

# Local Wisdom of Samin Community: The Core Values to Build Characters

Maria Veronika Roesminingsih & Rivo Nugroho

Universitas Negeri Surabaya

Surabaya, Indonesia

roesminingsih@unesa.ac.id

**Abstract**—The phenomenon happens more and more and it affects people's behavior which resulted to been being far from the roots of the tradition and local wisdom. It certainly raises the concerns about the erosion of values of national character, such as a culture of mutual cooperation. The Samin community in East Java with the basic principles of honesty, solidarity, and simplicity are still growing, with a simple lifestyle, hardworking, diligent prayer, fasting, and charity to others. These values into its own power deals with conflict or violence because of the philosophy that does not want to hurt others. The values that developed in Samin community could become the core values or basic values to shape the character. The character as an individual identity is the picture of quality that determines an individual to be recognized as a unique person and distinguishes from others.

**Keywords**—local wisdom, samin community, building character

## I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional values that grow and develop in Indonesia have many kinds of local wisdom. Titi Munfangati (2004) said that the concept of local knowledge in local knowledge systems (indigenous knowledge system) is typical of that a particular community of knowledge that has evolved as a result of the mutual relations between communities and their environment. The Samin community has a culture that suits with local knowledge containing philosophical view about harmony and rationality. They live surrounding the Kendeng Mountains that extends from Pati in Central Java, to Tuban in East Java.

According to Setiawan (2011) Samin People have very diverse ratings. Samin movement is seen as a symbol of resistance against the rule of the Dutch colonial era to the present. The notion appeared is that Samin people are a group of people who are not religious (atheist), poor, bizarre and retarded or the samin people often considered uneducated like: rules, manners, and some even say as the naive, innocent, candid. It is of interest because of suspected unique is his outlook on life. They are people who have highly honesty, compassion, and brotherhood as well as loving the environment and the universe. They never exploit nature excessively and just take what exists in nature as needed so that the nature will not be damaged and still maintained continuously.

Life is not a static term, people are constantly changing, and they are however supported by the faster and sophisticated technological developments and the current information

(Gillmor: 2006). Genesis is very alarming lately; the cases of violence to women and children are like an iceberg, since the cases appear only a fraction compared to the unknown reported cases. A number of behaviors, ranging from corruption, collusion, the low work ethic, intolerance towards difference, and the nature of greed, selfish, the tendency to use violence to solve problems, abusing law, and opportunism, all of them are still ongoing. The recent information and computer technology today lead people to a negative character as well as it happens to the students like: (1) collect the term papers from the internet; (2) replicate thesis (plagiarism); (3) answer the exam questions with the assistance of smart-phones that can connect to the Internet (Watzlawick et. al.: 2011). If the negative characters are allowed, the students are likely decreasing their creativity. As a consequence students will be lazy, like taking a shortcut, do not want to take a challenge and tend to find something instantly (Tice, et. al.: 2001).

Being motivated by the growing reality of the nation's problems, such as disorientation of *Pancasila's* values; shifting the value of ethics in the life of the nation; waning awareness of the cultural values of the nation; treating disintegration; and the weakening of independence of the nation are necessary development of strong character, a character that is able to form individual resilient, hardworking, passionate, and do not give up to face of challenges (Farley: 1996). The development of national character is a series of growing business and it is changed, planned and carried out consciously by all citizens of a nation, state, and government to have modernity in order to develop the nation (nation building) (Bendix: 2017). Routledge. The character is the innate of every human being, as a determining factor for someone to act and behave, to be affected by the situation, and felt in one's heart. One character may be closer to another character, which means human spontaneity act that manifested them to be humans so that when it appears there is no need to think again. Wynne believes the character is the virtue in the form of behavior (Zuchdi, 2009).

## II. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Every society has a history and along the way it will emerge the identities to be special or specific (d'Emilio: 1983). The social structure of a particular childbirth types recognize identity in individual cases, for example, executives have a different identity with the teacher or the homeless, and so on (Berger and Luckman, 1990). Orientation and behavior

in everyday life depend on that justification. That is, the types of social identity can be observed in everyday life and that statements which have been raised can be verified or disproved by ordinary people (Berger and Luckman, 1990). Berger said the identity is determined by the existed social structure. In accordance with it as expressed by Wasino (2013) every society has a culture that is used as a conducting code. Identity means as the interaction between organisms, individual awareness, and awareness of social structures reacting to the social structures that have been given, maintained, modified, or even reshaped. Cultural factors greatly influence the behavioral patterns of a society (Inglehart: 1997). Factors culture consists of values and norms. Value is a very abstract concept of every individual in this worldview. It can be categorized as good or bad, right or wrong, proper or inappropriate (Darmastuti, 2005). The value is born from the norms that govern the life in a community. The Samin phenomenon is regarded as a cultural uniqueness which is full of traditional values within existed in the modern era. The Samin people lifestyle is inseparable from the culture that exists in the midst of society because the society and culture are two things that cannot be separated. The characteristic of Samin community to interact and live in a daily life also inseparable from the system of local knowledge and values embraced by the people of Samin.

