

Internalization of *Pasang Ri Kajang* in Islamic Character Education of the *Ammatoa Kajang* Indigenous People

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the process of internalizing the values of *Pasang Ri Kajang* within the informal education system of the *Ammatoa Kajang* indigenous community in Bulukumba, South Sulawesi. *Pasang Ri Kajang* is a revered oral tradition that serves as a comprehensive life guide encompassing social, spiritual, and environmental ethics. Core values such as *kamase-masea* (simplicity), *kalambusang* (honesty), and adherence to customary law are integrated into all aspects of daily life. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with a key informant from the Kajang community who had pursued formal education outside the traditional region. The findings reveal that character education within the Kajang community is shaped through daily practices, role modeling, and active participation in customary rituals. The four paired values of Tuoki'na *Kamase-masea* which emphasize simplicity in sitting, speaking, walking, and dressing form the foundation for youth character development. The community maintains social equality by symbolic practices such as not using chairs inside homes, enforcing verbal discipline through social fines for harsh language, and prohibiting footwear as a sign of respect toward the earth. These values not only shape individual behavior but also reinforce collective identity and ecological awareness. This study highlights that indigenous education based on local wisdom plays a significant role in preserving cultural values, fostering character development, and promoting environmental stewardship in the context of modern education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Character education is one of the important issues in the world of contemporary education, especially in the midst of the moral crisis and value degradation that has hit modern society (Karadona et al., 2025). From an Islamic perspective, character education is not only oriented towards the formation of noble morals, but also serves as a means of internalizing the values of monotheism, justice, honesty, and social responsibility (Karadona, R. I., Fakhruddin, F., & Hudallah, 2022). Efforts to build Islamic character require the integration of religious teachings with local wisdom that has lived and developed in a community (Abdullatif et al., 2025). One of the forms of local wisdom is *Pasang ri Kajang*, which is a noble message that has been inherited from generation to generation by the *Ammatoa Kajang* indigenous people in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi.

Education The Kajang *Ammatoa* Tribe, which lives in the Bulukumba Regency area, South Sulawesi, is an indigenous community that has been known for its steadfastness in holding and carrying out *Pasang Ri Kajang*, which is a noble teaching that is sacred and passed down orally from generation to generation, which contains traditional values, social norms, and spiritual ethics as the main guidelines in

living life both in relationships between humans, interaction with nature, and in carrying out devotion to the Creator (Ichwan et al., 2021). More than just a collection of moral messages, *Pasang Ri Kajang* is a system of customary norms that are collectively binding, containing the principles of environmental ethics that emphasize the preservation of nature, the value of simplicity of life (*kamase-masea*) that distances oneself from consumptive nature and greed, and upholds total compliance with traditional rules and orders of life that apply consistently in all aspects life of the Kajang community (Ahmad Fadhel et al., 2023). The Kajang *Ammatoa* tribe in Bulukumba, South Sulawesi, has a rich background of tradition and culture. They are known for upholding *Pasang Ri Kajang*, a sacred mandate in the form of customary values that are used as a guideline for life in human interaction with humans, nature, and the Creator (Evi Alfira et al., 2024). *The Kajang Ri Tide* is the foundation for the people of Kajang *Ammatoa* in living their daily lives, as well as in managing natural resources and the surrounding environment.

In daily life, the Kajang *Ammatoa* indigenous people consistently carry out various forms of rituals and traditional ceremonies that are not only ceremonial, but also function as spiritual and social means to maintain cosmic balance and harmony between humans, nature, and the Creator (Husain et al., 2021). These practices reflect the deep belief that human life is inseparable from the natural order, so any action related to nature such as clearing land, harvesting forest products, or taking water from spring sources must be based on customary permits and accompanied by certain ordinances that are loaded with symbolic meaning. In addition, the Kajang people have a distinctive local knowledge and wisdom system in managing natural resources sustainably, which are passed down from generation to generation through oral traditions, collective experiences, and the example of traditional elders. This system emphasizes the principles of sufficiency, non-exploitation, and respect for other living beings, making them one of the indigenous communities that are able to maintain environmental sustainability independently and consistently in the long term.

