

## ***Pappaseng* values: A cultural framework for national character development**

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### **ABSTRACT**

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*Pappaseng*, a form of traditional Bugis oral literature, serves as a cultural medium for transmitting moral values through proverbs, advice, songs, and dialogic expressions. These forms function as pedagogical tools for both individual and communal character development. This study aims to explore the potential of *Pappaseng* as a culturally rooted framework for national character education in Indonesia. Employing a qualitative descriptive method through library research, the analysis draws upon primary *Pappaseng* texts and secondary sources from anthropology, education, and local wisdom studies. The research addresses the limited integration of indigenous oral traditions within current character education models. The findings reveal that *Pappaseng* embodies essential values, such as honesty (*lempu'*), wisdom (*amaccang*), and courage (*getteng*), that can be meaningfully integrated into educational practices to promote ethical awareness and national identity. These values are transmitted not only through interpersonal advice but also via traditional artistic expressions, including *kaddo bora* (songs) and dialogic storytelling. This study offers a novel contribution by positioning *Pappaseng* as an underutilized indigenous epistemology within the discourse on character education. As such, it provides a culturally relevant resource for strengthening national character through formal education and community engagement initiatives.

**Keywords:** Bugis oral literature, character education, indigenous pedagogy, national identity formation, *Pappaseng*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, there has been growing national and global concern over the decline of moral character, prompting efforts to strengthen value-based education both in formal institutions and through non-formal social mechanisms. In response, various initiatives have been implemented, ranging from reducing social violence to promoting ethical awareness through culturally embedded narratives and community-based programs. These issues are especially critical during adolescence, a developmental stage characterized by increased susceptibility to

high-risk behaviors such as violence, theft, bullying, and actions that may lead to serious human rights violations. According to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), in 2023, there were 1,478 cases of violence against children, including 615 cases of sexual crimes, 303 cases of physical and psychological abuse, and 126 cases involving children in conflict with the law (Humas KPAI, 2023). Furthermore, a 2024 KPAI report revealed that 35% of 114 child abuse cases occurred within educational institutions, and 48% of the 46 reported child suicide cases took place while the children were still in school uniforms (Humas KPAI, 2024). These findings highlight the reality that schools are not yet universally safe spaces for children and adolescents. As such, integrating local cultural values such as *Pappaseng*, the Bugis oral tradition, into character education offers a meaningful strategy to foster moral resilience among Indonesia's younger generation. Such examples reflect broader social problems in Indonesia today (Suyanto, 2010).

The deterioration of moral values and social cohesion in Indonesia can, to a large extent, be traced back to insufficient early character education. While Tilaar (2012) argues that the absence of moral and visionary education results in societal inequality and materialism, recent international literature cautions against overly deterministic views. Character education must not only be moralistic but also contextualized within cultural and communal frameworks (Oser et al., 2021). A critical element in shaping moral reasoning and prosocial behavior is the individual's interaction with family, school, and community. This is reflected in both local and global studies. Lickona (1991) laid the groundwork with his theory on environmental conditioning, and newer research confirms this through culturally responsive pedagogy. For example, a study by Zuchdi et al. (2019) highlights how local wisdom fosters moral resilience among Indonesian students when embedded in the curriculum and practice.

However, the national implementation of character education remains fragmented. Despite regulatory mandates (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003), formal schooling is often criticized as certification-focused rather than values-oriented (Zubaedi, 2015). This concern is echoed in global scholarship, González-Torres et al., (2015) argue that the commodification of education sidelines ethical formation, a concern not limited to Indonesia. Recent international scholarship emphasizes integrating ethnopedagogical approaches to enhance the relevance of character education. In their comparative study, Sapsuha & Wekke (2020) explore how character development in Islamic education in Indonesia can benefit from the cultural practices of local communities. Moreover, an article in *Heliyon* by Sakti et al., (2024) demonstrates that when local traditions and environmental wisdom are embedded in the curriculum, student engagement and ethical awareness significantly improve.

