and experiences are considered legitimate. Therefore, curriculum developers should adopt a critically inclusive approach that presents local wisdom as a diverse and contested field of meanings rather than a single homogeneous tradition. By incorporating multiple community perspectives, facilitating dialogical learning, and encouraging critical reflection on cultural practices, local wisdom can function not only as a medium for transmitting Islamic values but also as a resource for promoting inclusivity, social justice, and critical moral reasoning in increasingly pluralistic societies (Banks, 2016; Gay, 2018; Sahin, 2018).

### 3.2. *Local Wisdom and Value Transmission*

Literature synthesis shows that the transmission of values in Islamic education is rarely effective when relying solely on cognitive instruction and normative-theological delivery. Islamic values are more often internalized through implicit mechanisms, such as the example of authoritative figures,

social habituation, affective relationships between educators and students, and involvement in collective practices based on local culture (M. Suud et al., 2025; Sirojuddin et al., 2025). These mechanisms enable values to be understood not only conceptually but also internalized as moral dispositions and daily practices, in line with the view that values education rests on experience, habituation, and a consistent social environment (Arthur et al., 2017; Biesta, 2013; Jackson, 2020).

Local wisdom functions as a pedagogical medium that connects normative Islamic values with students' lived experiences. Values such as trustworthiness, social responsibility, and *ta'awun* are more effectively internalized through familiar cultural practices, including *gotong royong*, *musyawarah adat*, and collective religious rituals (Huda et al., 2017; Jackson, 2020; Suyatno et al., 2022). The literature indicates that this approach promotes deeper value internalization than models centered on memorization or formal obedience. However, a critical reading reveals that many studies treat local wisdom as a universal solution while overlooking ambiguities, implementation failures, and contextual factors. Some cultural practices may also reproduce patriarchal, hierarchical, or exclusionary values, thereby normalizing inequality when adopted uncritically in Islamic education (Apple, 2019; Banks, 2016; Kim & Taylor, 2017).

Implicit value transmission mechanisms also carry the risk of hidden domination. Role models and habituation are indeed effective, but they can internalize values without opening up space for critical reflection for students. In this context, a hidden curriculum based on local culture operates ambivalently: it strengthens the internalization of values while simultaneously limiting students' moral autonomy. Therefore, the success of local wisdom-based value transmission depends heavily on the reflective capacity of educators and institutions; local wisdom becomes effective when mediated ethically and contextually, not mechanically reproduced (Dhofier, 2011; Lukens-Bull, 2013). Therefore, the transmission of values through local wisdom needs to be understood as a social practice influenced by authority, gender relations, and cultural hierarchies, rather than as a neutral pedagogical process.

A critical perspective suggests that value transmission through local wisdom may unintentionally reproduce uncritical obedience when traditions emphasize conformity, deference to elders, and unquestioned authority. Values transmitted through habituation, exemplary conduct, and collective rituals effectively foster moral commitment but may limit critical reflection on their ethical foundations. As Freire (1970) argues, transmission-oriented education risks producing passive recipients rather than reflective moral agents, while Biesta (2013) stresses subjectification as the capacity to think and act responsibly. Therefore, Islamic education should mediate local wisdom through dialogical and reflective pedagogies, enabling students to critically examine traditions and develop moral commitment alongside intellectual autonomy (Apple, 2019; Sahin, 2018).

### 3.3. *Pedagogical Practices Based on Local Wisdom*

Literature shows that the integration of local wisdom in Islamic education encourages the development of contextual and community-based pedagogical practices, such as community-based learning, the use of the hidden curriculum, and the involvement of teachers, religious leaders (*kyai*), and community leaders as moral authorities in the learning process (Rekan et al., 2025). These practices enable Islamic values to be transmitted not solely through formal instruction, but through repeated, meaningful social experiences within Muslim communities (Ashraf et al., 2021; Suyatno et al., 2022). Thus, the formation of moral subjects takes place not only in the classroom but also through an educational ecology that links schools, families, and communities.

A critical synthesis shows that many studies remain celebratory and assume community-based pedagogy is an inherently positive normative solution. A heavy reliance on authoritative figures such as teachers or religious leaders potentially limits space for critical dialogue and positions students as passive recipients of values, rather than reflective moral subjects. From a critical pedagogy perspective, such practices risk reproducing symbolic domination when moral authority is left without room for negotiation or reflection (Giroux, 2018). A similar ambivalence is evident in the use of the hidden curriculum, which, on the one hand, reinforces the internalization of values, but on the other, can

reproduce entrenched social hierarchies and inequalities, including gender relations and unequal moral authority (Apple, 2019).

