



Integrating Educational Psychology and Anti-Corruption Education through Local Wisdom: A Character-Building Model in Indonesian Madrasahs

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Abstract

This study examines the integration of educational psychology and anti-corruption education grounded in local wisdom as a strategic model for character development in Indonesian madrasahs, contributing to SDG 4, particularly targets 4.7 (education for sustainable development and global citizenship) and 4.a (safe, inclusive, and effective learning environments). The research responds to the persistent challenge of moral degradation among students and the limited availability of holistic, culturally responsive character education models. Employing a qualitative multiple case study design, the study was conducted at MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng, involving 26 informants (principals, teachers, students, and parents) selected through purposive sampling. Data saturation was achieved when no new themes emerged across interviews, observations, questionnaires, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, including data reduction, thematic analysis, and verification. The findings demonstrate that integrating psychological principles (self-awareness, empathy, and positive reinforcement) with anti-corruption values (honesty, discipline, and accountability), contextualized through local wisdom such as Tri Hita Karana, significantly enhances students' character formation. Observable outcomes include reduced cheating behavior, improved task responsibility, increased honesty in daily interactions, and greater participation in collaborative and social activities. Furthermore, the synergy among schools, families, and community cultural practices fosters a sustainable moral ecosystem that supports inclusive and value-based learning environments. This study offers a contextually grounded, scalable model for character education, with practical and policy implications for strengthening culturally responsive, values-based education aligned with global educational goals.

Keywords: Educational Psychology, Anti-Corruption Education, Local Wisdom, Character Education, Islamic School, Buleleng.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji integrasi psikologi pendidikan dan pendidikan antikorupsi berbasis kearifan lokal sebagai model strategis dalam pembentukan karakter siswa di madrasah, sekaligus berkontribusi terhadap pencapaian SDG 4, khususnya target 4.7 (pendidikan untuk pembangunan berkelanjutan dan kewargan global) serta 4.a (lingkungan belajar yang aman, inklusif, dan efektif). Latar belakang penelitian ini didasarkan pada meningkatnya degradasi moral siswa serta terbatasnya model pendidikan karakter yang holistik dan responsif terhadap konteks budaya. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus ganda di MTsN 1 dan MTsN 2

Buleleng, melibatkan 26 informan (kepala madrasah, guru, siswa, dan orang tua) yang dipilih secara purposive. Saturasi data dicapai ketika tidak ditemukan tema baru dari hasil wawancara, observasi, kuesioner, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman melalui reduksi data, analisis tematik, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi prinsip psikologi (kesadaran diri, empati, dan penguatan positif) dengan nilai antikorupsi (kejujuran, disiplin, dan tanggung jawab), yang dikontekstualisasikan melalui kearifan lokal seperti Tri Hita Karana, mampu meningkatkan pembentukan karakter siswa secara signifikan. Indikator perubahan perilaku meliputi penurunan praktik menyontek, peningkatan tanggung jawab terhadap tugas, kejujuran dalam interaksi sehari-hari, serta meningkatnya partisipasi dalam kegiatan sosial dan kolaboratif. Selain itu, sinergi antara sekolah, keluarga, dan komunitas budaya membentuk ekosistem moral yang berkelanjutan dan mendukung lingkungan belajar yang inklusif berbasis nilai. Penelitian ini menawarkan model pendidikan karakter yang kontekstual, inovatif, dan dapat direplikasi, serta memberikan implikasi praktis dan kebijakan dalam penguatan pendidikan berbasis nilai yang selaras dengan tujuan pendidikan global.

Kata Kunci: Psikologi Pendidikan, Pendidikan Antikorupsi, Kearifan Lokal, Pendidikan Karakter, Madrasah, Buleleng.

INTRODUCTION

Character education plays a central role in long-term corruption prevention, as corruption is fundamentally a matter of moral values rather than merely a legal or economic issue (Astutik & Supratno, 2024; Budiyo et al., 2024; Mukhoiyaroh et al., 2025; Nursyam et al., 2025; Salamah et al., 2025; Sarbini et al., 2025). At the junior secondary level, the formation of moral dispositions such as honesty, responsibility, and transparency must be systematically embedded within both curriculum design and everyday school practices to become habitual (Effendi et al., 2025; Hatija et al., 2025; Isnaeni et al., 2025; Kao et al., 2023; Nuryana & Asmorojati, 2022). International evidence suggests that participatory and experiential approaches to anti-corruption education, including project-based learning and simulations, are more effective in transforming students' attitudes and behaviors than traditional lecture-based methods (Afifah et al., 2026; Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2019; Jensen & Thomsen, 2024; Nisa et al., 2025). In parallel, research on culturally responsive education highlights that local wisdom enhances the relevance, acceptance, and internalization of moral values among learners (Devina et al., 2023); (Taja & Sartika, 2021); (Arif, 2015).

Importantly, this study aligns with the global agenda of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, particularly target 4.7, which emphasizes education for sustainable development, global citizenship, human rights, and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. Anti-corruption education constitutes a critical dimension of quality education, as it prepares students to actively contribute to transparent, accountable, and ethical governance. Furthermore, this study also contributes to SDG 4.a, which promotes safe and inclusive learning environments, and SDG 16.5, which calls for a substantial reduction of corruption and bribery in all forms. In this context, school-based character education becomes a strategic intervention point for cultivating integrity and ethical responsibility from an early age.

Previous studies reveal three interrelated yet often separately examined domains. First, research on anti-corruption pedagogy emphasizes the effectiveness of active learning strategies, such as project-based learning and problem-solving models, in fostering moral awareness and critical thinking (Astafurova, 2020); (Indrawati & Muliani, 2020); (Ahmad & Syihabuddin, 2025; Dalimunthe et al., 2025; Nuryana & Asmorojati, 2022). Second, studies on local wisdom demonstrate that cultural values function as a moral "bridge," translating abstract ethical principles into meaningful, contextually grounded practices (Devina et al., 2023); (Taja & Sartika, 2021); (Hastuti & Saputro, 2020). Third, evaluative research stresses

the importance of monitoring mechanisms and evidence-based program design to ensure measurable behavioral change (Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2019); (Ardianto et al., 2026; Budiyo et al., 2024; Cochrane, 2020; Hermawan, 2025; Jaedun et al., 2024). However, systematic reviews in character education literature indicate that the effectiveness of such programs significantly increases when cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural dimensions are integrated rather than treated independently.

