

Research Article

Cite this article: Santosa, S., Santoso, H., & Ichsan. (2026). Integrating Early 19th-Century Javanese Court Literature Values into Multicultural Character Education.

Educational Process: International Journal, 21, e2026023.

<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2026.21.23>

Received August 27, 2025

Accepted October 25, 2025

Keywords: Cultural integration, ethical values, hermeneutic, moral education, Surakarta Kasunanan Palace

Author for correspondence:

Sedya Santosa

✉ sedya.santosa@uin-suka.ac.id

✉ Department of Islamic Education Management, Faculty of Islamic Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta



OPEN ACCESS

© The Author(s), 2025. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution, and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

Integrating Early 19th-Century Javanese Court Literature Values into Multicultural Character Education

Sedya Santosa^{id}, Handoko Santoso^{id}, Ichsan^{id}

Abstract

Background/purpose. Integrating Javanese court literature values into character education requires an inclusive approach to bridge cultural gaps and avoid ethnocentric bias in a multicultural society. This study analyzes character values in the Javanese literary treasures of the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace in the early 19th century.

Materials/methods. This study employs Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutic approach, which involves analyzing the text's structure, identifying themes and motifs, contextualizing the text, and providing an interpretation. The focus of Javanese literature at the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace in the early 19th century is exemplified by Serat Wedhatama by Mangkunegara IV, Serat Wulang Reh by Pakubuwana IV, and Serat Sasana Sunu by Yasadipura II.

Results. The findings of this study suggest that integrating the values of life balance, fortitude, humility, wisdom, and social responsibility into character education not only strengthens social cohesion but also reaffirms the relevance of local wisdom as a pillar of national character development in the contemporary era.

Conclusion. The findings suggest that the universal values within Javanese literary heritage can serve as a foundation for inclusive character education in Indonesia's multicultural society.

1. Introduction

The moral and character degradation in contemporary Indonesian society has become an urgent concern. Phenomena such as intolerance, corruption, and horizontal conflict between community groups indicate a fragility in the moral fabric and social values that once bound Indonesian communities together (Orhan, 2024). This moral crisis becomes even more alarming within Indonesia's multicultural landscape, where the nation's ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity often fosters tension and division rather than unity (Mazya et al., 2024). In this situation, character education emerges as a crucial endeavor to restore moral integrity and social harmony, grounded in cultural values deeply rooted in local wisdom and traditions. Amidst this concern, Javanese court literature, particularly from the Kasunanan Surakarta Palace in the early 19th century, stands as a profound source of moral and ethical wisdom (Santosa & Noorwatha, 2025). This period marked the golden age of Javanese literary production, yielding masterpieces such as *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu*. These works encapsulate philosophical thought, moral principles, and social ethics that reflect the Javanese worldview. Scholars have long acknowledged these texts as reservoirs of noble values that can be revitalized for contemporary moral education (Faturohim et al., 2024; Said et al., 2025).

The *Serat Wedhatama*, composed by K.G.P.A.A. Mangkunegara IV (1809–1881), contains profound teachings on moral cultivation and self-perfection through inner discipline, spiritual refinement, and harmony with the cosmos (Syihabuddin et al., 2024). Its four levels of spiritual development, worship of the body, mind, soul, and senses, can be interpreted as stages of holistic character formation relevant to modern education (Afandi & Setiawan, 2025). Similarly, *Serat Wulang Reh* by Sri Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV provides practical guidance for living a virtuous and civilized life, emphasizing humility, patience, and ethical conduct in social relationships (Pratiwi, 2021; Mahmudin, 2021). Meanwhile, *Serat Sasana Sunu*, authored by Yasadipura II (1760–1844), explicitly discusses the moral education of children and youth. It advocates values such as politeness, loyalty, honesty, and respect for parents and teachers, virtues that remain vital for character development today (Ubak et al., 2025; Hermawan et al., 2024). These three literary works share a common philosophical foundation grounded in *rukun* (harmony) and *ajining dhiri* (self-respect), which Anshori et al. (2024) identify as universal moral principles relevant to Indonesia's multicultural society.

Previous studies have primarily examined Javanese literature from historical or linguistic perspectives, focusing on its linguistic aesthetics and cultural symbolism (Abdullah et al., 2019; Arasy & Nelwati, 2023). However, few have explored how the ethical and character-building aspects of these texts can be meaningfully adapted into contemporary educational contexts. The lack of such studies reveals a gap in understanding how the values embedded in Javanese court literature can serve as foundations for modern character education, especially in pluralistic and multicultural societies. Furthermore, the socio-cultural conditions in which these texts were written share notable similarities with today's context. The early 19th century was a period of cultural transition during which colonial influences challenged indigenous values and identities (Abdullah et al., 2019). The palace poets responded creatively by reaffirming traditional values while adapting them to external influences. This adaptive capacity mirrors the need for contemporary character education to reconcile traditional moral frameworks with the pressures of globalization (Dewi & Alam, 2020). However, systematic studies connecting this historical adaptability with modern moral education remain scarce.

Despite their moral richness, integrating Javanese literary values into present-day education faces multiple barriers. Linguistic and cultural distance limit comprehension among younger generations, especially those outside Javanese culture (Kidwell & Triyoko, 2024). Moreover, traditional values are often perceived as outdated or incompatible with modern pluralism (Rohmadi et al., 2023). Without a critical and inclusive interpretative framework, efforts to integrate these

teachings risk ethnocentrism or cultural exclusivity. This highlights the need for a transformative approach that contextualizes traditional wisdom without losing its universal essence. A hermeneutic, ethnographic, and transformative approach provides a productive pathway for reinterpreting Javanese court literature for modern use. Rather than treating these texts as static artifacts, hermeneutics enables a dynamic dialogue between past and present, allowing new meanings to emerge that align with contemporary ethical and educational needs (Andersen, 2020). This approach promotes the universalization of moral values by identifying principles that transcend cultural particularities while remaining grounded in Javanese philosophical thought (Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013).

This research aims to fill the gap by examining how the moral and ethical values found in *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu* can be reconstructed to support character education in a multicultural society. By applying Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutic framework, this study interprets the historical meanings of these texts and recontextualizes them for contemporary relevance. It aims to uncover the enduring wisdom in these literary works and demonstrate their pedagogical potential to nurture tolerance, empathy, and integrity among learners in diverse educational environments. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the indigenization of character education in Indonesia by integrating local philosophical traditions into national moral education frameworks. It highlights that, when reinterpreted inclusively, Javanese court literature can serve as a valuable moral compass for a pluralistic society. Thus, this research not only preserves cultural heritage but also revitalizes it as a living source of ethical guidance for future generations.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Javanese Culture

Javanese culture reflects a complex set of values, beliefs, and worldviews deeply oriented toward harmony and balance. Sartini (2021) explains that Javanese culture is grounded in the principles of *rukun* (social harmony), *tata krama* (ethical propriety), and *tepa selira* (mutual tolerance), which serve as moral guidelines governing social interaction. These values form an ethical foundation for a community that upholds equilibrium among human beings, nature, and God. Geertz (2017) emphasizes that Javanese culture operates as a symbolic system that guides social behavior and instills a collective moral consciousness. Similarly, Nuriyanto et al. (2025) view Javanese culture as a system of meanings guiding individuals toward inner balance through calmness and harmony. Thus, Javanese culture is not merely a traditional legacy but a value system relevant to shaping human character in the modern world (Brenner, 2012). The moral and spiritual values of Javanese culture are embodied in various forms of classical literature, such as *serat*, *tembang macapat*, and *wayang*, which serve as media for internalizing these principles. Wiryomartono (2016) emphasizes that Javanese classical works such as *Serat Wedhatama* and *Serat Wulangreh* transmit moral teachings on wisdom, patience, and self-control as pathways toward *kasampurnan* (spiritual perfection). Koller (2018) explains that classical Javanese texts contain philosophical insights that teach the balance between the spiritual and social dimensions of human life. Quinn (2021) notes that literary forms such as *serat* and *babad* play a crucial role in transmitting social norms and ethical values to younger generations. Therefore, the Javanese literary tradition serves as an educational instrument that intertwines aesthetics, morality, and spirituality.

