

CHARACTER EDUCATION VALUES IN GHUTONG ROJHUNG TRADITION AT THE LARANGAN LUAR VILLAGE, DUSUN BERTAH

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Article history: received 21 February 2025; revised 02 March 2025; accepted 04 April 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33751/jhss.v9i1.11899>

Abstract. This paper seeks to illuminate the embedded values of character education manifest within the *Ghutong Rojhung* practices conducted during communal events in Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet. Employing a qualitative framework with an ethnography of communication design, data were amassed through immersive observation, dialogical interviews, and meticulous documentation. The analytic journey encompassed stages of data distillation, pattern visualization, and inferential synthesis. The findings unveil that despite the tides of modernization, the ritual of *Ghutong Rojhung* persists vibrantly among the populace. Communal undertakings such as prayer gatherings (*tahlilan*), collaborative construction of water channels, collective building projects, and various forms of mutual assistance continue to thrive, preserving the spirit of *Ghutong Rojhung* in Larangan Luar, Bertah Hamlet.

Keywords: values; character education; *Ghutong Rojhung*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education constitutes a continuous process of learning that transcends formal classroom settings or institutional boundaries, extending organically into the surrounding environment. It plays a critical role in elevating the quality of human resources [1]. As an essential pillar of human existence, education is intrinsically tied to character formation, interweaving deeply with human behaviors and actions. Etymologically, "character" refers to innate dispositions, temperaments, and moral inclinations that distinguish one individual from another. Terminologically, scholars offer varying interpretations of character. Thomas Lickona, a pioneering figure in Western character education, defines character as an individual's innate moral compass in responding to life's circumstances. Such a moral disposition materializes through tangible actions, manifesting in virtues like honesty, responsibility, respect for others, and other commendable attributes [2].

Character education embodies a conscious endeavor to nurture morally upright individuals, founded upon core values beneficial both to personal development and to societal harmony. It stands at the heart of human interaction, emphasizing its indispensable relevance to human life. Values represent intrinsic realities of nature, humanity, and culture, simultaneously acting as conscious norms shaped by personality systems and sociocultural needs for maintaining social order and mutual respect [3]. The foregoing explanation elucidates that the values underpinning character education are observable manifestations of deliberate human

behaviors, rooted in learning experiences encountered across diverse contexts, including societal settings.

Society, inseparable from collective actions and behaviors, is fundamentally a consortium of individuals living within social and cultural frameworks. Historically, the Madurese community is renowned for its deeply rooted traditions and cultural wealth [4]. The cultural tapestry of Madura, distinct from that of other ethnicities, is characterized by social simplicity, yet with profound adherence to ethical norms and a high regard for social engagements. This cultural vibrancy is evident across Madura's numerous villages, each fostering unique cultural identities. The Madurese exhibit an extraordinary spirit of mutual aid, demonstrated through daily acts of voluntary labor and mental contribution to support neighbors celebrating weddings or hosting significant events, gathering spontaneously without solicitation.

This communal ethos, known locally as *Ghutong Rojhung*—the Madurese term akin to the Indonesian "gotong royong"—represents collective labor and mutual assistance, especially evident in communal activities such as infrastructure development, environmental clean-ups, and social celebrations [5]. *Ghutong Rojhung* encapsulates the principle of undertaking shared tasks in a spirit of solidarity and selflessness. Koentjaraningrat interprets gotong royong as the voluntary offering of human labor without monetary compensation for projects of collective benefit [6].

The tradition of *Ghutong Rojhung* is deeply entwined with the human condition, reflecting the fundamental social nature of human beings who cannot thrive in isolation [7]. In Larangan Luar village, Bertah hamlet, Madura, *Ghutong*

Rojhung remains a living tradition practiced across diverse social events. This communal labor not only lightens workloads but also fosters a collective habit of shared responsibility. Through *Ghutong Rojhung*, the community internalizes cooperation, solidarity, mutual respect, accountability, and empathy—values that align closely with the aspirations of character education (Miyatun, 2022).

In this context, *Ghutong Rojhung* serves not merely as a mechanism for completing communal tasks but as a vital conduit for character education. By engaging in cooperative endeavors, the people of Larangan Luar cultivate their social fabric, preserving the essence of collective living through mutual support. The persistence of this tradition reflects the distinct social identity of the Madurese community in Bertah, Larangan Luar [8].

The primary objective of this research is to explore not only the ongoing practice of *Ghutong Rojhung* in Larangan Luar, Bertah but also to reveal the embodiment of character education values within this social environment. It aims to expand societal perspectives, recognizing that communal labor transcends its cultural roots to become a manifestation of the fundamental ethos of Indonesian nationhood—integral to every aspect of social life and not merely ceremonial [9].

Relevant prior studies include David Pracipto (2023), which examined the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the culture of gotong royong in Sido Binangun village, focusing on cultural shifts and the causative factors behind them. Another study by Nurbaeti et al (2022) explored gotong royong through the lens of Basic Human Values Theory, analyzing it as a core Indonesian cultural trait based on Shalom Schwartz's value framework. Further, Wiratsiwi, (2020) investigated gotong royong practices in Kampung Naga, emphasizing their role in strengthening community solidarity.

