

Integrating the Philosophy of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* in Early Childhood Education Management: An Ethnopedagogical Approach in Dompu Regency, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the integration of the local philosophical value "*Nggahi Rawi Pahu*" into the management of Early Childhood Education (ECE) through an ethnopedagogical approach in Dompu Regency, Indonesia. In the context of accelerating globalization, early childhood education faces increasing challenges in maintaining cultural relevance, often resulting in the marginalization of local wisdom. This research is therefore significant as it seeks to reposition indigenous values as a foundational element in shaping children's character, social awareness, and cultural identity from an early age. The study aims to explore how "*Nggahi Rawi Pahu*" is conceptualized and operationalized within ECE management practices and to examine its pedagogical implications. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis involving teachers, school principals, parents, and community leaders. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to uncover patterns of meaning and forms of value integration across educational processes. The findings demonstrate that "*Nggahi Rawi Pahu*", which embodies principles of harmony, mutual respect, responsibility, and collective solidarity, is not merely symbolically acknowledged but substantively integrated into learning planning, classroom interactions, and institutional culture. The novelty of this study lies in showing that local wisdom is used as a practical teaching framework, not just as cultural knowledge, and plays a direct role in shaping students' character and learning behavior. Teachers function as cultural agents who translate abstract philosophical values into concrete pedagogical practices, thereby fostering a culturally responsive learning environment. These findings suggest that the integration of local wisdom through ethnopedagogical strategies strengthens the relevance and transformative capacity of ECE management. The study offers a conceptual contribution by articulating a culturally grounded model of early childhood education that is both context-sensitive and globally relevant.

Keywords: *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*; Ethnopedagogy; ECE Management; Local Wisdom; Indigenous Values.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The trajectory of contemporary education increasingly reflects a strong inclination toward standardization, efficiency, and globally comparable outcomes (Benson et al., 2025). This orientation is closely linked to the demands of globalization, where education systems are expected to produce measurable competencies that can compete at an international level (Rasidi

et al., 2025). However, beyond its practical advantages, this trend also raises critical concerns regarding the narrowing of educational meaning, particularly when learning is reduced to the achievement of quantifiable indicators rather than the holistic development of learners (Oktaviani et al., 2025). In practice, this focus often leads to an overemphasis on tests, scores, and academic results. As a result, important aspects such as character, values, and social awareness receive less attention. Education risks becoming too technical and losing its broader purpose. In addition, uniform global standards can make learning less relevant to students' local context and daily life. Therefore, while global competitiveness is important, education also needs to balance it with local values and holistic development so that students grow not only academically, but also personally and socially.

While such tendencies are often seen as necessary in a rapidly interconnected world, they also bring an unintended consequence: the gradual distancing of education from its cultural roots (Suri & Chandra, 2021). Education, which traditionally functions as a medium for transmitting values, traditions, and local wisdom, risks becoming detached from the socio-cultural contexts in which learners are embedded (Fitrianto & Farisi, 2025). As a result, students may experience a form of disconnection from their own cultural identity, as learning materials and approaches are increasingly standardized and less responsive to local realities (Fitrianto & Farisi, 2025). This condition is particularly consequential in early childhood education (ECE), a formative phase in which learning is inseparable from the process of becoming, of developing identity, values, and a sense of belonging (Khadijah et al., 2022).

At this stage, children do not merely acquire cognitive skills but also construct their understanding of the world through social interaction, cultural experience, and meaningful engagement with their environment (Ita & Ngonu, 2025). Therefore, the absence of cultural relevance in early learning may affect not only knowledge acquisition but also the formation of character and identity (Nengah et al., 2018). In this context, it becomes essential to reconsider how educational practices can maintain a balance between global demands and local relevance. Integrating cultural values into learning processes is not simply an effort to preserve tradition, but also a strategic approach to ensure that education remains meaningful, contextual, and responsive to the developmental needs of learners (Sakti et al., 2024a). By grounding educational practices in cultural contexts, early childhood education can function not only as a space for academic preparation but also as a foundation for building socially and culturally rooted individuals (Dzanaity, 2024).

