



The Construction of Ethnopedagogy for Character Education: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Samin Community

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Abstract: Early childhood character education is a global imperative in mitigating the socio-moral erosion caused by rapid globalization, which often relies on Western-centric models while under-researching indigenous alternatives. Research objective: This study aims to investigate the ethnopedagogical framework of the Samin community in Indonesia to analyze how their resilient moral philosophy is transmitted to the younger generation. Utilizing a qualitative design with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the research explores the subjective experiences of seven Samin parents in instilling character through in-depth interviews and participant observation. Findings reveal that character development is an indigenous-organic and informal process rooted in parental role modeling and daily social praxis, prioritizing core values such as radical honesty, collective responsibility, and social harmony. The Samin approach successfully integrates moral teaching into the fabric of cultural identity, demonstrating that informal education based on oral traditions serves as a primary foundation for children's moral growth. This study contributes to social science by illustrating how indigenous principles can be contextualized to strengthen moral frameworks, providing educators with a reference point for developing locally relevant, ethically driven pedagogical strategies.

Keywords: character education; ethnopedagogy; indigenous wisdom; samin community

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood character education plays a pivotal role in shaping moral and social character traits that influence personal development and social interactions throughout a child's life. Research indicates that character education during the early stages significantly impacts children's positive attitudes, moral development, and social skills, providing an essential foundation for their future lives (Afnan, 2024; Syafrizal & Sari, 2024). The rapid advancement of information technology and globalization has introduced new challenges to character education, making it increasingly complex. Today, children are exposed to various forms of information via gadgets and digital media from an early age, often inconsistent with age-appropriate development and moral values that should be instilled. Technological advancements have had negative effects, as children are more frequently interacting with digital devices than with peers or family, key sources of their primary character education. Recent studies show that excessive digital media use correlates with reduced face-to-face social interactions, affecting children's social skills and character development (Anggraeni et al., 2025; Harverson et al., 2025; Thahir et al., 2025). This highlights the need for further studies on the impact of technology on character education based on local wisdom, ensuring that cultural values remain relevant, even as children are exposed to information from the digital world.

Character education initiated within the family is crucial for shaping children's behavior. The family is the first and primary educational environment, where parents serve as the primary moral exemplars. Several studies show that parental role modeling plays a significant role in children's character development. Parents who provide positive behavioral examples and engage directly in parenting can foster strong, character-driven personalities in their children (Hidayati et al., 2023; Rusdiana et al., 2025; Widiyanto & Nurfaizah, 2023). Parents are expected not only to provide educational materials but also to offer emotional attention, guide children through the learning process, and instill strong moral values (Rusdiana et al., 2025). The example set by parents forms the core of a child's character, which is reflected in their actions and decisions in daily life (Aminu et al., 2025; Sipahutar et al., 2024). Furthermore, families that give their children full attention and prioritize effective communication can enhance the quality of character formation (Hidayati et al., 2023; Rusdiana et al., 2025). Even when children spend considerable time with peers, the active and attentive role of parents remains a key factor in shaping a child's strong character (Widiyanto & Nurfaizah, 2023). In modern society, parents face significant challenges, including the influence of social media and work-related pressures that reduce the time they spend with their children. Therefore, parents must make the most of available time to provide positive role modeling and ensure children understand essential life values (Rusdiana et al., 2025). Recent research from

Taiwan shows that character education applied in the family, integrated into daily activities such as storytelling, music, and play, can strengthen the parent-child relationship and support the development of good character in children (Mei-Ju et al., 2014).

Character education grounded in local wisdom, integrated into Indonesia's cultural traditions, represents a significant approach to developing students' moral and social character. Research shows that the integration of local cultural values into character education through collaboration between schools, families, and communities, or through direct learning in schools, can enhance the internalization of cultural values while strengthening positive attitudes, cultural identity, and tolerance towards local culture among students (Badeni & Saparahayuningsih, 2023; Iryani et al., 2025; Yusuf et al., 2024). One interesting case is the character education in the Samin community in Kudus. Character education in the Samin community is not only linked to formal teachings but is also integrated into informal education passed down through local traditions and culture. Research shows that moral and cultural values in the Samin community are learned from an early age through daily habits, parental role modeling, and strong traditional cultural practices, making Samin character education informal and contextual in its community life (Rinenggo & Kusdarini, 2021; Sulanam & Huda, 2023; Winata & Imron, 2021). The Samin community applies character education through the role models of parents and customary leaders in daily life. Values such as honesty, responsibility, and simplicity are central to their character education, which is highly relevant to early childhood character formation.

