

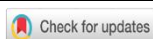


Enhancing Student Character: A Bibliometric Study on The Role of Local Wisdom Approaches

Abdul Salam¹, Agus Setiawan^{1*}, Aminuddin Prahatama Putra², Yadi Ruyadi²

¹Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

²Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Banjarmasin, Indonesia.



DOI : <https://doi.org/10.63230/jolabis.2.3.222>

Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: May 25, 2026

Final Revised: June 06, 2026

Accepted: June 07, 2026

First Available Online: July 05, 2026

Published: December 27, 2026

Keywords:

Bibliometric;

Local Wisdom;

Student Center;

Student Character.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The present research aims to analyze the development, trends, and intellectual structure of research on the role of local wisdom approaches in character building among students through a bibliometric study. **Method:** Bibliometric analysis using Scopus-indexed publication data for the 2014–2024 period. Data were obtained through a search using the keywords "local wisdom" and "character", resulting in 87 documents that met the analysis criteria. **Results:** Data processing was carried out using Microsoft Excel for frequency analysis and descriptive statistics, and VOSviewer to map collaboration networks and keyword relationships. The results show that publications on local wisdom and character education experienced a significant upward trend, peaking in 2020. Indonesia had the highest number of publications, while Ganesha University of Education and I Wayan Suastra were the most productive institutions and authors, respectively. Keyword network analysis identified three main clusters: character education and learning, local culture-based character education, and character building through local wisdom. The findings also indicate that the integration of local culture into character education has become an increasingly dominant theme since 2021. The implications of this research emphasize the importance of using local wisdom values as a contextual character education strategy relevant to students' cultural identities. **Novelty:** Presentation of a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of the relationship between local wisdom and character education, while also identifying trends, key actors, and remaining research opportunities in this field.

INTRODUCTION

Character education has become an essential global agenda in efforts to shape a moral, high-quality generation capable of competing on a global scale. Several studies have shown that character values, such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and hard work, play a crucial role in learning success across various educational levels (Arifuddin et al., 2023; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Gomez, 2024; Sakti et al., 2024). However, the challenge faced in implementing character education is the lack of connection between global values and the local contexts that students possess (Deviv, 2024). In this regard, local wisdom becomes a strategic element that can bridge this gap, making the character values instilled in the educational process more relevant to students' environments and local culture (Hermiono & Arifin, 2020; Parhan & Dwiputra, 2023; Yanti et al., 2022). The local wisdom-based approach offers a promising alternative for strengthening student character (Sadri & Temaja, 2025). Local wisdom reflects values passed down from generation to generation and is closely linked to the community's cultural identity.

Several studies have shown that incorporating local wisdom into the learning process can enhance student engagement, motivation to learn, and social responsibility (Parwati et al., 2018). Furthermore, this approach can provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between scientific knowledge and cultural values, ultimately enriching students' holistic learning experience (Saputra et al., 2023; Wilujeng et al., 2019). A bibliometric analysis is an appropriate method for exploring the development of research on the use of local wisdom in education (Novia & Aznan, 2026), particularly in the context of character strengthening. Bibliometrics enables detailed analysis of publication trends, scientific collaborations, and the impact of research on the field of education (Aria & Cucurullo, 2017; Khansa et al., 2025; Moreno-Guerrero et al., 2020; Muhammad & Triansyah, 2023). Through this method, we can identify key literature and the direction of study development, providing valuable insights into how local wisdom approaches have been applied in learning to shape student character (Pageh et al., 2025).

