

Implementation of the Tradition of Tying Corn in Learning

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ABSTRACT

The corn tie culture of the Meto tribe is an Indonesian cultural heritage that needs to be preserved and inherited as a form of community responsibility in the midst of an increasingly modern globalization. In addition, the tradition of corn tie also contains the concepts of high national values for character building. This study aims to identify the cultural values contained in the corn tie tradition to be implemented in learning at school. This research is qualitative research with an ethnographic approach. Data collection is done by reviewing the literature, making observations, conducting interviews, and documenting all activities in the field. The information obtained is then analyzed to describe the results of the exploration of cultural values of tying corn to various customs or traditions, which can be actualized in learning at school. The results of this study indicate that the Meto people already have basic values of life in social life. This can be seen from the results of the exploration that the values contained in the culture of corn tying are religious, nationality, independence, cooperation, and integrity. The culture of this corn tie contains cultural values that can be actualized in learning.

KEYWORDS

Implementation of tradition; cultural values; tribal culture; learning.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian society today continues to experience social changes in various fields of life, in the context of today's society it increasingly shows a pluralistic society life and from another perspective society is starting to lose the foundation to stand in the traditions that have been passed down along with the progress of science and technology. These changes in turn can lead to the formation of a society that is separated from the culture it once had, sociocultural values that have long been or in the past served as community guidelines, are now starting to fade, and people begin to hesitate to accept and sometimes even start to accept them. It is difficult to distinguish between good values and bad values.

The ability of the Meto Tribe of Mnelalete Village to maintain their traditions has become very difficult during the progress of modern society today. The values contained in local traditions or cultures that are summarized in daily speech culture are becoming less and less as technology advances. Supriatin (2012) says that oral tradition is an ancestral heritage that (Moreno et al., 2020) stores a lot of local wisdom, policies, and life philosophies which are expressed in the form of incantations, performances, and traditional ceremonies (Sihabudin, 2019).

Many members of the Meto Tribe of Mnelalate Village have begun to put forward a realistic attitude and have begun to abandon the cultural teachings or traditions instilled by their traditional elders. The tendency of the community to abandon cultural values becomes more widespread when the surrounding environment provides support. Tradition systems as special characteristics that are unique to a particular local culture are no longer the basic reference in behavior for their followers. The powerlessness of indigenous peoples in maintaining their cultural traditions is a serious threat to the sustainability of traditional values for the next generation.

Referring to the context of the Meto Tribe community in Mnelalete Village, where humanistic local wisdom is sprinkled for the survival of its people in the paradigm of living together, both with others and with the surrounding natural environment because that is where the concepts and values of local wisdom are beautifully spoken, structured and actualized in everyday life. Meanwhile, it can be called, for example, spiritual poems used by traditional community members at certain times, which are commonly revealed in the strains of solemn prayers either in traditional houses, under the shade of banyan trees, or on rocky slopes. Kevin Sherlock in his monumental work "A Bibliography of Timor" (1980) contains various written sources regarding the island of Timor and its surroundings (Ceunfin, 2018).

The people of the Meto Tribe, mostly work as farmers, especially dry land farmers with a shifting cultivation system with slash and burn techniques. The process of processing the fields of the Meto tribal community in Mnelalete Village is still very strong following the local wisdom process, where farming activities start from land selection (*ntae bale ai afu*), asking for permission (*toit ulan*), sharpening machetes (*ai' benas*), land clearing (*sef lene ai' bale*), burning of new gardens (*not len feu'*), fire fighting (*na' maet ai*), erosion control (*eka' noe*), payments to

land owner (*baen auf tuaf*), protecting young plants (*panat pena 'le' an moni*), the first corn harvest (*sek pena' ahunut*), the corn harvest (*sek pena'*), until returning to the village (*talan tia nfain neo kuan*) is a series of activities that are conditional with cultural meaning.

