



INTEGRATION OF CHARACTER VALUES BASED ON THOMAS LICKONA'S THEORY IN THE BERAU FOLKTALE *BATU BUAL* AS AN INNOVATION FOR MODERN LEARNING

Integrasi Nilai Karakter Berbasis Teori Thomas Lickona dalam Cerita Rakyat Berau "Batu Bual" sebagai Inovasi Pembelajaran Modern

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the character education values in the Batu Bual folktale from Berau Regency based on Thomas Lickona's theory of character education. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method with content analysis techniques. The primary data source is the book *Cerita Rakyat Paser dan Berau (Folktales of Paser and Berau)*, while the research data consist of textual excerpts containing character education values. Data were collected through library research involving a comprehensive reading and examination of the folktale text. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the Batu Bual folktale contains character education values, including honesty, responsibility, patriotism, healthy competition, harmony, and cooperation. These values are reflected through the characters' attitudes and actions, which embody the aspects of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Accordingly, the Batu Bual folktale can be utilized as a local wisdom-based medium for character education for younger generations.

Keywords: Batu Bual; Berau; character education; folklore; Thomas Lickona

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter dalam cerita rakyat Batu Bual dari Kabupaten Berau berdasarkan teori pendidikan karakter Thomas Lickona. Penelitian menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik analisis isi. Sumber data utama berasal dari buku *Cerita Rakyat Paser dan Berau*, sedangkan data penelitian berupa kutipan teks yang mengandung nilai pendidikan karakter. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui studi pustaka dengan membaca dan menelaah teks cerita rakyat secara menyeluruh. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan simpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa cerita rakyat Batu Bual mengandung nilai pendidikan karakter berupa kejujuran, tanggung jawab, patriotisme, persaingan yang sehat, harmoni, dan kerja sama. Nilai-nilai tersebut tercermin melalui tindakan dan sikap tokoh yang menunjukkan aspek moral knowing, moral feeling, dan moral action. Dengan demikian, cerita rakyat Batu Bual dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai media pendidikan karakter berbasis kearifan lokal bagi generasi muda

Kata-kata kunci: Batu Bual; Berau; folklor; pendidikan karakter; Thomas Lickona

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INTRODUCTION

Character education has become a crucial element in the educational system, with the aim of developing individuals who possess morality, responsibility, and integrity in social life. In addition to enhancing students' cognitive abilities, education also instills various moral values that can serve as guidelines for behavior. Amid current social phenomena, numerous moral issues have emerged, such as a lack of responsibility, diminished social awareness, and declining honesty among the younger generation. These conditions demonstrate that the strengthening of character education is an essential need in the field of education (Yanuardianto, 2021). Recent studies also emphasize that character education is increasingly being integrated into learning systems through contextual and culturally based approaches, including the use of local narratives and folklore as pedagogical media (Setiaji et al., 2026).

One effective approach to instill character values is through literary works, particularly folktales. Folktales are oral traditions passed down through generations within communities as a form of cultural heritage. Beyond serving as entertainment, folktales contain moral messages, cultural identity, and social values that can be utilized as learning resources in formal education. Contemporary research confirms that folklore-based learning is effective in strengthening moral reasoning, civic values, and democratic attitudes among learners (Asriani et al., 2026). Furthermore, folklore integration in language education has been shown to improve students' understanding of local wisdom and character formation in classroom practice (Simbolon & Mandalahi, 2025). These values are typically reflected through the messages, conflicts, plots, and characters embedded within the stories. Therefore, folktales can be utilized as a medium for imparting character values to younger generations (Setyawan et al., 2017).

One of the most frequently applied theories in character education is the concept proposed by Thomas Lickona. Lickona describes character education as a process aimed at helping individuals understand moral values, appreciate the importance of those values, and implement them in real actions. This concept encompasses several key components: moral knowing (understanding moral values), moral feeling (moral attitudes and awareness), and moral action (behavior reflecting moral values). These three components serve as a fundamental basis for shaping an individual's character so that moral values are not only understood theoretically but also applied in daily life (Husni & Norman, 2018).