In the context of character education, Javanese culture serves as a rich source of values for developing learners' personalities, grounded in local wisdom. Li (2012) asserts that education rooted in local culture not only strengthens national identity but also cultivates strong moral and ethical foundations. Eko et al. (2020) argue that multicultural education in Indonesia must accommodate local wisdom to foster tolerant and noble-minded individuals. Rasidi et al. (2025) note that integrating

regional cultural values into the curriculum is a strategic effort to preserve cultural heritage while instilling national character. Through the internalization of values such as *andhap asor* (humility), *sabar* (patience), and *narima ing pandum* (acceptance with sincerity), education can nurture empathy, social responsibility, and moral integrity (Nopitasari et al., 2025). Thus, the study of Javanese culture makes a significant contribution to the revitalization of character education in the era of globalization. Bronner (2011) emphasizes that cultural preservation must focus on transmitting the philosophical values that shape human character rather than merely maintaining traditional forms. Rasidi et al. (2025) argue that the internalization of local cultural values within education strengthens national identity while fostering multicultural awareness. Basir & Prajawati (2021) note that the moral values inherent in Javanese culture serve as guiding principles that promote harmony, honesty, and social responsibility. Therefore, integrating Javanese cultural values into character education constitutes a relevant pedagogical strategy for cultivating a generation that is morally upright, nationally conscious, and adaptable to global changes.

2.2. Javanese Court Literature

The court literature represents a noble form of cultural expression that flourished and developed within the royal palaces as centers of civilization, education, and spirituality in the past. In the context of Javanese culture, court literature functions not only as an aesthetic creation but also as a vehicle for transmitting moral, ethical, and religious values that form the foundation of social life (Wiriyomartono, 2016). Works produced in the royal environment, such as *Serat Wulangreh*, *Serat Centhini*, and *Serat Wedhatama*, embody noble teachings about manners, wisdom, and spiritual awareness that reflect the Javanese worldview toward humanity, nature, and the Divine. Within a cultural hermeneutic framework, these texts serve as symbolic representations of the social structures and value systems of classical Javanese society, centered on harmony and cosmic balance. Beyond its role as a medium of cultural inheritance, court literature also served as an instrument of political and ideological legitimization for the authority of kings and nobles. Through symbols, metaphors, and moral teachings, courtly literary works constructed the image of the ruler as a wise, just, and charismatic figure who embodies the principle of *manunggaling kawula gusti*, the unity between the ruler and the people (Sartini, 2021). The political dimension of court literature was not repressive; instead, it was subtly embedded within aesthetic and religious structures that nurtured collective awareness of a harmonious social order. Therefore, court literature cannot be separated from the structure of royal power and the palace's moral education system.

Furthermore, court literature served as a medium for character education, integrating intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. Values such as *andhap asor* (humility), *tata krama* (ethics), *eling lan waspada* (self-awareness and vigilance), and *budi pekerti luhur* (moral integrity) are conveyed symbolically through dialogues and narratives within these texts (Rasidi et al., 2025). The process of interpreting courtly texts encourages readers to reflect upon themselves and achieve inner wisdom. In contemporary education, these values can be integrated into character education programs to emphasize the development of virtuous and morally upright individuals. At the epistemological level, the study of court literature requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines perspectives from philology, cultural anthropology, and hermeneutics. Such an approach enables the revelation of symbolic meanings hidden behind the narrative structures and linguistic nuances of these literary works (Koller, 2018). Through deep interpretive reading, court literature can be understood not merely as historical texts but as a living system of knowledge that continuously guides humanity toward moral and spiritual perfection. Thus, court literature is not only a cultural heritage but also a source of inspiration for character education and universal wisdom that remains relevant for building modern civilization grounded in local wisdom values.

3. Methodology

3.1. General Background

This study employs a qualitative research approach, drawing on Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutic philosophy, to explore, interpret, and comprehend the character education values embedded within the literary heritage of the Surakarta Palace in the early nineteenth century. This hermeneutic framework positions literary works as *Ausdruck* (expressions) of the author's *Erlebnis* (lived experiences), thereby requiring interpretation through a profound process of *Verstehen* (understanding) that encompasses both the experiential and sociocultural contexts underlying the text's creation (Bleicher, 2017). In this regard, literary texts are not merely regarded as aesthetic objects but as reflective media that encapsulate the moral, spiritual, and humanitarian values of Javanese society during that historical period (Schmidt, 2016). Methodologically, this study proceeds through a series of systematic stages, including textual structure analysis, identification of central themes and motifs, examination of historical and cultural contexts, interpretation of symbolic meanings, and contextualization of the discovered values to ensure their relevance to contemporary character education. Each interpretative phase is conducted in a multilayered manner to maintain coherence between textual understanding and contextual meaning, enabling the findings to transcend mere description and reveal the dialectical relationship among the text, the author, and the surrounding social reality (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

3.2. Participant/Sample

The selection of the three classical Javanese literary works, *Serat Wedhatama* by Mangkunegara IV, *Serat Wulang Reh* by Pakubuwana IV, and *Serat Sasana Sunu* by Yasadipura II, was grounded in their representativeness and historical significance within the intellectual and moral landscape of the Surakarta Court in the early nineteenth century. These works collectively illustrate the rich philosophical and ethical tradition of Javanese court literature, which functioned not merely as artistic expression but as a medium for transmitting values of wisdom, virtue, and spiritual awareness. During this period, the Surakarta Court served as a cultural and educational hub that shaped the moral consciousness of Javanese society (Maknun, 2017). The rationale for selecting these particular texts lies in their normative and didactic dimensions, which make them valuable sources for interpreting character education values embedded in classical Javanese wisdom. *Serat Wedhatama* imparts lessons on spiritual integrity and moral self-cultivation. *Serat Wulang Reh* provides ethical and political guidance for both rulers and citizens. At the same time, *Serat Sasana Sunu* emphasizes manners, discipline, and civic responsibility. Together, these works form a coherent corpus that reflects the moral ideals upheld by the Surakarta Court, promoting harmony between individual virtue and social ethics (Daryono et al., 2024). In line with the objectives of hermeneutical analysis, the study employs a purposive sampling technique, selecting texts based on specific cultural, philosophical, and educational criteria rather than by random selection. This method ensures that the analyzed works authentically represent the ethical, spiritual, and social dimensions of nineteenth-century Javanese thought, thereby allowing the research to focus on sources that are both contextually rich and interpretively meaningful. Through purposive sampling, the study maintains analytical depth and academic rigor while ensuring that the chosen texts truly embody the moral and philosophical foundations of the Surakarta literary tradition (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

3.3. Procedures

This study began with the selection of three principal literary works, *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu* as the primary sources of data. These texts were deliberately chosen because they represent the intellectual and spiritual legacy of the Surakarta Court, which is profoundly rich in moral teachings, ethical values, and philosophical wisdom relevant to character

education. The next stage involved conducting library research by systematically examining both primary and secondary sources. The primary texts comprised the original manuscripts of the three *serat*. At the same time, the secondary sources included previous studies, interpretations, and scholarly works discussing the cultural and educational values within classical Javanese literature. This process employed close reading, in which each text was analyzed meticulously to identify explicit and implicit meanings. Every finding was then systematically documented to map the narrative structure, diction choices, stylistic elements, and moral symbols that serve as indicators of character education embedded within the texts (Bleicher, 2017).

3.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study uses Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutic approach, which views literary works as *Ausdruck*, or expressions of the author's life experiences, worldview, and historical awareness (Bleicher, 2017). From this perspective, text is not merely understood as a collection of words, but as a manifestation of inner experiences and the socio-cultural context that shapes the author's perspective on reality (Schmidt, 2016). Thus, the analysis process does not stop at mere linguistic description, but rather moves towards a deeper understanding of the philosophical and cultural dimensions that constitute the soul of the literary work. Meanwhile, the implementation of hermeneutic analysis is carried out through five main stages: structural analysis of the text, identification of themes and motifs, contextual interpretation, semantic elucidation, and recontextualization of meaning (James & Komnenich, 2021). These stages are systematically visualized in Figure 1, which depicts the flow of hermeneutic understanding as a dialectical process between text, context, and interpreter.

