

INTEGRATION OF THE "JAK BEUT" PROGRAM IN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A CONTEXTUAL STUDY IN WEST ACEH

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ABSTRAK: Penelitian ini mengkaji peran dan strategi integrasi *kegiatan Jak Beut* dalam menumbuhkan karakter siswa SD di Aceh Barat. *Jak Beut* adalah tradisi pendidikan nonformal masyarakat Aceh yang berfokus pada pengajaran Al-Qur'an, nilai-nilai moral, dan moral. Meski tidak terikat dengan sistem kurikulum formal, kegiatan ini tetap eksis dan berkontribusi signifikan dalam mengembangkan karakter siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi. Para informan termasuk guru madrasah, *Jak Beut*, siswa, orang tua, dan pejabat Kementerian Agama setempat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Jak Beut* berperan aktif dalam membentuk nilai-nilai kedisiplinan, tanggung jawab, sopan santun, kepedulian sosial, dan penghormatan guru. Kegiatan ini memperkuat pembelajaran karakter yang telah diajarkan di madrasah. Namun, tantangan integrasi muncul karena kurangnya regulasi formal yang mengakomodasi keberadaan *Jak Beut* dalam sistem pendidikan nasional dan minimnya kolaborasi antara madrasah dan lembaga madrasah. Oleh karena itu, pembuat kebijakan harus secara strategis menjembatani pendidikan formal dan tradisional berbasis lokalitas. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa *Jak Beut* merupakan sumber pendidikan karakter kontekstual yang relevan dan layak dijadikan mitra strategis madrasah dalam membentuk generasi yang berakarakter dan budaya Islam.

Kata kunci: *Jak Beut*, Pengembangan Karakter, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

ABSTRACT: This study examines the role and integration strategy of *Jak Beut activities* in fostering the character of Elementary school students in West Aceh. *Jak Beut* is a non-formal education tradition of the Acehnese people that focuses on the teaching of the Qur'an, moral values, and morals. Although not tied to the formal curriculum system, this activity still exists and significantly contributes to developing students' character. The research uses a qualitative approach of case studies with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The informants included madrasah teachers, *Jak Beut*, students, parents, and local Ministry of Religion officials. The study results show that *Jak Beut* plays an active role in shaping the values of discipline, responsibility, good manners, social care, and teacher respect. This activity strengthens character learning that has been taught in madrasahs. However, integration challenges arise due to the lack of formal regulations that accommodate the existence of *Jak Beut* in the national education system and the lack of collaboration between madrasah and madrasah institutions. Therefore, policymakers must strategically bridge the locality-based formal and traditional education. This study concludes that *Jak Beut* is a source of contextual character education that is relevant and worthy of being used as a strategic partner of madrasahs in forming a generation with Islamic character and culture.

Keywords: *Jak Beut*, Character Development, Elementary school

INTRODUCTION

Character education is the primary foundation in the Indonesian national education system, as affirmed in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. (Agustira et al., 2022) Character education is directed at forming religious personalities at the elementary school level. It focuses on developing moral, social, and cultural values sourced from Islamic teachings and the nation's noble values. (Rohman et al., 2022) In this context, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is the primary vehicle for fostering students' character. However, in practice, PAI learning in madrassas is often still dominated by textual and normative approaches that tend to be less contextual with students' local cultural reality. (Nasution, 2023) This impacts the weak internalization of Islamic values and characters taught theoretically in the classroom.

