Jurnal Cakrawala Inspirasi Edukatif
Vol. 03, No.2, Juni-Desember 2024
P-ISSN 3025-4108 E-ISSN 3025-4329

EXPLORATION OF LOCAL WISDOM VALUES IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF POSTMODERNISM PHILOSOPHY

Melda Diana Nasution[1]
[1]Pendidikan Agama Islam, STAIN Mandailing Natal
meldadiana83@gmail.com

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji potensi nilai-nilai kearifan lokal yang ada dalam masyarakat dan relevansinya dalam konteks globalisasi dan modernisasi melalui perspektif filsafat postmodernisme. Dalam era yang semakin mengaburkan batas-batas budaya, nilai-nilai kearifan lokal sering dianggap usang dan tidak relevan dengan dinamika zaman. Namun, kearifan lokal merupakan warisan intelektual dan spiritual yang kaya, yang telah teruji sepanjang sejarah dalam membentuk identitas dan keharmonisan sosial. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana nilai-nilai kearifan lokal yang mengutamakan keharmonisan dengan alam, solidaritas sosial, dan spiritualitas dapat menjadi solusi yang lebih berkelanjutan dan berorientasi pada manusia dalam menghadapi krisis lingkungan, ketidaksetaraan sosial, dan dehumanisasi yang disebabkan oleh teknologi. Melalui perspektif postmodernisme, yang menolak narasi besar dan mendukung pluralisme serta keragaman makna, nilai-nilai kearifan lokal dilihat bukan sebagai warisan yang statis, tetapi sebagai narasi kontekstual yang memiliki potensi transformatif. Postmodernisme memberikan ruang bagi pengakuan terhadap keragaman pengetahuan yang ada di setiap masyarakat, memungkinkan nilai-nilai kearifan lokal untuk menjadi solusi terhadap tantangan-tantangan kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian pustaka untuk mengeksplorasi nilai-nilai tersebut, serta menganalisis bagaimana penerapannya dapat membangun masyarakat yang lebih inklusif, adil, dan berkelanjutan. Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai kearifan lokal dapat diadaptasi dan berkembang tanpa kehilangan esensi tradisionalnya, dan berkontribusi dalam menciptakan solusi yang relevan untuk masyarakat saat ini.

Kata Kunci : Kearifan Lokal, Postmodernisme, Modernisasi

Abstract

This study explores the relevance and potential of local wisdom in the context of contemporary challenges, particularly through the lens of postmodern philosophy. In an era of globalization and modernization, traditional values often face the risk of being marginalized or considered outdated. However, local wisdom, with its emphasis on values such as harmony with nature, social solidarity, and spirituality, offers alternative solutions to current issues such as environmental degradation, social inequality, and cultural erosion. Postmodernism, with its rejection of grand narratives and emphasis on pluralism, provides a critical framework to validate and integrate local wisdom as dynamic and contextual knowledge that can adapt to modern needs. This study uses library research to explore how local wisdom can be transformed into relevant solutions by considering its application in various socio-economic contexts. By deconstructing the dominant universal narratives, the study illustrates how local wisdom can be seen as a legitimate, adaptable source of

knowledge that offers sustainable, inclusive, and human-centered solutions. Ultimately, the research highlights the potential of local wisdom, when viewed through postmodernism, to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, fostering a more inclusive and sustainable society. This study contributes to the development of alternative narratives that respect and incorporate diverse cultural identities and values.

Keyword: Local Wisdom, Postmodernism, Modernization.

A. INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization and modernization that increasingly blurs cultural boundaries, local wisdom faces significant challenges in maintaining its existence. Traditional values that serve as a guide for local communities are often considered outdated and irrelevant in the modern world. However, local wisdom represents a rich intellectual and spiritual heritage that has been tested through the course of history in shaping identity and social harmony. In this context, local wisdom is not merely tradition but also contains solutions to complex problems faced by society today.

One major challenge is the dominance of the modern paradigm, which emphasizes rationality, efficiency, and homogeneity. Modernization has shifted local values, which are holistic and contextual, into something perceived as incompatible with contemporary dynamics. In the midst of environmental crises, social conflicts, and dehumanization caused by technology, local wisdom values such as harmony with nature, social solidarity, and spirituality offer alternative solutions that are more sustainable and human-centered.

