

**LOCAL WISDOM OF BADUY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY IN
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS FOR CHARACTER
EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History:</p> <p>Accepted September 2023</p> <p>Revised Juli 2023</p> <p>Approved Juni 2023</p>	<p>This research aims to describe the local knowledge of the Baduy indigenous community in environmental conservation efforts, then describe the values of local wisdom of the Baduy community in environmental conservation efforts, and finally, describe the values of local wisdom of the Baduy indigenous community concerning the development of character education in elementary schools. The research method used is qualitative descriptive with data collection techniques such as interviews, documentation, and observations. The research results show that local knowledge and the values of local wisdom of the Baduy indigenous community are formed due to the interaction between the Baduy indigenous community and the geographical and topographical conditions of their natural environment in the Kendeng Mountains. The local knowledge of the Baduy indigenous community concerning environmental conservation includes knowledge about conservation zones, including settlement zones, cultivation zones, and conservation forest zones. The Baduy indigenous community is also familiar with various types of forests, such as cultivated, protected, and conservation forests. The values of local wisdom of the Baduy indigenous community concerning environmental conservation include not polluting rivers, not indiscriminately cutting down trees, the obligation to use natural resources for livelihood, the obligation to reforest barren land, the obligation to preserve water sources, not damaging mountains and valleys, the obligation to leave everything in nature as it is, and the value of honesty. Furthermore, the values that can be cultivated through character education in elementary schools include values for preserving and conserving natural resources and the value of honesty in utilizing natural resources.</p> <p>Keywords: Local Wisdom; Character Education</p>

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A. Introduction

In a literal sense, environmental conservation is an effort to preserve or protect the environment. According to the 1981 Burra Charter, conservation refers to managing a place to preserve its cultural significance. Meanwhile, according to the Indonesian dictionary, conservation is the continuous maintenance and protection of a place to prevent damage and the extinction of genetic resources through preservation (Salim, P., & Salim, Y. 2021).

Based on the concept of conservation, it can be stated that environmental conservation efforts are inseparable from protecting an area. The protection of an area is essential to preserve and safeguard life. According to Law Number 32 of 2009, an area is defined as a region with the main functions of protection or cultivation. Protected areas primarily conserve the environment, including natural resources, human-made resources, and historical and cultural values for sustainable development. Meanwhile, cultivation areas primarily function based on the conditions, potential natural resources, human resources, and artificial resources. Therefore, according to environmental conservation principles, an area should be divided into several zones according to its functions and interests.

The concept and values of conservation must be instilled in the next generation so that the availability of natural resources and the environment can continue to be well-preserved. The current situation shows that the younger generation no longer holds the concept and values of environmental conservation. Research has shown that public perception of environmental conservation has changed along with livelihood systems no longer entirely dependent on natural resources. As a result, younger generations generally need more commitment to environmental conservation efforts (Luthfi, A., & Wijaya, A. 2014). Furthermore, the deterioration of conservation values held by the younger generation can also be attributed to the impacts of conservation itself. Communities that experience losses due to conservation efforts tend to develop negative attitudes towards environmental conservation initiatives (Gadd, M. 2015; DeBoer, W. & Baquette, D. 2018). Due to the deterioration of environmental conservation values, there is a need to revive these values through educational programs. One of the efforts to

revive and rekindle environmental conservation values is by highlighting the conservation values held by local cultural communities through their indigenous wisdom concerning the environment.

The local cultural community that still holds its customs and ancestral wisdom is the Baduy indigenous community. The Baduy indigenous community is a society living around the slopes of Mount Kendeng. Mount Kendeng is located in Lebak Regency, Banten Province. The Mount Kendeng region, inhabited by the Baduy indigenous community, has an elevation of 300 to 600 meters above sea level. This area has a hilly topography with land slopes of approximately 45%. Within the Baduy indigenous community, customary land covers an area of approximately 5000 hectares. The Baduy indigenous community follows a principle of peaceful coexistence, avoids conflicts, and adheres to their traditions and customary laws (Suparmini, *et al.* 2015).