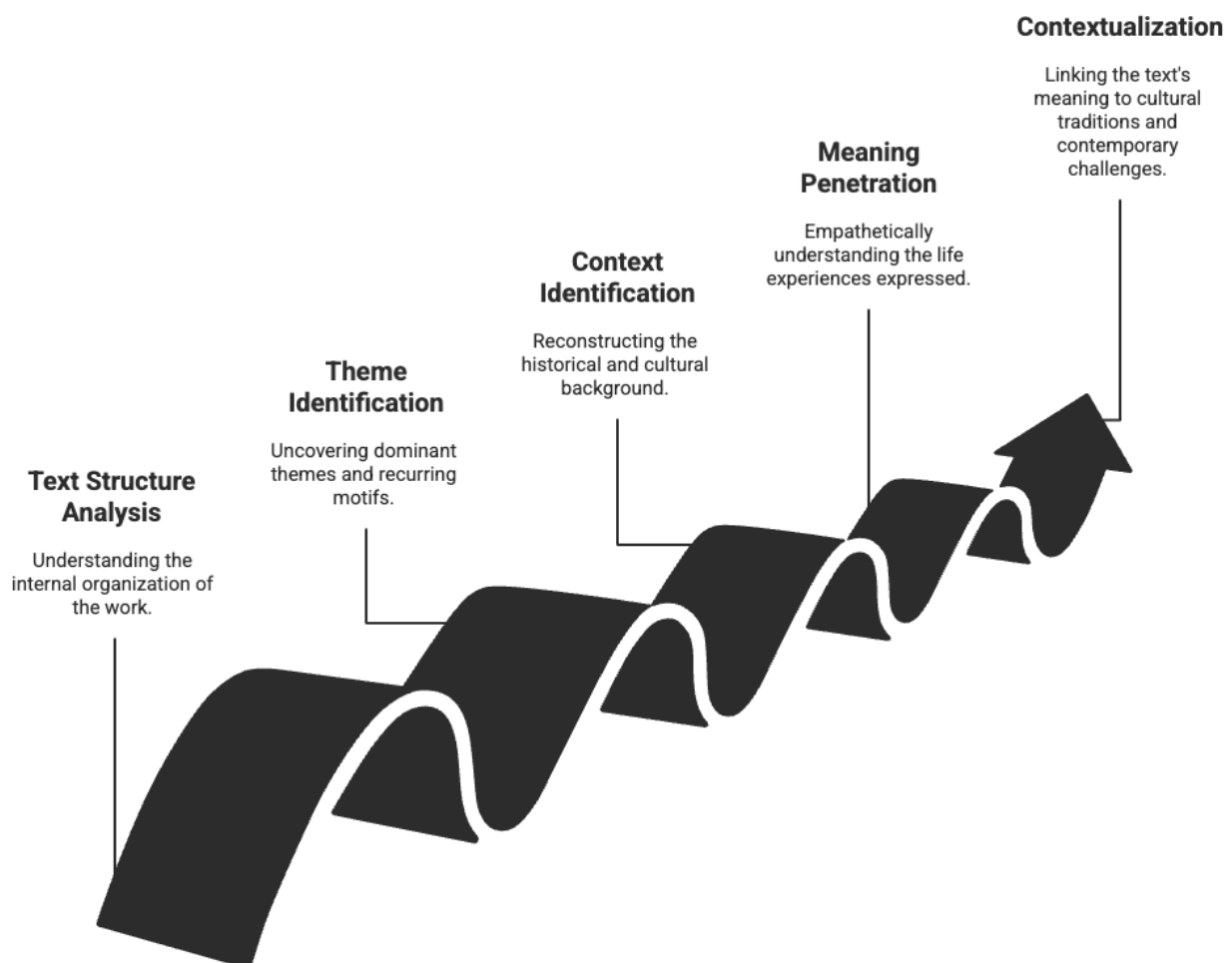


Figure 1. Stages of Diltheyan Hermeneutical Research

Textual structural analysis is intended to discern the internal organization of a work as a representation of the author's underlying structure of thought. In this context, the analysis focuses on the internal organization of three literary treasures from the early nineteenth century: *Serat Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu*. These works reflect the ideas, worldviews, and moral visions of the monarchs and court poets of Surakarta. The subsequent stage involves identifying themes and motifs to uncover both dominant and recurring ones within the texts. This identification is both descriptive and analytical, highlighting the interrelation between themes and motifs and the character values embedded within them. In this way, court literature can be understood as a rich and relevant source of values, serving as a foundation for multicultural education, wherein the noble teachings inscribed in these classical texts are positioned as a basis for cultivating attitudes, ethics, and wisdom in modern social life.

The stage of contextual identification within the framework of Dilthey's hermeneutics seeks to reconstruct the historical, social, cultural, and biographical settings that shaped the production of the manuscripts. At this stage, the character values previously discerned in *Serat Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu* are interpreted in terms of the dominant themes and recurring motifs identified earlier. Thus, contextual analysis not only reveals the external conditions that influenced the genesis of the texts but also situates court literature as a cultural artifact that articulates the moral and ethical aspirations of Javanese society in the early nineteenth century. The subsequent stage is *Verstehen* (understanding), an empathetic penetration of the lived experiences expressed in the texts, enabling the integration of their embedded character values into the multicultural education framework. Following this, the stage of contextualization of meaning extends the interpretive horizon by linking the significance of the texts to the broader cultural tradition and to their relevance to contemporary challenges. It is at this juncture that the character values unearthed from *Serat Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu* acquire practical actualization, serving as a foundational basis for multicultural education capable of addressing all layers of society, both within the Indonesian educational context and in the broader global arena.

4. Results

4.1. The Courtly Literary Treasure of the Surakarta Palace

This study reveals that the Surakarta Palace in the early nineteenth century played a strategic role as the epicenter of Javanese culture while serving as the principal producer of refined literary works. The literature of this period embodies aesthetic beauty and serves multiple functions as a medium of political legitimation, an instrument of moral education, and a vehicle for preserving tradition. This period may be regarded as the golden age of court literature, in which political authority and cultural power intertwined to produce literary works that consolidated Javanese identity and hegemony amid the shifting socio-political landscape. Typologically, court literature can be classified into three principal categories: *babad* (chronicles), *piwulang* (didactic works), and romantic-heroic narratives. Among these, *Babad* held a dominant position, exemplified by monumental works such as *Babad Kraton* and *Babad Giyanti*. However, the *babad* cannot be understood merely as historical chronicles; instead, they are ideological constructions that weave together historical fact and Javanese mythological narrative. Through this synthesis, the political legitimacy of the Surakarta dynasty was reinforced and transmitted to subsequent generations, making literature a symbolic medium that bound political authority to society's collective memory.

In addition to the *babad*, the *piwulang* genre flourished, producing works that functioned as ethical and spiritual guides for the aristocracy and the broader Javanese populace. *Serat Wulangreh* and *Serat Wedhatama* represent the most authentic examples of this typology, where Islamic teachings are harmoniously integrated with Javanese philosophy. This synthesis reflects the court's intellectual creativity in articulating universal values within a local framework, producing a cultural

amalgam that simultaneously offered moral guidance and reinforced a religious yet locally rooted Javanese identity. The tradition of romantic and heroic narratives is equally significant, exemplified by *Serat Menak* and the Panji tales. These works demonstrate the continuity of the Javanese literary tradition, grounded in heroism and romance, while illustrating its acculturative capacity to integrate Arab-Persian elements into the local framework. Their presence enriched the Javanese literary landscape and underscored the Surakarta court's openness to absorbing and transforming external cultural influences, reflecting its adaptive and transformative dynamics. From a linguistic and stylistic perspective, the literary works of this period exhibit a high degree of maturity. The use of *Javanese Krama Inggil* as the principal medium, combined with the metrical structure of *tembang macapat*, functioned as an aesthetic mode of communication and a marker of social status and intellectual depth. The complexity of linguistic registers and the congruence between metrical choice and textual content reveal a profound sociolinguistic awareness. This demonstrates that Javanese literary aesthetics were deeply intertwined with the philosophical and ethical dimensions of social life.

Viewed from a socio-cultural perspective, Surakarta court literature served three interrelated functions: as a legitimizing instrument of dynastic power, a medium for moral education, and a mechanism for preserving Javanese cultural traditions. These three functions suggest that court literature was not merely the product of individual creative expression, but also a collective necessity to sustain political stability, reinforce social order, and ensure continuity of cultural heritage. The findings suggest that the literature of the Surakarta Palace in the early nineteenth century functioned as an effective instrument of soft power in sustaining Javanese cultural hegemony. Through the construction of historical narratives, ethical guidance, and cross-cultural integrations, these works served not merely as cultural artifacts but also as cultural strategies that secured the continuity of political dominance and cultural identity amid social transformation. In this regard, court literature reflects Javanese culture's capacity to affirm itself through language, aesthetics, and philosophical values that remain resonant today.

4.2. *Serat Piwulang within the Courtly Literary Treasure: A Case Study of Serat Wedhatama, Wulang Reh, and Sasana Sunu*

This study reveals that the *serat piwulang* of the Surakarta court, namely *Serat Wedhatama* by K.G.P.A.A.K.G.P.A.A. Mangkunegara IV, *Serat Wulang Reh* by Pakubuwana IV, and *Serat Sasana Sunu* by Yasadipura II, are texts characterized by structural, thematic, and motivic complexities that are intricately interwoven in constructing the foundations of Javanese character education. Such complexity indicates that these works are not merely literary products but systematically designed pedagogical instruments to cultivate cultured, morally grounded, and spiritually resilient generations. Accordingly, *sastra piwulang* is an integrative medium that unites aesthetics, philosophy, and education. From a structural perspective, each text demonstrates a distinctive formal maturity with clear pedagogical significance. *Serat Wedhatama* employs four *macapat pupuh* to represent a philosophical journey toward spiritual perfection. *Serat Wulang Reh* presents thirteen *pupuh*, strategically chosen to align with the type of moral teachings conveyed. Meanwhile, *Serat Sasana Sunu* comprises ten *pupuh* that span a broad thematic spectrum, ranging from social ethics to religious mysticism. This demonstrates that textual structure is not merely ornamental, but rather part of a didactic strategy that facilitates the internalization of values.

