



Conceptual Map of Bugis Local Wisdom as a Source of Holistic Character Education in Elementary Schools: A Synthesis of the Values of Siri', Pacce, Sipakatau, and Tabé'

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ABSTRACT

The rapid pace of globalization has raised concerns about the erosion of local wisdom as a foundation for character formation among the younger generation, including the local wisdom of the Bugis community in South Sulawesi. Previous studies on the values of siri', pacce/pesse, sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge, and tabe' have generally been discussed separately and descriptively from an ethnographic perspective, leaving a gap in systematic conceptual maps that illustrate the interconnections among these four values as sources of holistic character education in elementary schools. This conceptual article aims to construct such a conceptual map through a library research approach, employing thematic-conceptual analysis of recent literature (2016–2025) on Bugis-Makassar local wisdom and character education. The findings indicate that these four values can be mapped onto four cyclically interrelated character dimensions: self-integrity (siri'), empathy and social solidarity (pacce/pesse), mutual respect (sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge), and politeness through behavioral habituation (tabe'). The resulting conceptual map integrates these constructs and charts their alignment with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, positioning Bugis local wisdom as a global pathway for character education in elementary schools. Further educational design research is recommended to empirically test the application of this conceptual map.

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization in the last decade has brought rapid changes to various aspects of life, including shifts in local cultural values among various ethnic communities in Indonesia, one of which is the Bugis community in South Sulawesi. Globalization has a dual nature: on the one hand, it opens up space for cultural exchange that enriches local treasures, but on the other, it has the potential to encourage cultural homogenization that threatens the uniqueness of local identities if not balanced with systematic preservation efforts (Kerubo, 2024; Huda et al., 2024). This tension between global flows and local identities is the starting point for the importance of reintroducing local wisdom values as resources for character education, not merely as ceremonial cultural heritage.

Character education has become a primary focus in national education policy, in line with the goal of developing the Pancasila Student Profile, which emphasizes the dimensions of faith and noble character, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity. Various studies have shown that successful character education is rooted in the socio-cultural context of students, not simply the transfer of universal values divorced from the realities of everyday life (Harun et al., 2020; Sakti et al., 2024; Pada et al., 2025). An ethnopedagogical approach, which utilizes local cultural values and practices as learning resources, has been empirically proven to increase cultural awareness and strengthen character development in early childhood and elementary school students (Sakti et al., 2024).

The Bugis people, as one of the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia, possess a rich treasure trove of local wisdom rich in character education. At least four value concepts consistently emerge in various studies as the core of the Bugis-Makassar ethical system: *siri'* (self-esteem and productive shame), *pacce* or *pesse* (empathy and social solidarity), *sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge* (humanizing, respecting, and reminding each other), and *tabe'* (politeness in speech and behavior). These four values have been extensively studied separately: *Siri' na pacce* has been studied as the basis

for character education in elementary schools (Azis et al., 2020; Reski et al., 2021) and as a basis for learning design (Azis et al., 2022); sipakatau-sipakalebbsipakainge has been studied in the context of preventing intolerance (Herlin et al., 2020) and in non-formal education communities (Rahmawati & Eli, 2023) and even integrated into deep learning approaches (Salmia et al., 2025); while tabe' has been studied in the context of fostering and internalizing polite character in elementary school-aged children (Umar et al., 2021).

Although these four values are closely related and philosophically interconnected, existing studies are still partial; each value is discussed in a different research context, with diverse methodological approaches, and has not been depicted in a single comprehensive conceptual map for the purposes of character education in elementary schools. However, a conceptual map that systematically depicts the relationships between these four values has the potential to provide a clearer visual-theoretical reference for teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers who wish to design learning based on Bugis local wisdom in a cohesive manner aligned with the national competency framework.

Based on this gap, this conceptual article aims to: (1) identify and synthesize the values of siri', pacce/pesse, sipakatau-sipakalebbsipakainge, and tabe' as constructs relevant to the dimensions of holistic character education; and (2) develop an integrative conceptual map that illustrates the relationships between these cultural value constructs, their relationship to the character dimensions, and their relationship to the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. The novelty of this article lies in the preparation of a conceptual map that connects the four values of Bugis local wisdom in an integrative and cyclical manner, not as stand-alone entities, into one image that can serve as a theoretical and visual reference for holistic character education in elementary schools.