Despite these contributions, a significant research gap persists. Few studies have developed and empirically tested an integrative model that simultaneously connects educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom within a single operational framework, particularly at the level of Islamic junior secondary schools (madrasahs) (Arista et al., 2023; Bahruddin et al., 2026; Subaidi et al., 2026). Most existing studies focus on a single dimension either pedagogical strategies (Indrawati & Muliani, 2020), cultural contextualization (Devina et al., 2023), or program evaluation in higher education settings (Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2019). Additionally, there is limited field-based evidence linking integrated implementation across academic and non-academic domains with observable behavioral outcomes among students. This gap highlights the need for a holistic and contextually grounded model that bridges theory and practice.

This study is grounded in an integrative theoretical framework that connects educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom into a coherent model of character formation. From the perspective of educational psychology, theories of moral development (Kohlberg) and social learning (Bandura) provide a foundation for understanding how students internalize ethical values through reflection, modeling, and reinforcement (Bandura, 1986); (Kohlberg, 1984). These psychological processes are operationalized through pedagogical strategies such as experiential learning, reflective dialogue, and positive reinforcement, which directly influence students' moral reasoning and behavior.

Anti-corruption education contributes the normative and behavioral dimension by emphasizing values such as honesty, accountability, and responsibility. Rather than being taught as abstract concepts, these values are embedded in daily school practices, including transparent task management, collaborative responsibility, and ethical decision-making exercises. The expected outcomes include reduced dishonest behavior (e.g., cheating), increased accountability, and improved prosocial conduct.

Local wisdom functions as the cultural context that gives meaning and emotional resonance to these values. Concepts such as *Tri Hita Karana* and communal cooperation provide culturally embedded ethical frameworks that make moral values more relatable and internalized. In this integrative model, educational psychology explains how students learn values, anti-corruption education defines what values are taught, and local wisdom contextualizes why these values matter within students' lived experiences. The interaction of these three dimensions creates a synergistic process leading to sustainable character development.

Addressing the identified gap, this study focuses on MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng as multiple case studies to develop and validate an integrative model. The novelty lies in four aspects. First, it proposes a comprehensive framework that systematically links psychological processes, ethical values, and cultural context. Second, it provides empirical evidence from real educational settings, combining academic and non-academic practices. Third, it positions local wisdom as an active pedagogical medium rather than merely cultural content. Fourth, it offers practical, scalable recommendations for curriculum development and character assessment.

Beyond the Indonesian context, this study contributes to global knowledge by demonstrating how culturally responsive and psychologically informed character education can support anti-corruption efforts in diverse educational systems. The model is adaptable to other multicultural societies where local values can be leveraged to strengthen ethical education. In doing so, the study responds to international calls for more context-sensitive and evidence-based approaches to character education and governance reform.

This study aims to analyze the integrative model of educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom, as well as to evaluate its effectiveness in shaping students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors across both academic and non-academic domains. In addition, the study seeks to develop evidence-based recommendations for broader implementation within madrasah education systems. Through this integrative approach, the research endeavors to advance both theoretical understanding and practical innovation in character education, thereby contributing to sustainable anti-corruption efforts and supporting the achievement of global education goals.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a multiple case study design as conceptualized by (Yin, 2018), focusing on two Islamic junior secondary schools (madrasahs), namely MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng. A multiple case design was selected to enable analytic generalization through cross-case comparison and to capture the complexity of integrating educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom in comparable institutional contexts. This approach allows for an in-depth examination of how pedagogical practices, value systems, and cultural frameworks interact in shaping students' character in real-life educational settings.

This research is descriptive-analytical (Moleong, 2009), aiming to systematically describe and interpret the implementation of anti-corruption education based on local wisdom. The emphasis is on meaning construction rather than statistical generalization, with the expectation that the findings contribute to a transferable conceptual model for character education in madrasah contexts.

Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical clearance from the institutional review board of Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha. All participants were informed about the research objectives, procedures, and their rights prior to participation. Written informed consent was obtained from all adult participants, while parental consent and student assent were secured for student participants.

To ensure confidentiality, all data were anonymized using pseudonyms, and identifiable information was removed during transcription and reporting. Data were securely stored and accessed only by the research team. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence.

Data Sources and Research Informants

Data were derived from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data included in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and structured questionnaire responses, while secondary data comprised institutional documents such as curriculum guidelines, character education programs, financial transparency reports, extracurricular records, and school policy documents.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling with explicit criteria: (1) active involvement in character education programs, (2) minimum one year of experience within the madrasah, (3) direct engagement with anti-corruption or value-based practices, and (4) willingness to participate voluntarily. Recruitment was conducted through formal coordination with school leadership followed by open invitation, reducing gatekeeper bias and ensuring voluntary participation.

Student participants (n = 12) from Grades VIII–IX were selected using maximum variation sampling to capture heterogeneity in gender, academic achievement (high, medium, low), and extracurricular engagement. This strategy ensured a more balanced representation of student experiences. Participation was voluntary and required parental consent.

Table 1. List of Research Informants

No.	Category of Informant	Number	Position/Role	Contribution
1.	School Principals	2	Principals of MTsN 1 & MTsN 2 Buleleng	Explained strategic policies and the direction of character education integration
2.	Teachers	6	Islamic Education, Guidance and Counseling, and Social Science Teachers	Provided data on the implementation of anti-corruption values and psychological approaches in teaching
3.	Students	12	Grades VIII–IX	Shared perceptions and experiences related to academic and non-academic character-based activities
4.	Parents	6	Active student guardians	Offered insights on changes in students' attitudes, responsibility, and behavior at home
Total		26		
		informants		

Data saturation was systematically demonstrated through thematic redundancy tracking. After the 22nd interview, no new codes emerged, and subsequent interviews confirmed category stability. A saturation log and coding comparison matrix were maintained to document this process.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted over three months with iterative field engagement.