Thematic findings highlight a consistent emphasis on balancing spiritual and material life. *Serat Wedhatama* underscores the pursuit of *ngudi kasampurnan*, a holistic integration of feeling (*rasa*), thought (*cipta*), will (*karsa*), and action (*karya*) as the framework for ethics and spirituality. *Serat Wulang Reh* emphasizes order, prudence, and practical morality to harmonize worldly obligations with spiritual transcendence. *Serat Sasana Sunu*, on the other hand, prioritizes the cultivation of virtue, religiosity, and social morality as the foundation of family and communal life. These texts thus

demonstrate a dual orientation: strengthening the individual and shaping a civilized social order. The motifs embedded in the three *serat* reinforce the imperative of character education that transcends the personal domain and extends into the social and cosmic spheres. In *Wedhatama*, the motif of spirituality grounds the formation of ethical consciousness; in *Wulang Reh*, the motif of social harmony undergirds communal continuity; while in *Sasana Sunu*, the motifs of religiosity and virtue serve as a bridge between private and public life. Together, they affirm a sustained narrative of character as a multidimensional entity rooted in Javanese wisdom.

Historically, these *serat* are inseparable from the early nineteenth-century political and social dynamics of Java. *Serat Wedhatama* reflects Mangkunegara IV's intellectual response to colonial pressures and his endeavor to safeguard the Mangkunegaran cultural identity. *Serat Wulang Reh* represents Pakubuwana IV's attempt to legitimize dynastic authority through a hegemonic literary strategy. *Serat Sasana Sunu* embodies Yasadipura II's engagement with colonial complexities while striving to preserve Javanese tradition. Hence, *sastra piwulang* functioned as a soft power, reinforcing Javanese cultural hegemony and political identity. The sustained discourse on character education within these texts demonstrates that classical literature should not be regarded as static documents, but as dynamic discourses that actively engage with the socio-political realities of their time. Within this framework, *sastra piwulang* emerges as an arena of dialectics between the forces of tradition and the exigencies of colonial modernity. Its contemporary relevance lies in its ability to articulate universal values through a distinctly local medium, allowing it to transcend cultural and temporal boundaries.

These findings bear significant implications for contemporary character education in multicultural contexts. The universal values embedded in the *serat piwulang*, such as wisdom, morality, religiosity, and social harmony, can serve as key references in developing integrative curricula. Such integration allows for the emergence of a character education model that addresses not only the cognitive dimension but also the spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions. Accordingly, *sastra piwulang* can be positioned as an epistemic source that enriches the discourse of modern character education with a strong local foundation. This research recommends the creative use of *serat piwulang* in formal and non-formal learning. The revitalization of *piwulang* values through contextual, integrative, and interdisciplinary approaches can reinforce the relevance of character education within Indonesia's multicultural society. This effort will safeguard the continuity of Javanese intellectual heritage and make a substantive contribution to developing adaptive, transformative, and locally grounded character education.

4.3. Character Values in Serat Wedhatama, Wulang Reh, and Sasana Sunu

The TPACK instrument, which had gone through the validity and reliability testing stages with Findings of this study demonstrate that the concept of harmony in the tradition of classical Javanese literature, as articulated in *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu*, encompasses multidimensional teachings that include self-balance, inter-human relations, spiritual connectedness with the Divine, and cosmic attunement with the universe. These three works function not merely as moral texts but as conceptual instruments that formulated the ethical paradigm of nineteenth-century Javanese society. Meanwhile, the values contained in *Serat Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu* are presented in Figure 2.

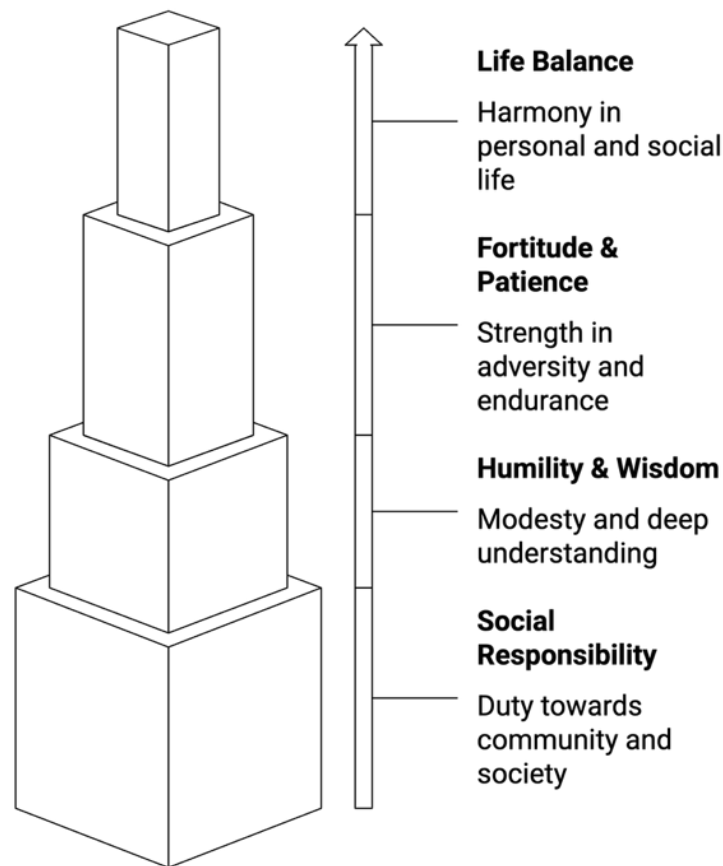


Figure 2. The Values Embedded in Serat Wedhatama, Wulang Reh, and Sasana Sunu

Figure 2 shows that the values embedded in Serat Wedhatama, Wulang Reh, and Sasana Sunu include the value of life balance (harmony), fortitude and patience, humility and wisdom, and social responsibility. *Serat Wedhatama* underscores the wisdom of life through self-restraint, spiritual discipline, and submission to Divine will; *Serat Wulang Reh* emphasizes the social dimension by affirming sincerity, acceptance, patience, and compassion; while *Serat Sasana Sunu* adds an emphasis on the importance of maintaining harmonious social networks and provides warnings against the dangers of disharmony arising from misguided interactions. Further analysis reveals that the values of *sabar* (patience) and *tabah* (fortitude) conveyed in these works are not construed as passive virtues but as active psychological and spiritual forces. These concepts serve as mechanisms of resilience in the face of life's adversities, preserving inner well-being and reinforcing social resilience. Pedagogically, patience and fortitude are presented as ethical and practical frameworks that enable the Javanese to internalize the principle of balanced living, thereby equipping individuals to navigate between worldly and spiritual demands proportionately.

Textual scrutiny reveals the consistency of these values. *Serat Wedhatama* in *Pocung*, stanza three, highlights introspection, forgiveness, and composure in the face of others' faults; while *Gambuh*, stanza 73, stresses steadfastness, surrender to divine decree, and moral perseverance. Thus, Mangkunegara IV interprets fortitude as an active energy sustaining moral consistency. Meanwhile, *the Serat Wulang Reh Wirangrong* stanza emphasizes the importance of patience in guarding one's speech, self-control, and prudence in social interactions, which Pakubuwana IV situates as the key to happiness and the manifestation of faith. In turn, *Serat Sasana Sunu*, *Dhandanggula* stanza 22, portrays patience as practical wisdom in the form of magnanimity and composure, directed especially towards the moral cultivation of the younger generation. Synthesizing these findings, patience and fortitude emerge as values operating on two levels: first, as the foundation of individual character, characterized by piety, wisdom, and self-discipline; and second, as a social mechanism that sustains harmony and community stability. Hence, these virtues operate

within the personal sphere and serve as components of a collective ethic that underpins social cohesion. Within this framework, *sastra piwulang* (didactic literature) operates as a form of soft power, structuring value systems while preserving Javanese socio-cultural integrity. The study also identifies humility as a central virtue across the three texts. *Serat Wedhatama*, through the concept of *setya budya*, emphasizes inner cultivation that fosters clarity of thought, humility, and resistance against spiritual or intellectual arrogance. *Pangkur* stanza eight explicitly criticizes arrogance, self-righteousness, and complacency as antithetical to ethical conduct. Similarly, *Serat Wulang Reh* underscores the necessity of introspection in subduing the ego, as *Pangkur* stanza 11 warns against pride as a betrayal of noble values. *Serat Sasana Sunu* further situates humility in its social dimension, positing it as the foundation for harmony and peace, while highlighting the importance of simplicity and self-restraint even in the presence of material or intellectual abundance.

