



Cultural Values in NTT Alor Folklore

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Abstract: This study aims to identify and analyze the cultural values contained in folklore from Alor, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Folklore is one form of intangible cultural heritage that reflects the worldview, social norms, and value system of the local community. Through a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected from several Alor folktales traced through written documentation and interviews with traditional leaders and local communities. The results of the analysis show that Alor folktales contain various cultural values, such as the value of mutual cooperation, honesty, courage, adherence to customs, and respect for nature and ancestors. These values not only strengthen the cultural identity of the Alor community, but also serve as guidelines in their social life. The findings are expected to contribute to the preservation of local culture and become teaching materials in local wisdom-based character education.

Keywords: Folklore, Cultural Value, Alor, East Nusa Tenggara, Local Wisdom.

INTRODUCTION

Folklore is part of the cultural heritage that is passed down from one generation to the next (Nurgiyantoro 2005). As a form of cultural expression, folklore not only functions as entertainment, but also as a medium of education and conveying noble values in society (Anafiah 2015). In Alor Regency, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), folklore has an important role in shaping cultural identity and strengthening social ties among the community. The various stories developed in this area reflect local cultural values, such as togetherness, courage, wisdom, and harmonious relationships with nature. The diversity of cultures and traditions depicted in Alor folktales is evidence of the wealth of local wisdom that continues to be maintained and passed down from time to time. Through folklore, the people of Alor not only maintain ancestral values, but also introduce their culture to the younger generation so that it remains sustainable in the midst of modernization.

The purpose of writing this article is to explore and understand the cultural values contained in the folklore of Alor, East Nusa Tenggara. Folktales are not just entertainment, but also have deep meanings that reflect the norms, customs, and local wisdom of the community (Badrin 2003). Through this study, it is expected to identify various cultural values that are passed down from generation to generation, such as wisdom, courage, mutual cooperation, and human relations with nature. In addition, this article also aims to reveal how folklore plays a role in shaping the character and identity of the Alor community. As part of intangible cultural heritage, folklore has an educational function that can instill moral and social values to the younger generation, so that its sustainability is maintained in the midst of modernization (Sugiarti, 2023).

The scope of discussion in this article focuses on folklore that developed in the Alor community, East Nusa Tenggara, by highlighting elements of culture, customs, and social norms that have been passed down from generation to generation. Alor folklore not only functions as entertainment, but also as a medium of moral education that reflects the local wisdom of the community (Kembaren, 2022). In this study, various cultural values contained in the folktales will be analyzed, such as the value of mutual cooperation that emphasizes the importance of togetherness and cooperation in social life, the value of wisdom that teaches how to make fair and wise decisions, and the value of courage reflected in the story characters who face challenges with strong determination. In addition, the relationship between humans and nature is also an important aspect in Alor folklore, where the balance between humans and their environment is depicted as part of a harmonious life. Through this analysis, it is hoped that the cultural values in Alor folktales can be better understood and appreciated as a valuable heritage for future generations.

The study of cultural values in Alor folklore has an important role in preserving regional culture as part of the nation's identity. According to Aisy & Fauziyah, (2024) stated that folklore is not just a story that is passed down from generation to generation, but also contains noble values that reflect the life, customs, and social norms of the local community. By understanding and preserving folklore, the younger generation can better recognize their cultural identity and appreciate their ancestral heritage (Gusnetti et al 2025). In addition, according to Indarti (2017) folklore plays a role in character education, because it teaches values such as honesty, mutual cooperation, courage, and respect for others and nature. Therefore, increasing awareness of local cultural wealth is an important step in maintaining Indonesia's cultural diversity. By making culture a national asset, it is hoped that this traditional heritage will remain alive and relevant in modern life, while becoming part of national pride.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to analyze cultural values in folklore of Alor, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). According to Sugiyono (2018) this qualitative method with a descriptive approach uses secondary data, namely data sources that do not directly provide data to data collectors, for example through other people or through documents. Therefore, in this study, data was collected through literature studies by tracing various written sources, such as books, journals, and articles that discuss Alor folklore and the cultural values contained in it. In addition, this research also utilizes relevant historical documents and cultural archives as material for analysis. The data analysis technique was carried out by reading, identifying, and interpreting the cultural values contained in the folktales, then categorizing them based on main themes such as social values, morals, and local wisdom (Moleong, 2000). With this method, the research is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of folklore in shaping the cultural identity of the Alor community without having to conduct direct interviews with sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Cultural Values of the Lewalu and Fish Communities

From the analysis of the Lewalu and Fish Community Stories, the author can see what cultural values are contained in this story. Cultural values are concepts about something that exists in the minds of people who consider it valuable, valuable, and important in life so that it becomes a guide to their lives. In relation to cultural values, there are several cultural value systems that can be concluded that cultural values can be divided into five main pillars, namely: (1) the nature of human life (man's relationship with his creator); (2) the nature of man's relationship with his neighbor (man's relationship with his neighbor); (3) the nature of human work (man's relationship with his work); (4) the nature of man's relationship with nature (man's relationship with nature); and (5) the nature of man's position in time and space (man's relationship with time). Here are some of the cultural values contained in this story.

The Nature of Human Life (Human Relationship with its Creator)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
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1.	Harmony with Nature and Living Things	In this story, the Alukae believe that sea animals are part of the human family, reflecting the harmonious relationship between humans and their creator, nature. Rituals performed to help each other illustrate a mutual respect for the greater forces that govern nature and life.
2.	A Life Full of Spiritual Life	Ritual traditions involving celebrations with marine animals indicate the existence of a spiritual dimension in people's lives, where they believe that creation and natural relationships have deep religious or spiritual value.