Internalization is a process that takes place in a sustainable manner, where the noble values contained in *Pasang Ri Kajang* are consistently instilled in the young generation from an early age through informal education mechanisms that live in the daily lives of the Kajang indigenous people. This process is carried out through various means, including direct teaching by the main indigenous leader called *Ammatoa*, participation in traditional rituals that are full of symbolic and spiritual meaning, and exemplary in daily life that reflects the values of simplicity, obedience, and harmony with nature. The results of the research of Fadil et al. (2023) reveal that the informal education model of the Kajang community tends to be authoritarian in a positive sense, namely emphasizing full obedience to customary rules and discipline in practicing *Pasang* values as part of their collective identity. In practice, this internalization process includes learning the values of manners or ethics known as *tabe'*, respect for fellow humans, and respect and obedience to nature as God's creation. These values integrally form a strong conservation character, which is a characteristic of the Kajang people in maintaining the preservation of customary forests and a harmonious social order (Fadil, Muhammad Yanis, 2023).

In the context of education of *the indigenous people of Ammatoa* Kajang, the *Pasang* system functions as a value system that is integrated with informal education practices. These values are then integrated into various aspects of educational activities including traditional rituals, forest care activities, and oral traditions so as to form a strong environmental character and cultural identity of Kajang children (Wijaya, 2018). In addition, the harmony of man's relationship with nature and man with God in *the Tide*

is often associated with the value of local sufism (*eco sufism*), which emphasizes the spiritual dimension in the internalization of values in society.

2. METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to understand the process of internalizing *Pasang Ri Kajang* values in the education of the *Ammatoa* Kajang indigenous people (Safarudin, R., Zulfamanna, Z., Kustati, M., & Sepriyanti, 2023). The data was obtained through in-depth interviews with one key informant, namely a Kajang native who has pursued formal education outside the Kajang area and has a dual perspective both as part of an indigenous community and as an individual who understands the modern education system. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to explore the experiences, views, and practices of internalizing the values of *Pasang Ri Kajang* in daily life and in the context of education. Data analysis is carried out thematically, starting from the transcription process, identifying the main theme, to extracting meaning from the patterns that appear. The validity of the data is maintained through internal validation in the form of re-checking the results of the interviews and the resulting interpretations to keep them in accordance with the socio-cultural context of the informant. The research methods used in this explanation are as follows:



Figure 1. Research Methods

The study also emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in the research process, especially when dealing with indigenous knowledge systems such as *Pasang Ri Kajang*. The researcher acted not only as an observer but also as a participant who respected the traditional norms and customs of the Kajang community. This participatory stance helped establish trust and allowed deeper access to the meanings and practices related to the transmission of local values. By integrating ethical research practices and cultural empathy, the study ensured that the voices and perspectives of the indigenous participants were authentically represented and that the findings contributed meaningfully to both academic discourse and the preservation of local wisdom.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the interviews show that the values of *Pasang Ri Kajang* are internalized through habituation, example, and oral traditions in the life of the *Ammatoa* people. The informant, a native of Kajang who was educated outside the customary territory, stated that since childhood he has been taught the principles of life such as honesty, simplicity (*kamase-masea*), and obedience to customs. Formal education does not shift these values, but rather strengthens awareness of the importance of customs as the

basis of character. The process of inheriting values is carried out through rituals, oral stories, and strong social supervision from the community.

