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Madurese Proverbs as Transformation of Cultural Character Symbols

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Abstrak

Kata Kunci:
Peribahasa;
Pendidikan
karakter;
Kebudayaan.

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji transformasi peribahasa Madura sebagai simbol pendidikan karakter berkebudayaan yang mencakup lima aspek utama, yaitu religiusitas, kekerabatan, gotong royong, kemandirian, dan integritas. Selain itu, penelitian ini menelaah potensi peribahasa Madura sebagai media pembelajaran yang dapat diimplementasikan dalam pendidikan karakter berkebudayaan. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, simak, dan catat. Data dianalisis dengan teknik padan referensial melalui tahapan klasifikasi, reduksi, dan interpretasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peribahasa Madura merefleksikan nilai-nilai karakter yang dapat dijadikan simbol budaya sekaligus pedoman dalam kehidupan, sehingga relevan sebagai media transformasi pendidikan karakter yang berbasis kearifan lokal.

Abstract:

Keywords:
Proverbs;
Character
education;
Culture.

This study aims to examine the transformation of Madurese proverbs as symbols of cultural character education, encompassing five main aspects: religiosity, kinship, mutual cooperation, independence, and integrity. Furthermore, it examines the potential of Madurese proverbs as a learning medium that can be implemented in cultural character education. The method used is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and note-taking. Data were analyzed using referential matching techniques through the stages of classification, reduction, and interpretation. The results show that Madurese proverbs reflect character values that can be used as cultural symbols and guidelines in life, making them relevant as a medium for transforming character education based on local wisdom.

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INTRODUCTION

Oral literature is an important part of cultural heritage and is a benchmark for a nation's progress (Nasyitha, 2024). Forms of oral literature include folk tales, myths, legends, pantun, poetry and proverbs, the existence of which is not only entertainment,

but also becomes a means of education and moral education that preserves local culture, ethical values, religiosity and social ties that are held firmly from generation to generation. (Mahmuda, Sulistyowati, and Agustian, 2023); (Hasanah and Andari, 2021); (Wuarlela, Lewier, and Lelapary, 2020). The preservation of oral literature requires synergy between various parties, such as the government, traditional leaders, and the community, in order to maintain the original meaning and values contained within it so that it remains sustainable as the nation's cultural heritage. (Simatupang, Sari Purba, and Siringo-Ringo, 2024).

In this context, Madurese proverbs (*parèbhâsan*) occupy an important position because they are a means of transforming cultural values that reflect the richness of the Indonesian nation, especially the Madurese tribe. (Taembo et al., 2024). Each proverb not only functions as a traditional expression but also contains deep meanings that describe the character of society, such as honesty, wisdom, religiosity, courage, and kinship (Fajriyah, 2021); (Natasya et al., 2024); (Rawati, 2023). Even though they have values that are quite relevant to character education and are part of a nation's identity, Madurese proverbs are now increasingly ignored by their speakers. (Munadifa and Ansori, 2024). This is in line with research conducted by (Astiari and Suardana, 2024), reveals the fundamental challenges in understanding and preserving proverbs due to the low understanding of the younger generation regarding proverbs as a moral and cultural heritage. This is proven by research conducted at school level which shows that students' understanding scores are still low (Indrawati, 2019).

This research was conducted to re-emerge the functions of *parèbhâsan* as a guideline for the lives of communities that preserve cultural riches as a manifestation of character education. Nurbaya (2023); Laili and Herwiana (2020) through *parèbhâsan* values such as integrity, kinship, concern for others as in the *parèbhâsan* "*asèkot dâ' abâ'na dhibi*" (measured by oneself) this proverb functions as a satire on bad habits that are accused of other people. as well as a symbol of Madurese culture which emphasizes the importance of manners and morals in social life, such as the expression *pa'apah rea usa thengka e paka'adâ'* which means that when doing something, good manners must be prioritized (Effendy et al., 2021) emphasizes that Madurese *parèbhâsan* represents local wisdom that gives rise to community identity towards local cultural character education, the use of which is starting to be rarely found in everyday The phenomenon of the use of *parèbhâsan*, whose existence is starting to erode, needs to be developed and paid attention to by academics to make it easier for listeners or readers by using the cultural theory approach proposed by Clifford Geertz through the concept of thick

description which can help read cultural symbols contextually contained in Madurese *parèbhâsan* (Fadil, Jamalie, and Nor, 2024). Apart from that, Wolfgang Mieder's paremiology theory views proverbs as language formulas that are dense with meaning, easy to remember, and need to be passed down across generations (Nugraha, 2017). The perspective offered by Mieder shows that Madurese *parèbhâsan* is not merely an aesthetic form, but rather an instrument of values and identity that needs to be retransmitted, including through digital spaces and even formal education at all levels.

