

# Promoting Peace Education by Using the Local Wisdom in Manggarai Culture, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

This research was based on the fact that violence in schools, such as bullying, fighting, or other types of violence, is still happening and has not been completely resolved. There are many models of peace education that have been implemented, but not all of them are effective. This study aims to explore a local wisdom in the Manggarai culture in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, namely "go'et" (proverb), which can be used as a medium for peace education in schools. The problem in this study is what are the values of "go'et" local wisdom that can be used as a medium for peace education in schools? The results show that there are many important values contained in go'et that can be used to promote a culture of peace for students. These values are: togetherness, respect for differences, respect for others and their rights, fairness to others, and love for others.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Peace education is one of the issues that has recently attracted the attention of researchers and educators (Gur-Ze'ev, 2019; Haavelsrud & Stenberg, 2012; Harris, 2011; Lombardo & Polonko, 2015). This issue arises particularly when dealing with actual problems such as violence, war, bloody conflicts, oppression, and harassment of human dignity on a local, national, and global scale (Chen & Astor, 2010; Flannery et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2006; Young et al., 2006).

Unicef (Loreta & Jasmin, 2010) defines peace education as "the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, and values needed to bring about behavioral changes that enable children and young people to avoid conflict and violence, both real and structural; to resolve conflicts peacefully; and to create conducive conditions for peace, whether at an interpersonal, intergroup, national, or international level.

Peace education is an educational model that promotes a culture of peace that is essentially transformative. This educational model instills a knowledge base, skills, attitudes, and important values that seek to change the way of viewing, attitudes, and human behavior that are influenced by the perspective of violent conflict. Peace education seeks transformation by building awareness and understanding, as well as developing concerns and challenging personal and social actions that enable people to live, relate to, and create conditions and systems of life that basically actualize the values of justice, non-violence, and other peace values (Loreta & Jasmin, 2010).

Efforts made by educators in schools to create schools that are free from various forms of violence have been carried out in various forms. This effort was carried out very comprehensively by UNESCO as an implementation of the UN peace agenda (Mayer, 2007; Kumar, 2018). The most common effort is through the curriculum. For example, the integrative peace model (Danesh, 2008), which is carried out through a peace curriculum based on the concept that peace is a psychological, social, political, ethical, and spiritual state with its expression in the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, international, and global fields of human life. Similar efforts were also carried out through curriculum development to raise student awareness about their responsibilities in society, especially through developing critical and reflective thinking skills among students (Butt et al., 2011).

Some theoretical analysis identifies several education models that can promote peace, namely international education, human rights education, environmental education, development education, and conflict resolution (Butt et al., 2011; Danesh, 2008; Harris, 2004). Other peace education models offered try to integrate peace education with sustainable development (Swee-Hin & Cawagas, 2010), with the assumption that education should strengthen and enhance their shared vision and mission to build a world that is infused with values of non-violence, justice, respect, reconciliation, and sustainability.

A peace education model is based on a critical education perspective (Brantmeier, 2013; Zembylas & Bekerman, 2013). This model advocates the need for comprehensive education and school reforms in all its aspects because it is in line with critical education assumptions. The sources of inequality that are the reasons for the emergence of violence, oppression, and violations of human rights are located in an unfair and longstanding status quo structure firmly embedded in conventional education models.

Of the several peace education models offered above, lately, they have also promoted peace education models based on local wisdom. Some studies have been carried out in the Indonesian context (Amirin, 2012; Anggraini et al., 2017; Meliono, 2011; Ulfah, 2014), but they do not entirely explore the cultural riches and local wisdom that can be the basis for the development of peace education.

Peace education based on local wisdom has not been widely implemented even though the use of local wisdom itself has proven to be effective in solving problems such as socio-cultural problems (Dahlioni et al., 2015; Eko & Putranto, 2019; Mungmachon, 2012; Qodariah & Armiyati, 2013; Teasdale & Ma Rhea, 2000) and education (Anggraini & Kusniarti, 2017; Cheong Cheng, 2004; Fajarini, 2016; Harsojo, 2013; Nurani Dewi et al., 2017; Pornpimon et al., 2014; Teasdale & Ma Rhea, 2000).