In response to these problems, a more holistic and contextual approach is needed, namely by integrating local wisdom into the learning process in madrasahs. One form of local wisdom that has the potential to be raised in the context of character development of Elementary school students is the *Jak Beut* tradition. This tradition is a form of informal recitation of the Acehnese people that has been going on for generations and has a strong educational function, especially in teaching the Qur'an and forming children. (Dewi, n.d.). In *Jak Beut* activities, which are generally carried out in the meunasah or the teacher's house, children not only learn to read the Qur'an, but also build their morals through the habit of discipline, good manners, respect for teachers, as well as the habits of worship and good behavior in daily life. These values align with PAI's learning objectives in madrasahs. (Sa'adah, 2018)

West Aceh is one of the regions that still maintains the *Jak Beut* tradition as part of the social and religious life of the community. Although madrasahs as formal educational institutions have spread widely in this region, the *Jak Beut* tradition still survives as a means of spiritual learning that complements the formal education system. This shows the potential for integrating locality-based formal and non-formal learning as a character development strategy. Unfortunately, this potential has not been explored much in scientific research, especially related to the systematic integration between *Jak Beut activities* and character learning within the framework of the Elementary school curriculum.

Previous studies have underlined the importance of a local culture-based educational approach in building students' character. For example, (Afdhal et al., 2024) Found that

internalizing local wisdom values in learning can strengthen the values of empathy, cooperation, and student responsibility. Similarly, (Sujarwo, 2025) In his study, he stated that applying a contextual approach based on local culture increases students' understanding of religious and moral values taught in PAI. However, most of these studies are still general and have not specifically highlighted non-formal educational practices, such as *Jak Beut*, that have been shown to have a long-term impact on the character and spirituality of Acehnese children.

Meanwhile, a study conducted by (Dewi, n.d.) Highlighting that although the practice of *Jak Beut* is decreasing in some regions due to the influence of modernization and digitalization, the values instilled in this tradition remain relevant and have a real contribution to the formation of the morals of the young generation of Aceh (Rahman et al., 2021; Sa'adah, 2018) Thus, it is essential to revitalize and reconstruct this practice so that it is in harmony with modern pedagogical approaches and can be integrated into formal learning in madrasas.

In the Merdeka Learning curriculum, which encourages schools to take advantage of local potential and give space to creativity in learning, integrating *Jak Beut* in PAI learning and character development in elementary schools is very relevant. Learning that elevates local practices will increase the meaning of learning for students and build a connection between religious values and the reality of their daily lives. (Nurohman et al., 2024; Suharman & Rohman, 2022). Thus, this educational model that combines formal and non-formal learning has the potential to strengthen the achievement of intact character education goals.

The uniqueness of this research lies in its integrative approach, which does not simply place *Jak Beut* as a cultural activity or traditional recitation but as a pedagogical strategy that is systematically studied in the context of learning the character of madrasah students. This study not only documents the practice of *Jak Beut* but also analyzes its potential and challenges in integrating it into the PAI curriculum and develops a framework for locality-based character development models that can be replicated in other madrasas, especially in areas with strong religious traditions.

Using a qualitative approach of a case study in elementary schools in the West Aceh region, this study aims to delve deeper into how *Jak Beut* activities can be integrated into students' character learning strategies. This research will also identify the character values

developed through *Jak Beut*, the integration techniques used by teachers, and students' responses to this approach. Through this research, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of the local tradition-based character education integration model can be obtained that is contextual, relevant, and has a real impact.

Theoretically, this research contributes to developing a local culture-based PAI learning approach by enriching the study of Islamic education and character from the perspective of cultural pedagogy. Practically, the results of this research can be a reference for teachers, madrasah heads, and education policy formulators in designing a curriculum more responsive to students' socio-cultural context. In the long term, this research can also contribute to preserving the noble values contained in the *Jak Beut tradition* as part of Aceh's cultural heritage that supports the development of the nation's character.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. (Sugiyono, 2013) This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the phenomenon of integrating *Jak Beut activities* to foster students' character in a specific cultural context, namely, the West Aceh region. Case studies are considered appropriate for examining contextually, comprehensively, and meaningfully the processes, practices, and socio-cultural dynamics related to implementing local traditions in the formal education system.

The research location was determined in one of the elementary schools in West Aceh Regency, which is still actively related to the practice of *Jak Beut* in the daily life of its community. The location selection was carried out purposively by considering the criteria of connection between the madrasah and the social environment and local traditions, especially *Jak Beut*, as well as the willingness of the madrasah to participate in the research.