Research on the transformation of character education symbols in oral literature has been conducted in various disciplinary contexts, such as by Badrih (2017) researching oral literature (Kèjhung) as an educational medium with regional cultural character, there are constitutive symbols, cognitive symbols, ethical symbols, expressive symbols, and aesthetic symbols which are transformed into the form of oral literary art in the form of *kejhung* with the aim of being a vessel for noble values (Susiatik, 2018). Through the study of classical Javanese literature, it is shown that the transformation of character education through learning that emphasizes spiritual balance, development of self-potential, and harmony with the natural and social environment. Meanwhile, Salamet, Alam, and Tazam (2023) shows that Madurese proverbs have personality values and religious messages that play a role in character education. Research in a broader scope regarding proverbs was carried out by Rizkiyah et al. (2025). Through a Systematic Literature Review using the PRISMA approach, the paper titled "The Role of Indonesian Proverbs in Character Building of Generation Z in the Digital Era" reveals three main themes: proverbs as a medium for character education, a means of cultural preservation, and the challenge of relevance in the digital era. Research conducted Nurbaya and Ati (2025) in his research, Revitalization of Character Values in Dolabilolo Proverbs: An Ethnopedagogical Study of Tidore Society, he found that Dolabilolo proverbs are full of religious values, responsibility, hard work, tolerance, and social solidarity that can be integrated into education to strengthen character while maintaining local cultural identity.

Nevertheless, most previous studies have placed more emphasis on traditional arts (*kèjhung*), learning based on classical Javanese literature, or proverbs as a medium for general moral education. In-depth studies of Madurese proverbs are still limited to descriptions of personality values and moral messages, without seeing them as cultural symbols that can be interpreted contextually. There has not been much research that uses an interpretative approach, for example through Geertz's (1973) thick description to uncover the social, historical and functional meaning of Madurese proverbs. This is the urgency of this research, namely to present Madurese proverbs as a source of character

education based on local culture as well as strengthening cultural identity amidst the challenges of globalization and the declining appreciation of the younger generation for oral traditions.

This study aims to analyze the transformation of Madurese proverbs as a medium for cultural character education which includes five main values, namely; religiosity, kinship, mutual cooperation, independence, and integrity. In addition, this study examines the potential of Madurese proverbs as a learning medium that can be implemented as a transformation of cultural character education. This study seeks to explore how proverbs reflect cultural values and how the meanings contained in them can be transformed into everyday life. Through research on Madurese Proverbs as Transformation of Cultural Character Symbols, it is hoped that Madurese people will increasingly understand and apply the cultural values contained in proverbs as cultural character identities. In addition, this research is also expected to serve as a reference and open up space for subsequent researchers to develop similar studies, both in the context of oral literature, character education, and local wisdom in other regions.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach to generate descriptive data on the cultural character education values found in proverbs. The main data in this study are Madurese proverbs that contain character education values. Meanwhile, the data sources in the research were obtained from elders or members of the community who were considered knowledgeable about Madurese proverbs, as well as supporting documents such as journals, books, and manuscripts containing Madurese proverbs. Data was collected using interview, observation and note-taking techniques. Interview techniques were used to obtain initial data in the form of Madurese proverbs that contain elements of character education. The listening technique is carried out by researchers regularly listening to proverbs in order to find initial data related to proverbs that have character values. Next, the researcher made notes on the paper that had been prepared. The recorded data is identified using the referential matching method. The referential matching method is used to identify the cultural character education values in Madurese proverbs. The references referred to in this research are data that refer to words that have the meaning of objects, places, characteristics, and so on. The data analysis technique uses three stages, including (1) data classification, namely grouping proverbs according to the character education contained in the proverbs, (2) data reduction, namely selecting and simplifying data that is relevant to the research focus, and (3) data interpretation,

namely interpreting the meaning of proverbs within the framework of cultural character education values in accordance with the theory put forward by Clifford Geert.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The scope of this research discussion, the researcher focuses on the character education values of Madurese proverbs which contain cultural character symbols that cover 5 main areas including 1) religiosity, 2) kinship, 3) mutual cooperation, 4) independence and 5) integrity. The meaning of cultural symbols such as Madurese proverbs cannot be understood superficially but must be examined in their social, historical, and functional contexts. The concept of thick description introduced by Clifford Geertz emphasizes that culture is a network of meanings created and interpreted by humans, so cultural research must explore the deeper meanings of existing symbols (Geertz, 1973). A symbol is an emblem that is based on a conventional agreement that refers to certain ideas or definitions (Salamet, Alam, and Tazam, 2023). The following will explain the values of cultural character education through a cultural approach through symbols contained in Madurese proverbs according to Clifford Geertz.

