



Integration of Islamic Educational Values into the Gayo Traditional Wedding Customs: A Case Study in Tampor Paloh, East Aceh

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Abstract

This study analyzes the integration of Islamic educational values into the eleven stages of the traditional Gayo wedding ceremony in Tampor Paloh Village, Simpang Jernih Subdistrict, East Aceh Regency. The study employs a qualitative approach with an ethnographically oriented case study design. Data were collected from February to March 2026 through observation of wedding ceremonies, semi-structured interviews with four key informants, and a review of village documents. Analysis was conducted through data condensation, thematic presentation, drawing of conclusions, and triangulation of sources, techniques, and time. The findings indicate that munginte, berunger, penosahen, berutem, pakat sara ine, genap mango, mah kero, beguru, jule bai, semah edet, and mah beru form a series of community pedagogical practices. Values such as shura, ta'awun, amanah, responsibility, birr al-walidayn, silaturahmi, courtesy, and gratitude are transmitted through participation, exemplary behavior, habit formation, and ritual symbols. Islamic Sharia serves as a normative boundary, while adat provides a social-performative medium for the internalization of values. This study proposes the concept of a custom-based social curriculum a process of non-formal Islamic education that operates through communal rituals and intergenerational relationships. The preservation of traditions must therefore be oriented toward the sustainability of values, not merely the maintenance of ceremonial forms.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage in Indonesian Muslim society is not only a legal and religious contract, but also a social event that activates kinship networks, customary authority, and mechanisms for the transmission of values (Istiqomah & Zulaikhah, 2019; Muamar, 2017; Rajafi, 2018). In such social spaces, religion and customary law rarely exist as two entirely separate systems (Wimra, 2017). Both interact through negotiation, selection, and reinterpretation that take place in everyday practices (Handayani, 2021).

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Studies on legal pluralism indicate that the encounter between Islamic law and customary law can result in harmony, tension, or the dominance of one system over the other, depending on the structure of authority and the local context (Anggraeni, 2023; Tabroni et al., 2025). Therefore, traditional wedding ceremonies should be understood not merely as a series of rituals, but as a space where communities define what is considered legitimate, good, appropriate, and educational (Wicaksono et al., 2021).

In the context of Gayo society, the relationship between custom and religion is normatively defined by the view that custom must operate within the boundaries of Islamic law. Previous research has shown that Gayo marriages combine the provisions of *fiqh munakahat* with local symbolic and social practices; the validity of the marriage contract is still determined by the pillars and conditions of marriage, while custom governs the structure of inter-family relationships, the distribution of responsibilities, and expressions of community respect (Santoso et al., 2022). Similar findings are evident in Malay marriage traditions in the Riau Islands, where the stages of *merisik*, conveying intentions, gift-giving, mutual invitations, *pantun*, and prayers for blessings serve as vehicles for the values of *ta'aruf*, consultation, mutual aid, cooperation, advice, and gratitude (Saiin et al., 2023). This comparison underscores that marriage customs can serve as a vehicle for the indigenization of Islamic values without necessarily replacing the fundamental norms of *Sharia*.

Nevertheless, the relationship between customary practices and Islam is not always harmonious. The prohibition of *khitbah* in the *merariq* tradition among the Sade community, for example, demonstrates that customary authority can restrict practices that are actually recognized within Islamic tradition (Sugitanata & Hakim, 2023). Elsewhere, changes in tradition can lead to violations of gender relations or place a disproportionate socioeconomic burden on families (Suhairi et al., 2022). This literature reminds us that evaluating *adat* cannot be done merely through cultural romanticization. Each element must be evaluated based on its alignment with religious principles, respect for human dignity, the well-being of the family, and the tradition's ability to adapt to social change.