METHODS

This article is a conceptual paper compiled through a library research approach with a thematic-conceptual analysis strategy. This approach was chosen because the article's primary objective is not to test empirical hypotheses, but rather to construct new theoretical arguments through the synthesis and reorganization of existing concepts in the literature, resulting in a conceptual map that can contribute to the development of local wisdom-based character education theory (Azis et al., 2022; Sakti et al., 2024).

The literature search was conducted through Scopus, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and the Sinta-indexed national journal repository, using the keywords "siri' na pacce," "sipakatau," "sipakalebbi," "tabe' Bugis," "Bugis local wisdom," "local wisdom character education," and "ethnopedagogy character education" for publications spanning 2016–2025. Inclusion criteria included: (1) articles discussing one or more of the concepts of siri', pacce/pesse, sipakatau, sipakalebbi, sipakainge, or tabe' in the context of education; (2) conceptual and empirical articles discussing the integration of local wisdom into character education; and (3) supporting literature on globalization, cultural resilience, and character education based on the Pancasila Student Profile.

The analysis was conducted in three stages. First, thematic categorization of the collected literature based on four value constructs (siri', pacce/pesse, sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge, and tabe'). Second, identification of relationships between constructs based on their philosophical, functional, and pedagogical links in the literature. Third, cross-construct synthesis to create an integrative conceptual map depicting the cyclical relationships among the four values, their relationship to the character dimensions, and their relationship to the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Siri': The Foundation of Self-Esteem and Integrity in Character Education

Siri' is a core concept in Bugis culture, representing the unity between shame and self-esteem (Azis et al., 2020). Philosophically, Siri' can be divided into two

orientations: *Siri' masiri'*, which is the drive to succeed and persevere in facing challenges to maintain one's and one's family's honor; and *Siri' ripakasiri'*, which is the reaction to maintaining honor when one feels humiliated in public (Abidin, 2019; Syarif et al., 2016). In the educational context, the *siri' masiri'* orientation has a very strong relevance to the character dimensions of integrity, responsibility, resilience, and an achievement ethic.

The results of a study by Azis et al. (2020) on elementary school teachers in Makassar showed that the value of *siri' na pacce* is still considered highly relevant for integration into learning, particularly in fostering a productive sense of shame, shame for dishonesty, shame for insincerity, and shame for violating norms. This finding is reinforced by a study by Reski et al. (2021), which demonstrated that the value of *siri' na pacce* remains relevant as a social identity for the Bugis-Makassar millennial generation, including those who have migrated from their ancestral homeland, as a moral foundation for navigating modern life.

In the conceptual map compiled by this article, *Siri'* occupies the node of the internal-individual dimension: it serves as a driving force that drives individuals to maintain their integrity. It is important to note that the *Siri' ripakasiri'* orientation, which has the potential to trigger defensive reactions when someone feels humiliated, needs to be managed wisely by teachers, for example, by avoiding public shaming, so that the *Siri'* energy is directed toward achievement motivation (*Siri' masiri'*) and not interpersonal conflict (Syarif et al., 2016). In the conceptual map, *Siri'* is directly connected to the *pacce/pesse* node because, in the Bugis-Makassar tradition, maintaining self-respect is inseparable from caring for others.

Peace/Pesse: Empathy and Social Solidarity as Relational Glue

While *siri'* focuses on the internal-individual dimension, *Pacce* (in the Makassar dialect) or *Pesse* (in the Bugis dialect) focuses on the social-relational dimension. *Peace/patience* reflects an inner sensitivity to the suffering of others, fostering a spirit of mutual assistance, solidarity, and a sense of shared

destiny regardless of kinship (Hamid, 2009; Juhansar, 2020). The dual constructs of *siri'* and *pacce/pesse* are often referred to as two sides of the same coin: *siri'* maintains a balance between shame and self-respect, while *pacce/pesse* fosters a sense of togetherness in both joy and sorrow (Hamid, 2009).

