

TRANSFORMING 'URF-BASED CULTURAL VALUES INTO ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL VALUES: LESSONS FROM THE KULFOT TRADITION OF THE SERAM COMMUNITY, MALUKU, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary Islamic education faces increasing challenges in maintaining its relevance amid rapidly changing social and cultural contexts. This situation highlights the need for educational approaches that are responsive to local wisdom and community realities. This study aims to examine the educational values embedded in the Kulfot tradition of the Seram community in Maluku and to explore how these values can be transformed into Islamic educational values through the framework of 'urf. Employing a qualitative library research approach, the study draws on literature related to 'urf, Islamic law, local wisdom, indigenous knowledge, and Islamic education, as well as studies on cultural traditions in Maluku. Data were collected through document analysis and examined using content analysis and thematic analysis. The findings reveal that Kulfot embodies core values such as solidarity, cooperation, collective responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation. These values meet the criteria of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* and function as mechanisms for cultural learning and intergenerational value transmission. The study further shows that 'urf serves not only as a means of legal validation but also as an epistemological bridge that connects local cultural practices with Islamic educational values. Based on these findings, the study proposes a conceptual model of *Culture-'Urf-Education*, which illustrates how local wisdom can be transformed into educational values within an Islamic framework. The findings contribute to the development of culturally responsive Islamic education, character education, and community-based learning, while enriching discussions on the relationship between culture, Islamic law, and education in Muslim societies.

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INTRODUCTION

The 21st century presents unprecedented new challenges for Islamic education in various parts of the world. The intensifying forces of globalization, accelerating technological development, growing cultural diversity, and shifts in social values have significantly reshaped the contemporary educational landscape. These changes simultaneously raise questions about the extent to which traditional educational models can adapt to an effectively respond to the dynamics of modern society. In this context, Islamic education is no longer viewed solely as a means of transmitting religious knowledge. However, it is also required to equip students with the competencies needed to navigate a complex social environment characterized by pluralism, cross-cultural interaction, and rapid socio-cultural change. Therefore, various critical concerns have emerged regarding the social relevance of Islamic education, especially when the educational practices implemented still tend to be normative, text-centered, and poorly connected to the realities of life faced by Muslim communities daily. (Taufikin Taufikin, 2025) . In line with these developments, various recent studies emphasize that Islamic education needs to move beyond a purely normative doctrinal orientation to a more contextual approach, so that Islamic teachings can be more meaningfully integrated with the challenges and social needs of contemporary society.

In response to these challenges, a growing number of academics are advocating the development of contextual Islamic education as an educational framework that bridges the gap between the ideals of religious teachings and society's real needs. Contextual Islamic education emphasizes integrating Islamic values with students' social, cultural, and historical experiences. This approach is based on the understanding that the educational process does not take place in a neutral space, but rather is always situated within a specific social and cultural context that shapes how individuals understand and internalize the values taught. Therefore, the success of the value transmission process is largely determined by the extent to which educational material connects with the realities students face in their daily lives. Within this framework, culture is not positioned as an obstacle to Islamic learning but rather as a pedagogical resource with great potential to help students

understand, interpret, and apply Islamic values in a more relevant and meaningful way, in line with their life contexts (Siregar et al., 2024).

Therefore, the relationship between Islamic education and culture is increasingly gaining attention as an important theme in contemporary academic studies. Various modern educational theories identify cultural responsiveness as a fundamental element in implementing effective and relevant education. Cultural responsiveness refers to the ability of an education system to recognize, appreciate, and utilize students' cultural backgrounds as valuable learning resources. From an Islamic education perspective, this approach demonstrates that Islamic values are more easily understood, accepted, and internalized when connected to cultural experiences relevant to students' lives and the communities in which they live. Therefore, Islamic education should not be separated from the social and cultural contexts that shape the lives of Muslim communities. Instead, Islamic education needs to foster constructive engagement with local realities so that the learning process is not only informative but also provides meaningful, contextual, and transformative learning experiences for students.

One concept that has an important position in explaining the relationship between Islam and culture is the concept of *'urf*. In Islamic legal theory, *'urf* refers to customs, traditions, and social practices that are alive and widely accepted by society as long as they do not conflict with the fundamental principles of Islamic law. Classical jurists positioned *'urf* as a secondary source of legal consideration in the process of *istinbāt*, particularly on issues related to social interaction, customs, and various aspects of daily life. The recognition of *'urf* demonstrates the flexible character of Islamic law and its ability to interact constructively with social changes occurring in society. Through this concept, various local cultural practices can be studied, accommodated, and integrated into the broader framework of Islamic values and norms.