Despite numerous studies discussing the success of culture-based character education, significant challenges remain in integrating these values into the more modern formal education system. Globalization and modernization have profoundly impacted the mindset and behaviors of younger generations, often conflicting with traditional values taught within families and communities. Leonia (2025) shows that local culture-based approaches can enrich moral instruction, particularly through project-based learning that incorporates social values and local wisdom. However, the implementation of this approach in formal educational curricula remains limited, requiring further efforts to align local cultural values with the broader education system. Although various studies have examined the role of local culture in character education, there is a lack of in-depth research on how these locally rooted, wisdom-based approaches can be integrated into formal education systems amid the challenges posed by globalization and the influence of technology. This gap calls for further exploration, particularly within Indonesian communities that preserve their cultural traditions.

As previously discussed, the role of parents and communities in character education, especially within the framework of local culture, is vital. In the Samin community, character education is informal and occurs in everyday life through the examples set by parents and community leaders. Character education within the Samin community is deeply influenced by traditions and values that are indirectly instilled through daily activities, parental role models, and oral traditions. This highlights the critical importance of active parental and community roles in supporting children's character formation, where moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy are taught through local culture and social habits (Fu'adi, 2020; Rinenggo & Kusdarini, 2021). Sakti et al. (2024) underscore the importance of integrating cultural values into early childhood character education, particularly in communities that preserve their cultural traditions. Values such as cooperation and honesty in children's social lives not only strengthen their morals but also form a strong cultural identity. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand how to effectively incorporate culture-based character education into formal education systems to align traditional values with the demands of contemporary society.

This study aims to delve deeper into how character values are applied in early childhood education, particularly within the Samin community in Kudus. The main focus of this research is to analyze the practice of character education based on local wisdom in the Samin community and its contributions to early childhood character formation. It is expected that the findings from this research will provide new insights into the importance of local culture-based character education, which could be applied in other communities with strong cultural traditions. The significance of this research lies in gaining a deeper understanding of how local culture-based character education, particularly in the Samin community, can serve as a relevant model for Indonesia's education system in the era of globalization. By exploring the application of local wisdom values in character education, this study aims to offer policy recommendations for integrating these approaches into formal education while preserving local cultural identity in future children's education.

METHODS

This study employs a phenomenological approach, with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the primary method for analyzing data to understand the subjective experiences and meanings informants attribute to specific phenomena. In this study, the experiences described are those of parents as they instill character in young children within the Samin community. IPA, developed by Smith et al. (2021), focuses on the deep understanding of how informants make sense of their experiences and how their interpretations of the social and personal world are formed. According to the researcher, this approach is particularly suitable for studies exploring personal and contextual life experiences within a community, especially those with a strong cultural identity. This study involved seven female informants from the Samin community in Kudus. All

informants were selected using purposive sampling criteria, targeting individuals with direct experience in character building in early childhood within the Samin culture. All informants were between 20 and 60 years old, married, and had children. [Table 1](#) describes the profiles of the seven informants in this study.

