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Transformation of Islamic Character Values in the Bugis Song "Ininnawa Sabbarae" into Students' Creative Literary Works

Nasirah^{1✉}

Universitas Muhammadiyah Bone

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Abstract

This study investigates the transformation of Islamic character values embedded in the Bugis traditional song *Ininnawa Sabbarae* into students' creative literary works. The study is grounded in the assumption that local cultural texts not only preserve cultural heritage but also function as effective media for character education. The research aims to identify the Islamic character values contained in the song and analyze how these values are transformed into students' literary creations. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study involved 15 undergraduate students enrolled in a Creative Writing course. Data were collected through classroom observations, document analysis of 23 literary works consisting of poems, short stories, and monologues, as well as semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the dominant Islamic character values represented in *Ininnawa Sabbarae* include *sabr* (patience), *istiqamah* (perseverance), *ikhtiar* (continuous effort), optimism, and orientation toward goodness (*al-khair*). These values were transformed into literary expressions through metaphorical language, emotional imagery, narrative conflicts, and contextual life experiences. Students did not merely reproduce the song's messages but actively reconstructed them according to their personal experiences, social realities, and religious reflections. The transformation process functioned not only as a literary activity but also as a medium for internalizing Islamic character values and preserving Bugis cultural heritage. This study contributes to the discourse on Islamic character education by demonstrating how local wisdom can be integrated into creative writing instruction to strengthen students' moral awareness, cultural identity, and literary creativity in higher education.

✉ Email Correspondent:
nasirah@unimbone.ac.id

Introduction

Character education has become one of the major concerns in contemporary education due to the increasing challenges posed by globalization, digital culture, and the shifting moral orientation of younger generations. Educational institutions are not only expected to develop students' cognitive competencies but also to cultivate ethical values and moral character that can guide their behavior in social life. In the context of Islamic education, character formation is closely related to the internalization of Islamic values such as *sabr* (patience), *istiqamah* (steadfastness), responsibility, honesty, and social awareness. These values are considered fundamental in shaping individuals who are intellectually competent and morally grounded.

The implementation of character education, however, often faces practical challenges. Character values are frequently taught through normative explanations and doctrinal approaches that are less engaging for students. As a result, students may understand moral concepts theoretically but encounter difficulties in internalizing them in everyday life. Therefore, innovative educational approaches that connect moral values with students' cultural experiences are needed to make character education more meaningful and contextual.

Local wisdom has increasingly been recognized as an important source for character education because it reflects the ethical principles, social norms, and cultural identity of a community. In many Indonesian societies, local cultural expressions such as folklore, oral traditions, proverbs, and traditional songs function not only as cultural heritage but also as media for transmitting moral values across generations. These cultural forms provide narratives and symbolic representations that help learners understand ethical principles within familiar social contexts.

Within Islamic educational discourse, the integration of local wisdom and Islamic values has received considerable scholarly attention. Several studies have demonstrated that local cultural traditions often contain values that are compatible with Islamic teachings, including patience, perseverance, mutual respect, solidarity, and spiritual awareness. Consequently, the utilization of local cultural resources in educational practices can contribute to both character development and cultural preservation while strengthening students' sense of identity.

One cultural expression that embodies these values is the Bugis traditional song *Ininnawa Sabbarae*. The song is widely known among Bugis communities and conveys messages concerning patience, resilience, perseverance, and the struggle of life. The term *sabbarae* itself derives from the Bugis concept of patience, which closely corresponds to the Islamic concept of *sabr*. Beyond its aesthetic function, the song contains moral messages that encourage individuals to remain steadfast in facing life's challenges, maintain hope, and uphold personal dignity. These values are highly relevant to the objectives of Islamic character education.

The moral values contained in *Ininnawa Sabbarae* also provide rich material for literary creativity. Literary works often emerge through processes of interpretation and transformation in which authors reconstruct meanings from existing cultural texts into new forms of expression. Through creative writing activities, students can engage critically with cultural texts, reinterpret moral messages, and express personal experiences through literary language. Therefore, transforming traditional song lyrics into literary works offers

opportunities for students not only to develop creative writing skills but also to internalize character values embedded within local culture.

