



## Building Education through the Legend of Mount Ramelau as an Effort to Preserve Local Culture in the Mulo Aitaturina Hatubuliko Ainaro Community

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### ABSTRACT

Oral literature is a cultural heritage that reflects the identity of local communities and plays an important role in preserving cultural values. This study aims to explore the potential of oral literature from certain regions as an integral part of education, especially through its application in the school curriculum. The focus of the study is on how oral literature can be used as a tool for preserving culture while building the character of the younger generation. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data processing techniques are carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions to find patterns of relationships between oral literature and education. The research sample consisted of educators, school students, and community leaders who were directly involved in preserving oral literature. Data were obtained through interviews, participatory observations, and document studies in the form of local oral literature texts. The research location is centered in the Aitaturina Tribe, Hatubuiliko District, Ainaro Regency, which has a unique wealth of oral literature and is closely related to local traditions and cultural values. The results of the study indicate that oral literature in the legend of Mount Ramelau can be used as an effective medium in teaching cultural values and strengthening local identity, while also having a positive impact on the formation of student character through deep and reflective learning experiences.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Oral literature, such as folklore, myths, legends, pantun, or poetry, has been a means of communication between generations for centuries. In the era of globalization, local cultural heritage is starting to be threatened with extinction. Including oral literature in education is a strategic step to preserve local values while integrating them into character building. This tradition not only functions as entertainment, but also as a medium to convey moral values, history, and the philosophy of life of the community. In the context of education, oral literature of the legend of Mount Ramelau has great potential to shape the character of the younger generation, strengthen cultural identity, and raise awareness of the importance of preserving local cultural heritage. Therefore, in order not to lose one of the important elements of cultural heritage, it is necessary to record it immediately. The existence of recording not only saves cultural values, but can also be used as a medium for displaying socio-cultural values (Department of Education and Culture, 1982).

The noble values it possesses must be strengthened so that they are not easily displaced by the rapid development of the times and the current of globalization like this (Rejo, 2021b). However, in the era of globalization, local cultural heritage, including the oral literature of the legend of Mount Ramelau, faces a serious threat if it is not continuously passed on to the next generation. Modernization and urbanization have caused a shift in cultural values, where the younger generation tends to be more exposed to global popular culture than local traditions. This is compounded by the opinion that most modern people now seem not to want to know about folklore in their environment, in contrast to traditional societies, folklore is passed down from parents to children by being told or told stories at bedtime (Dita Relawati Alifah et al. 2018). Research shows that the lack of attention to oral literature in the education curriculum can accelerate the loss of this tradition. Therefore, including oral literature in formal education is a strategic step to preserve local values while integrating them into the formation of student character.

Sandra Taufik et al., (2024) in the book "Contemporary Pedagogy", tries to highlight how oral literature can be used to build students' morality in elementary schools, especially in the context of teaching ethical and social values. This article can be found in an international education journal that discusses local traditions and education. Furthermore, oral literature can be an effective tool to overcome educational challenges in remote areas. In areas such as the Aituturina Tribe, Hatubuiliko District, Ainaro Regency, oral literature is not only a part of everyday life, but is also a rich source of local knowledge. By utilizing folklore and other oral traditions, educators can create relevant and meaningful learning experiences for students, while preserving traditions that are almost extinct. This was reaffirmed by a young researcher who discussed the integration of oral literature in language and literature learning, which showed an increase in students' literacy skills while strengthening their cultural identity. Jadila (2025).

Swati Dattatraya Patil, Dr. Purwa Kanoongo (2024), explores students' experiences in oral tradition-based learning during the transition from modular

to face-to-face learning. Incorporating oral literature into the education curriculum not only functions as an effort to preserve culture, but also as a strategy to build a young generation with character, creativity, and a sense of responsibility for their culture. This step is in line with the need to create inclusive and local culture-based education, as proposed in various recent studies.