The Bugis concept of *Pappaseng* provides an illustrative example. Promoting values such as *lempu*' (honesty), *getteng*' (integrity), and *siri*' (honor), *Pappaseng* represents a living ethical code embedded in local life. This aligns with studies in Ethics and Education, which stress that character education must arise from within the cultural context to be effective (Arthur et al., 2016) . Global best practices suggest a shift toward participatory curriculum design that centers indigenous values, such as *Pappaseng*, to bridge the gap between moral ideals and classroom realities. Yanti et al., (2025), for instance, codify local wisdom in language education to build civic identity in border regions, while Arianti et al., (2025) propose models of localized curriculum reform based on Sundanese and Javanese traditions.

One promising approach to addressing the national character formation issue is to begin with personal moral transformation, which is most effectively nurtured through early value-based

guidance and consistent moral education. While many existing character education models tend to be normative and generalized, this study proposes a culturally embedded alternative rooted in local wisdom. In contrast to conventional character approaches, this research introduces a novel framework based on *Pappaseng*, a traditional Bugis ethical philosophy that remains underexplored in academic discourse on character education.

The uniqueness of *Pappaseng* lies in its moral depth and contextual relevance. As a living tradition transmitted through oral literature, *Pappaseng* carries core values such as *lempu'* (honesty), *getteng'* (integrity), and *siri'* (dignity), all of which align with the essential components of national character development. These values are not only philosophically rich but are also deeply embedded in the daily social fabric of the Bugis community, offering authentic moral guidance that is directly drawn from lived experience.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of a culturally grounded character education model that is more responsive to Indonesia's diverse local traditions. Furthermore, it can serve as an academic reference for the formulation of more contextual and meaningful educational policies, helping to close the gap between national educational ideals and community-based realities.

By highlighting *Pappaseng* as both a philosophical foundation and a pedagogical resource, this study makes a unique contribution to the broader field of moral education. It offers a relevant, localized model of character formation that resonates with indigenous wisdom and identity construction. Given its rich moral teachings, *Pappaseng* holds significant promise as a foundational medium for national character education, thereby necessitating deeper exploration of its philosophical concepts, practical values, and educational applications.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach with library research as the primary method. This methodological choice is grounded in the research focus, namely, the exploration of cultural values embedded in *Pappaseng* and their relevance to national character education. Library research is particularly suitable for this type of inquiry, as it enables in-depth analysis of texts and scholarly works that preserve, interpret, and contextualize traditional knowledge within broader educational frameworks. Given that *Pappaseng* is a form of oral and written cultural heritage, engaging with authoritative secondary sources allows for a rigorous reconstruction and interpretation of its values.

Data were obtained from a purposive selection of 37 academic sources, comprising 26 peer-reviewed journal articles, 13 scholarly books, and 8 other credible academic documents. The inclusion criteria required that each source explicitly address the central themes of *Pappaseng*, cultural heritage, or character education. Sources lacking scholarly merit, credibility, or thematic relevance were excluded. The credibility and relevance of the literature were ensured through critical appraisal, considering factors such as peer-review status, citation metrics, and the academic reputation of the authors.

To ensure analytical rigor, triangulation was employed by integrating diverse types of sources (e.g., journal articles, monographs, and institutional reports), thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1994), which includes three concurrent processes: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Key concepts and values were extracted from the literature, condensed, and organized into thematic categories aligned with the dimensions of character

education. This process was iterative and reflexive, with data collection and analysis occurring concurrently to allow for continuous refinement of interpretations. The results are presented narratively, highlighting how the values contained in *Pappaseng* can serve as a philosophical and ethical foundation for character development in contemporary educational contexts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Pappaseng*: The Wisdom of Character and Identity

