

THE VALUE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN MEKONGGA FOLKLORE IN KOLAKA, SOUTHEAST SULAWESI

NILAI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER DALAM CERITA RAKYAT MEKONGGA DI KABUPATEN KOLAKA PROVINSI SULAWESI TENGGAH

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ABSTRACT

The socio-cultural situation of the Mekongga people in Kolaka is known to have a lot of oral literature, one of them called folklore. The importance of strengthening character education in Mekongga community is carried out through the use of local folklore as a basis for inculcating moral values. Scientific studies on the phenomenon of moral values in folklore are still scarcely carried out, especially in Mekongga folklore. To that end, this study aims to analyze and describe the moral values of the Mekongga folklore in Kolaka Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach with the technique of determining the informant is a purposive sampling technique. Data collection methods in this study include the methods of observation, interviews, and documentation. Meanwhile, the data that has been collected is analyzed through qualitative descriptive techniques. The results of this study indicate that there are various forms of character education values contained in the mekongga folklore starting from the value of responsibility, trustworthiness, honesty, patience, love, courage, caring, humility, wisdom, courtesy, and trust. The values of character education are used in forming a wise and humane person, moreover, as an effort to realize harmonization, harmony, and unity in social life in Kolaka, Southeast Sulawesi which is multicultural.

Keywords: education values, character education, folklore, mekongga

ABSTRAK

Keadaan sosial budaya masyarakat Mekongga di Kabupaten Kolaka diketahui memiliki banyak sastra lisan salah satunya adalah cerita rakyat. Pentingnya penguatan pendidikan karakter dalam masyarakat Mekongga di Kabupaten Kolaka dilakukan melalui pemanfaatan cerita rakyat Mekongga sebagai basis penanaman nilai-nilai moral. Kajian ilmiah mengenai fenomena nilai moral dalam cerita rakyat masih jarang dilakukan khususnya dalam cerita rakyat Mekongga. Oleh karena itu, tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis dan mendeskripsikan nilai moral cerita rakyat Mekongga di Kabupaten Kolaka. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik penentuan informan adalah teknik *purposive sampling*. Metode pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan metode observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Sementara data yang telah dikumpulkan di analisis menggunakan teknik deskriptif kualitatif. Adapun hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat berbagai macam berbagai bentuk nilai pendidikan karakter yang terkandung dalam cerita rakyat Mekongga mulai dari nilai tanggung jawab, sikap amanah, kejujuran, kesabaran, cinta kasih, keberanian, kepedulian, sifat rendah hati, bijaksana, kesopanan, dan kepercayaan. Nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter tersebut dimanfaatkan dalam membentuk pribadi yang bijaksana dan manusiawi, selain itu juga untuk menciptakan harmonisasi, kerukunan, dan persatuan dalam kehidupan masyarakat di Kabupaten Kolaka Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara yang bersifat multikultural.

Kata kunci: nilai pendidikan, pendidikan karakter, cerita rakyat, Mekongga

INTRODUCTION

Humans are the most perfect creatures of God's creation compared to others. They have been endowed with various advantages and main abilities called reason and conscience. With those, humans can be able to develop properly to form an orderly social order. On the other hand, the reason is a great potential in humans which of course is not owned by other creatures. This reason encourages humans to think proportionally for the sake of their interests and survival. The reason provides knowledge to humans to be able to distinguish between right and wrong and to convey messages and information properly and systematically. The reason indirectly shapes language skills in humans so that all hopes, aspirations, willingness, and desires can be actualized according to their place. (Fakhrudin, 2012) emphasizes that in principle, everyone has different potentials from one another. Each has its own unique and extraordinary talents and potential.