They are familiar with several work patterns that are considered as local wisdom that are still maintained, among others, cooperation (*meup tabua*), voluntary work to help people who have a higher customary status (*meup nok in nek muti ma kan toit fa sa-sa' neo mnais kuan ai' mnais alat*), cooperation as an exchange of work (*meub tabua es nok es*), working for wages (*meup he na pen baen*), and self-employment (*nmepun mes kun*). Commitment to work ethic and mentality to working hard and helping each other or helping each other in an atmosphere of kinship and brotherhood with joy is very much prioritized in the life of the Meto tribe community in Mnelalete Village. This work pattern is the culture or local wisdom of the Meto tribe of Mnelalete village which is still maintained to this day during the hustle and bustle of the modern world.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Local culture or tradition is a form of basic community knowledge obtained through a life that is balanced with the surrounding natural conditions. This is related to the culture in the community that is accumulated and inherited (local wisdom is basic knowledge obtained from living in balance with nature (Nawatrot et al., 2021). Culture can be conceptualized as a group's values and beliefs that influence their behavior and goals (Donohue, 2021)

In addition, local wisdom also has functions and directions that are achieved and learned (Theresia, 2018). The value of local wisdom can be understood as something valuable and ideal (from local wisdom) which gives a pattern of thought, feeling, and behavior (Aslan, 2017). In line with (Edwards, 2009) explanation that all local wisdom is an important social foundation to increase community solidarity.

In the culture of tying corn, before starting activities, of course, there is a traditional ritual that is passed as a sign that the process of tying corn will be held during the harvest season. This corn-tying tradition can be applied in classroom learning because culture-based learning that brings local culture has so far not had a place in the school curriculum, including in the learning process of various subjects at school. The cultural values contained in the tradition or culture of corn ties allow teachers and students to actively participate in learning activities based on the culture they already have so that satisfying learning outcomes can be obtained. For this reason, this study seeks to explore and actualize the values contained in the maize culture of the Meto tribe of Mnelalete Village. Bates & Jackson (1980) argue that exploration is a series of searches for valuable minerals made from fossil fuels which consist of investigation activities on the earth's surface (Hajalilou & Aghazadeh, 2016). Furthermore, Koesoemadinata (2000) argues that exploration is a scientific-technical activity carried out to find out an area, area, condition, or space that was previously unknown for its content of natural resources (Ishak, 2021). In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, it is very clear that exploration is field exploration to gain more

knowledge about the situation (KBBI, 2016). Thus, it can be concluded that exploration is an activity to dig up the widest possible information related to the cultural values contained in the tradition or culture of the corn tie of the Meto Tribe.

In the next stage, the results of the exploration of the values contained in this corn tie culture can be actualized through learning at school. The implementation of learning with local traditional culture in the students' environment is very good for increasing students' knowledge in every learning activity at school. Learning based on local wisdom traditions makes students remember the culture around them. In this regard, One of the educational stimuli to convey academic values, religious values, and religious norms, as well as habituation of good behavior, is a fun activity (Ari & Yossi, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

The type of research based on the problem under study is qualitative research. A type of research to uncover and obtain comprehensive, extensive, and in-depth information (Prahmana, 2017). The research procedures carried out included determining informants, collecting data, testing the validity of data, analyzing data, obtaining findings, and identifying and designing lessons. Various considerations that are considered by researchers in choosing the subject of this study include the following. (1) the subject has long and intensively integrated with the culture or tradition of tying corn; (2) the subject is fully involved in the culture of corn binding; (3) the subject has enough time to be asked for information for research purposes. Based on the above, the subject in this study were 5 people who lived in Mnelalete Village. More details can be seen in table 1.