The Bugis community has long been recognized for its distinctive life system and deeply rooted cultural values, which serve as moral and social guidelines in everyday life. Situated in South Sulawesi, a region abundant in historical heritage and vibrant cultural practices, the Bugis people preserve enduring traditions such as the *Lontara* script and *Pappaseng*, a corpus of oral wisdom handed down through generations. These two cultural elements represent not only markers of identity but also vehicles of local wisdom (Nurhaeda, 2018), positioning the Bugis uniquely within the global cultural landscape for their capacity to sustain and transmit indigenous knowledge in both written and oral forms. When seen from a global perspective, the Bugis tradition of transmitting ethical values through written scripts and oral expression echoes indigenous knowledge systems in other parts of the world. The *Māori Whakataukī* of New Zealand and Native American oral traditions, for instance, similarly function as mechanisms for instilling community ethics and character education. The *Lontara* script does more than just document history; it also embodies what Hall (1997) describes as cultural semiotics, sign systems through which societies encode their worldviews and moral frameworks.

To provide a deeper understanding of how *Pappaseng* functions within a broader theoretical context, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a valuable analytical lens. According to Lonner et al., (1980) societal values profoundly shape behaviors and institutions. Bugis society, characterized by collectivism, high power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, reflects these dimensions through the values expressed in *Pappaseng*, namely respect for elders, communal responsibility, and preservation of moral codes (Abbas, 2013). This connection shows that *Pappaseng* is not simply a traditional artifact but a cultural mechanism that supports societal cohesion. In parallel, Lickona (1991) the character education model, which emphasizes the development of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior, complements the structure of *Pappaseng*. Through its forms, *elong* (songs), *warekkada* (proverbs), and dialogues, *Pappaseng* fosters reflective moral reasoning and behavioral guidance. These forms operate as pedagogical tools that reinforce ethical decision-making and strengthen individual character, resonating with contemporary character education approaches embraced globally.

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Comparative international insights further emphasize the universality of this approach. Research conducted in Japan, Africa, and the Philippines underscores how cultural narratives and oral traditions act as foundational pillars in the development of ethical values and social norms (de Guzman et al., 2014; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2008). These traditions, like the *Ubuntu* philosophy in South Africa or *Ifugao hudhud* chants in the Philippines, affirm that community-based storytelling

and local expressions are essential in cultivating what can be termed moral capital, the collective ethical consciousness of a society. Thus, *Pappaseng* serves not just as a relic of the past but as a culturally embedded educational tool with contemporary significance.

The structure and meaning of *Pappaseng* can be further clarified through a comparative mapping of its core values with Indonesia's national character education values and Hofstede's cultural dimensions. For instance, *siri'* or shame/self-respect, delivered through monologue-style dialogues, aligns with integrity and discipline, echoing Hofstede's dimensions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Likewise, *alempureng* or honesty through *warekkada* reflects both long-term orientation and societal expectations of honesty. These parallels demonstrate how local cultural expressions like *Pappaseng* are not only compatible with but also enrich global frameworks of moral education.

Historically, *Pappaseng* was entrusted to respected figures such as Kajao' Laliddong, who were revered not only as cultural custodians but also as moral authorities and political advisors (Matalitti & Arief, 1986). These individuals functioned similarly to Confucian scholars in imperial China or griots in West African cultures, whose oral traditions were instrumental in maintaining social order and cultural continuity. Their wisdom was not abstract but deeply intertwined with governance, community regulation, and ethical leadership.

However, in today's rapidly globalizing world, the relevance of *Pappaseng* is increasingly challenged. The dominance of digital media and formal education systems has marginalized many oral traditions. Despite this, scholars such as Iskandar (2016) and Jumrana (2018) contend that integrating *Pappaseng* into the formal education curriculum could revitalize ethical discourse among youth and offer a culturally grounded form of character education. As such, there is a pressing need to reposition *Pappaseng* not just as an object of preservation, but as a dynamic source of ethical instruction relevant to both historical and contemporary contexts.