Since the beginning, humans have used their reason and conscience as filter

media in communicating. The realms of social activities in their environment require a moral order to interact properly and meaningfully. In completing the affairs of meeting the necessities of life, moral values are the main means to solve existing problems. The complexity of the pattern of the human mind is answered by the existence of a moral nature that not only acts as a means of verbal communication but also as a means of expression of the soul. It is undeniable that every level and field of life always comes with its repertoire so it requires an instinctive approach as a form of adaptation and meaning to the actual situation. In this context, moral values become a natural human method to develop and survive in every condition that arises in society. The existence of human character development is an expression of the language of the human soul for their environmental conditions.

(Hidayat, 2014) stated that language is something essential in human life. Every human being always uses language to solve all their interests, including the inheritance

of virtue values as a character so that it can run well. From ancient times until today, language has played a vital role in human life. (O Kotasoff, 1992) states that humans always try to express their thoughts and everything related to the results of the reflection cannot be done without the help of language. Moral language becomes a symbol system and an effective communication tool in society. Eco (in Faruk, 2003) states that a sign is a social convention that always represents something. Character development can be done through the delivery of good language, folklore in oral culture always uses the local language. It occupies an important position and has even become the identity of community groups which is implemented through a variety of regional oral literature such as folklore. (Amir, 2013) states that oral literature serves to build and bind a sense of group unity, where oral literature becomes the identity of the group. In various daily activities, folklore in society is something fundamental to convey some norms and moral messages. (Soekanto, 2002) asserted that the norms contained in society regulate the relationship between human beings. Therefore, the position of folklore as a medium of local communication is useful for creating a life characterized by virtue, peace, and harmony in a society that emphasizes the principles of morality.

The problem of morality has become a social phenomenon that continuously gets serious attention from various parties. The existence of regional culture as the main pillar in society has recently been placed in a dilemmatic position along with the development of modernization and globalization of technology, thought, and ideology. People's thoughts gradually began to be influenced by foreign cultures that systematically entered the social environment. A new paradigm emerges in society that using local culture is something ancient and outdated

and even seems primitive. This paradigm grows in the minds of young people as the nation's millennial generation who are required to be able to master the progress of the times. This phenomenon is also felt by the Mekongga people in Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. Children are faced with a situation and reality for which they are required to be able to adapt to foreign cultures. On the other hand, they must also be able to preserve the local culture. In dealing with these conditions, the community needs a media instrument so that they can continue to maintain and preserve their regional culture. One of the media used by the Mekongga community is using a folklore-based cultural approach.

Various regions in the Nusantara each have folklore to show their characteristics with other regions. In everyday interactions in society, it provides an opportunity to be able to convey messages or advice in a friendly and polite manner. Folklore has the power to awaken a sense of brotherhood between one another. In this case, it is a hope for society to survive and thrive amid increasingly modern technological developments. In addition, folklore that has lasted for a long time in society can also maintain the cultural identity of the community. It is a space that can be used as a means of communicating in every environment and situation from time to time. In this context, folklore has a place in society as a space for moral values to be conveyed. Folklore provides an opportunity for regional cultural ideologies to re-enter the community paradigm with a new model as a local ideology in a contemporary perspective.

Modernization and globalization that have been included in every sector of community social activities have influenced the sustainability of folklore, especially in the Mekongga peninsula. (La Ode Taalami, 2010) states that the development of globalization with all its universals must greatly affect efforts to instill local cultural

values as a form of national identity. The acceleration of the exchange of information and technology has gradually and unwittingly raised concerns for the sustainability of regional culture. The emergence of foreign cultures amid during in society makes the need for foreign cultures to thrive in the association. In various social fields, people no longer only interact with their fellow groups but have lived mingling with outsiders who have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Open access to the social system makes it easier for everyone to determine and find colleagues or life partners. The regional culture which was originally one of the language systems used in an association is now no longer the main culture because it has entered a foreign culture. Folklore as a regional culture also contributes to maintaining local culture. The process of using foreign cultures gradually makes the meaning of regional culture tend to decrease in intensity, especially in government agencies which are mostly filled by people with different cultural backgrounds from the local population. Moreover, in the educational environment, the majority of children at school easily recognize the richness of foreign culture which is then carried over to the social environment, both at the family level and at the community level. This phenomenon makes the position of a local culture increasingly threatened. This threat leads to the extinction of folklore in which contains many values of life and moral values and is useful in the education of human character.

