SUMANG: NORM OF GAYO COMMUNITY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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Abstract: The rise of immodesty among the young people towards the elderly implies the lack of cultural identity. This behavior is not only performed by individuals within the family environment but also the entire aspects of the educational environment and society. Dealing with this condition, it is necessary to re-actualize the social norms as local wisdom for future generations like Gayo community. Here are the norms to avoid violating actions. These rules are used as a foundation of life called Sumang. This paper focuses on the concepts of Gayo community norms within the framework of Islamic education. This research employed a descriptive qualitative using field research method. The sampling technique was purposive sampling by selecting the research participants consisting of the prominent tribal leader of Gayonese people. The data were collected by using observation and semi-structured interview. Then, the data were documented and analyzed through data reduction, display, and conclusion. The purpose of this paper is to explore the heritage value of Gayo community that can be used as a reference to respond to the challenges of future generations. The findings showed that the Gayo norms managing social interaction known as Sumang (taboo) consisting of Sumang Kenunulen (sitting), Sumang perceraken (talking), Sumang pelangkahan (journey), Sumang penengonen (seeing). Those concepts in Gayo community norms
within the framework of Islamic education are to prevent a contradiction to the religion and the cultural values or it can be classified as disrespectful attitudes. These norms have also been the foundation for developing character education.

**Keywords:** community norms, Islamic education, sumang, character values.

The widespread conflict between the young and the old is increasing, which indicates a decline in etiquette. This behavior is not only performed by individuals in the family environment but also in all aspects of the educational environment and society. To address this, it is necessary to preserve or reactivate the social norms that are considered as local wisdom for future generations. As in Gayo society, there are behavioral rules or prohibitions to avoid breaking the values. Gayo community norms are used as a basis or foundation for life called sumang. In the framework of Islamic education. An approach to Gayo community norms and values is used in this research, using a qualitative case study approach. The participants in this paper used the purposeful sampling technique, which is the traditional method in Gayo society. Data collection methods, interviews, and documentation during data analysis using data reduction, presentation of data, and conclusions. The purpose of this paper is to explore the cultural value of the Gayo community, which can be a reference in responding to challenges faced by future generations with declining values. The results in this field show that Gayo community norms that control social interaction are known as sumang kinonon (mismatched when sitting), sumang perisican (mismatched in speech), and sumang bilingkan (mismatched in travel), and sumang pinangon (contradictory vision). The concept of Gayo community norms in the framework of Islamic education is a contradiction with the religion, as it can be classified as a disrespectful attitude and can have a negative effect, and can be this basis of character education.

**Abstrak:** Maraknya sikap ketidaksopanan antara yang muda terhadap yang tua semakin membatasi perilaku etika. Tingkah laku tersebut bukan hanya dilakukan individu di lingkungan keluarga, namun pada seluruh aspek lingkungan pendidikan bahkan masyarakat. Untuk menyiapkan hal tersebut, perlu agenda pelestarian atau mengaktualisasikan kembali norma-norma sosial yang sudah menjadi kebijaksan...
Zulkarnain dkk, Sumang

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INTRODUCTION

The practices of local tradition in Indonesia have been performed by original indigenous people for a long time, even before the state formation. These traditions have emphasized the development of peoples’ morality through the implementation of its local wisdom in which the values have become the foundation for behaving among individuals, groups, and communities to maintain unity and peace surrounding. This local values shape an individual to possess a quality to be loved, needed, useful and considered as an object for certain interests. Those give meaning in life as a beginning, content, and purpose to be transformed in the educational process for students’ character development.

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Education is truly instilled to develop an individual’s physical, mental and morality to become well-mannered persons in order to fulfill their tasks as human beings. Humans as a perfect creature and Khalifah (leader) in this world should be a meaningful and beneficial person for his/her country.\(^2\) However, many news shows negative attitudes from human, like tribes clash and social destructions in the name of religion. Moreover, many people live with inappropriate manners, such as rude speaking, the relationship between non-Mahram men and women, seeing someone with a sharp gaze, even pornography has been seen by some people as common things.