The first form of *Pappaseng*, *elong*, is a poetic and melodic expression where messages are conveyed through song. This method allows the values to be more easily remembered and internalized by listeners. A compelling example is the *elong* that speaks of the regrets of adulthood rooted in a childhood without learning. It conveys the urgency of education, the danger of procrastination, and the blessing of discipline and self-guided effort, encapsulating key values such as responsibility, perseverance, and time management. One example of *Pappaseng* in the form of a song is as follows.

*Alama sea-sea mua'*  
*Tau na Ompori sesse' kale*  
*Na saba riwettu baiccuna*  
*De' memeng naengka ma'guru*  
*Baiccu'ta mi tu na wedding siseng*  
*Na rekko matoa'ni masussani*  
*Na saba maraja nawa-nawani*  
*Enrengnge pole toni kuttue*  
*Upasekki lao ri idi maneng*  
*Aja' lalo muonro mammatu-matu*  
*Tannia idi natajeng wattue'*  
*Sesse' kale maddimunri temma'guna*  
*Idi mitu na onroi pa'goncingna*  
*Pa'goncingna lao ri decengnge*  
*Mammuare namaseiki puangnge*

It means:  
 A life full of misery  
 People who come to regret  
 Because of his childhood  
 Never wanted to learn  
 Childhood is a time for learning  
 When it comes to maturity it will be difficult to learn  
 Because there are many thoughts  
 And also comes laziness  
 So I ordered you  
 Never like to procrastinate  
 Time does not wait for us  
 Regret will never be of any use  
 The key is in yourself

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*Natopada tuo mallongi-longi*

The key to goodness

May you get God's grace

As well as given a long life

The second form, *warekkada*, uses expressions akin to Indonesian proverbs to transmit ethical boundaries and behavioral codes. One notable *warekkada* advises not to take what is not yours, symbolized through imagery such as marked wood and objects set aside by others. This subtly promotes honesty, respect for ownership, and integrity—fundamental traits emphasized in national character development. An example of *Pappaseng warekkada* as follows.

*“Aja’ muala waramparang narekko taniya waramparammu*

*Aja’ muala aju ripasanre’e narekko tania iko pasanrei’*

*Aja’ muala aju riwetta wali narekko tania iko pe’ttai’*

It means:

Don't take things that don't belong to you

Do not take the wood that has been propped up if you are not the one propping it up

Do not take wood that has been marked unless you have marked it

The third form is dialogue, which may take the form of a conversation or a reflective monologue. For example, the line “*Sipungetta’ ri lino, tellumi di ala pasappo iyana ritu...*” outlines three guiding principles in life: fear of God, shame before oneself, and shame before others. These values reflect spiritual morality and social ethics, creating a holistic foundation for character building aligned with both cultural and religious principles (Iskandar, 2016). An example of dialogue.

*“Sipungetta’ ri lino, tellumi di ala pasappo iyana ritu:*

*Mkaseddin’na iyanaritu tau ta’ ri Dewatae*

*Makaduanna iyanaritu siri’e riwatakkale ta*

*Makatellunna iyanaritu siriita ri padatta rupataue.”*

It means:

As long as we live in this world, there are three things that guide us in life

First, fear of the creator, namely God Almighty

Second, shame on yourself

Third, shame on fellow human beings.

Furthermore, as stated by Matalitti et al. (1985) *Pappaseng* serves as ancestral instruction and advice, passed to descendants to ensure they live righteously and by societal norms. Punagi & Bakar (1983) further define *Pappaseng* as a *wasila* or will be an enduring form of moral transmission that functions as social control, protector of norms, character shaper, educational medium, and everyday guide in society.

### National Character in *Pappaseng*: The Soul of a Nation

The Bugis community has long upheld a rich tradition of cultural values and ethical systems that guide communal life in South Sulawesi. These traditions are enshrined in both the Lontara script and *Pappaseng*, the latter being a form of oral literature passed through generations as moral messages. Far beyond a relic of the past, *Pappaseng* embodies a living educational philosophy, deeply rooted in Bugis cosmology and sociocultural norms (Nurhaeda, 2018). This aligns with Ki Hajar Dewantara's view that education is an effort to develop one's character, intellect, and physical integrity to contribute meaningfully to society and the natural world (Supranoto, 2015).