Table 1. Demographic and Cultural Profile of Informants

Informant	Age (Years)	Occupation	Key Cultural Roles/Contribution
I01	60-70	Housewife	Deep experience in character education; cultural elder
I02	25-35	Housewife	Documenting Samin teachings for child education
I03	25-35	Housewife	Parental teaching through values and examples
I04	50-60	Housewife	Focus on honesty and responsibility within the family
I05	50-60	Housewife	Emphasis on cooperation and politeness
I06	25-35	Housewife	Samin values and character building in early childhood
I07	25-35	Housewife	Integration of local wisdom and sharing values

Informants in this study were selected based on three specific purposive criteria to ensure data richness and relevance to the research objectives. First, participants were required to be female members of the Samin community who were actively involved in their children's character education. Second, each informant had to be married and have children, providing them with the necessary direct experience to offer deep insights into early childhood character building within the Samin cultural context. Finally, informants demonstrated a voluntary willingness to participate by sharing their personal experiences and perspectives regarding the application of local wisdom-based character education in their daily family lives. The data collection process employed a triangulation of three primary qualitative techniques: semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted using open-ended questions, allowing informants to freely express their subjective experiences and interpretations of the character education methods implemented within their families. To complement the interview data, researchers conducted participant observations of daily social interactions within the Samin community, specifically focusing on the transmission of character values between parents and children in real-time social praxis. Furthermore, documentation was gathered through the collection of relevant historical records and the teaching materials used in Samin society to provide broader contextual support for the interview and observation findings. Since most interviews were conducted in Samin, a regional language, transcriptions were carefully prepared to ensure the meaning conveyed by participants remained intact and accurate. After transcription in Samin was completed, the transcripts were translated into Indonesian to facilitate analysis. During the translation process, researchers ensured that the original language's meaning was preserved, avoiding the loss of the nuances conveyed by Samin. Accuracy in language use is very important for maintaining the validity of research results. The data were analyzed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, with the following steps:

In the initial stage, all interview transcripts were read repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the informants' experiences. This was done to ensure that the researchers could capture the essence of the experiences conveyed by the informants and the social and cultural contexts behind them. After thorough reading, the data were then broken down into the smallest units that had meaning and relevance to the study. Inductive coding was used here, which is coding that emerged from the data collected and was not influenced by pre-existing categories. Examples of initial codes found in the interview transcripts are presented in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Initial Codes from Interview Transcripts

Code	Description
Honesty	Teaching about honesty, especially in family and community relationships.
Politeness	The value of politeness instilled from an early age, both in behavior towards parents and others.
Mutual Cooperation	Teaching the value of cooperation within families and communities, emphasizing the importance of helping others without expecting anything in return.
Responsibility	Education about the importance of responsibility, both towards family, duties, and society. Education about responsibility is taught from an early age.
Oral Teaching	Teaching that is done orally, without written notes, which is a characteristic of character education in Samin society.

After the codes were identified, the next step was to group them into main themes. These themes reflect the character education applied in Samin society and how their local wisdom influences children's character education. [Table 3](#) groups the codes into main themes.

Table 3. Main Theme Table

Code	Theme
Honesty, Responsibility	Character Values Instilled
Politeness, Mutual Cooperation	Character Teaching Methods
Oral Instruction	The Role of Local Wisdom in Character Education

Several themes that emerged were tested for validity by rereading the interview transcripts and ensuring that each theme accommodated all of the data. Adjustments were made when themes were found to be irrelevant or too broad. The review of themes from the findings is as follows: Instilled Character Values: After review, this theme covers values such as honesty, responsibility, and respect, which emphasize the core character teachings conveyed in the Samin family. Character Teaching Methods: This theme was expanded to include how teaching is carried out through parental example, advice, and daily routines. The Role of Local Wisdom: This theme explores how character teaching in the Samin community is grounded not only in prevailing social norms but also in culturally inherited values.

After the thematic review is complete, the researcher compiles a thematic report based on the identified findings. This report explains how character values are applied in Samin families, how they teach character to their children, and how local wisdom influences the entire process. Each theme is explained using direct quotes from interviews to illustrate the informants' meanings. In this study, the researchers acknowledge the importance of self-reflection on their own social and cultural positions. As researchers, we recognize that our experiences and backgrounds can shape how we interpret data. Therefore, during the research process, we strive to maintain awareness of our role and avoid making irrelevant assumptions about the experiences of informants. In addition, researchers strive to remain open to informants' perspectives by providing space for them to express the meanings they give to their own experiences in instilling character in children.