This is where postmodernist philosophy becomes relevant. Postmodernism, which rejects grand narratives and supports pluralism and diversity of meaning, opens the door for local wisdom to emerge as one of the narratives worthy of appreciation and application. Through the postmodern perspective, local wisdom values are no longer viewed as static or outdated but as contextual narratives with transformative power in shaping a society that is more inclusive and adaptive to change.

The postmodernist perspective also provides a critique of the universality that has long underpinned modernism. Postmodernism acknowledges truth as something relative, contextual, and influenced by the diverse experiences of humanity. This aligns with the characteristics of local wisdom, which is rich in diverse values and meanings, deeply rooted in the traditions and experiences of local communities. Thus, local wisdom and postmodernist philosophy have the potential to complement each other in constructing narratives relevant to contemporary life dynamics.

However, the issue arises as to how to deeply explore these local wisdom values and

integrate them with the postmodernist perspective without losing their traditional essence. This challenge includes efforts to preserve and transform these values so they can be accepted by modern society without erasing their cultural and philosophical roots. This process requires an interdisciplinary, critical, and creative approach to ensure that local wisdom remains relevant in addressing the challenges of the times.

On the other hand, revitalizing local wisdom also requires recognition from various parties, including academics, practitioners, and the general public. The local values that have long been overshadowed by the grand narratives of modernism need to be brought back to the forefront and given space in public discourse. The postmodernist perspective can serve as a bridge to connect local traditions with the demands of modern times, enabling these values to be integrated into everyday life.

Research on the exploration of local wisdom values from a postmodernist perspective becomes crucial to address these challenges. By exploring local values and analyzing them through the postmodernist approach, this study aims to identify the potential transformation of these values into foundations for building a more inclusive, just, and sustainable society.

Through this exploration, local wisdom will not only be seen as an artifact of the past but also as a source of inspiration for the future. This study is expected to contribute to constructing alternative narratives that value diversity, promote inclusivity, and create harmony between tradition and modernity in contemporary society.

B. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

1. Local Wisdom

Local wisdom represents a reservoir of values, norms, and practices that are passed down from generation to generation within a community, forming the cultural fabric of their daily lives. These elements of wisdom are not merely relics of the past but serve as dynamic frameworks that shape the worldview, identity, and resilience of a community. Local wisdom emerges from the community's long-standing interaction with their physical surroundings, their social relationships, and their spiritual beliefs. As Geertz

(1973) describes in his concept of "thick description," local wisdom is deeply embedded in the symbols and meanings unique to a particular cultural setting. This richness makes local wisdom a profound and contextually relevant guide for understanding the intricacies of human experience.

The essence of local wisdom lies in its core values, which often emphasize principles such as harmony, solidarity, justice, and spirituality. These values serve as moral compasses, guiding individuals and communities through life's challenges, ensuring social cohesion, and fostering mutual respect among members. Importantly, local wisdom is not a static or rigid construct. Instead, it is adaptive and fluid, constantly evolving to meet the demands of an ever-changing world. For example, communities with strong traditions of environmental stewardship may reinterpret these practices in the face of modern ecological crises, ensuring the preservation of their natural resources while maintaining the foundational principles of sustainability.

In a rapidly globalizing world, local wisdom offers an alternative lens to address the complexities of contemporary life. Modern challenges such as climate change, social inequality, and the erosion of cultural identities highlight the limitations of purely technocratic or universal approaches. Local wisdom, with its context-specific and human-centered perspective, has the potential to complement these modern frameworks. Its holistic nature prioritizes interconnectedness and balance, presenting solutions that not only resolve immediate issues but also nurture long-term harmony within society. Thus, local wisdom is not only relevant to local communities but also holds valuable lessons for broader global contexts.