In the global discourse on character education, *Pappaseng* aligns closely with the model proposed by Lickona (2009), who emphasized the teaching of universal moral values—honesty, responsibility, modesty, respect, and fairness. These are reflected in what the Bugis people express as *siri'*, *alempureng*, *reso*, and *amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar*. According to Wynne, these values become character when realized in consistent moral behavior (Zuchdi et al., 2009). Thus, *Pappaseng* as a medium of cultural instruction functions not only to preserve identity but also to promote national character in a concrete and deeply rooted manner.

The challenge today lies in bridging traditional expressions like *Pappaseng* with formal, pluralistic education systems. Although globalization and digital culture have reduced the dominance of oral traditions, scholars such as Iskandar (2016) and Jumrana (2018) argue that integrating *Pappaseng* into curricula can revive local wisdom as an educational force, especially in forming a plural and inclusive national character. As Kartadinata (2009) and (Dharmawan, 2014)) argue, national character is not the aggregation of individual behaviors but a reflection of cultural intelligence and awareness of unity in diversity.

To fully understand the role of *Pappaseng* in national education, it is essential to explicitly compare its values to the 18 national character values set by the Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional (2011). Below is a structured comparison.

Tabel 1. Comparative table: *Pappaseng* values and 18 national character values (Kemendiknas)

<i>Pappaseng</i> value	Form	Meaning/expression	Equivalent national character value
<i>Siri'</i> (self-respect / shame)	Dialogue	Moral restraint, inner dignity, and responsibility to society and self	Discipline, integrity, responsibility
<i>Alempureng</i> (honesty)	<i>Warekkada</i>	Ethical clarity, not taking what isn't yours	honest
<i>Reso</i> (hard work)	<i>Elong</i> (song)	The necessity of effort and learning early in life	Hard work, discipline, independent
<i>Mappatabe</i> (courtesy)	Dialogue/ <i>warekkada</i>	Respecting others, practicing humility and good manners	Tolerance, respect, communicative
<i>Amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar</i> (moral guide)	Dialogue and Religious	Encouraging virtue and discouraging vice, rooted in Islamic teachings	Religious, moral, social Care
<i>Pakkasitinaja</i> (justice and fairness)	Advice/dialogue	Being fair in action and speech	Fairness, democratic
<i>Paseddiwi</i> (loyalty/ nationalism)	Symbolic advice	Staying loyal to one's land and people	Love of homeland, national spirit
<i>Pammase</i> (compassion)	<i>Elong</i>	Asking for God's mercy, treating others with care and kindness	Social care, religious

Pappaseng value	Form	Meaning/expression	Equivalent national character value
<i>Pasang-sangaji</i> (divine awareness)	Dialogue	Always remembering and fearing the Creator	Religious
<i>Appalili</i> (mutual aid / unity)	Customary practice	Helping each other during hard times, community-based ethics	Cooperation, tolerance, social responsibility

Source: Research data

This mapping highlights how the core philosophical values in Bugis culture are not only compatible with but strengthen the implementation of national character education. *Pappaseng* is thus more than just folklore; it is an epistemology of character rooted in local cultural practices. As Wibisono (1998) noted, national character requires a collective identity grounded in nationalism and mutual roles, and traditions like *Pappaseng* are instruments for cultivating that collective awareness.

Moreover, this integration supports the government's vision of developing character through cultural literacy, as outlined in the National Policy for the Development of National Character (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2010). Cultural elements like *Pappaseng*, when embedded in education, not only preserve regional identity but enrich national diversity, serving as a foundation for inclusive and plural character education that unites rather than divides.