In the last few decades, studies on *'urf* have experienced quite significant development. Most existing research focuses on the role of *'urf* in Islamic family law, such as marriage traditions, dowry practices, inheritance arrangements, and kinship relations. In addition, several studies also examine the application of *'urf* in economic transactions, dispute resolution mechanisms, and customary-based governance systems. In general, these studies attempt to

assess the validity of a cultural practice from an Islamic jurisprudence perspective and explain the conditions under which a community custom may be recognized as a valid basis for legal consideration.

Despite producing important academic contributions, most of these studies remain focused on legal legitimacy and have not addressed the dimensions of educational transformation. The main question that dominated previous studies concerned the legal status of a tradition: whether it could be accepted, rejected, or accepted with certain conditions within the framework of Islamic law. Consequently, attention to how cultural practices that have acquired normative legitimacy can function as educational resources for transmitting Islamic values remains relatively limited. Thus, the educational implications of the concept of *'urf* have not received adequate exploration, even though its potential is enormous in supporting the development of contextual Islamic education.

At the same time, studies on local wisdom in Islamic education have shown rapid development. Various studies have investigated the integration of local values into Islamic religious education, character education, multicultural education, and community-based learning models. These research results consistently demonstrate that local wisdom contributes to the formation of social responsibility, the strengthening of tolerance, the fostering of cooperation, and the enhancement of students' moral awareness. Furthermore, educational approaches based on local wisdom have been shown to strengthen the relationship between educational institutions and the surrounding community while increasing student engagement in the learning process.

However, several limitations remain in the existing literature. Most research assumes that cultural values can be directly integrated into educational programs without adequately explaining how these values gain normative legitimacy within Islamic epistemology. The process of evaluating, validating, and transforming cultural practices into Islamic educational values is rarely discussed systematically. As a result, the epistemological relationship between local wisdom, Islamic law, and Islamic education remains conceptually fragmented.

These limitations become increasingly apparent when examining the various local traditions that still play an important role in people's lives. One

relevant tradition in this context is Kulfot, a local cultural practice observed on Seram Island, Maluku, Indonesia. Kulfot is a social tradition passed down through generations that helps maintain social solidarity, communal cooperation, and collective responsibility within the community. Through various shared activities, this tradition strengthens social ties among community members while maintaining the continuity of their local cultural identity.

The uniqueness of Kulfot lies in its ability to convey social values through direct involvement in community practices, rather than through structured, formal instruction. This tradition represents various important values such as mutual assistance, collective deliberation, social responsibility, and communal solidarity. These values are learned through active participation in various community activities, making Kulfot an important informal educational space for the younger generation in acquiring the moral and social competencies needed in community life.

From an Islamic educational perspective, Kulfot has enormous educational potential. The value of solidarity contained therein is in accordance with the concept of *brotherhood* in Islam. Likewise, the emphasis on collective deliberation reflects the principle of *shura*, while the spirit of collective responsibility inherent in the tradition aligns with the values of *amanah* and *ta'awun*. The harmony between Kulfot cultural values and Islamic principles shows that this tradition offers potential educational resources to support the development of Islamic education that is contextual and rooted in the local community's cultural realities.

However, academic attention to the Kulfot tradition is still very limited. Available studies generally place more emphasis on the social and cultural function of Kulfot in strengthening community cohesion. Research that examines Kulfot from the perspective of Islamic education or that connects it with the concept of *'urf* is still very rare. Furthermore, there has been no research that systematically analyzes how the cultural values embedded in the Kulfot tradition can be validated by Islamic legal principles and subsequently transformed into Islamic educational values. This condition indicates a significant empirical gap in the available literature.

In addition to empirical gaps, there are also theoretical gaps that require attention. The current literature does not yet offer a comprehensive conceptual model for explaining how local cultural values are transformed into educational values within an Islamic normative framework. Most previous research tends to examine the relationship between culture and Islamic law, or between culture and education, separately. In fact, the role of '*urf*' as a mediating mechanism connecting culture and education has not been developed much theoretically. Therefore, this study proposes the conceptual path *Culture* → '*Urf*' → *Islamic Education* as an analytical framework to explain how local cultural practices can gain legitimacy and subsequently become a source of value in Islamic education.

