

CHARACTER CONSTRUCTION BASED ON ORAL TRADITION IN COMMUNITY OF BALI

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ABSTRACT

Balinese society is an open society. The openness of Balinese society, on the one hand, has influenced the sociocultural dynamics of Balinese society, not only colouring its multiculturalism and the absorption of foreign cultures but on the other hand, it has also undeniably led to the erosion of the traditional culture of Balinese society. This can be seen from the erosion of the oral traditions of the Balinese people. It is not only a logical consequence of global openness and dynamics but also a result of development policies that do not favour oral traditions. This phenomenon causes cultural alienation and marginalization of oral traditions and can also destroy cultural values and people's identities. In connection with this, this study was carried out.

Another thing that inspired this study was the exclusion of oral traditions in elementary school learning. Apart from that, this study was also inspired by several studies related to oral traditions. The importance of this study is not only to develop the character of the younger generation but also to preserve oral traditions. This study uses a qualitative approach. Through this, it is revealed that oral traditions contain moral messages and values that have contributed to developing the character of the younger generation and strengthening the capital of the Balinese community.

KEYWORDS: Construction, Character, Oral Tradition, Bali

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of science and technology in the current era of open society cannot be avoided. This affects the sociocultural dynamics of a society, as does the Balinese society. The sociocultural dynamics of Balinese society not only colour the sociocultural and multicultural acceptance of Balinese society but have also led to the erosion of the traditional culture of Balinese society. This can be seen from the erosion of the oral traditions of the Balinese people. The erosion of the traditional culture of the Balinese people is also related to the development process with a modernist paradigm, which is less accommodating to traditional culture because traditional culture is considered to hinder the development process. For example, this can be seen from the views of early modernist figures who tended to position traditional culture as an obstacle to the development process. As expressed by one of the figures who designed the modernist paradigm, McClelland, in the theory of Achievement Motivation, traditional culture is stated to be pathetic (Suwarsono and Alvin Y. So, 1991: 27). Such a view will, of course, be able to influence development policies with a modernist paradigm in a society. Suspicion of such development policies is entirely justified, at least referring to the limited space for traditional cultural discourse, especially oral traditions in textbooks used by students at various levels of education. This can, for example, be seen from the limited space for

oral traditions in learning in Elementary school. Such things can result in the erosion of various traditional cultures, such as local wisdom, local languages, folklore and traditional games. This phenomenon not only causes the marginalization of oral traditions and cultural alienation but also destroys society's cultural values and personality.

This concern is getting stronger with the change in society's cultural orientation towards modern culture, which is full of various interests and ideologies. The development of this study was also inspired by studies related to oral traditions that had been carried out previously. The importance of the study of oral traditions was also recognized by the Director General of Indonesian Culture, who stated that oral traditions, as a treasure trove of cultural riches of high value, hold moral messages which need to be appreciated and placed as an ongoing study (2013). The Director of History and Cultural Values also conveyed a similar thing, stating that oral traditions have an essential function in human life, at least as a medium for constructing values or educational functions (2013). This view is in line with the results of studies of various oral traditions, which state that oral traditions can be used as a basis or medium for constructing values and developing students' character. Studies on oral traditions can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Oral Tradition Studies

No.	Researcher	Research Title	Research Result
1.	Nining Nur Alaini	Cepung Oral Tradition: Sasak Community Resistance Literature Against Balinese Power on the Island of Lombok (2015)	Cepung is a traditional performing art that grows in the Sasak community on Lombok Island. This performance was also accompanied by reading Lontar Monyeh, which revealed a form of resistance from the Sasak community against Karangasem's hegemony on the island of Lombok.
2.	Robert Sibarani	Anthropolinguistic Approaches to the Study of Oral Traditions (2015)	This study employed a qualitative approach. Anthropolinguistic emphasis is on exploring an oral tradition's meaning, function, values, norms, and local wisdom.
3.	Maria Matildis Banda	Capital Theory in the Inheritance of Oral Traditions (2016)	The study uses a qualitative approach. This reveals that the inheritance of oral traditions is related to the theory of capital, including cultural capital, social capital, economic capital, and symbolic capital, as proposed by Pierre Bourdieu.
4.	Aulia Kanzul Hidayah	The Value of Character Education in 27 Indonesian Folk Tales Collection Mb. Rahimsyah (2017)	This study used a descriptive qualitative method, revealing that folklore contains values that can support character development, such as religious values, honesty, hard