One dimension that has received insufficient attention is the educational function of traditional rituals. Much of the research focuses on assessing the compatibility of traditions with Islamic law or describing cultural symbols, while the process by which values are learned, practiced, and passed down through communal engagement has not been adequately explained. Yet, local wisdom can serve as social capital and an environment for character development. The internalization of local values within Islamic educational institutions has been shown to foster honesty, commitment, discipline, independence, and responsibility when these values are embedded in the organizational culture (Fauzi et al., 2023). The *Saprahan* tradition also demonstrates that solidarity, equality, respect, and ego control are learned through communal dining practices and the accompanying advice (Putri et al., 2024). Thus, cultural practices can be understood as a social curriculum that teaches values through experience, not merely through verbal explanations.

The village of Tampor Paloh offers an important context for testing this argument. Located in Simpang Jernih Subdistrict, East Aceh Regency, the village's social life remains supported by plantations, river transportation, boat-building skills, and bonds of mutual aid. The 2025 village profile records 775 residents in 212 households spread across Arul Betung Hamlet and Peubulon Hamlet. Limited access does not diminish the intensity of residents' participation in family events. On the contrary, the need to organize labor, food, firewood, transportation, and celebration spaces makes weddings a collective effort. These conditions allow religious values to manifest concretely in the division of labor and social relationships.

The Gayo wedding tradition in Tampor Paloh consists of eleven stages: *munginte*, *berunger*, *penosahen*, *berutem*, *pakat sara ine*, *genap mango*, *mah kero*, *beguru*, *jule bai*, *semah edet*, and *mah beru*. Each stage has different participants, purposes, and symbols. The sequence begins with the declaration of intent to marry, the setting of a date, and the fulfillment of material obligations; it continues with the mobilization of the family and the community; reaches its normative core at the marriage ceremony; and concludes with the strengthening of interfamily ties and the escorting of the bride. This sequential structure makes the traditional procession resemble a step-by-step learning process: the prospective couple, their families, and community members learn about their responsibilities through actions that are observed, repeated, and socially evaluated.

Modernization presents a dual challenge. On the one hand, changes in technology, mobility, and consumption patterns can simplify traditional stages, thereby reducing intergenerational knowledge transfer. On the other hand, rigidly preserving all traditional forms can result in high costs, social burdens, and a disconnect from the needs of the younger generation. Studies of rural Muslim communities emphasize the need for a balance between cultural conservation and adaptation, while continuing to involve younger generations and local institutions in the transmission of values (Hiptraspa & Saputri, 2024). Therefore, the central issue is not merely whether traditions survive, but rather which values are preserved, which elements need to be reinterpreted, and how the process of transmission can occur in a reflective manner.

This study aims to analyze two issues. First, how the Gayo traditional wedding tradition in Tampor Paloh is situated within the framework of Islamic sharia. Second, how each stage of the tradition functions as a medium for the internalization of Islamic educational values. The novelty of this research lies in a comprehensive mapping of the eleven stages of the tradition within a single remote community in East Aceh and in a pedagogical interpretation of the relationship between tradition and sharia. This article proposes the concept of a custom-based social curriculum a non-formal Islamic education system that integrates religious normative boundaries, communal participation, cultural symbols, exemplary behavior, and habit formation. This concept is expected to expand the study of Islamic education from the classroom to social practices where values are truly experienced.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with an ethnographically oriented case study design. This design was chosen because the research seeks to understand the meaning of actions, role distribution, symbols, and moral judgments from the perspective of the community that practices these traditions. A case study allows for an intensive examination of a single location and a specific set of practices with clearly defined sociocultural boundaries, while the ethnographic orientation is used to interpret the processions as actions embedded in community life (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The unit of analysis for this study is the stages of the Gayo traditional wedding ceremony and the process of internalizing Islamic educational values that takes place within it. The research was conducted in Tampor Paloh Village, Simpang Jernih Subdistrict, East Aceh Regency, from February to March 2026. Field data collection focused on observations on March 20, 2026, and interviews conducted from March 2023, 2026. Informants were selected purposefully based on their knowledge and involvement in the practice of *adat*. The four key informants consisted of a village imam and three community leaders who understood the stages of marriage, the relationship between *adat* and sharia, and the division of family roles. Supporting data was obtained from the involvement of the bride and groom, family

members, and villagers during the ceremony, without designating all of them as formal interview informants.