Indonesia possesses an extraordinarily rich cultural diversity, including various folktales that have developed in every region. One area with such cultural wealth is Berau Regency, located in the province of East Kalimantan. Berau Regency is known for its diverse traditions and folktales that have evolved within the local community as part of its cultural identity. These folktales not only depict the history and beliefs of the local people but also contain social values relevant to community life.

One of the most prevalent folktales among the Berau community is the Batu Bual folktale. This story has been transmitted orally and is recognized by the community as a tale containing moral messages about human behavior and the consequences of one's actions. Through the characters and events depicted, the story of Batu Bual embodies values related to responsibility, social relationships, and social norms. Therefore, the Batu Bual folktale has the potential to be examined as a source of culturally-based character education.

The selection of the Batu Bual folktale for this study is based on several considerations. First, the story is part of the cultural heritage of the Berau community that remains known to this day. Second, the Batu Bual tale is believed to contain moral messages that can provide lessons about human attitudes and behavior in social life. Third, academic studies on folktales from Berau Regency remain relatively limited compared to folktales from other regions in

Indonesia. Therefore, this research is expected to contribute to the development of regional literary studies while enriching research on character education based on local wisdom.

Several previous studies have addressed character education values in folktales. Research conducted by Erianty et al. (2024) on the Raja Sinadin folktale demonstrated that folktales contain various character values relevant to contemporary education. Another study by Humairoh et al. (2025) identified nine-character education values in the Batang Tuaka folktale, including courage, compassion, and religiosity. Additionally, a study by Ahmadi et al. (2021) on the Sendang Widodari folktale showed that folktales can convey values such as diligence, responsibility, honesty, and mutual respect. Research by Rahmawati et al. (2023) on the Lutung Kasarung folktale also discovered various local wisdom values that play a role in shaping students' character.

These various studies share a common focus on examining character education values in folktales, although they employ story objects from different regions and cultural backgrounds. Previous studies have generally focused solely on the general identification of character education values in widely known and studied folktales. Meanwhile, based on the literature review conducted, no study was found that specifically examines the Batu Bual folktale from the Berau community from the perspective of character education. This indicates that the Batu Bual folktale remains significantly underexplored in academic research.

Based on the literature review, no research was found that specifically examines the Batu Bual folktale from the perspective of character education using Thomas Lickona's theory. Yet, Thomas Lickona's character education theory — encompassing the aspects of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action — can be used to analyze how character values are understood, felt, and manifested through the actions of characters in folktales. Thus, a research gap exists in the form of limited studies on the local folktales of the Berau community and the minimal application of Thomas Lickona's character education theory in folktale analysis.

Therefore, this study presents novelty in two aspects. First, it focuses on the Batu Bual folktale, which has not been widely studied in the context of character education. Second, it employs Thomas Lickona's character education theory as the analytical framework to identify character values through the aspects of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. This novelty is expected to broaden the study of regional folklore while enriching research on character education based on the local wisdom of the Berau community.

Based on the foregoing, this study aims to examine the character education values contained in the Batu Bual folktale through Thomas Lickona's character education theoretical framework. Through this research, it is expected that the ways in which moral values in the story are reflected through characters, plot, and narrative messages can be identified. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the utilization of folktales as a medium for character education while simultaneously supporting the preservation of local culture.

The urgency of this research lies in the importance of strengthening character education for the younger generation through media that are relevant to the local cultural context. The Batu Bual folktale, as a cultural treasure of the Berau community, possesses various moral and social values with the potential to serve as a source of character education. By employing Thomas Lickona's character education theory, this study is expected to demonstrate how these character values are internalized within the folktale, enabling their utilization as a more contextual and effective character education strategy while simultaneously supporting the preservation of local culture (Husni & Norman, 2018).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Definition of Folklore

Folklore is a field of study that examines various cultural elements that live and develop within a community. The term "folklore" derives from two words: folk and lore. According to Dundes Lisa et al. (2020), folk refers to a group of people who share certain common characteristics — whether cultural, social, or physical — that distinguish them from other social groups. Meanwhile, lore refers to various forms of knowledge, traditions, and cultural heritage passed down from ancestors to subsequent generations. This process of transmission can occur through orally conveyed stories (verbal), cultural habits or behaviors in daily life (nonverbal), or through physical remnants such as objects or artifacts from the past.

