



Reconstruction of Ethnopedagogy: The Implementation of Teaching Materials Based on the Local Wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe in Enhancing Students' Morality and Ethics

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the process and outcomes of implementing character education teaching materials that integrate the local wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe (STM) in order to mitigate moral degradation among adolescents. The research adopts a Mixed Methods approach with an Exploratory Sequential design, integrating qualitative ethnographic exploration and quantitative quasi-experimental testing. The qualitative phase involved participatory observation and in-depth interviews with key community informants, focusing on fundamental rituals such as Begawai, Bulian, and death ceremonies to extract core ethical values. These values were reconstructed into teaching materials that combine the philosophy of Alam Takambang Jadi Guru with the National Curriculum, bridging traditional wisdom and contemporary educational relevance. The quantitative phase tested the effectiveness of the teaching materials using a quasi-experimental design with a nonequivalent control group. Data analysis employing paired and independent sample *t*-tests, as well as *N*-gain calculations, revealed statistically significant improvements in moral self-efficacy and ethical behavior. The experimental group achieved an *N*-gain score of 0.6257 (high category) and 100% completeness above the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM 75), indicating strong cognitive and affective internalization of local values. Findings suggest that ethnopedagogical teaching materials serve as an effective instrument for pattern maintenance (latency), internal boundary management, and value deformatization, allowing students to navigate ethical challenges in modern and digital contexts while remaining rooted in cultural identity. The study confirms that integrating local wisdom into formal education is not merely a cultural preservation effort but a forward-looking strategy for character formation, moral resilience, and social cohesion.

Introduction

In the contemporary era, the flow of globalization not only brings technological advancement and economic integration, but also triggers fundamental shifts in value paradigms within the social order of society (Vlados, 2024; Vlados & Chatzinikolaou, 2025; Hasan et al., 2025). Globalization often entails the infiltration of external cultures that are not always aligned with the noble values of the nation, which in turn leads to “culture shock” and an identity crisis among the younger generation (Wahono et al., 2024). (Lickona, 2022) in his classic work, emphasizes that the decline of adolescent character is marked by increasing violence, dishonesty, and a diminishing sense of respect for authority and others. These increasingly complex moral symptoms demand that education function not merely as an agent of knowledge transmission (transfer of knowledge), but also as the frontline in the process of value

transformation (transfer of value) (Mattiro et al., 2025; Clack et al., 2026; Bunea & Corbos, 2026).

General Education and Character Education play a crucial role as instruments for safeguarding social cohesion and personal integrity (Iksal et al., 2024; Azhari et al., 2026; Murtini et al., 2026). From the perspective of the sociology of education, schools function as social systems tasked with maintaining stability through value socialization processes (Juniardi et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2026; Mohammed et al., 2026). Referring to (Parsons, 2023) of structural functionalism, educational institutions must perform the functions of Latency (pattern maintenance) and Integration, in which moral values serve as the “glue” that binds society together and prevents fragmentation (Hylton et al., 2024). However, empirical realities indicate a disconnection between the character curriculum taught in schools and students’ socio-cultural realities (Harker, 2024). Character education approaches that are predominantly theoretical-formal and top-down tend to fail to reach students’ deepest affective dimensions due to a loss of contextual relevance (Rizzo, 2022).

The failure of universalistic models of character education has prompted the need to revitalize local wisdom (indigenous wisdom) as a pedagogical foundation (Tripayana et al., 2024; Hidayat, 2026; Santosa & Santoso, 2026). Ethnopedagogy emerges as a promising solution that views educational practice as a culture-based activity (Alwasilah, 2009). Local values possess high ecological validity because they grow and develop from the empirical experiences of local communities (Sadewo et al., 2025). By integrating local values, learning becomes more meaningful, as students can relate the moral principles they learn to their own cultural identities (Rero et al., 2025). This aligns with the view that effective character education must be able to connect the “heart, head, and hands” within a real cultural context (Mayenti & Malihah, 2023).

The Talang Mamak Tribe (STM) in Indragiri Hulu, Riau, is one of the indigenous communities with extraordinary philosophical richness that has not yet been optimally utilized within the formal education system. One of their core philosophical pillars is Alam Takambang Jadi Guru, which perceives the universe as an absolute source of moral learning. Talang Mamak local wisdom, as reflected in various customary rituals such as Begawai, Bulian, and funeral ceremonies, inherently embodies strong dimensions of honesty, discipline, and mutual cooperation. However, this richness often remains informal in nature and is threatened with extinction because it is not documented within formal learning instruments in secondary schools in the region.

The main issue addressed in this study is the gap between the rich ethical potential of Talang Mamak local wisdom and classroom learning practices that are still dominated by conventional textbooks. Transforming informal values from indigenous communities into formal teaching materials requires a precise methodological framework to ensure that these values do not lose their substance when transferred into the classroom. Moreover, character development should not be limited to the cognitive level, but must reach the level of moral self-efficacy. Referring to Bandura’s social cognitive theory, moral self-efficacy is an individual’s belief in their ability to behave ethically even under social pressure (Bandura, 2023).