Previous studies have examined the role of songs in language and literature learning, demonstrating their effectiveness in enhancing students' motivation, creativity, and appreciation of literary texts. Other studies have highlighted the contribution of local wisdom to character education and cultural preservation. Research on literary transformation has also explored various forms of adaptation, such as the transformation of novels into films, folklore into contemporary narratives, and oral traditions into written literature. These studies indicate that transformation enables the reinterpretation of cultural meanings within new social and educational contexts.

However, existing studies primarily focus either on the pedagogical use of songs as learning media or on the preservation of local culture through educational activities. Limited attention has been given to the process by which students transform traditional song lyrics into creative literary works while simultaneously internalizing Islamic character values embedded within those cultural texts. Furthermore, research specifically examining the transformation of Bugis traditional songs into students' literary creations remains scarce within the fields of Islamic education and literary studies.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the transformation of Islamic character values contained in the Bugis song *Ininnawa Sabbarae* into students' creative literary works. The study seeks to answer the following research question: How are Islamic character values represented and transformed in students' creative literary works inspired by the Bugis traditional song *Ininnawa Sabbarae*? The objective of this study is to describe the forms of literary transformation, identify the Islamic character values represented in students' works, and analyze the role of local cultural texts in fostering literary creativity and character education. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of literary transformation theory, Islamic character education, and Bugis local wisdom as a framework for understanding how cultural texts can function simultaneously as sources of creativity, moral education, and cultural preservation.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the transformation of Islamic character values embedded in the Bugis traditional song *Ininnawa Sabbarae* into students' creative literary works. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on understanding meanings, interpretations, and creative processes manifested in literary texts produced by students. The research aimed not only to identify textual transformations but also to examine how Islamic character values represented in the song lyrics were reconstructed and expressed in students' literary creations.

The study was conducted in the Creative Writing course at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bone during the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants consisted of 15 undergraduate students who were enrolled in the course and actively participated in all learning activities. The participants were selected using purposive sampling based on three criteria: (1) active participation in creative writing activities, (2) completion of literary works inspired by the song *Ininnawa Sabbarae*, and (3) willingness to participate in the research

process. From these participants, a total of 23 literary works were collected, comprising 12 poems, 8 short stories, and 3 monologues.

Data were collected through classroom observation, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. Classroom observations were conducted during the learning process to examine students' engagement, interpretation activities, and creative writing practices. Document analysis focused on students' literary works produced as the final assignment after listening to, interpreting, and discussing the song lyrics. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants to gain a deeper understanding of how they interpreted the song's messages and transformed them into literary narratives. The interviews also explored students' perceptions regarding the relevance of the song's values to their personal and social experiences.

The primary research instruments consisted of observation guidelines, interview protocols, and document analysis sheets. The observation guidelines were designed to record students' participation, interpretation processes, and creative responses during classroom activities. The interview protocols focused on students' understanding of Islamic character values, particularly patience (*sabr*), perseverance, responsibility, and resilience reflected in the song lyrics. Meanwhile, the document analysis sheets were used to identify thematic transformations, narrative developments, symbolic representations, and manifestations of Islamic character values in students' literary works.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the first stage, observation notes, interview transcripts, and literary texts were carefully reviewed and coded according to themes related to literary transformation and Islamic character values. In the second stage, the coded data were organized into analytical categories, including forms of literary transformation, thematic development, symbolic representation, and value internalization. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring patterns and relationships among the data sources.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed methodological triangulation by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and document analysis. Member checking was also conducted by discussing preliminary interpretations with selected participants to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations. Furthermore, peer debriefing with colleagues in the fields of literature and education was undertaken to enhance analytical rigor and reduce researcher bias.

For analytical purposes, Islamic character values identified in the song lyrics were categorized into four principal dimensions: patience (*sabr*), perseverance (*istiqamah*), responsibility, and resilience. These categories served as the analytical framework for examining how students transformed the moral messages of *Ininnawa Sabbarae* into creative literary expressions. Through this framework, the study sought to reveal the relationship between local cultural texts, literary creativity, and Islamic character education.

Results

Islamic Character Values Embedded in *Ininnawa Sabbarae*

Analysis of the lyrics of *Ininnawa Sabbarae* revealed several Islamic character values that became the primary source of inspiration for students' creative literary works. The dominant values identified include *sabr* (patience), *istiqamah* (steadfast perseverance), *ikhtiar* (continuous effort), optimism, and orientation toward goodness (*al-khair*).