In the conceptual map, *pacce/pesse* occupies a node in the relational-affective dimension that bridges self-awareness (*siri'*) with respect for others (*sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge*). Azis et al. (2022) formulated a value-based learning approach, *Siri' na Pacce*, consisting of five stages: acquiring initial knowledge, thinking, discussing, communicating, and reflecting, a structure that inherently fosters students' social sensitivity through a process of shared perspectives and shared responsibility. This structure aligns with the principles of collaborative learning, which place group success as shared success.

The relationship between *pacce/pesse* and the *sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge* construct in the conceptual map is mutually reinforcing: empathy (*pacce/pesse*) encourages one to actively humanize and respect others (*sipakatau*), while mutual respect (*sipakalebbi*) in turn deepens the empathy felt. Strengthening the value of peace in elementary schools can be done through group project-based learning that requires students to help each other who are experiencing difficulties, as well as reflective discussions about experiences of empathy in everyday life.

Sipakatau, Sipakalebbi, and Sipakainge: Social Ethics as Connecting Constructs

Sipakatau literally means "mutual humanization," which is the attitude of mutually recognizing the rights and dignity of every individual regardless of social status. *Sipakalebbi* means "mutual respect" or honoring each other, while "*Sipakainge*" means "reminding each other" to do good. These three elements form a unified social ethic known as the 3S philosophy, which underpins harmony in social interactions among the Bugis-Makassar community (Herlin et al., 2020; Syarif et al., 2016).

In the conceptual map, the sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge node occupies a central position as a connecting construct between individual empathy (pacce/pesse) and expressions of polite behavior (tabe'). Herlin et al. (2020) emphasized that the values of sipakatau-sipakainge-sipakalebbi play a crucial role in preventing intolerance by fostering a willingness to accept differences and resolve conflicts constructively. Rahmawati and Eli (2023) found that the implementation of these three values in a Makassar community caring for street children successfully created relationships of mutual respect and understanding among community members. A recent study by Salmia et al. (2025) showed that integrating the values of sipakatau and sipakalebbi into a deep learning approach, through storytelling, role-playing, and community-based projects, significantly contributed to strengthening character education in elementary schools.

The central position of sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge in the conceptual map also reflects its function as a feedback mechanism: sipakainge (reminding each other) specifically plays a role in maintaining the continued strengthening of other values within the ecosystem; when one dimension weakens, sipakainge serves as a social "alarm" that restores individuals to a sense of shared values. In learning practice, these three values can be realized through participatory classroom norms that uphold equal rights of speech, foster mutual appreciation, and encourage polite reminders (Salmia et al., 2025).

Tābe': Politeness as a Behavioral Expression and a Closing Node of the Cycle

"Tabe'" is an expression of permission accompanied by a gesture, bowing and lowering hands, as a sign of respect when passing another person, especially someone older or respected. More than just verbal etiquette, tabe' represents the principle of the unity of speech and action (taro ada taro gau), which is at the heart of habit-based character education in Bugis society (Syarif et al., 2016).

In the conceptual map, tabe' occupies a node in the behavior-habit dimension, which also functions as the closing node of the cycle: it is the outermost expression (observable behavior) of the entire underlying value

system. This means that when someone consistently practices *tabe'*, this behavior not only reflects politeness but also expresses and strengthens *siri'* (self-integrity that avoids being perceived as impolite), *pacce/pesse* (sensitivity to the feelings of those passed), and *sipakatau* (recognition of the dignity of others). Umar et al.'s (2021) phenomenological study of the internalization of the *mappatabe* character in elementary school-aged children in Sinjai found that this value is most effectively internalized through consistent role modeling and practice, rather than normative lectures.

Because *tabe'* is the closing node of the cycle and a feedback point to *siri'*, the conceptual map depicts arrows connecting *tabe'* to *siri'*: the practice of polite behavior (*tabe'*) ultimately strengthens the internalization of self-esteem and integrity (*siri'*), so that the cycle of values continues and reinforces each other. This depicts holistic character as a dynamic, never-ending process, not a one-time achievement.