In many educational settings, especially at the early childhood level, learning practices tend to adopt general frameworks that are not always in dialogue with the cultural context of the child (Keddie, 2022). As a result, education risks losing its depth, functioning merely as a transfer of knowledge rather than as a meaningful process of value formation (Sato et al., 2023). In contrast, educational practices that grow from within the cultural environment of learners often demonstrate a stronger capacity to nurture character, social awareness, and emotional connection (Williams et al., 2022). In practice, children learn best when new knowledge is linked to what they already know from their daily life. When lessons ignore their language, traditions, or social environment, children may find it harder to understand and feel less connected to the learning process. This can reduce their interest and participation in class. On the other hand, when teachers use familiar examples, local stories, and cultural practices, learning becomes more engaging and easier to understand. Therefore, integrating cultural context into early childhood education is important. It helps children not only gain knowledge, but also develop a sense of identity, belonging, and positive values that guide their behavior in everyday life.

This contrast suggests that cultural grounding is not peripheral, but intrinsic to the very purpose of education (Qoumariah et al., 2025). Within the Indonesian context, local philosophies continue to live and evolve within communities, offering rich ethical and social insights (Rasidi et al., 2025). One such philosophy is *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*, deeply embedded in the social fabric of the Dompu community (Fonsén et al., 2023). It conveys principles of mutual respect, harmony, responsibility, and collective consciousness values that resonate closely with the aims of early childhood education (Schaack et al., 2022). Yet, despite its relevance, this philosophy has largely remained within the sphere of lived tradition and has not been fully articulated within formal educational management. A closer look reveals a subtle but persistent gap.

On the one hand, educational discourse increasingly emphasizes the importance of character education and contextual learning (Benson et al., 2025). On the other hand, institutional practices often remain oriented toward administrative order and procedural compliance, with limited engagement with the cultural dimension. This disconnection raises an important question: how can local philosophical values be meaningfully translated into the structures and practices of educational management? In this regard, ethnopedagogy offers a thoughtful pathway. In practice, this requires more than adding cultural content to the curriculum. It involves integrating values into lesson planning, teaching methods, school rules, and teacher student interactions (Bockmann & Yu, 2023). Without this integration, local values risk being treated only as symbolic elements rather than as guiding principles in education (Archer et al., 2024). In this regard, ethnopedagogy offers a thoughtful pathway. Ethnopedagogy views local culture as a source of knowledge and a foundation for teaching and learning. It encourages educators to connect lessons with students' cultural experiences, making learning more relevant and meaningful (Jeon et al., 2024). Through this approach, local philosophical values can move from abstract ideas into concrete educational practices, shaping not only what students learn, but also how they think, behave, and relate to others.

By viewing culture not just as content but as a living source of knowledge, ethnopedagogy helps shift education toward context, experience, and meaning. It allows local values to shape not only what is taught, but also how learning is organized and practiced in schools. However, in reality, the integration of local wisdom in early childhood education is still limited. Many schools still rely on standard curricula and administrative routines, with little connection to children's cultural backgrounds. Local values are often only introduced as additional material, not as a core part of how teaching and school management are carried out. This makes learning less meaningful and less connected to children's daily lives. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of local wisdom and culturally responsive education, especially for character building. However, most of them focus on classroom activities and learning content. There is still limited research on how local philosophical values are applied in the management of early childhood education, such as in planning, school culture, and daily practices. This shows a clear gap that needs to be explored further. Based on this gap, this study aims to understand how the philosophy of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is integrated into early childhood education management in Dompu Regency. It also explores how this integration shapes learning practices that are more meaningful, relevant, and connected to children's cultural context.

2. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the integration of the local philosophy *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* in the management of early childhood education (ECE) through an ethnopedagogical approach in Dompu Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate as it allows for an in-depth understanding of cultural meanings, social practices, and educational processes as they naturally occur within their context (Mukherji & Albon, 2022). The research was conducted in several early childhood education institutions in Dompu Regency, which were selected purposively based on their relevance to the application of local cultural values. The participants consisted of 15 individual, include school principals, teachers, parents, and community leaders who were considered to have direct experience and understanding of the implementation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* within educational practices (Fonsén et al., 2023). Data were analyzed using thematic analysis with the help of NVivo. First, open coding was used to label key statements, for example value modeling and habit formation. Next, axial coding grouped these into categories like classroom interaction and school culture. Then, selective coding produced main themes such as value internalization through daily interaction. The results were arranged into a clear hierarchy of themes and sub-themes, showing how the values are integrated across practices. This structure is presented in Figure 1. To ensure validity, the findings were checked through data triangulation and participant confirmation. NVivo helped organize the data and clearly show the relationships between themes.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the coding process were represented in a hierarchical structure of themes and sub-themes, as illustrated in Figure 1.