Community development can be analogized as the process of evolution. The process of changing takes place very slowly. This idea is strongly influenced by the results of the discovery of the biological sciences, which indeed has grown rapidly. The foundation stone is the idea of social change as a form of "evolution", among others, as stated by Herbert Spencer and August Comte. Both of them have a view of the changes that occur in a community in the form of a linear progress towards a positive direction. The social aspect changed their perspective slowly but towards a form of "perfect" society (Etzioni, 1973).

In the middle of increasing modern civilization, there are still some parts or areas that are still maintaining the tradition of teaching (Calhoun: 2003). Crushing traditional culture is increasingly abandoned, resulting in people to forget their original culture. But there are still many people who cling to the teachings. One of the tribes that still maintain its existence is Samin. Apart from the samin attitude that still seems primitive and rarely socialize with the outsider community. Samin Society has such Doctrine which contains 5 suggestions: 1. based on self-control effort. 2. Praying to the Almighty, should respect their fellow creatures. 3. Always introspective, inward and harmonize with the environment 4. The attitude toward the danger or disaster is a means of god's examination and 5. Adhering to the character.

Samin tenets are concerned principally about human life values. It is contained in their religion of Adam, where in the community Adam Samin teachings is a means of given direction and guidance to do good deeds and to be honest, should not steal, responsible and believes in karma. Sunadi (2013) states that the process of strengthening the identity of the Samin community through a process of imitation and identification in a family environment. It is such impersonation of a child to his parents'. The form of imitation

behavior committed by parents is like dress imitation, livelihood, marriage customs, and imitation in terms of language and teachings shamanism.

Shamanism is heritably taught until now. It actually raises the values of truth, honesty, simplicity, unity, justice, and hard work. If the terms of the doctrine which is professing to Samin, they charges such person to has no religion (atheists), poor, weird, retarded or old-fashioned, do not want to pay taxes, and rebelliousness. The all are unfounded because Saminism stems from decency. Samin people are identified as Adam, who consistently holds his religion and upholds the principle of living together. Samin basic teachings are (1) Religion is a weapon or reference on life. Samin does not discriminate religions, therefore the Samin people never denied or hated religion. The important thing is behavior in their life. (2) Do not disturb, do not fight, is not envy, and do not like taking possession of other people. (3) Be patient and do not get cocky. (4) Human must understand life because life is the samin, and it is as the spirit and only taken one for last forever. According to the Samin, the spirits of the dead are not dead, but only un-dressed. (5) The talk should be able to keep mouth, Honest, and respectful.

According to Lickona (1992) There are nine pillars of character that come from universal noble values, namely: (1) the character of the love of God and all His creation; (2) self-reliance and responsibility; (3) honesty / trustworthy, diplomatically; (4) respectful and polite; (5) benefactors, like mutual help and mutual cooperation / collaboration; (6), confident and hardworking; (7) leadership and justice; (8) good and humble, and; (9) the character of tolerance, peace and unity. The nine pillars of character taught systematically in holistic education model using the method of knowing the good, feeling the good, and acting the good. Knowing the good can be easily taught because of the cognitive knowledge. After knowing the good, someone must emerge feeling to loving the good. It has something to do with how to feel and love the good that is being the engine that makes people always want to do something good. Once people are accustomed to do such good, they will be acting the good and it turns into a habit.

Children will grow into a good character if they grow up in the environment, especially the family environment that is also having good characterized manner (Werner: 2000). These conditions are very conducive to the actualization of the nature of the child to the adult. The crisis that hit the nation's character is a reflection of the failure and poor character education within the family as the basis character education itself. The family is the first and main environment as well as the place where humans first learn about the concept of good-bad, right-wrong, appropriate-inappropriate. From family someone would first learn about the values of character education (Kilmann: 1981).