(Al-Pansori, 2014) in his study of the values of character education in Sasak folklore (pragmatic approach) concluded that character education is something that every child must-have. The values of character education can shape attitudes and morals to become human beings. In addition, with the existence of character education, it will indirectly form positive

attitudes and behaviors so it is very important to be taught to children. In another study conducted by (Rahayu, 2018) in his journal entitled Analysis of Moral Messages in Kluet Folklore in South Aceh Regency, he concluded that folklore contains a lot of moral messages. These moral messages include those related to oneself, moral messages in relation with human life, and the social environment in the context of humans as social beings. The last is the moral message in the context of the human relationship with God. (Asmawati, 2019) in her journal about the value of character education in the folklore of Wa Ode Tonde-tonde Bulawa as an alternative teaching material concluded that the folklore in the Muna community has various character education values. The values found in the folklore are religious character, friendly and communicative, courage, curiosity, honesty, responsibility, and intelligence. Based on the results of these relevant studies, it can be stated that in principle, folklore actually contains virtue in character education efforts in society.

In society, the phenomenon of language extinction is also faced, so it needs serious attention from various parties who must be taken seriously and wisely. As an expression that states that language shows the character of the nation, it can lead to life remaining in the order of norms and customs. (Tondo, 2011) concludes that the extinction of local languages is leading to something real in people's lives. Fundamentally, in fact, the extinction is something that can happen to any local language, including the Mekongga local language. Therefore, the people adopt folklore as the basis for maintaining regional languages. It is also used as an instrument in maintaining the local language as well as a medium for character education.

The continued rooting of foreign ideologies in the social life of the people in Kolaka needs attention. The importance of maintaining the sustainability of regional

culture is an absolute thing to do. The contribution of regional culture in regional development based on character values plays an important role not only as an identity but also as a means of self-actualization in community activities. Efforts to support the preservation of regional culture in the Kolaka community then utilize Mekongga folklore as a medium for maintaining a regional culture that is seen as having many life values. In other words, folklore as a cultural product can be able to direct a more rational and constructive paradigm.

Regarding the importance of character education in society and the family, (Wibowo, 2016) described that cultural intelligence is a series of knowledge and skills that are flexible in viewing and understanding culture. People learn more in patterns of interaction that are structured to become more open, have a sensitivity that directs behavior to be more polite, polite, and responsible when communicating or interacting with other people's cultures. The people of Mekongga, in particular, place oral literature in the form of Mekongga folklore as a medium for educating children. Mekongga folklore is told at every moment of togetherness in the family so it can be said that folklore is the initial stage for children to know their environment and even understand the history of their origin. From infancy to childhood, it is still often told and listened to by parents. The process of conveying also uses local languages as the main medium in storytelling. The impression obtained when using the local language is that the message and process of telling the story become more effective and easier for children to absorb. Therefore, the method of telling folklore is still done using local languages.

The tradition of folk tales in the Mekongga Kolaka community has actually been going on for a long time. Even in the past, folklore was a space in society to convey messages and information about

various events such as warnings, advice, protection, education to divinity. Folklore as a picture of past life is used as a means of control in behaving and acting in a social and social environment. The principles of humanity contained in folklore create a way of appreciating fellow creatures of God. The content is not only related to human relations but also to humans with the surrounding natural environment and humans with God. It is undeniable that the great potential of culture in shaping human behavior. Of course, acting is a natural will of man as God's creation, which results in humans always looking for backing of the mind to be able to express their ideas. In this case, folklore is a medium for human projection in politely conveying their ideas.