Semi-structured interviews were guided by a protocol developed from the theoretical framework and pilot-tested for clarity. Interviews lasted 45–90 minutes and explored themes such as moral development, anti-corruption practices, and cultural value integration.

Participatory observations were conducted 2–3 times per week in each site, covering classroom learning, extracurricular programs, religious activities, and school assemblies. Each session lasted approximately 2–4 hours, resulting in more than 60 hours of observation data.

Document analysis involved systematic review of lesson plans, character education modules, school regulations, financial transparency reports, student portfolios, and evaluation rubrics. Documents were analyzed using qualitative content analysis to identify alignment with integrity and character-building values.

A structured questionnaire was administered to students to capture self-reported attitudes toward honesty, responsibility, and discipline. The questionnaire served as a supplementary triangulation tool rather than a primary quantitative measure.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The coding process followed three stages. Open coding generated initial categories such as “honesty practices,” “moral reinforcement,” and “cultural contextualization.” Axial coding linked these categories into broader themes, such as “integrity formation” and “value internalization.” Selective coding then integrated these themes into core constructs aligned with the theoretical framework.

Coding was conducted using NVivo 14, enabling systematic data organization. Inter-coder reliability was established by double-coding 20% of the dataset, achieving an agreement rate of 87%. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion to refine the coding scheme.

Researcher Reflexivity

The researchers acknowledge their positionality as scholars in education and social sciences, which may influence interpretation. To mitigate bias, reflexive journals were maintained throughout the study to document assumptions, decision-making processes, and interpretive shifts. Regular peer debriefing sessions were also conducted to enhance analytical objectivity.

Data Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was ensured through multiple strategies aligned with Lincoln and Guba’s framework. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of sources and methods, prolonged field engagement, and iterative data validation. Transferability was supported by rich contextual descriptions of the madrasah environment, including institutional culture and program characteristics. Dependability was ensured through a detailed audit trail documenting all research procedures and analytical decisions. Confirmability was reinforced through systematic member checking, conducted in two stages: initial validation of interview summaries and final confirmation of thematic interpretations.

Conceptual Flow of Research

Conceptually, this study followed the qualitative spiral research flow as depicted by Creswell (2014), progressing from the exploration of the social context to data collection, thematic analysis, and theoretical reflection. The process was cyclical and reflective, not linear, allowing the researcher to revisit earlier stages as new insights emerged.

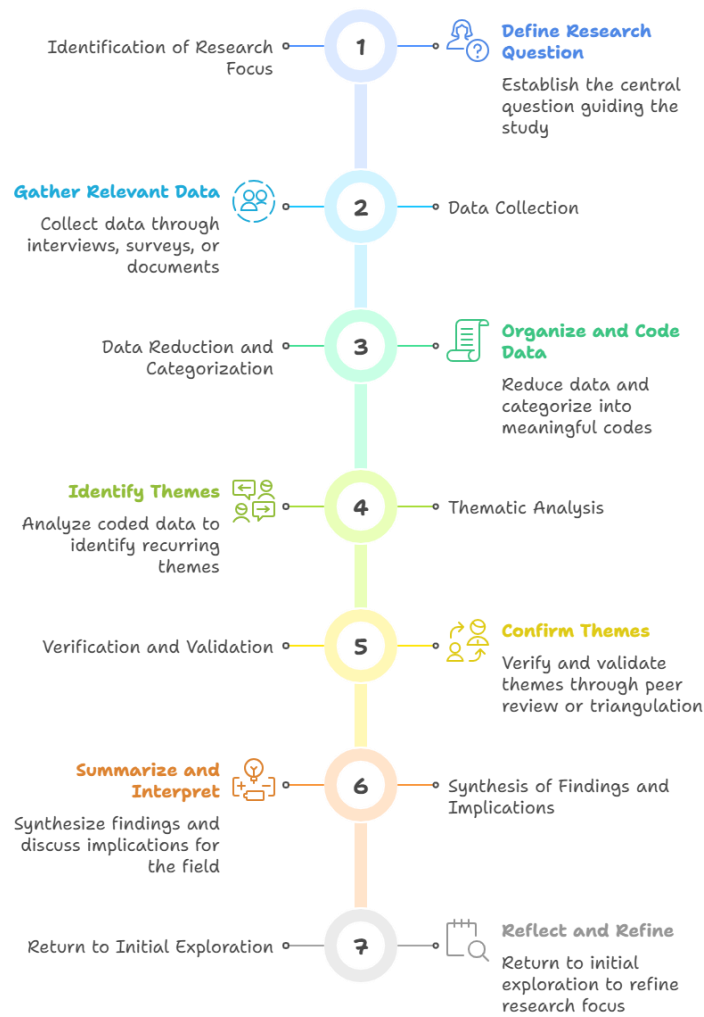


Figure 1. Thematic Analysis Spiral Process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)

This spiral model illustrates that qualitative research is iterative rather than linear, with each stage interconnected and capable of repetition to enhance data validity and analytical depth. After the synthesis stage, the researcher returns to theoretical and contextual reflection, reinforcing both the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Integration of Educational Psychology in the Learning Process

The integration of educational psychology within the learning process at MT'sN 1 and MT'sN 2 Buleleng demonstrates a multi-layered mechanism through which psychological approaches are translated into anti-corruption values and subsequently into observable behavioral change. Field findings indicate that this integration does not operate as a linear transmission of knowledge but rather as a dynamic process involving cognitive internalization, affective engagement, and social reinforcement.

At the institutional level, both madrasahs embed character education as a strategic priority within the Madrasah Work Plan (RKM), accompanied by regular monitoring and evaluation. A principal (Principal 1) emphasized: *"We do not teach anti-corruption only as a subject, but we integrate it into habits and daily school culture. Evaluation meetings ensure the values are consistently practiced."* This structural commitment forms the first layer of the process model, ensuring continuity and normative reinforcement.