This research was conducted with strict adherence to fundamental ethical principles to ensure the protection and respect of all participants. Ethical integrity was maintained primarily through informed consent, in which all participants received a comprehensive explanation of the research objectives, the procedures involved, and their absolute right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. To guarantee confidentiality and anonymity, the identities of the informants were protected by using pseudonyms and omitting any specific information that could potentially identify them in the final report. Furthermore, the researchers ensured that the collected data would be used solely for academic research. A significant emphasis was also placed on respect for culture, with the researchers maintaining a high level of sensitivity to the Samin community's cultural values. This included a dedicated effort to adapt to the community's prevailing norms and social practices throughout the data collection process, to ensure the study did not harm or offend their cultural heritage.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the thematic analysis using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), three main themes were identified: Character Values Instilled, Character Teaching Methods, and the Role of Local Wisdom in Character Education. To provide a comprehensive overview of these findings, [Table 4](#) summarizes the core components and meanings derived from the informants' experiences.

Table 4. Summary of IPA Themes on Samin Character Education

Main Theme	Core Components	Key Findings/Reflection
Character Values Instilled	Honesty, Responsibility, Politeness, Mutual Cooperation, and Respect.	Character is viewed as a representation of social identity; honesty is the paramount boundary of being "Samin".
Character Teaching Methods	Parental Role Modeling, Direct Advice, and Daily Routines.	Moral teaching is prioritized at home through informal, consistent practical experiences rather than formal academic instruction.
Role of Local Wisdom	Oral Traditions, Ancestral Teachings (<i>Mbah Samin</i>), and Cultural Practices.	Values are transmitted contextually through narratives and repetitive social praxis without written records.

As illustrated in [Table 4](#), the character education process in the Samin community is not a formal pedagogical structure but a deeply rooted socio-cultural practice. The detailed explanation of each identified theme is presented as follows:

Theme 1: Character Values Instilled

On this theme, it was found that values such as honesty, responsibility, politeness, cooperation, and respect are very important in children's character education. Informants emphasized the importance of instilling these values in everyday life, from interactions within the family to relationships with the community. Interview excerpts:

- *"Honesty is paramount in the family; if you are not honest, you are not a Samin." (I01)*
- *"Children are taught to always help others without expecting anything in return." (I07)*
- *"The moral values instilled are honesty, responsibility, fairness, tolerance, discipline, integrity, and respect." (I01 & I02)*
- *"In terms of attitude, the values taught include confidence, courage, friendliness, optimism, and creativity." (I04 & I05)*

Character values taught from an early age include honesty and altruism towards everyone, not just the Samin community. From an early age, children are also taught to avoid bad behavior and to speak softly, even when angry.

Theme 2: Character Teaching Methods

The character teaching methods used in Samin society prioritize parental role models and direct advice. Teaching is conducted informally, beginning with daily routines, such as advice in the morning before the children start their activities. Character values are also taught through the example of parents' daily behavior. Interview excerpts:

- *"Every morning, we give advice about the importance of manners before the children go out to play." (I06)*
- *"Character education at home is primary; school only supports it." (I05)*
- *"In the past, my father was only educated at home. After independence, formal schooling began to be allowed." (I02)*

This reflects the tension between formal education and traditional values in Samin society. Although they value formal education, they still use traditional methods to educate their children, especially in teaching moral values and character. This teaching is not only in the form of advice, but also through direct actions and examples that are expected to serve as role models for the next generation. The teaching of moral values at home is prioritized over formal education, indicating that the Samin community places greater importance on values taught within their social context. Home education in Samin seems to aim to maintain the continuity of local wisdom, which is passed down from generation to generation. This indicates a close relationship between their cultural identity and the character education of their children.