Moreover, social responsibility is another salient character value within the Javanese literary tradition. *Serat Wedhatama* emphasizes self-discipline, honesty, and sensitivity to others, as evident in *Gambuh* stanza 74, which highlights the importance of forgiving others' mistakes. *Serat Wulang Reh* conceptualizes social responsibility as a matter of diligence, mastery over desires, and the conscious preservation of balance, establishing the ethical foundation of personal integrity. *Serat Sasana Sunu* situates social responsibility within child-rearing, etiquette, religiosity, and simplicity. Thus, it extends its ethical horizon toward cultivating intergenerational social cohesion. These findings reveal that social responsibility in the Javanese tradition is multidimensional, encompassing the realms of religion, morality, society, and ecology. Accordingly, these texts offer normative prescriptions and a practical framework linking individual responsibility to social and cosmic sustainability. From a contemporary perspective, such teachings can serve as an ethical foundation for addressing global challenges marked by ecological crises, social fragmentation, and the erosion of communal solidarity. Thus, this study concludes that *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu* constitute a pedagogical trilogy that embodies the spirituality and ethics of nineteenth-century Javanese thought, offering a paradigm of wisdom with enduring relevance. Through the integration of teachings on patience, fortitude, humility, and social responsibility, classical Javanese literature constructs a philosophical and pedagogical framework that interconnects the cultivation of individual character with social and cosmic harmony. Consequently, these works should be re-read as local epistemological sources with significant potential contributions to the global discourse on character education.

4.4. The Relevance of Character Education in a Multicultural Society

This study reveals that three classical Javanese literary works, *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu*, preserve a rich repository of universal values in character education that remain profoundly relevant to the development of contemporary multicultural education in Indonesia. These values extend beyond individual morality, encompassing social ethics, spirituality, and religiosity that nurture individuals of integrity while fostering cross-cultural competence. Within these works, one can discern an integration of traditional Javanese wisdom with the exigencies of increasingly complex modern life. *Serat Wedhatama* underscores moral instruction by emphasizing religiosity, simplicity, perseverance, and creativity as the foundation of individual character. Its teachings affirm that spirituality and religious devotion are inseparable from work ethic and creativity. Thus, the values embedded in this text offer a synergy between transcendental dimensions and practical life, a combination highly pertinent to shaping a resilient and adaptive generation in the global era.

Meanwhile, *Serat Wulang Reh* emphasizes social ethics and communal behavior. The manuscript emphasizes the importance of patience, prudence, humility, and courtesy in cultivating harmonious social relationships. Furthermore, it stresses the necessity of equality, moderation, and respect for cultural and religious diversity.

The moral messages therein reflect a timeless truth: social harmony cannot be achieved without self-control, openness, and respect for others. By contrast, *Serat Sasana Sunu* concentrates more on spirituality and the triadic relationship between human beings, God, and society. Gratitude, honesty, tolerance, and reverence for the Divine constitute the core of its teachings. These values addressed moral crises of its historical context and significantly contributed to overcoming the ethical and spiritual decline of the modern era. Through guidance, the text fosters solidarity, empathy, and readiness to live meaningfully within a heterogeneous society. These three works construct a comprehensive character education framework that unifies spiritual, moral, and social dimensions of character development. They are not merely cultural artifacts but conceptual instruments that may serve as the foundation for multicultural education. Integrating these values into modern pedagogy enables the cultivation of an intellectually capable generation deeply rooted in ethics, morality, and respect for diversity. In the context of character education, universal values such as honesty, responsibility, patience, diligence, and humility constitute the fundamental basis for forming individuals of integrity. Meanwhile, contextual values such as openness to counsel, prudent selection of companionship, love of peace, and respect for differences enrich the practical dimension of life within plural societies. These dual categories of values demonstrate that the teachings of classical Javanese manuscripts bridge individuals' moral development with the collective imperative of social harmony.

Furthermore, this study confirms that patience, responsibility, and humility are essential pillars for strengthening multicultural societies. Patience is the prerequisite of tolerance, responsibility is the foundation of healthy civic participation, and humility is the generator of openness and respect for diversity. These three values materialize as a moral ethos historically embedded within Javanese tradition and functionally potent in consolidating contemporary social cohesion. Accordingly, these classical Javanese texts offer a strategic contribution to formulating a character education framework grounded in local wisdom yet adaptive to global demands. The values they embody operate as instruments of social transformation oriented toward harmony, solidarity, and respect for diversity. Their integration into modern education will foster a generation capable of engaging in dialogue with tradition, critically reflecting upon contemporary realities, and cultivating a civilized, multicultural society.

5. Discussion

This study attempts to analyze how the moral and ethical values contained in *Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu* can be reconstructed to support character education in a multicultural society. Through in-depth research and analysis, findings confirm that the literature of the Surakarta Palace in the early 19th century was not merely an aesthetic product, but rather a multidimensional cultural strategy. The prominence of *babad* as the dominant genre illustrates how historical narratives were employed as political instruments to consolidate dynastic legitimacy. This observation aligns with Sastrawan's (2020) assertion that *babad* consistently embodies ideological agendas, particularly by associating the monarch with a mythological genealogy. In this regard, court literature reveals a pattern consistent with the findings of Saddhono and Supeni (2014), who argue that *babad* functioned as an effective cultural-political strategy for constructing dynastic identity. Furthermore, the development of *piwulang* texts substantiates the conclusions of Andriyanto et al. (2022), who emphasize the role of didactic literature as an ethical compass for Javanese society. Nevertheless, this study also highlights a more profound dimension: *Serat Wulangreh* and *Serat Wedhatama* convey practical moral guidance and engender an epistemological synthesis between Islamic teachings and Javanese wisdom.

This analysis corroborates Syukur's (2023) perspective, which conceives *piwulang* as a product of harmonization between Islamic spiritual values and Javanese philosophy, thereby broadening the discourse on multiculturalism within ethical education. At the same time, the continuity of romantic

and heroic traditions as reflected in *Serat Menak* and the Panji narratives confirms the findings of Bhatt and Wang (2023), who argue that the adaptation of Arab-Persian traditions into the Javanese cultural framework constitutes compelling evidence of acculturative creativity. Moreover, this study extends these insights by demonstrating that the revitalization of the Panji narratives in the early nineteenth century, as documented by Kieven (2020), signifies the persistence of tradition and the innovative capacity of court poets to articulate local identity through narrative modification. Beyond this literary continuity, however, the present research advances a philosophical dimension: the deliberate selection of the *macapat* metrical form was not merely an aesthetic choice but also a vehicle of philosophical messaging, thereby deepening the semantic resonance of the texts.

Theoretically, the findings of this study reinforce Purwani's (2017) contention that the *keraton* functioned simultaneously as a cultural nucleus and a locus of political power. However, this research further demonstrates that courtly literature preserved tradition and operated as a medium of cultural transformation, capable of integrating new elements without eroding local identity. Surakarta court literature of the early nineteenth century may be understood as an instrument of *soft power* (Jamnongsarn, 2014), effectively safeguarding cultural hegemony while providing space for creative innovation. Within contemporary contexts, this legacy remains pertinent to strengthening multicultural education and cultivating character formation grounded in local wisdom. These findings underscore that *sastra piwulang* embodies the Javanese cultural strategy for negotiating social, political, and spiritual transformations in the early nineteenth century. This study substantiates that view by demonstrating that *Serat Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu* systematically contain moral and spiritual teachings that serve a dual function: as a guide to communal life and as an ideological instrument of the *keraton's* authority. Theoretically, these results resonate with the analysis of Niswah et al. (2021), who emphasize the didactic function of *sastra piwulang* as a medium for the internalization of Javanese ethics. However, this research advances further by revealing how textual structures, particularly the choice of *pupuh* and *tembang*, operate as semiotic devices that intensify the transmission of moral and spiritual values. In other words, in *sastra piwulang*, form and content are inseparable, reinforcing one another to construct a coherent framework for character education.

Furthermore, this study supports Muslih's (2024) assertion that *Serat Wulang Reh* embodies a synthesis of Islamic and Javanese wisdom. However, in a comparative framework, the present research reveals that analogous syntheses also manifest in *Serat Wedhatama* and *Sasana Sunu*, albeit with divergent emphases: *Wedhatama* foregrounds a dimension of philosophical mysticism, whereas *Sasana Sunu* gravitates toward social morality. These findings enrich the discourse on Javanese Islamization, demonstrating that the process did not simply displace indigenous traditions but engendered a productive acculturation. From a historical perspective, this study confirms Fanani's (2018) account that the early nineteenth century marked a period of cultural rivalry between the Surakarta and Yogyakarta courts, as well as a phase of intensified Dutch colonial domination. *Sastra piwulang* can be construed within this milieu as a subtle form of cultural resistance. The three *serat* collectively articulate character values that functioned as an internal mechanism through which Javanese society safeguarded its collective identity amid the political and economic incursions of colonialism.