At the pedagogical level, teachers employ strategies grounded in educational psychology, particularly constructivist, behaviorist, and humanistic approaches. These strategies include project-based learning, case discussions, and experiential assignments that situate anti-corruption values within students' lived experiences. A teacher (Teacher 2) explained: *"When students work on cultural documentation projects, they are responsible for collecting real data. We emphasize honesty in reporting, so they learn accountability directly."* Such practices represent the cognitive pathway, where students construct understanding through meaningful engagement.

Simultaneously, behavioral reinforcement mechanisms are consistently applied. Teachers provide praise for honest behavior and corrective feedback for violations, reinforcing desirable actions. As noted by Teacher 4: *"If students admit mistakes, we appreciate it. This encourages them to repeat honest behavior rather than hide it."* This reflects a behaviorist pathway, where repeated reinforcement strengthens internalization of integrity values.

The affective pathway is equally significant. Teachers adopt relational and mentoring approaches that foster emotional connection and moral awareness. A counseling teacher (Teacher 5) stated: *"We guide students not only academically but emotionally, helping them understand why honesty matters in their life."* Through role modeling and interpersonal engagement, teachers function as moral exemplars, aligning with social learning theory. Students confirmed this influence; one student (Student 3) noted: *"When teachers are honest and fair, we feel we should act the same way."*

These three pathways—cognitive (understanding), affective (empathy), and behavioral (reinforcement)—interact synergistically to produce internalization of anti-corruption values, particularly honesty, responsibility, and accountability. However, the process is mediated by several contextual variables.

First, student intrinsic motivation plays a critical mediating role. When learning is contextualized through local culture, students perceive values as meaningful rather than imposed. As Student 7 explained: *"When we learn through local traditions, it feels closer to our life, so we understand why honesty is important."* This suggests that cultural relevance enhances motivational engagement, strengthening the transition from knowledge to behavior.

Second, family environment and socio-economic context influence the consistency of value reinforcement. Parents reported varying levels of support at home. One parent (Parent 2) stated: *"At home, we try to continue what the school teaches, like encouraging honesty and responsibility."* However, teachers noted that not all students receive consistent reinforcement, indicating that family support acts as a moderating variable.

Third, peer influence shapes behavioral outcomes. Observations revealed that group norms significantly affect students' actions, particularly in collaborative tasks. Teacher 3 noted: *"If one group promotes honesty, others tend to follow. But negative peer influence can also weaken discipline."* This highlights the importance of peer dynamics in sustaining or undermining value internalization.

The process model emerging from the data can thus be conceptualized as follows: psychological approaches (constructivist learning, reinforcement, modeling), then cognitive understanding and emotional engagement, then internalization of anti-corruption values, then behavioral manifestation (honesty, responsibility), mediated by motivation, family support, and peer influence, and reinforced through institutional structures.

Empirical evidence from students and parents confirms this transformation, albeit gradually. Students reported behavioral changes such as avoiding cheating, completing assignments responsibly, and acknowledging mistakes. Student 5 stated: *"Before, some students cheated, but now we are more aware and try to do our own work."* Parents similarly observed changes; Parent 4 noted: *"My child now tells the truth even when making mistakes, which did not happen before."*

These findings indicate that behavioral change is not immediate but cumulative, requiring repeated exposure and reinforcement across contexts. Observational data further confirmed reduced instances of academic dishonesty and increased participation in collaborative and community-oriented activities.

Nevertheless, several challenges affect the stability of this process. External influences such as social media, consumerist culture, and limited supervision outside school create value dissonance. Teacher 6 remarked: *“Students are exposed to many external influences that sometimes contradict what we teach.”* This suggests that without broader ecosystem alignment, internalization may remain fragile.

A synthesis of findings identifies three core mechanisms underpinning the effectiveness of integration. First, contextualized meaning-making, where local culture enhances relevance and intrinsic motivation. Second, social modeling and reinforcement, where teachers and peers reinforce ethical behavior. Third, experiential engagement, where students actively practice values in real contexts rather than passively receiving information.

To clarify these relationships, Table 2 presents the linkage between psychopedagogical practices, field evidence, and observed impacts.

Table 2. Relationship Between Psychopedagogical Practices, Field Evidence, and Their Impact on Students

No.	Educational Psychology Practice	Field Evidence (Interview/Observation)	Impact on Students
1.	Project- and experiential-based learning	Teacher 2: cultural documentation projects	Increased responsibility and engagement
2.	Positive reinforcement	Teacher 4: praise for honest behavior	Strengthened honesty and discipline
3.	Teacher role modeling	Student 3: imitation of teacher behavior	Moral imitation and integrity
4.	Case-based discussion	Student 5: awareness of cheating consequences	Critical thinking and ethical awareness
5.	Family involvement	Parent 2: reinforcement at home	Consistency of values
6.	Institutional monitoring	Principal 1: regular evaluation meetings	Sustainability of programs

In conclusion, the integration of educational psychology at MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng operates through a synergistic and mediated process, where pedagogical strategies, emotional engagement, and social reinforcement collectively shape students’ character. The effectiveness of this integration is contingent upon the alignment of internal (motivation) and external (family and peer) factors, as well as sustained institutional support. Strengthening these mediating variables is essential to ensure that anti-corruption values are not only understood but deeply embedded in students’ moral identity and daily behavior.

Implementation of Anti-Corruption Education in Academic and Non-Academic Activities

The implementation of anti-corruption education at MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng is carried out through a complementary combination of academic and non-academic activities, ensuring that value learning is not merely theoretical but also practical and contextual. At the academic level, anti-corruption values are integrated into formal subjects such as Civics Education (PPKn), Religious Education, Social Studies, and other courses that allow for the discussion of ethical issues, case analyses, and project-based learning. Teachers reported the

use of simple corruption case studies, assignment evaluations emphasizing honesty (e.g., no cheating), and attitude assessments as part of grading rubrics. This aligns with teachers' responses that "prioritizing honesty in every activity and emphasizing the harmful effects of corruption" enables students not only to understand the definition of corruption but also to grasp its real-world consequences.