In the context of this research, local wisdom is positioned as a critical and alternative source of knowledge that can provide fresh insights into contemporary challenges. By exploring the values of local wisdom through a structured academic lens, particularly in tandem with the perspectives offered by postmodern philosophy, this study aims to uncover the transformative potential of these traditional practices. This approach not only revitalizes the relevance of local wisdom in modern society but also offers a counter-narrative to the dominance of homogenizing global forces. It positions local wisdom as a dynamic tool for fostering inclusivity, sustainability, and a deeper

understanding of human interdependence in today's complex world.

2. Philosophy of Postmodernism

Postmodernism is a school of thought that arose as a critique and response to the ideals and principles of modernism. Unlike modernism, which champions universal truths, linear progress, and the authority of reason, postmodernism challenges these grand narratives, arguing that they are often constructed, exclusionary, and oppressive. Thinkers like Jean-François Lyotard (1984) highlight that modernism's reliance on "meta-narratives" — overarching explanations such as scientific rationality or objective progress — often disregards the plurality and complexity of human experiences. Jacques Derrida (1976) further dismantles modernist assumptions by introducing the idea of deconstruction, which emphasizes the need to interrogate and reinterpret the meanings embedded in language, culture, and tradition (J. Greaney, 2023).

One of the central tenets of postmodernism is the rejection of a singular, universal truth. From this perspective, truth is inherently fragmented, localized, and deeply contextual, shaped by the diverse experiences of individuals and communities. For postmodernists, what is considered "true" in one context may not hold the same value or relevance in another. This perspective sharply contrasts with modernism's quest for universality and absolute objectivity. Postmodernism embraces the idea that truth emerges from the interplay of different narratives and perspectives, creating a mosaic of meanings rather than a singular, homogenized reality (Muhamba & Francis, 2023).

In critiquing the dominance of modernist thought, postmodernism also challenges its tendency to marginalize or dismiss local and traditional values. The hegemony of modernism has often promoted cultural homogenization, where local wisdom and practices are overshadowed or supplanted by global norms and ideals (Williams & Sewpaul, 2004). Postmodernism, however, views these local narratives as equally valid and essential components of human knowledge. It argues that local wisdom—rooted in tradition, cultural identity, and communal experience—offers unique insights and solutions that modernist frameworks may overlook. This philosophical stance opens up opportunities to recognize and integrate local wisdom as an integral part of understanding and addressing contemporary challenges (Williams & Sewpaul, 2004).

In this context, postmodernism provides a theoretical foundation for exploring and appreciating local wisdom without diminishing its significance. By embracing plurality and rejecting the idea of a single dominant narrative, postmodernism legitimizes the value of local wisdom as a vital source of knowledge. It creates a space where diverse cultural practices and traditions can coexist, offering alternative perspectives on truth, morality, and social cohesion. Through this lens, local wisdom is not just a relic of the past but a dynamic and evolving narrative that remains relevant in navigating the complexities of a globalized and interconnected world (Stevenson & Beech, 2001).

3. The Relationship between Local Wisdom and Postmodernism

Postmodernism offers a powerful conceptual framework for examining and revitalizing local wisdom in an era where globalization often undermines traditional knowledge systems. By challenging the universal truths and homogenizing tendencies of modernist thought, postmodernism emphasizes the uniqueness of each society's narrative as a reflection of its distinct reality. Local wisdom, enriched by its historical and cultural context, finds new relevance when reinterpreted through a postmodern lens. This approach allows traditional values and practices to transcend their origins and address the complexities of contemporary life, offering meaningful alternatives to dominant global paradigms (Jungck & Kajornsin, 2003).

One of the key contributions of postmodernism lies in its emphasis on the deconstruction of modern narratives. Modernism often elevates universal and homogeneous narratives, marginalizing localized knowledge systems like local wisdom. Postmodernism disrupts this hegemony by dismantling the structures that enforce singular truths, creating space for local wisdom to be recognized as a valid and essential source of knowledge. Through deconstruction, postmodernism legitimizes the diversity of human experiences and highlights the importance of localized contexts, enabling communities to reclaim their cultural identity and assert the relevance of their traditions in addressing present-day challenges (Feruza & Shakhnoza, 2024).