The research subjects include Islamic religious education teachers, madrasah heads, religious leaders, *Jak Beut* teachers in the surrounding environment, and elementary school students. Informants are selected through purposive sampling to ensure that the individuals involved have first-hand experience and knowledge related to the object of study. A total of 10 informants were involved in this study, consisting of 2 PAI teachers, one madrasah head, 3 *Jak Beut teachers*, and four students who actively participated in *Jak Beut activities* outside school hours.

Data was collected using three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. (Abdussamad & Sik, 2021) Interviews are semi-structured to provide data mining flexibility while focusing on pre-designed research questions. Observations were made to observe the learning process of *Jak Beut*, the interaction between teachers and students, and the patterns of character development that took place both in the madrasah and at the place *where Jak Beut was implemented*. Meanwhile, documentation is used to obtain secondary data, such as learning implementation plans (RPP), records of madrasah activities, photos, and archives of traditional recitation activities.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The analysis was carried out in layers, from transcription of interview results and observation notes, data coding, thematic grouping, and concluding. (Tersiana, 2018) The data analysis process follows the following stages: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) verification and drawing of conclusions, as stated by (Huberman & Miles, 2002) The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation techniques of sources and methods, member checking of key informants, and peer debriefing with fellow Islamic education researchers. (Ramdhan, 2021)

Research ethics are upheld by requesting written consent from the madrasah and informants before the interview and observation process. The informant's identity is confidential by using initials in data reporting. The researcher also maintains a neutral and reflective position on the field's social dynamics to ensure the research results' integrity. (Darmalaksana, 2020)

With this methodology, it is hoped that an in-depth picture will be obtained of how the practice of *Jak Beut* not only plays a role as a means of learning the Qur'an but also as a mechanism for fostering student character that is contextually integrated in the formal education system of madrasahs. Combining local values will be analyzed in terms of the pedagogical strategies teachers apply, community involvement, and their impact on students' character in daily life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Existence and Sustainability of *Jak Beut* Activities in West Aceh

Based on the results of interviews with community leaders, parents, and madrasah teachers in the Meureubo and Johan Pahlawan sub-districts, it is clear that *Jak Beut* activities

still have an essential place in the religious life and education of children in West Aceh. This activity is carried out routinely in several *meunasah* and *surau*, with the implementation time generally after the *Asr* prayer until before *Maghrib*.

One of the main speakers, Tgk. M (54), who has been teaching at a *meunasah* in Gampong Cot Seumeureung for more than 20 years, explained:

"*Jak Beut* is not just a recitation. Here, children learn manners, are taught how to greet elders, how to behave when praying, as well as how to live according to Islamic teachings. Even though the school is now sophisticated, *Jak Beut* is still important because it is part of our customs and religion."

The statement indicates that *Jak Beut*'s activities are seen as a form of holistic Islamic education rooted in local traditions. In this activity, children learn to read the Qur'an and understand moral values, such as good manners, honesty, and simplicity, which are taught through practice and example.

Furthermore, the Head of a Private Elementary School in the Peunaga Cut Ujong area, Mrs. N, said:

"The existence of *Jak Beut* helps us a lot. Children active in *meunasah* are usually more polite, understand PAI material in *madrasah* faster, and have high discipline. Sometimes they even become role models for their peers in class."

These findings reinforce the notion that although *Jak Beut* is a non-formal and unstructured activity like the school curriculum, its influence on developing students' character and spiritual competence is significant. This proves that informal education based on local wisdom has a real contribution to the formal education process, especially in *madrasah*s.

From the community side, the results of an interview with one of the parents of the student, named Mr. S (42), a farmer who is also active in village recitation, said:

"We in the village still believe that children must follow *Jak Beut*. If it is just school, it is not enough. At *Jak Beut*, they were taught the Islamic way of life and taught about good morals and manners. This is what is sometimes lacking in schools now."

This statement reflects the community's collective awareness of *Jak Beut*'s strategic role in maintaining Aceh's Islamic identity and local culture. This activity is considered more than just a complement to school education, but as a bridge between religious education and customary values firmly embedded in the lives of the Acehnese people.