This study is important because it can help formulate more targeted educational policy recommendations. Therefore, this research aims to examine the contribution of local wisdom to the development of student character through a bibliometric study. By analyzing the existing literature, this study seeks to provide an overview of how local values are applied in learning contexts and their impact on the shaping of student character (Palennari et al., 2023; Purwaningsih & Ridha, 2024; Rohman, 2024). The results of this research are expected to serve as a foundation for developing more contextual, local-wisdom-based character education strategies, which, in turn, can enrich learning models across various educational settings. To achieve these objectives, this study will address several critical research questions, including: What are the trends in research publications on the integration of local wisdom into character education over the years? How has local wisdom been operationalized within educational contexts to enhance student character? Additionally, what roles do different countries and institutions play in advancing research on local wisdom in education? These questions will guide the exploration of how local wisdom contributes to students' character development, providing insights that can inform educational strategies and policies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a bibliometric approach to map studies on the use of local wisdom to enhance students' character (Arjaya et al., 2024). Bibliometrics is a quantitative method for systematically analyzing scientific literature, focusing on publication patterns and trends within a particular field of study (Linnernluecke et al., 2020; Yan et al., 2024). This method allows researchers to evaluate the impact of research, identify collaboration networks, and analyze relationships among variables using metadata from indexed databases such as Scopus (Majhi et al., 2023). Using bibliometric analysis tools such as VOSviewer, this study reveals the distribution patterns of authors, institutions, research collaborations, and keyword frequencies in relevant studies. The initial step the researcher took after defining the research problem was to search for primary studies in

the Scopus database. The researcher used the keyword "local wisdom" in the search. By limiting the results to articles and conference proceedings and restricting the publication time frame to 2014-2024, 209 documents were obtained as the initial dataset. Since this study focuses on character development, the researcher added the keyword "character" to the search. With the combination of the keywords "local wisdom AND character," 87 documents were found. These data were then downloaded in CSV format.

The second stage of this research involved data processing. The data obtained were processed in Microsoft Excel for statistical analysis of the number of documents by publication year, authors, and country of origin (Pernitez-Agan et al., 2024). Next, to generate a bibliometric network analysis and visualization, the researcher used VOSviewer version 1.6.20. The final stage is data analysis. At this stage, the researcher analyzed the development trends in research on the use of local wisdom to build student character. The researcher identified the most productive authors and the countries showing significant attention to this topic, and reviewed recurring and potential sub-themes for further exploration based on the results of the bibliometric network visualization (Sohail, 2026).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researcher's search using the keywords "local wisdom AND character" in a Scopus account found 87 documents discussing the related theme. These documents consist of 86 (97.7%) reputable journal articles, 1 (1.1%) review article, and 1 (1.15%) proceedings article. All 87 documents are published in English. Figure 1 shows the number of documents published between 2014 and 2024. Although there was no publication in 2015, the following years saw a significant increase. In 2020, the number of publications peaked at 18 documents. Subsequently, the number declined, but it rose again in 2024, reaching 16 documents by the time this article was written. The results of the document enhancement are shown in Figure 1 below.

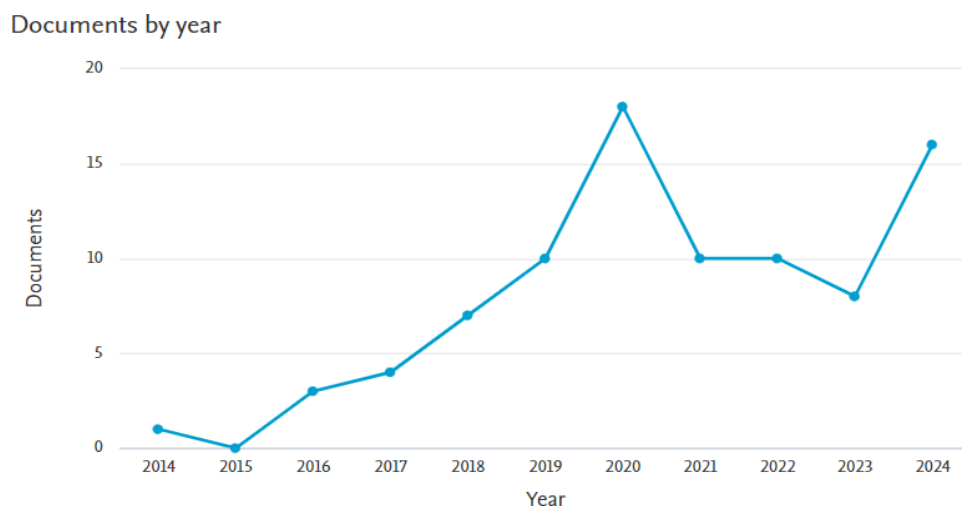


Figure 1. Publication by years

Figure provides information about the most prolific authors over the past 10 years. I Wayan Suastra is identified as the lead author of Scopus-indexed documents on local wisdom for character development. A total of three documents have been published on this topic. The following nine authors each contributed two documents. Figure 2 below illustrates the documents produced by the most productive writers.