Local wisdom is knowledge and important values that animate the unique practices that grow and develop in a culture that is uniquely maintained and preserved as an advantage of the community. According to Riyanto, Ohoitumur, Mulatno, and Madung (2015; pp. 28–29), local wisdom is often regarded as a philosophy of life that is embedded in the hearts of the people, manifested in the form of practical wisdom, ways of life, rituals and customs, and the like. Local wisdom is often hidden in the traditions of daily life, in mythology, in beautiful literature, in the form of rituals of worship or traditional ceremonies, in the form of symbolic values, in the form of houses, in the language and culture of eternity, and in other local life arrangements. He has a strong character and is inherent in the locus, or place where the community is located.

Because local wisdom is rooted in culture and lived by the people of that culture, it has an extraordinary influence on the lives of the people of that culture. The influence even strongly touches on the affective and behavioral aspects so that it influences the way of life and how to act and how to be. That is what makes the nature, character, and behavior of people from one culture often differ from those from other cultures in response to certain stimuli. Due to the strong influence of local wisdom on the formation of character and human personality, local wisdom is often used to solve problems or to promote certain positive cultures to the local community (Eko & Putranto, 2019; Mungmachon, 2012; Qodariah & Armiyati, 2013).

One form of local wisdom appears in the use of language and literature for certain purposes (Carroll, Kajangu, & Coulehan, 2006). Language is one of the important instruments in human interaction. Through language, humans can express themselves (thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and behaviors) both towards themselves and also towards others and their environment (Lycan, 2008).

The limited research on the use of local wisdom as a medium for peace education encourages the researcher to conduct a study on aspects of local wisdom that can contribute to the development of a culture of peace and peace education in particular by using the local wisdom in Manggarai culture, East Nusa Tenggara. One of the local wisdoms is poetic expression (*go'et*), which has certain pedagogical values.

According to Hemo (1990), "*go'et*" is an expression, a proverb, which, according to the Manggarai tradition, reveals certain meanings and values to be internalized by people in everyday life. In Manggarai culture, *Go'et* (poetic expression) is one of the linguistic expressions in the form of proverbs that have certain meanings. "*Go'et*" cannot be understood literally. It can only be understood in the context in which it is used because it often uses symbols taken from objects, animals, plants, and so on.

*Go'et* contains values that provide certain instructions or teachings for the Manggarai people. "*Go'et*" has several meanings. 1) prohibiting community members from engaging in behavior that violates societal norms or values. 2) Raising public awareness of the importance of adhering to life's norms and values. 3) Giving advice to the community or young people to live by 4) As a condemnation of speech, behavior, or actions that are contrary to norms and values (Hemo, 1990).

Deki (2011) classified the *go'et* into six types. 1) *Go'et* that contains the meaning of relationships with others in the family (*ase ka'e*); 2) *Go'et* expressing the togetherness of life in a village (*lonto golo, ka'eng beo*); 3) *Go'et* that consisted of the meaning of relationships with other people (*cama tau, ata bana*); 4) *Go'et* that contained the meaning of relations with the authorities (*ata tu'a laing*); 5) *Go'et* expressing the relations with ancestors (*empo*); 6) *Go'et* that which is associated with being supreme (*Mori agu Ngaran*).

The problem of this study is: what are the values of the poetic expression (*go'et*) that can be used as a medium for peace education in schools and communities? The purpose of this study is to describe several meanings of "*go'et*" that contain educational values so that they can be used as a model of peace education in creating a culture of peace in schools and in society.

## 2. METHODS

### Context

This study was conducted in Manggarai, an area in eastern Indonesia with a population spread across western Flores Island. Administratively, this area consists of three districts, namely Manggarai Regency, West Manggarai Regency, and East Manggarai Regency. The people in these three regions generally speak Manggarai with several dialects (*Kempo* and *Kolang* in West Manggarai, *Central Manggarai*, *Rongga* and *Rembong* in East Manggarai) and have a relatively similar culture so-called the Manggarai culture (Toda, 1999; Nggoro, 2016; Hemo, 1991; Verheijen, 1991). Geographically, Manggarai Raya is located at 8.14o–8.30o South Latitude and 119.30o–120.50o East Longitude. Statistics 2019 from the three districts show that the total population is 847,330 people (Badan Pusat Statistik NTT, 2020).

