Eduliterature with a local wisdom approach: integrating culture, literacy, and meaningful learning

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Abstract

Eduliterature is an interdisciplinary approach that integrates literary texts into educational practices to foster cognitive, affective, and character development. In recent years, the integration of local wisdom into eduliterature has gained increasing attention as a response to the homogenizing effects of globalized education and technology-driven learning. This article explores the concept of eduliterature grounded in local wisdom, highlighting its philosophical foundations, pedagogical relevance, and contribution to meaningful learning. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using a library research (literature review) design, this study examines how local cultural values, traditions, and historical narratives can be embedded in eduliterature to enhance students' literacy skills, cultural identity, and critical thinking. The findings suggest that eduliterature based on local wisdom not only strengthens literacy competence but also serves as a transformative medium for character education, cultural preservation, and contextual learning.

Keywords: *eduliterature, local wisdom, literacy education, cultural pedagogy, contextual learning*

INTRODUCTION

Literature has long been recognized as a powerful educational medium that reflects social realities, cultural values, and moral principles. In educational contexts, literature functions not merely as a linguistic artifact but as a pedagogical instrument capable of shaping learners' perspectives, emotional intelligence, and identity formation. Through narrative, symbolism, and character development, literary texts invite learners to interpret meaning, reflect on human experiences, and internalize ethical values. This educational orientation toward literature is commonly referred to as *eduliterature*, a concept that emphasizes the integration of literary works into teaching and learning processes to foster holistic development across cognitive, affective, and moral domains (Dewi, 2019; Rosenblatt, 1995).

However, despite extensive scholarship on literature-based learning, most existing studies tend to emphasize literary appreciation, language proficiency, or general character education, often treating culture as a supplementary rather than foundational element. In the era of globalization and rapid digital transformation, education faces a critical paradox: while innovative pedagogies and global content expand learning access, they simultaneously risk marginalizing local cultural narratives and values. This condition may lead to cultural disconnection and weakened identity among learners, particularly in multicultural and postcolonial societies. One strategic response to this challenge lies in re-centering *local wisdom* as a core pedagogical resource. Local wisdom represents indigenous knowledge systems, traditions, social norms, and ethical values sustained across generations (Geertz, 1983; Tilaar, 2012). Yet, its systematic integration into eduliterature especially within contemporary curriculum frameworks—remains underexplored.

The novelty of this article lies in its conceptual integration of eduliterature, local wisdom, and the deep learning curriculum as a unified pedagogical framework. While previous studies have discussed these elements separately, limited research has examined how eduliterature grounded in local wisdom can function as a concrete instructional strategy to operationalize deep learning principles. The deep learning curriculum emphasizes meaningful, reflective, and contextual learning experiences that promote higher-order thinking skills, including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and character development (Fullan, Quinn, & McEachen, 2018). This study advances the argument that locally grounded literary texts are not merely cultural supplements but essential vehicles for achieving deep learning outcomes.

By positioning learners as active meaning-makers, eduliterature rooted in local wisdom encourages critical interpretation of social realities, moral dilemmas, and cultural identities embedded within texts. This approach aligns closely with constructivist learning theory, which views knowledge as socially and culturally constructed through interaction between learners' prior experiences and new contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). The innovative contribution of this study lies in demonstrating how culturally responsive literary engagement transforms literature learning from surface-level comprehension into a reflective and transformative learning process.

Furthermore, this article introduces a value-internalization pathway through which character education is embedded organically within literary learning. Rather than delivering moral values through abstract instruction, eduliterature enriched with local wisdom provides authentic narrative contexts that allow learners to internalize empathy, responsibility, respect, and social awareness through reflection and dialogue. This perspective positions eduliterature not only as a literacy tool but as a culturally responsive model for character formation within deep learning-oriented curricula.

Therefore, this article aims to examine eduliterature through the lens of local wisdom and to analyse its pedagogical role in fostering meaningful, culturally grounded, and morally responsive education. By bridging theoretical discourse and curricular practice, this study offers a novel framework for educators and curriculum designers seeking to harmonize deep learning principles with cultural sustainability in contemporary education.

METHOD
Research Design

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using a library research (literature review) design. The method is appropriate for examining conceptual frameworks, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings related to eduliterature and the integration of local wisdom in educational contexts. Rather than collecting numerical data, the study

focuses on interpreting ideas, concepts, and educational practices documented in scholarly sources.

