



The Values of Local Wisdom on *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* in Batak Toba

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the values of local wisdom embodied in the *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*, a traditional Batak Toba legend originating from Pangunjunan Village, Habinsaran District, Toba Regency, North Sumatra. The legend narrates the tragic consequences of an incestuous relationship between two siblings, which ultimately results in their transformation into stone as divine and customary punishment. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach through folklore analysis, this study explores the moral, cultural, and social values reflected in the narrative based on the concept of local wisdom. The findings reveal that the legend primarily functions as a medium for preserving moral principles and reinforcing the Batak Toba kinship system, particularly the prohibition of incest and the importance of maintaining family honor. The analysis identifies seven major elements of local wisdom, five of which emphasize peace-oriented values, including self-control, politeness, social solidarity, belief in God, and moral education, while two represent prosperity-oriented values, namely diligence and work ethic. The dominance of peace-related values demonstrates that the legend serves as an effective mechanism of social control, cultural preservation, and character education. Consequently, *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* remains highly relevant in contemporary society as a cultural instrument for transmitting ethical values, strengthening collective identity, and preserving the traditional wisdom of the Batak Toba community amid ongoing social and cultural transformation.

Keywords: Local wisdom; *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*; Folklore

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji nilai-nilai kearifan lokal yang terkandung dalam *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*, sebuah legenda tradisional Batak Toba yang berasal dari Desa Pangunjunan, Kecamatan Habinsaran, Kabupaten Toba, Sumatera Utara. Legenda ini mengisahkan konsekuensi tragis dari hubungan inses antara dua orang bersaudara, yang pada akhirnya berujung pada perubahan wujud mereka menjadi batu sebagai hukuman ilahi dan adat. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif melalui analisis cerita rakyat, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi nilai-nilai moral, budaya, dan sosial yang tercermin dalam narasi tersebut berdasarkan konsep kearifan lokal. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa legenda ini terutama berfungsi sebagai sarana pelestarian prinsip-prinsip moral dan penguatan sistem kekerabatan Batak Toba, khususnya terkait larangan inses dan pentingnya menjaga kehormatan keluarga. Analisis mengidentifikasi tujuh elemen utama kearifan lokal; lima di antaranya menekankan nilai-nilai yang berorientasi pada kedamaian—meliputi pengendalian diri, kesantunan, solidaritas sosial, kepercayaan kepada Tuhan, dan pendidikan moral—sementara dua lainnya mewakili nilai-nilai yang berorientasi pada kesejahteraan, yaitu ketekunan dan etos kerja. Dominasi nilai-nilai yang berkaitan dengan kedamaian menunjukkan bahwa legenda ini berperan sebagai mekanisme yang efektif bagi kontrol sosial, pelestarian budaya, dan pendidikan karakter. Dengan demikian, *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* tetap sangat relevan dalam masyarakat kontemporer sebagai instrumen budaya untuk mewariskan nilai-nilai etis, memperkuat identitas kolektif, dan melestarikan kearifan tradisional masyarakat Batak Toba di tengah transformasi sosial dan budaya yang terus berlangsung.

Kata kunci: Kearifan lokal; *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*; Cerita rakyat



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1. Introduction

Folklore constitutes one of the most valuable forms of intangible cultural heritage that reflects the collective memory, beliefs, moral principles, and worldview of a community. As an oral tradition transmitted from one generation to another, folklore preserves historical experiences and cultural identity while functioning as an effective medium for moral education and social regulation. Among the various forms of folklore, legends occupy a distinctive position because they are generally believed by local communities to have originated from real historical events, despite containing supernatural or extraordinary elements. Legends are therefore not merely fictional narratives intended for entertainment, but cultural texts that embody social norms, ethical values, and philosophical teachings inherited from ancestors. In Indonesia, where cultural diversity is exceptionally rich, legends remain significant in maintaining traditional values and strengthening communal identity amidst rapid social transformation [1].