Mekongga folklore for children in Kolaka is always something interesting to listen to. A child listens to Mekongga folklore every time he goes to bed or when he is with his parents. The content or message contained in each folklore forms the knowledge of a child's local language. (Eagleton, 2007) states that literature is a work of high value and its meaning has existed eternally and absolutely. At present, the function of Mekongga folklore as a form of oral literature is no longer limited to conveying meaning but has developed into a means of maintaining local languages. Value is something real in human life. Affirmed by (Herimanto & Winarno, 2015) that value is something that is expected by a person or every community group. This value is something that is considered good and useful that humans aspire to. With this value, human actions in society encourage people to think according to the consequences of existing values. The existence of the Mekongga folklore from the beginning was believed by the Mekongga people because it contained values that were then used as guidelines in attitude and management of social life in their environment.

This study uses semiotic theory as the data analysis design. (Hoed, 2014)

mentions that a semiotic figure named Charles Sanders Pierce (a pioneer of pragmatic semiotics) suggests that signs and interpretation are a cognitive process which he later referred to as semiosis. The semiosis process is carried out in three stages: the process of absorbing the sign representament aspect through the five senses; the process of relating the representament to experience in human cognition who uses the representament (object); The last stage is called interpretant. Thus, the semiosis is a process of sign formation that starts from a representation that is spontaneously related to objects in human cognition and is then given a certain interpretation by the human concerned as an interpretant. Therefore, the object of the research is interpreted based on the views of the informants regarding the signs related to the educational value of the character of the Mekongga folklore in Kolaka.

Through the Mekongga folklore, the people of Kolaka have the opportunity to acquire and maintain their local culture as a basis for character education in the community. Therefore, the application of character education values based on the Mekongga folklore needs to be encouraged seriously to encourage polite and good cultured behavior consistently in various fields of life and opportunities. Based on this, it is deemed necessary to conduct this study. The purpose of this study was to describe the character education values of the Mekongga folklore in Kolaka, Southeast Sulawesi Province.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses an ethnographic method with a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono (2011), qualitative methods are needed to find data thoroughly and in-depth. Maleong (1989) States that qualitative research tries to focus on the accuracy and adequacy of the data. To facilitate the process of data collection and data sufficiency, the determination of

the informants is undergone by occupying the purposive sampling method. While the data collection techniques in this study used observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. (Maleong, 1989) describes that observations or reviews are made to be able to see the existence of a precise object truth. While the interview to be able to construct various kinds of events, feelings, motivations, and demands regarding the object and focus of study. The observation process was carried out to find the Mekongga folklore in Kolaka. The interview technique is a method used to explore the contents of each folklore from Mekongga. Documentation technique is done to document folklore that contains elements of character education. After collecting the necessary data, the next step is to conduct the analysis. The analytical technique used in this study is descriptive qualitative which consists of three stages; data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and verification of the conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Mekongga folklore has values that are beneficial to society, especially in reflecting character values. Concerning values in a folklore, (Bartens, 2005) stated that value is something that is interesting and sought after by someone because value is something that someone likes, interested in, and desires. In that section, the Mekongga folklore shows its role in growing the brotherly bonds and it also symbolizes the expression and social actualization of the community that possesses it. Mekongga folklore is also used by the community as a medium for character education for the community. In the custom of the Mekongga people in Kolaka, this folk tale is also used as a fairy tale that is told in their spare time or at bedtime. When family members are together, folklore is often performed as a means of bonding with one another. This study was actually carried out to explore various kinds of positive messages in the

Mekongga folklore. Character education is an accurate medium in shaping positive behavior and attitudes. Through the depiction of characters, events, words, and attitudes reflected in the Mekongga folklore, the implementation of character education can be demonstrated and marked on people's daily basis. Those values include trust, respect, responsibility, courage, caring, politeness, trustworthiness, patience, humility, wisdom, and honesty.