This condition indicates the erode of nation characteristic to uphold the unity as manifested in Islam as rah\(\text{mat li al’a>lami>n}\) (blessing for the whole world). The nation’s identity like tolerance, friendliness, peace, unity, and harmony has been on the contrary seems to decline from time to time. To save the future generation, some preventive actions should be done immediately, such as raising and preserving the local values. The local wisdom of each region has its own characteristics among the community related to community norms that can be used as guidelines to prevent the deviant of life. Actually, each region has its own policies to avoid the immorality gestures that are contradicted to customary and religious law, like in Gayo community. They educate its people by giving boundaries or rules in behaving and providing punishment for those who break the norms.

Gayo community upholds the norms called \textit{sumang}. It is a form of community education that prohibits the deviation. Literally, \textit{sumang} (taboo) is one form and system of education rooted in the culture of Gayo people as a basic foundation of life covering social relation, kinship systems, customs activities, and cultural system. It basically contains knowledge, beliefs, values, rules, laws that become the guideline for the community life,\(^3\) especially for the younger generation since they are relatively emotionally unstable. In

addition, *sumang* is a process of individual development based on Islamic beliefs.

*Sumang* acts as the control of people’s behavior in daily interaction, both the family and the social environment. It is to regulate the groups and individuals since waking up in the morning until night in order to be civilized humans within the community. This culture also becomes a behavioral control in the family, such as the children behave towards their parents, the younger to the older ones, and one family to another family member. *Sumang* is one way to maintain the social environment of the community to be a well-mannered society with high Islamic values.

The norms of Gayo community cannot be separated from the value of Islamic education as their beliefs to sustain Islamic laws. As explained by Ismail cited by Suryadi that Islamic education can develop morality as the basis for developing and controlling behavior in facing the secular system. Islamic norms also shield the personal life in this globalization era.⁴ In fact, local wisdom is loaded with religious values.⁵ As the Prophet Muhammad did when preaching, He never left His local identity. This is confirmed in the Surah Abraham verse 4, which means “And We did not send any messenger except [speaking] in the language of his people to state clearly for them, and Allah sends astray [thereby] whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.

As explained by Syukri that the cultural system of Gayo community is closely related to *sumang* (taboo) which means the deviant actions from norms that are also contrary to Islam and culture. This *sumang* system contains knowledge, beliefs, values, rules, and laws that become the guideline for behaving among Gayo people. The implementation of *sumang* towards the character among Gayo community is very relevant because it contains spiritual value and oriented to *akhlāq al-karīmah* (noble character) by maintaining dignity within the family and society.⁶ When it is applied as a whole, *sumang* can play an important role in restoring the culture of society

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to shape noble character. Previously, Syukri has revealed *sumang* culture and its implementation of the character restoration among Gayo community in Aceh, but this study aims at reviewing the Gayonese’s norms and its concepts within the framework of Islamic education. It is an important agenda to preserve the local policies among Gayo community. The local wisdom of *sumang* contains the value of Islamic education that should be taught in formal and non-formal education to avoid inter-ethnic conflicts as well as destructive actions in the name of religion. *Sumang* as the norm of Gayo society is inseparable from Islamic education because all occasions of their life are to support Islamic law.

This research employed descriptive qualitative using field research method. Moleong, as quoted by Kirk and Miller, explains that qualitative research is a particular tradition in social science that depends on what is seen.\(^7\) The field research with deep social goals is to reveal the educational values of Gayo community norms. This study also used literature studies by reviewing several studies related to the concept of Gayo community norm within the framework of Islamic law. This research was conducted in Gayo community in Central Aceh, Indonesia. The participants were determined by purposive sampling technique. They were the traditional figures among Gayo community. The data collection was observation and semi-structured, and in-depth interviews and documentation. The data analysis used the model from Miles and Huberman. The data reduction was summarizing the interview results and categorizing its significance related to the research purposes. After that, the data were presented in charts and its relationships among the categories. The next step was making conclusions on Gayo community norms in case of its educational concept within the framework of Islamic laws.