Within the contemporary horizon, the intellectual legacy embedded in these three *serat* remains profoundly relevant to the exigencies of modern character education. As Mustansyir and Murtiningsih (2020) emphasized, the values of equilibrium, harmony, and the integration of spiritual and material dimensions articulated in *sastra piwulang* may serve as a critical counterbalance to the dominance of Western paradigms in global education. Accordingly, this study contributes conceptually by demonstrating that Javanese local wisdom-based character education is not merely a vestige of cultural heritage, but also an epistemic resource capable of enriching the discourse on

multicultural education in the age of globalization. The findings further underscore that harmony in Javanese literature is not reducible to a mere social consensus, but instead constitutes a holistic principle governing human beings' relationship with themselves, others, the Divine, and nature. This resonates with Ali et al. (2024), who argue that harmony signifies the integration of diversity within a greater unity. Philosophically, such a conception reveals affinities between Javanese wisdom and other Eastern traditions that privilege inner balance and cosmic harmony, such as Taoism and Buddhism. Moreover, this perspective aligns with Narasimhan and Saputra's (2023) research, which emphasizes psychological resilience as a vital mechanism for maintaining individual well-being in the face of life's pressures. In this regard, the values of patience (*sabar*) and perseverance (*tabah*) emphasized in the Javanese *serat* demonstrate their universal relevance within the framework of contemporary positive psychology.

The emphasis on patience as a long-term endeavor toward attaining goals illustrates that Javanese local wisdom bears a striking affinity with the modern educational psychology construct of grit. The findings of Dantes and Relin (2023), which reject the interpretation of *sabar* and *nrimo* as forms of passive resignation, substantiate this study's interpretation that such values cultivate individual and communal resilience. In this respect, *Serat Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu* emerge as cultural texts that transcend their historical context, offering critical contributions to contemporary discourses on character education and the strengthening of social resilience. This study thus affirms that classical Javanese literature can be productively read as intergenerational texts that promote character education. The values of harmony, patience, and perseverance contained therein can significantly contribute to the development of modern character education, particularly within the pressing context of global moral and ecological crises.

Furthermore, these findings underscore that Javanese literature, especially *Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu*, functions as a vital medium for transmitting character values that are simultaneously transcendent and contextually grounded. The principles of perseverance and patience articulated in these texts resonate deeply with Javanese religious and cultural traditions, wherein Islamic teachings are interwoven with indigenous wisdom. Mukaffa (2018) emphasizes that the concept of patience in *Wedhatama* represents a synthesis between *taqwa* and Javanese prudence, thus offering a dynamic conception of patience: not merely self-restraint, but also the preservation of moral consistency in the face of temptation and adversity.

In this context, patience cannot be conceived as an individualistic virtue alone but rather as a social instrument that cultivates solidarity and collective harmony. Furthermore, Azzahra et al. (2025) emphasize that cultural practices grounded in spiritual values, including patience, serve as socio-cultural adhesives that mitigate potential conflicts and engender an order of communal coexistence. Within the framework of cultural hermeneutics, the teachings of perseverance and patience articulated in the three *serat* may be interpreted as a response to the socio-political conditions of nineteenth-century Java, marked by both colonial interventions and the internal dynamics of the royal courts. Thus, these teachings should not be regarded merely as normative ideals but as cultural strategies to safeguard human dignity while ensuring the continuity of social order. This perspective aligns with Rizal's (2020) view of Javanese culture as a symbolic system that foregrounds harmony and self-restraint in navigating change. From an educational standpoint, the values of perseverance and patience embedded within these texts hold profound relevance for contemporary character education. As Sutomo (2014) asserts, character education necessitates the integration of moral values with their concrete enactment in social life. For instance, the pedagogy of patience in *Wulang Reh* may be regarded as a foundation for multicultural education, underscoring respect for differences and prudence in communication.

The teachings articulated in *Sasana Sunu* are profoundly relevant for nurturing younger generations to cultivate wisdom in navigating the currents of globalization, which are fraught with

challenges. Accordingly, this discussion underscores that the virtues of perseverance and patience conveyed in *Wedhatama*, *Wulang Reh*, and *Sasana Sunu* are not confined to historical significance but embody universal and contemporary relevance. They serve as a bridge between tradition and modernity, while simultaneously making significant contributions to Javanese culture and advancing character education within both national and global contexts. The findings of this study further reveal a consistent thread of humility embedded within the literary heritage of the Surakarta court, resonating with modern academic discourse on character formation. Ubak et al. (2025) affirm that humility encompasses an accurate self-perception, receptiveness to new learning, and a prosocial orientation. The teachings of *Serat Wedhatama* and *Wulang Reh* align with this framework, as both emphasize the necessity of subduing the ego and eschewing self-centeredness in favor of prioritizing collective well-being. This alignment reinforces the argument advanced by Nielsen and Marrone (2018), who contend that humility entails a disposition to prioritize the welfare of others even in the absence of personal benefit.

Serat Sasana Sunu, for instance, presents humility as the ethical foundation of life that generates social peace, consonant with the view that humility sustains communal harmony. Furthermore, the integration of humility and wisdom in *Serat Wedhatama* resonates with the insights of Sudrajat et al. (2018), who emphasize the intrinsic relationship between humility and practical wisdom, particularly in facilitating more just and rational decision-making. This suggests that classical Javanese teachings on humility transcend their cultural specificity, revealing a conceptual continuity with contemporary discourses in moral philosophy and psychology. Within this framework, humility in classical manuscripts is a corrective to humanity's perennial tendency toward excessive self-glorification and a foundational principle for constructing a sustainable social ethic. The findings of this study also reinforce the argument that social responsibility should not be viewed merely as a normative value, but rather as an ethical framework deeply embedded in Javanese cultural traditions. This interpretation aligns with Santoso (2023), who asserts that responsibility constitutes one of the highest moral values in *Serat Wedhatama*, alongside conscience and religious devotion. Such a perspective demonstrates that the value of responsibility functions not only as an individual moral compass but also as a collective mechanism for sustaining social cohesion.

The emphasis on environmental preservation within Javanese tradition underscores that social responsibility extends beyond the interpersonal sphere, encompassing ecological stewardship and the sustainability of life itself. This discourse aligns with contemporary perspectives on character education, emphasizing the importance of incorporating local cultural values into curriculum development (Fitriadi et al., 2024). The notion of social responsibility embedded in classical Javanese texts may thus be actualized as a pedagogical resource for multicultural education, one that not only cultivates individual ethics but also fosters collective awareness in confronting global challenges. Accordingly, the findings of this study do more than merely affirm previous scholarship; they expand the horizon of understanding by demonstrating that the concept of social responsibility articulated in Javanese classical literature can function as both an ethical source and a pedagogical framework relevant to modern Indonesian and global contexts. Moreover, the study reveals a profound consonance between the character values inscribed in the corpus of Javanese classical literature and the foundational principles of multicultural character education. Multicultural character education, which seeks to form individuals who are both morally grounded and capable of engaging meaningfully with diversity, finds its historical legitimacy in the wisdom of Javanese tradition. This perspective aligns with the argument of Sitanggang et al. (2025), who maintain that character education must emphasize multicultural competencies such as empathy, tolerance, and cross-cultural communication, rather than being confined solely to teaching universal ethical norms.

In this context, *Serat Wedhatama* articulates the virtues of earnestness, patience, and religiosity as foundational universal values that guide learners in navigating global interactions. Likewise, the

teachings of humility and simplicity embedded in this manuscript resonate with the argument of Rohmadi et al. (2025), who contend that such universal values serve as cultural bridges between East and West, while simultaneously contributing to the advancement of world peace. Accordingly, the values enshrined in *Serat Wedhatama* may be construed as epistemic instruments that remain profoundly relevant for cultivating social harmony within pluralistic societies. Furthermore, *Serat Wulang Reh* emphasizes the importance of prudence, patience, and receptivity to counsel. These moral imperatives align with Mahmudin's (2021) principles of character education, which emphasize religiosity, diligence, and the pursuit of peace. Such alignment reinforces the thesis that traditional literature should not be regarded merely as a cultural artifact but as a transgenerational pedagogical medium capable of internalizing ethical values across temporal boundaries. Within this interpretive framework, the teachings of *Serat Wulang Reh* can be positioned as a vital source of character education rooted in local wisdom, while remaining compatible with contemporary multicultural education strategies.