Integrative Conceptual Map: Cyclical Relationships of Bugis Local Wisdom Values in Holistic Character Education

Based on the synthesis of the four value constructs above, the integrative conceptual map produced by this article depicts four interconnected value nodes in a closed cycle: *Siri'* (self-integrity) → *Pacce/Pesse* (empathy and solidarity) → *Sipakatau-Sipakalebbi-Sipakainge* (respect and reminders, among others) → *Tabe'* (politeness and behavioral habits) → returning to *Siri'*. Each node contains two elements: (a) the character dimension being strengthened, and (b) the relationship with the relevant Pancasila Student Profile dimension. The relationship between nodes is bidirectional because strengthening one node will strengthen adjacent nodes, and conversely, weakening one node has the potential to weaken others.

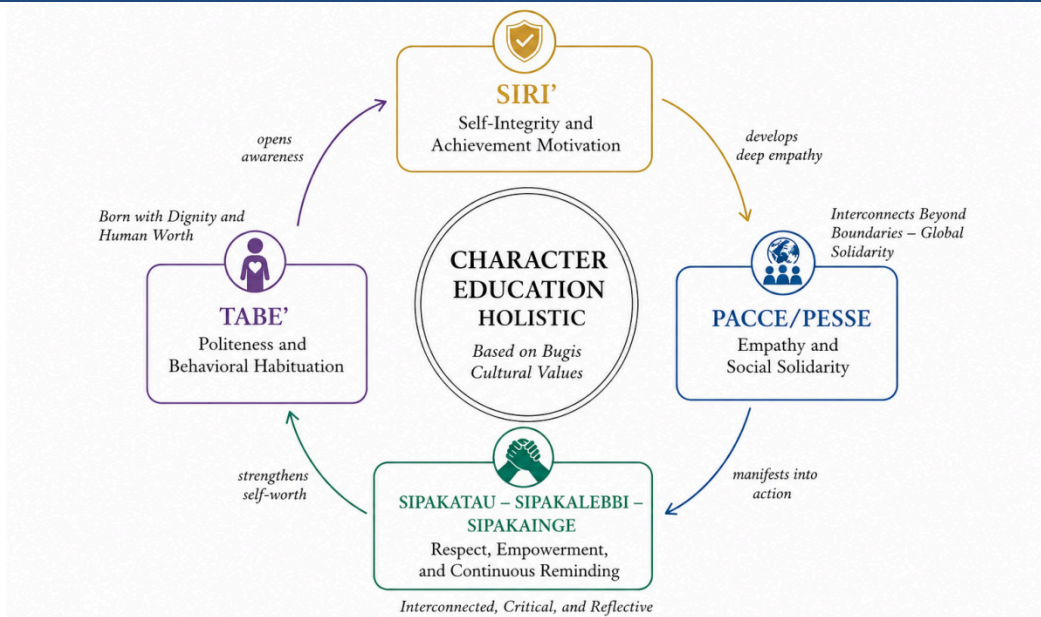


Figure 1. Integrative Conceptual Map of Bugis Local Wisdom Values in Holistic Character Education in Elementary Schools

In more detail, the relationships in the conceptual map can be read as follows. Siri' is connected to Pacce/Pesse through the proposition: awareness of authentic self-esteem opens up sensitivity to the suffering of others, because someone who truly maintains their dignity will not leave others in difficulty without care. Pacce/Pesse is connected to Sipakatau-Sipakalebbi-Sipakainge through the proposition: deep empathy encourages one to actively humanize, respect, and remind others—because genuine concern is expressed through recognition of others' dignity. Sipakatau-Sipakalebbi-Sipakainge is connected to Tabé' through the proposition: internalized mutual respect naturally manifests in consistent polite behavior because someone who truly respects others will express it through concrete actions, not just thoughts. And Tabé' is connected back to Siri' through the proposition: habituating consistent, polite behavior strengthens internalized self-esteem because someone who has become Accustomed to being polite will feel ashamed (siri') if they behave otherwise; thus, the cycle of values continues and reinforces each other.

The relationship between the four value constructs and the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile can be summarized as follows: *Siri'* corresponds primarily to the dimensions of independence, faith, and noble character; *Pacce/Pesse* corresponds to mutual cooperation and global diversity; *Sipakatau-Sipakalebbi-Sipakainge* corresponds to mutual cooperation and critical thinking; and *Tabe'* corresponds to faith, noble character, and independence. This correspondence emphasizes that Bugis local wisdom is not a substitute for the national competency framework, but rather a contextual root that can enrich its meaning and implementation at the educational unit level. In other words, this conceptual map positions local wisdom as a glocal pathway, a link between the universal values of character education and the local cultural roots of students, so that character education can be perceived as an organic continuation of their cultural identity. Table 1 summarizes the correspondence between the four Bugis local wisdom values, the character dimensions they reinforce, and their respective relationships to the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile.