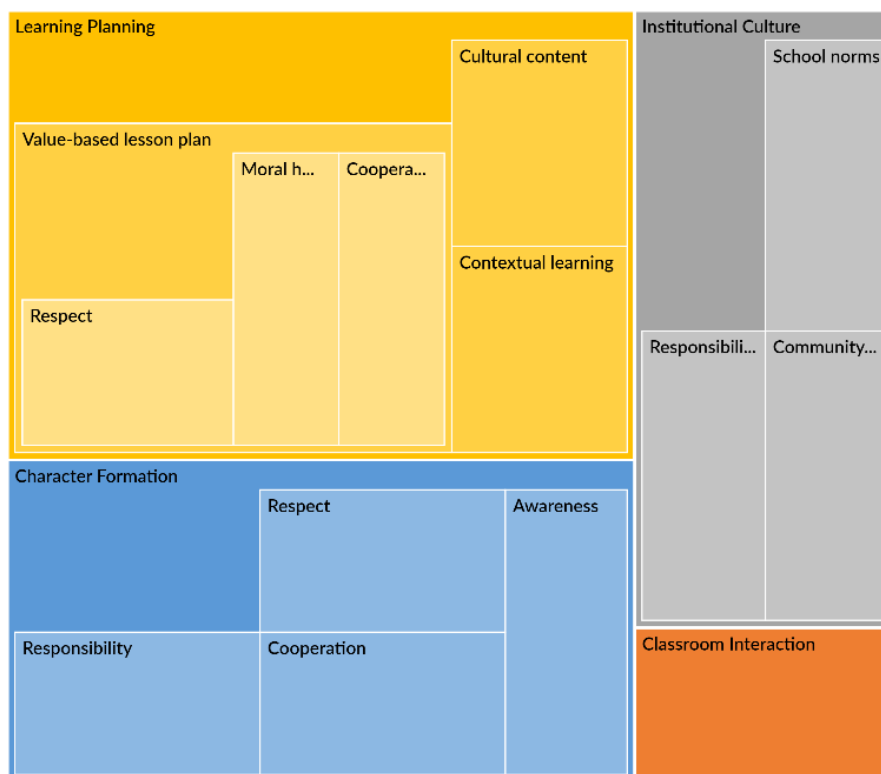


Figure 1. Hierarchical Coding Structure of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* Integration in Early Childhood Education Management

The hierarchical coding structure presented in Figure 1 illustrates the analytical process undertaken in this study using NVivo. The figure demonstrates how the integration of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is conceptually organized into four main dimensions: learning planning, classroom interaction, institutional culture, and character formation. Each dimension is further elaborated into sub-themes derived from the coding process, reflecting patterns identified from the empirical data. This hierarchical model indicates that the integration of local philosophical values is not confined to a single aspect of education but extends across interconnected domains of educational management. It also reflects the iterative nature of qualitative analysis, where initial codes are progressively refined into broader thematic categories. Through this visualization, the study highlights the systematic transformation of raw qualitative data into meaningful analytical constructs. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied data triangulation across sources and methods, as well as member checking to validate the accuracy of participants' responses. These procedures were employed to strengthen the credibility and dependability of the research results.

This is reflected in participants' experiences. One teacher explained, *"We do not only teach values, we show them every day through the way we speak and treat the children."* This statement highlights that values are not merely taught as concepts but are lived through everyday actions. Similarly, a parent noted, *"My child has become more respectful at home because they are used to being respected at school."* These accounts suggest that character development mainly takes place through daily habits and relationships rather than through formal instruction alone. From an educational management perspective, the integration of these values can be seen more concretely. In the planning stage, the values of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* are included in lesson plans, although often in a general form. In the organizing stage, schools involve teachers and parents in activities that reflect shared values. In the implementation stage, the values are most visible, expressed through routines, interactions, and teacher modeling in the classroom. In the evaluation stage, assessment is mainly conducted through observation of children's behavior and attitudes, rather than through structured instruments. These findings show that the main strength of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* integration lies in its lived practice rather than in formal documentation. On the one hand, this is a strength because the values are genuinely experienced by children. On the other hand, it also indicates a need to strengthen planning and evaluation so that the integration becomes more systematic and sustainable.