Theme 3: The Role of Local Wisdom in Character Education

The local wisdom of the Samin community strongly influences the character education implemented. Character teaching is often carried out through oral teachings passed down from generation to generation, without written records. This makes teaching more intimate and more deeply rooted in everyday life. Interview excerpts:

- *"Mbah Samin's teachings are very important in our lives, so we pass them on to our children." (I02)*
- *"We do not write down the teachings; everything is conveyed orally." (I03)*

Table 5. Data Findings and Analysis Themes

Theme	Theme Description	Sample Quote
Character Values Instilled	Moral values taught, such as honesty, responsibility, politeness, and cooperation.	"Honesty is paramount in the family; if you are not honest, you are not Samin." (I01)
Character Teaching Methods	Teaching through parental example, advice, and daily routines.	"We give advice about the importance of good manners every morning." (I06)
The Role of Local Wisdom	Character education based on oral teachings passed down from generation to generation, which are strongly influenced by Samin culture.	"Mbah Samin's teachings are very important in our lives." (I02)

Through the IPA analysis, this study successfully identified the main themes describing how the Samin community instills character in its children. Character values such as honesty, responsibility, and politeness are taught through informal methods, with strong influence from local oral traditions. These findings provide a clearer picture of how character education in Samin society differs from the formal education system, and how local culture plays an important role in shaping character education in early childhood. This study reveals three main themes in early childhood character education in the Samin community: the character values instilled, the character-teaching methods, and the role of local wisdom in character education. These three themes show that character education in the Samin community does not stand as a formal pedagogical process, but rather as a socio-cultural practice integrated into family and community life.

Theme 1: Character Values Instilled

The study's findings reveal that values such as honesty, responsibility, politeness, mutual cooperation, and respect form the foundational pillars of character education in Samin families. These values are not merely normative rules taught verbally, but life principles intrinsic to the social identity of the Samin community. In this context, character is understood not only as an individual quality but also as a representation of social and cultural membership. In the Samin community, moral lessons emphasize the internalization of values derived from collective social experiences, reflecting the interconnected relationship between individuals and their community. This perspective aligns with the thinking of [Lickona \(1992\)](#), who emphasized that character is formed through consistent moral habits from an early age and that these values are transmitted through behavioral models and everyday habits. However, this study extends that perspective by showing that, in the Samin community, the internalization of moral values occurs within the framework of cultural collectivism, where violations of values like honesty are not only viewed as personal mistakes but also as deviations from community values. Therefore, character not only reflects individual qualities but also social group identity, forming a strong foundation for moral teachings and behavior aligned with cultural values.

This finding supports the work of [Berkowitz and Bier \(2007\)](#), which suggests that character education rooted in community values tends to be more effective in shaping long-term moral commitments. In this regard, the Samin community emphasizes the importance of social solidarity and responsibility toward fellow community members, which is passed down through direct experience and active participation in daily life. As found by [Mei-Ju et al. \(2014\)](#), character education integrated into family life and everyday activities, such as play and storytelling, strengthens the parent-child bond and reinforces moral teachings outside of formal education. Thus, character education within the Samin community is more grounded in social experiences that have a greater influence on children's character development. Additionally, [Leonía \(2025\)](#) shows that, in traditional communities, character education through social experiences and observation of parental behavior is more effective than formal education relying solely on academic instruction. This experiential learning gives children the opportunity to internalize moral values more deeply, creating a solid character foundation and strengthening their cultural identity. This further underscores that in traditional societies like the Samin community, character values are more effectively taught through direct observation of parents' behavior and other community members, as well as through participation in collective activities that reinforce social identity. Furthermore, implementing these values serves as a strategic response to globalization. [Ramadhan et al. \(2025\)](#) suggest that multicultural education and local wisdom are essential strategies to mitigate global influences, which is reflected in how the Samin community in Undaan Kudus maintains social norms as a central guide for behavior ([Suryanto et al., 2023](#)). This is supported by [Ibrahim \(2023\)](#), who notes that Samin communities in Bojonegoro preserve strong cultural characteristics through their value systems, similar to the internalization of character through the 'Rokat Tase' tradition in other Indonesian coastal cultures ([Romli et al., 2026](#)).

