

# Folklore: Intangible Cultural Heritage as a Medium to Strengthen the Character of the Nation

Wahyuni Mulia Helmi<sup>1,\*</sup> Hasanuddin WS<sup>2</sup>, Harris Effendi Thahar<sup>3</sup>, Yasnur Asri<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Doctoral Program of Education, Universitas Negeri Padang

\*Corresponding author. Email: [wahyunimuliahelmi2019@gmail.com](mailto:wahyunimuliahelmi2019@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

Folklore, especially legends with lawlessness theme, is still transmitted from generation to generation by people who live in Minangkabau cultural surrounding. This leads us to an assumption that there are character education values which characterize Minangkabau ethnic group which is believed to be true and the existence of the values is still maintained. Therefore, an analysis was carried out to discover character values contained in folk tales (legends) with lawlessness theme in the Minangkabau tribe. In addition, the analysis is also carried out to see how the story contributes to the process of strengthening the nation's character education. Content analysis research techniques in qualitative paradigm were used to analyze the folklore text with lawlessness theme. From the folklore text, eleven values were identified which is believed to be true and their existence is still maintained by Minangkabau tribe community. These values contribute in strengthening the character of the nation.

**Keywords:** *Legends, Character, Lawlessness, Minangkabau.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ethnic character education mostly occurs naturally and crosses the boundaries of formal, non-formal, and informal education, by using the culture owned by these ethnic groups as a medium for inheriting values that are believed to be true. These values are passed down from generation to generation through an enculturation process, which then functions as a form of ethnic character. They characterize the ethnic group that uses the culture. This is a cultural wealth that contributes to the process of instilling good character values. This cultural wealth can be used for cultivating, developing, and strengthening the character values contextually in accordance with the characteristics of the nation's culture. Folklore is an intangible part of culture that has a special character and is a description of the identity of an ethnic group. In general, every ethnic group has a folklore that is always passed down from generation to generation with the aim that the latest generation can take lessons from the stories.

Research related to character values in Minangkabau cultural sphere has been carried out, some of them are the text of Kaba Sabai Nan Aluih by M. Rasyid Manggis Dt. Rajo Penghulu [1], Text Expressing People's Beliefs in Minangkabau Society [2], Character Building through Expressions of People's Beliefs in

Minangkabau Society [3], and Character Education Values in Folklore in Ampek Nagari District [4]. The research on Folklore: Intangible Cultural Heritage as a Media to Strengthen National Character was carried out on several folk tales of legend groups scattered in the Pasisia and Darek areas, namely two stories representing the Pasisia region and six stories representing the Darek area.

In general, there is an imbalance between the goals of education in forming individuals with noble character and the fact that there are many problems related to character, especially in West Sumatra, where most of its territory is inhabited by the Minangkabau ethnic group. Therefore, it is necessary to find a solution for planting, developing and strengthening character values from an early age, by considering the stages of character education classification based on the hadith of the Prophet, which was put forward by Hidayatullah [5] and the cultivation of *Adab* in children aged 5-6 years as stated by Nufus et al. [6].

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research on the folklore text of the legend group with disobedience to parents theme used content analysis research techniques. The content analysis of the text was carried out in a qualitative paradigm. Content

analysis technique (content analysis) is a technique of collecting and analyzing the content of a text [7]. This content analysis also focuses on the symbolic meaning of messages in the text. The messages contained in the text have a double meaning and are "open", so that the data obtained can always be seen from various perspectives, especially if the data is symbolic. The meaning contained in the data cannot be agreed upon as the only/universal meaning in various cultural and socio-political contexts, in other languages the meaning is always relative [8].

Qualitative content analysis is also known as text analysis or discourse analysis [9]. Technically, the implementation of this analysis does not trace the conscious arrangement of a text alone but also the unconscious order, and hidden assumptions that lie behind explicit things [10] which are also known as latent content [11] [7].

In this study, the extrinsic elements of the values of character education contained in the folklore text of legend groups in areas inhabited by the Minangkabau ethnic groups in West Sumatra were analyzed. They were instilled, developed and strengthened in children based on the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad which was put forward by Prof. Dr. M. Furqon Hidayatullah, M.Pd. and Nufus et al. The character values are instilled, developed, and strengthened in the child in accordance with the stage as shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** Character values to be identified

<b>Character planting</b>		<b>Age (years)</b>
<i>Adab</i> to parents (politeness)	Listening to the words of parents, starting to stand up when parents are standing up, obeying their orders, not passing through right in front of parents, not raising the voices higher than the parents' voices, answering calls gently, being humble and gentle, not bragging the kindness, neither looked cynical, nor sullen, ask for permission when going to travel	5-6
Responsible		7-8
Concern		9-10
Independence		11-12
The importance of society		≥13

This qualitative content analysis technique is used to find out, identify, proceed, and analyze the entire folklore text of the legend group with the theme of rebellion against parents in West Sumatra. The main purpose is to discover and understanding the character values contained explicitly (manifest) and implicitly (latent message) in the text.