Data were collected using three techniques. First, direct observation was used to record the sequence of the ceremony, the involvement of participants, honorific language, deliberations, collective work, the performance of the marriage contract, and interactions between families. Second, semi-structured interviews explored the reasons for preserving traditions, the meaning of each stage, indicators of compliance with Sharia law, and the values considered important by the community. Third, documentation included the 2025 Profile of Tampor Paloh Village, field notes, and visual documentation of the wedding ceremony. In this article, informants are identified by the codes I1–I4 to focus attention on the substance of the data and minimize the disclosure of personal identities.

Data analysis followed an interactive process that included data condensation, data presentation, and the derivation and verification of conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). During the condensation stage, observation notes and interview transcripts were initially coded based on actions and values, such as deliberation, responsibility, mutual aid, respect, obedience, social bonding, and gratitude. These codes were then grouped into three analytical categories: the normative boundaries of Sharia, the social mechanisms of internalization, and the performative medium of adat. Data presentation was conducted using a matrix linking stage names, key practices, actors, Islamic values, and educational functions. Conclusions were re-examined by comparing observational findings, statements across informants, and documents.

Data validity was ensured through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time. Statements by the village imam regarding the pillars of marriage were compared with observations of the marriage ceremony and accounts from community leaders. The meanings of gotong royong and musyawarah were verified through observation of activities and documentation. Data collection at different times was used to assess the consistency of the information. Analysis was also conducted critically by identifying potential tensions such as the economic burden of penosahen or the simplification of rituals to ensure the discussion did not stop at a romantic affirmation of the “tradition”. The focus of the research was not to establish new fiqh laws, but rather to explain how the community views sharia as a moral boundary and how adat functions as a means of social education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Sociocultural Context of Tampor Paloh

Tampor Paloh is a village with an inland character and a strong dependence on the river environment and plantations. The 2025 village profile recorded 212 households and 775 residents. The hamlet of Arul Betung is home to approximately 295 people in 65 households, while the hamlet of Peubulon is home to approximately 480 people in 147 households. This composition indicates a relatively small community, meaning that kinship ties, family reputation, and community participation play a major role in shaping social life. Livelihoods centered on farming and boat-building skills demonstrate adaptation to the geographical conditions and local transportation needs.

In this context, organizing a wedding cannot rely solely on the immediate family. Preparing fuel, food, a venue, transportation, labor, and hosting guests requires contributions from many parties. Residents do not view this involvement as a commercial service, but rather as a social obligation that will be reciprocated when another family holds a celebration. This pattern of reciprocity transforms the wedding ceremony into a space for collective learning. Children and young people

observe who leads the deliberations, how adults speak, how tasks are divided, and how minor conflicts are resolved without damaging relationships.

Field data also show that traditional and religious authority are not sharply separated. The village imam is involved in ensuring the validity of the marriage contract and providing moral guidance, while community leaders explain the traditional sequence of events and organize family participation. This relationship resembles the layered authority patterns found in studies of other Muslim indigenous communities, where kinship, religious, and community leaders collectively shape social compliance (Erawadi & Setiadi, 2024). However, in Tampor Paloh, the ultimate point of reference remains Sharia: adat is considered permissible as long as it does not alter the pillars of marriage, does not condone prohibited behavior, and does not diminish the dignity of the parties involved.

Sharia as a normative boundary, adat as a social medium

Observations of the “jule bai” ceremony reveal that the marriage contract is conducted in the presence of the bride and groom, the guardian, two witnesses, and the exchange of consent (*ijab kabul*). The ceremony is led by a religious leader and witnessed by family members. Informant I1 emphasized that all customary activities gain legitimacy only after the requirements and essential elements of marriage are confirmed to be fulfilled. This statement positions Sharia not as one of the stages of custom, but rather as the normative framework that determines the validity of the marriage. Custom governs how the community approaches, accompanies, and follows up on the marriage contract, whereas the contract itself must not be replaced by any customary symbol.