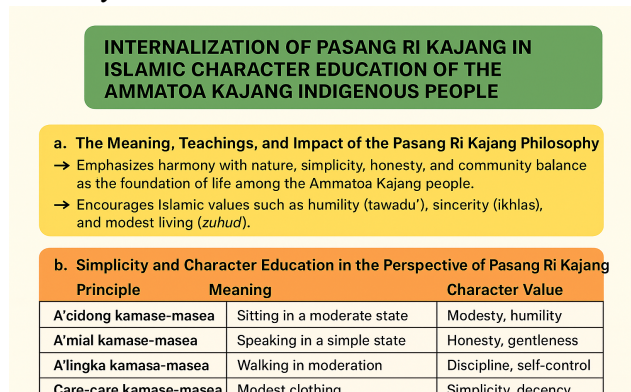


Figure 2. Results of research and discussion

3.1. The Meaning, Teachings, and Impact of the *Pasang Ri Kajang* Philosophy in the Life of the *Ammatoa Indigenous People*

Install generally means "message". However, for the Indigenous people in Tanah Towa Village, *Pasang* has a deeper meaning. *Pasang* is considered a sacred mandate from the ancestors that is a guideline for life and must be carried out. For the *Ammatoa* Indigenous people, *Pasang Ri Kajang* is a heritage that governs the way of life and shapes character since childhood. The values in *Tides* are maintained and passed on from generation to generation so that life remains in harmony with customs and nature (Fadhel et al., 2021).

Pasang Ri Kajang is a set of traditional beliefs and practices held by the indigenous people of Kajang in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. It emphasizes environmental ethics and a simple lifestyle known as *kamase-mase* or *tallasa kamase-masea* (Muhammad Hadith Badewi, 2018). *Pasang Ri Kajang* is considered sacred, contains messages from the Creator and guides all aspects of life, including belief systems, rituals, and social norms (Amin, 2020). The core of their worldview is the concept of *Turi'e A'ra'na* (God) and the belief in the Earth as a mother figure (Hafid, 2013). This philosophy promotes living in harmony with nature and has contributed to the preservation of forests in the Kajang area. The adherence of the *Ammatoa* Kajang people to these traditional values has resulted in a positive impact on ecological conservation and economic sustainability, as well as being a model for other regions with similar local wisdom (Nur et al., 2022).

It explains that this indigenous belief system emphasizes living in harmony with nature, practicing honesty, and maintaining a simple and balanced way of life. These values are deeply rooted in the Kajang people's worldview and guide their interactions with others and the environment. Furthermore, these teachings resonate strongly with Islamic ethical values such as humility (*tawadu'*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and modest living (*zuhud*), highlighting how local wisdom and religious principles can coexist and reinforce one another in shaping moral character.

3.2. Simplicity and Character Education in the Perspective of *Pasang Ri Kajang*

The values of *Pasang Ri Kajang* such as *kalambusang* (honesty), *kamase-masea* (simplicity), and obedience to customs are the basis of character education in the *Ammatoa Kajang* community. Oral traditions and daily habits make this value inherent from an early age. This is in line with the findings that *Pasang Ri Kajang* actively instills conservation and moral character in the younger generation in the context of local education (Ichwan et al., 2021).

In the structure of the life of the indigenous people of *Ammatoa Kajang*, *Pasang Ri Kajang* is not only understood as a series of moral messages or ancestral advice that are inherited from generation to generation, but more than that, *Pasang* is a value system that is integrated in all aspects of social, cultural, and educational life, where every good or bad action is interpreted through the lens of *Pasang*, thus creating a social control mechanism based on spiritual and collective consciousness; and among the fundamental values in the *Tide*, the principle of *Tuoki'na Kamase-masea* or living in simplicity occupies a central position because it not only shapes the ethics of individual behavior, but also becomes the main pillar in the character education of society, which is instilled informally from an early age through parental example, social supervision, and cultural rituals, and remains firmly internalized even when some of the younger generation *Kajang* pursue formal education outside their indigenous community, a condition that shows that indigenous education based on local values is not only able to survive in the midst of modernization, but also has relevance in forming individuals with integrity and ecological awareness, which shows that the *Kajang* millennial generation still maintains the principle of simplicity as a form of resistance to external values that are not in harmony with their cultural identity (Disnawati, 2013).