Table1. *Research Subject*

Subject	Age	Education	Profession or Occupation
A	72 years old	Primary school	Community Leader
B	68 years old	Junior High School	Community Leader
C	71 years old	Primary school	Corn farmer
D	67 years old	No school	Corn farmer
E	70 years old	No school	Corn farmer

Research instruments are tools or facilities used by researchers in collecting data that can help simplify their work so that they are more systematic, more accurate, more complete, and easier to process (Arikunto, 2019). The researcher acts as the main instrument while the supporting instruments include Interview Guidelines, Observation Sheets, and Documentation. The data in this study were obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. Furthermore, the data is analyzed to find and systematically compile the data

obtained from the results of interviews, documentation, observations, and other materials (Sudaryono, 2019) so that they are easily understood when conveyed to others.

Qualitative data is data in the form of information in the form of a description using prose language and then linked with other data to get clarity on the truth. In this study, researchers used qualitative data analysis according to Miles et al. (2014), which is (1) data reduction, as a selection process, focusing attention on one research object, simplification, abstracting, and transforming rough data that emerged from notes. written in the field, the process of sharpening, directing, removing unnecessary data, and organizing the data so that conclusions can be drawn.

In this study, the data reduction stage in question is that researchers trace the history that exists in corn tying activities through the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. For history, the researcher summarizes the outline based on the results of interviews and observations as well as documentation; (2) data presentation is a structured set of information that will be used to find meaningful patterns from the existing data, which gives the possibility of concluding and then taking action. The presentation of the data in this study is to record the findings in the activity of tying corn; (3) draw conclusions in this study based on the data obtained during research activities. At this stage, the researcher connects corn tying activities with the concept of value in learning.

The authors have received approval from the Meto tribal community members to publish their names, photos, and writings in the Meto language in the form of statements that they gave through traditional rituals when the researchers conducted this research. Thus, everything related to the Meto tribe in this paper is the responsibility of the authors.

RESULTS

Explore the Cultural Values of Corn Tie, Meto Tribe, Mnelalete Village

Maize is a strategic commodity for Indonesia because it has a wide use dimension such as animal feed (direct or processed), a staple food for part of the population (potentially for the wider community) and snacks, ingredients industrial raw materials (starch, sugar, processed food), and energy or bioethanol (Lubis et al. 2022).The agro-ecosystem of the NTT region is suitable for corn cultivation so that quite a lot of corn varieties are well adapted (Asa et al., 2020)

The people of East Nusa Tenggara who work as farmers generally cultivate agricultural land in a conventional way. Cultivated corn is an important part of supporting the economy of rural communities in NTT, especially in Mnelalete Village, West Amanuban. The Meto tribe is one of the tribes where the community still manages agricultural land conventionally. This tribe is located in Mnelalete Village, South Central Timor Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. In general, the Meto Tribe people work as dry land farmers, namely farming with traditional land management systems. The Meto people who work as farmers have a culture or tradition of tying corn (*tbu pena*) which is passed down from generation to generation. The tradition of tying corn is carried out after the Meto people finish harvesting corn in *lene/poan* (gardens/fields). Corn

that has been harvested from the fields/gardens (*lene/poan*) is then collected at the cottage or brought directly to the house. There are corns that are arranged and there are also those that are not neatly arranged. This stack of arranged corn is better known as *nabuata* which means "collection".



Pictures 1.1 and 1.2. *Pile of corns after harvested stacked regularly*

The pile of corn in the pictures above illustrates the unity in a society that is organized in one tradition or local wisdom from generation to generation to maintain togetherness. Brotherhood and unity in business or work, in the language of the Meto tribe, better known as *lais nek/neka mese, nmeup tabua, nekaf mese, ansaof mese ma meput mese*. This term wants to teach the next generation of the Meto tribe the importance of living in a group or community and respecting one another.