Another critical aspect of postmodernism is its acknowledgment of the plurality of meanings. It recognizes that there is no single, absolute way to interpret or understand the world. Local wisdom, in this sense, becomes a rich repository of diverse meanings,

symbolizing the many ways in which societies make sense of their existence and environment. By embracing this plurality, postmodernism affirms the value of multiple perspectives, ensuring that local wisdom is not merely preserved as an artifact of the past but celebrated as a dynamic and evolving narrative that enriches human understanding (Fitriani & Ifianti, 2023).

Lastly, postmodernism facilitates the transformation of local wisdom values to align with modern societal needs while preserving their authenticity. The postmodern approach views tradition not as a static relic but as a living, adaptable framework. It enables local wisdom to evolve, ensuring its relevance in addressing contemporary issues such as environmental sustainability, social justice, and cultural preservation. By reinterpreting local values through a postmodern lens, communities can navigate the complexities of modernity without compromising their cultural identity, creating a harmonious balance between tradition and progress (Ernawati et al., 2024).

C. METHOD

The method employed to analyze exploration of local wisdom values in the perspective of postmodernism philosophy is library research. Library research, as defined by Moleong, involves systematically gathering data from written sources, including books, journal articles, research reports, and other relevant documents. This method serves as a foundation for obtaining in-depth theoretical insights and empirical evidence that have already been published by experts and researchers in the same or related fields. It is particularly useful for studies aiming to explore complex themes like religious moderation and economic empowerment, as it provides access to a wide array of perspectives and established knowledge (Murdiyanto, 2020).

One of the key advantages of library research lies in its ability to offer a comprehensive overview of the existing body of knowledge. By analyzing a variety of written sources, researchers can identify patterns, gaps, and contradictions in the literature, which serve as a basis for developing new insights. For example, in exploring religious moderation, researchers can draw upon studies that highlight its principles—such as balance, tolerance, and justice—and examine how these principles intersect

with the strategies for empowering communities economically. This process not only enriches the conceptual framework of the research but also ensures that the study is grounded in credible and well-documented evidence (Sugiyono, 2008).

Moreover, library research allows for a critical evaluation of previous studies, enabling researchers to build on established theories while offering new interpretations. In the context of this study, the method facilitates an understanding of how religious moderation has been applied in various socio-economic settings, providing valuable lessons and best practices. Additionally, it enables researchers to contextualize their findings within the broader discourse, ensuring that their conclusions are both relevant and applicable. By synthesizing diverse sources of information, library research ensures that the analysis of religious moderation values and their role in economic empowerment is both nuanced and well-informed.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Results

This research reveals that the values of local wisdom that exist in society have great potential to be understood and applied in a broader social and cultural context, especially when viewed through the perspective of postmodernist philosophy. Based on an analysis of various literature sources, it was found that local wisdom encompasses a number of key values that are deeply rooted in the life of traditional people. These values include harmony, solidarity, justice, and spirituality. All of these values are not only rooted in tradition and history, but are also highly adaptive to the changing times. In other words, although local wisdom is born from a specific culture, these values have a universal dimension that can make a great contribution to the wider society.

In the context of local wisdom, it is found that most of these values are inclusive and dynamic, allowing them to evolve and adapt without losing their basic essence. Values such as social harmony and solidarity, for example, remain relevant in a variety of social contexts, both in rural and large cities. This adaptation process shows that local wisdom is not static, but is able to develop according to the challenges faced by

the community. Through the approach of postmodernism, which emphasizes the plurality of meanings and the critique of the grand narrative that dominates, these local values can be understood as a valid and relevant form of knowledge. Postmodernism opens up the view that local knowledge integrated into the traditions of a society can offer the right solutions to complex contemporary problems.

The study also found that local wisdom is often underestimated or even ignored in the context of globalization which tends to prioritize a grand narrative that is universal and homogeneous. For example, in the development of the global economy, many local values are not appreciated because they are considered outdated or do not conform to the logic of the dominant capitalist market. However, with the perspective of postmodernism, local wisdom is regaining its place as a legitimate source of knowledge and can be the answer to the social, economic, and cultural problems that arise in the contemporary world. In this sense, postmodernism provides space to recognize the diversity of knowledge that exists in each society, which in turn can enrich our perspective in solving the problems faced.