This finding reinforces the research by Santoso et al. (2022) that Gayo marriage traditions can harmonize with *fiqh* of marriage when cultural elements are positioned as social complements, not as sources that negate religious provisions. A similar pattern is found in Malay weddings, where Islamic values actually serve as the principles that interpret the meaning of the customary stages (Saiin et al., 2023). Thus, the relationship between adat and sharia in Tampor Paloh is more accurately described as functional differentiation rather than unlimited blending: sharia provides criteria for validity and ethical principles, while adat provides the language, sequence of actions, and social participation (Saiin et al., 2023; Santoso et al., 2022).

This distinction is important because the literature on legal pluralism shows that the relationship between customary law, Islam, and the state can range from harmony to conflict (Anggraeni, 2023). When normative boundaries are unclear, customary law can dominate and give rise to practices that conflict with religious rights or principles. Conversely, when religion is understood narrowly and erases all local expressions, communities lose the social medium that has long taught them responsibility and solidarity. The Tampor Paloh case points to a middle ground: preserving cultural forms that support the common good while allowing for the evaluation of elements that may be burdensome.

Mapping the Stages and Values of Islamic Education

Eleven stages of marriage form a sequence from initial negotiations to the couple’s reintegration into the family network. Table 1 summarizes the main practices, Islamic educational values, and pedagogical functions identified through observation, interviews, and documentation

The fourth theme is joint activities. According to the informants, these themes are steps to instill values of honesty, creativity, democracy, care for the environment, appreciation of achievement, friendliness, and love for peace. Examples of this activity are mutual cooperation, picket cooking, and cleaning, having dinner together,

and congratulating friends who won the competition. This theme was conveyed by informants as excerpts from the below:

Table 1. Stages of Gayo traditional marriage and Islamic educational values

No.	Stage	Key Practices	Educational Values and Functions
1	Munginte	The man's family formally expresses their intention to propose marriage.	Consultation, etiquette, respect; fostering polite communication and decisions made without coercion.
2	Berunger	Both families set the date for the wedding ceremony and reception.	Consultation, fairness, consideration; teaching planning and reaching agreements.
3	Penosahen	The groom's family openly presents the dowry.	Trust and responsibility; affirming sincerity and financial readiness.
4	Berutem	Residents search for and gather firewood together.	Ta'awun, mutual aid, solidarity; the practice of helping others without expecting anything in return.
5	Family meeting	Women's families consult with one another regarding preparations.	Shura, participation, sisterhood; providing space for women's families to contribute.
6	Ripe mango	Extended family meeting and division of tasks.	Collective responsibility, discipline, cooperation; linking decisions and implementation.
7	Mah kero	The men's side sends rice to the women's family.	Care, respect, sharing; a symbol of readiness to nurture interfamily relationships.
8	Beguru	The bride and groom-to-be ask for their parents' forgiveness and blessing.	Birr al-walidayn, humility, love; a reflection on the parents' sacrifices and prayers.
9	Jule bai	The marriage ceremony is held in the evening.	Observance of Islamic law, sacredness, commitment; learning the legal boundaries of marriage.
10	Semah edet	The bride's family is introduced to the groom's family.	Socializing, brotherhood, getting to know one another; building a post-marriage support network.
11	Mah Beru	The bride is escorted to the groom's home.	Mutual cooperation, gratitude, acceptance; marking the couple's social transition.

Consultation as moral literacy and family governance

Munginte and berunger demonstrate that moral education begins before the marriage contract. During munginte, the groom's family does not come as a demanding party but conveys their intentions using language that respects the bride's family. Decisions are reached through discussions between both parties. This pattern teaches that individual intentions must be translated into social responsibility and must not disregard the family's consent. The etiquette of communication becomes part of the educational content: tone of voice, order of presentation, willingness to listen, and the ability to postpone decisions are concrete practices of respect.