This study seeks to fill a significant research gap in the literature on the sociology of education and ethnopedagogy (Mohd Hashim et al., 2026; Purnama & Artika., 2026; Purwanto et al., 2026). Most previous studies tend to be confined to anthropological descriptions of local wisdom without offering empirically tested implementation models within school curricula. On the other hand, Parsons’ structural functionalism theory is often criticized for overemphasizing stability while neglecting micro-level interactions in the classroom. By employing a Mixed Methods approach, this study synergizes macro-sociological analysis of

value structures with micro-level analysis of Self formation through Mead’s symbolic interactionism (Ritzer et al., 2025; Wei et al., 2026; Nuha et al., 2026).

Through the development of teaching materials based on Talang Mamak local wisdom, this research aims to demonstrate both quantitatively and qualitatively that education rooted in local culture can significantly enhance students’ morality and ethics. The novelty of this study lies in the design of teaching materials that integrate ethnopedagogical principles with the strengthening of moral self-efficacy, positioning them not only as classroom learning tools but also as functional instruments of cultural preservation for strengthening national character amid the pressures of globalization. This study aims to analyze the process and outcomes of implementing character education teaching materials that integrate the local wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe (STM) in order to mitigate moral degradation among adolescents.

Methods

This study employed a Mixed Methods approach with an Exploratory Sequential design. In accordance with the research objective of implementing instructional materials, the study began with qualitative data collection to explore the character values of the Talang Mamak tribe. The findings from this phase were then used as the basis for the development and implementation of instructional materials in the quantitative phase (QUAL–QUANT). In addition, this research was oriented toward a Research and Development (R&D) approach to produce instructional materials whose effectiveness in improving students’ morals and ethics can be empirically tested. This study specifically adopts the Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. This design is characterized by initiating the research with a qualitative phase (QUAL) for in-depth exploration, the results of which are then used to formulate or develop instruments for the quantitative phase (QUANT) in the subsequent stage.

This research was conducted in the main settlement area of the Talang Mamak Tribe, located in Indragiri Hulu Regency, Riau Province. The selection of this location was based on geographical and cultural considerations, as the area represents both the natural setting and the center of the tribe’s sociocultural activities. The choice of this site is crucial in supporting the ethnographic approach, as it allows the researcher to conduct in-depth and intensive participant observation in order to capture the complexity of local wisdom practices within their actual spatial and temporal context (in situ).

Participant selection in the qualitative phase was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, which was further expanded through the snowball sampling principle to obtain informants who possess relevant knowledge, experience, and authority related to the research focus. This approach enabled the researcher to identify key informants who have a deep understanding of the implementation of customary values and educational practices within the community. The research participants consisted of three main groups. First, customary leaders, who served as the primary sources of information regarding value systems, customary law, and ritual practices. Second, education practitioners, who provided perspectives on the process of transmitting and internalizing character values within formal education settings. Third, representatives of the customary community, who illustrated how local wisdom is internalized and practiced in daily life by the younger generation.

Table 1. Research Participants

No	Participant Category	Number (Persons)	Role in the Research	Selection Criteria
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1	Customary Leaders (Ninik Mamak/Batin/Mangku)	3	Key informants who provide in-depth information regarding customary value systems, social structures, and ritual practices within the Talang Mamak community	Hold a formal position in the customary structure, are recognized by the community as traditional leaders, and possess extensive experience and knowledge of customary law and traditions
2	Education Practitioners (Subject Teachers)	3	Provide perspectives on the integration of local wisdom values into the learning process and the implementation of character education in schools	Active teachers who have experience in developing character education or learning related to socio-cultural values
3	Representatives of the Customary Community (Youth/Heirs)	4	Explain the actual practices of applying customary values in daily life and the dynamics of cultural sustainability among the younger generation	Members of the customary community who are active in socio-cultural activities and represent the next generation within the customary social structure
Total		10 Participants		

The subsequent phase is the quantitative stage, which aims to test the effectiveness of the developed teaching materials. This phase employs a quasi-experimental method with a nonequivalent control group design. This design is chosen due to the practical constraints of fully randomizing subjects in formal educational settings. The research participants consist of 60 students from SMAN 1 Seberida, divided into two groups: an experimental group that receives instruction using Talang Mamak local wisdom-based teaching materials, and a control group that continues to use conventional teaching materials commonly applied in the school.