Overall, the study also shows that the philosophy of postmodernism opens up space for local wisdom to flourish without being trapped in a single, absolute interpretation. One of the main concepts in postmodernism is relativism, which assumes that truth and values are relative and dependent on the social and cultural context of each one. In this case, postmodernism considers that there is no one view or way that can master the whole reality, but rather each local wisdom has relevance in its own context. Thus, local wisdom is not only seen as a legacy of the past, but also as a form of knowledge that can be translated into the context of the present day.

The importance of this recognition of diversity is reflected in postmodernist thought that criticizes the dominance of homogeneous grand narratives and ignores marginalized local values. Postmodernism encourages us to open up space for local wisdom in solving social and economic problems that are closer to society. For example, in the management of natural resources, local wisdom values such as respect for nature and environmental stewardship can provide more sustainable guidance

compared to the global economic paradigm that often exploits nature for short-term gains.

Finally, this research underlines that local wisdom can be renewed and reintroduced in various areas of life, especially in economic empowerment, social development, and cultural preservation. In the context of postmodernism, local wisdom is not only a legitimate alternative in facing the challenges of the times, but also plays an important role in building a more inclusive, just, and sustainable society. By integrating the values of local wisdom within the framework of postmodernism, we can see great potential in creating more relevant and contextual solutions to contemporary problems.

2. Discussion

The discussion of the research findings highlights the interrelation between local wisdom values and postmodern philosophy, which provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the relevance of these values in the modern world. First, from the perspective of postmodernism, the deconstruction of grand narratives emphasizing universalism becomes a gateway to recognizing the diversity of local values. Grand narratives, such as modern ideologies based on rationality and science as the ultimate sources of truth, often overlook traditional values that are local and contextual. Postmodernism thus creates opportunities to acknowledge that truth is inherently local and tied to the experiences and conditions of specific communities.

Furthermore, the plurality of meaning within postmodernism offers a more inclusive framework for understanding local wisdom. The values embedded in various communities' wisdom are diverse, and none is inherently superior to the others. In this context, values such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong), social justice, and tolerance found in local wisdom can be understood as solutions to contemporary social issues without being subjected to universal standards or norms dictated by grand narratives. The concept of plurality reinforces the idea that every community has the right to construct its own meaning based on its experiences and sociocultural context.

The discussion further underscores the importance of adapting local values to address the demands of changing times. Postmodernism not only creates space for

questioning and deconstructing grand narratives but also grants communities the freedom to adapt traditional values to contemporary needs. For instance, local wisdom values related to spirituality and social harmony can be reinterpreted within the modern economic context through practices that emphasize social justice, inclusivity, and sustainability. In this way, local wisdom not only survives but also evolves into relevant solutions for a world that is increasingly interconnected and diverse.

This research also illustrates that integrating local wisdom through the lens of postmodernism is not only vital for cultural preservation but also for creating more inclusive and equitable societal models. By recognizing local wisdom as valid and legitimate knowledge, societies can develop solutions that are more contextually grounded without being constrained by homogenized economic and social models. The postmodern perspective challenges the dominance of globalized approaches by emphasizing the value of diversity and local identity in addressing contemporary challenges.

Moreover, the deconstruction of modern, universalistic ideologies enables local communities to reclaim their narratives, enriching global discourse with diverse and context-specific contributions. This shift is particularly important in areas such as environmental sustainability, where local practices rooted in wisdom about nature and resource management can offer alternative approaches to global environmental issues. Local knowledge and values thus become critical resources in shaping innovative and culturally sensitive solutions.

Finally, this study concludes that the exploration of local wisdom through postmodern philosophy reveals its potential to be a transformative force in contemporary society. Rather than being confined to historical relics or cultural nostalgia, local wisdom can actively contribute to building a more plural, inclusive, and sustainable future. Through the principles of postmodernism, local wisdom not only finds validation but also becomes a dynamic element in responding to the complexities of the modern era.