Berunger extends this insight to the realm of planning. Timing is not determined unilaterally, as it depends on financial readiness, manpower, family travel arrangements, and the availability of religious leaders. Consultation here is not merely a method of decision-making, but a mechanism for risk distribution. Families learn to consider the capabilities of others and avoid decisions that might cause embarrassment or impose undue burdens. This finding aligns with the tradition of expressing needs in Malay weddings, which is interpreted as al-musyawahrah (Sa'in et al., 2023).

“Pakat sara ine” and “genap mango” represent two distinct circles of consultation. “Pakat sara ine” provides a space for the bride’s family to identify needs and offer contributions, while “genap mango” brings the extended family together for a broader division of labor. The existence of these two spaces is pedagogically significant because decisions do not end with mere discussion. Every agreement is translated into concrete tasks: who handles food and drink, welcomes guests, prepares the venue, or arranges transportation. The connection between decisions and actions teaches accountability a dimension often lost when deliberation is understood merely as a formal meeting.

The participation of women’s families in the “pakat sara ine” also reveals social agency that must be interpreted carefully. The data is insufficient to conclude comprehensive gender equality, but it indicates that women and their kinship networks are not passive recipients. They are involved in the planning and success of the event. In the context of studies on customary family law, attention to such spaces of participation is crucial so that analysis looks not only at who holds formal titles, but also at who manages knowledge, logistics, and social relationships (Tabroni et al., 2025).

Ta’awun, Reciprocity, and the Formation of Solidarity

Berutem is the stage that most clearly demonstrates ta’awun in action. Residents gather firewood collectively without any exchange of wages. In the geographical context of Tampor Paloh, firewood is directly linked to a family’s ability to provide food for guests. Therefore, this assistance is not an empty symbol but a material intervention that alleviates the family’s burden. Informants I2 and I3 interpret berutem as a time-honored tradition that preserves a sense of kinship. Education takes place through physical engagement: walking, gathering, transporting, and stacking firewood together.

This practice demonstrates that values are transmitted not only through advice but through lived experience. Younger generations learn that solidarity requires time and effort, not merely expressions of sympathy. These findings align with research on Marsiadapari in North Sumatra, which identifies reciprocal labor as the source of sustainable social relationships (Aricindy et al., 2023). It is also consistent with Dalihan Na Tolu, which operates mutual aid as a foundation for social harmony (Erawadi & Setiadi, 2024). The difference is that berutem is tied to the specific needs of marriage and serves as both ritual preparation and a means of household economic support.

Mah beru extends solidarity to the final stage. The escorting of the bride is not merely a physical transfer but a collective act marking the couple’s acceptance into a new social relationship. The presence of family and community members mitigates the impression that the woman is leaving her family of origin individually; the transition is witnessed and supported by the community. A sense of gratitude arises because the series of events has concluded, but this gratitude is expressed socially through shared activities, prayers, and the escort. Thus, ta’awun in this tradition shifts from material preparation toward emotional and symbolic support.

Reciprocity does indeed have the potential to turn into pressure when assistance is understood as a social debt that must be repaid in kind. However, field data more strongly indicates an orientation toward alleviating burdens. Therefore, the preservation of the value of ta’awun must be distinguished from competition over wedding celebrations. Communities must ensure that the extent of participation does not shift toward extravagant events or burdensome demands for repayment. The principles of Islamic education place assistance in the context of doing good, not in the reproduction of social prestige.

Trust, Responsibility, and Family Economic Ethics

Penosahen and mah kero encompass both economic and moral dimensions. Penosahen takes the form of a monetary gift from the man's side to the woman's side. The handover is conducted openly in front of the family, thereby serving as an acknowledgment of responsibility and a form of accountability. Informants emphasize that penosahen is not merely a transaction involving the purchase or pricing of a woman, but rather a sign of the man's sincerity in bearing a share of the marriage's expenses. This interpretation is crucial to prevent the tradition from being reduced to a mere material exchange.