3.1 Understanding the Meaning and Cultural Foundation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*

The findings indicate that *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is not merely positioned as a regional slogan, but functions as a deeply embedded cultural value that shapes the worldview and moral orientation of the Dompu community. Evidence from interviews, observations, and documentation consistently demonstrates that this philosophy operates as a normative framework guiding both individual conduct and collective social practices. In this sense, *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* can be understood not only as a cultural expression but as a lived ethical system that regulates social behavior through shared expectations and internalized values. From a theoretical perspective, this finding resonates with Clifford Geertz's view of culture as a system of meaning that is publicly shared and symbolically constructed.

The philosophy of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* embodies such a system, where meaning is not abstract but enacted through everyday practices. At the same time, the internalization of this philosophy aligns with Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, in which cultural values become embodied dispositions that guide actions without requiring explicit regulation (Sudarmansyah et al., 2024). This explains why participants consistently referred to the philosophy as something "naturally

practiced” rather than formally imposed. Participants described *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* as a triadic structure consisting of *nggahi* (speech), *rawi* (action), and *pahu* (realization) (Hackett et al., 2023). Importantly, these elements are not interpreted as discrete or linear stages, but as an integrated moral continuum that emphasizes the alignment between intention, expression, and outcome.

This triadic alignment reflects what Anthony Giddens conceptualizes as the duality of structure, where social norms are both shaped by and reproduced through human actions. In this context, the philosophy does not merely prescribe behavior but is continuously enacted and reaffirmed through daily interaction (Kaukko et al., 2022). Furthermore, the emphasis on congruence between words and actions reveals a strong ethical orientation toward integrity and accountability (Clemente-Suárez et al., 2024). This aligns with contemporary discussions on character education, particularly the notion that moral values must be embodied in consistent behavior rather than rhetorical statements.

The recurring pattern across participants suggests that *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* functions as a moral filter through which actions are evaluated, thereby reinforcing social trust and communal cohesion. The consistency of this triadic understanding across diverse participant groups indicates the presence of a shared cultural schema that transcends individual interpretation (Chen, 2023). Rather than being contested or variably defined, *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* appears as a stable and collectively reproduced meaning system. This stability suggests that the philosophy operates as a form of cultural capital that sustains identity, regulates behavior, and provides a normative foundation for educational practices, particularly in early childhood settings where value internalization becomes a central concern (Ainun et al., 2025). The philosophy is also closely associated with the identity of Dompus as “*Bumi Nggahi Rawi Pahu*,” reflecting its strong cultural presence in both formal and informal contexts. Observational data further show that the use of the term extends beyond symbolic expression and is embedded in everyday communication practices. The following is a visual representation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Visual Representation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*

The visual representation in Figure 2 illustrates how *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is expressed symbolically through textual and artistic elements. The integration of the three conceptual components into a unified visual form reflects the coherence of meaning identified in the data. The clarity and contrast of the image ensure readability, both in digital and printed formats.

3.2 Thematic Structure of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* Integration in ECE Management

Further analysis is systematically structured across four interconnected thematic dimensions: learning planning, classroom interaction, institutional culture, and character formation. These dimensions do not operate as isolated categories; rather, they form a coherent framework through which cultural values are translated into educational practice. The learning planning dimension is evident in the incorporation of value-oriented content within lesson plans and daily instructional activities (Khadijah et al., 2022). This integration suggests that cultural values are not treated as supplementary elements, but are embedded as foundational components of pedagogical design (Yoon et al., 2022). The classroom interaction dimension reflects patterned forms of teacher–student engagement characterized by discipline, cooperation, and guided participation, indicating that value transmission occurs primarily through interactional processes rather than formal instruction alone.

At the institutional level, the institutional culture dimension encompasses routines, shared norms, and habitual practices that collectively reinforce a sense of responsibility within the school environment (Clemente-Suárez et al., 2024). These findings demonstrate that the philosophy is not confined to classroom settings but is institutionalized through everyday organizational practices. Meanwhile, character formation emerges as the most prominent dimension, emphasizing behavioral outcomes such as responsibility, discipline, and social awareness as the core objectives of educational practice (Sakti et al., 2024b). From an analytical standpoint, the interrelation among these themes reflects what Pierre Bourdieu conceptualizes as the reproduction of cultural values through structured practices, where dispositions are gradually internalized through repeated exposure (Julistiyana et al., 2025). At the same time, the integration across planning, interaction, and institutional culture aligns with Jerome Bruner’s perspective that learning is culturally situated and mediated through social interaction and shared meaning-making (Tatminingsih, 2022). The following is the Thematic Structure of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* Integration in ECE Management, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Thematic Structure of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* Integration in ECE Management