The importance of legends extends beyond their narrative function because they serve as repositories of local wisdom. Local wisdom represents the accumulated knowledge, values, and practical experiences developed by a community through long-term interaction with its natural, social, and cultural environment. It provides guidance for appropriate behavior, conflict resolution, environmental management, and harmonious social relationships. Consequently, local wisdom is recognized as an essential cultural resource that contributes to sustainable social development while preserving the identity of indigenous communities. As modernization, globalization, and technological advancement continue to influence traditional societies, documenting and analyzing local wisdom contained in folklore becomes increasingly important to ensure that valuable cultural knowledge is not lost [2].

Within the Batak Toba community of North Sumatra, oral traditions continue to play a fundamental role in preserving customary law (*adat*), kinship systems, and collective morality. The Batak Toba people possess a highly structured patrilineal kinship system that regulates family relationships, marriage patterns, inheritance, and social obligations. Every member of society is expected to uphold customary regulations that have been established by previous generations. Among the most fundamental principles within this social system is the absolute prohibition of incestuous relationships, which are considered severe violations of both customary law and religious morality. Such violations are believed not only to bring shame upon individuals but also to threaten the honor, unity, and continuity of the entire clan (*marga*). Therefore, numerous oral traditions have evolved to reinforce these moral boundaries and educate younger generations regarding acceptable social conduct[3].

One important example is the *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*, originating from Pangunjunan Village, Habinsaran District, Toba Regency, North Sumatra. The legend narrates the tragic story of two siblings who unknowingly or carelessly violate the most sacred customary prohibition by engaging in an incestuous relationship while working together in a rice field. According to the narrative, they are subsequently struck by lightning and transformed into stone as an eternal punishment for their immoral behavior. The physical existence of the stone is believed by local people to serve as tangible evidence of the event, reinforcing the authenticity of the legend within the community's collective memory. Beyond its dramatic storyline, the legend functions as a powerful moral reminder concerning self-control, respect for customary law, family honor, and obedience to divine authority. It demonstrates how folklore may simultaneously preserve historical memory, strengthen social cohesion, and transmit ethical values across generations [4].

From the perspective of local wisdom, *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* contains numerous cultural messages that continue to be relevant in contemporary society. According to the concept of local wisdom proposed by Sibarani, cultural values generally function to achieve two primary objectives: creating peace and promoting prosperity. Peace-oriented values include belief in God, politeness, honesty, self-control, social solidarity, responsibility, gratitude, tolerance, and harmonious interpersonal relationships. Meanwhile, prosperity-oriented values emphasize diligence, discipline, education, cooperation, creativity, environmental preservation, and productive work ethics. These dimensions of local wisdom illustrate that traditional communities perceive moral integrity and material well-being as interconnected aspects of a balanced life. Consequently, legends become effective educational instruments because they communicate these values through memorable narratives rather than formal instruction [5].

Despite the abundance of studies on Indonesian folklore, relatively limited scholarly attention has been devoted to examining *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* from the perspective of local wisdom. Existing studies have generally focused on documenting the narrative, describing historical aspects, or identifying general

moral messages embedded within the story. However, comprehensive analysis of how the legend systematically represents peace-oriented and prosperity-oriented values remains insufficient. Moreover, limited research has explored the role of this legend as a mechanism of social control that reinforces the Batak Toba kinship system while simultaneously preserving cultural identity amid modernization. Addressing this research gap is important because folklore continues to function as an influential educational medium even in contemporary society, where traditional values increasingly encounter external cultural influences [6].

The present study therefore aims to analyze the values of local wisdom embodied in *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* by employing a qualitative descriptive approach through folklore analysis. The research identifies various cultural values reflected in the narrative and interprets their significance within the Batak Toba social and cultural context. Particular attention is given to understanding how the legend promotes peace-oriented values such as self-control, politeness, social solidarity, belief in God, and moral education, as well as prosperity-oriented values including diligence and work ethic. By classifying these values according to the theoretical framework of local wisdom, this study provides a more systematic understanding of the educational and cultural functions of the legend [7].

Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader field of folklore, cultural studies, and anthropological linguistics by demonstrating that traditional legends remain relevant as cultural resources for character education, ethical guidance, and identity preservation. The findings are expected to enrich discussions concerning the relationship between folklore and local wisdom while supporting efforts to safeguard Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, the study emphasizes that preserving legends such as *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* is not merely an act of conserving traditional stories but also an important strategy for maintaining the moral values, social harmony, and cultural continuity of the Batak Toba community in the face of ongoing cultural and social transformation [8].

2. Literature Review

Folklore and Legend as Cultural Heritage

Folklore constitutes an essential component of intangible cultural heritage that reflects the worldview, collective memory, and cultural identity of a community. It encompasses myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, rituals, customs, and oral traditions transmitted across generations. Unlike written historical records, folklore preserves traditional knowledge through oral narration, allowing communities to maintain their cultural continuity despite social changes. According to folklore scholars, legends differ from myths and folktales because they are generally believed by local communities to have actually occurred, although they frequently contain supernatural or extraordinary events. Legends are commonly associated with specific geographical locations such as mountains, rivers, caves, or stones, thereby strengthening people's attachment to particular landscapes and reinforcing local identity [9].

Legends perform multiple social functions beyond entertainment. They communicate moral values, explain the origins of places, preserve historical memory, and regulate social behavior. Through symbolic narratives, legends become educational media that teach younger generations about acceptable conduct and the consequences of violating social norms. Consequently, legends serve as instruments of informal education and cultural preservation. In Indonesia, where cultural diversity is exceptionally rich, legends continue to function as an important medium for maintaining indigenous knowledge and strengthening community cohesion amid modernization [10].

Local Wisdom as Traditional Knowledge

Local wisdom refers to the collective knowledge, values, norms, and practical experiences developed by local communities through long-term interaction with their natural and social environments. It is not merely inherited knowledge but also a cultural mechanism for maintaining social harmony, environmental sustainability, and collective well-being. Local wisdom embodies philosophical principles that guide people's attitudes, behavior, and decision-making processes in everyday life [11].

Local wisdom as cultural knowledge that functions to organize social life wisely and responsibly [12]. Local wisdom emerges from historical experiences and is continuously reconstructed through community practices. Therefore, it represents a dynamic rather than static cultural phenomenon. The sustainability of local wisdom depends on continuous cultural transmission across generations through family education, customary institutions, oral traditions, and community practices [13].

In the Indonesian context, local wisdom has become an increasingly important concept in cultural studies because it offers indigenous solutions to contemporary social challenges. It promotes respect for cultural diversity while strengthening local identity. The preservation of local wisdom is also recognized as an effective strategy for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and preventing the erosion of traditional values caused by globalization [14].

The Dimensions of Local Wisdom

Sibarani categorizes local wisdom into two broad dimensions: peace-oriented values and prosperity-oriented values. Peace-oriented values primarily function to establish harmonious social relationships and moral order within communities. These include belief in God, honesty, self-control, politeness, responsibility, solidarity, tolerance, compassion, gratitude, positive thinking, and social harmony. These values contribute to conflict prevention and encourage mutual respect among community members [15].

Meanwhile, prosperity-oriented values focus on improving the quality of life through productive activities. They include diligence, work ethic, discipline, creativity, education, cooperation, environmental conservation, gender equality, health awareness, independence, and economic responsibility. These values encourage communities to achieve sustainable welfare while maintaining ethical principles [16].

This theoretical framework has been widely applied in analyzing Indonesian folklore because legends frequently portray moral lessons that correspond to these two categories. The interaction between peace and prosperity values demonstrates that social welfare cannot be separated from moral integrity. Consequently, folklore functions not only as cultural entertainment but also as an educational mechanism for promoting balanced social development [17].

Oral Tradition and Cultural Transmission

Oral tradition serves as the primary medium through which local wisdom is transmitted from one generation to another. Unlike written literature, oral traditions depend upon continuous performance and community participation. Storytelling sessions conducted by parents, elders, and customary leaders provide opportunities for younger generations to internalize cultural values while simultaneously strengthening social relationships [18].

Cultural transmission through oral tradition involves more than memorizing stories. It includes understanding symbolic meanings, moral lessons, customary regulations, and collective identity. Through repeated narration, legends gradually become part of community consciousness and influence social behavior. Consequently, oral traditions contribute significantly to the preservation of indigenous knowledge and social stability [19].