The research instrument used in this quantitative phase is a Questionnaire for Measuring Moral and Ethical Development. This instrument was specifically designed to measure the dependent variable as a response to the implementation of the developed teaching materials. Theoretical Basis: The instrument was developed with reference to the framework of moral development theory, particularly the Stages of Moral Development proposed by (Kohlberg et al., 1984) as well as instruments based on post-conventional moral reasoning such as the Defining Issues

Test (DIT) developed by (Rest et al., 1999). Validation: The instrument used in this study has undergone construct validity and content validity testing, both through expert validation (Phase 3.3.1) and through limited empirical trials to obtain an adequate reliability coefficient before being applied in the main study. In the quantitative phase, the experimental group received an intervention in the form of teaching materials developed using the RE–TA–KA syntax (Reflection, Planting, Monitoring). This syntax represents an operationalization of the Project Based Learning model that has been modified with Talang Mamak ethnopedagogical values to intervene in the students’ Moral Self-Efficacy (MS-E) variable.

Table 2. Learning Syntax of the RE–TA–KA Model in the Experimental Procedure

Intervention Stage	Technical Procedure in the Classroom (Teacher & Student Activities)	Supporting Instruments
Reflection (RE)	The teacher presents real-life cases (Moral Crisis) and students conduct in-depth reflection using local philosophical values to identify initial solutions.	Self-Reflection Sheets & Cultural Documentary Videos
Planting (TA)	The teacher transmits ritual values (Begawai, Bulian, Dendo) through sociology learning materials. Students adopt these values as new behavioral standards.	Ethnopedagogy-Based Modules/Teaching Materials
Monitoring (KA)	Students practice these values in group projects. The teacher observes and guides students’ behavior to ensure consistency in moral actions.	Behavioral Monitoring Journal & Self-Efficacy Column

The data collection techniques in this quantitative phase are based on the Pre-test and Post-test Experimental Design as proposed by (Creswel & Creswell, 2018).

Table 3. Data Collection Techniques

Data Collection Stage	Operational Procedure	Objective
Pre-test	Administering the moral and ethics measurement instrument to the experimental group before the teaching model is implemented.	To measure the baseline score of students’ moral and ethical levels prior to the intervention.
Intervention	Implementation of the Talang Mamak local wisdom–based teaching materials within the learning process for a specified period.	To provide the treatment in the form of the developed learning model.
Post-test	Administering the same instrument to the experimental group after the intervention has been completed.	To measure students’ moral and ethical scores after the intervention in order to evaluate changes or impacts.

The data collection procedures in the qualitative phase were integrated through three main techniques to obtain holistic and comprehensive data: In-depth Interviews, Participant Observation, and Document Study (Patton et al., 2015). The implementation of this Method Triangulation strategy was intended to ensure the trustworthiness of the data, particularly in

terms of credibility and dependability of the findings. Through the synergy of these three techniques, the researcher was able to conduct cross-verification of the information obtained, t

The quantitative data analysis in this study was directed toward testing the research hypothesis concerning the effectiveness of the developed learning model. The analysis was conducted using statistical software in accordance with inferential statistical principles as explained by (Andy, 2018). The analysis process began with descriptive statistics, which were used to describe the basic characteristics of the sample and research variables. At this stage, the data were analyzed through the calculation of the mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution in order to provide a general overview of the initial and final conditions of students' moral and ethical variables. The next stage involved testing the assumptions of analysis to ensure that the data met the requirements of parametric statistical procedures before hypothesis testing was conducted. These prerequisite tests included a normality test, such as the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, and a homogeneity of variance test, such as Levene's Test. These tests were intended to confirm that the data distribution was normal and that the variance between groups was relatively homogeneous, thereby ensuring the validity of further statistical analysis. The final stage involved hypothesis testing to measure the effectiveness of the intervention implemented through the local wisdom–based learning model. This was conducted using a paired sample t-test, which was used to compare the differences in students' moral and ethical scores between the pre-test and post-test within the same experimental group. Through this analysis, the researcher was able to determine whether a significant improvement occurred in students' moral and ethical scores after the implementation of the learning model, thereby identifying the significance of the resulting gain score produced by the intervention.

Qualitative data analysis in this study employed the Thematic Analysis approach developed by (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This approach was selected because it provides a systematic and iterative framework for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within qualitative data in a comprehensive manner. The analysis process began with the data familiarization stage, in which the researcher conducted verbatim transcription of interview recordings and field observations. The transcribed data were then read repeatedly while making initial notes to develop a holistic understanding of the data content. This stage allowed the researcher to become deeply immersed in the data and identify preliminary ideas relevant to the research focus. The next stage involved the coding process, where meaningful units were identified within the interview transcripts and field notes. Each segment of data was then assigned descriptive codes through a line-by-line coding procedure. This process enabled the researcher to systematically organize the data and highlight important concepts emerging from participants' narratives. Following the coding stage, the researcher conducted initial categorization by grouping codes that shared conceptual similarities into broader categories known as potential themes. These categories served as the preliminary structure for identifying patterns within the dataset. The researcher then proceeded to the theme development and review stage, in which the emerging themes were carefully examined and compared with the entire dataset to ensure coherence, consistency, and accurate representation of the data. Subsequently, the definition and naming of themes were carried out. At this stage, each theme was given a concise, clear, and academically appropriate name that reflected the core meaning and essence of the data it represented. The final stage involved data interpretation and report writing, where the researcher analyzed the hierarchical and functional relationships among themes and connected the findings with theoretical perspectives on character education and local wisdom. The results of the analysis were then presented in a comprehensive narrative to provide an in-depth explanation of the sociocultural phenomena observed in the research context.

