



Family Counselling Model Based on 3S Values (*Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi*) for Strengthening Positive Character in Junior High School Students

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Abstract This study aims to explore the integration of Luwu's local wisdom values, namely *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi* (3S), into family counselling as a strategy for strengthening the positive character of junior high school students. The study employed an exploratory qualitative descriptive approach to investigate parents' experiences and perspectives regarding the implementation of these values in family life. The research participants consisted of parents of junior high school students from a junior high school in Palopo City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The results showed that the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi* had been internalized and consistently applied within families through daily interactions. Parents emphasized the importance of mutual respect, guidance, and openness to feedback as key strategies in shaping children's behavior. The integration of these values contributed to improving the quality of communication within the family and supported the development of positive character traits among students, such as politeness, empathy, responsibility, openness, and emotional control. Despite challenges, including parental workload and external environmental influences, these values remain relevant in the context of contemporary family life. These findings indicate that integrating Luwu's local wisdom values into family counselling represents a culturally grounded approach that is effective in strengthening character education and optimizing the role of families in student development.

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Introduction

National education policy emphasizes that character education must be fully integrated into a meaningful, enjoyable, and exciting learning process, as well as through flexible and contextual co-curricular and extracurricular activities (Fikri et al., 2023; Pratiwi, 2025; Sarifah et al., 2025; Zainuddin et al., 2025). This policy direction encourages schools to provide learning that is not only oriented towards academic achievement, but also fosters morality, empathy, cooperation, and social responsibility through deep and meaningful learning experiences. (Hassan et al. 2025; Tsani Izzati et al., 2025). In its implementation, schools are expected to be able to design projects that are in line with character values, utilize local culture as a source of learning, and involve families and communities as an important part of a harmonious and sustainable character education ecosystem. (Farlina et al., 2025; Irsan et al., 2024; Rizal & Nur, 2024; Yani et al., 2025; Yusuf & Fajari, 2025).

However, the reality at one of the junior high schools in Palopo City shows that the implementation of this policy has not been fully optimized. Preliminary observations and school counselling records revealed recurring cases of absenteeism, student conflicts, and

disciplinary violations among students. Various negative behaviours are still found among students, such as lack of discipline, low sense of responsibility, disrespectful behaviour towards teachers, and involvement in conflicts between students. This condition indicates a gap between the expected character education goals and actual practices in the school environment, where character values that should be internalized through learning, co-curricular and extracurricular activities are not consistently reflected in the daily behaviour of students (Nufa, 2025). This gap is exacerbated by the lack of synergy between schools and families, the lack of role models in the surrounding environment, and the suboptimal integration of local cultural values into the learning process. Therefore, a more contextual approach to character education is needed, one that is adaptive to the needs of students and relevant to the local culture in order to bridge the gap between policy and practice in the field (Wulandari et al., 2024).

Character education is a fundamental aspect of the Indonesian education system because it plays an important role in shaping the personality, morals, and behaviour of the younger generation. (Anriani et al., 2022); (Rasyid et al., 2024; Sakban & Sundawa, 2023). Schools and families share the responsibility of instilling moral values, responsibility, and social attitudes so that students grow up not only academically intelligent, but also strong in character (Eliza et al., 2024; Elsayed, 2024). However, globalization and digitalization have caused local cultural values, which form the moral foundation of society, to shift. Therefore, character education strategies based on local wisdom are needed to strengthen the national identity and morality of students (Erlande, 2024; Nasir et al., 2025; Trisno et al., 2024).

Local wisdom reflects a system of values and norms that have been passed down from generation to generation and serve as guidelines for community life (Sari et al. 2020; (Sobaya et al., 2023; Tohari, 2025). In South Sulawesi, particularly in the Luwu region including Palopo City, there is a well-known philosophy called tellu *sipakainga* (3S), which stands for *Sipakatau* (mutual respect), *Sipakainge* (mutual reminder), and *Sipakalebbi* (mutual honor). These values contain moral teachings about respect for others, mutual cooperation, and maintaining social dignity (Jihan Chepy Fadhilah & Abdul Rahman, 2023; Nur et al., 2023). Research shows that the application of the 3S values plays an important role in building social harmony and preventing negative behaviours such as violence and bullying among teenagers (Puspayanti et al., 2023).