The value of patience is explicitly reflected in the repeated expression "*Ininnawa sabbara'e*" (a heart that always remains patient) and "*Pitu taunna sabbara*" (seven years of patience). Meanwhile, perseverance is represented through the prolonged endurance portrayed in the lyrics, while *ikhtiar* appears in the phrase "*Sabbara'ko na acca'ko*" (be patient and keep striving). The song also conveys optimism through the message that patience and effort will eventually lead individuals toward goodness and dignity. Table 1 summarizes the Islamic character values identified in the song lyrics.

Table 1. Islamic Character Values in *Ininnawa Sabbarae*

Islamic Character Value	Representation in Lyrics
Sabr (Patience)	"Ininnawa sabbara'e"
Istiqamah (Perseverance)	"Pitu taunna sabbara"
Ikhtiar (Effort)	"Sabbara'ko na acca'ko"
Optimism	"Kelak akan mendapatkan kebaikan"
Orientation toward Goodness (al-khair)	"Untuk menjemput jalan kebaikan"

These values subsequently became the thematic foundation for students' literary transformation.

Transformation of Patience (*Sabr*) in Students' Poetry

The value most frequently transformed by students was patience (*sabr*). In the poem *Tujuh Tahun Sabar*, students reconstructed the lyrical message into symbolic and emotional expressions. The original song lyric "*Pitu taunna sabbara*" was transformed into the following poetic lines:

"*Aku menanam sabar
di ladang hati yang retak oleh rindu.*"

The metaphor "*menanam sabar*" demonstrates that students did not merely reproduce the song's meaning literally. Instead, patience was reconstructed as an active process of nurturing hope amidst suffering. Likewise, the line:

"*Tujuh tahun, katamu,
bukan waktu yang sebentar
untuk menunggu bahagia*"

reflects a direct reinterpretation of the song's message regarding prolonged endurance and steadfastness.

The poem further develops the value of patience through the symbolic expression:

*“Karena bagi orang yang bersabar,
langit selalu menyimpan
jalan pulang menuju kebaikan.”*

This excerpt transforms the song’s moral message into a spiritual metaphor suggesting that perseverance ultimately leads individuals toward goodness and hope.

Transformation of Perseverance and Tawakkal in Students’ Monologues

The transformation process is also evident in students’ monologues. Unlike poetry, monologues provide a more personal and reflective representation of character values.

In the monologue *Aku dan Penantian yang Panjang*, students reinterpret the song’s message through an internal dialogue portraying emotional struggle and perseverance:

*“Tujuh tahun...
iya, tujuh tahun aku bertahan dalam hidup yang begini-begini saja.”*

The phrase clearly echoes the song lyric *“Pitu taunna sabbara”*, while expanding its meaning into a broader life experience.

Another important transformation appears in the expression:

*“Mungkin karena aku percaya,
Tuhan tidak mungkin membiarkan air mata jatuh sia-sia.”*

This statement introduces a theological dimension absent from the literal wording of the song. Students connect patience with faith in God, thereby transforming cultural values into Islamic spiritual values associated with *tawakkal* (trust in God).

Similarly, the concluding lines:

*“Bersabarlah.
Terus berusaha.
Kebaikan tidak pernah datang kepada orang yang berhenti berjalan.”*

represent a reinterpretation of the lyric *“Sabbara’ko na acca’ko”* by emphasizing the inseparable relationship between patience and effort.

Transformation of Islamic Character Values in Students’ Short Stories

The transformation process reached its most elaborate form in students’ short stories. Through narrative structures, students developed characters, conflicts, and resolutions inspired by the moral messages of the song.

In the short story *Jalan Kebaikan*, the protagonist Daeng Rannu embodies the values of patience, perseverance, and effort. The direct insertion of the lyric:

“Pitu taunna sabbara...”

functions as an intertextual connection between the original song and the newly created narrative.

The story expands the meaning of patience through depictions of economic hardship:

“Sudah tujuh tahun ia hidup dalam kesulitan sejak gagal panen berturut-turut.”

Rather than simply repeating the lyrical message, students contextualize it within contemporary social realities experienced by rural communities.