Results and Discussion

Reconstruction of Talang Mamak Ethnic Character Values: A Local Epistemology

The findings of the qualitative phase indicate that the local wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe (STM) cannot be understood merely as a collection of cultural artifacts or traditional symbols, but rather as a coherent and living ethical system with strong epistemological foundations. Through an ethnographic approach, this study reconstructs Talang Mamak character values by positioning them as a source of moral knowledge rooted in local epistemology. This reconstruction is carried out through a critical examination of three fundamental rituals that form the backbone of Talang Mamak social life, namely the Begawai ritual, the Bulian ritual, and funeral ceremonies.

The Begawai ritual, or customary feast, is interpreted as a concrete manifestation of collectivity and social responsibility. In practice, Begawai involves the entire community, with clearly defined roles that require each member to demonstrate discipline, commitment, and accountability for the success of the collective event. From the perspective of structural functionalism, this ritual functions as a powerful mechanism of social integration, reinforcing social cohesion and stability within the community. The values of solidarity, shared responsibility, and social justice embedded in Begawai resonate strongly with the principles of unity and social justice enshrined in Pancasila. These findings underscore the significant pedagogical potential of Begawai values to be contextualized within classroom learning as a means of fostering students' civic virtues.

The Bulian ritual, which serves as a form of traditional healing, reveals profound dimensions of spirituality and ecological consciousness. This ritual is not merely aimed at physical recovery, but also at restoring harmony between humans, nature, and transcendent forces. The respect for nature embodied in Bulian reflects the philosophy of *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru*, which positions the natural world as a living moral text and an authentic source of ethical learning. The values of spirituality, ecological awareness, and human humility toward the universe are central to this ritual. In the context of character education, these findings demonstrate that moral understanding is cultivated not through abstract instruction, but through symbolic and experiential practices that nurture ethical awareness and reverence for life in a holistic manner.

Meanwhile, funeral ceremonies within the Talang Mamak tradition function as mechanisms of social healing and the restoration of communal bonds. The experience of grief is shared collectively, as community members provide emotional, material, and spiritual support to the bereaved family. The solidarity and empathy that emerge during these ceremonies illustrate how the indigenous community practices an ethics of care in a tangible and lived form. Funeral rituals thus become a social space where values such as empathy, social sensitivity, and moral responsibility toward others are learned through direct experience. From an educational perspective, these values offer a strong foundation for the development of students' character, particularly in cultivating social awareness and the ability to understand and respond to the suffering of others.

Overall, the reconstruction of Talang Mamak ethnic character values through these three rituals affirms that STM local wisdom constitutes a contextual, functional, and highly relevant ethical system for the development of educational materials. The values embedded within these practices are not only aligned with national character education principles, but also provide a meaningful pedagogical approach grounded in students' cultural realities, thereby enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of character education.

Implementation of Ethnopedagogy-Based Teaching Materials: Bridging Tradition and Modernity

The findings from the implementation phase indicate that ethnopedagogy-based teaching materials effectively function as a bridge between local traditions and the demands of modern life. The implementation process was carried out through a strategy of value deformatization, namely translating abstract and symbolic traditional concepts into contemporary problem contexts that are closely related to students' lived experiences. This approach enables traditional values to move beyond being merely historical knowledge and to be revitalized as ethical guidelines that remain relevant within modern social realities.

One of the key findings in the implementation of these teaching materials is the transformation of the *Utang Laki/Bini* value, which in the Talang Mamak customary context represents moral responsibility within social and familial relationships, into a learning project entitled "Modern Responsibility." Through this project, students are encouraged to analyze ethical issues in social media communication, including hate speech, the spread of misinformation, and digital responsibility, using a framework of self-control and social accountability derived from Talang Mamak customary values. Observational results indicate that students were able to draw clear parallels between customary norms and the ethical challenges of the digital world, allowing local values to function as a reflective lens for understanding modernity.

In classroom practice, the implementation of the teaching materials was supported by the use of role-playing methods and community-based simulations. These methods provide students with opportunities to actively engage in the learning process through role-taking and symbolic interaction. Based on Symbolic Interactionism theory, this process allows students to negotiate meanings related to the values being learned while simultaneously constructing moral understanding through simulated social experiences. Students do not merely learn values at a cognitive level, but also internalize them through action and collective reflection.