Table 1. Correspondence of Bugis Local Wisdom Values, Character Dimensions, and the Pancasila Student Profile

| Local Wisdom Values | Character Dimensions | Main Character Orientation | Relation to Pancasila Student Profile |
|---|---|---|--|
| <i>Siri' (siri' masiri')</i> | Self-integrity and a high-achieving ethos | Honest; persistent; responsible; proud of one's efforts; ashamed of wrongdoing | Independent; faithful and of noble character |
| <i>Pacce/Pesse</i> | Empathy and social solidarity | Sensitive to the difficulties of others; helping one another, and caring regardless of kinship | Mutual Cooperation; Global Diversity |
| <i>Sipakatau-Sipakalebbi-Sipakainge</i> | Respect and reminders among each other | Recognizing the dignity of others; showing appreciation; reminding politely, and preventing intolerance | Working together; Critical thinking |
| <i>Tabe'</i> | Politeness and behavioral habits | Asking permission; respectful body language, and consistency between words | Faithful and noble; Independent |

and actions (taro ada taro
gau)

Pedagogical Implications and Further Research Directions

The resulting conceptual map has several concrete pedagogical implications. First, teachers can use this conceptual map as an analytical framework in designing learning activities that consciously address more than one value node. For example, group project activities that integrate elements of pacce/pesse (helping each other) and sipakainge (reminding each other) will have a richer impact on holistic character than activities that address only one value. The ethnopedagogical approach, which has been proven effective in revitalizing local wisdom (Sakti et al., 2024), can be adapted through the use of kelong (traditional Bugis poetry) and folklore that narratively brings to life the cyclical relationships between these four values.

Second, this conceptual map provides a reference for curriculum developers in developing local wisdom-based learning outcomes that align with the Pancasila Student Profile. Because each value node in the map has been mapped to the relevant Pancasila Student Profile dimension, curriculum developers can design achievement indicators that draw on local cultural values without deviating from the national competency framework. Third, teachers need to develop their capacity as ethical role models, considering that the values of tabe' and sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge are performative and can only be effectively internalized through consistent modeling (Umar et al., 2021).

As a theoretical conceptual map, this work requires further empirical testing. Educational design research can be used to translate this conceptual map into operational learning tools, such as teaching modules, student worksheets, and character assessment instruments, which can then be validated and piloted in the elementary school context in South Sulawesi. Further research is also recommended to examine the potential adaptation of this conceptual map to other local cultural contexts in Indonesia, considering that its

cyclical structure encompassing individual, relational, social ethics, and behavioral-habitual dimensions is potentially relevant cross-culturally, although the specific labels and expressions will vary across ethnic groups.

CONCLUSION

This article constructs an integrative conceptual map depicting the cyclical relationship between four Bugis local wisdom values, *siri'*, *pacce/pesse*, *sipakatau-sipakalebbi-sipakainge*, and *tabe'*, as sources of holistic character education in elementary schools. These four values are mapped respectively to the dimensions of self-integrity, empathy and social solidarity, mutual respect, and politeness and behavioral habits, which are interconnected in a closed and bidirectional cycle. This conceptual map illustrates the relationship between constructs through explicit propositions that can be tested empirically, while also mapping their relationship with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. Thus, Bugis local wisdom is positioned not as merely a separate local content but as a glocal path that connects students' cultural roots with universal character education goals. Further research based on educational design research is highly recommended to empirically test the application of this conceptual map in the context of elementary school learning.

Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies Declaration

AI technologies were used in the creation and annotation of visualizations, including the labeling of images and graphic elements. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited all content as necessary, verified the accuracy of all images and annotations against the underlying data, and took full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Declarations

- Author : Muhammad Rusli: Conceptualization, Writing - Original Contribution
Contribution : Draft, Editing, and Visualization; Rafika Putri: Writing - Review & Editing, Formal Analysis, and Methodology.
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