On various occasions, parents in the Mekongga community always tell various kinds of Mekongga folk tales such as *Konggaaha*, *Sanggoleo Mbae*, *Koloimba*, and *La Pau* to their children. For the people in Kolaka, Mekongga community in particular, telling their folk stories is a necessity that must be given to children. This effort is a step taken by the community in order to maintain the existence of regional culture because in this folklore lies the richness of regional culture which is rich in value and meaning. Studying the purity of folklore is the same as studying cultural customs and the positive attitude shown by the characters in folklore. This is as stated by the informant R.

“...In *Konggaaha* (a folklore) which is passed down from generation to generation. The plot of the story reflects *Larumbalangi*'s courage and concern in helping *Unenapo* residents who are suffering from being attacked by a giant eagle (*Kongga*). The plot of *Konggaaha* also shows the humility of the character (*Larumbalangi*) who can unite the *Toono Motuo* (regional leaders). By reflecting the attitude of mutual cooperation, unity is created between them which in the end, from the bond of unity, the community in the plot can defeat the eagle of taste that disturbs their territory.” (Interview on November 2, 2020).

The interview excerpt above shows that the Mekongga folklore includes the values of character education. This can be seen in the character of *Larumbalangi* in the Mekongga folklore entitled *Konggaaha*.

Larumbalangi is narrated as a man who came down from the sky and possessed supernatural powers and nobility. He was a brave man and has a humble attitude so that he could be accepted and trusted by the people of *Unenapo* to guide and help them defeat the giant eagle that often disturbed the peace of the *Unenapo* residents. His concern regarding the problems experienced by residents encouraged him to provide assistance by inviting the community to work together until finally they were able to defeat and conquer the giant eagle. Such values should be instilled in every family and community so that a bond of brotherhood and unity is formed between one another. Those values can be used as a means of social control in people's lives in order to create a harmonious and meaningful life.

Family is the beginning of someone doing the learning process. A person gets his first lesson about various things ranging from simple to complex things from the family. As the basic social sphere, family is the foundation of knowledge for a child. The inculcation of character education values such as the importance of having a brave and wise attitude in making decisions, the importance of caring for others, and humility is a spiritual need of children that must be given. (Johnson, 1992) stated that local knowledge is a series of knowledge created by people over a long period of time from generation to generation who live together with nature. The values of character education are also depicted in the folklore of *Sanggoleo Mbae* as stated by Informant M.

“...The Mekongga folk tale entitled *Sanggoleo Mbae* that we often tell our children actually reflects humility and not boasting, concern for fellow family members, and the importance of having patience. (Interview November 6, 2020).

The interview excerpt above shows that the Mekongga folklore actually has a wealth of character education values. In *Sanggoleo Mbae*, which is often told in the

family community, in principle, it has the value of character education in the form of the importance of having humility and not being arrogant, also in the story it is shown to have care and patience in dealing with life's problems. In the plot, it is described that the *Sanggoleo*'s brothers are arrogant, miserly, and did not want to help others. They finally got the curse and died. In contrast, *Sanggoleo Mbae* who was patient and humble until the end of his life, his body turned into food crops such as bananas, coconuts, durians and even his spirit turned into rice. The story of *Sanggoleo Mbae*'s presence is a warning to humans that pride and miserliness will eventually destroy and have bad consequences in life. Although humility and patience will bring goodness and benefits to others, it is important to understand that in this life, humans are always met with trials and obstacles so that it takes mental, spiritual and physical strength to deal with them. Humans are met with luxury then must be accompanied by generosity and humility, also when faced with human suffering must go through it with faith and patience.

The people of Kolaka realize that the local Mekongga folklore is a valuable thing that should be preserved. In this conservation effort, parents use folklore as cultural knowledge about Mekongga to their children. In their understanding, they consider these children who will inherit and pass on the values of noble character education from their region and be passed on to the next generation. If the children lose their knowledge of their local culture, they will lose their future Mekongga cultural practitioners who are full of value and meaning.