The transformation culminates in the narrative resolution when Daeng Rannu eventually succeeds because of his persistence. The statement:

“Karena saya melihat sesuatu yang jarang dimiliki orang sekarang. Kesabaran.”

reinforces the moral value promoted throughout the story.

The final paragraph explicitly reflects the song’s central message:

*“jalan menuju kebaikan memang panjang,
tetapi kesabaran selalu menemukan jalannya pulang.”*

This narrative reinterpretation demonstrates how students transformed cultural wisdom into a contemporary literary expression while preserving its ethical substance.

Patterns of Literary Transformation

Analysis of the literary works identified three dominant patterns of transformation.

Table 2. Patterns of Transformation in Students’ Literary Works

Pattern	Description
Thematic Transformation	Reconstructing patience, perseverance, and goodness into broader life narratives
Symbolic Transformation	Converting lyrical messages into metaphors, imagery, and literary symbols
Contextual Transformation	Relating traditional cultural values to contemporary student experiences and social realities

Among these patterns, contextual transformation appeared most frequently. Students tended to reinterpret the values contained in *Ininnawa Sabbarae* within educational, social, familial, and economic contexts familiar to their daily lives.

The findings indicate that literary transformation functions not only as a creative writing activity but also as a process of internalizing Islamic character values and preserving Bugis cultural heritage. Through creative reinterpretation, students actively reconstruct local wisdom into contemporary literary forms while maintaining its moral and spiritual significance.

Discussion

Transformation of Islamic Character Values Through Literary Creativity

The findings demonstrate that the transformation of the Bugis traditional song *Ininnawa Sabbarae* into students' creative literary works is not merely a process of textual adaptation but also a process of value internalization and reinterpretation. Students did not simply reproduce the content of the song lyrics; rather, they reconstructed the meanings embedded within the song through poetry, monologues, and short stories based on their personal experiences and creative imagination. This finding confirms that literary transformation involves the active role of readers and writers in generating new meanings from existing cultural texts.

From the perspective of literary transformation theory, a text does not function as a fixed structure with a single meaning. Instead, it becomes a source of inspiration that can be reinterpreted and reconstructed into new forms of expression. The transformation identified in this study illustrates how students repositioned the values of patience, perseverance, effort, and hope contained in *Ininnawa Sabbarae* within different literary genres and social contexts. Although the forms of expression changed, the essential moral messages remained recognizable in the newly produced texts.

The findings further reveal that the value most consistently transformed by students was *sabr* (patience). In Islamic teachings, patience is regarded as one of the fundamental moral virtues that enables individuals to remain steadfast in facing difficulties, controlling emotions, and maintaining commitment to righteous actions. The transformation of patience into literary symbols such as "planting patience," enduring long periods of hardship, and continuing to struggle despite repeated failures indicates that students understood patience not as passive resignation but as an active moral commitment. This interpretation is consistent with Islamic perspectives that associate patience with perseverance, self-discipline, and trust in God.

Another important finding concerns the integration of patience and effort (*ikhtiar*). The original song emphasizes that patience must be accompanied by continuous striving, a message that was repeatedly reconstructed in students' literary works. In the monologue and short story, students portrayed characters who continued working, hoping, and struggling despite uncertain outcomes. Such representations reflect an understanding that success is achieved through the combination of patience, effort, and persistence. This finding supports the view that Islamic character education should not merely emphasize moral ideals but should also encourage productive action and responsibility in everyday life.

The transformation process also generated new religious meanings that were not explicitly stated in the original lyrics. Several students connected the value of patience with faith in God, divine wisdom, and hope for future goodness. These additional interpretations demonstrate that literary creativity enables learners to integrate cultural messages with personal spiritual experiences. Consequently, the transformation process functions not only as a literary activity but also as a reflective process through which students negotiate cultural values, religious beliefs, and life experiences. This finding highlights the potential of creative writing as a pedagogical strategy for fostering both literary competence and Islamic character formation.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that students exercised considerable creative autonomy during the transformation process. Rather than imitating the song directly, they expanded its meanings through symbolic language, narrative conflicts, emotional imagery, and contemporary social situations. Such creativity confirms that literary transformation is a productive process capable of generating new texts while preserving the ethical substance of the source text. Therefore, the use of traditional songs in creative writing instruction may provide an effective medium for simultaneously developing literary creativity and strengthening students' moral awareness.