The Nature of Human Relationship with Others (Human Relationship with Others)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Mutual Cooperation and Cooperation	The relationship between humans and sea animals in this story shows that cooperation and mutual aid are important in social life. Humans ask sea animals for help to celebrate a feast together, reflecting the importance of cooperation between people in society.
2.	Trust and Respect Between Individuals	Agreements made by humans and marine animals show mutual trust and respect between each other, both humans and other creatures. The Alukae community maintains good relations based on the trust built.

The Nature of Human Work (Man's Relationship with His Work)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Appreciation of Nature's Work	The story showcases how humans work together with nature to create a great feast, as well as co-create with the help of sea animals, reflecting the importance of appreciating nature's work and what can be achieved together.
2.	Human Powerlessness against Nature	When humans violate the agreement and break the harmony with nature (by burning the fish), it illustrates that although humans can collaborate with nature, humans also have limitations in dealing with natural forces and their consequences.

The Nature of Human Relationship with Nature (Human Relationship with Nature)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Harmony with Nature	This story illustrates the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Rituals involving marine animals and humans show that nature is seen as an entity that can be worked with.
2.	Offenses against Nature and Their Consequences	When humans break the rules, ignoring the message of the fish, it reflects the importance of maintaining a good relationship with nature and that violating nature will have serious consequences.

The Nature of Human Position in Space and Time (The Relationship Between Humans and Time)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Time as an Important Element of Ritual	In this story, time holds significant meaning, especially in the context of tradition and ritual. The celebration that lasts for several days teaches that time has value in maintaining a good relationship with nature and in carrying out respected traditions.
2.	Regret and Consequences of Lost Time	When humans violate the time agreed upon in a pact with sea creatures, it reflects that carelessness or disregard for time and rules can lead to irreversible damage, permanently altering the relationship between humans and other beings.

The Cultural Values of Mr. Tono and Rice

Based on the analysis of the story *Pak Tono and the Rice*, the author can identify the cultural values contained within the story. Cultural values refer to concepts held by a society that are considered meaningful, valuable, and important in life, thus serving as a guide in their way of living. In relation to cultural values, several systems of cultural values can be concluded, indicating that cultural values can be categorized into five main pillars: (1) the essence of human life (the relationship between humans and their Creator); (2) the essence of human relationships with others (interpersonal relationships); (3) the essence of human creativity (the relationship between humans and their works); (4) the essence of the relationship between humans and nature (interaction with the natural world); and (5) the essence of human existence in space and time (the relationship between humans and time). The following are some of the cultural values found in this story.

The Essence of Human Life (The Relationship Between Humans and Their Creator)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Faith in Divine Power	In this story, Mr. Tono prays to ask for guidance from God as a form of the relationship between humans and their Creator. Prayer is a way to seek direction in life.
2.	The Importance of Obedience to God's Instructions	Mr. Tono receives guidance from a dream, which he considers a communication from God, and strives to follow the given prohibitions, reflecting a high level of spiritual awareness.

The Essence of Human Relationships with One Another (Human Relationships with Others)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Cooperation and mutual assistance	When Mr. Tono felt tired due to the large harvest, he asked for help from the local community to harvest and burn the rice, reflecting the value of mutual cooperation within the community.
2.	Social responsibility	Although Mr. Tono violated the prohibitions given in his dream and asked for help from others to complete his work, the consequence was a shared loss.

The Essence of Human Work (The Relationship Between Humans and Their Creations)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Perseverance and effort in working	Mr. Tono demonstrates the values of hard work and perseverance in caring for his rice fields. He follows the given instructions and works diligently to achieve the desired results.
2.	Local wisdom in farming	In this story, farmers like Mr. Tono follow traditional principles in farming, such as planting rice in odd numbers and taking good care of it, reflecting the close relationship between humans and their work (agriculture).

The Nature of the Relationship Between Humans and Nature (The Relationship Between Humans and Nature)

No	Cultural Values	Description of Cultural Value
1.	Appreciating nature as the source of life.	Mr. Tono takes good care of the rice plants and follows guidelines on farming methods that are in harmony with nature. This demonstrates a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment.
2.	Prohibition against environmental damage	When Mr. Tono violated the taboo by burning the harvest, nature no longer provided abundant yields. This reflects that nature must be respected and preserved.

The Essence of Human Existence in Space and Time (The Relationship Between Humans and Time)

No	Cultural Values	Cultural Values
1.	Awareness of the life cycle	Mr. Tono takes good care of the rice plants and follows farming guidelines that are in harmony with nature. This demonstrates a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment.
2.	The Importance of Punctuality	Mr. Tono achieved a bountiful harvest because he followed the right timing to plant and care for the rice. However, breaking the taboo during the harvest season caused losses.

CONCLUSION

The folktales of Alor, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), contain various profound cultural values and reflect the local wisdom of the community. Values such as the relationship between humans and God, fellow humans, nature, and their creations are clearly evident in the actions and decisions taken by the characters. For example, there is an awareness of the importance of prayer and divine guidance, as well as respect for nature and traditions in farming. These stories not only serve as a medium to convey moral teachings but also function as cultural preservation that teaches how humans should live in harmony with nature and time.

Suggestions

For further research, it is recommended to conduct a more in-depth study of various other folktales from Alor and other regions in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) in order to explore broader cultural values. In addition, efforts should be made to preserve these stories, whether in written form or through other media, so that the younger generation can continue to understand and inherit this local wisdom. The use of folktales as a means of character education in schools is also highly encouraged, ensuring that these cultural values remain relevant and accepted by contemporary society.

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