Characteristics of Religious Culture

The character value of religious culture reflects a strong relationship that includes three aspects, including the relationship between humans and God, humans and humans, or humans and their environment (Khoiriyah, Badruli, and Adi 2021). Religious character education plays an important role in raising awareness and making the younger generation aware of the importance of understanding religious values in the community (Kusmanto and Mujiani 2023). The following are Madurese proverbs that reflect the character education of religious culture.

(1). *Abhântal syahadat asapok iman*

The Madurese proverb "*Abhântal syahadat asapok iman*" (Pillowed by the Declaration of Faith, blanketed by faith), literally represents a profound meaning. Philosophically, the proverb "*Abhântal syahadat asapok iman*" describes a person who makes belief in Allah and His Messenger as a guide in life (represented by the Declaration of Faith as a "pillow") and covers himself with faith that protects and warms the soul (represented by faith as a "blanket").

The proverb "*Abhântal syahadat asapok iman*" represents the Madurese people's belief in God Almighty. The two sentences of the Shahada, as a guide for the lives of

Muslims, are used as a proverb that instills positive values in the younger generation in Madura. The phrase "syahadat" is represented as a pillow, symbolizing a support for the soul, both in sleep and approaching death, as a form of complete surrender to God. The phrase "*asapok iman*" demonstrates the steadfastness of the Madurese people in obeying His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. The blanket of faith warms the soul and guides behavior based on the religious norms of its adherents. That proverb represents that the Madurese people highly value religious values, which are relevant for becoming a character education transformation based on local culture in the future. The integrity of character education in culture has the principle that oral literature serves as a guide from an early age and possesses a morality that can make the social-religious integrity of the Madura community more controlled (Alber and Andiyani, 2019).

The transformation of character education based on local culture in Madura can be strengthened by utilizing local proverbs and traditions as a medium for internalizing religious, moral, and social values. Research Salamet et al. (2023) states that Madurese proverbs contain personality values, especially in religious life, which are manifested in daily attitudes and can be a reflection of character for future generations. In addition, religious traditions such as nyabis, which are maintained by religious figures known as kiyai, strengthen the religious character values of society through the process of moral knowledge, attitudes and behavior that are in line with the theory of character education, which reflects the norms of community life that need to be maintained in the future (Maulidi et al. 2021).

The value of character education found in Madurese society, apart from being proven by cultural activities, is also proven by proverbs which use diction containing elements of trust in their creator through the Islamic religion which is believed to be a guide to life, then expressed in the form of figurative phrases to convey a certain meaning which aims to convey religious messages (Supriyadi, Hidayat, and Tawaqal 2020).

(2). *Mangghu' ka karsana Alla*

The Madurese people have a deep belief in the concept of destiny as determined by God (Tabarok, Ambarwati, and Tabrani, 2025). This principle is found in the proverb *Mangghu' ka karsana Alla* (accept everything that has been decreed by Allah), which teaches surrender after trying, as in the expression *Patenang bedâ Alla*, which means calm because there is Allah. This religious value forms the moral foundation that sustenance will not be exchanged, thereby fostering sincerity, patience, and perseverance (Salamet, Alam, and Tazam, 2023). More than just a spiritual attitude

represented in Madurese proverbs, but also shapes the work ethic and local culture of the Madurese people, who believe that efforts accompanied by prayer will bear fruit according to His will, while maintaining harmonious relations between humans and God as well as with one another (Suharti, 2021).

The principle of religious culture in Madurese society in the second proverb is not only used as a guide in spiritual life, but also influences the culture and ethos of Madurese society in doing everything. They show tenacity and patience because they believe that efforts based on prayer will bring results in accordance with His provisions. Thus, it creates harmony between humans and God or humans and humans (Suharti 2021). The proverb *Mangghu' ka karsana Alla* is not only a form of faith but also a representation of social relationships based on belief in God's provisions. When applied to the context of the religious cultural values of the Madurese people, these values are very strong in their religious nature, as evidenced by research conducted by Mohammad Syamsuddin in his book *Historis of Madura*, which states that Islam plays an important role in the lives of the Islamic community in Madura. The social culture and civilization that developed in Madurese society is a representation of traditional values and culture, and it is these traditional Islamic cultural values that have shaped a cultural identity and tradition that has enabled them to become a traditional Islamic group in Indonesia (Syamsuddin, 2019).