In its implementation, every character education value contained in the folklore text of legend groups in West Sumatra, (whether visible or hidden message) is included in a predetermined category (note-taking sheet). To ensure the validity of the data in this study, various techniques were carried out, including: (1) collecting the folklore text of a legend group with the theme of disobedience to parents who still exist in the Minangkabau ethnic community in West Sumatra province as the source; (2) the adequacy of the theory for analyzing texts, such as educational theory, character education, child development psychology; (3) persistence of observation in finding features and elements in situations that are highly relevant to the problem or issue being sought [12]; (4) examination of credible interviewee through various discussions. Examination of interviewee is carried out by exposing the provisional results or the final results obtained in the form of analytic discussions with the interviewee [12].

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on research on the text of the story: (1) The legend of Banca Bihunguik; (2) the legend of the Batu Galeh ; (3) the legend of the Batu Lipek Kain; (4) the legend of Payo Takuluak; (5) the legend of the Batu Tagak; (6) the legend of the Batu Puti; (7) The Legend of Batu Manangih (8) The legend of the Boncah Tangkuluak, it was identified the main characters that are considered important by the Minangkabau ethnic community to instill, develop and strengthen the children as the next generation of the Minangkabau so that these values must be conveyed to Minangkabau ethnic children. Folklore can be used as a medium of delivery.

The value of this main character is obtained by identifying a number of legendary group folk tales with the theme of disobedience to parents. The folk tales convey the character values expressed in the framework of the character education stages derived from the Prophet's hadith as proposed by Hidayatullah, and the cultivation of *adab* in children proposed by Nufus et al. The character values, conveyed by more than half of the total folklore of the legendary group with the theme of disobedience to the parents studied (n +1), are the main character values that are considered important by the Minangkabau tribe to be instilled, developed and strengthened in children Minangkabau ethnic communities as individual successors and supporters of Minangkabau culture.

Based on the analysis conducted on the research data, it is known that being humble and caring are the main character values believed to be important to be instilled, strengthened, and developed in the children of the Minangkabau ethnicity. This can be seen from the research findings whereas from eight folklores (groups of lawlessness theme) being investigated, all of them highlight the character of being humble and gentle, as well as the character of caring to others.

Meanwhile, legendary group themed disobedience to parents suggests that the character should not look the parents cynically, and at the same time it should be independent. Based on the analysis of the research data, it is found that not looking parents cynically and being independent is the highlighted characters which are believed to be important for every individual of the Minangkabau ethnic community. From the eight folk tales of legends with disobedience to parents theme being studied, there are six folk tales of legends which expose the importance of not to look parents cynically and being independent person.

The next main character is to listen to the words of the parents and obey the orders of them. These characters are related to one another. Based on the analysis carried out on the research data, there are five out of the eight folklore groups of legends with are themed disobedience to parents that contain both character values mention in the previous sentence.

The process of instilling character values using folklore media is not an easy thing to do since it is challenged by other forms of activities and games which offer immediate effect of enjoyment without going through a more complicated and complex processes as folklore do. However, the process of instilling character values by using folklore media does not seem impossible at all. One biggest challenge could be to really ensure that these values are well-conveyed to the children of the Minangkabau ethnic group as the next generation to support the Minangkabau culture.

In each process of storytelling, aiming at cultivating, developing, and strengthening the values of character education, the following things should be at least fulfilled: 1) children who listen to the folklore text can imagine and feel involved in every series of events that occurred. 2) Children who listen the text of the story are touched by their feelings so that they can feel the inner conflict experienced by the characters in the story. 3) The hardest part is to ensure that the children who listen to the text of the story can understand the parts of the text in the form of messages, which are conveyed behind each event that occurs in each character in the folklore. It is about "the meaning inside" of the text or of the story. The "inner meaning" is the meaning that is hidden so that in order to get the "inner meaning", a deeper, broader interpretation must be carried out and not just an objective interpretation [13] [14] [15].

Children who listen to and follow a story for the first time might not be able to understand the true meaning of the story. Initially, what being constructed is simply knowledge about the events and characters of the story, or things related to the intrinsic aspects of it. If a story text can be conveyed in an interesting way, the children will usually, at other times, come back asking for the story to be repeated. On the second occasion, there will be a more open dialogue between the children and the storyteller; new questions will emerge about intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the story. Even questions from children can be developed beyond the context and it is sometimes related to their real life. This happens because children are constructing their knowledge and connecting with the knowledge they already have.