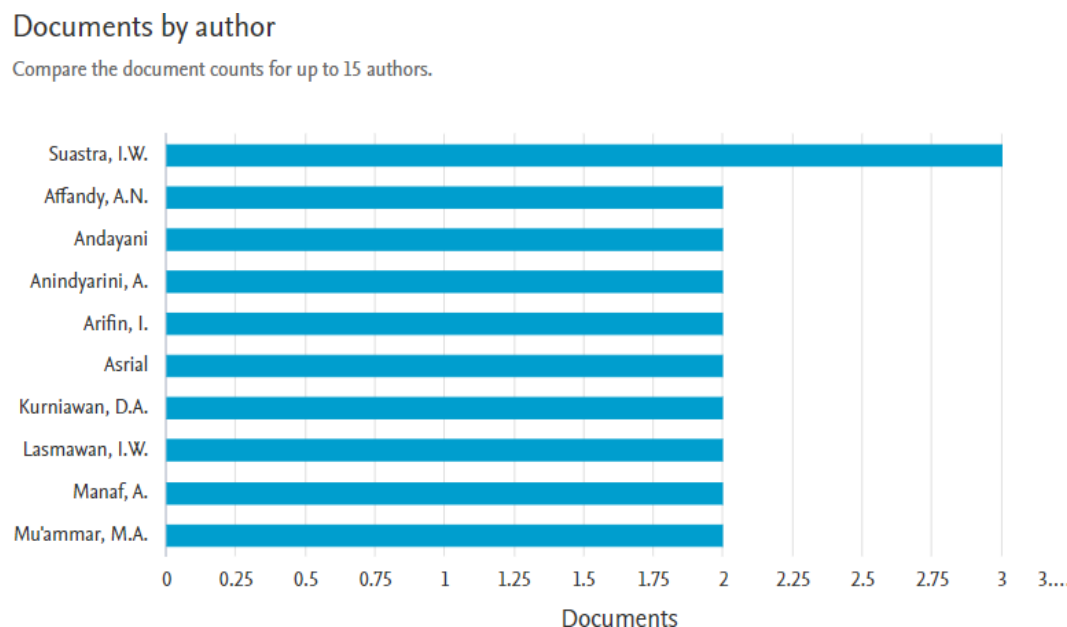


Figure 2. The most productive writers produce documents

Next, research shows that Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha produces the most documents, with a total of 7. The second position is shared by Universitas Sebelas Maret and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, each contributing five documents. The next positions are occupied by Universitas Padjadjaran, Universitas Udayana, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, and Universitas Negeri Malang, with each institution contributing four documents. The following is Figure 3, illustrating that productive institutions produce documents.

