# RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EDUCATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH "NADOMAN": ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES ON SUNDANESE ETHNIC

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**ABSTRACT:**

Religion and beliefs are an essential part of national culture and daily life in Indonesia. Religious values are essential things to be transformed in Indonesian society at every level of education to build a nation's religious character. Therefore, this research aims at analyzing how the process of transforming religious values in early childhood through religious poetry (*nadoman*) in the Sundanese ethnic community. To address these objectives, an ethnographic research involving six children in the age range of 7-8 years old was designed. This research resulted in several findings including; 1) *nadoman* is a Sundanese ethnic tradition in early childhood character education in addition to *tetembangan* (humming) and *kaulinan* (games), besides, *nadoman* is also a form of anti-thesis of the *reak* tradition in the Sundanese ethnic community, 2) *nadoman* activities represent theistic, ethical, and aesthetic values of the Sundanese ethnic originating from Islamic values, both in the credial, ritual, and moral dimensions, 3) of the six types of places of worship for Muslims that include *tajug* (*langgar*), musalla, congregational mosque, community mosque, grand mosque, and great mosque, *nadoman* activities are only carried out in musalla and mosques, 4) in early childhood, the *nadoman* activity represents behavior that reflects beliefs, obedience, sacredness, intelligence, cleanliness, holiness, togetherness, and politeness. From these findings, this research can

conclude that *nadoman* activities for early childhood in Sundanese ethnic can form religious characters.

**INTRODUCTION**

The issue of character education has long been a discourse in the world of education. The urgency of character education continues to be echoed when the current wave of globalization has encouraged more free cultural contact. The current globalization and interaction between countries, cultures, languages, ethnicities, and religions today cannot be avoided. This cultural contact raises various threats in addition to the positive side it causes. These become threats to the Indonesian nation because it makes religion and belief an essential part of national culture and daily life in Indonesia, which is moral degradation in the form of loss of courtesy and rampant expressions of hatred (Malmasi & Zampieri, 2018). Along with that, isolation, anxiety, and feelings of losing the meaning of life are also threats (Strunz & Bartkowski, 2018; Mirza, 2018; and Javornicky, 2019). These threats require anticipation through character education based on feelings, not logic, namely religiosity (Samarina, 2019) where religiosity is a reference to personal values (Lee & Kawachi, 2019), which has an impact on other fields (Cohen-Zada & Elder, 2018 and Moustafa, 2018).

Given the huge impact and threat posed by globalization, early childhood needs to be stimulated by religious character education with various dimensions. One source of stimulation that many character education experts recommend is local wisdom (Chairiyah, 2017; Saddhono & Pramestuti, 2018; and Suastra, Jatmiko, Ristiati, & Yasmini, 2017). Local wisdom is a crystallization of wisdom containing knowledge and views that grow and are rooted in a community. Local wisdom represents the theological, cosmological, and sociological visions of the community concerned (Priyatna, 2017 and Afiqoh, Atmaja, & Saraswati, 2018).

Every ethnicity has local wisdom, as well as Sundanese ethnicity. This ethnic group has several legacies in the form of local wisdom to educate early childhood character. Some of the local wisdom is in the form of simple phrases and songs called *tetembangan*. This ethnic group has several phrases and *tetembangan* with various functions. The phrase "*hao hakeng*" serves to make babies happy by inviting them to communicate. The phrase "*mepende*" serves to instill ideals to the children so that they can become educated human beings after they grow up. "*Ucang-ucang angge*" phrase serves to strengthen the muscles of the child. "*Jampe-jampe harupat*" phrase serves to reduce pain after a child fall. "*Paciwit-ciwit lutung*" phrase serves to build children's closeness to peers. The Sundanese ethnic group performs these practices in a playful atmosphere (Yuliansyah, 2017).

In addition to having local wisdom for character education with playful nuances, Sundanese ethnicity also has local wisdom that has spiritual nuances (Rohmana, 2019). It is in the form of *nadoman* which functions to build religious values (Hazbini, 2019). *Nadoman* is a poem containing teachings about credial, ritual, and moral values as a legacy of Islamic values in the Sundanese society (Gunawan, 2019; Hazbini, 2019; Hendayani, 2011; Kusuma, 2014; Mutakin,

2013; Sumiyadi et al., 2020). *Nadoman* was read by early childhood children, especially those aged 7-8 years. Some *nadoman* texts are read only before maghrib and the rest are read on the commemoration of Islamic holidays.