On this occasion, a complex constructivist process occurred starting from the constructivist Piaget to Vygotsky. Where, at first, the children construct their knowledge by transforming, organizing, and reorganizing the knowledge with previous information personally in accordance with Piaget's constructivist (cognitive). In the next process, the children will construct their knowledge through social interactions with other people, for example with storytellers as well as with friends who listen to the stories or with other people. This process is a description emphasized by the constructivist Vygotsky (social) [16].

"Information text" which becomes new knowledge for the children, obtained during listening to folk tales, is intertwined with other "information text" knowledge obtained from the previous occasions. According to Grenz [18], the texts are endless doors, which will lead us to other texts whereas each of these texts always provides a relationship, correlation, and context so that it always has the potential to produce a broader meaning.

Therefore, for the storyteller to facilitate the process of constructing broad knowledge in children, she/he must have a broad knowledge of the nature of the story she/he is telling. A storyteller must have the knowledge that any information or knowledge contained in the folklore text is inter-textual with other information or knowledge. In other words, there is no "original text". Each text with its own characteristics is inter-textual [19] [10] whereas the meaning of the text is not only limited to the story, but may also be a language text [20].

In connection with the folklore text with the disobedience to parents theme that is passed down from generation to generation to the Minangkabau ethnic group, the storyteller is expected to have sufficient knowledge of the humble and gentle character, the caring character, the character who does not look cynically to parents and the independent character. They should also have knowledge in the character of listening to the words of parents and obeying parental orders. In

In addition, storytellers are also expected to have knowledge related to the characteristics of Minangkabau culture as well as the religious system of the Minangkabau ethnic groups. To illustrate, why the character is the mother? Why the character is not the father? It is not common for these simple questions to be asked by children to the storytellers. Therefore, the storytellers can give hints or clue or situations so that the children are stimulated to ask such questions. The answer to this question should be presented by the storyteller in the Minangkabau cultural paradigm as well as the religious system in the Minangkabau ethnic group which are considered to be very important by the Minangkabau people.

Regarding the meaning contained in this folklore with lawlessness theme, there is a possibility that when the stories are told, the children cannot understand the explanation from the storytellers yet. The children can only accept the explanation as information. However, this information will be stored in memory until it is mutually supported by other information to produce a deep meaning. Even it is possible that this information can only be understood after adulthood.

It can be argued that, people, who support the Minangkabau culture, view that being humble and gentle, caring for others, not looking cynically at others, having an independent spirit, listening to and obeying parental orders are the main values that must be possessed by the entire Minangkabau ethnic community. Therefore, these values are important to be instilled, developed, and strengthened to the children as the successor of the Minangkabau ethnic group. To ensure that these values can be conveyed to the children of the Minangkabau ethnic group, folklore texts, which are intangible cultural heritage, are used as a medium of delivery.

The main character values identified in the folklore of the legendary group theme contribute to the cultivation, development, and strength of character education that help to build the culture and character of the Indonesian nation. It is as developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture [21] namely in the formation of disciplinary characters (actions which shows orderly behavior and obeys various rules and regulations), peace-loving character (attitudes, words and actions that cause others to feel happy and secure in their presence), and independent character (attitudes and behaviors that are not easily dependent on others in completing tasks).

Since these character values are considered very important to be understood, owned and then applied in everyday life, they should become identity which crystallize into one's character of the Minangkabau ethnic group. The folklore of this legacy group theme is important to be conveyed widely to children in the Minangkabau ethnicity, in informal education activities, non-formal education, and formal education.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Main characters that are considered important by the Minangkabau ethnic community to instill, develop, and strengthen the children. This main character's value is obtained by identifying several legendary group folk tales with the theme of disobedience to parents. The folk tales convey the character values expressed in the framework of the character education stages derived from the Prophet's hadith as proposed by Hidayatullah, and the cultivation of adab in children proposed by Nufus et al. The character values, conveyed by more than half of the total folklore of the legendary group, is the main character values.

Instilling character values using folklore media is not an easy thing to do since it is challenged by other forms of activities and games that offer an immediate effect of enjoyment. The hardest part is to ensure that the children who listen to the text of the story can understand the text's parts. Being humble and gentle, caring for others, not looking cynically at others, having an independent spirit, listening to, and obeying parental orders are the main values that must be possessed by the entire Minangkabau ethnic community. These values are important to be instilled, developed, and strengthened in the children.

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