(3). Abhâjeng èpettenga

A Madurese proverb that contains values of religious character education is found in the proverb *Abhâjeng èpettenga* (Pray in the dark). In the context of Madurese culture, it contains a message for people who do good deeds but do not show them to others. The proverb *Abhâjeng èpettenga* represents the values of Islamic teachings believed by the community, where worship is a form of ritual devotion between servants and their God that does not need to be directed or displayed to others. Through proverbs, Madurese poets seek to make the community aware of the need to maintain their actions in accordance with Madurese cultural norms. The proverb *Abhâjeng èpettenga* represents the highly respected value of sincerity, where the Madurese community is known as persistent and unyielding in their work without expecting praise. Cultural character values are not only based on strong social norms, but also on the deep religious beliefs of their adherents.

The presence of Islam for the Madurese people is not just a religious routine, but has become a traditional cultural identity in living life. Islam is not only practiced in formal worship, but has become an integral part of local traditions through deep acculturation.

These include the ngusar, rokat, samman, sarwe'en, and kolom traditions. Tabarok, Ambarwati, and Tabrani (2025), this shows how the local culture of the Madurese people adapts Islamic teachings into their traditional cultural practices. In addition, research conducted by Shidqon and Ramadhan (2023) shows that the farming community in Madura, not only uses the Koran as a reading medium for dialogue with God, but also as a guide in daily activities, such as in the farming process, which begins with praise when planting or when harvesting.

Characteristics of Kinship Culture

Relatives, or what is generally known as family, play a significant role in Madurese society as a form of social solidarity and strong cultural ties. Family relationships are not only limited by blood, but also extend to the concept of *tretan* (brotherhood) which encompasses emotional relationships between residents in the Madurese community. Kinship patterns in Madurese society serve as a social support system in various aspects of life. This is reflected in the following traditional Madurese proverb.

(4). *lèbbi bhâgus apagher pereng è tembhâng apagher perreng*

Proverbs that have a kinship or family cultural character are found in the proverb *lèbbi bhâgus apagher pereng è tembhâng apagher perreng*, (it is better to have a plate fence than a bamboo fence). This is a Madurese proverb which has extraordinary wisdom and philosophy of life. This proverb has a symbolic meaning about giving alms or in Madurese culture it is known as *ter-ter*. *Ter-ater* is a cultural tradition of the Madurese people which is often carried out by the people of the interior when there is an event or what is known by the Madurese people as a *hajatan*. *Ter-ater* means sharing one's fortune with relatives, neighbors, teachers, and people who are considered worthy of receiving gifts (Bahri and Lestari, 2020).

The meaning of *Apagher pereng* fence the plates has a symbol of a generous person who maintains friendship through food alms, or sharing social fortune, a person who likes to share is protected by neighbors from danger. Meanwhile, the *apagher perreng* with a bamboo fence symbolizes someone who is never involved in social interactions, is not generous, and is ultimately shunned by his environment. as the Madurese expression is known as *degghi' mun mate la eosong dhibi'* (if you die, you'll carry it yourself).

Research conducted by Bahri and Lestari (2020) shows that the social values in character education related to the tradition of theater demonstrate the kinship values held

firmly by the Madurese people. This kind of character building can be transformed into local wisdom-based education at all levels, enabling the Madurese generation to integrate the values of social solidarity while maintaining their cultural identity in the modern era (Naimah, Mubayyamah, and Efendi, 2021).

The Character of *Gotong Royong* Culture

Mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) is a community activity often performed during social celebrations. It also reflects and can be used as a form of moral education, fostering a caring attitude toward others. Madurese society is also known for prioritizing social interaction. This is a guiding principle for social activities. This value of character education is reflected in the following proverb.

(5) Song osong lembhung

The next data on the cultural character of the Madurese people is found in the proverb *Song osong lembhung* (lifting the barn). This proverb is often used by the Madurese people to refer to the mutual cooperation activity carried out by lifting the barn together. The word *lembhung* has the connotation of a spirit of mutual assistance, which literally means a barn where the harvest is stored.