Mah kero the delivery of rice from the groom's family to the bride's family demonstrates responsibility in a more relational form. Food serves as a symbol of care, respect, and a willingness to share. Through this act, the groom's family shows that the marital relationship extends beyond the couple, creating an obligation to uphold the honor of the new family. Economic value here is not measured solely by the quantity of goods, but by the intention, sufficiency, and manner in which the gift is given.

From an Islamic educational perspective, both stages link trust with actual capability. The prospective husband is not only advised to be responsible but is placed in a social situation that demands proof of his sincerity. Families also learn to assess capabilities proportionally. The critical point is the possibility that the dowry (penosahen) may become a burden exceeding one's capacity. Literature on marriage traditions indicates that customary demands can conflict with the greater good when material standards become. Therefore, the values that must be upheld are responsibility and openness, while the amount and form of the gift must remain flexible based on capacity and mutual agreement.

This reinterpretation aligns with the principle of cultural adaptation. Traditions do not lose their identity when their material elements are simplified, as long as the meanings of trust, respect, and mutual assistance remain intact. This approach is crucial so that younger generations do not view customs as an economic barrier to marriage. Instead, they can understand customs as practice in financial planning, communicating about one's means, and fulfilling obligations without extravagance.

Beguru and Intergenerational Emotional Education

The "beguru" is the most emotionally intense stage. The prospective bride and groom ask for forgiveness, seek their parents' blessing, and receive their advice before entering married life. Observations reveal a deeply moving atmosphere marked by profound respect. Informant I4 described beguru as a moment when children reflect on their parents' upbringing and sacrifices. The value of birr al-walidayn becomes tangible through body language, tears, expressions of apology, and prayers.

Its educational function goes beyond mere obedience. Beguru creates a space for reflection on the transition of identity from a child in the family of origin to a partner who shoulders new responsibilities. The bride and groom-to-be are encouraged to acknowledge their limitations, resolve unresolved conflicts, and enter marriage with humility. Within the framework of emotional education, this ceremony teaches the ability to express gratitude, ask for forgiveness, accept advice, and connect personal decisions with the history of family relationships.

Such rituals are relevant amid a trend in religious education that places too much emphasis on propositional knowledge. The value of devotion cannot be understood merely as a definition; it must be embodied in actions and affective experiences. Local wisdom can provide situations that make religious values feel close and contextual. However, emotional expression must not turn into pressure to accept family decisions that conflict with the consent of the prospective couple.

Blessings should reinforce a marriage chosen responsibly, not replace the will of those getting married.

Jule bai, the sacredness of the marriage contract, and Sharia literacy

Jule bai occupies a central position because it is at this stage that the marriage contract takes place. The practice of holding it at night is a local custom, but time is not a determining factor in the validity of the marriage. What determines validity is the fulfillment of the essential elements and conditions. This distinction is a form of Sharia literacy: the community can recognize which religious elements are normative and which customary elements are optional. This awareness prevents the uncritical conflation of custom and worship.

The presence of the guardian, witnesses, the exchange of vows, and religious figures transforms the “jule bai” into a space for public learning. Those in attendance witness that marriage is not merely a celebration, but a legal and moral commitment. The marriage contract changes the status of the relationship and gives rise to rights and obligations. Thus, sacredness is not built solely through a quiet atmosphere or traditional attire, but through the understanding that the exchange of vows carries ethical consequences.

This finding aligns with developments in Indonesian marriage law, which positions marriage at the intersection of religious norms, state law, and family protection (Wirastris & van Huis, 2024). While this article does not specifically examine marriage registration, it is pedagogically important for religious and traditional leaders to link religious validity with the state’s administrative order. Strengthening this literacy will help couples understand that protecting the rights of husbands, wives, and children requires compliance with these two mutually supportive domains.