### ***Pappaseng* Values as a Foundation for National Character Building**

When examined through the lens of its definition, form, and function, *Pappaseng*—a body of ancestral wisdom from the Bugis people—emerges as a culturally rooted pedagogical instrument capable of shaping national character. The moral messages embedded in *Pappaseng* offer a behavioral framework aligned with the core values of character education, such as responsibility, discipline, social awareness, and moral integrity. More than mere advice, *Pappaseng* contains layered meanings and symbolisms, best understood through semiotic and discourse analysis. One of the most expressive forms is the *Pappaseng* delivered through kelong—traditional Bugis songs that are rich in metaphor and emotional resonance.

*Pappaseng* in song form (*Kelong Alama Sea Sea*)

“Alama sea-sea mua’  
*Tau na Ompori sesse’ kale*  
*Na saba riwettu baiccuna*  
*De’ memeng naengka ma’guru*”  
 It means:  
 A life full of vanity  
 People who come to regret  
 Because of his childhood  
 Never wanted to study

This first stanza conveys a moral narrative centered on the concept of time and regret. Semiotic analysis reveals childhood as a metaphor for formative years, a sacred period for moral and intellectual development. The notion of regret functions as a symbol of moral consequence. This aligns with the philosophical premise of character education: that moral identity must be

cultivated early to prevent future moral decay. Delivered through a *kelong*, this message becomes more than didactic; it becomes emotionally evocative, tapping into communal memory and encouraging intergenerational reflection.

*“Baiccu’ta mi tu na wedding siseng*

*Na rekko matoa’ni masussani*

*Na saba maraja nawa-nawani*

*Enrengnge pole toni kuttue”*

It means:

“Childhood is a time to learn

When it comes to maturity, it will be difficult to learn

Because there are many thoughts

And also, laziness comes”

In the second stanza, it means that education that starts early will have a better impact in the future because when education starts early, individuals will have a foundation when entering the adult phase, and post-adult individuals will find it easier to develop their education. This is in line with the purpose of character education to form students who believe in and fear God Almighty (Omeri, 2015). This stanza further underscores the urgency of early education. The phrases “many thoughts” and “laziness” symbolize the cognitive and emotional distractions of adulthood. A discourse analysis reveals an implicit critique of procrastination and an advocacy for proactive self-development. When integrated into classroom discussions, particularly through methods like storytelling or dramatization, this *Pappaseng* encourages students to reflect on their learning habits and future aspirations.

*“Upasekki lao ri idi maneng*

*Aja’ lalo muonro mammatu-matu*

*Tannia idi natajeng wattue’*

*Sesse’ kale maddimunri temma’guna”*

It means:

“So I ordered you

Never like to procrastinate

Time does not wait for us

Regret will never be of any use”

The symbolism of “time” as a fleeting, uncontrollable force parallels global philosophical and religious teachings about impermanence. In the context of Bugis wisdom, time becomes a moral compass. Here, character education intersects with self-management and goal-setting skills highly encouraged in modern curricula. Teachers might use this as an entry point for reflection journals or dialogic learning, where students share personal experiences of time use and self-discipline.

*“Idi mitu na onroi pa’goncingna*

*Pa’goncingna lao ri decengnge*

*Mammuare namaseiki puangnge*

*Natopada tuo mallongi-longi”*

It means:

“The key is in yourself

The key to goodness

May you get God's grace

And given a long life”

This stanza encapsulates the philosophy of intrinsic motivation. The key (*pa'goncing*) symbolizes agency and self-awareness values central to building ethical and independent learners. Semiotic analysis also reveals a spiritual dimension, where divine blessing is conditional upon personal effort. In terms of pedagogy, this aligns with the character education principle of fostering internal control over external conformity. It also connects with spiritual learning outcomes in Indonesia's national curriculum, which emphasizes faith in God alongside moral development. Another form of *Pappaseng* that reflects interpersonal ethics is found in the popular Bugis maxim.

