



## Character Education Values in the Legend of "Mount Lewotobi" in East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the integration of character education values in the Indonesian legend *Mount Lewotobi* from East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara. Character education is a fundamental aspect of human development, shaping morals and personalities to create more humane individuals, and local legends serve as valuable mediums for imparting ethical lessons. Employing a qualitative approach, this research utilized documentation as the primary data collection technique and applied Spradley's cultural theme analysis model to analyze the narrative. Data validation was ensured through triangulation techniques. The findings reveal that the *Mount Lewotobi* legend conveys significant character education values, particularly in teaching ethics and manners. The study underscores the rich correlation between education and literature, emphasizing the potential of local wisdom as an effective medium for character education. By incorporating such narratives into educational curricula, students can connect with their cultural heritage while fostering moral and ethical growth, making local legends a vital resource for holistic education.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is deeply intertwined with modern society, as it plays an integral role in daily life across all levels of human experience. It is as vital as basic necessities like clothing, food, and shelter. High-quality education equips students to prepare for their future roles, fostering the necessary skills to adapt to evolving conditions, ultimately enabling them to achieve their life goals efficiently and effectively. In essence, education serves as a means to develop individuals' mental, physical, and moral attributes in alignment with societal and environmental harmony (Wibowo, 2013:2). This highlights the critical need for character education, which should be instilled early on in various settings, including homes, communities, and schools, to shape individuals with intellectual competence and strong moral character. Character education is expected to nurture students into skilled, insightful, and ethically grounded individuals, balancing intellect with virtue.

Despite its importance, cases reflecting a lack of moral development among students persist. For instance, there is rampant misuse of digital media, such as excessive gaming, inappropriate internet use, and watching age-inappropriate content. Additionally, issues related to school culture, such as poor discipline, dishonesty, lack of camaraderie, and neglect of religious practices, are still prevalent (Zuchdi, et al., 2013:114). Examples include students failing to complete assignments, engaging in cheating, taking others' belongings, and refusing to acknowledge mistakes. Instances of physical or verbal altercations among students and limited respect for diverse religious practices further demonstrate gaps in character education. These challenges underscore the necessity of incorporating robust character-building practices into education.

Lickona (2013:20) outlines ten moral deficiencies that require immediate attention, including violence, theft, dishonesty, disobedience to rules, student brawls, inappropriate language, premature sexual behavior, and self-destructive tendencies. Addressing these requires embedding character education deeply into the formal education system from kindergarten through higher education. As Muslich (2013:15) asserts, character education can be integrated into various subjects, particularly through the study of Indonesian literature. This offers a unique opportunity to foster character development through exposure to cultural and moral values embedded in oral traditions and written works.

Oral literature, an integral part of Indonesian heritage, preserves cultural identity and moral teachings untouched by external influences. This spoken form of literature, transmitted orally across generations, provides a foundation for literary activities in Indonesia. Unlike written literature, oral traditions reflect the storytelling practices rooted in community life. Bengkulu Province, particularly Seluma Regency, boasts a wealth of oral traditions, including *rejung*, *junglean*, *nandai*, *tadud*, and folklore. Unfortunately, the younger generation's familiarity with these traditions has significantly diminished, largely due to modernization and insufficient efforts to preserve and incorporate them into educational curricula. For instance, the Seluma folklore,

rich with noble values, faces near extinction despite its potential to impart significant character education lessons.