Several research results related to the development of religious character have been carried out in various countries. Research in America shows that at an early age, children receive religious character education in the family. However, after they enter higher education, they get exposure to secularism (Henderson, 2016; Deangelis, Acevedo, & Xu, 2016; and Yust, 2017). Meanwhile, in China, from an early age to higher education, children are exposed to anti-religious ideology. Atheism permeates the curriculum. However, the more educated the Chinese are, the more they realize the importance of religion in life (Wang & Uecker, 2017; Zhao, 2017; and Li, Lu, & Yang, 2018). The research in Indonesia related to *nadoman* was carried out by Hazbini (2019). In his research, he revealed that *nadoman* can be an intensive medium for delivering information and teaching to the community, especially in terms of personality development. However, the results of the research are still general and character development through *nadoman* in early childhood has not been touched.

Subaweh (2019) examines the values of character education contained in the *nadoman* texts used in the Aurodan Yahadian oral tradition of the AsySyahadatain Tarekat in Cirebon. The Aurodan Yahadian oral tradition of the AsySyahadatain Tarekat in Cirebon and the accompanying Cirebon-language *nadoman* poetry are part of the oral tradition in the form of religious rituals. The research results reveal that the Aurodan Yahadian tradition and Cirebon *nadoman* poetry reflect Cirebon's Islamic culture, which is religious, beautiful, tolerant, and prioritizes social values. However, his research focuses on Cirebon ethnicity in West Java so that the *nadoman* that was studied is in the Cirebon language, while the study of *nadoman* in Sundanese ethnic in West Java has not been conducted.

In contrast to previous researchers, this research is motivated by the existence of a medium for the inheritance of educational values for the next generation which is inherited by the Sundanese ethnic community in the form of *nadoman*, which is an oral tradition that is rich in religious values passed down from generation to generation in a simple way through the oral or verbal media. Therefore, this research emphasizes on analyzing how the process of transforming religious values through *nadoman* in early childhood in the Sundanese ethnic community.

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS**

At the conceptual level, *nadoman* is a poetry that is arranged systematically and in a pattern (Arifin, 2019). The *nadoman* term is familiarized to Islamic boarding schools and is used in the world of formal education (schools/madrasahs), *surau*, and *majlis taklim* (Arifin, 2019; Hendayani, 2011; Rohmana, 2014). In the boarding school environment, *nadoman* is used as a learning medium in learning Arabic grammar, the attributes of God, rituals of worship, and moral teachings (Arifin, 2019). In addition, *nadoman* is used to worship Allah and His Messenger.

*Nadoman* is part of an oral tradition in the form of religious rituals. Valuable oral traditions are passed down from generation to generation in simple ways through verbal or oral media (Ruhaliah, 2019). One of the values that can be utilized from oral traditions in the life of the next generation is the values of character education (Subaweh, 2019). Therefore, *nadoman* is used as a medium of expression and a medium for education by several agents (Arifin, 2019). As a tradition, *nadoman* has become one of the activities of inheriting local cultural values as well as the treasures of Sundanese people which is originated from Islamic values (Hazbini, 2019; M Shariff et al., 2020; Munir et al., 2019).

The inheritance of local cultural values through *nadoman* is important as a character education for the nation, especially for early childhood children, given that the rapid flow of globalization is feared to have an impact on the erosion of local and national cultural values. Spradley (2016) states that in the development of an increasingly advanced world civilization, a person can experience a 'culturally overwhelming' event, namely the emergence of the influence of two or more cultures at once, or together. The younger generation who have not known their own culture and are dealing with the influence of various foreign cultures as a result of the sophistication of information technology will experience confusion because they are not able to distinguish between cultures that are good and suitable for themselves and cultures that are not good and suitable. As a result, a person will experience cultural alienation. This happens because in addition to not knowing the original culture of their ancestors, they have not been able to "select and sort" which culture is good according to the character of the nation.

Even though Indonesia is not a religious country, when viewed from the first precept, which reads 'Belief in the one and only God', it indicates that Indonesia is a country with a religious ideology orientation (Latif, 2018; Lubis, 2019; Muhammad et al., 2019; Noreen et al., 2019). This also emphasizes that religious values are the basis for thinking and the basis of national and state life. An example of this is the existence of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 137 of 2014, which lists aspects of the development of moral-religious values as the first of the six aspects of early childhood development. The other aspects are physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art (Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2014). The placement of this aspect of the development of moral and religious values shows that the development of moral and religious values is very important for this nation, without reducing the importance of other aspects of development in order to realize a religious golden generation of 2045 through character education (Malihah, 2015; Rokhman et al., 2014; Noorollahi et al., 2019).