*"Warekkada Rebba Sipatokkong, Mali Siparappe', Malilu si Pakainge"*

It means:

"Upholding each other, when drifting beached each other, and reminded each other of each other."

Each phrase in this proverb operates as a cultural symbol. "*Rebba Sipatokkong*" (upholding each other) represents social solidarity and mutual support, essential in collectivist societies. "*Mali Siparappe*" (help each other when adrift) serves as a metaphor for resilience and interdependence. "*Malilu si Pakainge*" (remind each other) symbolizes moral correction and shared accountability. These values are not only foundational to character education but also echo the goals of civic education and social-emotional learning (SEL). Educators can use collaborative learning, storytelling circles, and even classroom governance structures to model these values in action.

This is in line with research conducted by Wening (2012). In his research, he said that the formation of national character is influenced by the values of everyday life, the community environment, and value education within the family. Besides being related to values in social life, there is also *Pappaseng*, which means a prosperous life in society with prevailing norms, and fosters a sense of responsibility towards oneself, namely.

*"Cinnai Siri'mu nasaba siri'e mitu rionroang rilino.*

*Nakko teddengngi' siri'mu, wajo-wajomitu monro, Malebbi'I mualai Amatengenge.*

*Naia tau de'e sirina, maddupa taumi, de lainna olokolo'e."*

It means:

"Take care of your shame (honor) because it is with shame that it will always be guarded in the world. If the shame (honor) has disappeared, it's like just a shadow, it would be better if you didn't live (died)."

Because people who have no shame are just like animals."

The term *siri'* (honor/shame) is a core moral value in Bugis society, symbolizing human dignity and moral consciousness. This triadic stanza can be read as a cultural discourse on the ontology of the self: to lose *siri'* is to lose one's very essence. In educational terms, this can be connected to character learning about integrity, accountability, and respect. Teachers may use this text as part of ethical dilemmas or values clarification exercises, allowing students to explore the consequences of moral choices. Furthermore, the sentence "*Nakko teddengngi' siri'mu, wajo-wajomitu monro, Malebbi'I mulai Amatengenge*," this sentence has the meaning that if the shame has disappeared within a person, then life is like a shadow that is unable to benefit others. Life is like a body without a spirit that gives strength to live in this world. It would be better not to live in this world, or to walk the path of death. Furthermore, *Naia tau de'e sirina, maddupa taumi, delaina olokolo'e*, this sentence has the meaning of explaining about someone who no longer has a past towards each other, or is likened to an animal that has no mind.

In essence *Pappaseng* is made as a guide for their children and grandchildren, in the process of making *Pappaseng* it is not immediately used as an advice, but through a long process, this is because all the tips are based on the experience that has been passed at that time. *Pappaseng* as

the shaper of the nation's character because his previous parents gave instructions in which there was an invitation to always do good, which can be used as a basis for life in dealing with various life problems.

Character building through *Pappaseng* is expected to be able to provide good character formation in accordance with its characteristics because it teaches about values in life, and teaches how to live in a society in a prosperous manner with the norms that apply. Character education is not just teaching good and bad or right and wrong, but instilling habits about good things and being able to feel these good values, then makes it position higher than moral education (Firman & Haramain, 2022). With *Pappaseng*, it can provide value education, education about norms, discipline, and creativity, and increase responsibility and which is the goal of character education. With this in mind, the Bugis community has good character and is always able to build a prosperous life, improve social life, so that it pays attention to the public interest without feeling disadvantaged because of what has been done.

Many character values come from literature and culture, so it is not enough if character development is only carried out by educators (Firman & Haramain, 2022). Parents and the community must be involved to maximize the formation of character through literature or culture, because *Pappaseng*, who are included in the literary caste, are very active in the family and community environment to create true character.