This research explores the character education values within Seluma folklore to highlight their relevance and applicability in fostering moral development. Using Thomas Lickona's theory, the study examines how folklore promotes key elements of character education—knowing the good, loving the good, and doing the good—alongside foundational moral values like respect and responsibility. Effective character education transcends cognitive understanding; it should encourage emotional commitment and behavioral actualization of moral values. According to Lickona (2013:74-76), schools must teach values such as honesty, justice, tolerance, wisdom, discipline, compassion, cooperation, and democratic principles. Employing a structural approach, this research analyzes the relationships within literary texts, specifically folklore, to uncover the embedded moral lessons. As Endraswara (2011:152) emphasizes, understanding text structures is essential for preserving and transmitting the intrinsic values of oral traditions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. Character Education**

The Strengthening Character Education (PPK) initiative is an educational program overseen by educational institutions aimed at enhancing students' character development. This is achieved by integrating the harmonization of emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects through collaboration between schools, families, and communities, aligning with the goals of the National Mental Revolution Movement (GNRM). The Presidential Regulation outlines several key objectives:

- a. Preparing and equipping students to become Indonesia's golden generation by 2045, instilled with a Pancasila spirit and strong character education, enabling them to adapt to future changes and challenges.
- b. Establishing a national education framework that prioritizes character education as the core element of teaching. This is achieved with the active participation of the public through formal, non-formal, and informal education channels, respecting Indonesia's cultural diversity.
- c. Revitalizing and enhancing the potential and capabilities of educators, education personnel, students, as well as the community and family environment, to effectively implement PPK.

PPK emphasizes the application of Pancasila values in character education, which includes but is not limited to fostering religious devotion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic values, curiosity, national pride, patriotism, respect for achievement, effective communication, love for peace, a passion for reading, environmental awareness, social responsibility, and accountability, as stated in PP No.3 Article 3.

### **B. Mount Lewotobi**

Mount Lewotobi Men and Mount Lewotobi Women in East Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province hold a legend about two pairs of

husband and wife. The two twin volcanoes side by side are believed by the indigenous people of Nawokote, Wulanggitang District to be the ancestors of men and women. The landowner of the Puka tribe and owner of Mount Lewotobi, Tobias Lewotobi Puka, said that the original name of the twin mountains was 'Ile Bele', which means big mountain. Ile Bele, consisting of Ile Lake (Male Lewotobi) and Ile Wae (Female Lewotobi). The two mountains have a height of 1,548 meters and 1,703 meters above sea level. Mount Lewotobi cannot be separated from legends, these legends have been conveyed by the Puka tribe or the owner of Mount Lewotobi, namely Tobias Lewotobi Puka. Tobias said that the original name of the twin mountains was Ile Bele, which means big mountain. It is known that the legend of a husband and wife who live side by side is Puka and Tobi. At that time, Puka and Tobi's wives were both pregnant to look after him, they agreed to create a status when their child was born. According to him, if a girl is born, her status is mame (uncle/uncle) and if it is a boy, she is seen as Opu (brother-in-law). However, at that time Tobi's wife gave birth to a daughter, so to this day Puka views them as mame. Tobias said that from the start Puka had always made mountains from sand and stone, but his efforts failed. Because it was not finished, the Tobi or Mame tribe came to help by installing shells on the tops of the two mountains. The story of two mothers who gave birth to a boy and a girl is the origin of Bele, which is now called Lewotobi, male and female.

## METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative type of research. This research has data and data sources. The data source is the legend "Mount Lewotobi" which originates from East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The data in this research are words, sentences, paragraphs that show values, education, character. The data will be interpreted in the context of cultural discourse. The data collection techniques used in this research are interview techniques and documentation techniques. The data analysis technique used is hermeneutics. The data validity technique used is an external auditor who is none other than a lecturer.



Figure 1. Lewobi Mountain

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research will divide the exposure into several aspects, namely:

1. Religious

Religious according to Thontoi (in Wicaksono, 2014:265-266) states, "There are five aspects or dimensions of Religiosity, namely; 1) ideology or belief dimension, 2) worship dimension, 3) appreciation dimension, 4) knowledge dimension, 5) practice dimension." The dimension of religiosity in the legend of "Mount Lewotobi" is the dimension of belief. The main characters in this legend are two mothers who are both pregnant and about to give birth to a child. This belief is stated in the agreement process made between the two mothers.