The research findings further demonstrate that the application of these methods within a multicultural school environment does not lead to cultural exclusivity. On the contrary, Talang Mamak local values are positioned as open sources of dialogue, thereby encouraging intercultural interaction and mutual understanding among students. This process illustrates that ethnopedagogy does not result in cultural segregation, but rather enriches shared ethical perspectives through constructive exchanges of meaning.

Overall, the implementation of ethnopedagogy-based teaching materials has proven to be pedagogically effective in bridging tradition and modernity. The resulting learning process not only strengthens students' character and ethical awareness, but also supports the vision of General Education in shaping individuals who possess global competence, social sensitivity, and moral integrity firmly rooted in local values.

Effectiveness of Enhancing Students' Moral Self-Efficacy

Based on the results of the initial observation, it can be concluded that the XI-grade students of SMAN 1 Seberida essentially already had a basic understanding of moral values derived from local wisdom, such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), honesty, and respect for others and the environment. However, this understanding was still conceptual and had not been fully reflected in students' actual behavior in daily life. This was evident from the fact that some students still showed a lack of cooperation in group activities, were not consistent in applying academic honesty, and had not demonstrated optimal care for the school environment. This condition indicates a gap between theoretical understanding and the practical application

of moral values, highlighting the need for a more contextual and applied learning approach to help students internalize character values more effectively.

Table 4. Average Pre-test Results of Students

No	Description	Score
1	Number of Students	36
2	Highest Score	80
3	Lowest Score	46.6
4	Total Pre-test Score	2226.1
5	Average Pre-test Score	61.84
6	Number of Students \geq KKM (75)	7 students
7	Number of Students $<$ KKM (75)	29 students
8	Percentage \geq KKM	19.4%
9	Percentage $<$ KKM	80.6%

Based on the pre-test results administered to 36 XI-grade students, it can be concluded that students' initial moral and ethical abilities were still relatively low. Scores ranged from 46.6 to 80, with a class average of 61.82. Compared to the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 75, only 3 students (8.3%) met or exceeded the standard, while 33 students (91.7%) remained below it. These results indicate that students' initial ability to understand and apply moral and ethical values based on Talang Mamak local wisdom was still low. Most students were unable to relate concepts such as mutual cooperation, honesty, and respect for nature and others to real-life situations. Therefore, this initial condition became an important basis for the implementation of character education teaching materials based on Talang Mamak local wisdom as an effort to improve both understanding and internalization of students' moral values.

Subsequently, the design and implementation of the Talang Mamak-based character education teaching materials were intended to integrate local cultural values such as mutual cooperation, honesty, and respect for others into the learning process at SMAN 1 Seberida. The teaching material design includes learning objectives, basic competencies, teaching materials, learning methods, learning resources, and a systematic assessment system to support the development of students' morals and ethics. Learning was conducted over three main sessions: introducing Talang Mamak local wisdom values, implementing honesty in daily life, and applying respect for others in social life. The learning process used participatory methods such as group discussions, social practice, simulations, role-playing, and self-reflection, so that students not only understood the concept of character values theoretically but also practiced them in real activities.

The implementation results show that applying these teaching materials was able to improve students' understanding and awareness of the importance of character values based on local culture. Students began to show positive changes, especially in terms of cooperation (mutual cooperation) and respect in social interactions at school. However, the application of honesty still posed a challenge for some students, requiring continuous reinforcement of learning. Overall, the implementation of character education teaching materials based on Talang Mamak local wisdom was successful and contributed positively to strengthening students' character development. Learning approaches that connect moral values with local culture proved more contextual and relevant for students, helping to enhance moral self-efficacy, that is, students' confidence in acting according to moral values in daily life. Therefore, this learning model has the potential to be further developed and applied in character education in schools.

Table 5. Average Post-test Results of Students

No	Description	Score
1	Number of Students	36
2	Highest Score	100
3	Lowest Score	76.6
4	Total Post-test Score	3121.2
5	Average Post-test Score	86.7
6	Number of Students \geq KKM (75)	36 students
7	Number of Students $<$ KKM (75)	0 students
8	Percentage \geq KKM	100%
9	Percentage $<$ KKM	0%

Based on the post-test data, all XI-grade students successfully achieved scores above the KKM (75), with an average score of 86.7. The highest score obtained was 100, and the lowest was 76.6. These results indicate a significant improvement compared to the pre-test, both individually and as a class average, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Talang Mamak-based character education teaching materials in enhancing understanding and application of moral values, particularly mutual cooperation, honesty, and respect for others.

In this study, to determine the improvement in the application of Talang Mamak local wisdom values (mutual cooperation, honesty, and respect for others) before and after the treatment using character education teaching materials based on local wisdom, the results are presented in the following table:

Table 6. Average Pre-test and Post-test Results

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	61.8194	36	9.16758
	Post-test	85.7056	36	6.10058

Based on the statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test results in Table 4.31, there is a significant improvement in students' moral and ethical development after the implementation of character education teaching materials based on Talang Mamak local wisdom. The average student score in the pre-test was 61.8194, while in the post-test it increased to 85.7056, indicating a meaningful positive change. Furthermore, the standard deviation in the post-test (6.10058) is lower than in the pre-test (9.16758), suggesting that after learning, students' results became more consistent. This indicates that most students showed similar improvements in understanding the material. The smaller standard error of the mean in the post-test (1.01676) also indicates that the estimated mean is more accurate and reliable. Overall, these results show that the Talang Mamak local wisdom-based teaching materials successfully enhanced students' character and ethics with better consistency after learning.