The values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi* are also in line with modern educational principles such as empathy, self-control, and respect for differences (Nur et al., 2023). Several studies confirm that the 3S values can form the basis for the development of culture-based education that strengthens local identity while shaping the humanistic character of students (Anggraeni et al., 2021; Jihan Chepy Fadhilah & Abdul Rahman, 2023). Thus, education is not only a process of knowledge transfer, but also the development of a dignified personality in accordance with the cultural values of society (Vanderstraeten, 2020).

The family plays a strategic role in shaping children's character because it is their first and primary educational environment (Hairullah, 2023; Nelissa et al., 2024). Children learn responsibility, empathy, and discipline through role modelling and communication within the family. The success of character education in schools is highly dependent on family support and parenting styles (Dwi et al., 2024; Hatiah. & Muslimah, 2024). Therefore, family counselling is expected to be an important approach that can help parents understand and apply positive values in raising children. If family counselling integrates the 3S values, then the process will not only resolve behavioural problems, but also strengthen the morals and emotional bonds between family members (Ilyas et al., 2024).

A number of studies show that integrating local wisdom into family counselling

contributes significantly to strengthening interpersonal relationships and the effectiveness of parenting patterns (Ghoffar et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2022; Sakti et al., 2024). A counselling approach based on cultural values can improve the quality of communication, strengthen emotional bonds, and foster mutual respect among family members (Lasi et al., 2023; Perron et al., 2023). Other findings indicate that local cultural values can serve as guiding principles in the counselling process, particularly in building emotional regulation, moral commitment, and protective family functions (Chen, 2025; Nelissa et al., 2024; Roman et al., 2025).

Family counselling not only functions as a space for problem solving, but also as an educational process that instils cultural values through dialogue, reflection, and the habit of positive communication (Kandeger et al. 2018; Putri et al. 2022). The model was developed by exploring the meaning and practice of 3S values through field studies and interviews with traditional leaders, then adapting them into operational and contextual counselling guidelines. It is hoped that the application of this model will improve the quality of family interactions, strengthen parenting functions, and foster positive attitudes and prosocial behaviour among students both at home and at school.

Thus, character building in students cannot be focused solely on schools, but requires synergy between families, schools, and cultural communities. Family counselling is an effective means of transferring local cultural values into modern family life. Therefore, this study aims to describe the Luwu Local Wisdom-Based Family Counselling Model (3S values) operationally, including the preparation of counselling guidelines, implementation of interventions, and evaluation of changes in family communication and student behaviour through a multi-method approach (Jihan Chepy Fadhilah & Abdul Rahman, 2023). This study is expected to contribute to the development of contextual family counselling theory and practice in Indonesia, by offering an indigenous family counselling framework based on Luwu cultural values that can be adapted and replicated in similar socio-cultural contexts. The framework is also expected to strengthen collaboration among schools, families, and communities in shaping a generation with positive character, strong cultural identity, and adaptability to global challenges (Nurhayati et al., 2025; Valencya et al., 2025).

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive exploratory design (Giuliani, 1995). The descriptive exploratory design is used to systematically describe the phenomenon while exploring the process, dynamics, and strategies of integrating the 3S values into family counselling. This study understands social reality contextually based on the perspective of the research subjects. Thus, this study emphasizes data depth rather than generalization of findings. The research was conducted in Palopo City, taking into account the socio-cultural context of the Luwu community, which still upholds local wisdom values as a guide for life, especially in family relationships and the upbringing of junior high school-aged children.

Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, which is the deliberate selection of research subjects based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria for participants in this study included: (a) Parents who have children attending junior high school. (b) Families residing in Palopo City and living in the Luwu cultural environment. (c) Parents who understand and apply the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi* in family life, either consciously or unconsciously. (d) Willing to participate and provide information openly through interviews. The number of participants in this study consisted of four parents representing families from diverse social backgrounds.

Data collection was conducted through in depth interviews with participants. The interviews were semi structured, using interview guidelines based on research questions, including: (1) The family's understanding of the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi*. (2) The process of integrating the 3S values into family counselling. (3) The impact of implementing the 3S values on family communication and the character of junior high school students. Interviews were conducted face to face in a conducive atmosphere so that participants could freely and thoroughly convey their experiences and views.