E. CONCLUSION

The challenges brought about by globalization and modernization have placed local wisdom at a critical juncture. Often viewed as outdated or irrelevant, local wisdom, in reality, holds a wealth of values that are capable of addressing contemporary challenges. These values, which emphasize harmony with nature, social solidarity, and spirituality, can serve as sustainable solutions to the crises of the modern era, including environmental degradation, social inequality, and the erosion of cultural identity. The postmodernist perspective offers an opportunity to elevate these local wisdom values as contextual and transformative narratives that contribute to a more inclusive and adaptive society.

From a postmodernist lens, local wisdom aligns with the rejection of grand narratives and the emphasis on pluralism and contextual truths. This philosophical framework appreciates the diversity of human experiences and validates local traditions as essential sources of knowledge. Unlike modernism, which often marginalizes localized knowledge in favor of universal truths, postmodernism fosters a space where local wisdom can coexist with modern paradigms. Thus, local wisdom is positioned as not only relevant but also necessary in constructing sustainable and human-centered solutions to contemporary challenges.

Postmodernism's emphasis on deconstruction also highlights the importance of recognizing and reinterpreting local wisdom. By challenging the hegemony of universal narratives, postmodernism enables communities to reclaim and integrate their cultural identity into modern society. This approach ensures that local wisdom is not merely preserved as a relic of the past but is revitalized as a dynamic framework that evolves with time, offering practical and meaningful solutions for today’s world.

Additionally, the integration of local wisdom and postmodernist perspectives underscores the adaptability of traditional values in addressing modern societal needs. Local wisdom, when viewed as a living and evolving narrative, retains its philosophical roots while being transformed to meet the demands of modern life. This transformation fosters a harmonious relationship between tradition and progress, allowing societies to navigate globalization without losing their cultural authenticity.

The exploration of local wisdom through the postmodernist perspective provides an important avenue for constructing alternative narratives that are inclusive, diverse, and sustainable. It emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary approaches to ensure the relevance of local wisdom in a rapidly changing world. By revitalizing and integrating these traditional values into modern contexts, local wisdom becomes a source of inspiration and a foundation for building a just, inclusive, and harmonious society in the face of globalization's challenges.

F. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ernawati, H., Syahlani, S. P., Siswomihardjo, S. W., & Dewi, I. J. (2024). Rooted in Tradition: Exploring the Integration of Local Wisdom with Sustainability and Education for Future Research. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, *50*(12), 347–356. https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2024/v50i121703

Feruza, K., & Shakhnoza, R. (2024). UNDERSTANDING POSTMODERNISM THROUGH THE THEORIES OF LYOTARD AND BAUDRILLARD. *International Journal Of Literature And Languages*, *4*(3), 20–25. https://doi.org/10.37547/ijll/Volume04Issue03-04

Fitriani, E., & Ifianti, T. (2023). The Mapping of Local Wisdom Found in the Lara Pangkon's Speech in the Wedding Reception of Ngantang People. *Briliant: Jurnal Riset Dan Konseptual*, *8*(4), 916. https://doi.org/10.28926/briliant.v8i4.1549

J. Greaney. (2023). Derrida and Modernism: A Review of Understanding Derrida, Understanding Modernism. *Journal of Modern Literature*, *46*(2), 174–179. https://doi.org/10.2979/jml.2023.a885854

Jungck, S., & Kajornsin, B. (2003). "Thai Wisdom" and Glocalization. In *Local Meanings, Global Schooling* (pp. 27–49). Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781403980359_2

Muhamba, D., & Francis, B. S. (2023). Deconstructing Reality: A Postmodern Analysis of the Concept of Truth. *Journal of African Politics*, *3*(2), 31–42. https://doi.org/10.58548/2023jap32.3142

Murdiyanto, E. (2020). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (1st ed.). LP2M UPN Veteran

Yogyakarta Press.

Stevenson, C., & Beech, I. (2001). Paradigms lost, paradigms regained: defending nursing against a single reading of postmodernism. *Nursing Philosophy*, *2*(2), 143–150. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1466-769X.2001.00050.x

Sugiyono. (2008). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D* (4, Ed.). Alfabeta.

Williams, L., & Sewpaul, V. (2004). Modernism, postmodernism and global standards setting. *Social Work Education*, *23*(5), 555–565. https://doi.org/10.1080/0261547042000252280