Psychological development and cultural knowledge of children can be developed through folklore-based storytelling methods. In principle, folklore is a fun and effective medium to be conveyed to a child, moreover that the content of the story contains many values and positive

sides that are able to support the growth of children's cognitive, affective and motoric development. A child who is still in the growing age has a development in the way of thinking and a fairly large curiosity about his surroundings. Therefore, in optimizing this, folklore plays a role in filling the void of a child's curiosity. Children can learn about various kinds of things, especially those related to the state of the natural environment and social situations in society. The family as the smallest sphere in society is a place for children to first learn about how to adapt, how to speak, how to deal with problems to how to solve a problem. For the Mekongga community in Kolaka, providing education to children through a cultural approach, especially in folklore, is an effective way for their children to optimize the learning and socializing process. In a literal sense, there is an understanding that situations, thoughts, circumstances, and even conflicts that exist in folklore are a picture of reality in society. Hence, from an early age these children have been provided with character education as a basis for attitudes when mingling with the wider community, as stated by informant M.

"*Sanggoleo Mbae* is a patient and loving character. He always faced the treatment of his brother who always looked down on him. With great patience, even when he was insulted, he remained patient in dealing with it until the end of his life. When he left the world, he grew into a plant that people used for living. (Interview 2 November, 2020)."

The quote above gives a hint that patience is an important thing for everyone to have. With patience, goodwill comes. In applying this, parents must have an effective and fun method to teach patient behavior so that folklore becomes the main choice because it is more integrated with the psychology of children and also contains character values. Ranjabar (2008:103) describes that in essence education is a

learning medium that can shape the ability to think and act, provide values that are useful for human life, especially in the face of the entry of various new understandings and ideologies. Therefore, it can no longer be denied that it is important to teach children about values and character. Likewise, society, in general, is emphasized to have good knowledge and character. This effort, in the custom of the Mekongga people, is carried out by always reviving cultural values as local wisdom, especially in folklore as a projection of the values of life in the past.

In their custom, they often tell folk tales before their children go to sleep. Parents began to tell stories in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere using the local language. In that situation, when a father or mother was telling a story, the child harmoniously and happily followed the storyline that being presented. At that time, the process of instilling the values of character education in children was taught and implemented. This is experienced because at an early age which is the best time to give life values in the minds and minds of children as an ideology of human character. The use of Mekongga folklore to maintain the value of cultural traditions remains sustainable (as well as a medium in character education) is the responsibility of every family in Kolaka. The existence of folklore makes them more aware of the historical relationship that has been built between one another. In fact, efforts to inculcate character education values through local culture always face challenges and obstacles. However, the spirit of love for regional culture, especially folklore, is becoming more and more energetic to always ground character education as its identity. The role of Mekongga folklore in maintaining the existence of local languages in the family environment is quite positive for the development of children's character. Informant S confirmed that:

“...The Mekongga folk tale entitled *La Pau* contains the value of character education which is very useful for us in Mekongga. In the folklore *La Pau* reflected the attitude of responsibility, trust, trustworthy, care, love, and patience (interview 10 November, 2020).

The interview excerpt above further confirms that Mekongga folklore has a priority in character education. The values of character education in folklore are then found again in the folklore entitled *La Pau* which emphasizes responsibility, trust, love, and patience. The story contains values that can support the development of one's character to become a better human being. The Mekongga people believe that folklore that grows and develops in their social system is a reality in the past. Every folklore was born represents an event which the local community then perpetuates in an oral story from time to time and from generation to generation to the present day. Not only integrity of the inherited events, but there is also the purity of values as a cultural ideology. As stated by (Ranjabar, 2008), ideology is a value hierarchy that grows in society over a long period of time until they live together side by side. It functions in regulating the behavior of members of the community that owns it. The value system is an important part of survival because it contains instructions and guidance. Therefore, the trust given by the Mekongga people to the cultural works of folklore is placed in a special position of value and meaning.

Children are the main pillar in continuing the legacy of their family and society. A child is embedded with a big responsibility that must be passed on to the next generation in the future. One of the valuable and valuable assets in social life in society is local culture. A child becomes a part that cannot be underestimated in the development of regional culture that has high values and meanings such as the value of character education in it. As stated by

informant M.