Strengthening the value of character education is very much needed to fill the changes in the era of the new order of life. Nurul Baiti Rohmah & Uman Rejo (2022), these values are a reflection of our personality as a cultured and characterful society through the creativity of writing literary works. This is a strong fortress to strengthen the construction of the national soul as a united nation of Timor-Leste. One strategy to strengthen the value of character education is through folklore. Yoseph Yapi Taum, (2011) said, folklore is also sometimes considered a myth by some people, but in reality, it can be used as a means of education for children who listen. In myths, it seems that there is no logic and no continuity. The essence of myth is a logical tool as an effort to find solutions to empirical contradictions faced by society and which are not understood by human reason.

Based on the description, the formulation of the problem in this study is how to revitalize the folklore of the Mulo Aitukurina Community as a reinforcement of character education values in the era of a new order of life. The formulation will focus on three things, namely (1) the form of revitalization of the folklore of the Timor community as a reinforcement of character education values in the current era of independence, (2) the function of revitalizing the folklore of the Mulo Aitukurina community as a reinforcement of character education values for the younger generation in the world of education, and (3) the meaning of revitalizing the folklore of Mount Ramelau in the Mulo community as a reinforcement of character education values in the era of the new order of life for the younger generation.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study has two objectives, namely long-term objectives and objectives with specific targets. First, the long-term objective to be achieved is to revitalize various forms, functions, and meanings of Mulo Community folklore which are full of local wisdom values and character education that are still relevant to be applied today. So that these folklores are not lost by the rapid development of information and communication technology, various efforts to revitalize them are needed. Considering that after the achievement of independence, Timor-Leste experienced developments in the use of language which were also very advanced. In order to maintain regional languages in an area, it is important for children to continue to be exposed to the use of regional languages as a strategy to maintain the nation's culture which has been preserved by ancestral culture through formal education. Alexandra et al (2023) said that students in this school still need to improve their ability to learn Tetum, the national language. Another thing that affects students is that students' understanding of the Mambae language, which is their mother

tongue, is getting better, so that after finishing studying Tetum in class, when outside the classroom they return to using the Mambae language as an ancestral heritage. Second, the goal with a specific target is that various forms of revitalization produced can be properly inventoried, read by many people outside the Mulo Aitukurina Community and also the Timor-Leste Community in general, the folklore of Gunu Ramelau will be understood and known nationally and globally, and the cultural values contained therein can be used as a reinforcement of character education in the era of the new order of life like today for the younger generation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data processing techniques involve Data Reduction by simplifying data from interviews, observations, and documents to focus on relevant information. Qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meaning of a phenomenon based on the perspective of the research subject. A descriptive approach is used to describe or explain phenomena in detail as they are, without manipulation or intervention. This allows researchers to get an in-depth and contextual picture. Data Reduction Technique is the process of simplifying and selecting raw data collected from various sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents, with the aim of this technique being to focus the analysis on relevant and significant information in the Aspects and Values of Social Education from Oral Traditions such as; Mutual Cooperation Values, Tolerance and Religious Values, Leadership and Exemplary Values, Justice and Honesty Values, Environmental Love Values, Historical Values and Cultural Identity, Empathy and Social Concern Values, and Character Education Values.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Mutual Cooperation Values**

Oral traditions often contain stories that emphasize the importance of cooperation and mutual assistance in community life. For example, folk tales that describe the success of a community in facing a common challenge can teach students to value cooperation and solidarity. In oral tradition, it is an important vehicle for instilling social values in the younger generation, especially the value of mutual cooperation. Stories that are passed down from generation to generation in oral tradition often serve not only as entertainment, but also as a means of moral and social education. The Importance of Cooperation in Community Life Folk tales, legends, or myths often describe the success of a group of people working together in facing challenges. For example, stories about how villagers unite to build a dam or fight an invading enemy. The main message that can be taken is that success can only be achieved through harmonious cooperation. In the context of education, this story can be used as learning material to teach students about the importance of collaboration in various aspects of life.