Pambudi (2023) state that folklore is a form of traditional art that develops within a community and is passed down through generations via traditional means, taking the form of oral narratives, actions, or gestures understood by members of the supporting community. Thus, folklore encompasses not only folktales but also various traditions, beliefs, and cultural practices inherited by each generation.

Based on the expert perspectives, folklore can be understood as a component of culture that grows and develops within a community and is continuously inherited across generations. Folklore extends beyond folktales to include cultural values, beliefs, customs, and various traditions that constitute part of a community's social life. The existence of folklore reflects a shared cultural identity held collectively by a group or ethnic community and serves as a means of preserving those cultural values. Accordingly, folklore can be interpreted as a collective cultural heritage that is consistently maintained and safeguarded by the people as part of their identity and cultural wealth. Therefore, folklore is expected to endure and evolve despite ongoing societal changes (Soleh, 2020). Contemporary studies emphasize that folklore is not only a cultural inheritance but also an educational resource that can strengthen civic values, cultural literacy, and democratic attitudes in learning contexts (Asriani et al., 2026). In addition, folklore has been increasingly recognized as an effective medium for integrating local wisdom into formal education, particularly in language learning, where it enhances students' understanding of cultural identity and moral values (Simbolon & Mandalahi, 2025).

Folktales

Folktales are a component of folklore that has been passed down through generations via oral tradition and require preservation, as their presence is increasingly rare in the modern era. The development of technology and shifts in societal lifestyles have led to a decline in interest in folktales. According to Bascom (1965), folktales serve functions as instruments of education, entertainment, and validation of social norms within communities. Meanwhile, Danandjaja (1984) explains that folktales are anonymous narratives that develop traditionally and are transmitted orally from generation to generation.

Beyond serving as cultural heritage, folktales also function as a medium for character education because they contain various moral values conveyed through characters, plot, and narrative conflict. Values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and social awareness are frequently reflected in the behavior of characters, making them a source of learning for society and the younger generation alike. Through the events and conflict resolution within the narratives, readers can understand the consequences of both virtuous and reprehensible behavior in social life. Therefore, folktales serve not only as entertainment but also as a means of cultivating attitudes and character aligned with the moral values of the community.

Recent studies highlight that folktales remain highly relevant in contemporary education because they function as narrative-based learning media that strengthen character formation and cultural awareness among students (Setiaji et al., 2026). Furthermore, folktales have been

effectively integrated into Indonesian language learning to improve students' understanding of moral values and local wisdom in classroom contexts (Simbolon & Mandalahi, 2025). In addition, the development of folklore-based teaching materials using digital media shows that folktales can adapt to technological transformation while maintaining their educational and cultural functions (Hasibuan et al., 2024). Broader studies also confirm that Indonesian folktales consistently contain strong character education values and are increasingly discussed within the context of cyber literature and modern educational discourse (Santosa et al., 2022).

One of the folktales that has developed in Berau Regency is the Batu Bual folktale. This story not only portrays the local culture of the Berau community but also contains various character values relevant to social life. These values are evident through the characters' actions in confronting conflicts and events within the story. Consequently, the Batu Bual folktale can be utilized as a medium for character education based on local wisdom.