Serat Sasana Sunu manifests the dimensions of religiosity, tolerance, and integrity, which remain profoundly relevant to the framework of contemporary Islamic education. By foregrounding the values of gratitude, reverence for the Divine, and humility, this text substantiates the argument advanced by Nugraheni et al. (2025) that multicultural character education in Indonesia constitutes a strategic endeavor to cultivate respect for cultural diversity and universal human values. In other words, *Serat Sasana Sunu* expands the moral foundation of multiculturalism by emphasizing spirituality as the basis for tolerance and peace. Taken as a whole, the findings of this study affirm that the values articulated in these three classical Javanese manuscripts are congruent with modern conceptions of multicultural character education, enriching the academic discourse on the interrelationship between local tradition and the globalization of values. This supports the thesis of Kao-ian (2025), who argues that universal principles, such as justice, equality, and freedom, can be actualized within the framework of local culture without forfeiting their relevance in global interactions. Consequently, multicultural character education in Indonesia may derive both legitimacy and cultural authority by integrating traditional literary heritage into contemporary educational praxis. Thus, integrating the values embedded within these three *serat* reinforces the argument that character education need not be derived solely from Western modern theories, but can also be grounded in the rich corpus of local heritage imbued with spiritual, moral, social, and multicultural dimensions. This underscores that the classical literature of the Surakarta Palace is not merely a cultural legacy; it is also a testament to the enduring value of the past. Still, it remains an epistemological reservoir of enduring relevance for shaping an Indonesian character education paradigm, one that is firmly rooted in local wisdom while remaining adaptive to global exigencies.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study affirm that the courtly literature of the Surakarta Palace in the early nineteenth century, particularly the *serat piwulang* (*Serat Wedhatama*, *Serat Wulang Reh*, and *Serat Sasana Sunu*), possesses profound epistemological and pedagogical relevance for the development of character education within today's multicultural society. The central implication of these findings is that the *serat piwulang* may be positioned as a conceptual foundation for formulating a transcultural paradigm of character education, insofar as the values they embody are universal, transcending the boundaries of religion and culture, and capable of integrating spiritual, moral, and social dimensions in the formation of virtuous character. More specifically, this research highlights the need to revitalize Javanese classical literature as both an academic and pedagogical resource in curriculum design, whether within formal schooling structures or in non-formal community contexts, so that local wisdom can be systematically integrated into educational practices that are responsive to social plurality. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to bridging local literary traditions with global educational imperatives, while simultaneously affirming the *serat piwulang* as

cultural heritage that is not merely monumental, but also functional in cultivating a generation of individuals who are inclusive, tolerant, and oriented toward universal virtues. Consequently, the study recommends the adoption of integrative strategies to incorporate the values of the *serat piwulang* into the design of national character education curricula through the development of contextual teaching modules, teacher training informed by local wisdom, and further research exploring the transformation of classical literary values into contemporary pedagogical practices. In this way, the *serat piwulang* of the Surakarta Palace may serve a dual function, both as a repository of cultural heritage and as an effective instrument for character education that remains profoundly relevant to the challenges of Indonesia's multicultural society in the age of globalization.

Declarations

Author Contributions. S.S.: Literature review, conceptualization. H.S.: methodology, data analysis, review-editing, and writing. I.: Original manuscript preparation. All authors have read and approved the published version of the article

Conflicts of Interest. The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Funding. No funding

Ethical Approval. (All data collection and storage procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board as an exempt study for program improvement. Participant identifiers were removed to ensure anonymity.

References

- Abdullah, I., Jubba, H., Pabbajah, M., Sari, I. P., Zuhri, S., & Ernas, S. (2019). From selfism to indifferentism: Challenges facing Indonesian society and culture, 2015-2045. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 8(3), 102-112. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2019-0009>
- Afandi, R., & Setiawan, A. (2025). An analysis of Islamic Education values in Serat Wedhatama by Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Arya (K.G.P.A.A.K.G.P.A.A.) Mangkunegara. *Jurnal Iqra': Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan*, 10(1), 290-307. <https://doi.org/10.25217/ji.v10i1.5705>
- Ali, M., Wiranto, E. B., Shobahiya, M., & Maksum, M. N. R. (2024). Culture, religion, and harmony: The struggle for roles in diversity in Indonesia. *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental*, 18(3), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v18n3-099>
- Andersen, J. (2020). Understanding and interpreting algorithms: toward a hermeneutics of algorithms. *Media, Culture & Society*, 42(7-8), 1479-1494. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443720919373>
- Andriyanto, O. D., Subandiyah, H., & Hardika, M. (2022). Ethical values in modern Javanese literary works: Identity and character education in the digital era. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(3), 106-119. <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.803009>
- Anshori, A., Setiawati, R., Pimay, A., Syukur, S., & Dwianto, A. (2024). The ethos of religious harmony of Javanese Muslims, according to King Mangkunegara IV. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(3), 230-247. <https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i3.3332>
- Arasy, A., & Nelwati, S. (2023). Indonesia faces challenges in maintaining national identity in the era of globalisation. *Hakamain: Journal of Sharia and Law Studies*, 2(1), 129-138. <https://doi.org/10.57255/hakamain.v2i1.318>
- Azzahra, F., Mulyani, M., & Binarsae, A. (2025). Acculturation of Islamic teachings and local customs: A sociological study on the Nyadran tradition in Java. *Smart: Journal of Sharia, Tradition, and Modernity*, 5(1), 13-24. <https://doi.org/10.24042/f16gp058>

- Basir, S., & Prajawati, M. I. (2021). Moral responsibility and wholeheartedness: a source of cohesion in Javanese society. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 13(1), 15-27. <https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v13.i1.7617>
- Bhatt, I., & Wang, H. (2023). Everyday heritagging: Sino-Muslim literacy adaptation and alienation. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2023(281), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2022-0058>
- Bleicher, J. (2017). *Contemporary hermeneutics: Hermeneutics as method, philosophy, and critique*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315112558>
- Brenner, S. A. (2012). *The domestication of desire: Women, wealth, and modernity in Java*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400843916>
- Bronner, S. (2011). *Explaining traditions: Folk behavior in modern culture*. University Press of Kentucky. <https://doi.org/10.5810/kentucky/9780813134062.001.0001>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Dantes, N., & Relin, D. E. (2023). Character values of independence, hard work, creativity, and democracy in Serat Wedatama. Vidyottama Sanatana: *International Journal of Hindu Science and Religious Studies*, 7(2), 151–167. <https://doi.org/10.25078/vidyottama.v7i2.2468>
- Daryono, A. A., Setiawati, R., Pimay, A., Syukur, S., & Dwianto, A. (2024). The ethos of religious harmony of Javanese Muslims, according to King Mangkunegara IV. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(3), 230-247.
- Dewi, E. R., & Alam, A. A. (2020). Transformation model for character education of students. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 15(5), 1228-1237. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v15i5.5155>
- Eko, P. S., Eko, H., Munandar, M. A., & Rachman, M. (2020). Local wisdom: Pillar development of multicultural nations and national education values. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 15(6), 1587-1598. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v15i6.5319>
- Fanani, A. (2018). The Javanese Quest of Islamic spirituality in Suluk Wujil: A semiotic reading. *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion*, 3(2), 221–238. <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v3i02.654>
- Faturohim, I., Triyanto, T., & Daryanto, J. (2024). Character education based on Javanese culture in Surakarta Palace at Kasatriyan Elementary School, Surakarta. In *Social, Humanities, and Educational Studies (SHES): Conference Series* (Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 140-150). <https://doi.org/10.20961/shes.v7i1.84302>
- Fitriadi, F., Sinaga, R. M., & Muhammad, R. R. (2024). A literature review on the cultural perspective study in elementary school education in Indonesia. *Journal of Innovation in Educational and Cultural Research*, 5(1), 51-61. <https://doi.org/10.46843/jiecr.v5i1.848>
- Geertz, C. (2017). Ritual and social change: a Javanese example. In *Ritual* (pp. 549-576). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315244099-32>
- Hermawan, S. Y. A., Ubak, A. A., Sabila, A. N., Harits, I. B., Putra, F. A., & Wahyuni, F. (2024). Nilai-nilai etno-parenting pada Serat Sasana Sunu: Analisis hermeneutic [Ethno-parenting values in Serat Sasana Sunu: A hermeneutic analysis]. *Satwika : Kajian Ilmu Budaya dan Perubahan Sosial*, 8(1), 100–109. <https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v8i1.30173>