The data analysis procedure in this study was carried out in several stages as follows: (1) Familiarization with the data, (2) Production of initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, and (6) Writing the research report (Georgiou, 2024). The results of the analysis are presented in the form of a systematic and contextual descriptive-analytical narrative in accordance with the research objectives. To ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the data, this study employed triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing techniques throughout the analysis process.

Results and Discussion

Families' Understanding of Local Wisdom Values in Luwu (*Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi*)

Based on interviews with four respondents, all participants demonstrated a relatively good understanding of the local wisdom values of Luwu, namely *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi*. In general, *Sipakatau* was understood as treating others humanely and with respect. One respondent stated, "*Sipakatau means we must treat everyone kindly and humanely*" (Respondent Ilh). Similar views were also expressed by Anw and Ser, who emphasized respecting others and avoiding condescending behaviour. The value of *Sipakainge* was interpreted as reminding others of mistakes in a polite and non-hurtful manner. A respondent explained, "*If someone is wrong, they should be reminded, but not angrily*" (Respondent Anw). Other participants shared similar perspectives, emphasizing that advice and reprimands should be delivered gently through calm communication. Meanwhile, *Sipakalebbi* was understood as mutual respect and maintaining proper manners, especially toward parents and elders. As one respondent stated, "*Children must speak politely to their parents; that is part of being well-mannered*" (Respondent Ser). Similar sentiments were expressed by Ilh and Anw, who associated *Sipakalebbi* with respectful speech and behaviour in everyday interactions.

All respondents explained that their understanding of the 3S values was primarily obtained through family upbringing and daily interactions at home. One participant stated, "*I first learned about the 3S values from my family, especially from my parents*" (Respondent Ilh). Other respondents also described similar experiences, explaining that these values were reinforced through school and community life. Although the cultural terms are not always explicitly mentioned, respondents agreed that the practices of speaking politely, respecting others, and advising children gently are still consistently applied in family life. Furthermore, all participants believed that the 3S values play an important role in shaping children's character, particularly in developing politeness, empathy, respect for others, and appropriate social behaviour.

The Process of Integrating 3S Values into Family Counselling Patterns

The interview results show that the integration of 3S values in family counselling patterns is carried out through simple and contextual practices in everyday life. All respondents explained that parents share flexible roles in instilling the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi*. One respondent stated, "*I tend to set an example through my*

daily behaviour, while my partner reminds and advises our children more often” (Respondent Ilh). Similar views were expressed by other participants, who explained that both parents contribute through exemplary behaviour and verbal guidance depending on the situation.

The main strategies used by families were role modelling and dialogic communication. Parents emphasized speaking politely, respecting each other, and avoiding conflict in front of children. As one respondent explained, “*We try to speak politely in front of our children and not argue in front of them*” (Respondent Anw). Other participants also highlighted the importance of using gentle language and listening to children before giving advice. Families considered casual discussion and two-way communication more effective in strengthening the internalization of the 3S values than harsh or authoritarian approaches.

However, all respondents reported similar challenges in implementing the 3S values consistently, including emotional fatigue, busy schedules, peer influence, and children’s exposure to digital media. One respondent stated, “*When I’m tired or have a lot on my mind, sometimes I get impatient*” (Respondent Anw). Other participants expressed similar concerns regarding external influences on children’s behaviour. As a form of reflection, respondents stated their intention to improve family communication by listening more to children, reducing commanding tones, and using more persuasive and empathetic language. These efforts were seen as important for strengthening the sustainable integration of Sipakatau, Sipakainge, and Sipakalebba within family counselling practices.

Strengthening Family Functions and Positive Communication through the Implementation of 3S Values

Based on the interview results, all respondents felt that the implementation of Sipakatau, Sipakainge, and Sipakalebba had a positive impact on strengthening family functions and improving communication quality. The most visible changes included calmer communication, more polite language, and a greater tendency to resolve problems through discussion rather than emotional conflict. One respondent stated, “*Nowadays, when there is a problem, it is more common to discuss it calmly rather than immediately getting angry*” (Respondent Ilh). Similar experiences were also expressed by other participants, who explained that communication within the family had become more controlled, respectful, and discussion oriented.