The use of folktales as a medium for character education is also supported by various previous studies. Sibarani (2015) asserts that oral traditions contain moral values that can be used as sources of character education. Research by Nugroho (2023) also demonstrates that folktales are capable of instilling values such as a spirit of sacrifice, responsibility, love for one's homeland, and social solidarity through the behavior of characters in the stories. Thus, folktales possess significant potential as a medium for character education because they contain moral values transmitted across generations. In the context of this research, the Batu Bual folktale serves not only as a cultural heritage of the Berau community but also as a source of character education for the younger generation.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that folktales have significant potential as a medium for character education because they contain various moral values passed down through generations. In the context of this study, the Batu Bual folktale from Berau Regency functions not merely as a traditional story depicting the local culture of the Berau community but also contains character values that can serve as a source of moral education for younger generations.

Character Education Theory

Character education is a conscious and deliberate effort to help individuals understand, feel, and apply various moral values in every aspect of their lives (Lickona, 1992). In his book *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*, Thomas Lickona explains that character education aims to develop moral individuals through the cultivation of core values such as justice, compassion, respect, responsibility, and honesty.

According to Lickona (1992), good character comprises three main components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Moral knowing pertains to an individual's knowledge of moral values, including moral awareness, value comprehension, and the ability to make sound decisions. Moral feeling encompasses the emotional dimension, including conscience, empathy, and concern for others. Meanwhile, moral action represents the concrete implementation of moral knowledge and feelings in behavior that aligns with one's professed values. Furthermore, Lickona (1992) emphasizes that character education should not only develop an understanding of right and wrong but also cultivate the habit of acting morally. Values such as honesty and responsibility must be practiced consistently to become integral parts of an individual's personality. In this context, folktales can serve as a medium for character education because they provide concrete examples of moral behavior through the characters and events in the story.

In line with this perspective, character education is also understood as a process of value internalization aimed at forming a well-rounded personality, encompassing psychomotor, affective, and cognitive dimensions (Samani, 2012). Culturally-based character education

emphasizes the importance of local wisdom as a source of moral values relevant to community life (Sibarani, 2015). Thus, the integration of folktales into character education constitutes a form of value strengthening grounded in culture.

In this study, Thomas Lickona's character education theory is employed as the primary framework for analyzing the values within the Batu Bual folktale. Values such as honesty, responsibility, patriotism, healthy competition, harmony, and cooperation are analyzed through the stages of character development: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. This theoretical framework enables a systematic analysis of how these values are understood, felt, and manifested in the actions of the story's characters.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method and content analysis technique. The qualitative approach was selected because this research aims to understand and interpret the character education values contained in the Batu Bual folktale in a deep and contextual manner (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The descriptive method was chosen because the study focuses on presenting and describing data in the form of character values found in the folktale text without manipulating the research data (Sugiyono, 2021). Meanwhile, content analysis was used to identify, classify, and interpret the meanings of character education values embedded in the folktale.

The primary data source analyzed was the book *Cerita Rakyat Paser dan Berau* (Folktales of Paser and Berau), published in 2013, which contains the Batu Bual folktale text. This book was selected because it represents the official written documentation of folktales that have developed within the Berau Regency community. In addition to the primary data source, this study also utilized secondary data sources, including books and academic journals related to folklore theory and character education, particularly Thomas Lickona's theory (Lickona, 1992).

The research data consists of textual excerpts from the Batu Bual folktale that contain character education values, such as honesty, responsibility, patriotism, healthy competition, harmony, and cooperation. Data were obtained through a library research technique involving comprehensive reading and examination of the folktale text (Zed, 2014). The data collection process proceeded through several stages: repeatedly reading the text to understand the story's content, identifying excerpts containing character education values, coding the relevant data, and grouping the data by character value categories in accordance with the concepts of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action.

Data analysis followed Miles & Huberman (1994) interactive model, which comprises data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with verification. During the data reduction stage, relevant excerpts containing character education values were selected and classified according to the indicators of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The data were then presented descriptively in narrative form to reveal patterns of character values in the Batu Bual folktale. Subsequently, the research conclusions were verified through persistent observation by repeatedly reading the text and through theoretical triangulation by comparing the analytical results with folklore theory and Thomas Lickona's character education theory to ensure the validity and consistency of the data obtained.