### Focus

This research is descriptive qualitative research. The focus of this research is expressions or proverb (*go'et*) that are often used by the Manggarai people on various occasions, especially in certain rites or ceremonies. There are numerous *go'et* expressions in use in the Manggarai language, but the focus of this study is on *go'et*, which has specific pedagogical meanings, particularly those related to values in peace education.

These proverb are then analyzed using a semiotic approach (Danesi, 2007). Semiotic analysis was used with several considerations. First, the data analyzed are words that contain objects, signs, symbols, events, or actions. A number of *go'et* contain words that refer to certain objects, events, signs, or actions that are not only denotative but also connotative in their meanings (Wood, 2011). Second, the meaning of objects, symbols, events, or actions that are expressed in words requires interpretations, agreements, or conventions that contain broader or deeper values.

More specifically, the semiotic analysis technique used is the Ferdinand de Saussure model (1959). Saussure defines the sign as a dichotomous opposition between the signifier and the signified. For

Saussure, the linguistic sign unites a concept and a sound-image. In this context, signifiers are words that come out in the form of sound-images arranged into a series of voiced words, for example in the form of expressions (go'et). The signified is a concept or meaning that is understood by the user both denotatively and connotatively.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following are some go'et collected from expressions or proverbs commonly used by the Manggarai people on various occasions.

Go'et (Proverb)	Signifier	Signified
Toda kongkol kopè olès, nai ca anggit tuka ca lèlèng	toda = shield; kongkol = united, becoming one; kope = machete; oles = metal handiwork; nai = heart/mind; ca = one; anggit = tie/bond; tuka = stomach/will/desire; leleng = same/one	This go'et contains meaning for the people in the community to always maintain unity in living together. The highest value is placed on unity, so disputes must always be avoided. Unity and togetherness should started from family between its members (kilo, ame, panga) and then will affect togetherness in community life.
Neka bikè ca lidè, nèka behas ca cewak	neka = prohibited; bike = break; ca = one; lide = container for filling vegetables, rice or seeds made of woven bamboo or pandan leaves; behas = separate, breaking the bond; cewak = traditional plate of the Manggarai people made of forest pumpkin / melon whose skin is quite hard. When used as a plate, the pumpkin is split and seeded and cleaned to be a container for storing rice/food	This go'et also speaks of the importance of unity. Through this go'et, the members of the community are always reminded to maintain integrity in the family and in the community. This expression is also a warning that in the community there is always the potential for dispute due to disagreement, jealousy, envy, and greed. The use of the word "neka" (prohibited) implicitly reveals that the potential for dispute is real, and may also be based on the past experiences that have occurred, and should be avoided.
Anggom pèlè awon, awèk pèlè salèn	anggom = uniting; pele = part; awon = from the east; awek = pull; salen = from the west	The meaning of this expression is that in living together, all people in the community come from various backgrounds (age, sex, status, position, ethnicity, religion, and belief) as expressed in the use of the words "awon" (from the east) and "salen" (from the west). As a result, the spirit of togetherness must be preserved by strengthening the ability unite one another. The differences due to background diversity have the potential to bring about friction within the community. People are always reminded to be able to accept one another by building