As stated by Purwasito (2003) social control developed in Samin community rooted in conscience matter. The developing values are as a means of not hurting other if you do not want to be hurt. Who plants goodness will later reap the benefits, the person must return the loan, and the debtor must pay. The concept is a simply way of thinking and it became a

surplus of the samin society. At the end, they want to be useful and avoid conflict as long as it is possible. Simplicity and modesty of Samin people need to be adopted by other society for a very high social behavior such as honesty, not arrogant, compared to some people who are well educated, they accumulated experience but dishonest and arrogant. Samin community figures show that community remains firmly defend the traditions of local knowledge. It could then be used to diagnose a life mindset to the people who have a materialist, individualism, and consumerism point of view. Modern society measures the levels of life from the economic establishment, while the measure of happiness in the Samin community is the interaction with the environment to create full harmony, comfort, and leaving the conflict. Noble values in the Samin teaching are able to muffle the behavior of members of the public and it is not applied arbitrarily. The values of Samin local wisdom actually promote a balance between rights and obligations, respect others, and great effort.

### III. CONCLUSION

Local Wisdom is a cultural identity, national culture personality that absorb and process the appropriate foreign cultures to own character and abilities of local wisdom is formed as a local culture of excellence and geographical conditions in the broad sense. Local knowledge is a product of past cultures that should continuously be hold onto life. Even though it is considered as local value but it worth and is considered very universal. The values of local wisdom of Samin people actually promote a balance between rights and obligations, respect others, and great effort. Three basic teachings of Samin community are talking about law, legal actions and legal issue that need to be applied. Planting local values can be started from an early age and performed in the family because society considers that Samin education took place at home. It focuses on everyday experience with material tailed to the needs and development of the child as they will be the generation that will continue the Samin teachings.

### References

- [1] Berger, Peter L. & Thomas Luckmann 1990. Tafsir Sosial atas Kenyataan: Risalah tentang Sosiologi Pengetahuan (diterjemahkan dari buku asli The So-cial Construction of Reality oleh Hasan Basari). Jakarta: LP3ES
- [2] Darmastuti, Rini. 2005. Pola Komunikasi Masyarakat Samin.Vol.XVII No.1,2005: 59 83. <http://ppspuksw.org/sys/sites/default/files/>. Accessed on 25 December 2014.
- [3] Etzioni, A. & Halevy, Eva Etzioni- (eds). 1973. Social Changes: Sources, Patterns, and Consequences. Basic Books, New York.
- [4] Lickona, Thomas, 1992. Educating for Character, How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility, Bantam Books, New York
- [5] Munfangati, Titi (dkk.), Kearifan Lokal Di Lingkungan Masyarakat Samin, Kabupaten Blora, Propinsi Ja-wa Tengah. Yogyakarta: Balai Kajian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional Yogyakarta, 2004
- [6] Purwasito, Andik. 2003. Komunikasi Multikultural.Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta.
- [7] Setiawan, 2011. "Modernitas, Lokalitas, dan Poskolonialitas Masyarakat Desa di Era 80-an". Dalam Literasi, Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Humaniora, Vol. 1, No. 1, 116-133.
- [8] Sunadi, Ahmad. 2013. Interaksi Sosial Masyarakat Samin Di Tengah Modernisasi"( Studi Di Desa Baturejo Kecamatan Sukolillo Kabupaten Pati. Yogyakarta-ta. Skripsi S1 Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.
- [9] Wasino, W. (2013). Indonesia: From Pluralism to Multiculturalism. Paramita: Historical Studies Journal, 23(2).
- [10] Zuchdi, Darmiyati. (2009). Humanisasi Pendidikan . Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- [11] Bendix, R. (2017). *Nation-building and citizenship: Studies of our changing social order*. Routledge.
- [12] Gillmor, D. (2006). *We the media: Grassroots journalism by the people, for the people*. " O'Reilly Media, Inc.
- [13] Watzlawick, P., Weakland, J. H., & Fisch, R. (2011). *Change: Principles of problem formation and problem resolution*. WW Norton & Company.
- [14] Tice, D. M., Bratslavsky, E., & Baumeister, R. F. (2001). Emotional distress regulation takes precedence over impulse control: If you feel bad, do it!. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 80(1), 53.
- [15] Farley, R. (1996). *The new American reality: Who we are, how we got here, where we are going*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- [16] Calhoun, C. (2003). European studies: Always already there and still in formation. *Comparative European Politics*, 1(1), 5-20.
- [17] Werner, E. E. (2000). Protective factors and individual resilience. *Handbook of early childhood intervention*, 2, 115-132.
- [18] Inglehart, R. (1997). *Modernization and postmodernization: Cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies*. Princeton University Press.
- [19] d'Emilio, J. (1983). Capitalism and gay identity. *Families in the US: Kinship and domestic politics*, 131-41.
- [20] Kilmann, R. H. (1981). Toward a unique/useful concept of values for interpersonal behavior: A critical review of the literature on value. *Psychological Reports*, 48(3), 939-959.