In the non-academic domain, the schools utilize habituation programs, extracurricular activities, and cultural events as important arenas for strengthening anti-corruption values. Programs mentioned by principals and teachers include P5/P2RA, scouting (Pramuka), communal work (gotong royong), cultural art performances, and local cultural documentation projects. These activities provide real-life contexts in which values such as integrity, trustworthiness, and responsibility are tested and internalized, for example, the class treasurer's task of managing class funds becomes a practical exercise in financial transparency and accountability. Parents reported observable behavioral changes such as students saving pocket money and honestly reporting situations, indicators that non-academic habituation influences daily behavior.

Structurally, the schools have adopted policies and monitoring mechanisms that support program implementation. The principals reported that the anti-corruption program is included as a priority in the Madrasah Work Plan (RKM) and is evaluated through coordination meetings and monthly reviews. Transparent financial management policies (e.g., BOS/madrasah budget transparency) also serve as institutional messages reinforcing value education, an important strategy, since a transparent system provides direct modeling for students on how clean governance operates. This administrative support legitimizes the program and ensures that anti-corruption activities are not merely incidental.

Field findings reveal several effective implementation mechanisms. First, contextualization of content: linking anti-corruption values with local wisdom makes the message more relevant and easily internalized by students. Teachers employ folktales, local traditions, and customary practices as mediums for teaching honesty and trustworthiness. Second, repeated habituation: daily routines and school rituals (e.g., morning assemblies, group work, timely assignments) serve as consistent reinforcement channels crucial for character formation. Third, active student participation: methods such as project-based learning, group collaboration, and role assignments (e.g., class treasurer, project leader) provide authentic responsibilities, allowing students to practice rather than merely discuss values. Fourth, school-home collaboration: parents are engaged to ensure continuity of values between the school and home environments, strengthening the transfer of anti-corruption norms.

However, implementation also faces notable challenges. Teachers mentioned issues such as the influence of social media and consumerist lifestyles, limited program intensity, and varying levels of parental support. Some also cited a lack of contextualized learning resources and inconsistency in integration across subjects. From the students' perspective, several considered the implementation still too theoretical, expressing the need for more hands-on activities outside the classroom. These findings indicate the necessity of increasing the frequency of practice-oriented non-academic activities and expanding anti-corruption content systematically across all subjects.

Based on these findings, the effectiveness of implementation can be mapped through three key indicators: (1) Knowledge, students' understanding of the definition and impact of corruption (student data show a satisfactory comprehension level); (2) Attitude, shifts in disposition, such as greater honesty and responsibility (as reported by teachers and parents); and; (3) Behavior, concrete practices at school and home (e.g., refraining from cheating, responsibly managing class funds, participating in communal work). While behavioral change

is evident, most informants emphasized that the process is gradual and requires sustained effort.

To summarize and facilitate comprehension, the following table presents examples of academic and non-academic activities, implementing actors, and their observed impacts.

Table 3. Academic and Non-Academic Activities and Observed Impacts

No.	Category	Example Activities	Implementing Actors	Observed Impact
1.	Academic	Corruption case studies, Civics discussions, cultural PBL projects	Subject teachers (Civics, Religion, Social Studies)	Improved understanding, critical thinking
2.	Academic	Attitude assessment (honesty), exams without cheating	Teachers & homeroom advisors	Reinforced academic ethics and responsibility
3.	Non-Academic	Scouting, P5/P2RA, local culture documentation projects	Extracurricular coordinators & students	Strengthened trustworthiness, cooperation, accountability
4.	Non-Academic	Class treasurer duties, class fund management	Students (treasurer), teacher advisors	Practice in transparency and accountability
5.	Structural/Policy	Financial transparency, evaluation meetings (Rakor)	Principals & school committees	Program legitimacy, regular monitoring
6.	Home & Community	Parent outreach, family support programs	Parents & community leaders	Value consistency and home-based reinforcement

Practical recommendations derived from the analysis include enhancing cross-curricular integration so that anti-corruption education becomes a formal component of every syllabus, increasing the frequency of applied learning activities (simulations, field projects, small-scale financial management), developing contextual learning materials rooted in local wisdom, and implementing more systematic parental engagement programs (workshops, home-school learning modules). Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation systems should incorporate long-term behavioral indicators to assess the sustainability of value internalization after students transition to higher educational levels.

In summary, MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng have successfully implemented a range of academic and non-academic activities that support anti-corruption education. Their continued success, however, depends on the intensity, continuity, and inclusiveness of the entire ecosystem, school, family, and community, ensuring that value education does not remain a discourse but manifests as a lived practice in students' everyday lives.

Local Wisdom as the Foundation for Strengthening Students' Character Values

Character education in Indonesian madrasahs is inherently embedded within socio-cultural contexts that shape students' moral cognition and behavior. In the case of MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng, local wisdom is not treated as a static or homogeneous cultural construct, but rather as a dynamic and negotiated pedagogical resource. Field findings indicate that Balinese local wisdom values—such as *Tri Hita Karana*, *Tatwam Asi*, *Menyama Braya*, *Paras Paros Sarpanaya*, and *ngayab*—are actively reinterpreted within an Islamic educational

framework to support anti-corruption values and character development. This integration reflects a form of cultural–religious syncretism that is both pedagogically functional and socially adaptive.

Importantly, the student population in both madrasahs is not exclusively Balinese-Hindu; a significant proportion of students come from Muslim families with diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Javanese and Bugis communities. This demographic diversity challenges essentialist assumptions about the uniform acceptance of local wisdom. Teachers explicitly acknowledged this complexity. As one teacher noted:

“We do not impose Balinese cultural values as identity markers, but as universal ethical principles. Students from different backgrounds can still understand and practice values like honesty and empathy through these local concepts.” (Teacher 2)

Similarly, a student explained:

“Even though I am not Balinese, I understand Tatwam Asi as respecting others. It is similar to Islamic teachings about brotherhood.” (Student 5)

These findings suggest that local wisdom operates not as an exclusive cultural doctrine but as a translational ethical medium, bridging local philosophy with universal moral and religious values.