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the Batu Bual folktale, several character education values were identified that align with Thomas Lickona's theory (1992): honesty, responsibility, patriotism, healthy competition, harmony, and cooperation. These values are analyzed through three-character components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action.

The Values of Honesty and Responsibility

The word "honest" derives from the Arabic *shidq*, meaning truthful and trustworthy. Thus, honesty refers to words or actions that are consistent with the truth. Additionally, honesty is defined as a candid and forthright expression (Husaini, 2021). Furthermore, honesty is a positive virtue that is universally accepted by all people, regardless of place or time (Irwani, 2018). The value of honesty in the Batu Bual folktale is evident in the following excerpts:

Data 1

"After paddling for nearly the entire night, upon arriving at Binungan Village, he was startled because the sun had already begun to rise, marked by the sound of roosters crowing. Meanwhile, he had not yet reached the princess's village on the Kelay River. This reality confounded the prince. This event could have occurred either because of the princess's supernatural powers or simply because dawn had indeed arrived, and the sun had risen. The prince was deeply shocked and saddened because he could not fulfill the conditions and keep his promise to the princess." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 5, page 399)

Data 2

"The prince realized that his arrogance, supernatural powers, and all the advantages he possessed amounted to nothing. His strength and authority were insignificant compared to the strength and authority of God the Creator, the Almighty. Ultimately, the prince from the Segah River cursed himself and turned to stone." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 5, page 399)

Based on excerpts (1) and (2) above, the values of honesty and responsibility are reflected in the prince's attitude of acknowledging his failure without seeking compensation or blaming others. The character's awareness demonstrates an inability to uphold the moral standards that had been established. This aligns with Koentjaraningrat's view (cited in Sumarto, 2019) that cultural values are concepts that permeate society and serve as guidelines for action. In this context, honesty and responsibility are highly valued components of the value system because they promote social harmony and individual well-being.

This is consistent with Kluckhohn's perspective (2020): the prince's acknowledgment of his limitations also reflects moral awareness, which, according to Kluckhohn, is rooted in every culture's value orientations that govern the relationships between humans and themselves, other individuals, and greater forces (Yusliyanto, 2019). The failure in the Batu Bual story is not presented as a disgrace to be concealed, but rather as a reflection of human limitations. According to this value, integrity is more important than victory or success in the worldview of the community that produced this story.

Beyond the aspect of moral knowing, the excerpts also demonstrate the aspect of moral feeling, namely the emergence of sadness, disappointment, and regret at being unable to fulfill a promise. These emotions show that the character possesses a conscience and moral awareness regarding his actions. The prince's sorrow serves as an indication that the character understands the importance of honoring commitments and keeping promises. This demonstrates that moral values are not only understood cognitively but are also experienced emotionally by the characters in the story.

The values of honesty and responsibility are manifested through the action of accepting the consequences of one's deeds, representing the stage of moral action. This action demonstrates that moral values can not only be felt and understood but also enacted concretely. This aligns with Lickona's (1992) view that good character is reflected in the consistency among moral knowledge, feelings, and actions.

The Value of Patriotism

The term "patriotism" refers to a strong sense of loyalty toward one's country, cultivated through dedication, faithfulness, and efforts to uphold moral principles and support the local community or society (Listiyowardani & Putri, 2025). In a religious context, patriotism is associated with loyalty to collective identity and a strong sense of belonging.

Data 3

"The prince set out from the Segah River toward the Kelay River using only a rowing boat. He undertook a long journey navigating the swift river currents, overcoming natural obstacles and considerable distances, to prove the sincerity of his heart and his determination to fulfill the conditions that had been set." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 4, page 399)

Data 4

"The agreement constituted the conditions of the prince's marriage proposal to the princess, which had to be fulfilled without exception. He was required to arrive before sunrise as proof of his steadfastness of promise and sincerity of intention, so that his success in meeting this condition would determine whether or not his proposal was accepted." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 4, page 399)

Based on excerpts (3) and (4) above, the prince's departure was not merely a personal journey but rather demonstrates a strong commitment to the Segah River as a territory. This decision reflects a sense of responsibility and loyalty toward his homeland and the royal identity he represents. The prince's determination to fulfill the conditions of the proposal illustrates an effort to preserve the honor of his kingdom while safeguarding the dignity of his community. In this context, the character's actions can be understood as a manifestation of patriotism — a love for and loyalty to one's region or group of origin, realized through concrete actions to uphold the reputation and continuity of a shared identity.