Nevertheless, some also expressed concern over the challenges they faced. Tgk. S (47), a teacher in Gampong Ujong Drien, said:

Now, many children are busy with cellphones and private lessons. Sometimes they do not come to meunasah. In the past, one meunasah could be full of up to 30 children, now it is at most 10 or 15. However, we keep going, because this is our mandate and responsibility."

This indicates that although *Jak Beut* still exists, modernization and changes in children's and families' lifestyles have decreased participation. An adaptive strategy must be developed to respond to this challenge so that this activity remains relevant and in demand by the younger generation.

However, field data also shows revitalization efforts. Several villages have taken the initiative to hold recital competitions or *meuseuraya* (gotong royong) activities with *Jak Beut* children to increase their participation and interests. This shows that *Jak Beut* is a dynamic local education system and can adapt to the times' challenges, as long as all elements of society support it.

From an academic perspective, these results are in line with the findings. (Riadhi, 2024) This statement states that locally-based education in Aceh, such as *Jak Beut*, is vital in maintaining children's social and spiritual integrity amid globalization. In addition, (Sadali, 2020) Emphasized that traditional Islamic education in Aceh teaches religious knowledge and becomes a medium for cultural transmission and social values.

Thus, it can be concluded that *Jak Beut*'s sustainability in West Aceh is still maintained despite facing challenges from outside. This activity is a cultural heritage and an integral part of the character education system for elementary school children. Its existence reflects the harmonious combination of religion, customs, and education, which is Acehnese society's hallmark.

2. Character Values Formed through *Jak Beut* Activities

The results of this study show that *Jak Beut activities* significantly contribute to the formation of the character of elementary school students, especially in the West Aceh region. Based on the results of in-depth interviews with the primary informants, consisting of (*Jak Beut* teachers), classroom teachers in madrasas, and parents of students, it was found that character values are formed through examples, habits, and intensive social interaction in *Jak Beut activities*.

a. Value of Discipline

In an interview with Tgk. M. Y., in Gampong Cot Seumeureung, emphasized that discipline is the result of habits that are built continuously:

"Here, we do not scold the children if they come late, but we call and ask why they are late. The next day, they arrived early because they knew we cared."

This speech reflects a pedagogical approach based on compassion and dialogue, which, according to Nucci and Narvaez (2008), is more effective in instilling discipline than a punitive approach. The observations showed that 80% of active students in *Jak Beut* showed an increase in discipline when attending formal schools, based on attendance data from homeroom teachers who were also interviewed. (Marpuah, 2024)

b. Value of Responsibility

Interviews with grade V teachers of Gampong Ujong Baroh Elementary School have revealed that students who participate in *Jak Beut* have higher personal responsibilities than other students: "If there is a group task, those active in *Jak Beut* usually offer to be group leaders. They are not afraid of being wrong."

Responsibility is also instilled through daily tasks such as cleaning the study room, leading prayers, and keeping the Qur'an. This instillation of values supports Vygotsky's (1978) theory that social interaction is an essential foundation in developing children's cognitive and moral functions. (Ardiati, 2021)

c. The Value of Respect for Teachers and Parents

This value is central to all *Jak Beut* activities. Tgk. S, a woman from Gampong Leuhan, stated: "*We teach children to always pray for their teachers before starting to study. They are also taught not to talk if the teacher is talking.*"

An interview with one of the students' parents, R's mother, reinforces the statement: "My son used to be a bit stubborn, but after joining *Jak Beut*, he started kissing our hands more often and was more patient."

Cultivating this attitude of respect is in line with Islamic teachings in the hadith of the Prophet PBUH, which emphasizes that manners towards parents and teachers are part of the virtue of knowledge ('ilm la yanfa'). In this context, *Jak Beut* is a vehicle to translate these values practically into children's lives. (Akh Syaiful Rijal & Hakim, 2021)

d. The Value of Social Care

This value can be seen from the habits of cooperation and solidarity formed during *Jak Beut's* activities. Tgk. Rasyid, a manager of *Jak Beut*, said that social service activities

such as cleaning mosques, visiting sick friends, and fundraising for disasters are often carried out:

"We not only teach ngaji, but also invite them to care for each other. If a friend is sick, they usually ask for permission to visit together."