Furthermore, the Baduy indigenous community is well-known for their deep respect for the environment. Upon birth, they believe their primary duty is to protect and preserve nature (Hasanah, A., 2014). Therefore, the way of life of the Baduy indigenous community is entirely focused on environmental preservation. For the Baduy community, the environment must be conserved, as evidenced by their environmental conservation practices. Environmental conservation practices are an integral part of the Baduy people's way of life and a manifestation of their local wisdom. Consequently, the Baduy community possesses local wisdom values for environmental conservation that must be unearthed and integrated into educational programs to foster environmental care attitudes.

Local wisdom itself can be viewed as local knowledge. Local wisdom is a belief system that develops within a community in its interaction with the natural environment, encompassing values and behaviors (Mulkhan, A.M. 2014). Based on this perspective, local wisdom grows within the community due to their interaction with the natural environment. Therefore, local wisdom or local knowledge represents values that develop within the community to achieve a balance between humans and the natural environment. According to Aprianto (2018), local wisdom is the values created and developed by the community and

serves as their daily guidance. This view reaffirms that local wisdom is a set of values that guide the lives of a community. These values are obeyed and passed down from generation to generation, allowing them to endure over time. Communities can acquire local wisdom through experience. It aligns with the opinion of Rahyono (2019), who asserts that local wisdom is a form of human intelligence owned by an ethnic group and acquired through community experiences. Therefore, an ethnic group, such as the Baduy indigenous community, undoubtedly has experiences related to the natural environment, particularly in the context of environmental conservation. These experiences shape local knowledge, making it valuable for them in environmental management.

Consequently, these values need to be discovered, adopted, and adapted by people outside the Baduy community. This research aims to describe the local knowledge of the Baduy community in their efforts towards environmental conservation. It also aims to describe the values of local wisdom within the Baduy community in their efforts towards environmental conservation. Furthermore, it aims to describe how values related to environmental conservation, based on local wisdom, can be used to develop character education in primary schools.

B. Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative descriptive research approach, a research method that comprehensively describes a phenomenon occurring within a community. The subjects in this research, serving as valid data sources, include the population of the Baduy indigenous community, including traditional leaders and community figures.

The research focuses on two main aspects: (1) The natural environment of the Baduy indigenous community and (2) The values of local wisdom held by the Baduy community regarding environmental conservation. Data collection methods used in this research include observation, documentation, and interviews. Structured observation is used as a checklist to record observations systematically. Additionally, documentation is used to complement the primary data obtained.

Documentation data is collected from reference sources or previous research findings, which can be compared with the current research results.

The interview is the primary method to obtain data and discover the values of the Baduy indigenous community's local wisdom. The interview process involves face-to-face interactions between the researcher and the interviewees. In this process, a semi-structured interview approach is used. Semi-structured interviews combine aspects of both open-ended and structured interviews. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for delving deeper into the values of local wisdom the researcher intends to uncover and explore.

After collecting data through observation, documentation, and interviews, the next step involves data analysis. Data analysis in this research involves three main processes: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification.

C. Results and Discussion

The research results to describe the local wisdom or knowledge of the Baduy community were obtained through data collected from interviews with the "Puun" (traditional leader) and other traditional figures of the Baduy community. The interview results, which provide an overview of the Baduy indigenous community's local knowledge regarding environmental conservation, can be presented in the following table:

Table 1
The Local Wisdom of the Baduy Community

No	Knowledge Criteria	Local Wisdom/Local Knowledge
1.	Knowledge of conservation zoning systems	• <i>Dukuh lembur</i>
		• <i>Taneuh Garapan / Huma</i>
		• <i>Leuweung kolot / leuweung titipan</i>
2.	Knowledge of forest types	• <i>Leuweung Garapan</i>
		• <i>Leuweung Dudungusan</i>
		• <i>Leuweung Larangan</i>

