

## Character Education Implementation Strategies Based on Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah: A Study at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota

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**Abstract.** Generation Z faces significant moral and social challenges in the digital and globalized era, often leading to shifts in values and behavior. In the context of West Sumatra, character education needs to be aligned with local wisdom, particularly the philosophy of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK), which integrates Minangkabau cultural values with Islamic teachings. This study aims to analyze the strategies for implementing character education at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota and its relevance to the ABS-SBK principles. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The results indicate that character education at the school is implemented through role modeling, curriculum integration, extracurricular activities, school culture, reward and punishment systems, and educational discipline. The character values developed among Generation Z students include honesty, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, empathy, politeness, and diligence. These values reflect moral integrity and social responsibility that align with both Islamic norms and local culture. The relevance of character education to the ABS-SBK philosophy is evident in the integration of Islamic values with local traditions, such as the principles of Syarak Mangato Adat Mamakai and Kesudahan Adat Ka Balai Urang. This integration fosters balanced moral character—religious, culturally aware, and socially responsible—while preparing students to face the challenges of the digital era.

**Keywords:** Character education, Generation Z, Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah

### 1. Introduction

Character education is a crucial aspect of developing human resources with integrity and competitiveness. In the context of education in Indonesia, character education not only functions as an effort to shape individuals with moral integrity but also serves as a moral foundation for young generations in facing social dynamics and technological developments. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, now represents the largest group in Indonesia, accounting for nearly 28% of the total population (BPS, 2020). Growing up amidst rapid digital advancements, they face significant challenges in character formation, such as reduced face-to-face social interaction, increased

individualism, and the risk of exposure to instant gratification values through social media.

According to Thomas Lickona (1991), character education encompasses three main dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. These three aspects must be developed in an integrated manner so that learners not only understand moral values but also possess the awareness and skills to implement them in daily life (Lickona, 2013). This theory provides an important foundation for designing character education strategies aimed at holistic personality development. In the Indonesian context, the implementation of character education will be more effective when adapted to local values and community culture.

One cultural context with a strong value system is the Minangkabau culture, which is based on the philosophy of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK). This principle emphasizes that tradition (adat) should be grounded in Islamic law (syarak), which is derived from the Kitabullah (Qur'an). These values highlight the harmony between religion and culture, making ABS-SBK highly relevant as a foundation for shaping students' character. In the matrilineal social system of Minangkabau, character education is closely related to values such as responsibility, deliberation, mutual respect, and trustworthiness—values that align with the moral dimensions in Lickona's theory.

MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota plays a significant role in integrating character education with ABS-SBK values. Located in an environment rich with Minangkabau traditions and culture, the school strives to instill moral and spiritual values through various learning activities, such as regular religious studies, Islamic-based leadership training, and extracurricular programs introducing local culture. Through the 2013 Curriculum and the "Merdeka Belajar" policy, the school aims to develop character education that is relevant to the challenges of the digital generation. Nevertheless, the implementation of these programs still faces challenges, such as limited teacher understanding and community involvement in supporting the internalization of values.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of integrating cultural values in character education. Ridha et al. found that character education often focuses primarily on cognitive aspects, while affective and psychomotor dimensions are not optimally addressed (Ridha, A. R., Bahij, M. A., Nurachman, A., & Setiawan, 2025). Meanwhile, Rinantas emphasized that the success of character education heavily depends on the involvement of local culture in the learning process (Rinantas, 2022). Based on these findings, this study offers an approach that combines Lickona's character theory with ABS-SBK values as an effort to create contextual and sustainable character education. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the strategies for implementing character education at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota and its relevance to the values of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of a character education model aligned with Islamic values and Minangkabau local culture, serving as a reference for other schools in strengthening the character of young generations in the modern era.