			work, friendship, deliberation, responsibility, and forgiveness.
5.	Sastri Sunarti	Ocean Cosmology in the Oral Traditions of the Mandar People in West Sulawesi (2017).	The research used a qualitative ethnographic approach. This study reveals that the marine cosmology of the Mandar people is fundamental in their fishing activities.
6.	Suci Ayu Latifah, Sutejo, dan Edy Suprayitno	The value of character education and educational messages in Indonesian fairy tales (2021).	This study used a qualitative descriptive approach and found that 15 out of 18 character education values were contained in children's fairy tales.
7.	Onok Pamungkas, Andyanto Yayang Aan	Mysticism of Oral Literature: Environmental Wisdom in the <i>Cepetan Alas</i> Tradition	This study used a qualitative approach. This study revealed that the <i>Cepetan Alas</i> tradition is a form of community culture still preserved today. This tradition contains the values of harmonization between humans, nature and God.
8.	Masyithah Maghfirah Rizam	Character Values from Children's Fairy Tales in Bobo Magazine and Their Implementation During the Covid-19 Pandemic (2021)	This research used a qualitative approach. The results reveal that the five main values of character education in the Bobo.Grid.Id children's fairy tale can be implemented in learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
9.	I Wayan Saklit, I Wayan Sukayasa , I Wayan Winaja	Character Education through <i>Materuna Nyoman</i> Ceremony in Tenganan Pegringsingan Village, Karangasem-Bali (2021)	This study used a qualitative approach. Its results revealed that the <i>Meteruna Nyoman</i> ritual contains values that can contribute to character development.
10.	Mochammad Nginwanun Likullil Mahamid	Islam, Kolonial Dan Tradisi Lisan: Tinjauan Kritis Terhadap Babad Tempurejo (2022).	This study used a qualitative descriptive approach. One of the findings was the preservation of local history through the use of oral tradition in writing the Babad Tempurejo.

These studies generally use a qualitative approach. This study reveals the importance of studying oral traditions. The study of oral traditions contains moral messages or values that can be used for character development, social literacy, ecological literacy, and even preserving local culture and history. So, it can be said that oral traditions have a function for the supporting community. This is in line with Bascom's view, as quoted by Enjat Djaenuderadjat who states that there are at least four functions of oral tradition, namely, projection, validation of institutions, education, social control (2013), or as stated by Dudes as quoted by Titus Pekei & Natalis Package stated that oral traditions have several functions, namely, education,

strengthening group feelings, social control, solace, and social criticism (2013). In order to reveal the various functions and significance of oral traditions for a society, it is necessary to make efforts to express the various discourses developed in oral traditions, and it is necessary to borrow ideas from figures in critical social theory. So that the meaning contained in the discourse described in the oral tradition can be revealed comprehensively, both the denotative meaning and the connotative meaning, the denotative and connotative meaning of the discourse contained in oral traditions will be able to clarify the significance of oral traditions as a medium for developing the character of the younger generation in strengthening the community capital of a society. In this regard, it is essential to carry out this study. The importance of this study is not only to develop the character of the younger generation but also to preserve oral traditions.

The development of the character of the younger generation is an ongoing project because the development of the character of the younger generation must continue to be pursued in facing various challenges in the sociocultural dynamics of society. Efforts to develop character education are increasingly important, especially when society is experiencing a decline in national character. Studies on character education have been carried out in various dimensions. This can be seen from the following studies: *Educating For Character* (Thomas Lickona, 1991) and *Character Building Forms Character* (Soemarno Soedarsono, 2002). *Character Building* (Barbara A. Lewis, 2004), *Character Education Building Eight Golden Characters Towards a Dignified Indonesia* (Mustakim, 2011), *Character Education in Schools* (National Identity Foundation Expert Team, 2011), *The Value of National Character in Traditional Balinese Children's Games* (I Nyoman Suarka et al., 2011), *Character Education Based on Religion and Culture* (Haedar Nashir, 2013) *Unraveling Oral Traditions to Create Character Education* (Ni Nyoman Karmini et al (ed), 2013). These studies conducted a comprehensive study of character education. From these various studies, it can be stated that character education is basically an effort to shape human character. Educational agents and students as learners carry out character education. In character education, the target is to shape national character. Thus, the formation of national character is a process of Indonesianization to produce Indonesian people with an Indonesian personality reflected in the foundation of the Pancasila State. National character is essential for every nation, considering that national character will determine unique national collective behaviour, which has theological, pluralist, democratic and just dimensions (Magnis-Suseno, 2008). In the context of multicultural Indonesia, of course, the development of character education must provide space for the cultivation of national culture while still accommodating local culture and global culture, which contribute to the progress and civility of the nation (Atmadja et al., 2017).