- James, D., & Komnenich, P. (2021). Dilthey's philosophy and methodology of hermeneutics: An approach and contribution to nursing science. *Nursing Philosophy*, 22(3), 123–131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nup.12353>
- Jamnongsarn, S. (2014). Interaction of music as a soft power in the dimension of cultural diplomacy between Indonesia and Thailand. *International Journal of Creative and Arts Studies*, 1(1), 58-69. <https://doi.org/10.24821/ijcas.v1i1.1572>
- Kao-ian, J. (2025). Developing an innovative leadership model of school administrators under a multicultural context. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 17(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.17.386>
- Kidwell, T., & Triyoko, H. (2024). Language awareness as a resource for multilingual individuals' learning about culture: a case study in the Javanese context. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 45(4), 839–851. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1922421>
- Kieven, L. (2020). Panji and Sekartaji on the move. *Wacana*, 21(1), 69-102. <https://doi.org/10.17510/wacana.v21i1.868>
- Koller, J. M. (2018). *Asian philosophies*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315210254>
- Li, J. (2012). *Cultural foundations of learning: East and West*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139028400>
- Mahmudin, A. S. (2021). Women's self-actualization in the family (Moral teaching in Serat Wulang Reh Putri). *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4(2), 180-194. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v4i2.1422>
- Maknun, M. L. (2017). The education of Javanese characters in Serat Wasitawala. *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion*, 2(2), 214-233. <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v2i2.510>
- Mazya, T. M., Ridho, K., & Irfani, A. (2024). Religious and cultural diversity in Indonesia: Dynamics of acceptance and conflict in a multidimensional perspective. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 7(7), 4932–4945. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V7-i7-32>
- Melé, D., & Sánchez-Runde, C. (2013). Cultural diversity and universal ethics in a global world. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 116(1), 681-687. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1814-z>
- Mukaffa, Z. (2018). The era of uncertainty and ethical arrangement in Javanese classical texts: disseminating Ranggawarsita's works as a source of Islamic ethics in Islamic higher education. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 56(2), 461-493. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2018.562.461-493>
- Muslih, M. (2024). Serat Wulangreh: Islamization in Java through a cultural approach. *Tsaqafah*, 20(1), 840-849. <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v20i1.10840>
- Mustansyir, R., & Murtiningsih, R. S. (2020). Moral dimensions of Javanese forgiveness in Serat Wedhathama and Serat Nitiprana. *Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana*, 25(1), 473-483. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3784893>
- Narasimhan, P. L., & Saputra, H. (2023). Contriving emotional resilience through spirituality in the light of Vedanta. *Indonesian Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Humanity*, 2(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijores.v2i1.1-21>
- Nielsen, R., & Marrone, J. A. (2018). Humility: Our current understanding of the construct and its role in organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(4), 805–824. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12160>

- Niswah, S. N. Z., Pudjastawa, A. W., & Endraswara, S. (2021). Moral teaching in the Piwulang manuscript and its relevance to the teaching of character education in Indonesia. In the *1st International Conference on Character Education (ICCE 2020)* (pp. 234-240). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210204.036>
- Nopitasari, D., Murtadho, A., Larasati, N., & Ilhamuddin, M. F. (2025). Integrating Andhap Asor cultural values in sociodrama-based group guidance to prevent arrogant behavior: A literature review. *Journal of Cultural Guidance and Counseling*, *1*(1), 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.26740/jcgc.v1i1.42899>
- Nugraheni, A. S., Siwi, A. A., & Abroto, A. (2025). Language acquisition mapping program to enhance linguistic skills and cultural understanding of Indonesia for primary students in Australia. *Educational Process: International Journal*, *17*(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.17.360>
- Nuriyanto, L. K., Rosidin, R., Rachmadhani, A., & Fauzah, T. I. (2025, June). Javanese culture in weaving harmony in Indonesia. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Cultural Studies (ICCUS) 2024* (Vol. 930, p. 323). Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-418-1_26
- Orhan, S. (2024). Social fragility in Muslim societies, fitnah, and Said Nursi's attitude against fitnah. *Journal of the Contemporary Study of Islam*, *4*(2), 161–193. <https://doi.org/10.37264/jcsi.v4i2.03>
- Pratiwi, V. U. (2021). Intertextuality of Pupuh Pangkur in Serat Wulangreh and the implications for the Javanese character education. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)*, *4*(2), 2169–2176. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v4i2.1907>
- Purwani, O. (2017). Javanese cosmological layout as a political space. *Cities*, *61*(1), 74–82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2016.05.004>
- Quinn, G. (2021). *The novel in Javanese* (Vol. 148). Brill.
- Rasidi, R., Istiningsih, G., Masithoh, R. F., & Rosyidi, M. I. (2025). Education based on local wisdom: An alternative model for the integration of cultural values in the school curriculum in Indonesia. *International Journal of Contemporary Studies in Education*, *4*(2), 114-135. <https://doi.org/10.56855/ijcse.v4i2.1521>
- Rizal, M. (2020, January). Javanese culture has internal control in government bureaucracy. In *Third International Conference on Social Transformation, Community and Sustainable Development (ICSTCSD 2019)* (pp. 35–41). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icstcsd-19.2020.37>
- Rohmadi, M., Sudaryanto, M., Susanto, D. A., Saddhono, K., & Saputra, A. D. (2023). Sociopragmatic study of Javanese oral discourse in big city communities as an effort to maintain the indigenous language. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, *4*(4), 41-59. <https://doi.org/10.58256/rjah.v4i4.1290>
- Rohmadi, M., Wibowo, P. A. W., Sudaryanto, M., & Saddhono, K. (2025). Religiousness in Javanese language and culture communication: A sociopragmatic study in Java Island, Indonesia. *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion*, *7*(1), 19–37. <https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7i1.112>
- Saddhono, K., & Supeni, S. (2014). The role of Dutch colonialism in the political life of the Mataram dynasty: A case study of the manuscript of Babad Tanah Jawi. *Asian Social Science*, *10*(15), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n15p1>

- Said, C. U., Alfiyanti, F., & Al Munawir, M. A. (2025). The value of character education in the Serat Wulang Reh Sri Susuhunan Pakubuwana IV. *Ijelas: Indonesian Journal of Education, Language, and Psychology*, 2(1), 49-61. <https://doi.org/10.25273/refleksi.v2i1.18687>
- Santosa, I., & Noorwatha, I. K. D. (2025). Symbolic and aesthetic fusion in Keraton Surakarta: colonial influence and Javanese cultural resistance through architectural design adaptation. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 12(1), 248–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2025.2482456>
- Santoso, T. A. (2023). The concept of moral education (Comparative study of the book of Ayyuhal Walad by Imam Ghazali and Serat Wulangreh by Pakubuwono IV). *Syntax Idea*, 5(4), 418–433. <https://doi.org/10.46799/syntax-idea.v5i4.2165>
- Sartini. (2021). *Wisdom from rural Java: Ethics and worldviews*. UGM Press.
- Sastrawan, W. J. (2020). Temporalities in southeast asian historiography. *History and Theory*, 59(2), 210-226. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hith.12155>
- Schmidt, L. K. (2016). *Understanding hermeneutics*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315539331>
- Sitanggang, A. O., Lubis, D. P., Muljono, P., & Pramono, F. (2025). A systematic literature review: Character education to build tolerance. *Multidisciplinary Reviews*, 8(10), 2025201-2025201. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2025201>
- Sudrajat, S., Suryo, D., & Siswoyo, D. (2018). Moral values of the Javanese leader in Serat Wedhatama. *Asian Social Science*, 14(3), 49-57. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v14n3p49>
- Sutomo, I. (2014). Modification of character education into akhlaq education for the global community. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 4(2), 291-316. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v4i2.291-316>
- Syihabuddin, M., Mustofa, M. L., Nurbaiti, D., & Wafi, H. A. (2024). The construction of Javanese Islamic ethics in Serat Wedhatama: Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge approach. *Al-Qalam*, 30(2), 317-329. <https://doi.org/10.31969/alq.v30i2.1550>
- Syukur, S. (2023). Empowerment of Islamic and Javanese Hindu ethics in forming national character. *Jurnal Penelitian/ Research Journal*, 20(2), 155-170. <https://doi.org/10.28918/jupe.v20i2.1950>
- Ubak, A. A., Multisari, W., Zen, E. F., & Zulkuple, S. S. (2025). Developing a sociodrama guide with Serat Sasana Sunu values to improve Muslim students' Polite behavior. *Pamomong: Journal of Islamic Educational Counseling*, 6(1), 59-77. <https://doi.org/10.18326/pamomong.v6i1.3925>
- Wang, M. T., & Degol, J. L. (2016). School climate: A review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28(2), 315–352. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9319-1>
- Wiryomartono, B. (2016). *Javanese culture and the meanings of locality: Studies on the Arts, urbanism, polity, and society*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781666999044>

About the Contributor(s)

Sedya Santosa, Department of Islamic Education Management, Faculty of Islamic Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Email: sedya.santosa@uin-suka.ac.id

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2148-8984>

Handoko Santoso, Department of Master of Biology Education, Postgraduate Program, Muhammadiyah University of Metro, Lampung, Indonesia.

Email: handoko.umm@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1546-1298>

Ichsan, Department of Teacher Professional Program, Faculty of Islamic Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Email: ichsan01@uin-suka.ac.id

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5598-2847>

Publisher's Note: *The opinions, statements, and data presented in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributors and do not reflect the views of Universitepark, EDUPIJ, and/or the editor(s). Universitepark, the Journal, and/or the editor(s) accept no responsibility for any harm or damage to persons or property arising from the use of ideas, methods, instructions, or products mentioned in the content.*