## **2. Methods**

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the implementation of character education for Generation Z at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota and its relevance to the principles of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah

(ABS-SBK). Data were collected using three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, systematic observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including the school principal, vice principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, guidance and counseling teachers, and selected students. Observations were carried out on classroom learning activities, extracurricular programs, and daily interactions within the school environment to identify the practices of character values. Documents such as school profiles, activity reports, photographs, and written policies were used to complement the primary data.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that each informant had direct involvement with the character education programs. Data credibility was maintained through source and method triangulation by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion verification, conducted continuously throughout the research process.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1. Role Modeling as the Main Strategy Based on ABS-SBK**

The study findings indicate that role modeling is the most dominant strategy in implementing character education at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota. Teachers, school staff, and leaders consistently demonstrate Islamic virtues such as discipline, trustworthiness, politeness, and respect for others. The majority of students surveyed stated that teachers' behavior is the main factor influencing changes in their attitudes and character habits. This shows that students do not merely hear about character values but directly observe them in the daily behavior of educators.

Theoretically, this strategy aligns with Thomas Lickona's view that "if we want to teach character, we must model character" (Lickona, 2016). Role modeling influences two key aspects of moral education:

- a. Moral knowing – students' understanding of what is right.
- b. Moral feeling – the growth of appreciation for goodness.

When teachers consistently exhibit behaviors aligned with the values they teach, students can observe, understand, and appreciate these values, facilitating their internalization. This practice also aligns with the Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) principle. In Minangkabau culture, the expression *anak dipangku kamanakan dibimbing* implies that the younger generation should be guided through exemplary behavior. Teachers act as role models who not only teach knowledge but also reflect both adat and syarak in daily practice. Thus, role modeling at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota serves not only as a pedagogical strategy but also as a practical implementation of ABS-SBK values, effectively internalizing respect, honesty, discipline, and responsibility among students.

#### **3.2. Integration of Character Values into the Curriculum Based on ABS-SBK**

The integration of character values into the curriculum is a fundamental strategy consistently applied at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota. Findings show that teachers across subjects connect learning materials with character values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and Islamic ethics. In Islamic Religious Education (PAI), integration is

carried out by strengthening students' understanding of Qur'anic verses and Hadith and relating them to real-life situations. This approach ensures that character values are not taught merely theoretically but are embedded through contextual learning experiences.

This integration aligns with Agung's view that character education should be internalized across all subjects, through thematic, contextual, or direct value-infusion approaches. Teachers play a central role, as curriculum integration requires pedagogical mastery, consistency, and the ability to relate academic content to moral values. Intracurricular character education is crucial for shaping students who are virtuous, polite, honest, and responsible. Successful implementation depends not only on the curriculum but also on teacher effectiveness and institutional support, such as teacher working groups (KKG) and subject teacher forums (MGMP) (Agung & Sudiyono, 2017).

The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, Rahmatan lil 'Alamin (P5RA), further strengthens character value integration. The project Maanta Jo Manjopuk Marapulai exemplifies the harmonization of Islamic and Minangkabau values. Through this project, students not only learn local traditions but also internalize values such as cooperation, deliberation, trustworthiness, and social ethics. These values reflect ABS-SBK principles, where syarak serves as a moral principle and adat as the regulating social system. Thus, curriculum integration at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota reflects a comprehensive approach, merging modern character education theory with religious-cultural values, making the curriculum an instrument for shaping morally upright, responsible, and culturally aware students.

### **3.3. Extracurricular Activities as a Medium for Internalizing Adat and Syarak**

Extracurricular activities at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota serve as a strategic medium for internalizing character values based on ABS-SBK. Activities such as Scouts, Ar-Rijal and An-Nisa forums, communal prayers, religious studies, and social service provide concrete opportunities for students to practice discipline, responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and social care. Minangkabau adat values, such as *bulek aia dek pambuluah* and *bulek kato dek mufakat*, are reflected in group activities, discussions, and organizational deliberations emphasizing togetherness and consensus.

This aligns with Agung's perspective that extracurricular activities are part of a planned self-development program aimed at personal, social, recreational, and career preparation. Moral values are effectively instilled through non-formal activities, allowing students to experience moral principles in authentic social contexts, complementing formal learning (Agung & Sudiyono, 2017).