Data Sources

The data for this study were drawn from a wide range of carefully selected primary and secondary sources to ensure both depth and academic rigor. These sources included peer-reviewed journal articles that explore literature-based learning, eduliterature, and the integration of local wisdom in educational contexts, providing up-to-date theoretical and empirical insights. In addition, scholarly books on literacy education, cultural studies, and character education were examined to establish strong conceptual foundations. The study also engaged with national and international publications addressing culturally responsive pedagogy, offering broader perspectives on contextual and value-based learning. Finally, relevant policy documents and curriculum frameworks emphasizing character formation and contextual learning were analyzed to align the discussion with current educational directions and institutional practices. The sources were selected based on their relevance, credibility, and contribution to understanding the relationship between literature, education, and local cultural values.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection in this study was carried out through a systematic documentation technique that emphasized rigor and thematic coherence. The process began with the identification of core concepts such as eduliterature, local wisdom, literacy learning, and character education—which served as analytical lenses for selecting relevant sources. The collected literature was then carefully classified based on thematic relevance to ensure conceptual alignment with the research focus. Finally, key theoretical arguments, pedagogical models, and significant findings related to the integration of literary learning and local cultural values were extracted and synthesized. This systematic procedure enabled a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of how literature grounded in local wisdom contributes to educational practices and character development. This process ensured that the collected data were comprehensive and thematically aligned with the research focus.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to uncover meaningful patterns and insights across the selected sources. This process began with careful reading and re-reading of the texts to achieve a deep and nuanced understanding of their ideas and arguments. From this close engagement, recurring themes such as interpretative engagement, cultural identity, moral values, and pedagogical implications were systematically identified and coded. These themes were then synthesized to build a coherent and integrated conceptual narrative, allowing the study to present a clear and meaningful framework of eduliterature grounded in a local wisdom approach. The analytical process emphasized interpretation and meaning-making, consistent with the reflective nature of literature-based learning.

Validity and Trustworthiness

To ensure validity, source triangulation was applied by comparing ideas across multiple authors and publications. Conceptual consistency and theoretical relevance were prioritized to maintain academic rigor and trustworthiness.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF EDULITERATURE

Eduliterature is derived from the combination of *education* and *literature*, signifying the pedagogical use of literary texts to achieve educational objectives. According to Rosenblatt's transactional theory, meaning in literature emerges through the interaction between the reader and the text, influenced by personal experiences and cultural background (Rosenblatt, 1995; Islam; 2021; Islam, 2024). This perspective aligns closely with

eduliterature, which positions learners as active meaning-makers rather than passive recipients.

Eduliterature places learners at the heart of the meaning-making process by inviting them to engage interpretatively with texts reflecting on ideas, questioning assumptions, and responding critically rather than reading passively. Through stories, poems, and narratives rich in symbolism, eduliterature subtly transmits moral messages and ethical values, allowing character education to grow organically from literary experience rather than moral instruction alone. At the same time, it emphasizes contextual relevance by linking literary content to learners' social realities, cultural traditions, and lived experiences, making learning feel familiar, meaningful, and alive. In this way, eduliterature functions as a dynamic bridge between the development of literacy skills and the formation of character, uniting intellectual growth with moral and cultural awareness.

LOCAL WISDOM AS A PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATION

Local wisdom refers to culturally embedded knowledge systems that guide social behavior and communal life. It includes folklore, oral traditions, local history, religious practices, and traditional values such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), respect for elders, and spiritual devotion (Sibarani, 2014).

In educational theory, local wisdom supports contextual learning, where knowledge is constructed through real-life experiences and socio-cultural contexts (Johnson, 2002). By incorporating local wisdom into eduliterature, learning becomes more authentic and meaningful, as students encounter narratives that resonate with their lived experiences.

EDULITERATURE BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM IN LEARNING

Eduliterature grounded in local wisdom can be implemented through a wide range of literary forms, including short stories, folklore, poetry, historical narratives, and religious texts. In culturally rooted educational institutions such as pesantren and community-based schools, classical manuscripts, local chronicles, oral traditions, and religious narratives can be meaningfully adapted into contemporary learning materials. When these texts are contextualized within learners' cultural environments, literature becomes not only a source of language learning but also a medium for cultural transmission and ethical reflection.