Based on this framework, this study aims to analyze the transformation of cultural values based on '*urf*' contained in the Kulfot tradition into Islamic educational values in the Seram Island community, Maluku, Indonesia. This research is expected to contribute to the development of contextual Islamic education, enrich the discourse on cultural accommodation in Islamic jurisprudence, and expand the study of local wisdom by offering a new theoretical model for understanding the intersection of culture, Islamic law, and Islamic education.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a library research design. The approach was selected because the study aims to explore and interpret the transformation of cultural values embedded in the Kulfot tradition of the Seram community into Islamic educational values through the perspective of '*urf*'. Qualitative research is appropriate for understanding meanings contained in texts and social practices through interpretive analysis. (JW Creswell, 2017) . Library research also enables systematic collection and critical examination of relevant literature to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework. (Zed, 2008) .

The data sources consist of primary and secondary materials. Primary sources include books, journal articles, and classical as well as contemporary works discussing '*urf*', Islamic jurisprudence, local traditions, and Islamic educational values. Secondary sources include reputable journal articles,

conference proceedings, dissertations, and research reports related to Islamic education, local wisdom, character education, and socio-cultural studies of Maluku society.

Data were collected through documentation and literature review. Relevant publications were identified, selected, classified, and critically evaluated from credible academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The collected literature was organized into several themes: (1) *'urf* and cultural accommodation in Islamic law; (2) local wisdom and indigenous knowledge; (3) Islamic educational values; (4) value transformation and character education; and (5) studies on Maluku cultural traditions, particularly the Kulfot tradition. Document analysis was used to identify patterns, concepts, and values found in the selected sources. (JR Bowen, 2003) . To examine the educational dimension of the Kulfot tradition, a value identification matrix was employed. The analysis focused on moral values (*akhlaq*), social values such as cooperation and solidarity, spiritual values, civic values including deliberation (*shūrā*) and justice (*'adl*), and character-building values relevant to contemporary Islamic education. (Al-Attas, 1980; Halstead, 2007; Lickona, 1992).

The study uses three analytical frameworks. First, the *'urf* framework is applied to assess whether the Kulfot tradition fulfills the criteria of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* (valid custom) (Kamali, 2022) . Second, the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* framework is used to examine the contribution of these values to religious, intellectual, and social well-being (Auda, n.d.). Third, the framework of Islamic educational values is employed to analyze the relevance of these values for character formation and value transmission in Islamic education. (Al-Attas, 1980; Ashraf, 1985) .

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis was used to interpret the explicit and implicit meanings in the literature (Krippendorff, 2018). At the same time, thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring themes such as solidarity, responsibility, deliberation, moral integrity, and social cohesion. (Braun, V., & Clarke, 2021) .

The process of analysis followed three stages: (1) identification of cultural values within the Kulfot tradition; (2) validation of these values through the

perspectives of *'urf* and *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*; and (3) transformation of validated values into Islamic educational values applicable to character education and contextual learning. (Al-Attas, 1980; Ashraf, 1985) To ensure validity and credibility, the study applied source triangulation and theory triangulation. Findings from different disciplines—including Islamic law, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and Islamic education—were compared and analyzed using multiple theoretical perspectives. Only credible academic sources published by reputable journals, publishers, and research institutions were included in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Kulfot Tradition

The Kulfot tradition is one of the typical cultural heritage of the Seram people in Maluku Province, which plays an important role as a social and spiritual mechanism in maintaining the balance and harmony of life together. This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation, especially in the East and Central Seram regions. It reflects the values of cooperation, solidarity, and respect for customary norms rooted in Islamic teachings. Implementation of Kulfot. It usually occurs in various social contexts, such as weddings, deaths, traditional house construction, and religious ceremonies. In practice, every member of the community is required to participate in assisting in the form of energy, materials, and moral support as a form of social responsibility. This tradition shows the function of Kulfot as a form of 'urf sahih, which is a widely accepted habit because it contains beneficial value (maṣlaḥah), which is in line with the principles of Islamic teachings (Wattimena, 2014).

As explained by Wattimena (Wattimena, 2014) in his research on the social system of the southern coastal communities of Seram Island, *Kulfot* depicts a pattern of social relations that emphasizes balance, togetherness, and mutual respect. This tradition is closely related to the concept of Squirrel, a form of cooperation and mutual support integral to the cultural identity of the Maluku people. The moral values contained in the *Kulfot* not only strengthen social solidarity but also form the collective character of a society oriented

towards harmony and common welfare. Thus, *Kulfot* can be understood as a social institution that regulates human relations based on complementary Islamic traditional values and spirituality.

Furthermore, Handoko (Handoko & Agency, 2024) explains that the people of Seram have a high cosmological awareness of the origins and social order, based on mythology, São Paulo, São Paulo, which is believed to be the center of the Moluccan civilization. In this view, man is positioned as an integral part of the sacred order of nature and is therefore required to maintain a balance of relationships with others, nature, and God. The *Kulfot* tradition is a concrete manifestation of this cosmological consciousness in daily social life. Through the implementation of *Kulfot*, the community not only strengthens social relationships but also fulfills moral and spiritual responsibilities towards fellow human beings as part of their devotion to God.