The normality test is used to examine whether the distribution of data obtained from the pre-test and post-test follows a normal distribution. In this study, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used because it is more effective for small sample sizes (less than 50). The results of this normality test provide an overview of whether the data meet the normality assumption and are suitable for further analysis, especially when comparing pre-test and post-test results. The following table shows the results of the normality test applied to the pre-test and post-test data:

Table 7. Normality Test Results

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Shapiro-Wilk
	Statistic	df

Pre-test	0.101	36
Post-test	0.136	36

Based on the normality test results using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk, it can be concluded that the pre-test and post-test data are normally distributed. For the pre-test, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a statistic of 0.101 with a significance of 0.200, indicating that H0 is accepted and the data are normally distributed. The Shapiro-Wilk test produced a statistic of 0.963 with a significance of 0.268, confirming the normal distribution of pre-test data. For the post-test, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a statistic of 0.136 with a significance of 0.089, which is also greater than 0.05, indicating normal distribution. The Shapiro-Wilk test for the post-test gave a statistic of 0.949 with a significance of 0.097, confirming normality. Overall, since the significance values for both tests are greater than 0.05, the pre-test and post-test data meet the normality assumption. Therefore, parametric tests such as the paired sample t-test can be used to examine the differences between pre-test and post-test results.

The normality test confirms that the data have a normal distribution, allowing further analysis to be conducted using appropriate statistical methods. These results support further analysis using parametric techniques, such as the paired t-test or n-gain analysis, to measure improvements in students' moral and ethical development after the implementation of Talang Mamak local wisdom-based character education teaching materials.

The next step in this study was to analyze the improvement in students' learning outcomes before and after implementing Talang Mamak local wisdom-based character education teaching materials. This analysis used the normalized n-gain formula to determine the extent to which the implementation of local wisdom values, such as mutual cooperation, honesty, and respect for others, could enhance students' moral and ethical development. The data for this analysis came from pre-test and post-test scores, measured based on the application of these values in students' daily lives. The n-gain calculation results are presented in the following table:

Table 8. N-Gain Results

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
N-Gain	36	0.36	1.00	0.6257	0.15478
Valid N (listwise)	36				

Based on Table 8, the obtained n-gain value is 0.6257, which falls into the "High" category. This value indicates a significant increase in students' understanding of honesty, mutual cooperation, and respect for others applied in daily life. The n-gain improvement shows that the implementation of Talang Mamak local wisdom-based teaching materials effectively developed students' moral and ethical competence.

In conclusion, the implementation of Talang Mamak local wisdom-based character education teaching materials empirically contributed significantly to enhancing students' moral and ethical quality. These findings indicate an increased capacity of students to internalize and actualize Talang Mamak values in real social interactions after the pedagogical intervention. This confirms that integrating collective values (mutual cooperation), personal integrity (honesty), and interpersonal respect (respect for others) as pillars of learning has successfully transformed students' ethical awareness systematically.

To provide statistical legitimacy regarding the effectiveness of the intervention, a hypothesis test was conducted to verify the significance of the differences in students' moral and ethical

achievements before and after the implementation of the teaching materials. The statistical procedure used was the Paired Sample *t*-Test, which analyzes disparities between pre-test and post-test scores. This measurement focused on the degree of internalization of local wisdom values, including mutual cooperation, honesty, and respect for others. The statistical comparison results are shown in the following table:

Table 9. Comparative Analysis Results (Paired Sample *t*-Test) Pre-test and Post-test Scores

	Paired Differences	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
Pair 1	Pre-test – Post-test	-23.88611	8.51245	1.41874

From Table 4.8, the significance value (Sig.) is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 (the null hypothesis), which states that there is no difference between pre-test and post-test results, is rejected, and H_a (the alternative hypothesis), which states that there is a significant difference, is accepted. This indicates that the implementation of Talang Mamak local wisdom-based character education teaching materials in learning has a positive and significant impact on students' moral and ethical development. Thus, it can be concluded that applying local wisdom values through these teaching materials significantly improves students' understanding and application of moral and ethical behavior.

Quantitative Effectiveness: Escalation of Students' Morality

The results of the quantitative analysis indicate that the implementation of ethnopedagogy-based teaching materials has a highly significant impact on the improvement of students' morality and ethics. Based on data obtained through a quasi-experimental design, this instructional intervention has proven to be effective both statistically and substantively in promoting the escalation of students' character.