Based on the table, it can be observed that the Baduy indigenous community possesses knowledge related to environmental conservation. The knowledge held by the Baduy community about the conservation zoning system can be equated with conservation terminology as follows, "Dukuh lembur" can be interpreted as the lower

zone or village forest, “*Taneuh garapan*” or “*Huma*” can be interpreted as the middle zone or cultivated land/farming area. In contrast, “*Leuweung kolot*” or “*Leuweung titipan*” can be interpreted as the upper zone or old-growth forest. Additionally, knowledge about the types of forests can also be aligned with common conservation terminology, “*Leuweung Garapan*” is equivalent to the conservation term “field forest” or farming zone, “*Leuweung Larangan*” corresponds to the conservation term of protected forest, and “*Leuweung Dudungusan*” in conservation terms represents the core zone as a source of genetic diversity.

Based on the research findings, the values of local wisdom within the Baduy community can be described as follows:

Table 2
The Value of Local Wisdom

Local Wisdom/Local Knowledge	The Value of Local Wisdom
1. Knowledge of conservation zoning systems 2. Knowledge of forest types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not polluting the rivers • Not cutting down trees • The obligation to use natural resources for livelihood • The obligation to reforest barren land • The obligation to preserve water sources • The prohibition of damaging mountains and valleys • Leaving everything in nature as it is

The Baduy indigenous community inhabits the Kendeng Mountains region. The geographical conditions of the Kendeng Mountains consist of hills and valleys situated at coordinates ranging from 6°27'27" South Latitude to 6°30'0" South Latitude and from 108°3'9" East Longitude to 106°4'55" East Longitude. The Baduy indigenous community living in the Kendeng Mountains region can be distinguished into the outer Baduy indigenous community and the inner Baduy indigenous community. The difference between these two communities lies in the more lenient rules of conduct for the external Baduy indigenous community. However, even though there are differences, the fundamental laws are still strictly adhered to by the outer Baduy indigenous community. There is an expression that states, “*teu bisa, baheula ti kolot kitu, kudu kitu bae, kami teu wasa*”, which means that they cannot change norms

and rules because it has been like that since their ancestors, so it must remain that way (Mansur & Mahmudah, 2016). Overall, the Baduy indigenous community exhibits a high level of compliance with the ancestral rules and norms. These customs, regulations, and standards typically govern the interaction between the Baduy indigenous community and their natural environment. The Baduy's natural environment, consisting of hilly terrain with slopes reaching up to 45%, has soil conditions generally categorized into three parts: volcanic soil in the northern part, mountain sediment in the central region, and a combination of volcanic mountains with elevated sediment in the southern part (Suparmini et al., 2015). The environmental conditions of mountains and forests compel the Baduy indigenous community to rely entirely on their natural surroundings. It can be observed through the various livelihoods of the Baduy community, which are primarily based on farming. Although some engage in trade, these traders typically have secondary businesses alongside agriculture, and their merchandise consists mainly of natural products obtained from their region. Given this condition, the Baduy indigenous community is acutely aware of their complete dependence on nature, which results in an obligation to preserve and protect their environment. Protecting their environment is a duty for the Baduy community. According to Djoewisno (2015), one of the struggles of the Baduy indigenous community is to preserve the surrounding environment as entrusted land. This context and understanding are the legacies passed down from their ancestors from generation to generation.

The strong desire of the Baduy indigenous community to preserve the natural environment cannot be separated from their interaction with the environment itself. The Baduy indigenous people benefit from their natural surroundings, which motivates and instils a strong desire to protect the environment for its sustainability. Consequently, we recognize the Baduy indigenous community as actively preserving their environment. According to cultural theories, as proposed by Alexander, J.U. (2016), such attitudes arise from the living conditions of humans when they interact with their natural surroundings. Therefore, the conditions of the environment strongly influence the attitudes and adherence of the Baduy indigenous community to preserving their environment. From this strong desire and attitude towards

environmental preservation, community values emerge, becoming the local wisdom of the local population in safeguarding the environment.