It presents a structured table that breaks down the core concept of *kamase-masea* a term that encapsulates the spirit of moderation and simplicity in all aspects of life. The table lists four essential principles: *A'cidong kamase-masea* (sitting in a moderate state), *A'miak kamase-masea* (speaking in a simple state), *A'lingka kamase-masea* (walking in moderation), and *Care-care kamase-masea* (modest clothing). Each of these reflects an aspect of moral and behavioral discipline, teaching individuals to act, speak, and present themselves with humility and restraint. Collectively, these principles serve as a moral compass that nurtures modesty, honesty, discipline, and decency qualities that are central to both the *Pasang Ri Kajang* philosophy and Islamic teachings. This becomes the deep philosophical relationship between indigenous tradition and Islamic ethics but also underscores how these intertwined values contribute to the holistic formation of character and moral integrity among the *Ammatoa Kajang* people. *Tuoki na Kamase Masea* is a noble teaching in the *Kajang* indigenous people that contains four main principles called the four *Pairs* of simplicity. The four *Pasang* reflect the values of life that uphold modesty in all aspects of daily life, namely:

1. *A'cidong kamase-masea* sits in a moderate state

In the *Kajang* indigenous people, the principle of equality has not only become a social norm, but has taken root as part of a collective view of life that manifests itself in all aspects of daily life. One of the most obvious manifestations of this value can be seen in the practice of social association, where in the activity of visiting or receiving guests, the use of chairs is not found in the house; Everyone, regardless of status, age, or social role, sits directly on the ground floor or mat in parallel a concrete symbol of the local adage "sit equally low, stand equally high" which is not just a rhetorical expression, but actually implemented consistently in everyday life. Even in households, the *Kajang* people do not use luxurious

furniture such as chairs or mattresses, because it is considered to create a symbolic boundary between individuals and each other, which is contrary to the principles of *kamase-masea* (simplicity) and equality. Interestingly, this egalitarian lifestyle does not only apply to ordinary people, but is also run by the highest traditional leader called *Amma*, who lives and behaves without any privileges compared to other citizens in terms of dressing, walking barefoot, sitting on an equal footing with their community, and so on. The concept of leadership in Kajang society is not seen as a hierarchical structure that places one individual above another, but rather as a protector role that remains socially parallel. Thus, the people of Kajang have implemented a form of authentic and comprehensive social equality, which is not only idealized, but also lived in real life through their culture, traditions, and daily life ethics.

2. *A'miak kamase-masea* Speaks in a simple state.

All forms of communication and words conveyed in customary areas cannot be separated from the binding customary rules and rules. Every speech has a strong social and ethical responsibility. From a young age, people are taught not to speak rudely or hurt the feelings of others through words (Patimah et al., 2020). This is part of the noble values taught in the family and community. If a person is found to have spoken abusive words or insulted another party, he will be subject to customary sanctions in the form of a fine of two million rupiah. In the case of an argument or verbal dispute, if one of the parties feels offended or does not accept the abusive treatment, then he has the right to submit a report to the nearest customary authorities, or even directly to *Amma* as the highest traditional leader. After the report is received, *Amma* will hold a special customary hearing between the perpetrator and herself. In the trial process, figurative or symbolic language is used as a form of communication that is firm but still upholds the value of wisdom. This reflects local wisdom in resolving conflicts without direct embarrassment, but still has a deterrent effect. The fine imposed on the perpetrator of two million rupiah will be divided in two: one million is given to the victim as a form of restoration of good name and respect, while the remaining one million is distributed to the traditional leaders who are present at the trial as witnesses, indicating that the perpetrator's fault has been acknowledged and borne openly in front of the indigenous people.