Storage of corn that has been harvested can be occupied in a house or cottage or a special place that has been prepared. After that, the owner of the house (*uim tuaf*) invites or invites neighbors in the neighborhood around his house to tie corn. Before the corn is tied, the

first thing to do is a traditional ritual. This ritual is in the form of a prayer together as a thanksgiving for the corn obtained and the start of tying the corn. This prayer is done jointly by the owner of the corn and invited guests. (*onen neo hit Usi he tat bu' pen*). This traditional prayer or ritual is a form of human thanksgiving, especially the Meto people to the Creator (*Uis neno, Uis pah, ma Uis Oe*). To entertain the invited guests, the owner of the house needs to prepare betel (*manus*), areca nut (*puah*), food and drink (*mnaht ma mninut*), knife and sharpening stone (*besi ma aki*). The next stage, guests who are invited to tie the corn will sit around the pile of corn.



Picture 2. People who are going to tie corn sitting in a circle

After completing the prayer procession together, the next step is to tie corn. Guests who are invited to tie the corn will sit around (form a circle) a pile of corn (*nabonet*) which has the meaning of togetherness (*nekaf mese*), a sense of brotherhood (*olif tataf*) and kinship (*olif tataf, fetof naof, 'nae makliko*) and cooperation (*meup tabua*). Corn is taken one grain (*pune mese*). One ear is described as a man or a woman (*atoni/li'mone ma bife*), single or not having a partner (*fe ma mone*), some are taken 2 ears (*pune nua*) and some are taken 4 grains (*pune ha*). The choice of corn to tie depends on the size of each ear. If the corn is large then take 1 or 2 ears, if the corn is small then take 2 ears.

One ear is described as a man or a woman (*atoni/li'mone ma bife*), single or not having a partner (*fe ma mone*), two ears symbolize family life (*atoni ma bife nbi ume mese*) which means 'husband and wife' (*mone ma fen nabuan nan bi ume mese*) the four ears has the meaning of one family consisting of "father, mother and child" (*amaf, enaf, an mone ma anfeto*).



Pictures 3.1 and 3.2. Corn bonds combined into one bond

It is said that the process of tying corn is carried out at night and is only done by men because there is a division of tasks for women at that time to take care of food for guests. However, due to a shift in cultural values, at this time the corn tying process can be carried out during the day and involves women. During the corn tying process, everyone involved while tying the corn, sing together (*sin nabuan/nabuan ma sin*). This implies the expression of joy for the harvest obtained. The people of Meto tribe call it *sit pules* (hymns). Corn tied with corn husk (*polaiif*). So, the rope used as a corn binder is not a synthetic rope or another type of rope, but the corn husk itself. This is done so that the bond is really strong and durable during the storage process. Corn is tied with a technique or method of tying it in two ways, namely, the head of corn is tied up (*pena' nakan nfutu nekin sae'*) and another way, the head of corn is bent and tied down (*pena 'nakan nfutu nekin saun*).



Picture 4.1 The technique of tying corn (*mukniu*)



Picture 4.2 The technique of tying corn (*mbua*)

The way of tying the corn from the picture in section 4.1 is the way of tying the corn with the top of the corn bent, depicting a man who has good bonds with his partner and with his family (*mukniu*), while Figure 4.2 is a way of tying the head of corn up which implies the bond of a woman (*mbua*). This of course wants to illustrate that there have been gender differences in the Meto tribe since ancient times, besides that *mukniu* means to be tied into one unit, (*mese*) and *mbua* is more of unity and togetherness because the head of the corn tie is round. There

are two sizes of corn, namely corn with a large size (*pen naek*) and corn with a small size (*pen ana*). The large corn symbolizes the leader or king, while the small corn symbolizes the people. That said, the King was loved and protected by his people. The large grain corn is placed in the center of the heap of corn that has been tied and the small ear corn is placed around the large ear corn. Corn with large ears is taken when corn with small grains is no longer available or consumed. In addition, large-grain corn is used for seedlings.