This finding is strengthened by the documentation of *Jak Beut's activities, which shows photos of social activities and students' active roles*. This supports Lickona's (1991) theory that effective character learning must include habituation, exemplification, and emotional involvement in the community. (Alamsyah & Ningsih, 2025; Devianti et al., 2020)

e. Integration of Grades into Formal Schools

Interviews with madrasah heads showed that students who were active in *Jak Beut* showed positive behavior in class, such as respecting teachers more, not being involved in bullying, and being active in school religious activities. The head of the madrasah stated, "Jak Beut's children are usually easy to direct. If there is a religious event, they come first."

This data is strengthened by student portfolio documents, which show that more than 70% of the participants in religious competitions in madrassas come from student groups that are active in *Jak Beut*.

3. The Relationship between *Jak Beut* Activities and Learning in Madrasah

This study found that student involvement in *Jak Beut activities* positively impacted student behavior and understanding in the madrasah environment. In particular, students who actively participated in *Jak Beut* showed improvements in three main aspects: (1) discipline in participating in teaching and learning activities, (2) understanding of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials, and (3) spiritual and social attitudes that reflect Islamic character. Interview data with one of the classroom teachers at MIN 1 West Aceh, Mrs. R, corroborate this finding. He conveyed that:

"Children who regularly participate in Jak Beut memorize daily prayers and short letters faster. They are also used to greeting and respecting the teacher. Even when problems are in class, they are calmer and quick to discuss well."

This statement confirms that Jak Beut's influence is seen not only in religion's cognitive aspect but also in students' affective and psychomotor aspects.

Furthermore, the Head of Madrasah at MIN 3 West Aceh, Mr. J, said that:

"We see a continuity between the material taught at Jak Beut and the PAI lessons in the madrasah. For example, about manners towards parents and teachers. The students who participated in Jak Beut were already familiar with the manners before"

entering the class, so we had to strengthen and expand the context."

This shows that although *Jak Beut*'s activities are informal and traditional, he has a functional role in strengthening the internalization of Islamic values, which is also part of the core competencies in the madrasah education curriculum.

Some teachers stated that students who followed *Jak Beut* seemed more emotionally and spiritually prepared to take lessons at the madrasah. They tend to show a humble attitude, are not quick to anger, and easily build social relationships with friends. In observation of learning, these students are also more cooperative when asked to answer religious questions or engage in class discussion activities.

The observations in the field also showed that children participating in *Jak Beut* often showed higher confidence when asked to read the Qur'an in front of the class. This shows a positive relationship between the habit of reciting in the meunasah and the ability to practice religion in the madrasah.

However, the relationship between *Jak Beut* and madrasah learning is still informal and has not been facilitated through policies or collaborative programs. There is no joint evaluation mechanism between madrasah teachers and *Jak Beut* to monitor the development of students' character and religiosity. The opportunity for synergy is very open, especially in character development based on Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline. (Ilham & Rohman, 2022)

Thus, this study emphasizes bridging formal and non-formal education through policies that accommodate local wisdom, such as *Jak Beut*. If this integration is facilitated properly, *Jak Beut* can effectively complement students' character in madrasahs, especially at the elementary school level, which is the foundation for forming fundamental Islamic values. (Jamin & Rohman, n.d.).

4. Support of Parents and Community Leaders for *Jak Beut*

This study found that *Jak Beut*'s sustainability in West Aceh is highly dependent on the active participation of parents and community leaders in maintaining, supporting, and preserving the existence of these non-formal educational institutions. (Agustina & Hafinda, n.d.) Parents in the Aceh community consider *Jak Beut* a place where children learn to read the Qur'an and interpret it as an institution for character formation based on Islamic values.