From the perspective of the deep learning curriculum, this approach supports learning that is meaningful, reflective, and transformative rather than superficial. Deep learning emphasizes the development of higher-order thinking skills, including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and character formation (Fullan, Quinn, & McEachen, 2018). Eduliterature rooted in local wisdom naturally facilitates these competencies by inviting learners to interpret narratives, analyze moral dilemmas, engage in dialogue, and relate textual meanings to real-life experiences. Through such processes, literacy learning expands beyond decoding texts toward deeper interpretation, evaluation, and reflection.

This approach contributes to holistic learning by strengthening learners' literacy skills not only in reading and writing, but also in interpreting texts, constructing meaning, and reflecting on underlying values. As students interact with narratives embedded in their own cultural contexts, they develop a stronger sense of cultural identity and pride, recognizing local heritage as a legitimate and valuable source of knowledge. Contextual stories and traditions stimulate critical and reflective thinking, as learners are encouraged to compare perspectives, question assumptions, and connect literary themes with contemporary social realities core practices emphasized in deep learning pedagogy.

Character education is also nurtured organically through this approach. Rather than relying on rote memorization of moral principles, learners internalize values such as empathy, responsibility, humility, and social awareness through narrative engagement and reflective

discussion. This aligns with the deep learning curriculum's emphasis on character as an integral learning outcome, cultivated through authentic experiences and meaningful contexts.

The theoretical foundation of this approach is reinforced by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which posits that learning is fundamentally shaped by social interaction and mediated by cultural tools (Vygotsky, 1978). In this sense, eduliterature infused with local wisdom functions as a powerful cultural tool that mediates learning through familiar symbols, language, and values. By situating literary learning within culturally meaningful narratives, eduliterature enables learners to construct knowledge collaboratively and reflectively—hallmarks of deep learning-oriented instruction.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The integration of eduliterature with a local wisdom approach has significant implications for curriculum design and instructional practice. Educators are encouraged to develop learning materials that are not only linguistically appropriate but also culturally responsive. This approach aligns with the principles of meaningful learning, which emphasize relevance, reflection, and deep understanding (Ausubel, 1968).

Moreover, eduliterature grounded in local wisdom plays a strategic role in supporting sustainable education by simultaneously preserving cultural heritage and fostering innovation in literacy pedagogy. By integrating local narratives, traditions, values, and collective memories into learning texts, this approach ensures that cultural knowledge is not merely archived but actively transmitted and reinterpreted by younger generations. At the same time, eduliterature encourages pedagogical innovation by transforming traditional cultural resources into dynamic literacy practices such as critical reading, reflective writing, and creative reinterpretation aligned with contemporary educational demands. Through this synergy, learners develop strong literacy skills while cultivating cultural awareness, ethical sensitivity, and adaptive thinking, enabling education to remain contextually rooted yet responsive to global changes.

CONCLUSION

Eduliterature with a local wisdom approach represents a transformative educational strategy that integrates literacy development, cultural preservation, and character education within a meaningful learning ecosystem. When aligned with the deep learning curriculum, this approach moves beyond surface-level literacy toward reflective, critical, and contextual learning that actively engages learners in meaning-making processes. By embedding local values, traditions, and narratives into literary learning, education becomes more authentic, humanistic, and relevant to learners' lived experiences, fostering higher-order thinking skills, ethical awareness, and cultural identity.

This approach is particularly relevant in culturally rich educational settings, such as pesantren and community-based schools, where tradition, spirituality, and learning coexist dynamically. Through eduliterature grounded in local wisdom, learners are encouraged to critically interpret texts, reflect on moral dilemmas, collaborate in discussion, and connect literary narratives to real-life social contexts core principles emphasized in the deep learning curriculum. As a result, literary learning not only enhances language proficiency but also cultivates creativity, empathy, collaboration, and character formation.

Future research is recommended to explore empirical implementations of eduliterature-based local wisdom within deep learning-oriented instructional designs, particularly through digital platforms and AI-assisted learning environments. Such studies may examine how adaptive technologies, interactive narratives, and personalized feedback can further strengthen interpretative engagement, cultural relevance, and meaningful learning outcomes in contemporary education systems.

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