Respondents also emphasized different aspects of the 3S values as being most influential in parent child relationships. Some participants considered Sipakainge the most important because it allows parents to advise children without pressure or harshness. As one respondent explained, “*Sipakainge is most helpful because it can advise children without making them feel pressured*” (Respondent Ilh). Other respondents highlighted Sipakalebba as a value that strengthens mutual respect and patience within the family, while others viewed Sipakatau as important in creating more equal and humane relationships between parents and children. Despite these differences in emphasis, all participants agreed that the three values complement one another in shaping healthy family communication patterns.

The implementation of the 3S values also encouraged positive behavioural changes within families, such as increased openness, mutual apology, and reduced verbal conflict. One respondent stated, “*Now, if there is a mistake, we apologize to each other more quickly*” (Respondent Anw). Similar views were expressed by other participants, who described the family atmosphere as calmer and more harmonious. Overall, these findings indicate that the local wisdom values of Luwu function as effective cultural instruments for strengthening family relationships, fostering constructive communication, and supporting children’s character development within the local cultural context.

Discussion

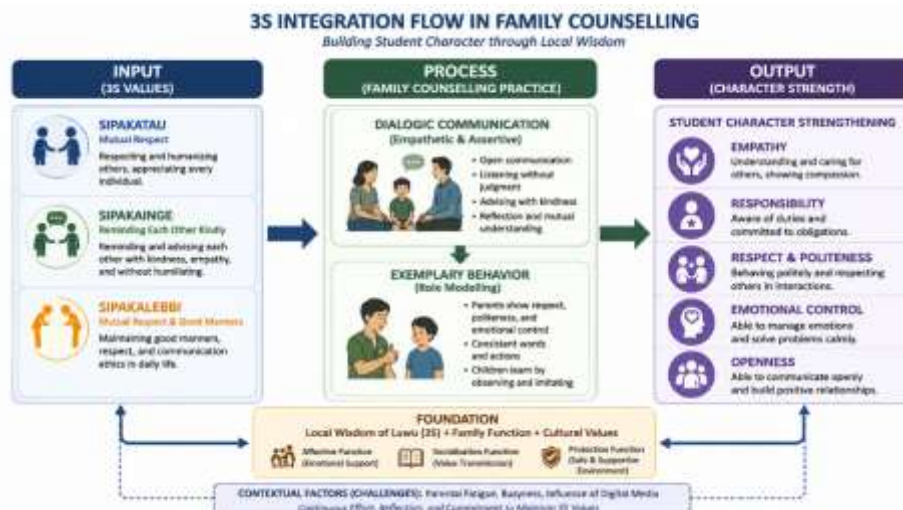


Figure 1. 3S Integration Flow in Family Counselling

The Value of Luwu's Local Wisdom (3S) in Family Counselling and Student Character Building

The discussion findings can be illustrated through the first stage of the schematic, namely the input (3S Values). In this stage, the local wisdom values of the Luwu community, namely Sipakatau, Sipakainge, and Sipakalebbi (3S), function as the primary cultural foundation in shaping family interaction patterns and parenting practices. These values have been internalized in family life and serve as behavioural guidelines that shape communication patterns, parent-child relationships, and ethical interactions based on mutual respect, polite reminders, and good manners.

The value of *Sipakatau* emphasizes the principle of mutual respect in line with the humanistic parenting approach that emphasizes unconditional positive regard and appreciation of individuals as whole persons (Anggraeni et al., 2021). Within the family environment, the application of *Sipakatau* creates a more equal relationship between parents and children, so that children feel valued and emotionally secure. This condition supports the formation of open communication and increases children's trust in their parents (Lufipah et al., 2022).

The value of *Sipakainge*, which means reminding each other in a kind manner, is in line with the principle of assertive communication in the family, which emphasizes conveying messages clearly, empathetically, and without cornering the other person (Anggraeni et al., 2021). Research findings show that parents prefer to advise their children through a dialogical approach and avoid emotional communication. This supports the view that effective family counselling is not judgmental, but rather focuses on the process of reflection and behavioural improvement (Hamzah dan Marwati, 2023).