**THE NORM AMONG GAYO COMMUNITY**

The term of the norm has several meanings but generally, it refers to such regularities or what people believe in a group as typical and proper actions\(^8\). The function of norms is important to maintain

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social relations as a prominent element of behavior evaluation. It covers expectations about the kinds and reactions to behavior as well as punishments to maintain certain types of behavior.\(^9\)

In the sociological perspective, norms are defined as rules that are designed to be followed by a certain community. They are not explicitly stated like the law. Norms usually passed through a process of socialization from generations to generation about the way people should behave properly. There are three elements contained in each norm, namely values, rewards, and punishments. The values are basically abstract ideas that are relatively preferred, liked and achieved by society. Therefore, the values contain important ideas for and by society. On the other hand, the reward and the punishment are concrete because they directly determine human behavior.\(^10\) The rewards are positive sanctions for all behaviors that are in accordance with the norm, and vice versa, the punishment is the negative one for actions that are contradicted with the applicable norms.

Moreover, social norms are a set of written and unwritten rules agreed by a community to control the behavior of all members. The social or community norm believed by certain groups to determine a certain action is appropriate or not.\(^11\) This kind of norms applies from generation to generation that becomes such a tradition. The interdependence between expectations and actions stimulate the social norms to be so strict that against the changes due to the dynamics of life. This norm is usually unwritten rules as informal regulations implied in the daily of a society.

A behavior is considered deviant if it is not in accordance with the values and social norms that apply in the community or in other words deviations are all kinds of behavioral patterns that do not succeed to make conformity to the will of society. Such behavior can be regarded as a deviation or not as determined by the norms or values that apply in society. Any action that is contrary to the norms will be considered as a deviation and will be rejected\(^12\). There

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10 Francesca and Holly Shakya.
11 Francesca and Holly Shakya, *What Are Social Norms? How Are They Measured?*
are several different understandings of social norms, but those still operate on the element of social expectation based on one’s beliefs about what other people do and think. In addition, it also focuses on elements of social norms that affect others, such as social effects, sanctions, or disapproval. The social norms may be regarded as legal norms, though, actually, both are different.

Norms deal with the aspects of human behavior that encourage people to behave in such ways which are consistent with the others’ expectations. Norms can indeed reduce personal freedom because it dictates the individuals, but it can give free way to socialize by relying on the norm. A norm has the label of “must be followed”. This type of obligation involves social attitudes about agreement and disagreement and some forms of external sanctions as a means of law enforcement.  

The norms can be divided into four. Firstly, the religion norm is the rules of life as orders and prohibitions from God which regulates vertical relations. It is about humans and God (worship) as well as horizontal relations, i.e. humans and others. Secondly, the moral norm is the rules of life about good and bad behavior in the form of hints or inner voices that originate from the human conscience. Based on its nature, human conscience “maintain” the moral values. The second is the politeness norms as the rules of community life about good and bad behavior (appropriate or inappropriate) which apply in a particular community or environment. This norm is usually derived from customs, culture, or community values. Politeness encourages good deeds, which is not coming from conscience, but more on mutual respect. This norm is cultural, contextual, national or even local but it is not universal. An action can be considered as polite by a group of people may be listed as impolite to another group of people. The punishments of this kind of norms include reproach, ridicule, or exile by the community. The fourth norms are regulations made by the state-authorized institutions which are binding and compelling in

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order to realize public order.\textsuperscript{14} In this study, the focus is on politeness norms because it is more on the traditional context in terms of Gayo community.

**ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

The term of Islam comes from the word of \textit{aslama}, \textit{yuslimu}, and \textit{islāman} which means submission. \textit{Aslama} comes from salima which means peaceful or safe. This definition is in line with the purpose of Islamic teachings to encourage people to obey and submit to God in order to realize safety, peace, and security.\textsuperscript{15} Islam is a universal religion that teaches human beings about various aspects of life, both the life and the afterlife. One of Islam teachings is obliging Muslims to carry out education to gain the various knowledge to achieve prosperity and happiness both in the world and the hereafter. As stated in Surah al-Alaq verses 1-5 which means: “Read by (mentioning) the name of your Lord Who Created, He has created man from a lump of blood. Read it, and your God is the Most Gracious, Who teaches (man) with the intercession of the word. He teaches people what he does not know.”\textsuperscript{2} The sources of Islamic values include Qur’an, the authentic traditions (Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad (Saw.) and the scholarly opinions (Ijtihad). The basic foundation is the Qur’an because it contains eternal God instructions for mankind for their happiness in the world and the hereafter. The Qur’an contains aqidah (a set of beliefs), shariah (a set of laws), morality, past stories, upcoming news and other important divine knowledge of God.\textsuperscript{16} The contents are related to the application of human akhlaq (a code of moralities). Etymologically, morals mean actions towards his/her God and other creatures, like human beings; personal self, household, neighbors, society and non-human beings (flora and fauna). So, actions taken as good or bad can also be categorized as moral or immoral actions.

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{14}] ahsan Ziyadi, “Pentingnya Pengenalan Pelajaran Norma Melalui Strategi Pembelajaran Menyenangkan Dengan Humor,” 2017, 4.
\item[\textsuperscript{15}] Abuddin Nata, \textit{Ilmu Pendidikan Islam} (Jakarta: Kencana, 2010).
\item[\textsuperscript{16}] Endang Saifuddin Anshari, \textit{Wawasan Islam; Pokok-Pokok Pikiran tentang Paradigma & Sistem Islam} (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2004).
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Moreover, in Arabic, educating is called as *rabba-yurabbi*, a teacher is called *murabbi*, and in education is called *tarbiyah*. Besides that, the meaning of education in the Qur’an is very diverse such as *ta’lim* (teaching), *tadris* (learning), and *ta’dib* (character building). The term in education that is often used is pedagogy which means education and pedagogic as educational sciences. In general, the meaning of education is as a human effort to grow and develop their potential of both physical and spiritual in accordance with the values that exist in society and culture. Ki Hajar Dewantara stated that education is an effort to foster children’s character, intelligence and physical to be able to advance the life quality in harmony with nature and society. All those three aspects are an integral part to make children grow in the right way. Ki Hajar Dewantara’s statement indicates that education is the development and growth of all aspects of human beings, both physical and spiritual to be a perfect human being. The difference between general education and Islamic education is the emphasis of the educational goals. As the ultimate human perfection is close to God in the world and the hereafter, Islamic education trains individual based on Islamic teachings from Allah (Swt.).

The purpose of Islamic education as the results of the worldwide congress on Islamic education is to create balanced growth of the overall human personality by training the personality, mind, feelings and physical. Thus, education must strive for the growth of all human potential including spiritual, intellectual, imaginary, physical, science, and language in order to achieve goodness and perfection. Basically, the education aims at enhancing the faith and piety that emanate from the submission of human beings to carry out worship according to their beliefs as well as have the noble character to

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maintain harmonization of horizontal and vertical relations. This relationship is also manifested by all other religions.