Research conducted by Gufron (2020) at IAIN Ambon found that social practices in the Seram area, including *Kulfot*, contain distinctive dimensions of gender and spirituality. This tradition affirms the proportional roles of men and women in traditional activities, reflecting the principles of justice and equality that are in line with Islamic values. Although not regulated in formal legal texts, the values contained in *the Kulfot* represent the principles of *maqāṣ id al-sharī'ah*, especially in the protection of the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), and honor (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*). Thus, *Kulfot* not only functions as an expression of local customs but also reflects the adaptive and dynamic Islamic cultural praxis in the social context of Maluku society.

In addition, *Kulfot* also strengthens the idea of maritime Islam in the eastern archipelago of Indonesia. As explained by Lonthor, the development of Islam in Seram took place peacefully through adaptation to local culture, without creating normative tensions between religious teachings and local customs. In this context, the *Kulfot* serves as a symbol of coexistence between customary norms and sharia values, which unite in create social and religious harmony. Through *Kulfot*, *Islam is understood not only as a theological system but also as a social system that is alive and firmly rooted in the local people's culture.*

Thus, *the Kulfot* tradition can be seen as a *living tradition* that reflects the harmonious interaction between Islamic customs, culture, and law. The social

values it contains remain relevant today as a source of local wisdom with great potential in strengthening the social and spiritual development of the Seram community. The study of this tradition is of high urgency in efforts to preserve the Islamic cultural heritage of the archipelago in eastern Indonesia, as well as to enrich the discourse of Islamic law based on a more inclusive, locally contextual approach.

'Urf Values Contained in the *Kulfot Tradition*

a. Solidarity

Solidarity is a core value of the Kulfot tradition, strengthening social bonds and collective awareness among the Seram people. This reflects Durkheim's concept of social solidarity, which is built on shared norms and values. (Durkheim, 2018) In Islamic jurisprudence, it can be classified as *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* because it is widely practiced, socially accepted, and consistent with Islamic principles. It also supports *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* by promoting social welfare and cohesion (Auda, n.d.). From an educational perspective, solidarity aligns with the goals of *tarbiyah* and *ta'dīb*, fostering socially responsible and ethically aware individuals. (Al-Attas, 1980) .

b. Cooperation and Help

Cooperation (*gotong royong*) is another important value reflected in Kulfot, where community members voluntarily help one another without expecting material rewards. This practice embodies the Islamic principle of *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance) and qualifies as *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* because it strengthens social cohesion and generates public benefit. It also supports the objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* by promoting welfare and preventing social harm. (Kamali, 2022) . Educationally, it integrates *ta'līm* and *tarbiyah* by cultivating empathy, generosity, and commitment to the common good through direct experience.

c. Collective Responsibility

Kulfot emphasizes collective responsibility, where participation in communal affairs is viewed as a shared obligation. This reflects the Islamic concept of *amanah* (trust and responsibility), encouraging accountability and social commitment. As a form of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ*, it contributes to social order and communal welfare while supporting the objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*.

In Islamic education, this value embodies *ta'dīb* by nurturing disciplined and responsible individuals who are conscious of their social duties.

d. Social Harmony

The Kulfot tradition promotes social harmony by strengthening mutual trust, encouraging dialogue, and reducing the potential for conflict. As a form of *maṣlaḥah*, it fulfills the criteria of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* because it contributes to social stability and welfare. This value also supports the broader aims of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. In educational terms, it reflects the objectives of *tarbiyah* and *ta'dīb*, fostering tolerance, respect, and peaceful coexistence within society.

e. Deliberation

Deliberation (*shūrā*) is a key feature of Kulfot, with communal decisions reached through consultation and consensus. This participatory process reflects an important Islamic principle that promotes justice, inclusiveness, and collective wisdom (Kamali, 2022). As such, it qualifies as *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* and contributes to the realization of public welfare and social participation. In Islamic education, deliberation integrates *ta'līm*, *tarbiyah*, and *ta'dīb* by developing critical thinking, social maturity, openness, and respect for others' opinions.

Overall, the values of solidarity, cooperation, collective responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation demonstrate that Kulfot is not merely a cultural practice but also a source of normative values that fulfill the criteria of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ*, support the objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, and reflect the educational orientations of *tarbiyah*, *ta'dīb*, and *ta'līm*. These findings show that Kulfot provides a strong foundation for integrating local wisdom into Islamic education and illustrates the dynamic interaction between culture, Islamic law, and education in Seram society.