A religious term is identical to religion. Albright & Ashbrook (2001) state that humans can be referred to as religious beings (Homo Religious) because religion has existed throughout its existence as homo sapiens. The word religion, which comes from the Latin word *religio*, has the root word of *religare*, which means binding because religion contains rules and obligations that must be carried out where all of them function to bind a person or group of people in relation to God, fellow humans, and the surrounding environment (Jalaluddin,

2002; Normalini et al., 2019; Ramakrishnan et al., 2020). Religion is described as an attitude and behavior that is obedient in carrying out the teachings of the religion it adheres to, is tolerant of the worship of other religions, and is in harmony with followers of other religions (The Ministry of National Education, 2010). In the concept of strengthening character education, religious is described as an attitude that reflects belief in one and only God which is shown in the behavior of faith and piety, cleanliness, tolerance, and love for the environment (The Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

Related to the religious meaning above, Pargament (1999) suggests the same element between religiosity and spirituality. The common point between religiosity and spirituality is the search for the holiness. In other words, the function of human existence in life in the world with all forms of behavior is an effort to find (seek) God. This shows that spirituality cannot be separated from religion (Fridayanti, 2015; Pargament, 1999; 2002; Shabbir et al., 2019). Therefore, the development of religious character goes hand in hand with the development of spirituality. The spiritual development of children is touched, influenced, and shaped not only by themselves but also by the people they interact with and by the world around them (Stockinger, 2019; Ubani & Murtonen, 2018).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
### Research Design
To support the results of this research, an ethnographic design was chosen as the design in this research. This is due to the involvement of researchers and subjects in understanding a particular culture or environment (Hammersley, 2018; MacLeod et al., 2019) in this case the Sundanese ethnic community. In addition, ethnographic design is also a design that is widely used by researchers in studying the field of education (Creswell, 2012; Frank & Uy, 2004; Hammersley, 2018; Pole & Morrison, 2003; Zaharlick, 1992).  This is relevant to the problems in this research which examines religious character education in early childhood in Sundanese ethnic communities.

### Subject and Research Site
This research involved six early childhood subjects who did *nadoman* activities. The subjects consist of three girls and three boys aged 7-8 years old. This research was conducted for eight months in one area in Cileunyi district, Bandung Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia.

### Research Procedure
The ethnographic research procedure in this research refers to the steps proposed by Spradley (McCurdy et al., 2004; Spradley, 1999, 2016; Spradley & Phillips, 1972). The procedure starts from selecting ethnographic projects, selecting informants, formulating questions, finding cultural themes, and making ethnographic reports.

The selection of ethnographic projects in this research is focused on religious character education projects in Sundanese ethnic communities. Furthermore, the informant's determination in this research was a teacher who was directly involved in the character education process through *nadoman* in early

childhood. Apart from being directly involved, the teacher is a person who understands Sundanese culture well because ethnically, the teacher is a Sundanese. The next stage is compiling a list of questions for the interview. The answers to these questions are an attempt to answer the core questions of this research, namely how the process of transforming religious character education through *nadoman* in early childhood. The results of the interview analysis found several cultural themes related to *nadoman* in the Sundanese ethnic community.

### *Data Collection and Analysis Techniques*
In this research, data collection was carried out using observation, interviews, and documentation study. The data analysis techniques were done in several stages, namely the domain analysis, taxonomy, components, and theme analysis.

### RESULT & DISCUSSION
### 1. *Nadoman* as an Antithesis of *Reak* Culture
*Nadoman*, for the people of Cileunyi, is a medium of cultural communication and education for the community, especially for the early childhood. *Nadoman* activity is basically the antithesis of the previously developed culture, namely the *reak* culture. *Reak* is one of the typical arts of West Java, especially around Ujung Berung, Bandung, which is held at a circumcision event or certain days commemoration such as welcoming the fasting month, welcoming Eid, welcoming the new year, and so on (Ramdan, 2017).

The *reak* art was born from the idea of Prabu Siliwangi's son, Prabu Kian Santang around the 12th century, which had an intention to spread Islam religion in Java, especially West Java (Kent, 2019; Rizky, 2020; Rohendi, 2016). In Islam, there is an obligation for every boy who will reach puberty to be circumcised. However, when the boys are about to be circumcised, they often feel afraid. Because of that, the figures or elders in Sumedang began to think together with Prabu Kian Santang about what to do so that the children who were going to be circumcised will not be afraid. Then, a type of art was created to entertain and enliven the circumcision event, which is now called *reak* art (Ramdan, 2017; Rohendi, 2016).