Local wisdom itself can be seen as a form of local knowledge, which is acquired through the experiences of a community when interacting with its natural environment. The local knowledge of a community ultimately shapes the values of local wisdom that serve as guidelines for the community when interacting with the environment and nature.

The local knowledge of the Baduy indigenous community, especially in environmental preservation and conservation, includes their understanding of the division of territory using a zoning system in line with environmental conservation theory. The zoning system recognized by the Baduy community encompasses dividing territory in the Kendeng Mountains into three zones: settlement forests, farming forests, and conservation forests.

Settlement forest zoning is designated for the residence of the Baduy community, known as “*dukuh lembur*” in the Baduy terminology. This area serves as the concentration of all Baduy community settlements, including play areas for Baduy children. Houses in this area are constructed in groups and have a structured layout. The houses built by the Baduy community in the settlement zone do not use materials that harm the environment. Typically, these houses are built as raised houses using wood and natural ropes from the surrounding environment. The houses are uniformly oriented north-south, referred to as “*nyulah nyanda*”. It demonstrates that the Baduy community maintains a high level of adherence to preserving their natural environment.

Even though the settlement zone is a residential area, the Baduy people are committed to not damaging it. This commitment is evident in the Baduy people’s life principles (Suparmini et al., 2015). For instance, they are prohibited from creating waterways, which means they can not construct irrigation systems or ponds. They are also prohibited from altering the land’s shape, such as digging for wells, levelling the land for settlements, or tilling the land for agriculture. Additionally, they are prohibited from using chemical substances for their daily needs. Based on these life principles, the Baduy people, despite utilizing the forest for settlement purposes, continue to

safeguard their environment against damage.

The next zone is the farming forest zone, designated as an area for farming. In this zone, intensive agricultural activities are carried out to meet the needs of the Baduy community. The farming system used here is highly traditional and is chosen because it is considered the most effective system for preserving the forest. Therefore, even though this zone is intended for farming, it is still preserved using environmentally friendly farming practices.

For example, agricultural land is typically used for one year, and after one year of use, the land must be left fallow for at least 3 years. This knowledge follows ecological principles, acknowledging that farmland cannot be continuously used but must be left fallow to allow ecological processes that positively impact the soil. Additionally, the farming system applied in the farming forest zone also employs mixed farming, known in modern terms as agroforestry. Agroforestry is a land-use system that combines trees with crops to enhance economic and ecological benefits.

In such a system, various crops are grown on the same land, reducing the risk of crop failure, protecting the soil from erosion, and reducing the need for fertilizers due to organic fertilizer recycling. It is supported by the opinion of Widiyanto (2015), who states that agroforestry has environmental functions, including hydrological, ecological, and conservation functions. In this context, agroforestry serves as a soil erosion preventive measure through land cover and canopy strata, groundwater storage, and as a habitat for the conservation and protection of flora and fauna.

The agroforestry system like this has been passed down through generations and is consistently practised by the Baduy community. Therefore, despite being seen as adhering to traditional values, the Baduy community possesses modern knowledge in land management, which forms their values of environmental concern.

The next zone in the Baduy indigenous community's zoning system is their recognition and implementation of forest conservation zones. According to the Baduy community, this forest conservation zone is known as the "*leuweung kolot*" area, roughly translated as an old forest. The Baduy people differentiate this area in the conservation zone into two parts: prohibited forests and protected forests.