Beyond demonstrating loyalty to one's homeland, the value of patriotism in the Batu Bual story is also evident through the character's courage in facing various obstacles to preserve his dignity and honor. The prince's long journey symbolizes sacrifice and results in carrying out the responsibilities he had accepted. This attitude shows that patriotism is not only understood as love for one's region of origin, but also as a willingness to struggle and sacrifice to maintain the dignity of oneself and the community one represents. This value demonstrates that individuals have a moral bond with their social group and the cultural identity from which they originate.

The character's patriotic attitude, from the perspective of character education, also reveals the aspect of moral knowing — the understanding of the importance of preserving honor and keeping promises. The aspect of moral feeling is evident through the character's sincerity and earnestness in undertaking the given challenge, while moral action is realized through the concrete act of undertaking a long journey to fulfill the established conditions. These three aspects indicate that patriotism in the folktale is not merely an idea or feeling but is also manifested in actions that reflect moral responsibility.

The value of patriotism in the Batu Bual story is also relevant to contemporary society, particularly in fostering a sense of love for regional culture and identity. Folktales can serve as a means of instilling awareness among younger generations about the importance of preserving local cultural values and respecting the origins of their communities. Thus, folklore serves not only as cultural heritage but also as a medium for moral education and social character formation that can strengthen a sense of togetherness, loyalty, and concern for the social and

cultural environment of one's region.

This aligns with Koentjaraningrat's (2018) assertion that the educational system within a community functions to shape and influence individual behavior in accordance with the values, norms, and needs of one's social group. Through folktales, these values are indirectly instilled in community members, particularly the younger generation, enabling them to emulate the attitudes of the characters in the stories. In this context, patriotism in the Batu Bual story is reflected through the character's efforts to preserve the honor of his origins and maintain the identity of the group he represents. The value of patriotism is also relevant to contemporary society, particularly in building a love for regional culture and identity. Folktales can serve as a means of instilling awareness among younger generations about the importance of preserving local cultural values and respecting the origins of their communities. Accordingly, folklore functions not only as cultural heritage but also as a medium for moral education and social character formation that can strengthen a sense of togetherness, loyalty, and concern for the social and cultural environment of one's region.

The Value of Competition

According to Lickona (1992), character education also instills values of fairness and integrity in facing challenges. Healthy competition is not intended to defeat others, but rather to test one's abilities fairly. In various folktales, trials or challenges serve as a means of expressing the values and capabilities of the characters. The value of competition in the Batu Bual story is evident in the following excerpts:

Data 5

"She wished to personally prove and test the prince's valor and supernatural prowess. Therefore, she did not immediately accept the proposal but instead established a condition that had to be fulfilled as tangible proof that the prince truly possessed courage, strength, and resolve." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 3, pages 398–399)

Data 6

"In short, the princess challenged the prince's prowess by tasking him to navigate the river swiftly. The challenge was not a mere ordinary race, but rather a grueling test that had to be completed within a limited timeframe, so that only a prince who was truly resilient and capable of keeping his promise could fulfill the requirements." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 4, page 399)

Based on excerpts (5) and (6), the challenge set by the princess for the prince represents a form of constructive competition that contains no element of hostility. The competition is used as a means of testing the prince's ability, courage, and sincerity before he is accepted as a partner. The challenge of navigating the river serves as a symbol of life's trials that must be overcome to prove one's qualities and commitment to the promises made. Thus, the competition in this story is not intended to harm another party, but rather as a way of assessing an individual's worthiness through effort and ability.