However, along with technological advances and globalization that led to many foreign cultures entering Indonesia, this *reak* art journey was not smooth and began to be abandoned. Nowadays, people that hear the procession of *reak* art on the street will enter their homes and lock themselves in their own homes. This is much different from before when most people would join in to celebrate it. Negative perceptions arise due to some irresponsible individuals' actions, one of which is the drunkenness phenomenon that occurs in almost every *reak* art performance (interview with informants). This has taken *reak* away from the original purpose of its originators so that the moral messages of this art have begun to be forgotten by most people.

Seeing this fact, religious leaders who act as educational agents for the community in that environment were trying to build *nadoman* activities as a medium of education for the community, especially for children in building a culture of religious society as a reflection of the character of a nation. This is

done because education is a process of exchanging culture, as well as a reflection of the cultural values of a place (Ramdan, 2017).

## 2. *Nadoman* and Inherited Values

Based on field observations, there are three types of *nadoman* which are used as material for early childhood including: 1) *nadoman* with credial dimension, 2) *nadoman* with ritual dimension, and 3) *nadoman* with moral dimension. *Nadoman* is sung in the modes of Sundanese art, either *pelog* mode, *salendro* mode, or *madenda* mode. The mode term is a frame of reference as well as a frame for interpreting the tone system that is inherent or relevant to the song, *gending*, or the song accompaniment (Sasaki, 2007; Spiller, 1999).

### 2.1 *Nadoman* with Credial Dimension

One type of *nadoman* with a credial dimension is *nadoman aqaidul iman*, which contains the doctrine of divinity in Islamic teachings. The divine doctrine refers to one of the theological schools adhered to by the majority of the Muslim community in Indonesia. In the Islamic concept, the theological school of thought is the Sunni or Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah in the Asy'ariyah version. One of the sounds of the verse in *nadoman aqaidul iman* is as follows:

*"Wujud qidam baqa mukhalafatu lil hawaditsi*
*Qiyamuhu bi nafsihi wahdaniyyat qudrat iradat*
*'ilmu hayat sama bashar kalam qadiran muridan*
*'aliman hayyan sami'an bashiran mutakalliman"*

(God exists, he is the first and former, eternal, and distinct from creatures
He is independent, single, powerful, and willed
He is knowledgeable, lives, hears, sees, and speaks
He has knowledge, hearing, sight, and the word)

The fragment of the verse from *nadoman aqaidul iman* seeks to introduce God's attributes. Through this *nadoman*, theistic values in Islamic teachings are transformed in early childhood to know and understand God.

### 2.2 *Nadoman* with Ritual Dimension

*Nadoman* that has a ritual dimension, is a *nadoman* that contains instructions on how to perform ritual worship. There are several types of *nadoman* with ritual dimensions, including; *Nadoman Prak-prakan Ibadah*, *Nadoman Eling-eling Umat*, *Nadoman Istisqo*, and *Nadoman Tajwid*.

#### 2.2.1 *Nadoman Prak-prakan Ibadah*

*Nadoman Prak-prakan Ibadah* is a *nadoman* containing instructions on how to perform ablution as a condition for performing prayers. Ablution in Islamic teachings teaches the values of purity and cleanliness before facing God (Uddin et al., n.d.; Zakaria et al., 2019). The fragment of the *nadoman* verse is as follows:

*"Fardhu wudlu aya genep sadayana*
*Hiji niat kadua ngumbah beungeutna*
*Tilu ngumbah leungeun dua jeung sikuna*
*Opat ngusap bagian tina sirahna*
*Lima ngumbah suku dua nepi kana*

*Mumuncangan tartib rukun kagenepna"*

(There are six pillars of ablution
The first is the intention, the second is washing face,
The third is washing hands and elbows,
The fourth is rubbing part of the head,
The fifth is washing both feet and ankles, and
The sixth is doing those in an orderly manner)

### 2.2.2 *Nadoman Eling-eling Umat*

Related to the prayers that must be performed by every Muslim, there is a *nadoman* called *Nadoman Eling-eling Umat*, which contains an invitation to pray in congregation at the mosque. This is important because in Islamic teachings, prayers performed in congregation are more important than those performed individually because congregational prayer is not only worshipping in a ritual dimension but also worshipping in a social dimension (Asber, 2019; Ismatullah, 2019). The *nadoman* is usually read after the call to prayer and before *Iqamat*. The *nadoman* reads as follows:

*"Eling-eling umat Muslimin Muslimat
Hayu urang berjama'ah shalat Maghrib
Estu kawajiban urang keur di dunya
Pibekeleun balik jaga di akherat"*

(Be aware, be aware Muslim brothers and sisters
Let us do a Maghrib prayer in congregation
That is our duty in the world
As a provision to return to the hereafter)