“...The values of character education inherent in every Mekongga’s folklore are always heard and taught to children every time they are told, with the aim that values can be attached and grow in themselves and their minds. At the play time, not infrequently when they make mistakes, we always hear that they will be described as in folklore characters. For example, when some of them forget their promise, they will be likened to the character of *La Pau* who forgot his promise to his wife *Anawaingguluri*. Likewise, when they take courageous actions in helping others, their friends will be likened to the courage of *Larumabalangi* or *Tasahae* in the Konggaaha folklore. (Interview: November 6, 2020).

The quote above illustrates that the values of character education in the family environment are a priority. At all times, children are always reminded to always do good and benevolence to each person and the environment. Based on the interview quote above, the values of character education have been implemented in the child's social environment. As in playtime, they immediately label the characters in the Mekongga folklore on the actions they take. This needs to be cultivated in every community environment, not only in children but also in every community group which results in the formation of a social order that is humanist and has character. As a generation of civilization, children need to interact with each other in a good, polite, courteous manner, while at the same time inserting the value of mutual understanding and respect. The interaction created between them can be used to deepen their love for their local culture. In everyday life, habits that occur in the social environment of children in Kolaka are still under the supervision of parents. The emphasis is that children can communicate with each other by using etiquette and customary norms. Folklore can be used to actualize the values of character education so that the

atmosphere becomes more lively and meaningful. The values contained in the Mekongga folklore are used as a means of controlling actions in the community. This is as stated by informant S.

“...This Mekongga folk tale is like a house in which it contains various values of life, especially in teaching the values of goodness. The Mekongga folk tale entitled *La Pau* teaches us to always keep our promises, be responsible and be honest. The character of *La Pau* is characterised as a patient and responsible individual.” (Interview 12 November, 2020).

Based on the informant's statement above, it shows that the *La Pau* folklore provides a lesson about the importance of having principles to keep promises and have an attitude of responsibility. At one point, *La Pau* who was cleaning the garden forgot and did not keep his promise to his wife to always take care of and clean up his child, due to negligence, he was then abandoned by his wife. Hereafter, another plot shows the bad consequences of a dishonest attitude that ends in sadness afflicting *La Pau*. It was narrated that his wife (*Anawaingguluri*) was mad at him, because he hid his wife's scarf. *Anawaingguluri* was originally an angel that lost her scarf. Since then, she could not get back to the heaven. The scarf apparently was hit by her husband she then had no option but married to him. Feeling cheated on and lied to, *Anawaingguluri* was angry and chose to leave *La Pau*. However, from *La Pau*'s many mistakes, he redeemed himself with a full sense of responsibility and was responsible for all his actions.

The Mekongga folklore owned by the Kolaka community provides access for everyone to be able to get to know more about the values of character education contained in each of their folk stories. This shows the importance of folklore as one of the cultural expressions of society so that people are able to live peacefully in a multicultural environment from time to time. As stated by (Sztompka, 2010) that basically, human history follows three

stages of development that have their own distinct characteristics, starting from the phase of savagery, barbarism, and the phase of civilization which is characterized by technological developments. More specifically, this phase of civilization was marked by the emergence of the invention of letters and the art of writing.

In the civilization process, in order to actualize the values of character education, the educational environment is an arena that greatly determines the sustainability of a culture to survive or become extinct. This is influenced by the educational environment that allows all cultural access to be open from local culture to foreign culture. In this section, specifically, local culture becomes a dilemma for its survival. These challenges then make the position of regional culture that is rich in value and meaning got threatened. In this situation, a good planning is needed so that the local culture does not lose its direction and continues to exist. Planning as described by (Siswanto, 2013) is a basic human activity in living life which contains considerations regarding the results of a business, before it is decided to choose from various alternatives. Therefore, the value of character education in folklore for the Mekongga community is included in learning materials as basic learning capital for students.