An interview with one of the students' guardians, Mrs. N (40), revealed that:

"I make sure my children go to *Jak Beut* every day, because there, children not only learn to recite, but also are taught how to be polite, respect teachers, and help each other. If you only rely on school, I do not think it is enough to form morals."

This view shows that the parents placed *Jak Beut* in an essential position as a complement to formal education in the madrasah. They believe that character education is more effective if it is delivered by a figure with moral authority and cultural closeness, such as in a space full of local religious values.

From the perspective of community leaders, support for *Jak Beut* is also very real. Tgk. A, and the priest of the meunasah in the research area, explained that:

"When we were little, *Jak Beut* was where we studied and played simultaneously. Children come here not because they are told, but because they feel comfortable. We teach the Qur'an and the values of daily life such as honesty, patience, and responsibility."

This indicates that *Jak Beut* is an educational forum based on the emotional relationship between students, the spiritual relationship between children, and Islamic values introduced through daily interactions.

A theoretical reference that strengthens this finding is the concept. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) The ecological theory of child development asserts that children's moral development and character are greatly influenced by the interaction between individuals and their environment, especially at the microsystem level, namely the family and the community in which they live. In the context of *Jak Beut*, the environment is very relevant because education takes place communally with intense social intimacy.

Previous research by (Kusuma et al., 2024) The journal Social Sciences Education Innovation also supports this finding. Kusuma points out that the involvement of local religious leaders and parents in character education in rural areas significantly increases the success of internalizing values such as honesty, discipline, and social concern. He emphasized that *education based on local wisdom* gives students a high sense of ownership in their learning process.

In addition, a study by Rahman & Abdullah (2021) in *the Journal of Character Education* confirms that the existence of local religious figures serves as moral role models and social role models for children. (Golbyah & Purnamasari, 2025) This figure indirectly

shapes children's behavior by strengthening Islamic values and daily social practices taught consistently in informal forums such as *Jak Beut*.

Furthermore, *Jak Beut* is also a symbol of the sustainability of the generations-old tradition of Islamic education in West Aceh. According to Hasballah, the *Jak Beut* tradition is a form of learning that instills personal and social piety within the framework of local culture. Therefore, community support for *Jak Beut* is also a form of respect for the Acehnese people's scientific heritage and historical Islamic identity.

In the field, the concrete form of support provided by parents and the community is not only in the form of their children's participation in these activities, but also in the form of materials such as the procurement of mushaf, learning equipment, and the provision of light consumption in turn. There is collective solidarity in improving the infrastructure, where *Jak Beut's activities*, such as repairing the floor of the meunasah or purchasing new carpets, are involved.

This kind of social support is essential in supporting the sustainability of the community-based informal education system. (Efendi et al., 2023; Hardiyati et al., 2023) As Putnam (2000) explains in his social capital theory, social institutions will be strong and durable if surrounded by cohesive social networks and shared trust. In this case, *Jak Beut* is a real example of a non-formal educational institution that survives because it is harmoniously integrated into the social network of the people of West Aceh.

Thus, it can be concluded that *Jak Beut* is part of a strong character education ecosystem in West Aceh because it is supported by partnerships between families, religious leaders, and the wider community. Parents' role is not passive but active in ensuring that internalizing Islamic values and character occurs completely and sustainably. Community leaders function as educators and guardians of local values and culture that continue to live in daily socio-religious practices.

5. Challenges of *Jak Beut's Integration* with the Formal Education System

One of the significant findings in this study is that although *Jak Beut* has a substantial role in forming elementary school students' religious and social character, its existence has not been formally integrated into the madrasah education system. The madrasah curriculum still refers to national standards that have not yet made room for local content, such as *Jak Beut*, to be accommodated as part of official intracurricular or extracurricular learning.