### 2.2.3 *Nadoman Istisqo*

*Nadoman Istisqo* is a *nadoman* which contains a request to God to ask for rain. In Islamic teachings, there are rituals that must be performed to ask for rain, namely by performing the *Istisqo* prayer which is a form of repentance to God (Afifah, 2018; Supriatin, 2016). The fragments of *Nadoman Istisqo* verse are as follows:

*"Istaghfiru rabbakum
Innahu kana ghaffara
Yursilissama a 'alaikum midrara"
Hayu batur urang tobat
Nya tobat meungpeung di dunya
Di akherat moal tobat
Nalangsa meunang siksaan"*

(Repent to your god
As He is a great recipient of repentance
If you repent,
He will send a cloud
That will fall as heavy rain)

### 2.2.4 *Nadoman Tajwid*

In addition to the above rituals of worship, there is also *Nadoman Tajwid* that contains the rules for reading the Al-Qur'an. Since reading the Al-Qur'an is a series of ritual worship in Islamic teachings as the starting point in understanding the words of Allah, then in reading the Al-Qur'an, every Muslim is obliged to follow its rules both from the right side of reading and pronunciation (Supriyadi et al., 2019; Supriyadi, Julia, & Iswara, 2019; Supriyadi & Julia, 2019). *Nadoman Tajwid*, sung by early childhood, is a modification of *Tajweed* knowledge. One of the fragments in *Nadoman Tajwid* reads as follows:

*"Hamzun fa ha un tsumma 'ainun ha u*
*Muhmalatani tsumma ghinun kha u"*

(Hamza, then ha, next 'ain and ha
After that, there are two dotted letters namely ghin and kha)

The verse fragments in all types of *nadoman* above attempt to introduce as well as campaign related rules in carrying out ritual activities as a form of service and submission to God by following all the rules that have been determined by God. Through the *nadoman*, ethical values in Islamic teachings are transformed in early childhood.

### 2.3 *Nadoman* with Moral Dimension

*Nadoman* that has a moral dimension is a *nadoman* containing an invitation, reminder, and respect for the prophets as an effort to foster ethical behavior as a manifestation of diversity. In Islam, religious manifestations are shown by moral dignity (Muhtar et al., 2020; Suherman et al., 2019; Supriyadi, Julia, & Firdaus, 2019). There are several types of *nadoman* with moral dimension, including; *nadoman pepeling*, *nadoman pupujian*, and *nadoman hayu geura saradia*.

### 2.3.1 *Nadoman Pepeling*

*Nadoman Pepeling* contains a warning to mankind that life in this world is only temporary. All humans will face death. Therefore, all must prepare for the afterlife. One of these types of *nadoman* reads as follows:

*"Eling-eling dulur kabeh*
*Ibadah ulah campoleh*
*Beurang peuting ulah weleh*
*Bisina kaburu paeh"*

(Be aware, Be aware, O' Brothers
Don't neglect your worship
Both day and night
Because death is coming soon!)

### 2.3.2 *Nadoman Pupujian*

*Nadoman Pupujian* contains praises to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This *nadoman* contains a biography, genealogy, the names of family members, and friends of the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, this *nadoman* also informs about His work, struggles, characteristics, and miracles. This *nadoman*'s first verse reads as follows:

> *"Gusti urang sarerea*
> *Kangjeng Nabi anu mulya*
> *Muhammad jenenganana*
> *Arab Quraisy nya bangsana"*

> (Leader of all of us
> Glorious prophet
> His name is Muhammad
> From Quraish Arab)

### 2.3.3 *Nadoman Hayu Geura Saradia*

*Nadoman Hayu Geura Saradia* contains a message to do good during the life to prepare for the afterlife.

> *"Hayu Geura Saradia*
> *Meungpeung keur hirup di dunya*
> *Amalkeun sampeureun tea*
> *Da akhir moal sulaya"*

> (Let us get ready
> While living in the world
> Practice that provision
> Because the afterlife will come)

The fragments of the verse from *nadoman* above attempt to introduce behaviors that must be cultivated and accustomed to in the life of a Muslim. The attitude that always glorifies the prophet, remembers the future, and does not neglect worship is an attitude that must always adorn the behavior of a Muslim as a consequence of the belief system and ritual worship performed. Through these *nadoman*, aesthetic values in Islamic teachings are transformed in early childhood.

### 3. The Transformation Process and The Values of *Nadoman*

*Nadoman* as a form of education is transformed verbally in early childhood. This oral tradition always functions as a medium for the inheritance of educational values for the next generation that are inherited by certain traditional communities (Subaweh, 2019). The process of transforming *nadoman* skills is carried out by agents, in this case the Koran teacher (*ustadz*) that teaches *nadoman* to early childhood in mosques. The form of learning is done verbally. The teacher exemplifies reciting the *nadoman* line-by-line and verse-by-verse with a rhythm, then the students listen and follow it. After that, the *ustadz* teaches the values contained in the *nadoman* as far as early childhood can understand.