Go'et (Proverb)	Signifier	Signified
Neka anggom lè anggom lau, èmè data, data muing, nèka daku dèmèng data	neka = prohibited; anggom = collect; le = in the south; lau = in the north; eme = if; data = belongs to someone; daku = belongs to me; demeng = still	dialogue, mutual understanding, and mutual respect.  An important message from this phrase is: do not take the rights or property of others illegally. It also means that each person is obliged to get something based on his/her own effort and hard work. Individual property rights are also very well maintained when living together. Having something is a right for everyone, but it must be obtained in ways that are lawful and not detrimental to others.
Inung toè nipu, hang toè tanda, lage locè toko data	inung = drinking; toe = no; nipu = sure; hang = eating; tanda = certain; lage = pass, go by, stride; loce = plaited mat; toko = sleep; data = the property of others	This phrase contains advice to stay away from adultery. Adultery is a form of confiscation of the property of others (data), either husband or wife. The Manggarai community highly values the sanctity of marriage and adopts a monogamous marriage system. Therefore, adultery is considered a disgrace that must be avoided. The meaning of adultery is seen in the use of the word "someone else's bed mat" (loce toko data). Beds in this context are legal husband and wife beds, which are places for intercourse. To stride the bed (lage loce toko data) is similar to straddling the dignity of a marriage that has been bound, as well as the dignity of the household of others.
Bahi gici arit cingkè gici irèt, kudu te agil cama laing	bahi = divide; gici = each part; arit = small cleavage; cingke = divide as small as possible; iret = divide; kudu te = in order to; agil = just; cama laing = together	The context of this go'et relates to the division of inheritance (land) of shared property, which must be shared fairly and equally among all members. But this phrase also means treating others fairly, respecting their rights, and not being discriminatory. When someone acts as a leader, he must be honest, fair, and not discriminatory in treating the people he or she leads.
Sèkang baling salang toko rontong manè ngaèng	sekanng = house; baling = beside/on the edge; salang = road; toko = sleeping; rontong = turtle bird that flies alone, perches on a tree because of the	Originally, this expression was used during a girl's engagement. A spokesperson (tongka) at the ceremony compared the presence of a man to that of a turtledove that is benighted and wants to find shelter in the

Go'et (Proverb)	Signifier	Signified
	night; manè = late evening; ngaèng = be found, be uncovered	girl's house. However, in its wide use, this expression also teaches people the obligation to provide a ride for other people/strangers who are benighted on the way. Strangers or other people who are on their way are people who should be helped because they are far from their family or relatives. He or she experienced difficulties due to lacking a place to stay because it was already night when he was still on his way. This expression also means feeding people in need without demanding certain compensation.
Onè-onè kèot, onè-onè kèco, onè-onè gici koè	one-one = getting deeper; keot = tightness/narrowness; keco = tightness/narrowness; gici koe = little by little	This expression comes from a context in which the community members who inhabit a village are increasingly growing meanwhile the land for living is becoming increasingly limited. But people should not be driven away just because of limited land. This expression means that the community should provide a place for others who are in need, despite difficulties and limitations. People should have solidarity to others who were suffering.
Nggoès walè oè, inggos walè io	nggoes = easy, fast, light; wale = answering; oe = smooth and polite answers; inggos = walking slowly, walking politely; io = greeting or polite answer	This phrase describes the manners of the Manggarai people when treating their interlocutors. In speaking, a polite attitude towards the interlocutor is highly demanded. People should not use harsh and disrespectful words toward their interlocutors, especially those who are older. Manggarai people see that human dignity is also reflected in the speech they use every day with others.
Mu'u luju lema emas reweng cembes	mu'u = mouth; luju = chain of precious metal ornaments; lema = tongue; emas = gold; reweng = speech/sound; cembes = cool, fresh, happy, pleasing to the heart	This expression illustrates the ability of people who speak cool, refreshing, and pleasant words to make others cool. The words that come out of the mouth are likened to chains of precious metal ornaments (luju), and the tongue is like gold. One key to communicating politely is the use of language, or the selection of the right words. Therefore, this expression teaches people to always be wise in their use of

Go'et (Proverb)	Signifier	Signified
		words when communicating with others. The use of the right words can also prevent people from antipathy, hostility, displeasure, and even conflict.

From the 10 go'et analyzed using de Saussure's semiotic analysis model above, it appears that the following values are important for promoting peace education in schools. *First*, care for unity in togetherness. Living together, which is always filled with a harmonious and peaceful atmosphere, is the desire of all people, including the Manggarai people. Togetherness and unity are two of the important values that are lived up to and always voiced on various occasions. The parents, traditional leaders, or community leaders always called for people to live in harmony, maintain unity, and integrity. *Second*, respect for the difference. One important issue in peace education is how people can live peacefully amid differences. The difference is a necessity, therefore it must be valued. *Third*, respect for the rights of others. Individual rights must also be respected when living together. These individual rights include the property and ownership of others, as well as the right to live and develop.