Therefore, local wisdom-based pedagogy needs to be understood not as an ideal, problem-free model, but rather as an arena for negotiation between values, power, and the formation of students' moral subjects. Consequently, the integration of local wisdom demands a shift from reproductive pedagogy to reflective pedagogy, where educators act as mediators of ethical dialogue, not merely guardians of tradition. To avoid excessive conceptual abstraction, the literature provides empirical illustrations of how local wisdom is operationalized in Islamic education practices across various contexts in the Global South. This subsection is not intended as a comparative case study, but rather to demonstrate how conceptual findings are embedded in different institutional practices.

a. Indonesia: Islamic boarding schools and the ecology of practice-based value transmission

In the Indonesian context, Islamic boarding schools are often positioned as Islamic educational institutions deeply rooted in local wisdom. Classical and contemporary studies show that Islamic values are transmitted not only through the formal curriculum, but also through daily practices such as etiquette, devotion, respect for the chain of knowledge, and the social relations typical of *pesantren* (Dhofier, 2011; Lukens-Bull, 2013; Nurhidayah & Choiri, 2024). At the practical level, the learning of values occurs as social habituation—for example, discipline, simplicity, and collective care—that continuously shape the moral habitus of students (Hannaway & Richardson, 1987; Wakhidah, 2025; Sahin, 2018).

Several empirical studies have shown that the internalization of humanitarian values in Islamic boarding schools is formed through a combination of role models, dormitory culture, and consistent community practices, not solely through cognitive learning (Anam, 2025; Fauzi et al., 2023; Nurhidayah & Choiri, 2024). This finding reinforces the review's main argument that value transmission becomes effective when tied to social practices that are repeatedly "lived." However, critical literature also emphasizes the ambivalent nature of Islamic boarding schools. Hierarchical relations can simultaneously serve as a source of role models and a mechanism for limiting criticism, particularly when moral authority is not accompanied by a space for reflective dialogue (Apple, 2019; Giroux, 2018). In this context, local wisdom functions as both a pedagogical resource and an arena of power that needs to be ethically mediated (Arifin et al., 2018; Sah & Fuad, 2024). Outside Islamic boarding schools, the practice of mutual cooperation and deliberation in local Muslim communities is also adopted in formal and non-formal education as a medium for transmitting socio-Islamic values, such as *ta'awun*, solidarity, and collective responsibility (Suyatno et al., 2022).

b. Malaysia: *adab*-based pedagogy as an institutional counterpoint

In the Malaysian context, local wisdom is not always explicitly articulated as "local culture," but rather is institutionalized through a state-mediated *adab*-based pedagogical framework and moral education. The literature shows that *adab*-based pedagogy places the formation of ethics, manners, and character at the core of Islamic education, with *adab* understood as a framework of *ta'dīb* (religious practice) that integrates knowledge, morality, and the formation of ethical subjects (Ahmed, 2018; Sahin, 2018; Yusuf et al., 2025). Malayo-Islamic values such as politeness, respect for authority, social balance, and communal harmony are positioned as an institutionalized cultural medium for transmitting Islamic values while building a religious-national identity (Dube & Zheba, 2025).

Several studies have shown that the internalization of *adab*-based values is strengthened through consistency across domains—school, family, and community—and through formal curricular tools and educational policies that explicitly integrate Islamic values into both general and religious subjects (Tambak et al., 2021; Zabidi et al., 2021). In this regard, the Malaysian context serves as an institutional counterpoint, demonstrating how local values are rearticulated and standardized through the state framework.

The literature also highlights the ambivalence of the strong emphasis on social harmony and obedience to authority. Without reflective pedagogy, *adab*-based pedagogy has the potential to limit students' critical dialogue and encourage conformist, rather than reflective, internalization of values (Biesta, 2013; Giroux, 2018). Therefore, recent studies emphasize the importance of balancing *adab*-based pedagogy with dialogical and inquiry-based learning approaches so that students learn not only "how to behave" but also "why a value needs to be lived."

c. Other contexts: community-based Islamic education, minorities, and identity politics

In the context of Muslim minorities and communities facing socio-political pressures, such as Southern Thailand or certain regions in Africa, community-based Islamic education exhibits a similar pattern. Local wisdom functions as a cultural survival strategy, a medium for transmitting values, and strengthening collective identity (Abubakar et al., 2023; Hefner, 2008; Irwandi et al., 2025). This pattern emphasizes that local wisdom is not only pedagogical but also political and identity-based, as it regulates community boundaries, moral authority, and the negotiation of Islamic values in a public space that is not always welcoming.