2. Be honest

Honesty is the attitude or characteristic of someone who states something truly and as it is, neither added nor subtracted. This honest characteristic must be possessed by every human being, because this characteristic and attitude is the basic principle of reflecting a person's morals. Honesty can also be a reflection of a person's personality and even the personality of a nation. In the legend of "Mount Lewotobi" honesty is shown by the two mothers. Each of these mothers honestly said the gender of their child. The first mother gave birth to a boy and was named Ile Lake and the second mother gave birth to a girl who was named Ile Wae so they were combined into Lewotobi.

3. Independent

Independence can be interpreted as "the state of being able to stand alone" or "not depending on other people". According to Syarbini (2014:38), independence is an attitude and behavior that does not easily depend on other people in completing tasks. An example of an independent lifestyle in the legend of "Mount Lewotobi" is the independence of the Tobi tribe who moved from Lewotobi to the Nawokote area because of the transfer of power of the Mukin tribe.

4. Enthusiasm

The spirit of character expressed in the legend "Mount Lewotobi" can be observed in the activities of the two mothers, from conceiving, giving birth, to raising their respective children. There is not a single word, sentence, paragraph that describes their despair in carrying out their parental duties in their lives. On the contrary, they feel happy and proud of their children. They show enthusiasm and never give up to face life. Indirectly, they become icons or examples for their children that facing life requires an attitude of enthusiasm and continuing to fight.

5. Love for the Motherland

A way of thinking, acting and insight that places the interests of the nation and state above the interests of oneself and one's group. As students we can still show an attitude of love for our country, including; 1) Study diligently so that we can also serve and develop our country so that we are not left behind by other nations. 2) Maintain environmental sustainability. 3) Don't choose your friends. 4) Be devoted to your

homeland and nation 5) Be devoted to your parents (mother, father, teachers). These five aspects are in the legend of "Mount Lewotobi".

6. Communicative

Actions that show a sense of enjoyment in talking, socializing, and collaborating with other people.

7. Love Peace

Attitudes, words and actions that cause other people to feel happy and safe in their presence.

8. Care for the Environment

Attitudes and actions that always strive to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, and develop efforts to repair natural damage that has already occurred.

9. Social Care

Attitudes and actions that always want to provide assistance to other people and communities in need.

10. Responsibility

Responsibility is an extension of respect. If we respect others, it means we respect them. If we value them, it means we feel a certain responsibility towards their welfare (Lickona, 2013: 63). An example of an attitude of responsibility in everyday life can be seen in the illustration of a child who was playing football and accidentally broke his neighbor's window. The child dares to admit and take responsibility for his mistakes even though he has to accept the risk of being scolded by neighbors and his own parents. Another example we can see is an older sibling who is given the small task of looking after his younger sibling who is playing and is taught to be responsible for all (small) risks if something happens to his younger sibling.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research has several conclusions in accordance with the problem formulation stated in the introduction. These conclusions are:

- a. Character begins with education, and early character formation begins within the family. A family that is conducive, full of support, full of love, will give birth to children or a generation full of talents and noble morals.
- b. Education is needed by every human being in the process of education giving birth to values, developing character, and creating personalization that is getting better every day and full of humanity and wisdom.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

Building upon the conclusions of this study, future research could delve deeper into the interplay between family environments and educational systems in shaping character and moral development. Exploring how variations in family dynamics, such as parenting styles, socio-economic status, and cultural influences, impact the early formation of values and talents would offer valuable insights. Additionally, examining the effectiveness of educational interventions, such as values-based curricula or experiential learning

approaches, could shed light on methods that enhance personalization, humanity, and wisdom in students. Cross-cultural studies could provide a broader perspective on the universality and specificity of education's role in character building, while research on the integration of family and school efforts could propose collaborative frameworks to optimize outcomes. Furthermore, investigating the influence of technology on character education, particularly in digital learning environments, could address emerging challenges and opportunities in maintaining humanistic values in an increasingly digital world.

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