In Baduy's view, the protected forest is a forest area that can be used for limited

purposes, which, in conservation terms, is referred to as a utilization zone. Meanwhile, the prohibited forests are treated as a unique forest area where no one is allowed to benefit from the forest. In conservation terms, this is referred to as a core zone. According to the Minister of Forestry Regulation No. 56 of 2006, the core zone is an area with physical and biotic functions that remain natural and undisturbed by humans, protecting the representation of original and unique biodiversity.

For the Baduy people, the “*leuweung kolot*” core zone is treated with special reverence. The core zone should not be disturbed, and its preservation must be maintained. Inside the core zone are “sacred” areas according to the Baduy’s beliefs and the water source for the entire Baduy region. Access to the core zone is highly restricted, and anyone wishing to enter the “*leuweung kolot*” must obtain permission from the indigenous leaders. The Baduy indigenous community deeply understands forest protection and conservation efforts. To them, the forest is a “trust” that must be preserved, and they have to protect the forest and their environment because they benefit from doing so.

Based on their knowledge of the environment and surroundings, values of local wisdom are generated. Values serve as the foundation for individuals’ considerations regarding something, and these considerations can involve judgments of good and evil, what is allowed and what is not. Therefore, values can underlie the emergence of certain behaviors. It aligns with Hazlit’s (2014) perspective, which states that values are appraisals of something that can become the determining basis for a person’s actions. Hence, behavior results from an individual’s interaction with a value system. A value system will be formed when individuals know objects within the value system.

In the Baduy indigenous community context, they have developed a local knowledge system regarding environmental conservation. This local knowledge system is geared toward preserving the environment or environmental conservation. This knowledge is continuously preserved because they understand that by safeguarding the environment, the Baduy indigenous community benefits from their actions. It is these benefits that motivate the Baduy indigenous community to preserve the local knowledge that has been passed down through generations and to form a

value system. The value system or values of local wisdom within the Baduy indigenous community concerning environmental conservation revolve around caring for the environment.

Caring for the environment is a fundamental value that guides behaviors to refrain from altering and damaging nature and to maintain the balance of the functions and benefits of nature for the well-being of the community. According to Hasanah (2014), the Baduy community believes that preserving nature is an obligation that cannot be negotiated. The concern of the Baduy indigenous community in safeguarding the environment is passed down to the younger generation through a unique educational system of the Baduy community. The values of environmental care inherited by the Baduy community encompass rules and prohibitions that serve as guidelines for behavior within their community. These rules are encapsulated in an ancestral saying passed down through generations, known as the “*Amanat Buyut*”.

The “*Amanat Buyut*” saying goes as follows, “*Buyut nu nitipkeun ka puun, nagara satelung puluh telu, bangan sawidak lima pancer salawe nagara, gunung teu meunang di lebur, lebak teu meunang di rusak, larangan teu meunang di rempak, buyut teu meunang di robah, lojor teu meunang di potong, pondok teu meunang disambung, nu lain kudu dilainkeun, nu ulah kudu diulahkeun, nu enya kudu dienyakeun*”. The proverb means that the Baduy community, through its tribal leader (*Puun*), has been entrusted by their ancestors to preserve the surrounding environment to maintain harmony and balance, as seen in the phrase “*buyut nu nitipkeun ka puun*”.

Furthermore, the concept of “*nagara satelung puluh telu, bangan sawidak lima, pancer salawe nagara*” (a country with thirty-three districts, sixty-five rivers, and twenty-five central areas) signifies a commitment to the principle of natural equilibrium. It means that the Baduy community is committed to maintaining the balance of nature through their behavior in preserving the environment. Among the values associated with maintaining the balance of nature and are part of the Baduy community’s commitment are (1) not polluting rivers, (2) not indiscriminately cutting down trees, (3) using natural materials for their daily needs, (4) replanting deforested areas, (5) the obligation to safeguard water sources.

Then, the next proverb is the concept of “*gunung teu meunang di lebur, lebak*

teu meunang di rusak, lojor teu meunang di potong, pondok teu meunang disambung“.