Theme 2: Character Teaching Methods

Character education in the Samin community is conducted informally through parental role models, direct advice, and daily routines. Character education is not separate from children's daily activities but is present in simple interactions, such as how they speak, behave, and interact with others. This pattern emphasizes that character education occurs naturally and continuously. It demonstrates that character education in the Samin community is closely tied to experiential learning, where moral and social values are taught through observation and direct interaction in everyday life. This finding affirms Social Learning Theory by [Bandura and Walters \(1977\)](#), which states that children learn through observation and imitation of significant figures, particularly their parents. Children in the Samin community learn values such as honesty, responsibility, and social concern by observing their parents' behavior in daily life. Parents serve as primary role models, and by observing their actions, children internalize the norms and values of their community. This is consistent with [Mei-Ju et al. \(2014\)](#), who show that character education integrated into family life and daily activities, such as playing and storytelling, strengthens the parent-child bond and reinforces moral teaching beyond formal education.

Additionally, this finding is also in line with Ecological Theory by [Bronfenbrenner \(1979\)](#), which places the family as the primary microsystem in child development. Bronfenbrenner argues that the family is the first

context that provides the greatest influence on character development. In the Samin community, the family is the primary source of teaching social and character values, which are then reinforced through interactions with the broader social environment. In this regard, character education is not detached from the larger cultural value system in the Samin community, where each individual is responsible for maintaining social harmony.

Harahap & Tumanggor (2024) and Sutrisno et al. (2023) suggest that character education approaches grounded in social habits and routines are more effective at internalizing moral values than purely instructional or theory-based approaches. This is because character values are not only learned cognitively but are shaped through consistent practical experiences in students' daily lives, both in the family and school environments. Character education studies implementing positive behavior habituation programs show that routine activities, such as personal discipline, teamwork in social activities, and involvement in community affairs, significantly contribute to the development of character traits such as responsibility, empathy, and respect. Integrating character values into these routines allows children to internalize moral values naturally through the repetition of positive behaviors within their social context, rather than merely through verbal instructions or classroom theory. This aligns with practices in the Samin community, where character education is not structured in a written curriculum but is built through repeated direct experiences. In the context of Indonesia, this practice reflects the concept of "system among" by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, which emphasizes education through role modeling, emotional closeness, and the use of local language and culture (Putri & Arifin, 2023). This concept emphasizes a more personal, context-specific relationship between the educator (in this case, the parents) and the child, which plays a crucial role in teaching character values.

Along with these findings, Leonia (2025) also reveals that project-based approaches integrating local cultural elements in early childhood education can strengthen character education. Through community-based projects that involve children in social activities, character values such as cooperation and social teamwork can be more easily accepted and applied in children's everyday lives. By involving children in real social activities, they not only learn through instruction but also through direct experiences that reflect the social values present in their community. This approach provides opportunities for children to interact with their social environment, building empathy and concern for others. Furthermore, Aminu et al. (2025) emphasize that character education grounded in active participation in social and cultural activities is more effective in strengthening children's social identity. Firsthand experiences in community-based activities, such as communal work or cooperation, give children the chance to learn moral values through action rather than just verbal instruction. This enhances children's understanding of the importance of their contributions to the common good and strengthens their relationships with their community and culture. In a broader educational context, Wongarso et al. (2022) emphasize that the management of character education models based on Samin local wisdom in schools underscores the environment's crucial role. This strategy often involves specific cultural survival tactics, in which the Samin community uses social strategies to maintain its educational identity (Rosyid, 2020). Such approaches mirror the integration of localized values in other formal settings, ensuring that character building is not just an instructional lesson but a lived experience (Fransiska, 2024).

Theme 3: The Role of Local Wisdom and Oral Traditions

Local wisdom plays a central role in character education within the Samin community, particularly through oral teachings passed down from generation to generation. Despite the absence of written records, the character education process is actually strengthened by oral traditions, which create a closer relationship between parents and children. Oral wisdom in the form of narratives allows moral values to be conveyed in a contextually relevant, flexible manner, relevant to children's daily lives. This also creates a foundation for character that is not only theoretical but is also applied in real life and daily experiences. This oral tradition affirms Lickona (1992) that character is formed through meaningful and repetitive life practices. Character education delivered directly and continuously through everyday social interactions is more effective at shaping character than more formal or instructional methods. In the Samin community, values conveyed through stories, advice, and proverbs carry deep moral teachings that not only guide how to act but also how to understand and appreciate social values within their community context.