After the teacher teaches the *nadoman* and the students have mastered how to pronounce the *nadoman*, as a form of appreciation of the *nadoman* material that has been taught by the teacher, the students will always chant it in places of worship. In Sundanese ethnicity, there are several terms used to describe places of worship for Muslims, including *tajug* (*langgar*), musalla, congregational mosque, community mosque, grand mosque, and great mosque. The difference lies in the size, type of building, and location of the place. For example, *tajug* is a place of prayer that can only accommodate about five or six people. *Tajug* is a building that resembles a loom, usually standing on the edge of a pond or rice field. The building materials are mostly made of wood with roof tiles, zinc, or thatch leaves.

Musalla is a place of prayer which is bigger than *tajug*. It can accommodate more people and usually used to do five prayers in congregation but not used for Friday prayers. The congregational mosque is a mosque that is bigger than a musalla and is usually used for Friday prayers. The community mosque is a large mosque at the district level and the building usually stands near the Office of Religious Affairs. The grand mosque is a mosque at the regional level, located on the edge of a city square, and usually, it is opposite the prison. Meanwhile, the great mosque is a mosque at the provincial level. Like the grand mosque, the great mosque also located in the city square.

Based on the observations, the recitation of *nadoman* by children is carried out in places of worship such as musalla or congregational mosque through loudspeakers every time before maghrib time. The pronunciation of *nadoman* before maghrib time continues so that it becomes the habits of the early childhood children.

In order for these habits to remain sustainable and cultured, the administrators at places of worship provide full support for the *nadoman* tradition. The form of support provided is in the ease of accessing loudspeaker facilities at musalla so that it can be used by the children aged 7-8 years old. For example, with just one press of a button, the loudspeakers will immediately be turned on, and the children can reach the placement of a switch to turn on the loudspeakers. Chanting *nadoman* through loudspeakers in places of worship is a form of religious performance and a form of *da'wah* or exclamations to the surrounding environment because their voices can be heard well in homes, streets, or playing areas.

Some of the other children who heard this sound in their neighborhood were interested, and some were not. The interested children then joined their friends at the mosque. At this stage, children adjust to live and work together. They immediately followed their friends who were chanting *nadoman* word-for-word, line-by-line, and verse-by-verse. However, on the first and second days, they did not dare to hold the microphone when chanting *nadoman*. They began to hold the microphone after participating in the *nadoman* activity on the third day, and it was also by a trial and error process. They recited one to two lines; then, they gave the microphone to their friend, who was already good at chanting *nadoman*.

As a form of appreciation from the surrounding community, children who used to do *nadoman* get the opportunity to appear on every anniversary of Islam. Either the commemoration of the Prophet's birthday, Isra Mi'raj, or the celebration of the Hijri new year. Children are always given the opportunity to perform *nadoman* on the stage as a religious art performance.

Thus, the process of *nadoman* transformation in early childhood takes place naturally in places of worship. At first, the process was carried out by a teacher as an agent or model which was then followed by students who would later become agents for other children in the surrounding environment so that the *nadoman* activity became a habit for early childhood before the maghrib prayer time. The whole process of the *nadoman* transformation can be described as follows:
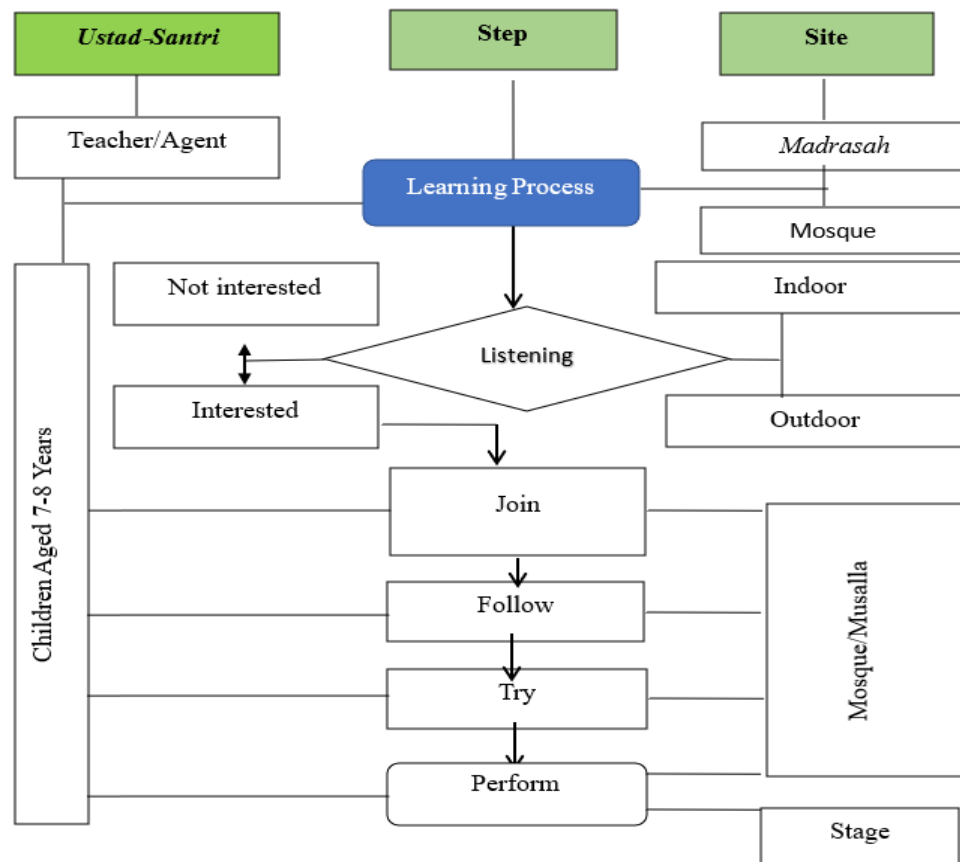