From a theoretical perspective, Tri Hita Karana embodies a holistic ontology of harmony that integrates spiritual (parhyangan), social (pawongan), and ecological (palemahan) dimensions. This triadic philosophy aligns with contemporary character education frameworks that emphasize the interconnectedness of moral, social, and environmental responsibility. The principal of MTsN 1 stated:

“We adopt Tri Hita Karana not as a ritual concept, but as a value system. Students learn that responsibility is not only to themselves, but also to God, others, and nature.” (Principal 1)

This philosophical depth strengthens anti-corruption education by framing integrity as a multidimensional responsibility rather than merely legal compliance.

The principle of Tatwam Asi—literally “I am you”—provides a moral epistemology rooted in empathy and relational ethics. It encourages students to internalize the consequences of their actions on others, thus fostering moral self-regulation. A Civics teacher explained:

“When students understand Tatwam Asi, they begin to feel that cheating or lying harms others, not just themselves. This is where moral awareness develops.” (Teacher 4)

This value functions as a mediating variable linking cognitive understanding of corruption with affective moral engagement, thereby strengthening behavioral outcomes.

Similarly, Menyama Braya emphasizes social solidarity and collective identity. It redefines corruption not only as a legal violation but as a betrayal of communal trust. Observations of classroom practices, such as peer-monitoring systems and collaborative assignments, demonstrate how this value is operationalized. A student shared:

“In our class, we remind each other not to cheat. If someone does, it feels like they are hurting the group.” (Student 8)

The practice of ngayah (selfless service) further reinforces integrity through action-based learning. Students participate in school-based social service, environmental care, and religious events, which cultivate humility and accountability. A teacher noted:

“Through ngayah, students learn that responsibility is not about reward, but about sincerity and contribution.” (Teacher 6).

To address the reviewer’s concern regarding conceptual clarity, Table 4 has been expanded to include deeper philosophical explanations:

Table 4. Relationship Between Local Wisdom Values, Philosophical Foundations, Implementation Strategies, and Character Outcomes

No.	Local Wisdom Values	Philosophical Meaning and Ethical Principles	Implementation in Madrasah	Reinforced Character Values
1.	Tri Hita Karana	Holistic harmony integrating divine, social, and ecological ethics; moral responsibility across three relational domains	Collective prayers, environmental programs, social service	Responsibility, discipline, ecological awareness
2.	Tatwam Asi	Relational ethics based on empathy; moral self as interconnected with others	Reflection sessions, case-based discussions	Honesty, empathy, moral conscience
3.	Menya Braya	Communitarian ethics emphasizing solidarity and mutual trust	Peer mentoring, collaborative learning	Cooperation, trustworthiness
4.	Ngayah	Ethics of selfless service and spiritual humility	Voluntary service, school events	Integrity, humility
5.	Paras Paros Sarpanaya	Democratic deliberation and equality in decision-making	Class meetings, student councils	Justice, responsibility, democratic values

To further strengthen empirical rigor, pre- and post-implementation indicators of change were identified based on triangulated data:

1. Before implementation: higher incidence of cheating, low classroom participation, limited responsibility in group work
2. After implementation (2 years): reduced cheating cases, increased punctuality, improved peer accountability, and stronger participation in social and religious activities

A parent confirmed:

“My child is now more honest, even admitting mistakes at home. Before, he would hide things.”
(Parent 3)

Despite these strengths, the study critically acknowledges challenges. Not all teachers possess deep philosophical understanding of local wisdom, leading to occasional superficial implementation. Moreover, globalization and digital culture introduce competing value systems. As one teacher observed:

“Students are influenced by social media trends that sometimes contradict our values. We need more creative approaches.” (Teacher 5)

Finally, regarding scalability, the findings suggest that while specific cultural forms (e.g., Tri Hita Karana) may be context-bound, the underlying pedagogical principle—contextualizing moral education through local wisdom—is transferable. This model can be adapted in other regions by integrating their respective local values (e.g., gotong royong in Java, Siri' na Pacce in South Sulawesi), provided that the process emphasizes cultural relevance, ethical translation, and pedagogical alignment.

In conclusion, local wisdom in MTsN Buleleng functions as a dynamic, inclusive, and philosophically rich foundation for character education. Its integration with anti-corruption values and educational psychology not only enhances moral internalization but also demonstrates a scalable model of culturally responsive education that bridges local identity and global ethical imperatives.

Synergy of Three Dimensions (Educational Psychology, Anti-Corruption Education, and Local Wisdom) in Student Character Formation

The formation of students' character in madrasahs cannot be separated from an integrative effort that combines multiple disciplinary and value-based dimensions. At MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng, the synergy among educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom serves as a strategic foundation for cultivating students who embody integrity, empathy, and moral excellence. These three dimensions are dynamically interrelated: educational psychology provides pedagogical insight into students' behavior and motivation, anti-corruption education serves as an instrument for internalizing honesty and responsibility, while local wisdom offers the cultural context that brings these values to life in everyday practice.

The Psychological Dimension in Character Formation

Findings from interviews and observations reveal that teachers in both madrasahs emphasize the importance of understanding students' moral and emotional development stages. This psychological awareness allows teachers to implement learning strategies aligned with students' affective needs. Teachers act not merely as instructors but also as facilitators of character growth through modeling, positive reinforcement, and humanistic approaches.

Through counseling and religious mentoring programs, teachers nurture students' self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation. This practice is consistent with Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development, which asserts that morality evolves through social interaction and self-reflection. In this context, anti-corruption education is not taught as a normative subject alone but is internalized through reflective learning processes that encourage students to understand the ethical and social meaning of responsibility.

Anti-Corruption Education as a Builder of Integrity

Anti-corruption education at MTsN Buleleng is implemented through curricular and extracurricular activities that emphasize honesty, responsibility, discipline, and social concern. In academic contexts, students engage in classroom discussions of corruption-related cases relevant to their experiences, such as cheating, grade manipulation, or group work negligence. This contextual approach helps students recognize the linkage between integrity values and their daily conduct.