DISCUSSION

Reinterpreting Kulfot as a Cultural Learning Space

The findings of this study indicate that Kulfot should not be understood merely as a traditional tradition or socio-cultural institution, but also as a culturally based learning space that plays a role in transmitting values, norms, and collective identity from one generation to the next. The educational

significance of Kulfot lies in its function as an informal learning environment where community members acquire social knowledge through direct involvement, observation, and shared experiences in communal life. (Bowe, 2009) . In this social space, values such as solidarity, cooperation, collective responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation are not taught through structured formal instruction. However, they are instead experienced and internalized through ongoing cultural practices. This process reflects the characteristics of contextual and experiential learning, in which knowledge and values develop through real involvement in everyday situations, not simply through the transfer of abstract knowledge. From an Islamic educational perspective, Kulfot can be understood as a community-based pedagogical arena that integrates tarbiyah, ta'lim, and ta'dib, thereby enabling individuals to develop intellectual understanding, moral awareness, and social competence simultaneously. This interpretation also reinforces the view that local wisdom is a source of knowledge that has important epistemological value in enriching Islamic educational practices that are responsive to culture and rooted in the social realities of society. (V Braun, 2006) .

The interpretation developed in this study differs fundamentally from most previous studies on local wisdom and Islamic education. Previous studies generally focused on integrating local traditions into formal educational settings, for example, through the development of a local wisdom-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum, the implementation of active learning strategies, or the use of culturally responsive pedagogical models. These findings indicate that local culture can increase motivation to learn, strengthen students' cultural identity, and enhance the relevance of the educational process to the social context in which learning takes place. However, most of these studies still position local traditions as learning materials or pedagogical instruments used in formal education, rather than as autonomous learning spaces with their own educational mechanisms. (Mr., MIF, Anam, AM, Agustinova, DA, Prasastiawati, D., Awal, FRN, & Yaacob, 2024) . Likewise, studies regarding 'urf have so far focused more on aspects of legal legitimacy and the conformity of customs with the principles of Islamic law, especially in the areas of family law, customary practices, and socio-economic relations in society. As a result, the educational dimensions contained in traditions that

have received normative validation have received relatively less attention. Unlike these approaches, this study argues that Kulfot functions as a living educational institution in which cultural values are continuously reproduced, negotiated, and internalized through the active participation of community members. This perspective broadens the understanding of *'urf* and local wisdom by highlighting their pedagogical significance, not just their legal or cultural functions. (Yamamah, 2016) .

The main contribution of this research lies in proposing a new conceptual framework that connects culture, *'urf*, and Islamic education through the process of educational transformation. In contrast to views that treat culture only as an object of legal assessment or merely as a supporting resource in the learning process, this research positions Kulfot as a cultural learning space whose values first gain normative legitimacy through *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* and are then transformed into the values of Islamic education. (Auda, nd) . This perspective contributes to three areas of study at once. First, this research enriches Islamic educational theory by showing that community-based cultural practices can function as authentic and effective learning environments in character formation. Second, this study expands contemporary discourse on *'urf* by revealing its pedagogical implications, so that the concept is no longer understood solely as an instrument of legal accommodation. Third, this study contributes to the study of local wisdom by proposing a theoretical path of *Culture → 'Urf → Education*, which explains how the cultural values of indigenous communities can gain normative legitimacy while simultaneously becoming a source of educational knowledge and character formation. (Halstead, 2007) . In this context, Kulfot provides empirical evidence that cultural traditions are not merely passive legacies from the past but rather a dynamic, continuously evolving educational system that meaningfully transmits Islamic values, is rooted in local culture, and possesses strong transformative power in people's lives.

'Urf Beyond Legal Validation

Most studies on *'urf* have tended to position it as a legal instrument used to determine the permissibility or validity of customs and traditions within the framework of Islamic law. The main focus of these studies is generally to assess whether a cultural practice meets the criteria of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ*, so that it can be

accepted as a basis for legal considerations in various fields, such as family law, economic transactions, and social practices. (Auda, nd) This legal approach indeed makes a significant contribution to explaining the adaptive nature of Islamic jurisprudence in response to societal dynamics. However, this orientation often limits the understanding of *'urf* to merely a normative instrument for accommodating social realities within a legal framework. As a result, the social, cultural, and educational dimensions contained within *'urf* as a living system that transmits values between generations have not received adequate attention. (Kamali, 2022) . Many studies stop at the issue of legal legitimacy without further analyzing how culturally recognized practices shape collective consciousness, social learning processes, and moral formation in community life. Therefore, the pedagogical implications of *'urf* remain relatively underdeveloped, despite the concept's important role in bridging the gap between Islamic norms and everyday social realities. (Musfiroh, 2016) .