Alexandra de Araujo Tilman, (2022) said Oral traditions can also describe situations where each individual in a community has an important role that

complements each other as values and advice to each other. Stories like this provide an understanding that solidarity is the key to maintaining harmony in society. Children who hear these stories will learn to appreciate differences and the importance of contributing positively to the community.

The values of mutual cooperation contained in folklore can be applied in everyday life, such as community service activities in schools or communities. Teachers can use folklore as discussion material to raise students' awareness of social issues and the importance of collective action to overcome problems. Traditional stories often contain characters who help each other. By exploring these stories, students can learn about empathy, tolerance, and the importance of providing assistance to others. Oral tradition is not only a cultural heritage, but also an effective social education tool to shape children's character to appreciate the values of mutual cooperation and community life full of solidarity. In formal and informal education, these values can be the main pillars for creating a generation that cares about others and their environment.

### **Values of Tolerance and Diversity**

Many oral traditions reflect the cultural and religious diversity of a society. These stories teach the importance of respecting differences and living together peacefully. For example, the oral traditions of the Aituturina people may include stories that highlight harmony between groups within their community. As a means of preserving culture, it is also a vehicle for character building that instills values of tolerance and diversity. Through stories that are passed down from generation to generation, the younger generation is taught to accept and respect the cultural, religious, and traditional differences that exist within the community.

Representation of Multicultural Life where many folktales depict the life of a diverse society, where individuals with different cultural and religious backgrounds live side by side in harmony. For example, the oral tradition of the Aituturina Tribe may include stories of friendship or cooperation between different community groups. These values naturally teach that differences are not obstacles, but rather strengths that enrich life together.

Teaching the Importance of Respect Traditional stories often feature characters from diverse cultural backgrounds and beliefs. In these stories, the conflicts that arise are usually resolved using approaches that reflect respect for differences. These narratives teach listeners important lessons about the need to respect the beliefs and outlooks of others in order to create a peaceful life.

Addressing Stereotypes and Discrimination Oral traditions also serve to break down stereotypes about certain groups. For example, stories that feature protagonists from minority or marginalized groups often portray them as wise, brave, or virtuous individuals. This helps young people learn that everyone, regardless of background, has the potential to make a positive contribution.

Forming a Habit of Peaceful Living Through the repetition of oral stories, the values of tolerance can be instilled from an early age. Stories that tell of cooperation between different tribes or religious groups motivate listeners to emulate similar attitudes in real life. In addition, oral traditions are often used

in traditional rituals or joint celebrations, which are real evidence of tolerance in practice.

Instilling Awareness of Plurality Folktales that reflect the beauty of differences are often accompanied by a moral message about how plurality is a gift that enriches social life. For example, stories that highlight the contributions of different groups in building a community provide an understanding that diversity is an important element in achieving shared success. Implementation in Education Teachers and educators can utilize oral traditions as learning materials to instill the values of tolerance and diversity. Folktales can be used in discussion activities, role-playing, or even in art projects where students are asked to depict the story in the form of paintings or dramas. This approach helps students understand these values deeply and make them part of their lives. Thus, oral traditions not only function as a medium for preserving culture, but also as an effective social education tool to form a generation that is able to live side by side harmoniously in a pluralistic society.

### **Leadership Values and Exemplary Behavior**

In oral tradition, there are often figures who serve as role models because of their wisdom, courage, or sacrifice. These values can inspire students to develop leadership and become responsible individuals. The following is a more in-depth development of the values of leadership and role models in oral tradition. Leadership and Role Model Values in Oral Tradition as Inspiration for Character Education. Oral tradition often presents figures who are symbols of leadership, wisdom, courage, and sacrifice. These stories are not only for entertainment, but also a means to shape the character of the younger generation, especially in developing leadership and responsible role models.