One corn wheat will be tied with one corn of the same size, the two corn grains tied to two other grains of the same size, and so on with the same pattern according to the needs and this technique is more familiar with the Meto tribe as *futu mese*. The meaning contained in this concept is how a single human being, tied to a relationship with the opposite sex becomes one family and oversees the family clump in the fabric of love (*lais manekat nbi famili olif tataf, ma fetof naof*). Next, the tied corn will be placed on the attic (*pana tunan*) or a special place provided to dry with bloat technique. The arrangement of corn forms a cone, and corn that has a large size is tied together with a rope and placed in the middle while the small corn will be on the outside around the large corn which is better known by the Meto tribe as *tain uf*. The rope that binds the corn is in the middle of the pillar of the house, the end of the rope penetrates the roof of the house, this bond has a deep meaning related to the relationship between humans and God. God as the creator of the universe and its contents in the language of the Meto Tribe is called *mansion ma uis neno*. To arrange or pick up corn in the attic, it is only permissible for women who are called (*mama ai' bi fe*), this symbolizes fertility (*namlia'he kais oke*), and prosperity (*npet ma nmalin*), other than that, the following activities are carried out without any obstacles or obstacles for families who enjoy the harvest. Then, as a closing ceremony, a prayer is held together (*onen taboo neo hit uis neno es le' uis neno, uis pah ma uis oe*) as gratitude for the smooth activities of tying corn and thanksgiving for what has been done. has been obtained in the life of the owner of the corn (Taneo & Madu, 2022).

Implementation of cultural values in learning in schools

In the culture of tying corn in the Meto Tribe, there are character values that can be implemented in learning at school. The linkage of this corn tie cultural value can be connected to learning at school. Fadly (2013) argues that the use of learning resources through a culture that exists in the environment of students is indeed proven to have benefited two parties, namely teachers and students (Tolak Totok, 2018). It is easier for students to get learning resources and present subject matter, while students are easier to understand the material presented by students so that learning is achieved optimally according to the target achievement.

As contained in Presidential Decree No. 87 of 2017 contains 5 values to build national character. These values include religion, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and integrity. The life of the Meto people cannot be separated from the cultural values that have been arranged and preserved from generation to generation. If it is related to the values contained in Presidential Decree No. 87 of 2017, then the cultural values contained in the Meto tribe's corn tie tradition can be identified and grouped as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *The main values that will be actualized in learning in schools through the culture of tying corn*

No	National character values	Cultural Value of Meto Tribe Corn Tie	Indicator
1	Religiosity	Pray as thanksgiving for the harvest and protection of the creator in the process of work being done.	Obedient actions and attitudes in carrying out their religion, and having a tolerant spirit towards someone of another religion in carrying out their worship. The value of this religious character includes three dimensions of relations at once, namely the individual's relationship with God, the individual with others, and the individual with the universe (environment) (Cahyadi & Della, 2021). Religious sub-values include: faith, piety, cleanliness, tolerance, and love for the environment
2	Nationalism	The Meto tribal people are willing to sacrifice for their leader as illustrated by the size of the corn layout, the large corn (King/leader) is in the middle and surrounded by small corn (the people).	The value of nationalist character is a way of thinking, acting, and doing that shows loyalty, awareness, and high appreciation for the language, the physical, social, cultural, economic, and political environments of the nation. The nationalist can place the interests of the nation and state above the interests of the self and the group (Berliani & Sudrajat, 2018).
3	Independent	The Meto tribal people have independence in their lives, where they have their agricultural land and do not depend on others.	An attitude that does not always rely on and depend on the lives of others in everyday life. independent sub-values include: hard work, creativity, disciplined, courage, and learning
4	Mutual help	The Meto people working together in the process of tying corn or other activities in daily life	The values of mutual cooperation include respect, cooperation, inclusiveness, commitment to joint decisions, deliberations of consensus, help, empathy, solidarity, anti-discrimination, anti-violence, and voluntary attitudes (Rostati, <i>et al.</i> 2019)
5	Integrity	The people of the Meto tribe have politeness, and exemplary behavior, this is reflected in the process of tying corn where they invite each other to help tie the corn without being paid.	Values that underlie behavior are based on efforts to make a person's personality as a person who is trusted in words and actions. Integrity sub-values include: honesty, exemplary, politeness, and love of truth (Cahyadi & Della, 2021)

The character values contained in the Meto Tribe corn tie tradition can be implemented into learning in schools according to the level of education so that teachers can encourage students to develop dignified and moral national character values.