Semah edet, social gatherings, and the expansion of the family

Semah edet introduces the bride’s family to the groom’s family after the marriage contract is signed. This stage transforms marriage from a relationship between two individuals into a network of inter-family support. The introduction is not considered complete simply because the families meet at a celebration; a dedicated space is needed to establish social standing, kinship titles, and the etiquette of interaction. The value of *silaturahmi* thus takes on an institutional form.

The educational function of semah edet is to reduce social uncertainty. Couples learn whom they can turn to for support, how to respect older relatives, and how to maintain communication between their families of origin and their spouse’s family. In small communities, clarity regarding these relationships helps prevent conflicts. Research on the role of customary law in family resilience also indicates that kinship networks can serve as a source of mediation and a means of preventing divorce when utilized appropriately (Usman et al., 2024).

However, family support must be distinguished from excessive intervention. Educational family gatherings provide couples with the space to build a household while also giving them access to advice and assistance. Therefore, semah edet can be interpreted as an education on the boundaries of relationships: the extended family serves as a support system, not as a controller of all the couple’s decisions.

Mechanisms of Internalization: From Ritual to Social Curriculum

A cross-stage analysis shows that Islamic educational values are transmitted through four main mechanisms. These mechanisms explain why customs can function as a social curriculum that is, a curriculum not written in a syllabus but one that governs the community’s learning experiences.

Table 2. Mechanisms of value internalization in a custom-based social curriculum

Mechanism	Manifestation in tradition	Educational function
Role modeling	Religious leaders, parents, and community leaders demonstrate polite language, deliberation, division of tasks, and respect.	Values gain authority because they are embodied in the actions of trusted figures.
Participation	Residents and families are involved in the utem, deliberations, preparations, escorting, and serving guests.	Learning takes place through hands-on practice and real responsibilities.
Repetition	These stages are repeated at every wedding and recognized across generations.	Repetition shapes moral expectations and fosters a spirit of mutual cooperation.
Symbols and narratives	The dowry, rice, blessing, marriage contract, family introductions, and the wedding procession are imbued with religious and social significance.	Symbols help the community remember and interpret abstract values.

The first mechanism is setting a good example. The authority of values stems not only from religious quotations but also from the consistent behavior of respected individuals. When traditional and religious leaders deliberate without contradicting one another, the younger generation sees a model of the integration of custom and religious law. When parents offer advice in a mentoring role with love and compassion, respect is not learned through fear. Setting a good example links norms to the credibility of the actors. The second mechanism is participation. Berutem, genap mango, mah kero, and mah beru transform participants from spectators into active agents. Participation gives values a cost and consequences: helping means contributing effort; taking responsibility means completing tasks; respecting means minding one's words and actions. In Islamic education, such experiences are important because they integrate knowledge, attitudes, and deeds.

The third mechanism is habituation. The repetition of the eleven stages across various weddings creates collective memory and behavioral expectations. Community members know that families hosting weddings will be assisted and, on other occasions, will in turn provide assistance. This habit formation resembles the educational culture discussed by Fauzi et al. (2023), where local values become routine patterns that drive ethical behavior. However, habit formation still requires reflection so that the community does not perform rituals mechanically without understanding their meaning. The fourth mechanism involves symbols and narratives. Penosahen, mah kero, restu, akad, and the escorting of the bride and groom are observable actions, but their meanings are shaped through the community's interpretations. Symbols bridge abstract values with concrete experiences. Sincerity is marked by proportional giving; affection is expressed through restu; commitment is embodied in akad; and social bonds are maintained through family introductions. Education occurs when the older generation explains why actions are performed, rather than merely commanding the repetition of forms.

These four mechanisms form three layers of the social curriculum. The normative layer contains sharia principles such as the validity of contracts, prohibitions against destructive behavior, trustworthiness, and justice. The social layer contains the distribution of roles, deliberation, mutual aid, and kinship networks. The performative layer contains symbols, ceremonial sequences, space, time, food, and traditional language. Values become strong when all three layers are in harmony. If performance is maintained without norms, traditions can become

mere formalities; if norms are taught without a social context, values struggle to form habits; if social solidarity is not evaluated, it can turn into communal pressure.