This practice is very closely related to the Islamic religious values embraced by the Kajang people. In their view, religion can be corrupted if it is not accompanied by the ability to guard the oral. Therefore, character education through speech control is very important. Parents in Kajang play a major role as the first teachers for their children. From an early age, children are taught and understood not to speak rudely, but to speak politely and respectfully. There is also a form of moral doctrine that is instilled from childhood, that if a child speaks rudely, it is considered a disgrace that embarrasses his parents in front of society (Wijaya, 2018). These values show that the Kajang people not only uphold politeness in speaking as a social norm, but also make it a form of strong character education, based on customs, religion, and respect for others (Novia Fitri Istiawati, 2016).

3. *A'lingka kamase-masea* (walking in moderation)

The Kajang indigenous people have unique traditions that are still strictly maintained to this day, one of which is the prohibition of using footwear, both sandals and shoes when inside the customary area. For the people of Kajang, living in harmony and balance with nature is not just an abstract principle, but is carried out concretely in their daily lives, including through the way of stepping directly on the ground. The prohibition does not only apply to indigenous people, but also to every guest or visitor who wants to enter the Kajang customary territory. Upon arrival at the gate of the customary area, anyone who comes is required to take off their footwear as a form of respect for the values and philosophy of life of the Kajang

people. This action is not a form of torture or coercion against guests, but an invitation to feel and understand how the people of Kajang live their simple, meaningful, and not always physically comfortable lives. By experiencing firsthand how to walk barefoot, visitors are invited to dive into the philosophy that life is not always easy or fun, but contains dynamics that must be accepted and lived with awareness and appreciation for nature. In essence, the main reason the Kajang people refuse to use footwear is because they believe that the land is "*Anrong*," or their first ancestor before the presence of the Prophet Adam (AS). Therefore, using sandals or shoes is considered an act of bravery and disrespect to their first mother, the land itself. In Kajang's local cosmological view, the soil is not just a physical element that is stepped on, but a living entity, which has been present and is the support of human life. Therefore, walking barefoot is a form of spiritual respect and a symbol of surrender to life that comes from nature.

4. *Care-care kamase-masea* (modest clothing)

The traditional clothing of the Kajang people consists of only two main colors, namely black and white, each of which has a deep philosophical meaning in their lives (Ulil Amri J, 2023). The black color symbolizes *kalambusang* which means honesty, while the white color depicts *katangkasang* which means purity. In another dimension, black is also interpreted as a representation of night, while white symbolizes day. According to the community's beliefs inherited by *Amma Toa* as the highest traditional leader, these two colors not only reflect the symbolic aspect of time that runs constantly night and day but also represent the two main moral values that must always be upheld by every member of the community, namely honesty and purity. More than just a symbol, the use of black and white colors in the daily clothes of the Kajang people is a form of internalization of traditional values that aim to form a strong moral character in each individual (Aswana et al., 2022). This is not just a cultural norm, but also part of the social control mechanism. If a person violates these values for example by lying or being dishonest he will be subject to customary sanctions in the form of fines that must be paid every day as long as the value is violated. This system shows that fashion is not only about appearance, but also a means of character education and a guardian of social harmony in the Kajang indigenous community.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The results of the study show that *Pasang Ri Kajang* is not just a cultural heritage, but a life value system that is integrated with all dimensions of the life of *the indigenous people of Ammatoa* Kajang. Values such as honesty, simplicity, and respect for nature have shaped the social character of the community through an informally but effective internalization process, especially through example, habituation, and active participation in traditional rituals. These values are not only lived in theory, but are actually embodied in everyday practices such as the prohibition of speaking profanity, walking barefoot, dressing in symbolic colors (black and white), and rejecting luxury as a form of social equality. The principle of *kamase-masea* is the main foundation in the formation of the character of a society that is not only honest and obedient, but also aware of the importance of living in harmony with nature. In fact, the formal education pursued by some of the young generation of *Kajang* does not shift these traditional values, but rather strengthens their commitment to cultural identity. This traditional education model has proven to be able to create a strong social control and ecological awareness system, making it a contextual and relevant character education model in responding to modern educational challenges.

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