Lickona's character education theory emphasizes that effective character formation requires students' engagement in moral action, applying moral values in real social situations. Extracurricular activities such as teamwork, leadership, community service, and organizational discipline provide opportunities for students to practice moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action in an integrated manner (Lickona, 2014). Moreover, incorporating Minangkabau adat ensures that character education does not merely follow national frameworks but also integrates local cultural values. ABS-SBK principles guide the combination of syarak values (trustworthiness, honesty, simplicity, virtuous behavior) with adat values (deliberation, cooperation, respect for the community). Consequently, extracurricular activities shape students' Islamic and Minangkabau identities simultaneously.

### **3.4. School Culture as a Representation of ABS-SBK Values**

School culture at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota serves as a vital pillar in the internalization of character values based on ABS-SBK. Habits such as greetings, smiles, punctuality, and polite language create an orderly and religious social environment. For Generation Z students living in a digital world with fluid values, such a culture acts as a controlled social space instilling moral values through repeated practice.

This aligns with Zubaedi's assertion that the first step in implementing character education is creating a supportive school environment—a clean, orderly culture managed with a vision and mission oriented toward character development (Zubaedi, 2011). Lickona further emphasizes that school culture functions as a moral ecology, influencing students' behavior through norms, habits, and school expectations (Lickona, 2013). At MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota, religious practices such as collective prayers and ethical social interactions reflect this moral ecosystem.

According to Koesoema, school culture is part of the hidden curriculum, shaping students' character through daily interactions, traditions, and routines (Koesoema, 2010). Findings confirm this, as values such as politeness, deliberation, and cooperation are not only explicitly taught but practiced across school activities, including cleaning duties, greeting habits, and collaboration in religious programs. School culture represents ABS-SBK values in practice, where *syarak* guides moral conduct and *adat* governs social practices, demonstrating the integration of Islam and Minangkabau tradition in education.

### 3.5. Reward System as Affirmation of Adat and Syarak Values

At MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota, the reward system is employed to encourage positive student behavior, such as honesty, discipline, diligence, academic achievement, and participation in religious activities. Observations and interviews indicate that rewards take the form of teacher praise, certificates, or public recognition. This approach aligns with the Islamic principle of *targhib*—encouraging good behavior—and with Minangkabau custom, which values children's achievements, thereby strengthening students' motivation and self-esteem.

Analysis shows that the reward system functions not only as temporary motivation but also as reinforcement for character values instilled through the curriculum, teacher role modeling, and school culture. Values such as trustworthiness, discipline, and perseverance are strengthened when recognized socially and spiritually, in accordance with ABS-SBK principles emphasizing balance between *adat* and *syarak*.

Other character development theories suggest that cultivating good morals requires continuous guidance, patience, and support from parents and society (Aufa et al., 2022). Findings at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota indicate that rewards serve as continuous character guidance, consistently reinforcing positive behavior. Therefore, the reward system is an effective strategy to internalize character values in Generation Z while integrating religious and local cultural principles according to ABS-SBK.

### 3.6. Character Values Developed in Generation Z Students

The overall implementation strategies indicate that several character values have been clearly developed among students. **Discipline** is reflected in adherence to school rules, punctuality, and orderly practice of worship. **Responsibility** emerges through task completion, commitment to organizational trust (*amanah*), and attention to maintaining classroom cleanliness. **Honesty** is evident in students' behavior during

examinations and social interactions. **Politeness** is manifested in respecting teachers, using courteous language, and maintaining proper social etiquette. Furthermore, **empathy, cooperation, solidarity, and independence** develop through various extracurricular activities and culture-based projects.