This study used a qualitative approach. It revealed that oral traditions contain moral messages/values that can contribute to the development of the younger generation's character.

Oral Tradition and the Construction of Character Values

Oral tradition can be interpreted as everything that is transmitted through speech. Oral traditions have social and cultural aspects. The social aspect of oral traditions is related to the perpetrators with various social processes, while the cultural aspect is related to the messages contained therein (Pudentia MPPSS, 2013). Oral traditions as creative cultural products contain various things related to the life and lives of the supporting communities. In this regard, oral traditions can be an entry point to understanding the supporting society because oral traditions are an essential source in forming the identity of society and the civilization of a nation.

In the process of forming national identity and civilization, oral tradition, on the one hand, becomes a source of values; on the other hand, oral tradition becomes a medium for transforming these values among members of society. The internalisation and personalisation of a value occurs through the process of transforming values in society. The personal values of each member of society will characterize the

character of members of society, which will further be reflected in their behaviour patterns in society. This is in line with the ideas of social construction theory developed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman (1990; Riyanto, 2009). The perspective of social construction theory reveals that social reality is made socially meaningful when social reality is constructed and interpreted subjectively by other members of society. The meanings of community members will develop intersubjectivity regarding reality, which will position the stability of the existence of reality objectively. In connection with this, it is argued that the reality of everyday life has subjective and objective dimensions, which are dynamic, dialectical and pluralistic in a sustainable manner. The dialectical process continuously has three moments, externalization, objectivation, and internalization, in space and time. According to Bourdieu (Ritzer & Goodman, 2005), social construction is significant in the dynamics of individual and societal life because, through the process of social construction, actors feel, think and build structures and then act based on the structures they build. In this context, the process of social construction of oral traditions for developing children's character values becomes crucial. The child's character and personality develop through this kind of social construction process.

Talking about the existence of oral traditions in the character construction process cannot be separated from the educational process. In the educational process, the presence of teachers is significant. Teachers are basically agents of liberating social construction. In Balinese society, it is known that there is a *catur guru*, namely God as the true teacher, parents as *guru rupaka*, teachers at school as *guru pengajian*, and the government as *guru wisesa*. In the context of Rwa Bineda's ideas, chess teachers are divided into two, namely, *guru niskala* (God) and *guru sekala* (three teachers, parents, teachers at school, and the government). For the Balinese, every teacher is a role model and provides their students the truth and meaning of life. This can be seen from the meaning of the song *Saking Tuhu Manah Guru* lyrics. From a sociocultural perspective, teachers, in this case, three teachers, always refer to the superstructure of ideology and social structure in carrying out their functions. The ideological superstructure contains various values, norms, and ideas that are based on religious teachings, ideology, and literary works, including the oral traditions of a society. The ideological superstructure forms and/or is reflected in the social structure, namely the actual actions carried out by each member of society in space and time. In this context, the idea of an ideological superstructure (oral tradition values) becomes a reference for the actual action patterns of every social structure (family, peers, village communities, social groups, and various organizations/institutions) that exist in the society concerned. Balinese people know various oral traditions, such as *sesenggakan*, *wewangsalan*, folk songs, folk tales, folk games and folk performances. The process of constructing the values contained in the oral tradition is through the oral tradition method of *melajah sambil megending* (learning while singing), *melajah sambil ningehang* (learning while listening), *melajah sambil mecande* (travelling while playing), *melajah sambil mebalih* (learning while watching), and *melajah sambil megawe* (learning while working).