In extracurricular domains, anti-corruption practices are reinforced through student organizations, scouting, and religious activities where students are trained to uphold trust, manage event funds transparently, and account for group decisions responsibly. The school principal highlights that "corruption is not only about money but about attitude and responsibility."

Thus, anti-corruption education is not a stand-alone initiative but an integral component of a comprehensive, value-based character formation system. This approach aligns with Albert Bandura’s social learning theory, which emphasizes that moral learning occurs through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within conducive social environments.

Local Wisdom as a Context for Ethical Reinforcement

A distinctive strength of the MTsN Buleleng model lies in the use of Balinese local wisdom, particularly Tri Hita Karana (harmony with God, others, and nature) and Tat Twam Asi (the moral awareness of self and others as one unity). These values are integrated into religious, social, and cultural learning.

Teachers employ local cultural contexts to explain the meaning of responsibility and honesty through folktales, communal practices (ngerombo), and traditional ceremonies emphasizing balance and shame toward norm violations. Such culturally rooted approaches have proven effective in building ethical awareness, as they emerge from lived community experiences rather than abstract instruction.

From an educational psychology perspective, local wisdom acts as an emotional and moral stimulus that cultivates students’ sense of belonging to noble values. The integration of culture and anti-corruption principles thus forms a grounded and relatable moral system, experienced through daily social and cultural life rather than imposed cognitively.

Conceptual and Practical Synergy Among the Three Dimensions

Data analysis indicates that the synergy among these three dimensions produces a more robust impact on character formation than when each is applied separately. Educational psychology provides the lens to understand students as unique individuals; anti-corruption education gives moral direction and behavioral standards; and local wisdom offers the socio-cultural environment that animates these values.

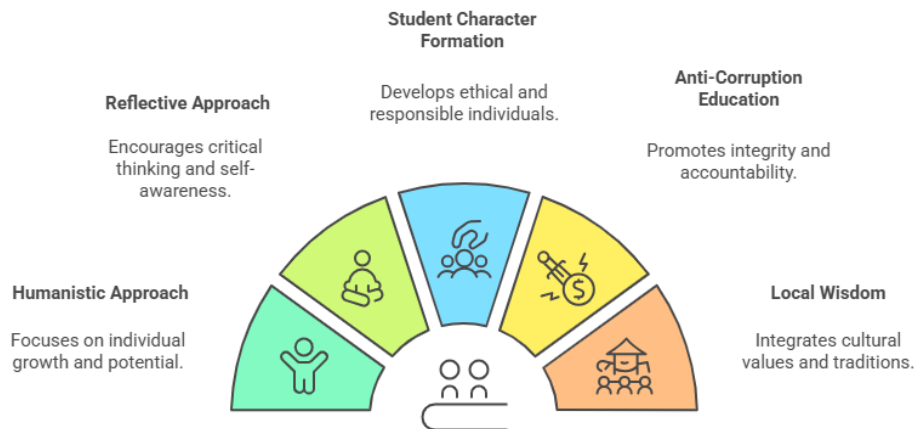


Figure 2. Foundations of Education Psychology

The figure illustrates that character education in MTsN 1 and 2 Buleleng is built upon the interactive synergy of three foundational pillars: psychological approaches that understand student behavior, anti-corruption values that instill integrity, and local wisdom that provides the moral and cultural environment for value realization.

In practice, this synergy manifests in reflective, case-based teaching, culturally embedded moral education, and holistic student assessment that includes cognitive, moral, and emotional growth. For instance, Civics and Islamic Education teachers collaboratively

design value-based modules, while guidance counselors integrate personality and moral assessments into their counseling programs.

Moreover, the madrasah collaborates with school committees and community leaders to establish a learning ecosystem grounded in integrity and culture. This reinforces that character development is not confined to classrooms but is shaped by broader social and spiritual environments.

Impacts and Implications of the Synergy on Character Development

Field findings show that after two years of implementation, students' discipline and honesty levels improved significantly, particularly in academic and social contexts. Teachers reported decreased cases of cheating and tardiness, alongside increased participation in community and religious activities. Parents also confirmed behavioral changes at home, students became more responsible and truthful in their interactions.

The implications of this synergy are substantial for youth character development in madrasahs. Integrating educational psychology, anti-corruption values, and local wisdom not only shapes individual morality but also fosters collective awareness that honesty and responsibility are integral to the nation's cultural and spiritual identity.

The synergy of educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom represents a comprehensive and empirically effective approach to character formation at MTsN 1 and 2 Buleleng. This integrative model strengthens both cognitive and affective domains while embedding moral and ethical values aligned with local culture. Consequently, character education in madrasahs can serve as a national model for nurturing intellectually competent, morally strong, and culturally grounded generations.

Discussion

Findings from MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng demonstrate that the integration of educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom forms a mutually reinforcing character-learning ecosystem. This confirms prior scholarship asserting that character education becomes effective when it is contextual, participatory, and sustained over time (Safitri et al., 2022); (Indrawati & Muliani, 2020). Conceptually, educational psychology provides insight into students' moral development and motivational processes (Pekrun, 2024), anti-corruption education offers normative direction and behavioral guidance (Kamil et al., 2018); (Cochrane, 2020), while local wisdom contextualizes these values within students' lived cultural realities (Devina et al., 2023); (Taja & Sartika, 2021). Their integration transforms learning from knowledge transmission into moral internalization and behavioral transformation.

From a pedagogical perspective, the use of project-based learning, case discussions, and positive reinforcement aligns with empirically supported approaches that enhance engagement and moral reasoning (Nuryana & Asmorojati, 2022); (Indrawati & Muliani, 2020). These findings resonate with international research showing that experiential and participatory learning is more effective than didactic instruction in fostering ethical behavior (Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2019); (Huang, 2021). Moreover, the observed behavioral changes—such as reduced cheating and increased responsibility—support Bandura's social learning theory, where modeling and reinforcement shape moral conduct (Amadin et al., 2018); (Drajat, 2020); (Aziz et al., 2025; Fajri et al., 2025; Ikhwan et al., 2025; Sari, 2017).