This proverb conveys values related to environmental conservation, namely (1) not destroying mountains, (2) not damaging valleys, and (3) leaving everything in nature as it is.

The value of “not destroying mountains” is further elaborated in rules that prohibit the exploitation of forests, both flora and fauna. It includes restrictions on altering the land or mountain slopes, such as prohibitions on levelling the land and digging it for agriculture.

The value of “not damaging valleys” entails restrictions on altering anything within the valley environment. For example, it includes prohibitions on changing watercourses, building fish ponds, and modifying drainage and irrigation.

The value of “leaving everything in nature as it is” means refraining from altering the natural environment for human interests.

The next proverb from *Amanat Buyut* is “*nu lain kudu dilainkeun, nu ulah kudu diulahkeun, nu enya kudu dienyakeun*”. This proverb emphasizes the importance of honesty in managing the environment, implying that the values of honesty should be applied in the interaction between humans and their natural surroundings.

Based on the above presentation, many local wisdom values can be developed for elementary-level character education. These local wisdom values include values for preserving and safeguarding natural resources and the value of honesty in utilizing natural resources.

Implementing the value of preserving and safeguarding natural resources includes developing students’ character to preserve and not pollute rivers, preserve and not damage forests, and conserve water resources.

On the other hand, the value of honesty that can be developed through character education in elementary schools pertains to honesty in human interactions with the environment. Implementing this value involves developing students’ character in the responsible use of natural resources according to their needs.

Character development is crucial in environmental conservation efforts, as the character of individuals can influence their approach to nature and natural resources. According to Sudrajat et al. (2021), the character is often visible in a person’s actions.

Therefore, individuals with good character in natural resource management are more likely to take actions that have a positive impact on environmental conservation efforts.

The local wisdom values of the Baduy indigenous community can be used as a source of values for character education in elementary schools. Based on research results, these local wisdom values can serve as a reference for the development of character education (Iswatingsih, D, 2019; Muhammad, F. & Yosefin, Y., 2021; Priyatna, M, 2017; Syafrudin et al., 2020; Zulkarnaen, M, 2022). Furthermore, it is affirmed by other research results that local wisdom values can also be used as a source of values in character education (Daniah, D, 2016; Mislikhah, S.T, 2020; Rahayu, T., 2021; Salsabilah, 2019; Zakiyah, D & Rahmayanti, D., 2018; Wongarso, S.W et al. 2022). Furthermore, according to the research results of Syamsijulianto et al. (2022) and Firmansyah (2020), local wisdom used as a source of values in character education can be concluded to shape individuals in harmony with the values of the local community. Moreover, according to Hamida et al. (2022), the character values of a tradition can be taught to elementary school children, just like the tradition of “*sedekah bumi*” in the Raci village community. Thus, local values from the Baduy indigenous community can be a source of character education values. In the context of this research, the values of the Baduy indigenous community highly prioritize environmental preservation. Therefore, if these values are implemented in character education in elementary schools, it will lead to the development of Indonesian students with wisdom and a commitment to environmental conservation.

D. Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the Baduy indigenous community possesses local conservation knowledge. The Baduy community knows conservation zoning, including residential, farming, and conservation forest zones. Furthermore, the Baduy community is also acquainted with categorizing various types of forests, such as cultivated forests, protected forests, and conservation forests.

The values of local wisdom held by the Baduy indigenous community

regarding environmental conservation include not polluting rivers, not indiscriminately cutting down trees, the obligation to use natural resources for livelihood, the obligation to reforest barren land, the obligation to preserve water sources, the value of not damaging mountains, the value of not damaging valleys, the duty to leave everything in nature as it is, and the value of honesty in utilizing the environment.

These values of local wisdom from the Baduy indigenous community can serve as a source of character education in elementary schools to develop students' attitudes toward preserving and conserving the environment. The values that can be nurtured through character education include the value of caring for and preserving natural resources and the value of honesty in utilizing natural resources.

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