**Figure 1.** The Transformation Process of Nadoman in the Early Childhood Aged 7-8 Years

## 4. The Representation of a Religious Character Through *Nadoman* Activities

To analyze the development of the religious character of children aged 7-8 years old through *nadoman*, Glock and Stark's theory becomes a reference in this research. The theory identifies religiosity in five dimensions (Clayton & Gladden, 1974; Glock & Stark, 1970; Stark & Glock, 1968b, 1968a). The five dimensions are belief, worship, appreciation, knowledge, and morals (Clayton & Gladden, 1974; Pelters & Roxberg, 2018). The religious characters developed through *nadoman* activities are represented in Table 1 below:

**Table 1.** Religious Characters that is Developed in Children Who Did Nadoman

| No. | Religiosity Dimensions | Developing Religious Characters |
|-----|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Belief | Faith |
| 2 | Worship | Obedience |
| 3 | Appreciation | Solemn |
| 4 | Knowledge | Intelligence |
| 5 | Morals | Polite |
| | | Good Manner |
| | | Cooperative |
| | | Discipline |

**Table 1** above explains that the dimensions of trust grow and develop in children aged 7-8 who carry out *nadoman* activities. The *nadoman* mentioned is the one with a credial dimension related to Islamic doctrines about God's attributes, which represents their belief in an infinite power outside of themselves. *Nadoman* about the attributes of God that was recited repeatedly gave them confidence in the existence of God with its various characteristics. The manifestation of belief in God's existence is carried out consistently without any coercion or demands. This is because the *nadoman* activities that are chanted in places of worship will not be carried out if they arise from a low level of belief in God, angels, prophets, holy books, and the afterlife. By chanting a *nadoman* with a credial dimension related to God's nature, they increase their belief in God, which is a representation of the dimension of a religious character.

The dimension of worship as a representation of religious character grows and develops in children aged 7-8 years old who do *nadoman* activities. The values of obedience are manifested in *nadoman* activities with a ritual dimension, namely in the *nadoman* that contains an invitation to pray in congregation as in verse "*Hayu urang jama'ah sholat maghrib*" (Let us do maghrib prayer in congregation). They represent obedience by always performing prayers at the beginning of time, especially maghrib prayers. They do this in congregation because before the call to prayer, they were already in the mosque. In other words, the *nadoman* conditions children to pray in congregation.

The dimension of appreciation grows and develops in children aged 7-8 years old who carry out the *nadoman* activities. The dimension of appreciation is manifested in a solemn attitude in chanting *nadoman*. This attitude develops from the *nadoman* which has a moral dimension, namely the *nadoman pepeling*, which reminds people not to neglect the worship. The need to have a solemn character is an implicit message of the prohibition of neglecting the worship. The solemn character will grow from a combination of credial and ritual dimensions.

The dimension of knowledge grows and develops in children aged 7-8 years old who carry out the *nadoman* activities. The dimension of knowledge as a manifestation of religious character is manifested in memorization related to

*nadoman* materials about belief concepts, worship practices, morals, the ability to read and understand holy books, and the history of the prophets. By memorizing and listening to *nadoman*, children aged 7-8 years old will have a scientific vocabulary about religion in its various aspects. *Nadoman* material has become intellectual capital as an accumulation of knowledge about religion for children of their age, thus representing their intellectual intelligence.