DISCUSSION

Since ancient times, the Meto people have had noble values related to the way of life in a group and society. Culture is not only limited to art alone, but culture is so broad and has various forms. Koetjiningrat (1990) argues that in the world there are seven, namely language, social organization, knowledge system, livelihood system, living equipment system and technology, art, and religious system. This is following the form of culture itself which can be in the form of ideas or ideas, social norms, and the results of human work both in terms of activities and materials (Kristanto, 2015).

In the context of actual actualization of cultural values, learning with this concept is very relevant to use. Learning materials developed must refer to learning achievement. Anik et al. (2017) mention several characteristics of the cultural values-based learning model that distinguishes it from other learning models.

First, the learning objectives are so that participants master the areas in the formulation of competencies and character values that exist in these competencies. *Second*, the implementation of learning aims to facilitate students so that they can acquire competencies in accordance with the applicable curriculum, and continue to prioritize actions to develop the values of the nation's character. *Third*, the learning materials taught to students in an integrated manner are adapted to the dimensions of the nation's character values. *Fourth*, the learning environment is arranged naturally so that students are given the opportunity to gain real learning experiences in the surrounding environment related to the noble values that develop in society. Real experience in society is more effective than instant knowledge that develops in isolated classes.

The research findings related to the values contained in the Meto Tribe's corn tie tradition, including religious values, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and integrity. Through the application of culture-based learning or local traditions, it is hoped that it can foster motivation in students in applying character values and obtaining good learning outcomes. In the implementation of learning, students are given problems related to local culture or traditions that they have acquired in everyday life. The problems given must be following the level of education of the child.

The importance of integrating local wisdom in learning in schools as an effort to create learning that not only equips students with knowledge but also instills a sense of love for local diversity in their environment, the impact of implementing wisdom-based learning and how teachers step in integrating local wisdom (Pingge, 2017). The integration of varied cultures and perspectives strengthen the need for diversity (Goodloe & Ardley, 2021) in school. Constitutions No. 32 of 2009, defines local wisdom as noble values that apply in the life of the community to

protect and manage the environment sustainably (Jundiani, 2018). Local wisdom is a view of life and knowledge as well as various life strategies in the form of activities carried out by local communities in responding to various problems in meeting their needs (Fajarini, 2014). The values that are very important to be introduced and internalized include: love for God, honesty, discipline, tolerance, and peace, self-confidence, independence, help, cooperation, and mutual cooperation, respect and courtesy, responsibility, hard work, leadership, and justice, creative, humble, care for the environment, love the nation and the motherland (Tusubha & Hadyanto, 2019). It is based on the capacity to model and find solutions to situations that can serve individuals in everyday life (Ikeda, 2013) to build new knowledge or reconstruct the knowledge they have acquired (Van den Heuvel-Panhuizen, M., & Drijvers, P., 2014). According to Stephens (2000), learning based on local wisdom seeks to integrate indigenous (local) knowledge systems around topics or subject matter to increase students' understanding of the concepts being studied and at the same time increase students' understanding of their local culture.

Character formation is very necessary for students, where it can be seen that education in our country is currently experiencing problems related to character cultivation in students, especially at the age of teenagers, where at this age, students are vulnerable to a crisis of character values within themselves. Therefore, learning with a cultural approach can be implemented in schools so that through the cultural values contained in local culture in Indonesia, it can build the character of children as the next generation of the nation. In addition, this learning model can achieve the learning objectives themselves, namely building students to become good citizens, by inculcating religion, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and integrity of national character.

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