This value teaches that success is not achieved instantly but must be attained through genuine effort, perseverance, and courage in facing obstacles. Such an attitude demonstrates that the community views competition as part of the character formation process. Through healthy competition, individuals can learn about discipline, responsibility, and the importance of respecting both their own abilities and those of others. This value is also relevant to contemporary social life, particularly in education and community settings that require individuals to compete positively without harming others.

Theoretically, competition in folktales is often understood as a social mechanism that teaches moral values to the community. According to Bascom (1965), folklore functions as a means of education and social control that conveys behavioral norms to the community through stories. Through folktales, communities can understand which behaviors are considered virtuous or reprehensible based on the consequences experienced by the characters in the story. Therefore, challenges and competition in folktales serve not only as elements of entertainment but also as vehicles for conveying moral values.

Furthermore, Vladimir Propp (1968) explains that within the structure of folktales, protagonists generally must face a series of tests or tasks to prove their worthiness and courage. These tests constitute an important part of character development, as the characters learn to confront difficulties and prove their qualities through this process. In the Batu Bual story, the challenge posed by the princess serves as a test that determines whether the prince is truly worthy and capable of fulfilling the established conditions.

Meanwhile, Lickona (1992) asserts that the experience of facing challenges can shape an individual's character, particularly in cultivating attitudes of responsibility, courage, discipline, and perseverance. In the context of the Batu Bual story, the value of competition also reveals the aspect of moral knowing, namely the character's understanding of the importance of proving one's abilities honestly. Additionally, the aspect of moral action is present when the character strives to meet the challenge through concrete action and genuine effort.

Therefore, competition in the Batu Bual story serves not only as a plot-building element but also as a medium for character education that teaches the importance of effort, courage, and sportsmanship in achieving goals. This value demonstrates that folktales have an educative function relevant to community life and can serve as a means of moral education for younger generations. Through the challenges faced by the characters, readers can understand that success must be achieved through ability, hard work, and determination — not through means that harm others. Furthermore, the value of healthy competition in the story also teaches the importance of appreciating the process and upholding fairness in facing every competition in life.

The Value of Harmony

The value of harmony refers to the transcendental and interpersonal relationships between humans and nature. Harmony is a fundamental principle in the philosophy of life used to explain the laws of the universe and social life (Kluckhohn, 2020). Traditional communities often regard humans as part of a broader natural system. The value of harmony in the Batu Bual folktale is evident in the following excerpts:

Data 7

"The speed of the journey depended on the tidal currents. When the water was high and the current flowed swiftly, the boat could travel faster; however, when the tide receded and the current weakened, the journey became slow and filled with challenges that had to be met with patience and perseverance." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 1, page 398)

Data 8

"His strength and authority were insignificant compared to the strength and authority of God the Creator, the Almighty. This awareness made him understand that all human abilities have limits, and that ultimately, only the will of God determines the success or failure of every endeavor." (Batu Bual, Paragraph 6, page 399)

Based on excerpts (7) and (8) above, the value of harmony demonstrates that human success is closely intertwined with natural conditions and the will of God. Initially, the prince relied on his supernatural powers, but ultimately realized his limitations in the face of the forces of nature and the Creator. This aligns with Kluckhohn's (2020) assertion that every culture possesses orientations that emphasize the relationship between humans and the natural world and supernatural phenomena. Therefore, the value of harmony in this story highlights the importance of balance among humans, the environment, and the integrity of religious faith.

Regarding the aspect of moral feeling, an inner awareness and humility emerge upon recognizing one's limitations before God. These feelings reflect emotionally mature character development. As for moral action, harmony is realized through the acceptance of what has occurred without blaming circumstances. This attitude demonstrates the integration of religious values into concrete action.

Beyond the relationship between humans and God, the value of harmony in the Batu Bual story also reveals a close relationship between humans and nature as mutually influential entities. The prince's journey, which depends on the river's currents, demonstrates that humans cannot fully control nature but must be able to adapt to existing conditions. The river in the story functions not merely as a setting but also as a symbol of natural force that determines the success of the character's journey. This portrays the worldview of traditional communities, which regard nature as an essential part of human life that must be respected.