No	Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Description
1	Learning Planning	Value-based lesson plans; Daily activities	Integration of cultural values into structured learning plans and daily classroom activities
2	Classroom Interaction	Discipline; Cooperation; Guided participation	Teacher–student interaction emphasizing behavioral guidance and active participation
3	Institutional Culture	Routines; Norms; Shared practices	School environment that reinforces collective responsibility and value internalization
4	Character Formation	Responsibility; Discipline; Social awareness	Development of students’ character as the primary outcome of value integration
No	Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Description

The Table 1 presents the thematic structure derived from NVivo coding. It shows how the integration of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is organized into four main themes and further elaborated into specific sub-themes. Each category reflects a particular dimension of educational management, indicating that the philosophy is implemented through interconnected practices rather than isolated actions. Importantly, the holistic nature of these dimensions indicates that the implementation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* extends beyond formal curricular representation and becomes embedded in the lived experience of the educational environment. This suggests that

value internalization is achieved not through isolated interventions, but through the continuous alignment of pedagogical design, interactional practices, and institutional norms (Mariño et al., 2023). Such a pattern underscores the role of education as a cultural process in which meaning, behavior, and identity are simultaneously constructed and reproduced (Tretyakova et al., 2021).

3.3 Dominant Practices and Coding Density in Educational Implementation

This pattern suggests a distinction between prescribed values and lived values, where the philosophy gains its significance not through textual representation but through continuous enactment in everyday interactions. The dominance of character formation reflects a strong pedagogical orientation toward shaping students' behavior and moral dispositions, positioning education as a process of value internalization rather than mere knowledge transmission (Rasidi et al., 2025). At the same time, the prominence of classroom interaction highlights that the transmission of values occurs predominantly through relational and dialogic processes between teachers and students (Folayan et al., 2023). This indicates that meaning is co-constructed through interaction, rather than delivered unilaterally. In contrast, the relatively lower presence of learning planning and institutional culture suggests that these dimensions function as structural supports rather than primary sites of value realization.

Their limited visibility in the data implies that formal and organizational aspects of education provide a framework within which values are enacted, but do not themselves constitute the core arena of implementation. From a theoretical perspective, this pattern aligns with Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that learning and development occur through social interaction and guided participation (Marginson & Dang, 2017). The centrality of classroom interaction in the findings reinforces the idea that values are internalized through mediated engagement rather than abstract instruction. Additionally, the emphasis on repeated practice and behavioral alignment resonates with Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, where dispositions are formed and sustained through ongoing social practices (Minsih et al., 2025). Furthermore, the co-occurrence of dominant themes indicates that value internalization is not a linear process but a relational and iterative one, in which guidance, discipline, and participation operate as interconnected mechanisms (Formen & Pranoto, 2025). These processes collectively create a pedagogical environment in which cultural values are continuously reproduced and reinforced (Ferreira et al., 2025). Thus, the implementation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* can be understood as a dynamic practice embedded in interactional routines, rather than a static principle confined to formal educational structures. To further examine dominant patterns in the data, a word frequency analysis was conducted. The results are visualized in a word cloud that highlights the most frequently occurring terms, as shown in Figure 3.

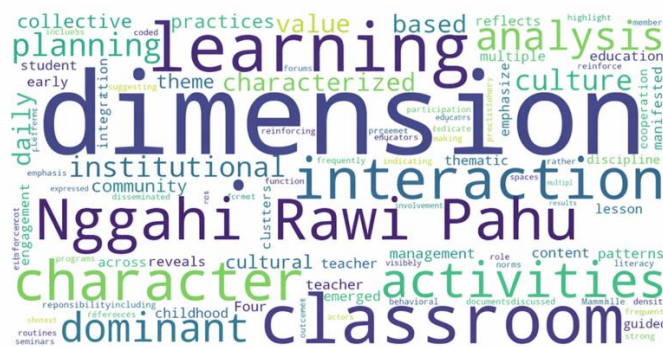


Figure 3. Word Cloud of Dominant Themes in *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* Integration

The word cloud analysis reveals that terms such as character, interaction, learning, values, and culture appear prominently across the dataset, indicating the central discursive focus of the study. The recurrence of these terms not only reflects their frequency in the data but also signals their conceptual significance within the implementation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*. In this sense, the visualization functions as a complementary analytical layer that reinforces the thematic patterns identified in the coding process, particularly the prominence of character formation and classroom interaction as key dimensions. Beyond mere frequency, the distribution of these dominant terms suggests that the philosophy is primarily articulated through behavioral practices and relational processes, rather than abstract conceptualization.