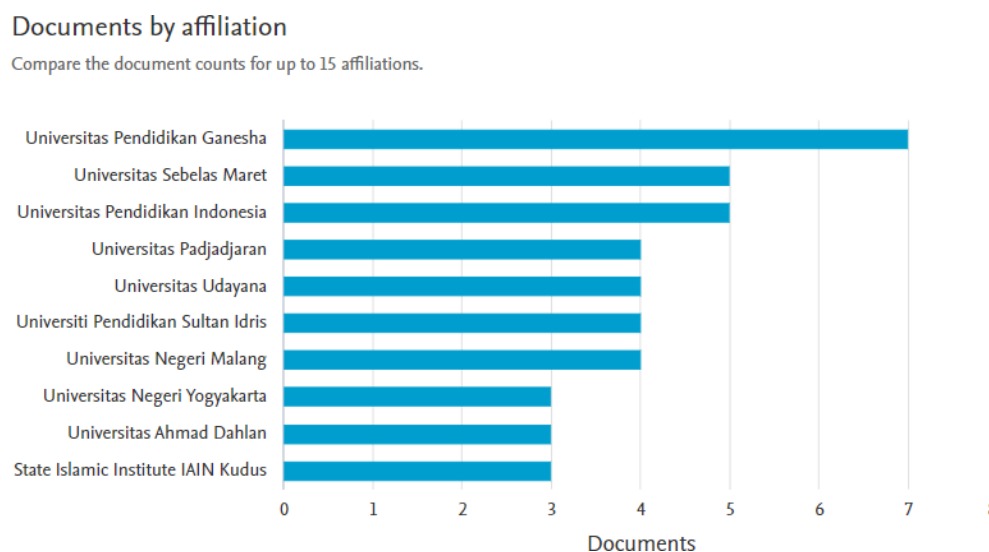


Figure 3. The most productive institutions produce documents

The dominance of Indonesia in Scopus publications on local wisdom and student character development between 2014 and 2024 can be attributed to its rich cultural diversity, which makes local wisdom highly relevant in education. The Indonesian government has also actively promoted character education through local approaches, as seen in the 2013 Curriculum, which emphasizes the importance of cultural values in learning (Hidayati et al., 2020; Maisaroh & Utari, 2024; Wahyudin & Suwitra, 2017). Additionally, Indonesian universities have conducted extensive research on integrating local values into education, contributing to the high number of publications (Hidayati et al., 2020; Ramli et al., 2025). Figure 4 shows that Indonesia is the most productive country in generating documents related to this theme, with a total of 85 documents.

Documents by country or territory

Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories.

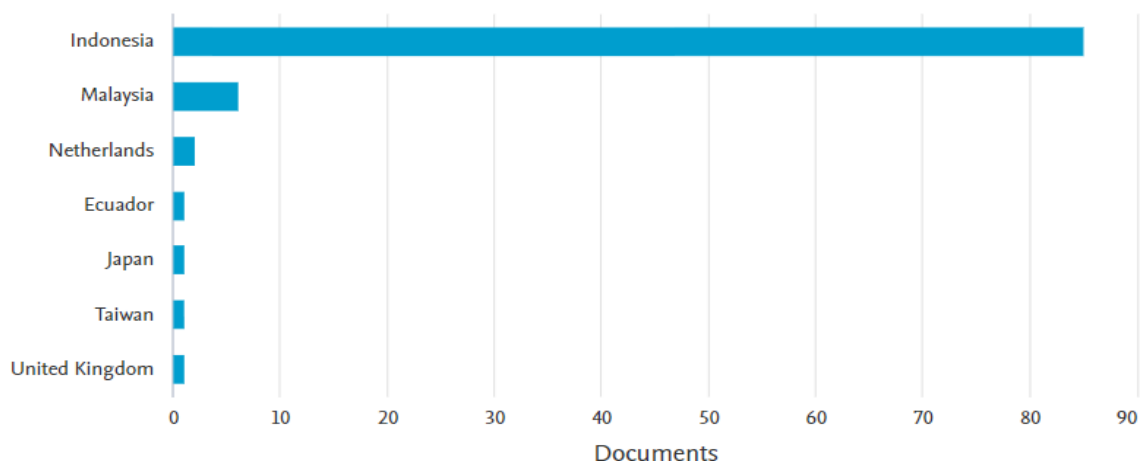


Figure 4. The most productive countries producing documents

Furthermore, the research also found that over the past decade, three clusters have emerged in studies regarding the use of local wisdom in character development. A visualization of the network is shown in Figure 5 below.