Teaching Wise Leadership Traits In oral tradition, the leaders who are often raised usually have extraordinary wisdom traits. For example, a king who decides a conflict between villages fairly and impartially. Stories like this provide students with a concrete picture of how a leader must think critically, make wise decisions, and consider the common good above personal interests.

Emulating Courage in Facing Challenges Many folktales depict main characters who are brave in facing threats, such as fighting enemies to protect their community. This value of courage teaches listeners about the importance of taking risks responsibly to fight for the truth and protect the weak. Students can learn that courage is not only about physical strength, but also about the strength of the heart and principles. Inspiration from Sacrifice for the Common Good Figures in oral traditions are often depicted as willing to sacrifice personal interests for the welfare of the community. For example, a hero who sacrifices himself for the safety of the group teaches a lesson about the importance of putting the common good first. Values like these can help students understand the meaning of devotion and responsibility to the community.

Building Integrity and Exemplary Characters who are used as role models in folklore usually have high integrity, such as being honest, fair, and committed to their promises. Through oral traditions, students can learn to make integrity part of their character, while understanding how a good leader

should be a role model in acting and behaving. Guiding the Younger Generation to Become Future Leaders. Oral traditions that highlight stories of leadership can help shape the mindset and motivation of the younger generation to become future leaders. By understanding the role and responsibilities of a leader, students can be inspired to develop their own leadership skills through learning experiences and active involvement in the community.

Implementation of Leadership Values in Education Educational approaches can involve the use of traditional stories to help students identify the characteristics of good leaders. Teachers can encourage interactive discussions, where students are asked to analyze the actions of the characters in the story, why they are considered role models, and how these values can be applied in everyday life. In addition, role-playing activities based on folk tales can help students experience firsthand the responsibilities of a leader.

Thus, the values of leadership and exemplary behavior in oral traditions not only serve to preserve culture, but also as an important foundation in forming the character of the younger generation who are able to lead with heart, wisdom, and full responsibility.

#### **Values of Justice and Honesty**

Many folktales teach the importance of justice and honesty through conflict and its resolution. For example, a story about a character being punished for dishonesty can be a moral lesson for students.

#### **Environmental Love Values**

Oral traditions often contain stories that describe the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. This value is relevant to teach students about the importance of protecting the environment and respecting natural resources.

#### **Historical Values and Cultural Identity**

Oral traditions serve as a medium to convey local history and cultural identity to the younger generation. By understanding these stories, students can appreciate their cultural heritage and feel proud of their local identity.

#### **Values of Empathy and Social Concern**

Stories in the oral tradition often depict the suffering or struggles of a particular individual or group. This can teach students to be more sensitive to the needs of others and develop empathy.

#### **Character Education Values**

Oral traditions contain many moral lessons that are relevant to the formation of students' characters. Values such as courage, patience, and sacrifice are often the main themes in folklore, through a Case Study of Regional Oral Literature such as "The Legend of Mount Ramelau" –has moral, spiritual, and historical values that can be a source of learning. This oral tradition not only tells history, but also describes a deep philosophy of life. Utilizing this oral literature in schools can be done through interactive methods, such as drama, group discussions, or integration into literacy learning.

The following is a case study development on oral literature from Timor Leste, specifically the "Legend of Mount Ramelau" also known as Tatamailau, is

the highest mountain in Timor Leste and has a deep spiritual meaning for the local community. The Legend of Mount Ramelau is one of the oral traditions rich in moral, spiritual, and historical values. In this folklore, Mount Ramelau is often described as a sacred place, a symbol of strength, and a protector of the community. According to local beliefs, ancestral spirits gather at the top of this mountain before continuing their journey to heaven. The Legend of Mount Ramelau contains various values that can be a source of learning:

1. **Morality:** This story teaches the importance of maintaining harmony with nature and fellow human beings. The legend of Mount Ramelau has a rich culture and deep meaning for the people of Timor Leste. Here is a more detailed explanation of the contents of the paragraph:

Spiritual Meaning of Mount Ramelau, also known as Tatamailau, is the highest mountain in Timor Leste with a symbolic height that conveys a sense of awe and respect. In local culture, this mountain is considered a sacred place. The community's beliefs view it as a location where ancestral spirits gather before continuing their journey to heaven. This reflects a spiritual view that is closely related to nature and the afterlife, making it an important element in traditional beliefs. Symbol of Strength and Protector of the Community. In folklore, Mount Ramelau is not only a geographical symbol but also a symbol of strength. As a protector of the community, this mountain is depicted as a form of resilience that maintains the survival and well-being of the local community. This involves a sense of security, belief in ancestors, and a deep cultural attachment to the place. Rich in Moral, Spiritual, and Historical Values Orally passed down legends provide various moral values, such as maintaining harmony with nature and fellow humans. This harmony is at the center of traditional teachings that emphasize the importance of balance and respect for nature.

Spiritually, this story teaches the relationship between humans and the divine world and the role of ancestors in life. Historically, this legend preserves the culture and traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation, making it a valuable legacy for Timor-Leste. The Importance of Harmony. One of the main messages in this legend is to maintain harmony – not only with the natural environment but also with fellow human beings. This concept emphasizes the importance of balance in the relationship between humans and nature, which may have been the foundation for the preservation of culture and the environment in the region. Mount Ramelau and the legends surrounding it are not just about geography or myth, but also a reflection of the identity of the local community. Through this oral tradition, meaningful values are maintained and passed on to future generations. Would you like me to explore a particular aspect of this legend in more depth?

2. **Spirituality:** Mount Ramelau is considered a sacred place, teaching respect for ancestral traditions and beliefs. The legend of Mount Ramelau has a deep spiritual value that is very important to the people of Timor Leste. Mount Ramelau has been considered a Holy Place, which is not only the highest geographical point in Timor Leste but also serves as a major spiritual symbol. In local beliefs, this mountain is a place where ancestral

spirits gather before continuing their journey to heaven. This makes it a sacred location, where humans feel closer to the divine realm and gain a deep sense of existence. This belief involves respecting the place as a bridge between the human world and the spirit world. Respect for Tradition and Ancestors. The legend of Mount Ramelau emphasizes the importance of respecting ancestral traditions and beliefs. This tradition is a way for the local community to maintain a relationship with previous generations, who are considered spiritual protectors. This respect is also seen in rituals or cultural activities carried out around the mountain, which strengthens the connection between humans and their ancestors and cultural heritage. Spiritual Values That Teach Wisdom. Through this legend, people are taught to value things that are not only material but also spiritual. Mount Ramelau is a symbol of divine power that teaches lessons about respect for nature and life. Local people see this mountain as a reminder to live in harmony with nature and respect the environment as part of divine creation.

Uniting Communities Through Spiritual Beliefs. Belief in Mount Ramelau as a sacred place helps unite communities. By sharing common values and traditions, these legends serve as a way for communities to maintain their cultural identity and strengthen solidarity in everyday life. These legends are not only oral stories but also a legacy that enriches the values of life. Through respect for tradition, spirituality, and ancestors, the people of Timor-Leste continue to maintain their meaningful identity. Would you like me to expand more on the historical or ritual aspects?

3. History: This legend holds traces of the history of the people of Timor Leste, including their struggle to maintain their cultural identity. The legend of Mount Ramelau not only contains spiritual and moral elements, but also holds traces of history that are important to the people of Timor Leste. The following is a detailed description of the historical value contained in this legend:

- Reflection of the Historical Traces of the Timor Leste Community

Through oral stories, the legends of Mount Ramelau immortalize events and experiences that are an important part of the history of the Timorese people. These include stories about the people's struggle to maintain their homeland and cultural identity, especially amidst the challenges of colonialism, conflict, and modernization. These legends serve as a link to the past, providing a deeper understanding of who they are as a community. The Struggle to Maintain Cultural Identity. In a historical context, these legends reflect how the Timorese people have tried to maintain their local traditions and culture despite external pressures. Mount Ramelau, as a symbol of strength and protection, represents this struggle. The stories about the mountain contain values of pride in local culture and instill a sense of responsibility to preserve the heritage of their ancestors for the next generation.