The visibility of interaction-related terms indicates that meaning is constructed through engagement, where values are enacted, negotiated, and reinforced in everyday educational encounters (Qoumariah et al., 2025). This pattern aligns with Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective, which posits that learning and value formation are mediated through social interaction and shared activity (Yildiz, 2025). Furthermore, the presence of terms associated with community activities and broader educational contexts suggests that the implementation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* extends beyond the boundaries of the classroom. The philosophy appears to operate across multiple social spaces, indicating its function as a collective cultural discourse rather than a context-specific educational tool (Zaror et al., 2022). This finding resonates with Etienne Wenger's concept of communities of practice, where knowledge and values are produced and sustained through participation in shared social practices. Taken together, the word cloud does not merely visualize frequency but reveals the discursive structure of the data, highlighting how key concepts cluster around interaction, behavior, and cultural meaning. This reinforces the interpretation that *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is enacted as a lived philosophy, embedded in both educational practices and wider community engagement.

The findings also reveal that the reinforcement of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* extends beyond formal educational settings into community-based activities. Coding results indicate frequent references to seminars, literacy programs, and cultural events as key spaces for disseminating and strengthening the philosophy. These activities involve multiple stakeholders, including educators, cultural practitioners, and community members (Wariloon & Boonsawasdgulchai, 2025). The data show that such forums function as platforms for collective meaning-making and value reinforcement, contributing to the sustainability of the philosophy across generations.

The presence of diverse participants including educators, cultural practitioners, and community members suggests that the transmission of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* operates through multi-actor engagement, enabling the philosophy to be continuously recontextualized across different social roles. This pattern aligns with Etienne Wenger's concept of communities of practice, in which knowledge and values are sustained through participation in communal activities (Kurian, 2025). The seminar functions not only as a site of information dissemination but also as a space where shared understanding is negotiated and reaffirmed (Rahimah & Koto, 2022). In this sense, the visibility of structured interaction and symbolic representation within the image reflects the broader process through which cultural philosophy is institutionalized and reproduced within the community. Moreover, the use of visual symbols and organized presentation formats indicates an effort to translate abstract cultural values into accessible and communicable forms. This suggests that the sustainability of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* is supported not only by lived practice but also by intentional strategies of cultural representation and public engagement.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* in early childhood education management in Dompu Regency operates as a culturally embedded framework that shapes educational practices in a holistic manner. The findings demonstrate that the philosophy is not merely conceptualized as a symbolic cultural identity, but is actively enacted through daily pedagogical practices, particularly in classroom interaction and character formation. These dimensions emerge as the most dominant, indicating that value internalization is primarily achieved through relational and behavioral processes rather than formal planning structures. The study further reveals that the implementation of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* extends beyond classroom settings into broader community contexts, where seminars, literacy activities, and collective forums function as spaces for reinforcing and disseminating cultural values. This indicates that the sustainability of the philosophy is supported by both institutional practices and community engagement, creating a continuous cycle of value reproduction across social contexts. The novelty of this research lies in its demonstration that local wisdom is not only integrated as cultural content, but functions as an operational framework that actively shapes educational management, particularly by positioning classroom interaction as the central mechanism for value internalization rather than relying primarily on formal planning structures. This shifts the understanding of culturally responsive education from a symbolic or curricular approach toward a practice-based and relational model. Theoretically, this study contributes to the understanding of culturally responsive education by showing how local wisdom can operate as a practical and embedded system in shaping both learning processes and institutional culture. Practically, the findings suggest that educational institutions should prioritize the alignment between planning, interaction, and institutional culture to ensure the effective internalization of values. For future research, it is recommended to explore the long-term impact of *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* integration on students' behavioral development and learning outcomes. In addition, comparative studies across different cultural contexts are needed to examine how similar local philosophies can be adapted and implemented in diverse educational settings.

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