**SUMANG AS GAYO COMMUNITY NORM WITHIN ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

Before Islam was “coming”, the community had been through their livings with several traditional practices. The applicable norms are legitimate social laws and must be obeyed. In this case, the manifestation of the local wisdom among Gayo community comprises a language, governance system (*sarakopat*), community norms (*sumang*), aesthetic expressions (*didong*), the basic values of Gayo culture. For this study, the author focuses on the norms of society (*sumang*). **Sumang** as an act or action that deviates from the habitual manners among Gayonese that is defined as taboo in social interaction between parents and children or the older with the young. It is a Gayo traditional value included in the social education system in daily life. This system has been running in community life, though it is not learned through formal learning in classrooms or scientific forums. The educational pattern of *sumang* is in the form of individual and community control to guide the people to live with civilized manner. Gayo community goals are to educate its generation to become noble people, *sumang* (taboo) actions are considered rude and wrong. According to Halihasimi, it is the norm that should be avoided by the community because it will lead to the obstruction or prohibition by Gayo people in particular and Muslims in general. These actions are contrary to the culture and it may disturb the community environment. In Islam, *sumang* is also prohibited as unworthy attitudes (*akhlāq al-maẓmūmah*). It is a despicable or bad moral that can be measured from attitude, behavior, and speech. Unfortunately, *sumang* seems only owned by

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elderly people because today the young generation may have a low sense of belonging. Most of them just know word of mouth without any deep understanding and awareness. Moral values for children have a backing that originates from religion. By doing so, children can feel to have some obligation and to be under God supervision. Thus, the appreciation of children in his/her religious values is not only interpreted as immanence-transcendental (local values) but also ecumenically-transcendental about the relationship among human beings, family and self.

The source of Islamic values in the form of local wisdom is used as the basis of this study. The moral education involves local wisdom as the guidelines for personal enrichment and community life. In line with this, Al-Musanna explains that Gayo community norms were the fiqh that is locally translated and interpreted. This community has performed this value (fiqh) since it had been mutually agreed and carried out from generations to generations because, the values actually of tradition or culture in agreement with the religious teachings, especially Islam that is *rahmat li al-‘alamîn* has a boundary corridor to realize perfection as a human being. In details, *sumang* as the norm of Gayo community is divided into four, as follow.

**Sumang Kenunulen (talking)**

*Sumang Kenunulen* is a taboo act in sitting or a contradiction that occurs because of sitting, such as men and women in a quiet or an unusual place and the way of sitting which is impolite. This kind of *sumang* is to prevent the man and woman to sit together in an inappropriate place. As explained by the community leader, Yusin, *Sumang Kenunulen* teaches the way of sitting between the young and the old in which young person should not be in an equal position or in a higher seat than the old like father, mother, and teacher. So, it guides the way to place themselves when sitting or standing. With this norm, everyone must be aware of themselves in taking a seat during an occasion, such as, older people should not sit near the entrance doors. Another thing related to this norm includes a prohibition to visit a widow’s house, a girl without her parents, a wife without her

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26 Pinan, Daur Hidup Gayo.
husband. Even a daughter-in-law or daughter may not live with her father if there is no mother or another person in the house to prevent bad things from happening.28

**Sumang Percerakan (talking)**

This norm can be interpreted as taboo in talking. *Sumang Percerakan* is also a prohibition on speaking or producing words containing porn, naughty, or *jis* (expressing disrespect for others). These rules are considered as politeness, ethics, and courtesy in speaking. As explained by Turham, speaking should pay attention to the interlocutors. *Sumang Percerakan* rules the way and content of talking, for example avoiding a discussion about women or girls, or the relationship between husband and wife. With this norm, Gayonese should stay away from talking with someone who is not his/her spouse in an unusual place or speaking in high intonation. The words include in *Sumang Percerakan* are rude, arrogant, and harsh words. There is a Gayo proverb related to respecting “*ta’zim kin reje demu denie, ta’zim kin teacher of science*” means, obeying the king can obtain the world, obeying the teacher can gain knowledge.29

**Sumang Pelangkahan (journey)**

This norm can be interpreted as a ban for a man and a woman who are not mahram to have journey or travel in a quiet or remote area.30 It is to avoid the human being from adultery, rape and sexual harassment as well as to keep the goodwill of heredity. This norm is also a taboo action in the way of walking toward approaching immoral actions and places.