Sustaining Tradition: Preserving Values, Reinterpreting Forms

The Tampor Paloh community faces sustainability challenges shared by other rural Muslim communities: changing work patterns, the mobility of the younger generation, the use of technology, and rising costs of celebrations. Preservation cannot rely solely on the memories of elders. Terms, meanings, and functions of each stage must be documented in easily understandable language. Schools, religious study groups, customary institutions, and families can use traditions as a source of contextual learning—for example, through documentation projects, intergenerational interviews, or simulations of deliberative meetings. Preservation must also be selective. Elements that uphold consultation (*syura*), mutual aid (*ta'awun*), responsibility, respect, and social bonds (*silaturahmi*) need to be strengthened. Practices that have the potential to cause waste or impose an economic burden should be open to negotiation. This principle does not weaken tradition but is an effort to maintain its relevance. Studies on Islamic traditions in rural communities confirm that cultural heritage endures when it strikes a balance between conservation and adaptation (Hiptraspa & Saputri, 2024).

Young people need to be positioned as active participants, not merely as recipients of messages. Their involvement in digital documentation, organizing simple events, and discussing the meaning of customs can transform technology from a threat into a means of transmission. However, digitization must not replace communal experiences. A video about *berutem* is not the same as participating in the work; a post about *beguru* does not replace the courage to apologize. Technology is effective when it expands memory and access, while character development still requires real interaction and responsibility. The implication for Islamic education is the need to expand learning resources. Religious values are not found solely in textbooks but also in social practices that can be critically analyzed. Teachers and religious educators can guide students to distinguish between normative, social, and performative elements; assess the compatibility of local customs with *maqasid* and the public good; and design adaptations that preserve these values. This approach prevents two extremes: uncritically accepting all local customs or rejecting them entirely because they are not found in the same form in other Muslim communities. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the view that local culture can serve as a medium for Islamic education when universal values are translated into patterns of behavior understood by the community. Values do not become “local” in the sense of losing their universality; what is local are the forms of expression and the channels through which they are transmitted. *Musyawah*, *amanah*, *ta'awun*, *birr al-walidayn*, and *silaturahmi* are broader principles, whereas *munginte*, *berutem*, *beguru*, and *semah edet* are cultural mechanisms that bring these principles to life in Tampor Paloh.

CONCLUSION

The Gayo traditional wedding customs in Tampor Paloh demonstrate a functional integration between Islamic law and local customs. Islamic law serves as the normative framework that determines the validity of the marriage contract and the ethical direction of the wedding, while local customs organize family participation, the distribution of responsibilities, and the community's symbolic expressions. The eleven stages of the tradition embody the values of *shura*, courtesy, trustworthiness, responsibility, *ta'awun*, *birr al-walidayn*, *silaturahmi*, *ukhuwah*,

obedience, and gratitude. These values are not merely stated but are learned through exemplary behavior, participation, habit formation, as well as symbols and narratives.

The main contribution of this research is the concept of a custom-based social curriculum. This concept explains that non-formal Islamic education can take place through three interrelated layers: the normative layer of sharia, the social layer consisting of relationships and the division of roles, and the performative layer consisting of rituals and cultural symbols. The continuity of tradition should be directed toward preserving educational values and functions, rather than rigidly reproducing forms. Penosahen and other material elements need to be adapted to people's capabilities so as not to become a burden, while deliberation, mutual cooperation, parental consent, proper contractual procedures, and social bonding need to be strengthened.

This study is limited to one village and four key informants and therefore does not represent the full range of Gayo customs. Further research could compare several Gayo regions, examine the experiences of women and young couples in greater depth, and explore how migration and digital media are altering the transmission of customs. For communities and educational institutions, participatory documentation, culture-based study groups, and intergenerational learning projects can serve as strategies to keep traditions alive, reflective, and aligned with the well-being of families.

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