However, modernization, urbanization, and technological advancement have altered patterns of cultural transmission. Younger generations increasingly rely on digital media rather than traditional storytelling. This transformation threatens the continuity of many oral traditions. Therefore, documenting and analyzing local legends have become important academic efforts to preserve endangered cultural knowledge while making it accessible to future generations.

Batak Toba Culture and Kinship System

The Batak Toba community possesses one of the most structured kinship systems in Indonesia. Social organization is based upon a patrilineal clan system known as *marga*, which determines family relationships, inheritance, marriage regulations, and customary obligations. Every individual belongs permanently to the father's clan, creating a strong sense of collective identity and social responsibility [20].

One of the most fundamental principles within the Batak Toba kinship system is the absolute prohibition of incestuous relationships among individuals belonging to the same bloodline or clan. Marriage regulations are strictly enforced through customary law because violations are believed to threaten not only individual morality but also the social order of the entire community. The philosophy of *Dalihan Na Tolu* further strengthens this system by emphasizing mutual respect, reciprocity, and social balance among different kinship groups [21].

Within this cultural framework, legends become effective instruments for reinforcing customary law. Rather than relying solely on formal legal sanctions, Batak Toba society employs symbolic narratives to cultivate moral awareness. Stories describing severe supernatural punishments for customary violations encourage voluntary obedience and strengthen community solidarity.

Folklore as Social Control and Character Education

Many folklore researchers argue that traditional narratives function as mechanisms of social control. By illustrating the consequences of immoral behavior, legends establish behavioral standards accepted by the community. Fear of supernatural punishment, social shame, or divine retribution reinforces adherence to customary values without requiring formal legal enforcement [22].

Character education has become another significant function of folklore. Moral virtues such as honesty, responsibility, diligence, respect, self-control, and compassion are repeatedly emphasized through symbolic characters and dramatic events. Because these values are presented within memorable narratives, they are more easily internalized than abstract moral instruction.

The legend of Batu Porang Ni Aji exemplifies this educational function. The transformation of two siblings into stone after committing incest symbolizes irreversible consequences resulting from violations of customary law. The narrative encourages self-control, respect for kinship boundaries, responsibility toward family honor, and obedience to divine and customary authority. Simultaneously, the depiction of agricultural activities before the tragedy highlights diligence and productive work as positive cultural values. Thus, the legend integrates both peace-oriented and prosperity-oriented dimensions of local wisdom, although moral preservation clearly remains its dominant purpose [23].

Overall, previous studies consistently demonstrate that folklore represents an effective medium for preserving indigenous knowledge, strengthening cultural identity, and transmitting ethical values. Nevertheless, relatively few studies specifically investigate the local wisdom embodied in the *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* using Sibarani's framework of peace and prosperity values. This gap provides the foundation for the present study, which seeks to identify and interpret the local wisdom embedded within the legend while explaining its continuing relevance for preserving Batak Toba cultural identity and moral education in contemporary society [24].

3. Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design with a folklore analysis approach to investigate the values of local wisdom embodied in *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*, a traditional legend of the Batak Toba community in Pangunjungan Village, Habinsaran District, Toba Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the primary objective of the research was to interpret the cultural meanings, moral teachings, and local wisdom embedded within the narrative rather than to measure variables quantitatively [25]. Folklore is recognized as a cultural text that reflects the collective experiences, beliefs, customs, and worldview of a community. Therefore, qualitative analysis enables an in-depth exploration of symbolic meanings and socio-cultural values contained in the legend while considering its historical and cultural context.

The primary source of data consisted of the oral and documented versions of *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* obtained through interviews with local cultural informants and existing written documentation. The informants were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed extensive knowledge of Batak Toba oral traditions, customary law (*adat*), and local history. They included traditional elders, community leaders, cultural practitioners, and residents who had inherited the legend through oral transmission. To complement the primary data, secondary data were collected from books, journal articles, folklore archives, government cultural publications, and previous studies related to Batak Toba folklore, local wisdom, and anthropological linguistics. The combination of oral narratives and documentary sources strengthened the credibility of the findings by allowing cross-verification of the information.