Local Wisdom, Islamic Character Education, and Cultural Preservation

The findings also demonstrate the important role of local wisdom in supporting Islamic character education. The values embedded in *Ininnawa Sabbarae* are deeply rooted in Bugis cultural traditions, yet they correspond closely with universal Islamic moral principles. Concepts such as patience, perseverance, responsibility, humility, and striving for goodness occupy central positions both in Bugis cultural philosophy and in Islamic ethical teachings. This relationship indicates that local culture and Islamic values should not be viewed as separate entities; rather, they can complement and reinforce one another within educational contexts.

The integration of local wisdom into learning activities provides students with opportunities to encounter moral values through cultural expressions that are familiar to their daily lives. Educational messages delivered through culturally meaningful texts tend to be more accessible and emotionally engaging than abstract moral instruction. In this study, students demonstrated strong emotional involvement when interacting with the song *Ininnawa Sabbarae*, suggesting that cultural proximity facilitates deeper reflection and personal engagement with moral values. Such findings support the argument that character education becomes more effective when it is connected to learners' sociocultural backgrounds.

Another significant contribution of this study lies in its demonstration that literary transformation can function as a strategy for cultural preservation. Traditional songs are often vulnerable to marginalization amid rapid social and technological change. However, when cultural texts are reinterpreted through creative literary production, they acquire new relevance for younger generations. Through poetry, monologues, and short stories, students not only preserved the messages contained in *Ininnawa Sabbarae* but also revitalized them within contemporary contexts. Consequently, literary transformation becomes a dynamic process of cultural continuity rather than a simple act of cultural reproduction.

This finding is particularly relevant to contemporary Islamic education, which increasingly emphasizes the importance of integrating religious values with local cultural resources. Educational practices that recognize local wisdom as a source of moral learning contribute to the development of students who are both culturally rooted and ethically grounded. In this regard, the transformation of *Ininnawa Sabbarae* demonstrates how local cultural heritage can be utilized to strengthen Islamic character education while preserving regional identity.

The findings further suggest that creative writing activities may serve as an effective bridge between cultural preservation and character development. Through the act of

writing, students engage in processes of interpretation, reflection, and value reconstruction that enable them to internalize ethical principles in meaningful ways. Consequently, literary learning should not be understood merely as the acquisition of aesthetic skills but also as an educational space for cultivating moral awareness, cultural identity, and religious values. This study therefore contributes to ongoing discussions concerning the integration of local wisdom, literary education, and Islamic character formation in higher education.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Bugis traditional song *Ininnawa Sabbarae* contains Islamic character values that can be transformed into students' creative literary works through processes of interpretation, reconstruction, and creative expression. The findings reveal that the dominant values represented in both the song lyrics and the students' literary texts are *sabr* (patience), *istiqamah* (perseverance), *ikhtiar* (continuous effort), optimism, and orientation toward goodness (*al-khair*). These values were transformed into various literary forms, including poetry, monologues, and short stories, through the use of metaphors, emotional imagery, narrative conflicts, and contextual life experiences.

The study further shows that students did not merely reproduce the messages contained in the song lyrics. Instead, they actively reinterpreted and reconstructed those values according to their personal experiences, social realities, and religious reflections. Through this process, traditional cultural texts became sources of literary creativity as well as media for internalizing Islamic character values. The transformation process therefore functions not only as an aesthetic activity but also as a reflective educational experience that strengthens students' moral awareness and cultural identity.

This research contributes to the growing discourse on the integration of local wisdom and Islamic character education by demonstrating that traditional songs can serve as effective pedagogical resources in higher education. The findings suggest that creative writing activities based on local cultural heritage provide meaningful opportunities for preserving regional traditions while simultaneously fostering character development among students. In this regard, *Ininnawa Sabbarae* functions not only as a cultural artifact but also as a medium for transmitting ethical and spiritual values to younger generations.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted within a single creative writing course and involved a limited number of student participants. In addition, the analysis focused exclusively on one Bugis traditional song, which may limit the broader generalization of the findings. Future studies are therefore encouraged to investigate the transformation of Islamic character values in various regional songs and cultural traditions across Indonesia. Comparative studies involving different educational contexts and interdisciplinary approaches may further enrich understanding of the relationship between local wisdom, literary creativity, and Islamic character education.

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