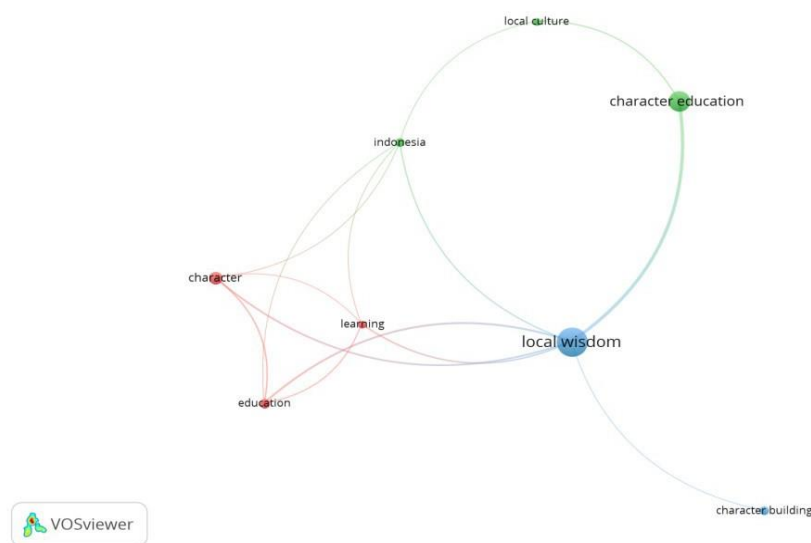


Figure 5. Network visualization map of co-occurrence by keyword

The first cluster, visualized in red, includes the keywords character, education, and learning. The second cluster, visualized in green, contains the keywords character education, Indonesia, and local culture. Lastly, the third cluster, shown in blue, comprises the keywords "character building" and "local wisdom". The overlay visualization map of keyword co-occurrence, as shown in Figure 6, illustrates the trend of keywords frequently used in recent research (since mid-2021), marked in yellow, which primarily centers on character education in relation to local culture.

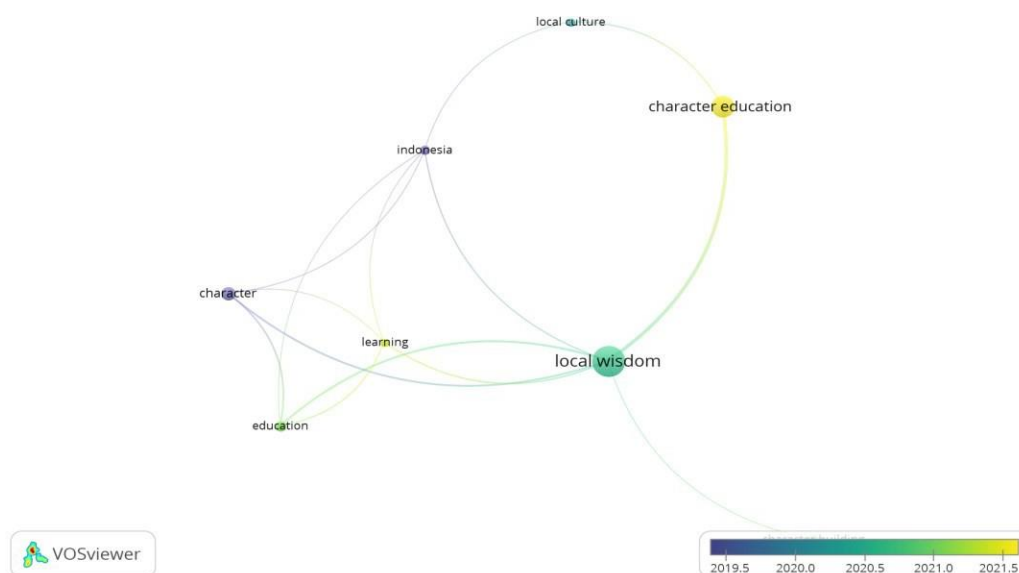


Figure 6. Overlay visualization map of co-occurrence by keyword

This can be explained by the growing need to contextualize character education to make it more relevant and meaningful for students, particularly amidst the social and cultural challenges faced by the younger generation (Herak, 2025; Nuraeni et al., 2024; Solisa et al., 2024). Studies have shown that integrating local culture into the character education curriculum can enhance student engagement and foster values such as tolerance, empathy, and social skills (Aramudin & Susanti, 2024; Nuraeni et al., 2024). Furthermore, there is a resurgence of interest in preserving local wisdom as part of efforts to strengthen character, a trend supported by educational policies that emphasize the importance of local values (Afif, 2022; Iswatiningsih, 2019). Thus, the focus on local culture in character education reflects an endeavor to cultivate stronger student character aligned with cultural identity amidst the dynamics of globalization (Akhatova et al., 2024; Zalli, 2024).

Discussion

The increase in publications on local wisdom and character development during the 2020 pandemic can be linked to heightened awareness of the relationship between local values and character strengthening, as well as the role of localism in maintaining social and mental resilience during a crisis. Local values, such as social responsibility, solidarity, and empathy, proved highly relevant in shaping student character during the pandemic

(Cipolleta & Ortu, 2020; Maulin-Stozek et al., 2022; Napoli et al., 2021). Moreover, local wisdom, which embodies spiritual and communal values, helped strengthen communities' mental resilience amid uncertainty, further underscoring the importance of localism in character education (Sayuti et al., 2023; Wajiyanti et al., 2022).