These character values demonstrate the successful implementation of ABS-SBK-based character education, as they align not only with Islamic teachings but also with Minangkabau cultural ethics. This finding is supported by questionnaire data collected from 68 students at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota, as presented in the following table:

**Table 1.** Questionnaire Results on Character Values Emphasized at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota

No	Character Value	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Politeness	61	89,7
2	Honesty	55	80,9
3	Responsibility	49	72,1
4	Tolerance	35	51,5
5	Cooperation	33	48,5
6	Diligence	29	42,6
7	Discipline	31	45,6
8	Improving Good Manners	1	1,5

The questionnaire data indicate that the character value most emphasized at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota is politeness, with the highest percentage (89.7%), followed by honesty (80.9%) and responsibility (72.1%). These values reflect the school's focus on developing students' ethics, integrity, and sense of responsibility. Other values such as tolerance and cooperation also demonstrate the importance of togetherness in character education at the school.

From these results, it can be concluded that MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota prioritizes character values related to social interaction (such as politeness and tolerance), personal responsibility, and honesty. This aligns with the school's vision of producing students who are not only academically excellent but also possess strong moral character in accordance with Islamic principles and Minangkabau cultural values. Within the framework of *Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah* (ABS-SBK), the emphasized values are highly consistent with religious and cultural teachings, where honesty, responsibility, and tolerance are highly esteemed norms.

Concrete evidence from the study shows that these character values are implemented through established habits and school regulations. In interviews with the vice principal for student affairs, it was noted that students are taught to value time and discipline, reflected in routine activities such as flag ceremonies and obligatory congregational prayers. Observations also revealed activities like *muhadarah* (public speaking exercises), which provide opportunities for students to develop their speaking skills while instilling noble values such as honesty and social care. Additionally, school regulations emphasize discipline and cleanliness, with strict rules regarding environmental hygiene and the orderly conduct of daily student activities.

### 3.7. Relevance of Character Education to ABS-SBK Principles

The relevance of character education strategies to the *Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah* (ABS-SBK) principle is evident in the harmonization of Islamic law (*syarak*) with local customs implemented at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota. Every educational strategy—from teacher role modeling and the integration of character values into the curriculum to the cultivation of school culture—is based on the understanding that *syarak* serves as a moral reference while *adat* reinforces social practice. Values such as discipline, trustworthiness (*amanah*), deliberation (*musyawarah*), cooperation (*gotong royong*), politeness, and social care indicate that students' character development aligns with the principle of *Syarak Mangato Adat Mamakai*—religion guiding the implementation of custom while maintaining students' social and spiritual balance.

From a theoretical perspective, Minangkabau proverbs such as “*Syarak mangato adat memakai*” emphasize that religious principles guide the practice of *adat*, while “*Syarak bertelanjang adat besesamping*” suggests that religion is direct and clear, whereas *adat* uses symbols or metaphors in practice (Bukhari, 2009). This philosophy aligns with Yuhaldi's view that “*adat mengikuti syariat, syariat mengikuti Kitabullah*” carries profound meaning in guiding behavior and character development, including in the context of school guidance and counseling (Yuhaldi, 2022).

Thesis findings show that the implementation of ABS-SBK-based character education at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota not only strengthens students' Islamic identity but also preserves Minangkabau cultural continuity, shaping a harmonious character that balances religiosity and social practice while remaining relevant in facing the challenges of the digital era.

## 4. Conclusion

This study shows that character education at MTsN 3 Limapuluh Kota is implemented through structured strategies aligned with the *Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah* (ABS-SBK) principle. These strategies include teacher role modeling, integration of character values into learning processes, reinforcement through school culture, optimization of extracurricular activities, and the application of discipline and rewards in an educational manner. Through these strategies, Generation Z students have developed key character values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, cooperation, social awareness, politeness, and religiosity.

These character values not only align with the objectives of national character education but also reflect the ABS-SBK philosophy, which emphasizes harmony between Islamic teachings and Minangkabau culture. This relevance is evident in practices such as *Syarak Mangato Adat Mamakai*, respect for teachers and parents, deliberation, and habitual worship. The integration of these values has successfully

nurtured students who are ethical, culturally grounded, and capable of facing the challenges of the digital era without losing their local and religious identity. Therefore, ABS-SBK-based character education proves to be an effective model that can be applied in other madrasah contexts in West Sumatra and has potential for adaptation in educational environments with similar cultural characteristics.

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