In Madurese culture, this proverb reflects the principle of cooperation or mutual cooperation which is highly valued in Madurese social culture. Mutual cooperation in Madurese society is not just about working together, but is a manifestation of a sense of responsibility as human beings who have very strong social ties. In addition, mutual cooperation in the context of Madurese culture not only helps with physical matters, but also in solving various problems, both economic, social and cultural. As in the case of building a house, holding traditional celebrations, or in harvest celebrations (Ummah and Rahmawati, 2024). The principle of *song-osong lembhung* teaches that the success and happiness of a society depends on the extent to which individuals or groups contribute to the common good. This is in line with what was said by Koentjaraningrat states that solidarity is manifested in the form of cooperation to achieve common goals, in this case mutual cooperation which is seen as something highly commendable in the legal system of society. If it is associated with Madurese tradition, it is known as the *jhâk-ajhâk* (cooperation) tradition (Amin, 2018).

(6). Tadâ' oreng jhâreppen e sarrop dhibi'

A proverb that reflects the cultural value of mutual cooperation can be found in the proverb *Tadâ' oreng jhâreppen e sarrop dhibi'* (no one blows their own eyes when they have something in them). The context of mutual cooperation reflected in this proverb emphasizes that every human being who lives in a social community will inevitably need other people (Mawardi, Mulyana, and Amalia, 2024). The values of togetherness contained in local proverbs show that the practice of mutual cooperation has become a social system that has been preserved for generations and has strong relevance in forming community solidarity. This principle is emphasized in proverbs.

(7). *Ghânte bâta*

Ghânte bâta (taking turns to lift) is a symbol of the richness of local wisdom that is steeped in life values, especially regarding the importance of mutual assistance. The *Ghânte bâta* language is a cultural text conveyed by Greertz through symbolic expression by harmonizing the meaning of the text with the culture of the Madurese people. This proverb can be interpreted as character education that emphasizes the importance of togetherness, cooperation, and empathy in social life. This value is in line with previous research showing that Madurese proverbs contain character education that is relevant to instill in the younger generation, especially regarding the values of mutual cooperation (Salamet, Alam, and Tazam, 2023).

Cultural character education as reflected in the proverb *Ghânte bâta* must continue to be reinterpreted in order to survive in the midst of changing times. In this case, cultural symbols that can be used as a basis for strengthening character education based on local wisdom need to be preserved and developed in the form of oral literature such as proverbs. In line with the findings (Hani'ah et al., 2017) Proverbs play a strategic role in building the morality of the younger generation because they contain ethical messages that are simple and easy to understand but have profound meaning. Thus, Madurese proverbs can provide information about local culture and present an adaptive and relevant character education model to address future social challenges.

Independent Cultural Character

The Madurese people are known for their independence in life. The independent cultural character of the Madurese people can be represented in a lifestyle that prioritizes independence as part of the cultural identity of the Madurese people. This kind of independence can be seen in their ability to utilize natural resources wisely. The independent values of the Madurese people are also reflected in their philosophy of life,

which is often conveyed through proverbs. The following are Madurese proverbs that represent the character of independence.

(8). *Tadhâ' jagung, obi dèddhi nase'*

The Madurese proverb *Tadhâ' jagung, obi dèddhi nase'* (if there is no corn, even roots will become rice) is similar to the Indonesian proverb When there's no rattan, *even roots will do*. (if there is no rattan, even roots will become rattan). It means that something that is not available can be replaced with something else, especially since people in the past never made a fuss about things that were not available (*apah badanah*). Eating whatever is available, denotatively, has the meaning of simplicity and not being picky about food, so that whatever is available and edible, they will eat it.

In Madurese culture, this reflects a philosophy of independence. The proverb represents a pragmatic and creative attitude in facing limited resources, as well as the ability of the Madurese people to utilize everything available to achieve their goals or fulfill their needs. In the context of independence, the proverb *Tadhâ' jagung, obi dèddhi nase'* shows that even without primary resources (such as corn), the Madurese people are still able to adapt and find alternatives, even utilizing something that may be considered less useful (such as sweet potatoes) to produce something of value (such as rice). This reflects the values of hard work, innovation, and resilience that are highly valued in Madurese culture. The Madurese people, despite often living in limited circumstances, have a spirit of not relying on others and continue to strive to optimize their potential and available resources, which is at the core of their independence in facing everyday life.