Data collection was conducted through three complementary techniques: documentation, in-depth interviews, and literature review. Documentation involved collecting various written versions of the legend, photographs of the Batu Porang Ni Aji site, and relevant historical records associated with the narrative. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to obtain comprehensive explanations regarding the story, its symbolic meanings, and its significance in maintaining customary values within the Batak Toba community. The interview format provided flexibility for informants to elaborate on cultural interpretations while allowing the researcher to explore emerging themes related to local wisdom. Meanwhile, the literature review served to establish the theoretical framework of the study by examining scholarly discussions concerning folklore, local wisdom, oral tradition, and Batak Toba culture.

The analytical framework of this research was based on the concept of local wisdom proposed by Sibarani, which classifies local wisdom into two principal dimensions: peace-oriented values and prosperity-oriented values. Peace-oriented values include belief in God, self-control, honesty, politeness, social solidarity, responsibility, gratitude, harmony, conflict resolution, and respect for customary law. Prosperity-oriented values emphasize diligence, discipline, creativity, education, cooperation, environmental awareness, and productive work ethics. This theoretical framework provided systematic criteria for identifying and categorizing the cultural values represented in the legend [26].

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data condensation, the collected narratives were carefully read and coded to identify statements, events, dialogues, and symbolic expressions reflecting the values of local wisdom. Similar codes were subsequently grouped into broader thematic categories corresponding to the theoretical dimensions of peace and prosperity. Data display involved organizing the categorized findings into descriptive matrices and thematic explanations that facilitated interpretation of the relationships among cultural values. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting how the identified values functioned within the Batak Toba cultural system and how the legend continues to serve as a medium for moral education, social control, and cultural preservation.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied source triangulation and theoretical triangulation. Source triangulation was achieved by comparing information obtained from different informants with written folklore records and previous academic publications. Theoretical triangulation was conducted by interpreting the findings using the perspectives of folklore studies, local wisdom theory, and anthropological linguistics. Credibility was further enhanced through repeated examination of the narrative and continuous comparison between field data and documentary evidence. This rigorous analytical procedure ensured that the interpretation of local wisdom reflected both the cultural understanding of the Batak Toba community and established academic perspectives on folklore studies. Through these methodological procedures, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* functions as an enduring cultural instrument for transmitting ethical principles, preserving customary values, and strengthening the collective identity of the Batak Toba people.

4. Result and Discussion

The analysis of *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* demonstrates that the narrative embodies a comprehensive system of local wisdom deeply rooted in the cultural values of the Batak Toba community. Rather than functioning merely as a traditional folktale, the legend serves as an educational medium, a mechanism of social control, and a cultural instrument for preserving the customary norms governing kinship, morality, and communal life. Through qualitative analysis, seven dominant values of local wisdom were identified. These values were classified according to Sibarani's framework into two broad categories: peace-oriented local wisdom and prosperity-oriented local wisdom. The findings reveal that peace-oriented values are considerably more dominant than prosperity-oriented values, indicating that the principal objective of the legend is to maintain social harmony and protect the moral integrity of the community [27].

The first and most dominant value identified is self-control. Throughout the legend, the tragic event originates from the inability of the two siblings to restrain their desires despite understanding the social and customary boundaries that regulate relationships among Batak Toba people. Their uncontrolled passion ultimately leads to the gravest violation of Batak customary law—incest—which is considered not only a personal sin but also a collective disgrace affecting the entire family lineage. The transformation of the siblings into stone symbolizes permanent punishment and serves as a moral warning that human desires must always be governed by ethical principles and customary regulations. In this context, self-control is portrayed as the foundation of personal morality and social stability. The legend teaches that failure to control one's emotions and desires inevitably produces irreversible consequences, both spiritually and socially.