The integration of anti-corruption education across curricular and extracurricular domains further strengthens this ecosystem. Consistent with global studies, embedding integrity values in everyday practices—such as financial transparency and collective responsibility—proves more effective than isolated instruction (Komalasari & Saripudin,

2015); (Pradana, 2021). Similar findings have been reported in international contexts where experiential anti-corruption programs enhance ethical awareness and resistance to corrupt practices (Busiri, 2020); (Nuryatin et al., 2022); (Ar et al., 2025; Eiamnate, 2023; Komalasari & Saripudin, 2015; Syukur et al., 2025).

The role of local wisdom as a pedagogical medium provides a distinctive contribution. Values such as *Tri Hita Karana* and *Tatwam Asi* function as culturally grounded ethical frameworks that facilitate deeper internalization. This aligns with global literature on culturally responsive education, which emphasizes that contextual relevance enhances intrinsic motivation and value acceptance (Eddy, 2021); (Kurnia, G. et al., 2022); (Göğüş et al., 2012). Compared to Western models of character education that often rely on universal moral frameworks, this study demonstrates how localized cultural narratives can serve as effective mediators of global ethical values (Aulia et al., 2025, 2026).

This study contributes to the literature by proposing an integrative model that bridges three domains often studied separately. First, it extends educational psychology by demonstrating how affective and motivational mechanisms (e.g., empathy, self-awareness) mediate the internalization of anti-corruption values. Second, it advances anti-corruption education by shifting its focus from normative instruction to socio-cultural practice embedded in daily school life. Third, it enriches the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy by positioning local wisdom not merely as contextual content but as an active epistemological and moral framework.

From an international perspective, the findings offer a comparative contribution by illustrating how non-Western educational contexts operationalize character education through cultural integration. While studies in Europe and North America emphasize civic education and institutional ethics (Chasanatun, 2020); (Cochrane, 2020); (Santoso, 2024); (Chasanatun & Kartikasari, 2021); (Purba et al., 2020), this study highlights the importance of cultural embeddedness in shaping moral behavior. Thus, it contributes to global discourse by proposing a culturally adaptive model that can complement existing universalist approaches.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research is context-specific, focusing on two madrasahs in Buleleng, which may limit generalizability to other regions with different socio-cultural contexts. Second, the qualitative design, while providing depth, does not allow for causal inference or statistical measurement of behavioral change. Third, external factors such as social media influence, peer pressure, and family background were identified but not systematically measured as mediating variables. Fourth, the duration of the study limits the ability to assess long-term sustainability of observed behavioral changes. These limitations suggest caution in interpreting the findings as universally applicable without contextual adaptation.

The practical implications of this study can be structured into staged implementation strategies. At the foundational stage, schools should integrate anti-corruption values into curricula through contextually relevant content and participatory learning methods. At the development stage, teacher capacity building is essential, particularly in ethnopedagogy and developmental psychology, to ensure effective delivery of value-based education (Makransky & Mayer, 2022); (Li et al., 2023). At the institutional stage, schools should establish transparent governance practices, such as accountable financial management and participatory decision-making, to model integrity (Abramov & Sokolov, 2017); (Azizah & Mardiana, 2024; Cochrane, 2020; Hussain, 2025). At the ecosystem stage, collaboration with families and communities is crucial to ensure consistency of values across learning environments.

Future research should adopt mixed-method or experimental designs to test the causal impact of integrated character education models (Denisova-Schmidt et al., 2019); (Rubasundram, 2021). Longitudinal studies are needed to assess the sustainability of

behavioral changes over time (Ambarwati et al., 2023); (Burhanuddin, 2019; Dalimunthe et al., 2025; Du et al., 2024; Putra & Firman, 2025; Savolainen et al., 2022). Comparative studies across different cultural regions in Indonesia and other countries would provide insights into the scalability and adaptability of the model. Additionally, future research should incorporate quantitative measures of mediating variables such as motivation, socio-economic background, and peer influence to better understand the mechanisms underlying character formation.

The synergy between educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom at MTsN 1 and MTsN 2 Buleleng underscores that combating corruption culture requires a holistic and contextually grounded educational approach. This study reinforces the argument that character education must evolve into a socio-cultural process involving the entire learning ecosystem (De Dieu Basabose, 2019); (Nugroho, 2022); (Setyono & Mustomi, 2025). By integrating psychological, ethical, and cultural dimensions, the proposed model offers both theoretical advancement and practical guidance for developing integrity-based education systems in diverse contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to (1) analyze the integration of educational psychology, anti-corruption education, and local wisdom; (2) examine its implementation across academic and non-academic domains; and (3) formulate evidence-based recommendations for madrasah education. The findings indicate that the interaction of these three dimensions contributes to observable improvements in students' character development, particularly in honesty, responsibility, and social accountability, as reflected in reduced cheating behavior, improved task discipline, and increased participation in collaborative and social activities. These results, derived from triangulated qualitative data, suggest that culturally contextualized and psychologically informed approaches can support the internalization of anti-corruption values, although they should be interpreted as indicative rather than causal.

A key contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that local wisdom functions not merely as contextual content but as an active ethical mediator that translates abstract moral values into lived practices. The integration of values such as *Tri Hita Karana* and *Tatwam Asi* within the madrasah context reveals a dynamic alignment between cultural and religious frameworks that enhances students' moral engagement. This finding extends existing literature by proposing an integrative model that bridges educational psychology, anti-corruption pedagogy, and culturally responsive education. By demonstrating how culturally grounded character education can advance quality education (SDG 4) while contributing to anti-corruption efforts (SDG 16), this study offers a scalable model for values-based education in diverse cultural contexts.

However, this study is limited by its focus on two madrasahs within a specific socio-cultural setting and its reliance on qualitative methods, which do not allow for causal generalization. Future research is recommended to employ mixed-method or experimental designs, include broader and more diverse samples, and conduct longitudinal assessments to evaluate the sustainability of character development outcomes. Further studies should also explore the adaptability of this integrative model across different cultural and educational contexts to strengthen its relevance for wider policy and practice.

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