*Fourth*, be fair to others. Living together is also characterized by fair attitudes and behavior towards others. This attitude is related to the use of shared resources. For example, in the distribution of land, assets, or inheritance, those who play a role in the distribution process must be fair. It means giving other people what they are entitled to. *Fifth*, loving others. This is an important virtue in building relationships with others. Besides being an important core teaching of various religions, the moral value of loving others is also an important value that is lived and lived by people of various ethnic groups. *Sixth*, respect for other people. Attitudes of respect for other people appear in speech, attitudes, and actions towards them. The Manggarai people uphold politeness in speaking and being polite to other people, especially older people.

## Discussion

The use of cultural treasures as educational tools have been implemented in "culture-based education models." This model allows the use of various cultural treasures, such as local wisdom, as a medium of learning for students. The results of this study are in line with the efforts promoted by UNESCO in order to strengthen cultural resilience from the onslaught of foreign cultures (Kumar, 2018) and also answer the question raised by UNESCO about the tension between the local and the global for society in the 21st century (Delors, 1996). Likewise, this research has confirmed the findings of a study that the cultural approach in education has proven to be effective (Singh & Espinoza-Herold (2014). Besides, the use of local wisdom has eliminated the anxiety of indigenous people about the loss of their cultural treasures due to the cultural homogenization carried out in modern education, especially from the legacy of colonialism.

The values of local wisdom found in this study are also in accordance with the values that are promoted in peace education around the world as initiated by the 1998 UN Declaration, namely: 1) respect for life and human rights, 2) rejection of violence in all its forms and commitment to the prevention of violent conflict by taking root causes through dialogue and negotiation; 3) commitment to full participation in the process to meet the needs of current and future generations; 4) promotion of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, 5) recognition of the right of all people to freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, and freedom to obtain information, and 6) respect for the principles of liberty, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue,

and understanding between nations, ethnicities, religions, cultures, and individuals (Loreta & Jasmin, 2010).

The six important values based on the analysis of the meaning of go'et show that these values are in line with various peace education efforts being promoted, especially those driven by UNESCO. Peace education is related to efforts to help people with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to: 1) build and maintain relationships at all levels of human interaction; 2) develop positive approaches to overcoming conflict, from personal conflict to social conflict; 3) create a safe environment, both physically and emotionally, that fosters individual growth; 4) create a safe world based on human rights and justice; and 5) build a sustainable environment and protect it from exploitation and war.

Some of the go'et explored above show a wealth of values that can be utilized for peace education both at school and at home. Some values, such as respecting others, loving others, respecting other people's property rights, being friendly to others, and upholding togetherness, are important themes in peace education as promoted by Unesco (Kumar, 2018). Peace education is based on a philosophy that promote non-violent behavior as well as love, sacrifice, trust, justice, honesty, cooperation, and respect for the human nation and all life on this earth. These skills include communication, listening, understanding different perspectives, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, conflict resolution, and social responsibility (Kumar, 2018).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research has strengthened the belief that the use of local wisdom in conveying important values in education is a best practice that needs to be promoted, especially in supporting peaceful cultural practices in schools. Living the values of a peaceful culture should be rooted in the local culture that is lived by students as long as these values do not conflict with the universal values that are lived by people from other cultures. The implementation of peace education based on local wisdom needs to involve stakeholders such as parents and community leaders as well as traditional leaders. In addition, an educational curriculum that is friendly to students and teaches a culture of peace is an important educational model in order to preserve the values of a culture of peace in schools and in society.

In addition, this study has only explored the values of local wisdom in general in the context of Manggarai culture and has not investigated specifically how the values of local wisdom are lived in different community groups such as in terms of the educational background of parents, religiosity, gender, and various other demographic variables. Therefore, further research can be done by exploring specific variables, especially demographic and psychological variables, in order to develop a contextual and integrative model of peace education based on local wisdom.

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