This study argues that *'urf* needs to be understood not only as a juridical mechanism, but also as an epistemological mechanism that enables society to build, maintain, and pass on knowledge from one generation to the next. Within this framework, *'urf* serves as a link between revealed norms and the lived experiences of society, so that Islamic values can be understood, interpreted, and realized within a specific cultural context. Recognizing a tradition as *'urf* not only indicates legal legitimacy, but also indicates that the tradition has undergone a process of collective social validation and developed into a vessel that holds shared meaning, ethical principles, and communal wisdom. (Hassan, SA, & Batool, 2024) . This perspective aligns with the historical reality that Islamic law utilizes *'urf* as a means to bridge universal religious principles with diverse local cultural realities, thus creating a balance between the continuity of Islamic teachings and their relevance to the societal context. Through traditions such as Kulfot, *'urf* operates as a form of social epistemology, where knowledge is acquired not only through formal education but also through direct engagement, observation, and communal practices that occur in everyday life. (Hassan, SA, & Khan, 2021) . Thus, cultural practices become learning spaces that enable community members to continually learn, internalize, and reproduce ethical values, social responsibility, and religious principles.

The main theoretical contribution of this research lies in its attempt to reconceptualize 'urf as a mediating framework that connects culture, Islamic law, and Islamic education in one interconnected flow. (Khan, 2026) . In contrast to conventional approaches that emphasize the role of 'urf as an instrument of legal accommodation, this study shows that 'urf also serves an educational function, enabling socially recognized cultural practices to be transformed into sources of meaningful value formation. Through a study of the Kulfot tradition, this study shows that cultural traditions that have been validated through 'urf can function as an effective educational resource in fostering solidarity, cooperation, responsibility, social harmony, and the ethics of deliberation. (Yusuf, SAM, Yusliani, H., Idrus, AW, & BK, 2026) . Based on these findings, this article proposes a conceptual model of *Culture* → *'Urf* → *Education*, which positions 'urf as an epistemological bridge that transforms local cultural experiences into Islamic educational values. This model contributes to the development of Islamic educational theory by expanding the role of 'urf beyond the realm of legal reasoning and positioning it as a conceptual framework for understanding how Islamic values are transmitted through learning processes rooted in the culture of society. Thus, this research opens up a new research space that integrates local wisdom, Islamic jurisprudence, and educational transformation in a more comprehensive and integrated analytical perspective.

Cultural Transmission of Islamic Educational Values

The process of transmitting Islamic educational values in the Kulfot tradition occurs through continuous social interaction, active involvement of community members, and participation in various cultural practices, rather than through structured, formal learning mechanisms. The community, especially the younger generation, acquires and internalizes these values by observing, emulating, and directly engaging in communal activities that reflect shared norms and ethical principles. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of *cultural transmission, namely the process of passing on knowledge, beliefs, and values from one generation to the next through collective experiences and social practices* within the community. (Cavalli-Sforza, L. L., & Feldman, 1981) . In the Kulfot context, values such as solidarity, cooperation, responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation are not merely conveyed as conceptual moral

teachings. However, they are experienced directly through traditional practice. This experiential learning model aligns with the principles of Islamic education, which place habituation and the appreciation of values (*ta'dīb*) as a more effective means of shaping moral and spiritual personality than merely cognitive knowledge transfer (*ta'lim*) (Al-Attas, 1980). Therefore, Kulfot can be understood as a cultural medium that enables Islamic educational values to be naturally inherited, reproduced, and maintained from generation to generation. From the perspective of *'urf*, this process demonstrates that customs accepted and recognized by society can function as an effective means of maintaining and transmitting normative values that are in line with Islamic principles.

The success of passing down values in the Kulfot tradition is inseparable from the community's active role as the primary educational environment. In Islamic educational thought, the educational process occurs not only in formal institutions but also in the family, community, and cultural environment, which serve as important agents in shaping individual character. In the Seram community, traditional elders, religious figures, community leaders, and family members collectively take part in maintaining and passing down the values embodied in the Kulfot tradition. Their involvement forms a communal learning ecosystem that allows ethical norms to be reinforced through social expectations, shared participation, and collective responsibility. This pattern aligns with social learning theory, which explains that values and behavior are formed through the process of observation, interaction, and involvement with social figures who have significant influence in an individual's life. Furthermore, the communal character inherent in Kulfot strengthens the legitimacy of inherited values, as the learning process occurs within a social framework that has been collectively recognized and validated across generations. Thus, society functions not only as a social group but also as a living educational institution that continuously instills Islamic values through daily cultural practices.