The moral dimension is a consequence of all dimensions of religiosity. This dimension is a manifestation of belief, worship, experience, and knowledge of religion. Children aged 7-8 years old who cultivate a *nadoman* in this dimension have a religious character who has politeness in acting and speaking. They are cooperative and easy to manage. These characters seem to have developed from the implementation of the *nadoman* activity itself. The polite character can be seen from the slightly bent posture when meeting an older person (in Sundanese terms, this attitude is called *rengkuh* or like an *izugu* in Japanese tradition). Politeness can be seen from the soft intonation of their voices when carrying out the *nadoman* activities. Their ability to work together can be seen from their solidarity when they go to places of worship together.

The findings above indicate the fact that *nadoman* stimulates the development of the religious character of children aged 7-8 old through repetition of messages. In the ideological dimension, they believe in supernatural things, holy books, God's provisions, death, and the afterlife. This is in line with what Ghafur (Ghafur, 2018) stated that the repetition of messages determines the effectiveness of character education. Then, this is also in line with Ninsiana (2016) which stated the importance of repetition in the learning process to improve memory.

In the dimension of worship, the children begin to show obedience to God's commands as a form of their commitment to their religious teachings. In the context of Javanese culture, adherence to religious rules is called *santri*. This is in line with the one stated by Geertz (1976) that describe in depth phenomenon of Javanese religion by using three typologies, namely *abangan*, *santri*, and *priyayi*. The *abangan* and *santri* variants refer to religious affiliation and commitment, while the *priyayi* variant represents the social categorization. *Abangan* is a term for those who do not obey their commitment to religious rules. *Santri* is a term for those who have religious commitment which is measured based on their level of obedience in carrying out a series of religious rules. *Priyayi* is a term for those who are socially and economically considered to have a higher degree and stratification than most rural communities in Java. Therefore, children who carry out *nadoman* activities are identified in the *santri* class.

In the dimension of appreciation, children represent solemn characters. A focused gaze, by not looking left or right or playing around while praying is an indicator of their solemnity as a result of the *nadoman* content related to worship procedures which are often chanted continuously before prayer. This is in line with what Azis (Aziz, 2017) said about the solemn indicator, which are controlling or stopping the body's movements or activities, pay close attention, and bend over backwards towards serenity.

In the dimension of knowledge, the *nadoman* activity will make them more intelligence. This intelligence is very logical because they learn religious knowledge in a *nadoman* way which resembles the activity of singing a song because it is sung with rhythm. Singing a song can be intrinsically motivating, attention-grabbing, and quite enjoyable for learners of all ages (Good et al., 2015). Moreover, the use of song to support encoding and retrieval of information is widely practiced by educators (Bilalovic Kulset & Halle, 2020; Bradt et al., 2019; Funabiki & Konishi, 2003).

In the moral dimension, the *nadoman* activity develops a religious character represented by indicators of personal hygiene, neatness in dressing, togetherness and discipline when entering a place of worship as a form of glorification and respect, and politeness. Such behavior is so inherent in themselves as a reflection of religiosity. In fact, in any religious teachings, the peak of one's religiosity and spirituality is measured by moral dignity (Broen Jr, 1957; Dezutter et al., 2006; Gerard, 1985).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION
## CONCLUSION
Based on the explanation above, this research concludes that *nadoman* is a tradition that lives and grows in the Sundanese ethnic community as stimulation for character education. The character developed through *nadoman* lies in the domain of spiritual character development in its various dimensions. In the dimension of belief, *nadoman* develops confidence in the creator. In the dimension of worship, *nadoman* develops a strong obedience and commitment to the teachings of the religion. In the dimension of appreciation, *nadoman* develops the solemnity. In the dimension of knowledge, *nadoman* develops intelligence. In the dimension of morality, *nadoman* develops an attitude of politeness, courtesy, discipline, cleanliness, and purity as the pinnacle of religion. This is a result of internalizing the values in the *nadoman* material, which includes theistic, ethical, and aesthetic values in children that occur naturally. Thus, *nadoman* is a cultural treasure owned by the Sundanese ethnic community which needs to be maintained and preserved.

## RECOMMENDATION
Some of the limitations in this research are shown only in one ethnicity in the country of Indonesia, namely the Sundanese ethnicity. The focus of the research emphasizes on early childhood education and the values that are explored are only religious character values. Therefore, to expand the ethnographic research, it is possible to study other ethnicities in Indonesia and even in various countries.

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