A critical examination of local wisdom-based Islamic education shows that it may reproduce hierarchical authority when traditions emphasize deference to religious leaders, elders, and institutional authorities as sources of moral legitimacy. Values such as *ta'zīm*, obedience, and loyalty are transmitted through social practices that position teachers, *kyai*, and senior figures as unquestionable authorities. Although these relationships support character formation and social cohesion, they may limit dialogue and critical engagement. Critical pedagogy views this as cultural reproduction rather than reflective moral formation (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 2018). Symbolic authority, embedded through habitus, can naturalize hierarchy, making obedience appear morally desirable and socially unquestionable (Bourdieu, 1991).

This analysis has important implications for *pesantren* and madrasah leaders in shaping institutional culture and governance. Rather than abandoning traditions of respect and moral guidance, leaders should foster a reflective culture where authority is exercised through ethical mentorship, consultation, and dialogue rather than hierarchical control. Islamic education scholarship highlights the need to develop students' intellectual agency and moral reasoning alongside character formation (Sahin, 2018; Halstead, 2004). Accordingly, institutions should provide spaces for respectful student participation, critical discussion, and shared decision-making. Participatory learning, teacher reflection, and evaluation of hidden power structures can transform authority into moral empowerment while preserving local wisdom as a source of identity and values (Biesta, 2013; Niyozov & Memon, 2011; Sahin, 2018).

### 3.4. Institutional Variations in the Integration of Local Wisdom

Literature synthesis shows that the successful integration of local wisdom is heavily influenced by the institutional context. Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) are relatively adaptive because their structural autonomy allows for curriculum flexibility and closeness to the community (Sirojuddin et al., 2025). However, this adaptability is also a consequence of their position as less subject to the pressures of state standardization (Junaedi et al., 2025; Romlah et al., 2025). Conversely, madrasahs and formal Islamic higher education institutions often face structural limitations due to regulations, accreditation, and the performative logic of modern education (Romlah et al., 2025).

In this context, local wisdom is often reduced to local content or symbolic activities that are not systemically integrated into the curriculum, evaluation, and educator capacity development (Rohmatulloh et al., 2023). This institutional disparity suggests that strengthening local wisdom in Islamic education requires policy reforms that go beyond symbolic recognition to concrete structural accommodations. Empirical studies on strengthening religious character education based on school culture demonstrate that the institutional ecology of rules, customs, role models, and school climate plays a key role in the internalization of values, so that value integration cannot be achieved solely at the written curriculum level (Nursalim et al., 2024). These findings reinforce the argument that the

success of local wisdom integration is determined by the institutional configuration and daily practices of educational institutions.

A critical perspective suggests that local wisdom may reproduce a hidden curriculum through institutional routines, leadership structures, disciplinary practices, and everyday interactions in Islamic educational settings. While promoting moral development, these practices can implicitly normalize assumptions about authority, participation, and social relations, leading students to internalize not only Islamic values but also particular notions of legitimate behavior, knowledge, and authority (Apple, 2019; Jackson, 1968). This finding highlights the need for policymakers to move beyond symbolic recognition of local wisdom by supporting reflective institutional practices, quality assurance mechanisms, and professional development that critically examine hidden curricula, ensuring contextual moral education without reproducing unequal power relations or unexamined cultural assumptions (Fullan, 2016; UNESCO, 2021).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This critical integrative review shows that local wisdom in Islamic education functions both as a resource for values transmission and as an arena where authority, identity, and power are negotiated. The reviewed literature indicates that local wisdom can strengthen contextual and meaningful Islamic pedagogy, but it may also reproduce hierarchy, gender bias, and symbolic domination when adopted uncritically. Therefore, Islamic education should integrate local wisdom through reflective pedagogy, dialogical teaching, and institutional support that enables teachers and students to evaluate local values ethically and contextually. The implications of this study emphasize that teachers should not merely insert local cultural content into lessons; they should facilitate ethical dialogue about which local values should be preserved, revised, or critically questioned, and institutions should support curriculum flexibility and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Furthermore, the paucity of longitudinal studies and the limited use of critical perspectives such as feminism, postcolonialism, and critical sociology limit understanding of the long-term dynamics of value internalization in Islamic education. These methodological limitations also explain why local wisdom is often represented as historically and depoliticized, rather than as a vibrant and dynamic arena of contestation. Therefore, future research should prioritize: (1) cross-national and cross-institutional comparative designs to assess variations in local wisdom integration; (2) longitudinal approaches to trace changes in students' moral dispositions over time; and (3) critical perspectives that center the voices of students and marginalized groups. This approach allows local wisdom to be analyzed not only as "good values," but as a pedagogical and ethical arena that has real social and political consequences.

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