The results of an interview with one of the madrasah heads in Meureubo District, West Aceh, revealed:

"So far, we have encouraged *Jak Beut* activities for students, but they cannot be officially part of the madrasah curriculum. No regulation from the Ministry of Religion regulates or gives legal space to this kind of local learning model, even though we see a huge impact on children's behavior." (Interview, Head of Madrasah, May 20, 2025)

This statement reflects the disconnect between local culture-based educational practices and formal education systems that tend to be uniform and standardized. This hinders the development of contextual character development models, even though *Jak Beut* has proven effective in shaping values such as discipline, manners, and responsibility.

Furthermore, a person who actively teaches *Jak Beut* conveyed the following views:

"We have never been asked to be involved in the meeting of madrasah teachers. Even though the students who studied with us also studied at the madrasah. There should be cooperation so children's education is more directed, and we can help each other." (Interview, May 22, 2025)

This statement indicates that no collaborative forum exists between non-formal educators such as madrasah teachers. *Jak Beut*'s lack of involvement in the formal education planning caused him to remain on the fringes of policy, even though his role was fundamental in society.

Regarding policy, the document analysis results show no special policy from the Ministry of Religion or the West Aceh Education Office that provides recognition or formalization space for *Jak Beut*. This has implications for limited resource support, training, and program synergy between madrasahs and *Jak Beut institutions*. An official from the West Aceh Regency Ministry of Religious Affairs Office stated:

"We appreciate *Jak Beut* as a traditional Acehnese educational heritage. However, to include it in the madrasah curriculum, we must wait for the center's directions. Currently, there is no official regulation that allows this." (Interview, Head of Madrasah Education of the Ministry of Religion of West Aceh, May 24, 2025)

This shows that education policy is still top-down and unresponsive to local dynamics. A contextual educational approach is one of the keys to building the nation's character through an education system that pays attention to local values, culture, and wisdom. (Gianto & Sunanik, 2024; Setiarsih, 2016).

In a literature review, research by (Zunaidi, 2024) States that integration between non-formal and formal education is possible through a collaborative approach, where educational

institutions can establish partnerships with community leaders and informal teachers. A similar study by Saifuddin (2021) in North Aceh shows that local education models such as *Tambeh* or afternoon recitation also face similar legality constraints.

Thus, this study emphasizes that the main challenge for integrating *Jak Beut* in formal education is not in the substance of its activities, but in the absence of legal mechanisms and policies that support recognition and collaboration between the formal and traditional education systems. Strategic steps are needed in the form of derivative regulations, involvement in madrasah education programs, and training to strengthen contextual learning methods for madrasah teachers, so that *Jak Beut* can be integrated as an active partner in holistically and sustainably forming student character.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that *Jak Beut* activities are a traditional educational practice that not only survives amid modernization, but also significantly contributes to fostering the character of elementary school students in West Aceh. Character values such as discipline, responsibility, respect for teachers and parents, and social concern are consistently instilled in *Jak Beut's* activities through an exemplary approach, habits, and warm social interaction between students.

The findings show that *Jak Beut* has had a tangible impact on the attitudes and behaviors of students in madrasas, especially in PAI lessons and other religious activities. The relationship between formal and non-formal education shows a positive synergy, although it is still occurring informally and has not been facilitated by policy.

However, integrating *Jak Beut* with the formal education system faces several challenges. The absence of official regulations from the central and regional governments has led to limited recognition, resource support, and collaboration between madrasah teachers and *Jak Beut*. The lack of a forum for communication and joint evaluation between the two institutions prevents the potential for synergy from being realized to its maximum.

Therefore, this study recommends formulating locally based policies that accommodate *Jak Beut's* existence and function in the formal education system, especially madrasas. Strategic steps such as joint training between madrasah and madrasah teachers, the development of locally based integrative modules, and strengthening the role of the

community and parents are needed so that contextual character education can be carried out sustainably.

This research also contributes theoretically to the discourse of Islamic education based on local wisdom. It offers an educational partnership model that is adaptive to the community's culture and values. Thus, Jak Beut is a cultural heritage and a source of alternative pedagogy relevant to forming a generation of madrassas with noble character and high social spirit.

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