The value of harmony in this story also teaches humility and an awareness that humans have limitations in the face of greater forces. The prince's recognition of God's authority demonstrates a shift from excessive self-confidence toward an attitude of surrender and acceptance of what has transpired. This value shows that harmony is not only related to social relationships but also encompasses the balance of the human relationship with nature and spiritual beliefs. In community life, a harmonious attitude is important because it can create a balance among individual interests, the environment, and religious values.

The value of harmony, from the perspective of character education, also reveals the interconnectedness of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The character understands that humans have limitations before God and nature, representing moral knowing. This awareness then fosters a sense of humility and self-reflection as part of moral feeling. Subsequently, the value of harmony is realized through the attitude of accepting reality and not blaming circumstances, representing moral action. Thus, the Batu Bual story not only conveys moral messages about human relationships with one another but also instills the importance of maintaining a balanced relationship with nature and God in daily life.

Based on the analysis, the Batu Bual folktale contains various interrelated character education values that form a unified moral framework within community life. The values of honesty, responsibility, patriotism, healthy competition, and harmony are present not merely as narrative elements but also as vehicles for conveying the worldview of the Berau community. Through the characters' behavior, conflicts, and event resolutions within the story, the community indirectly instills moral values in subsequent generations. This demonstrates that folktales possess an educative function beyond entertainment and oral cultural heritage.

The character values in the Batu Bual story also reveal a close relationship among the individual, the community, nature, and spiritual beliefs. Characters in the story are expected not only to possess courage and ability but also to have moral awareness, social responsibility, and humility before God's authority. Thus, character education within folktales is oriented not solely toward interpersonal relationships but also encompasses the human relationship with the environment and the religious values that develop within the community.

Furthermore, the research findings demonstrate that Thomas Lickona's character education theory is relevant for analyzing moral values in folktales. The aspect of moral

knowing is evident through the characters' understanding of good and evil, moral feeling is apparent in the characters' emotional awareness and conscience, while moral action is realized through the concrete actions taken by the characters in confronting conflicts. These three components are interconnected and together shape the character holistically within the story.

The Batu Bual folktale also demonstrates that character values can be conveyed more contextually through local cultural narratives. Delivering values through stories makes moral messages easier to comprehend because they are linked to life experiences, conflicts, and events that are closely related to community life. Therefore, folktales possess significant potential to be utilized as a medium for character education based on local wisdom, particularly in efforts to instill moral values in younger generations.

Learning resources derived from folktales in the educational context serve not only to introduce regional culture but also to shape students' attitudes and behavior. Values such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, and social harmony remain highly relevant to the conditions of contemporary society. Accordingly, the preservation of the Batu Bual folktale is important not only as an effort to safeguard regional cultural heritage but also as a means of character education that can strengthen cultural identity and the moral values of the community.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the Batu Bual folktale contains various character education values reflected through the behavior, attitudes, and actions of the characters in the story. These values include honesty, responsibility, patriotism, healthy competition, harmony, and cooperation. All of these values can be analyzed through three components of character education: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The characters in the story not only understand moral values but also demonstrate inner awareness and the application of those values in concrete actions.

The research findings indicate that the Batu Bual folktale has a broader function than merely serving as entertainment or oral cultural heritage. This folktale can be utilized as a medium for character education based on local wisdom because it contains moral values relevant to community life and the character formation of younger generations. Furthermore, this research demonstrates that regional folklore possesses significant potential as a source of contextual learning that can be used to strengthen social, cultural, and moral values in daily life.

This study still has limitations, as it focuses on only one folktale from Berau Regency and employs a content analysis approach to written text. Therefore, future research is recommended to examine a greater number of folktales from various regions to obtain a broader comparison of character values. Additionally, subsequent research could extend the study through ethnographic approaches, reader-response theory, or the implementation of folktales in classroom instruction, so that the utilization of folklore as a medium for character education can be examined in a more in-depth and applied manner.

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