Tabel 2. Oral Tradition as A Medium for Constructing Character Values

No.	Method	Form of Oral Traditio	Character Values
I	<i>Melajah Sambil Megending</i> Learning while Singing	Folk songs: <i>Dabdabang Dewa</i> <i>Dabdabang</i>	Seek knowledge, learn to socialize, and be able to behave ideally.
		<i>Meong-Meong Alih Ja Bikule</i>	ecological
		<i>Ede Ngaden Awak Bisa</i>	Ethics of Courtesy, Suppressing Egoism, arrogance

			Encouragement to continue learning/learning throughout life
II	<i>Melajah Sambil Ningehang</i> Learning while Listening	Folklore <i>Pedanda Baka.</i>	<i>Karmaphala</i> , ecology, teacher and student relationships, Vigilance, controlling greed in life.
		<i>Pan Balang Tamak</i>	King-People Relations Smart, Critical, Social Criticism Democratic Discipline
III	<i>Melajah Sambil Mecanda</i> Learning while Playing	Folk Games <i>Kelik-Kelikan</i>	Religious, humanist, harmonious, loving the environment, love, togetherness, mutual cooperation.
		<i>Tok Lait Kancing</i>	Religious, humanist, harmonious, loving the environment, love, togetherness, mutual cooperation, unity, caring
		<i>Gowak-Gowakan</i>	Religious, humanist, harmonious, loves the environment, love, togetherness, mutual cooperation, compact, caring, hard work, sportsmanship, willing to sacrifice, and loves the country.
IV	<i>Melajah Sambil Mebalih</i> Learning while Watching	Folk Show <i>Tari sanghyang</i>	Religious
		<i>Drama Gong</i>	Historical, Social Ethics, Responsibility, Social Criticism
		<i>Calon Arang</i>	Historical Religious, social criticism
		<i>Tari Topeng</i>	Historical, Social Criticism, Educational Social Relations, Critical, Social Ethics
V	<i>Melajah Sambil Bekerja</i> Learning while Working	Perform <i>Ngopin, Metetlung, Ngayah</i>	Study Openness Hard work Social Ethics

Based on this description, almost all the character values proclaimed by the government can be stated, such as religious, honesty, responsible, healthy lifestyle, discipline, hard work, self-confidence, entrepreneurial spirit, logical thinking, critical, creative and innovative, independent, curious, love of knowledge, self-aware, aware of the rights and obligations of self and others, obedient to social rules,

respect the work and achievements of others, polite, democratic, ecological, nationalist and appreciate the diversity contained in oral traditions (Suarka et al., 2011, Karmini, et al., 2011; Atmadja et al., 2017; Aryani & Tuty Maryati, 2022). From the perspective of the Balinese people's oral tradition of local wisdom, all the character values contained in the oral tradition can be grouped into three dimensions, namely the theological, sociological and ecological.

Strengthening various character values in the younger generation will, of course, contribute to strengthening the community capital of a society. For example, this can be seen from one of the oral traditions of the song *Juru Pencar*. The *Juru Pencar* song is an oral tradition of the Balinese people that contains the values of awareness of the living space of the Balinese people. The song states that coastal areas and the sea are living spaces. Because there are many fish in coastal and marine areas, Balinese people's awareness of the coast and sea as a living space can also be seen in the expression mountain nation. Mountain country implies the awareness that their living space is in the sea and mountainous areas. This awareness of living space is framed by the *Tri Hita Kara* oral tradition, which greatly emphasises the importance of theological, sociological and ecological harmony.

In this way, the construction of ideas contained in the oral tradition of the *Juru Pencar* song can not only strengthen the character of students but can also strengthen community capital, cultural capital, natural capital, human resource capital, and social capital, but also related to economic capital. Likewise, the oral tradition of *Putri Cening Ayu* reveals ideas about family life, dialogue between parents and their children, the introduction of responsibility, the introduction of market institutions, market activities, the existence of the market as a supplier of life's necessities, social ethics, discipline, sincerity and karmaphala. These ideas can also contribute to strengthening community capital. Strengthening community capital can also be seen from the folklore of *Men Tiwas* and *Men Sugih, Bawang* and *I Kesuna*. Things like this can also be seen in the folk game of hide and seek.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that oral traditions can not only be used as a medium for constructing character values but also contain values that can contribute to the development of the character of the younger generation. The method of constructing character values is *melajah sambil megending* (learning while singing), *melajah sambil ningehang* (learning while listening), *melajah sambil mecande* (traveling while playing), *melajah sambil mebalih* (learning while watching), and *melajah sambil megawe* (learning while working). Strengthening various character values in the younger generation will, of course, contribute to strengthening the community capital of a society.

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