The second value reflected in the narrative is politeness and propriety. In Batak Toba culture, politeness extends beyond courteous speech and behavior; it also encompasses respect for customary rules governing interpersonal relationships. The incident in which the siblings jokingly point at the reproductive organs of the mouse represents the beginning of their moral decline. Although seemingly trivial, this behavior violates cultural norms of modesty and decency. The narrative implies that inappropriate speech and behavior may gradually lead individuals toward more serious moral transgressions. Consequently, the legend emphasizes that maintaining politeness in words, gestures, and interactions constitutes an essential component of ethical living. Respect for cultural etiquette functions as a preventive mechanism against actions that threaten social harmony.

The third peace-oriented value is social solidarity. Although the narrative centers on two individuals, the consequences of their actions extend far beyond the perpetrators themselves. Within the Batak Toba kinship system, individual misconduct is understood as affecting the honor (*hasangapon*) and dignity of the entire clan (*marga*). Therefore, the legend reinforces the collective responsibility shared among family members to preserve moral conduct. The strong kinship structure characteristic of Batak Toba society requires each member to protect not only personal reputation but also the reputation of the lineage. By illustrating the communal consequences of individual wrongdoing, the legend strengthens collective awareness that social harmony depends upon mutual responsibility and adherence to shared cultural values. In this way, folklore becomes an effective instrument for maintaining social cohesion across generations.

Another significant finding concerns the value of belief in God and spiritual justice. The sudden appearance of thunder and lightning, followed by the transformation of the siblings into stone, symbolizes divine intervention in response to moral violation. Although the legend contains supernatural elements, these components should not be interpreted merely as mythical imagination. Instead, they represent the Batak Toba worldview that moral actions are constantly observed by a higher spiritual authority. Divine punishment reinforces customary sanctions, emphasizing that violations of sacred social norms are unacceptable both in human society and before God. The integration of religious belief with customary law illustrates the inseparable relationship between spirituality and morality within Batak cultural philosophy. Consequently, the legend encourages individuals to develop ethical behavior based not only on fear of social sanctions but also on faith in divine justice.

The fifth peace-oriented value identified is moral education. One of the primary functions of oral tradition is the transmission of ethical principles from older generations to younger members of society. *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* clearly fulfills this educational role. Parents, elders, and traditional leaders recount the story to children as a means of teaching them about the importance of respecting family relationships, observing customary law, exercising self-discipline, and maintaining social responsibility. Rather than presenting abstract moral concepts, the legend communicates these lessons through a dramatic narrative that leaves a lasting emotional impression on listeners. The tragic ending functions as an educational strategy, ensuring that the moral message remains memorable. This characteristic explains why the legend continues to survive despite modernization and changing patterns of communication. Folklore remains an effective educational medium because it combines entertainment, emotional engagement, and ethical instruction within a single narrative framework.

Besides emphasizing peace-oriented values, the analysis also identifies two values associated with prosperity-oriented local wisdom, namely diligence and work ethic. Although these values receive less emphasis than moral teachings, they remain important components of the narrative because they reflect the socioeconomic background of Batak Toba society.

The first prosperity-oriented value is diligence. At the beginning of the story, the siblings are portrayed as working together in the rice fields during the harvesting season. Farming represents the principal livelihood of traditional Batak communities, and agricultural activities symbolize perseverance, patience, and responsibility. The narrative suggests that productive labor constitutes a respectable way of achieving prosperity. However, the tragic incident occurring during agricultural work also conveys an important moral lesson: economic productivity alone cannot guarantee a meaningful life if moral values are neglected. Material success must always be accompanied by ethical conduct. Therefore, diligence is presented not simply as hard work but as disciplined labor guided by moral principles.

Closely related to diligence is the value of work ethic. The legend portrays farming as an honorable occupation requiring commitment and cooperation. Before the moral violation occurs, the siblings exemplify industriousness by participating actively in agricultural production. This depiction reflects the Batak cultural appreciation for individuals who contribute positively to family welfare through persistent effort. Nevertheless, the subsequent tragedy illustrates that a strong work ethic cannot compensate for serious ethical misconduct. The narrative therefore integrates economic values with moral responsibility, emphasizing that prosperity achieved without integrity ultimately leads to destruction rather than happiness. Such an interpretation aligns with traditional Batak philosophy, which considers moral character as the true foundation of sustainable prosperity.