Meanwhile, the value of *Sipakalebbi*, which emphasizes mutual respect and maintaining good manners, is closely related to the social learning approach. According to this approach, children learn behaviour through the process of observation and imitation of significant figures, especially parents. Parents' exemplary behaviour in maintaining their words, respectful attitudes, and communication ethics become models of behaviour that are indirectly internalized by children in their daily lives (Nur et al., 2023).

Integrating 3S Values into Family Counselling Practice

The second stage in the schematic represents the process, namely the implementation of 3S values through dialogic communication and exemplary behaviour in daily family

interactions. The results of the study show that the integration of 3S values in family counselling occurs through informal practices such as parental role modelling, empathetic communication, and problem solving through discussion. These findings reinforce the view that culturally based family counselling is more effective when implemented contextually within everyday family interactions (Nurhayati et al., 2025).

The value of *Sipakatau* is closely related to Carl Rogers' concept of unconditional positive regard. Parents who apply *Sipakatau* communicate empathetically and appreciate children's opinions, creating emotional security and openness in family relationships. In the schematic, this value is reflected through respectful and supportive interaction patterns that encourage positive communication between parents and children. The value of *Sipakainge* is represented in the process of dialogic communication, where parents advise children through calm discussion, reflection, and empathetic interaction rather than emotional reactions or punishment. Carl Rogers emphasizes that effective helping relationships are built through empathy and non-threatening communication. This process encourages children to reflect on their behaviour voluntarily and strengthens trust and mutual understanding within the family system.

Meanwhile, the value of *Sipakalebbi* is reflected in the process of exemplary behaviour (role modelling). Parents demonstrate politeness, emotional control, respectful communication, and consistent behaviour that become direct examples for children in everyday interactions. However, challenges such as parental fatigue, busyness, and the influence of digital media remain obstacles in implementing the 3S values consistently (Agustina, 2024). Despite these challenges, parents continue to demonstrate commitment to maintaining local cultural values in family counselling and parenting practices.

Strengthening Family Functions and Character Building for Students

The final stage in the schematic represents the output, namely the strengthening of student character as a result of the integration of 3S values in family counselling. The implementation of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi* has been proven to contribute to strengthening family functions, particularly in creating positive and harmonious communication. This is in line with the affective function of the family as a source of emotional support and moral values for children (Hajar et al., 2026).

Through the integration of the 3S values, students develop character strengths such as empathy, responsibility, politeness, openness, and emotional control. These findings demonstrate that the implementation of local wisdom values not only shapes cognitive understanding of moral values but also supports emotional development and behavioural practice within the family environment. Although each respondent emphasized different aspects of the 3S values, the findings show that *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi* complement one another and cannot be separated. This supports the perspective that effective character education should integrate moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions simultaneously (Purwati et al., 2024).

Thus, this discussion confirms that the local wisdom values of the Luwu community (*Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbi*) are not only culturally relevant but also have a strong theoretical basis in family counselling and character education studies (Nur et al., 2023). The integration of 3S values in family counselling can be viewed as a contextual, applicable, and effective approach in supporting character building among students and strengthening the synergy between families, schools, and community culture.

Conclusion

This study reveals that the local wisdom values of the Luwu community, namely *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge*, and *Sipakalebbe* (3S), have an important role in family counselling and in strengthening students' positive character. These values are internalized through daily family interactions and become guidelines for communication, parenting, and problem solving based on mutual respect, polite reminders, and ethical behavior. The integration of 3S values through parental role modelling, dialogic communication, and discussion-based approaches contributes to more harmonious family relationships and supports the development of students' empathy, politeness, responsibility, openness, and emotional control. Although challenges such as parental busyness and external environmental influences remain, the 3S values continue to be relevant and adaptive as a contextual local wisdom-based approach for strengthening family counselling practices and character education.

Recommendation

Further research should involve more diverse respondents and use a mixed methods approach to provide a broader understanding of the implementation of 3S values. Counselors are encouraged to develop culturally based counseling programs through school family collaboration, while the Education Office should support the development of culturally responsive counseling curricula and training for teachers and counselors in integrating local cultural values into school programs.

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