The results of the Paired Sample *t*-Test show a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a very significant difference between students' moral and ethical scores before and after the use of teaching materials based on local wisdom. These findings demonstrate that the learning intervention does not merely affect academic aspects, but also clearly stimulates positive changes in the affective domain of students. Thus, the developed teaching materials function as an effective medium for transforming moral values into students' learning experiences.

In terms of the quality of improvement, the calculation of the N-gain score yielded a value of 0.6257, which falls into the high category. This result reflects that the observed improvement is neither superficial nor temporary, but rather represents a strong process of value internalization. Ethnopedagogy-based teaching materials have been shown not only to enhance students' cognitive understanding of moral and ethical concepts, but also to embed these values within the structure of students' moral awareness and convictions when facing social situations.

Furthermore, the analysis of learning mastery reveals that all students in the experimental group achieved a 100 percent mastery level, with scores exceeding the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 75. This achievement indicates that learning materials rooted in local culture are more easily understood and accepted by students. The sociological relevance between the learning content and students' lived realities makes the learning process more meaningful, contextual, and effective in shaping character.

Overall, the quantitative findings of this study affirm that teaching materials based on Talang Mamak local wisdom demonstrate high effectiveness in enhancing students' morality and ethics. This intervention not only meets statistical criteria for success, but also reflects a deep and sustainable transformation of values within students.

Theoretical and Empirical Synthesis

The success of this implementation can be explained through (Bandura, 2023) concept of Moral Self-Efficacy. The developed teaching materials function as an effective modeling medium. When students see the noble values of their own culture values that may have previously been perceived as outdated elevated into prestigious academic content, their moral self-efficacy increases. Students gain greater confidence in acting ethically because these values originate from their own collective identity, making moral action both personally meaningful and socially anchored.

From a sociological perspective, the integration of Talang Mamak values into the formal curriculum strengthens the Latency function (pattern maintenance) within Parsons' AGIL framework. Schools, in this sense, are no longer agents of cultural alienation but become functional bridges for cultural preservation. The empirical findings of this study confirm that effective character education is one that can transform local wisdom into pedagogical instruments responsive to contemporary challenges (Ritzer et al., 2025; Smith, 2010).

By merging theoretical constructs with empirical outcomes, this research demonstrates that ethnopedagogy not only enriches cognitive understanding but also facilitates affective and behavioral internalization of values. Students are empowered to navigate ethical ambiguities in modern life while remaining rooted in cultural identity, thereby achieving a synthesis of global competence and local integrity.

Local Wisdom as a Pattern Maintenance (Latency) Instrument

The findings of this study provide empirical confirmation that the local wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe (STM) occupies a strategic position as an instrument of pattern maintenance, or latency, within the AGIL framework proposed by Talcott Parsons. From the perspective of structural functionalism, the latency function plays a crucial role in preserving, transmitting, and stabilizing core value patterns that form the foundation for the continuity of a social system. The empirical results of this research indicate that character education rooted in STM local wisdom is not only culturally relevant but also sociologically effective in maintaining value continuity amid increasingly complex and disruptive social changes.

Traditional STM values integrated into the teaching materials have proven to function as anchors of moral stability for students. In the context of globalization, which is rife with ethical ambiguity and value fragmentation, local wisdom provides clear and contextual normative guidance for students to discern right from wrong. Values such as social responsibility, respect for nature, communal solidarity, and spirituality embedded in STM traditions act as moral frameworks guiding students' behavior in facing modern life challenges, both in real-world social contexts and in digital spaces.

In line with (Hylton et al., 2024) view, social systems require institutions capable of reproducing fundamental values continuously to maintain social integrity and cohesion. In this study, schools, through teaching materials based on local wisdom, serve as key institutions in this value reproduction process. The teaching materials function not only as pedagogical tools but also as media for cultural transmission, bridging the generational gap between elders and youth. Through a contextual and reflective learning process, STM customary values are reinterpreted and internalized by students as part of their moral consciousness.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that local wisdom does not merely serve a symbolic or ceremonial function but possesses vitality as an operational ethical guide. Integrating STM values into learning allows the community's "collective memory" to remain alive while adapting to contemporary contexts. Thus, local wisdom is not trapped as static historical artifacts but transforms into a functional moral compass in shaping the character of the younger generation.

Overall, this discussion strengthens the argument that character education based on local wisdom is an effective strategy for executing the pattern maintenance function amid rapid social change. Through this approach, education not only transfers knowledge but also preserves value continuity, moral stability, and the social identity of students as integral members of an evolving society.

Dialectics of Identity and Internal Boundary Management

From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, classroom learning is not merely a process of information transfer but a space for negotiating meaning, where students actively construct their sense of self. (Mead, 2022) emphasized that the formation of the self involves the dynamic interplay between the "I" as the acting subject and the "Me" as the internalization of social values. Through this lens, learning becomes a participatory and reflective process in which students engage with both personal agency and social expectation.