During the Local Lesson materials are taught in a learning environment, students are introduced to the Mekongga folklore as part of the children's character education process. This situation is supported by the opinion of William I. Gorden in (Dilla, 2007) states that the socio-cultural system actually influences and has a close relationship with every action and form of communication of members of the community. For this reason, the use of folklore as the cultural wisdom of the Mekongga people in maintaining and instilling the value of character education is harmonious and easy to accept.

In the world of education, in Kolaka,

Local Lesson education has been promoted in every school. The program is expected to absorb elements of local wisdom from the local community to be included in the learning section. On that occasion, oral literature in the form of Mekongga folklore had the opportunity to be taught to students as a forum for the value of character education. This will indirectly revive the existence of regional culture in the educational environment. Local Lesson subject has a wider reach because it can be taught to anyone in the learning environment. The presence of folklore in the formal education environment is a big leap in efforts to implement and instill character education values.

According to (Herimanto & Winarno, 2015), civilization does not only refer to human cultural works that are physical or can be seen and touched by the human senses such as goods, artifacts, and various forms of various buildings. In another perception, civilization is not only related to the forms of objects created by culture but also more than that. The form of civilization can also be seen in the form of ideas and human behavior. The essence of civilization is actually part of a culture that is meaningful, valuable, and beautiful, likewise the position of the Mekongga folklore which is the result of the creation and work of the community regarding its socio-cultural journey. It is seen as having meaning, value, and leading to civilized progress. Local languages are the basis for laying community civilization, so the Mekongga people in Kolaka, Southeast Sulawesi pay attention to the sustainability of this cultural wealth.

The potential for the preservation and maintenance of regional culture to stay alive gets a special spot in the educational environment. (Widianto, 2018) stated that local language learning activities in the school environment have a positive impact on preserving local languages. Children at school then get additional time to deepen

their mastery of the local language while in the language learning room. The wealth of Mekongga folklore can be used to attract children's interest in communicating using the local language. This can be realized by giving the task of telling stories about folklore either orally or in writing. Thus, Local Lesson learning in schools can spur children's regional cultural knowledge to grow better which leads to the implementation of character education values that can be done well too. As stated by informant M.

"...The value of character education in the Mekongga folklore is important for us to have and apply in everyday life. The educational values of responsibility, patience, trust, courage, and honesty must be possessed by everyone in order to form a good and wise personality. Additionally, in order to get any mandate can be run with full sincerity and full of goodness. (Interview 12 November, 2020).

The interview script placed the values of character education to be highly emphasized in social life. The application of character education values of honesty, responsibility, caring, humility is an important part of forming a harmonious socio-cultural order of society. The implementation of character education values in the midst of society is the basis and commitment in oneself to grow optimally in various conditions and circumstances. Regional culture developed through the Mekongga folklore becomes a model and introduction to knowledge for the community in realizing a sense of love for the environment. Those folklores have a philosophical meaning about politeness, obedience, solidarity and love for the homeland. The value of character education which becomes the identity is used as the ideological basis in social activities. The noble values of regional culture contained in folklore in Kolaka can be used as education in maintaining the unity and integrity of society, nation and state.

CONCLUSION

The existence of Mekongga folklore provides an opportunity for the millennial generation of the community to continue to know their regional culture. The value of character education stored in folklore is a cultural wealth of the community that forms personality and identity. It is undeniable that the power of culture is a universal thought and knowledge in a socio-cultural system. Accordingly, it is important to implement the principles of life, especially the value of character education as the root of national culture and as part of the mental revolution. Folklore that lives in the midst of the Mekongga people in Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province is a field of value and meaning. There are various forms of character education values contained in the Mekongga folklore ranging from the values of responsibility, trustworthiness, honesty, patience, love, courage, caring, humility, wisdom, courtesy, and trust. The values of character education are used in various aspects of people's lives to create an atmosphere of harmony, unity in social life in Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province which is multicultural.

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