Role in Strengthening Solidarity The Legend of Mount Ramelau serves as a unifying element for the people of Timor Leste. Historically, this story has helped build a sense of solidarity, togetherness, and collective spirit. In many

cultures, sacred places such as Mount Ramelau often serve as gathering points for ceremonies, celebrations, or spiritual reflection, strengthening the bonds between individuals within a community. Sources of Historical Learning Through Oral Traditions. Oral traditions such as legends have been a primary method of preserving local history, especially before the introduction of modern writing methods. By retelling these legends, communities not only preserve ancestral stories, but also convey important values and events that can guide the younger generation in understanding the historical journey of their nation. The Legend of Mount Ramelau is a reflection of the relationship between a community and its history, where this story plays an important role in maintaining collective memory, strengthening a sense of national pride, and ensuring the continuity of their cultural identity.

Application in Education the Legend of Mount Ramelau can be utilized in education through various interactive methods:

1. Drama and Theatre: Students can play the characters in this legend, so that they understand the values contained in it deeply.
2. Group Discussion: Discussing the moral and spiritual messages of this story can improve students' critical thinking skills.
3. Literacy Learning: This legend can be used as reading material to improve students' reading and writing skills, while introducing them to the local culture of the surrounding community, including the Hatubuiliku region, one of which includes Mulo Aituturina.

Utilization of the Legend of Mount Ramelau in education through interactive methods can enrich students' learning experiences while strengthening their understanding of local culture. The following is a detailed description of each method. Through learning Drama and Theater materials with the aim of playing traditional figures from the legend of Mount Ramelau, students not only learn about the story but also understand the moral, spiritual, and historical values contained in the process Where teachers can divide students into several groups to explore characters or important elements in the story, such as ancestral spirits, the community around the mountain, or symbols of strength. Dialogue and expression exercises can improve students' communication skills and creativity. Or Performing the legend in class or at school events can be a memorable learning experience. The benefits are Strengthening students' self-confidence through performance. Helping students understand the story in depth through direct interaction with cultural texts. Improving group work skills.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

With the Group Discussion, we can discuss the moral and spiritual messages from the legend story to improve students' critical and analytical thinking skills. Through the Process, the Teacher facilitates small group discussions, where students can discuss the spiritual meaning of Mount Ramelau, such as the role of the mountain as a holy place and protector of society. Students can also compare the values taught in this legend with the values in other folklore. The teacher encourages students to express their opinions, practice public speaking skills, The benefits are that it will open up

space for students to think critically about the relevance of the story in everyday life, and develop students' ability to see the relationship between local traditions and global life, and train students to convey arguments logically and clearly.

Literacy Learning aims, through this legend as reading material to improve students' literacy skills while introducing local culture, including the Hatubuiliku region such as Mulo Aitukurina in the system and traditions of the Mulo Aitukurina Community, especially the customs of Dato and Bilese and Leofusu. Through the Process, teachers can provide the text of the Mount Ramelau legend that is adjusted to the students' literacy level. Where students are asked to read, analyze, and write reflections or essays about the story. And teachers can connect the story with geography or history lessons, so that students understand the context of the Hatubuiliku region and its local culture. The benefits themselves are to improve students' reading and writing skills through text analysis, enrich students' understanding of local culture, including the customs and beliefs of the people around Mount Ramelau, and connect literacy with cultural insight, encouraging students to appreciate diversity. With this interactive approach, the Legend of Mount Ramelau is not only an educational tool, but also a bridge to strengthen students' relationships with their traditions and cultural identities.

#### **FURTHER STUDY**

This research still has limitations so further research is still needed on this topic.

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