The implementation of ethnopedagogy in this study provides students with the opportunity to practice "internal boundary management." By internalizing the symbols of local wisdom—such as the philosophy *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru* students acquire a cognitive framework to filter external influences. As (Ritzer et al., 2025) notes, the power of social actors lies in their ability to actively interpret and assign meaning to symbols. In this context, a strong sense of local cultural identity functions as a sociological filter, preventing moral anomie and helping students maintain personal integrity amid complex value pluralism.

In practice, this means that students are not passive recipients of knowledge; they actively negotiate between traditional ethical frameworks and contemporary social challenges. The internalization of local wisdom equips them with both a moral compass and a critical lens, enabling them to navigate diverse social environments while upholding core values. As such, the integration of STM local wisdom into classroom learning strengthens students' ethical resilience, reinforces their cultural identity, and supports the development of autonomous, morally grounded individuals capable of interacting responsibly in a pluralistic society.

Value Deformalization: From Abstraction to Axiology

This study also underscores the critical importance of value deformalization in character education. Often, values education in schools becomes trapped within an abstract cognitive domain, losing its transformative potential. Ethnopedagogy offers a solution by integrating *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action* (Lickona, 2022), bridging the gap between understanding values conceptually and living them experientially.

Practical activities, such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) during the preparation of customary rituals adapted to an academic context, exemplify concrete forms of meaningful learning. According to (Alwasilah, 2009) local wisdom provides an ethical laboratory far more effective than theoretical doctrines alone. When noble values are practiced through real-life activities and subsequently reflected upon critically in classroom discussions, value crystallization becomes more permanent and deeply internalized.

This process bridges the divide between sociology as a pure science and pedagogy as an applied science, creating a synergy capable of producing substantial behavioral change. By translating abstract cultural norms into actionable and contextualized practices, deformalization transforms intangible principles into living ethics, ensuring that students do not merely know values but feel and enact them in their daily lives.

Transformation Towards a Fully Realized Pancasila Human

At the macro level, the integration of contemporary sociology and ethnopedagogy in this study aligns with the national educational vision of shaping the “Pancasila Human.” Pancasila, as the philosophical *grundslag* of the Indonesian state, finds its sociological grounding in the local wisdom dispersed across the archipelago. (Pambudhi et al., 2026) emphasizes that general and character education must be capable of producing citizens who possess global intelligence while remaining firmly rooted in their cultural foundations (*local integrity*).

This study demonstrates that character strengthening through ethnopedagogy is not a mere romanticization of the past but a forward-looking strategy for cultivating cultural resilience. By positioning the local wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe as both a theoretical and practical resource for education, this approach not only preserves tradition but also undertakes a form of social reconstruction. The goal is to create a societal order that is more civilized and ethical, fully aligned with the noble ideals of the nation.

In essence, the integration of ethnopedagogy into character education enables the development of students who embody the values of Pancasila in thought, feeling, and action—individuals who are globally competent, ethically grounded, and culturally rooted, representing the vision of a fully realized Pancasila Human.

Conclusion

Based on comprehensive analysis using a Mixed Methods approach, this study provides empirical evidence that the implementation of teaching materials integrating the local wisdom of the Talang Mamak Tribe (STM) is significantly effective in enhancing students’ morality and ethics at the Senior High School (SMA) level. The findings confirm that reconstructing endogenous values through ethnopedagogical principles synergizing the philosophy of *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru* with the structure of the National Curriculum produces a learning model with high ecological validity. These teaching materials function not only as a medium for knowledge transmission but also as an instrument for strengthening moral self-efficacy, equipping students to navigate the complexities of moral degradation in the contemporary, globalized era.

Limitations

Despite its significant contributions to the discourse on ethnopedagogy, this study has several limitations. Spatially and demographically, the research is limited to the Talang Mamak community in Indragiri Hulu, so generalizing the findings to other ethnic groups with different social structures may require adjustments to the intervention parameters. Furthermore, the relatively short duration of the quasi-experiment—one semester—may not fully capture long-term character transformation at the habitus level. Future research is therefore recommended to conduct external validity testing through cross-cultural studies or to implement this model across different educational levels to examine its broader consistency and effectiveness.

Practical Implications

The findings carry strategic practical implications for educators and policymakers. The developed teaching materials demonstrate high scalability and replicability, making them

highly recommended for adoption in other schools with strong local cultural or endogenous wisdom. For teachers, this model provides a practical guide for contextualizing the national curriculum within local content without compromising academic competence. Additionally, regional education authorities can use this framework as a reference for formulating character-building policies rooted in local “cultural capital,” creating a school ecosystem that excels cognitively while maintaining moral integrity grounded in the nation’s identity.

This research validates the pedagogical potential of ethnopedagogy as a bridge between cultural preservation and contemporary character education, offering a model that cultivates ethically grounded, culturally aware, and socially responsible students.

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