The overall distribution of local wisdom values demonstrates a clear imbalance between peace-oriented and prosperity-oriented dimensions. Five of the seven identified values focus primarily on maintaining peace, while only two emphasize prosperity. This proportion indicates that the central purpose of *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* is not to promote economic achievement but to preserve social order and moral discipline.

Such findings support the broader theoretical perspective that folklore functions primarily as an instrument of normative regulation within traditional societies. Through symbolic narratives, communities establish behavioral standards that ensure social stability and cultural continuity.

Another important finding concerns the legend's role in preserving the Batak Toba kinship system. The Batak social structure is based upon a patrilineal clan system in which lineage identity determines social relationships, marriage regulations, inheritance, and customary obligations. Incest represents the most severe violation of this system because it threatens the integrity of kinship boundaries established over generations. By presenting incest as an offense punished through supernatural intervention, the legend reinforces the sacredness of customary law. Consequently, the story functions as a cultural mechanism for protecting one of the most fundamental institutions within Batak society. Even contemporary audiences who may no longer literally believe the supernatural aspects of the narrative continue to recognize its symbolic importance in preserving social ethics.

The symbolic transformation into stone also deserves particular attention. Across many Indonesian oral traditions, petrification symbolizes eternal remembrance rather than simple punishment. In *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji*, the stone functions as a permanent cultural monument that materializes collective memory. Unlike written documents, physical landmarks associated with legends enable communities to connect historical narratives with geographical space. The existence of the stone strengthens the authenticity of the legend in local belief and continuously reminds community members of the moral consequences associated with violating customary norms. Thus, landscape, memory, and oral tradition become interconnected components of cultural preservation.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the legend remains highly relevant in contemporary society despite increasing modernization and globalization. Rapid social transformation often challenges traditional values by encouraging greater individualism and weakening communal institutions. Nevertheless, the ethical principles embedded in the legend—including self-control, respect for family, responsibility, honesty, and social solidarity—continue to possess universal significance. While modern legal systems regulate behavior through formal institutions, folklore complements these mechanisms by influencing moral consciousness and cultural identity. The educational function of oral tradition therefore remains valuable in character development, particularly among younger generations who face increasingly complex social challenges.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* represents far more than a traditional narrative explaining the existence of a particular stone. It constitutes a sophisticated cultural text containing ethical philosophy, social norms, religious beliefs, and educational principles that collectively sustain Batak Toba cultural identity. The predominance of peace-oriented values confirms that the legend primarily seeks to establish harmonious relationships among individuals, families, and the wider community. Meanwhile, the prosperity-oriented values reinforce the importance of productive work conducted within ethical boundaries. Together, these dimensions illustrate that local wisdom is not merely inherited knowledge but a dynamic system of values that continues to guide human behavior across generations. Consequently, preserving *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* contributes not only to safeguarding Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage but also to strengthening moral education, social cohesion, and cultural resilience in an era of continuous social change.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* embodies significant local wisdom that continues to function as an essential cultural and moral guide within the Batak Toba community. The analysis demonstrates that the legend is predominantly oriented toward peace-related values rather than prosperity-related values. Among the seven identified elements of local wisdom, five emphasize peace—self-control, politeness, social solidarity, belief in God, and moral education—while only two focus on prosperity, namely diligence and a strong work ethic. This distribution indicates that the primary purpose of the legend is not merely to entertain but to preserve social harmony, strengthen the Batak Toba kinship system, and reinforce the prohibition of incest as one of the most fundamental customary norms. Through its tragic narrative, the legend effectively communicates the consequences of violating moral and cultural principles while encouraging individuals to uphold family honor, respect customary law, and maintain ethical behavior. Although values related to prosperity remain important, they are presented as meaningful only when supported by strong moral foundations. Therefore, *Legenda Batu Porang Ni Aji* serves as an enduring instrument of character education, social control, and cultural preservation. Its continued relevance in contemporary society highlights the vital role of folklore in transmitting ethical values, strengthening

collective identity, and safeguarding the cultural heritage and local wisdom of the Batak Toba people amid rapid social and cultural transformation.

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