In addition to the community's role, the Kulfot tradition itself is a crucial tool in maintaining the continuity and transmission of Islamic educational values. Tradition is understood not only as customs inherited from the past but also as a repository of collective memory, cultural identity, and moral knowledge that shape how communities understand and organize their social

lives. (Geertz, 1973) . In Kulfot practice, repeated participation in customary activities helps community members internalize social norms and ethical values that align with the goals of Islamic education. From an '*urf perspective*, a tradition acquires normative meaning because it embodies socially accepted values, is consistently practiced, and does not conflict with the principles of Islamic law. (Kamali, 2022) . Therefore, Kulfot can be viewed as a cultural infrastructure for values education, providing a contextual, relevant, and culturally meaningful learning framework for integrating Islamic teachings into the community's daily life. These findings demonstrate that the transmission of Islamic educational values occurs not only in mosques, schools, or formal religious institutions but also through local cultural traditions, which serve as effective informal educational spaces. Thus, Kulfot demonstrates how local wisdom can maintain the sustainability of Islamic values while preserving the cultural identity of the Seram community in the face of ongoing social change.

Implications for Islamic Education

The findings of this study have important implications for the development of Islamic education curricula, particularly in efforts to build contextual, responsive educational models that reflect society's cultural realities. The values contained in the Kulfot tradition, such as solidarity, cooperation, collective responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation, demonstrate that local wisdom can be a substantial source in the development of educational materials, alongside normative Islamic teachings. In this perspective, culture is no longer positioned as an element outside the education system, but rather as an integral part that can be accommodated through the framework of '*urf al - ṣ aḥīḥ*. This approach allows for a closer relationship between Islamic principles and the socio-cultural realities students face in their daily lives. In line with the concept of culturally responsive education, integrating local knowledge and community experiences into the educational process is believed to enhance the relevance of learning and strengthen the internalization of values (Gay, 2018). In the context of Islamic education, developing a curriculum grounded in local wisdom can help students understand Islam not only as a set of normative doctrines but also as a living tradition capable of engaging in constructive dialogue with the community's culture. Therefore, Kulfot can be seen as a concrete example of

how local cultural resources help shape a more contextual, adaptive, and socially meaningful Islamic education curriculum.

In addition to the curriculum aspect, the results of this study also have significant implications for learning practices and pedagogical approaches in Islamic education. The Kulfot tradition demonstrates that learning occurs not only in the classroom or formal educational institutions but also through direct involvement in the community's social and cultural activities. This finding underscores the relevance of experiential and community-based learning models, which emphasize direct interaction with real-life situations to develop knowledge, skills, and life values. From the perspective of Islamic education, such an approach reflects the integration of *ta'līm* as knowledge transfer, *tarbiyah* as holistic personality development, and *ta'dīb* as the formation of ethics and manners. The educational process reflected in the Kulfot practice demonstrates that local cultural experiences, collaborative activities, and community participation can be important components in the design of Islamic learning. In this way, students do not only act as passive recipients of religious information, but also as active subjects who build understanding and meaningful learning experiences based on the cultural context in which they live.

This research also makes an important contribution to strengthening character education in Islamic educational institutions. The values found in the Kulfot tradition are closely related to the moral goals of Islamic education, such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, respect for others, empathy, and social commitment. Character building is one of the main goals of Islamic education, which seeks to produce individuals who not only possess personal moral qualities but are also capable of carrying out social responsibilities in community life. (Halstead, 2007) . Through repeated involvement in various cultural activities, members of society gradually internalize these values until they become part of their habits and character, rather than mere theoretical knowledge. This phenomenon is in line with Lickona's view. (Lickona, 1992) who emphasized that effective character education must integrate three main dimensions, namely moral knowledge, moral *feeling*, and moral action. In this context, Kulfot shows that local cultural traditions can serve as an effective informal system of character education by fostering ethical behavior through

real-world experiences in social experiences. Therefore, the integration of cultural values that are deeply rooted in society into Islamic education programs can strengthen efforts to develop individuals with noble morals and high social responsibility.