Based on the results of the literature review, character education faces challenges in connecting universal values with students' social and cultural realities (Islamic et al., 2024; Mariyono, 2024). The implementation of character education often focuses on instilling normative values without considering the local contexts of students' lives (Anisah, 2023; Gomez, 2024; Jonassen & Slavin, 2025). As a result, the values taught are often difficult to understand and apply in everyday life. Various studies show that local wisdom has great potential to overcome this problem because it contains moral values that have been tested and passed down from generation to generation. Integrating local wisdom into learning can increase the relevance of the material to students' experiences, thus making the process of internalizing character values more effective (Aris & Wijaya, 2023; Wijayanti, 2025). Values such as responsibility, cooperation, honesty, social awareness, and respect for the environment can be developed through an approach grounded in local culture (Aricindy & Wijaya, 2023; Chukwu et al., 2023).

Literature reviews also show that the use of local wisdom in education positively strengthens students' character. Various studies report increased learning motivation, student engagement, social awareness, and collaborative skills after local values are integrated into the learning process (Rashed et al., 2025; Zitha et al., 2023). Furthermore, research trends indicate increasing attention to the use of local wisdom as a contextual and sustainable learning resource. However, research contributions remain dominated by certain countries and institutions, necessitating broader, more collaborative studies. Bibliometric studies indicate that local wisdom serves not only as a medium for cultural preservation but also as an effective educational strategy for building student character (Hasnanto, 2025; Saad & Syahrir, 2025). Therefore, strengthening character education grounded in local wisdom can be a relevant alternative for addressing educational challenges in the era of globalization while maintaining the cultural identity of communities.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Findings: This bibliometric study shows that research on the use of local wisdom to strengthen students' character experienced significant growth during the 2014–2024 period, with a peak in publications in 2020. Key findings indicate that Indonesia dominates research contributions in this field, both in terms of the number of publications, institutions, and productive authors. Keyword network analysis revealed three main themes: character education and learning, local culture-based character education, and character building through local wisdom. These findings confirm that local wisdom is increasingly viewed as a strategic approach to building students' character that is contextual and relevant to cultural identity. **Implication:** This study suggests that integrating local cultural values into education can be an important alternative for strengthening character education amid the challenges of globalization

and rapid social change. **Limitation:** This study has limitations because it relies solely on the Scopus database and focuses on bibliometric analysis, thereby not empirically evaluating the effectiveness of implementing the local wisdom approach in learning practices. **Further Research:** Recommended to expand data sources, conduct comparative studies across countries and cultures, and examine the impact of implementing local wisdom on the development of students' character through an empirical approach and broader international collaboration.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Abdul Salam led the research and manuscript writing. **Agus Setiawan** processed and analysed bibliometric data. **Aminuddin Prahatama Putra** performed data validation and discussion. **Yadi Ruyadi** supported the literature search, reference compilation, and final editing. All authors approved the final manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest, either financial or personal, that could influence the content or results of this study.

ETHICAL COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

This article has met the standards of research and publication ethics. The author affirms that this research is original, conducted with academic integrity, and free from unethical practices, including plagiarism.

STATEMENT ON THE USE OF AI OR DIGITAL TOOLS IN WRITING

The final responsibility for the content of the manuscript rests entirely with the authors. The author declares that this manuscript was prepared entirely without the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI) or other digital tools. The entire process, from planning, data processing, analysis, to writing and editing the manuscript, was carried out manually by the author. Thus, full responsibility for the content and authenticity of this article rests solely with the author.

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Abdul Salam

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

Dr. Setiabudhi Street No. 229, Bandung City, West Java, 40154.

Email: salam@upi.edu

***Agus Setiawan (Corresponding Author)**

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

Dr. Setiabudhi Street No. 229, Bandung City, West Java, 40154.

Email: agus_setiawan@upi.edu

Aminuddin Prahatama Putra

Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

Kayu Tangi, Pangeran Village, North Banjarmasin District, Banjarmasin City,
South Kalimantan, Postal Code 70123

Email: aminuddinpatra@ulm.ac.id

Yadi Ruyadi

Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

Kayu Tangi, Pangeran Village, North Banjarmasin District, Banjarmasin City,
South Kalimantan, Postal Code 70123

Email: yadiruyadi16@gmail.com