**Sumang Penengonen (seeing)**

This norm is a prohibition or taboo on seeing genitals (especially with sexual desire) or anything that is prohibited by religion because it can stimulate adultery actions. *Sumeng Penengonen* should be avoided to maintain the dignity of humans in relation to acts of social deviation to create the community order. The actualization of this rule is to avoid being angry in public that can be seen by anyone,

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28 *Daur Hidup Gayo*.


30 *Daur Hidup Gayo*.  


seen in bathing places, and winking eyes or giving signals to seduce others. This rule is very crucial to be implemented for early childhood to develop their awareness to put down their eyes, especially to his or her opposite-sex friends.

*Sumang* is originating from Islamic-based customs that contains the educational element as the basis for the transformation process. Islamic education aims to create a balanced growth of the human personality as a whole and effort to accomplish the good life, especially livelihood of children in harmony with nature and society that is manifested in *sumang*. It contains social and religious values that can be used to educate young people whose morals begin to erode. The social and religious values contained in the culture of *sumang* are (1) the responsibility. As a Gayo community, the community is required to be responsible for the harmony of life. It lies in the individual’s awareness that must be done by implementing obligations and leaving prohibitions as the religion order to obey God’s commands. (2) Honesty is not only seen in speech but also in avoiding immoral actions or activities. This value is clearly seen in *sumang perceraken* as the way of speaking to older people. In addition, if there is someone who commits *sumang*, the community will immediately prevent it with various efforts including the direct punishment to make them afraid to commit another violation. (3) The value of self-esteem is actualized on self-appreciation in the form of logical thinking to make a judgment of good and bad. If a person cannot think clearly and do a disgraceful act, he or she will lose the self-pride. The term of Gayonese related to self-esteem is *mukemel* (shame). Someone who commits immorality is considered to have no self-esteem and to be self-humiliation (*jema gere mukemel*).

The forth (4) value of self-control contains in *sumang* as a social control system to shield people in committing immorality or adultery actions. As the preventive efforts, if someone breaks the norms, the parents will give sanction to give a deterrent effect. (5) The discipline value is implied through the value of compliance or adherence to the norm. People who conduct Sumang are expelled (*parak*) from the community (*klen*). *Sumang* law known as *parak* or *geret naru* has the meaning of separated or buried for long by excluded from the group or considered dead. However, a few areas have left *parak*.

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31 *Sumang dalam Budaya Gayo.*
since those have mixed with other tribes. The people who have been expelled can return with some condition, such as repenting to God and slaughtering a buffalo as well as feeding all members of their group as the apology to the general public.

The sixth (6) value of hard work has become a commitment to maintaining order and peace in the community. Maintaining tradition is the result of the community’s hard work and perseverance through their willingness to prevent *sumang* actions. It is a social control that must be carried out continuously so that this culture can be preserved. (7) The value of social care where the community applies *sumang* to guide within community relations. This value is not limited to knowing and understanding, but a willingness to act and realize *sumang* for their own and other benefits. (8) The value of peace as a reflection for harmony within the social environment is in accordance with the values that apply in society by avoiding cheating and providing peace. (9) The ethical and moral values enclose in its teaching values of *sumang*, such as *kenunulen* (sitting), *perceraken* (talking), *pelangkahen* (journey), and *penengonen* (seeing). *Sumang* unites words, deeds, and hearts. In the concept of Islamic education, it can be classified as moral and character development where *sumang* implementation means building Islamic values in life.

**CONCLUSION**

Gayo community norms that regulate social interaction consist of *Sumang*, such as *Sumang kenunulen* (sitting), *Sumang perceraken* (talking), *Sumang pelangkahen* (journey), and *Sumang penengonen* (seeing). The concept of Gayo community norms within the frame of Islamic education is to ban the actions that are contrary to tradition and religion because it can be classified as a contradiction attitude and has a negative impact to self and society. Moreover, *sumang* teaching values can be the basic foundation to grow character values among students.

**REFERENCES**


Zulkarnain dkk, Sumang