Another important implication relates to strengthening religious moderation (*wasatīyyah*) in contemporary Islamic education. The values imbued in the Kulfot tradition encourage a culture of dialogue, collective decision-making, respect for differences, and social harmony, all of which align with the principles of moderation in Islamic teachings. The concept of religious moderation emphasizes balance, openness, tolerance, and the ability to coexist peacefully amid societal diversity (Azra, A., & Thaha, 2020). In the context of a multicultural society like Maluku, local traditions that prioritize cooperation and solidarity across social groups can serve as a strong cultural foundation for strengthening moderate religious attitudes. The practice of deliberation and efforts to maintain harmony reflected in the Kulfot provide a concrete illustration of how Islamic values can be realized through cultural mechanisms rooted in community life and oriented toward strengthening social cohesion, rather than exclusivism. Thus, the integration of local wisdom into Islamic education not only enhances cultural relevance in the learning process but also contributes to the formation of a generation of moderate, inclusive Muslims with a high level of social awareness in they face the complexities of a pluralistic society in the contemporary era.

CONCLUSION

The Seram community contains various cultural values that are in line with the principles of *al-'urf al-ṣaḥīḥ* and have strong relevance for the development of Islamic education. The study found that solidarity, cooperation, collective responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation are the main values inherent in the practice of Kulfot. These values are not merely cultural expressions but also function as a social mechanism that sustains and passes down ethical norms, communal responsibility, and collective identity across generations. Furthermore, this study reveals that Kulfot serves as a cultural learning space that enables Islamic values to be internalized through direct

involvement, social interaction, and shared life experiences, not only through the formal learning process in educational institutions.

The findings of this study also address the research questions posed. The values contained in Kulfot have been proven to meet the criteria for legitimate '*urf*' because they have received social recognition, are consistently practiced in community life, and do not conflict with the basic principles of Islamic teachings. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that these cultural values undergo educational transformation through mechanisms of cultural transmission and communal participation. In this context, Kulfot functions as a mediating institution that facilitates the translation of local cultural values into Islamic educational values. The analysis also confirms that the relationship between culture and Islamic education is not contradictory, but rather complementary. Local traditions can be an effective means of maintaining and transmitting Islamic ethical values in accordance with the social and cultural characteristics of the society in which these values develop.

The main theoretical contribution of this research lies in its attempt to reconstruct the understanding of '*urf*', which has so far been positioned more as an instrument of legal validation. Most previous studies focused on the legal function of '*urf*' in determining the validity or permissibility of a custom from an Islamic legal perspective. This study expands this scope by showing that '*urf*' also has epistemological and educational functions. Through an analysis of the Kulfot tradition, this study offers a conceptual framework of *Culture* → '*Urf*' → *Education*, which explains how cultural practices first gain normative legitimacy through '*urf*' and are then transformed into Islamic educational values. This conceptual framework contributes to the development of Islamic educational theory by presenting a new perspective in understanding the relationship between local wisdom, Islamic law, and the educational process in an integrated manner.

From a practical perspective, the results of this study emphasize the importance of integrating values rooted in local culture into contemporary Islamic educational practices. The values that live in the Kulfot tradition can be a relevant source for curriculum development, contextual learning, character education, and strengthening religious moderation. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions need to move beyond a purely normative approach and

begin to optimize the potential of local culture, which is closely tied to students' life experiences. This approach has the potential to enhance the relevance of Islamic education, sustain cultural heritage, and strengthen social cohesion in a pluralistic society. Within this framework, local wisdom should be viewed not merely as cultural heritage to be preserved but also as an educational asset that supports the development of a holistic human being across moral, intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions.

However, this study still has several limitations that warrant consideration. As a qualitative study based on a literature review, all analyses are compiled from written sources and conceptual interpretations, so they do not involve direct observation of Kulfot practices in contemporary community life. This condition means that research findings are not yet fully capable of capturing the diversity of practices, forms of local adaptation, and life experiences of communities related to these traditions in various regions of Seram Island. In addition, the research focus is more directed at the normative and educational dimensions, so that other aspects, such as political dynamics, economic changes, and intergenerational transformation in the Kulfot tradition, have not been studied in depth. These limitations indicate the need for further empirical research to enrich and test the conceptual arguments developed in this study.

Based on the findings, further research can be pursued along several study directions. First, ethnographic research and field studies need to be conducted to examine in more depth how Kulfot values are practiced, negotiated, and inherited in contemporary community life. Second, comparative research involving various local traditions in Maluku and Eastern Indonesia can provide a broader understanding of the relationship between local wisdom, 'urf, and Islamic education. Third, future studies can develop and test educational models based on *the Culture → 'urf → Education framework, both in formal, non-formal, and community-based Islamic educational institutions. Such efforts* will not only enrich the academic literature on culturally responsive Islamic education but also contribute to the development of educational practices that are more contextual, socially meaningful, and aligned with the cultural realities of Muslim communities.

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