*Pappaseng* is a work of high quality, making it suitable to be used as a tool in shaping one's character. The moral and ethical standards contained in *Pappaseng* depend on the author or creator; therefore, not all of them can convey it well, but Bugis people will easily understand it and apply it in Indonesian, so that it can be applied in social life. In addition, parents who play an important role in implementing *Pappaseng* must first know the characteristics of their children, as mentioned Lickona (1996), because when parents do not know their children's emotions, these children are not ready to fulfill obligations. mentally and morally.

Humans have various characteristics that define their behavior and interactions within society. According to Mutmainnah (2018) these characteristics are divided into several key values. *Deceng na jak'* refers to good and bad behavior, which serves as a measure of what is acceptable or prohibited in society and acts as a moral guide in daily life. This concept has been passed down through generations and is embedded in local wisdom known as *Pappaseng*. *Lempu*, or honesty, represents a sincere and truthful attitude toward oneself, others, and God. An honest person is highly respected in society for their integrity and kindness. *Warani* or bravery, signifies the courage to take risks and make difficult decisions. Among the Bugis people, this trait is evident in their willingness to challenge the ocean waves through sailing, which has become part of their cultural heritage in *Pappaseng*. *Ada' na gau* reflects the principle of aligning actions with words, emphasizing discipline and consistency in one's conduct. *Marenreng per'ru*, or loyalty, originates from two words: *marenreng* (to move or vibrate) and *pe'ru* (intestines), symbolizing the deep bond between parents and their children, highlighting the vital role of parents in shaping a child's character. *Sipakatau* embodies the principle of respecting oneself and others, fostering affection and compassion within the social environment to create a harmonious and prosperous society. Lastly, *aseddi'-seddingeng*, or cooperation, promotes social solidarity, prevents division, and contributes to a safe and peaceful community life. These values collectively shape the moral and ethical foundation of Bugis society.

The characters above are taught in *Pappaseng* as an effort to shape the character of a person, learning is done through advice, conversations, or in the form of songs, in which there is

advice directed towards building that character. Thus, this shows that *Pappaseng* is a unit that plays a very important role in character building from an early age to adulthood.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *Pappaseng*, as a form of Bugis oral tradition, is not merely a traditional moral compass but holds significant potential as an indigenous source for character education within modern pedagogical contexts. Through semiotic and discourse analysis, this research reveals that *Pappaseng* contains core ethical values such as *siri'* (honor and dignity), responsibility, honesty, social solidarity, and respect for time and learning. These values align with Indonesia's national character education framework and contribute directly to the holistic development of students.

Theoretically, the findings extend character education literature by offering an ethnopedagogical perspective grounded in local wisdom. *Pappaseng* can serve as a conceptual model for integrating traditional knowledge into formal education, challenging the dominance of decontextualized universal moral standards and supporting a culturally responsive pedagogy. This approach represents an original contribution to decolonizing character education by restoring indigenous narratives and epistemologies to their rightful place in the curriculum.

Practically, *Pappaseng* may be implemented through culturally-rooted instructional strategies such as storytelling, oral performance, and reflective dialogue. These pedagogical methods not only transmit moral lessons but also reinforce cultural identity and foster intergenerational connections. In terms of curriculum development, *Pappaseng* is well-suited for thematic learning in Bugis communities and broader multicultural education settings across Indonesia. From a policy perspective, the findings highlight the need for institutional support in formalizing the role of local cultural texts within national education systems. Local governments and educational stakeholders are encouraged to promote the revitalization of *Pappaseng* through teacher training, instructional material development, and collaboration with cultural elders and communities.

Nonetheless, this study is limited by its conceptual and literature-based approach. Further empirical validation is necessary to assess the practical impact of *Pappaseng* in real-world educational settings. Future research should include classroom observations, interviews with educators and learners, and the experimental design of curriculum modules based on *Pappaseng* that can be tested and evaluated systematically. *Pappaseng* should be regarded not only as a cultural heritage but also as a pedagogical resource capable of shaping students' character within a culturally grounded, value-based education framework.

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