(9). *Ta' adhâng, ta' adhâng*

The seventh proverb means "no trade, no meat" and refers to the independence of the Madurese people in seeking work. This is often said by traders. The meaning conveyed in this proverb emphasizes the attitude of independence in seeking sustenance; whoever works hard in life will live a decent life. As in the proverb. "*Orèng madhurâ ta' tako' mate, tapi tako' kalaparan*" means "*Madurese people are not afraid of death, but they are afraid of starvation*." This proverb means that a person's life and death are determined by God's will. No matter how much they try to avoid death, it will still happen to every living creature, and starvation is one of the real fears because when a person is starving, they cannot do anything. Thus, this proverb teaches the character education value of independence, namely how a person can survive in life by using hunger as a step towards independence.

Cultural Character of Integrity

The Madurese people are known for their high level of integrity, a value that is reflected in their daily lives, which emphasize honesty, responsibility, and steadfastness in following traditions. The cultural integrity of the Madurese people is built through a strong culture and traditions. These values are not only passed down from generation to generation, but also serve as guidelines for maintaining social harmony and the welfare of the Madurese community. In addition, the Madurese people's philosophy of life, which is rich in symbolic meaning, is reflected in proverbs that embody integrity as a culture-based society. The following are Madurese proverbs that reflect the character of a culture of integrity.

(10). *Etèmbâng potè matah lèbbi bhâgus potè tolang*

A proverb that has character values about integrity is found in the proverb *Sembilan Etèmbâng potè matah lèbbi bhâgus potè tolang* (better white bones than white eyes). This proverb has a meaning about the integrity of the Madurese people regarding a person's pride, which states that above all else, it is better to die than to bear shame. The Madurese people have a very high philosophy of life that upholds the value of optimism in the principle of living so as not to waver, let alone be broken.

Etèmbâng potè matah lèbbi bhâgus potè tolang teaches us as cultured human beings to have a high level of commitment in life, especially in carrying out duties or responsibilities. In the context of Madurese culture, this proverb is usually used by the Madurese people to defend the honor of their family, in other words, to avoid shame. It is interpreted as a situation where, when one of their family members is insulted, they are willing to sacrifice their lives to defend the honor of their family. The feeling of shame cannot be borne in the lives of the Madurese people. Therefore, every effort can be made to avoid the feeling of shame in question. Desecration of the Madurese people that causes feelings of shame can lead to *carok* among the Madurese people (Hipni and Karim 2019).

(11). *Abhântal ombâ' asapok angin*

The last proverb about integrity is found in the expression *Abhântal ombâ' asapok angin* (cushioned by waves and covered by wind). This proverb refers to the Madurese people who never give up in life. *Abhântal ombâ' asapok angin* is a proverb familiar to fishermen in Madura, who work in the middle of the sea, as the coastal community of

Madura is predominantly engaged in sea work or fishing for their livelihood. Cognitively, the proverb *Abhântal ombâ' asapok angin* is likened to the Madurese people, in that the life of a fisherman is full of challenges, trials, and storms that hinder them. But they never falter in their determination to continue forward. They liken the sea to a home, the wind to a blanket, and the waves to pillows (Fadlilah, 2021).

The Madurese people highly value moral values in their interactions. In the context of Madurese culture, character education that embodies the symbol of integrity needs to be instilled in the younger generation from an early age as a guideline for life. The Madurese proverb *Abhântal ombâ' asapok angin* reflects important values about resilience in life, determination, and loyalty to principles. The values represented in the proverb *Abhântal ombâ' asapok angin* are not only part of the oral cultural heritage, but also serve as a guideline for life that is in line with building the character of the Madurese people, who are resilient, adaptive, and highly competitive. This makes the Madurese people a community with a collective identity. In addition, Madurese proverbs can be preserved and sustained, and the younger generation is able to maintain local wisdom that is ready to thrive in the dynamics of modern life.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Madurese proverbs not only function as traditional expressions, but also as cultural symbols that represent character education values, namely religiosity, kinship, mutual cooperation, independence, and integrity. These five values demonstrate how proverbs serve as guidelines for life and a means of moral internalization in Madurese society. The substance of the meaning obtained confirms that proverbs play an important role in maintaining social harmony, strengthening cultural identity, and shaping a young generation with character and roots in local wisdom. It is hoped that the development of this research can be directed towards comparative studies between cultures in Indonesia, so that similarities and differences in patterns of character formation based on local wisdom can be seen. In addition, further research also has the opportunity to integrate proverbs into formal and non-formal education strategies so that they are more relevant to the younger generation in the era of globalization and digitalization. Thus, proverbs are not only a cultural heritage, but also a dynamic and contextual character education instrument.

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