Furthermore, this finding extends Ecological Theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979), which positions the family as the primary microsystem in child development. In the context of the Samin community, local wisdom serves as a macrosystem that shapes child-rearing practices and character education. Local culture does not merely serve as a cultural background but also as the primary framework that shapes children's attitudes and behaviors through social interactions and experiences in their daily lives. In addition, research on Pencak Silat Setia Hati Teratai provides an important perspective on character education grounded in local wisdom. Purnamasari et al. (2024) emphasize that the philosophy taught in Pencak Silat Setia Hati Teratai involves character development through values such as cooperation, noble ethics, independence, and global diversity. This approach aligns with the goals of the Pancasila Student Profile, which emphasize character rooted in national values and tolerance. In this context, local wisdom conveyed through cultural traditions like Pencak Silat can be an effective means of instilling universal character values relevant to global social life.

Sakti et al. (2024) also demonstrate, in the context of ethnopedagogy, that integrating local cultural values into early childhood education enhances the meaning and sustainability of character education. In the Samin community, this ethnopedagogical approach is not merely an alternative form of education but has become a practice that naturally and consistently unfolds in their daily lives. Character education in the Samin community is not only derived from verbal instruction and formal doctrines but also from everyday cultural practices deeply rooted in their lives. This ethnopedagogical model links the moral process to local culture, shaping children's cultural identity and instilling universal values relevant to their social lives. As explained by Leonia (2025), ethnopedagogy allows children to learn social and moral values through direct experience within their socio-cultural context, which strengthens their understanding of the values being taught. Further, Andari et al. (2025) found that applying ethnopedagogical values in Pasraman Saraswati Tri Parartha results in character education that integrates everyday cultural practices, making it more effective in shaping moderate and tolerant character traits in children. In this context, education is not only delivered through texts or formal doctrines but also through cultural practices that shape children's character in deeper, more meaningful ways. This indicates that ethnopedagogy is more effective when internalized into daily life, not just in formal curricula. Additionally, in the book *Ethnopedagogy: Grounding Education with Local Wisdom*, the authors emphasize the importance of the ethnopedagogical approach in grounding character education by integrating local values into daily education. According to them, education grounded in local wisdom not only strengthens cultural values but also enhances children's social identity and character within a broader societal context.

This is further supported by Ulunma (2023), who notes that oral literature and norms are vital for the contextual transmission of societal values. The Samin community's reliance on ancestral teachings, such as the historical continuity found in their traditional calendar systems (Khanifah, 2023), reinforces the effectiveness of the ethnopedagogy approach in preschool settings (Sakti et al., 2024). Ultimately, this model ensures that education is recalibrated to emphasize intercultural meanings and objectives, fostering a resilient cultural identity against modern socio-moral erosion (Conti, 2025). The findings of this research offer several critical implications for social and educational practice. Primarily, it underscores the need to strengthen the family's role as the central axis of character education, suggesting that formal training and deeper support for parents are essential to integrating local moral values into daily upbringing. Furthermore, this study advocates integrating ethnopedagogical approaches into broader character education curricula, ensuring that moral teaching remains culturally relevant and grounded in local wisdom. In an era of rapid globalization, preserving such indigenous teachings is not merely an act of cultural conservation but also a strategic effort to foster in students a resilient ethical identity. Ultimately, these insights can be utilized to design more inclusive and effective character education programs that harmonize general educational theories with the rich, localized wisdom present within the community.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that early childhood character education in the Samin community is deeply embedded in local cultural values, with moral transmission occurring through an indigenous, organic process. The findings reveal that informal education, centered on parental role modeling and oral traditions, functions as a primary foundation for children's moral growth, prioritizing core values such as radical honesty, collective responsibility, and social harmony. By highlighting these mechanisms, this research contributes to social science by providing an empirical framework on how ethnopedagogy can complement formal education systems. It provides a significant reference point for educators and researchers to develop culturally responsive pedagogical strategies, ultimately enriching global discourse on character building across diverse societal contexts.

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