While these studies share thematic commonalities, this research differentiates itself by focusing specifically on the existence and character educational values within *Ghutong Rojhung* traditions in Larangan Luar, Bertah. The divergence lies in the employed research methodology, thematic focus, geographical context, and research subjects. Consequently, this study is motivated by the aspiration to uncover the values embedded in the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition, advancing the understanding of character development through community practices in Bertah village.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This inquiry adopts a qualitative paradigm through the lens of ethnographic exploration. Distinguished scholars, including Bodgen and Taylor, conceptualize qualitative methodology as an investigative framework that yields descriptive outputs articulated through written or spoken narratives derived from individuals and the behavioral phenomena observed [11]. Ethnography, within this context, is interpreted as a portrayal intimately entwined with the cultural essence of a particular ethnic group, or more expansively, as a vivid exposition concerning the peoples inhabiting distinct locales across specific temporalities [11]. The present study was situated in the restricted external

precincts of Bertah Hamlet, located in Pamekasan, Madura. The participants encompassed community members, religious figures, and village officials residing within Bertah Hamlet [12]. Data gathering instruments were systematically constructed through observational protocols, semi-structured interviews, and the meticulous compilation of documentary evidence.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Manifestation of Character Education Values in the *Ghutong Rojhung* Tradition in Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet

Character education is considered a fundamental aspect of human life, both historically and presently (Mustari, 2014). Character education does not merely convey knowledge through institutional settings but is also evident in community practices that are deeply ingrained in daily routines, thus contributing to the formation of character. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, there are 18 core character values to be developed at every educational level in Indonesia. Among these values, several are reflected in the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition in Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet, as observed in activities in the community. These are as follows:

1. Religious Character Values Religious character reflects the attitude of obedience and compliance in understanding and practicing the religious teachings [13]. Within the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition, religious values are apparent in the activity of tahlilan, as it is conducted in a religious manner, with the actions of the community leaders serving as models and guides for religious practices in Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet. The religious character stages are evident in the group assembly process, prayer activities, and the collective recitation of tahlil. The religious values in this study are also embodied in tahlilan, where community members assist and participate, even if not everyone can attend in person. It is customary to delegate attendance to family members, even children. This reflects a value of *ukhuwah*, a mutual respect among members. Religious character is further demonstrated in the involvement of both adults and children in community gatherings, ensuring the preservation of religious traditions and the inculcation of religious values in the younger generation. This process represents character education that nurtures a love for religious teachings. Interviews with religious leaders revealed that this tradition of community solidarity in Larangan Luar Bertah remains intact to this day. The community values each other's presence and cooperation during the readings, acknowledging that without their collective involvement, such activities would not be successfully carried out (Ust. Lihen). Furthermore, the regular participation of the community in these activities, conducted every Saturday night, highlights the cohesion among residents, from children to adults [14].
2. Creative Character Values Creative character values are found within the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition, particularly in the community's efforts to construct a water channel.

The residents' ability to carry out this task collaboratively demonstrates creativity in problem-solving and a proactive approach to helping one another. According to Mr. Gandar, a local contributor, the habit of mutual assistance results in beneficial outcomes for the whole community [15]. He emphasized that community-driven initiatives often originate from individual ideas, such as his own suggestion to create a water channel to solve flooding problems. This exemplifies the creative thinking employed to address local issues and the community's ingenuity in resolving challenges. Creative character values also emerge in the renovation activities, where residents contribute their skills, even if they are not trained builders. This illustrates that the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition is not merely a form of physical labor but also a manifestation of innovative spirit in producing useful outcomes. The willingness of individuals to offer their ideas and assistance in these joint activities showcases the innovative nature of the tradition, as residents selflessly contribute, whether by transporting cement, stones, or other materials.

3. Gotong Royong (Cooperation) Character Values The essence of gotong royong, or cooperation, is central to the *Ghutong Rojhung* process, evident in the community's collective efforts to achieve a common goal. In Larangan Luar Bertah, cooperation is demonstrated in various activities, particularly in the construction of water channels. The community works together without expecting compensation, ensuring that the water channel benefits everyone. Each individual contributes according to their ability, whether by digging the earth, lifting stones, or providing tools and materials. This collaboration reflects the communal spirit of maintaining the environment and ensuring the well-being of the collective. Gotong royong is also evident in the tahlilan tradition, where the community helps one another by attending or sending representatives to participate in the prayer rituals. The presence of the community, or the effort to send a representative, reinforces the value of mutual assistance for the common cause of honoring the deceased. As one community member explained: "The community attends as invited, but not everyone can always be present due to other commitments. However, they send their children, even the young ones, to represent them. The intention of being present is what matters, and it is customary to have family members, even children, participate. This way, they become accustomed to tahlilan, and it is considered appropriate for anyone who wishes to join the prayer" (Mr. Aziz/Addus, 2024). This illustrates how the community helps one another achieve shared goals, despite the constraints on physical presence. The effort to attend, even symbolically, reflects the spirit of cooperation, where every individual seeks to contribute, even under limited circumstances..

The Presence of the *Ghutong Rojhung* Tradition in Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet

The *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition, practiced in the Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet, is a community tradition commonly performed by the local population of Bertah Hamlet. This activity has become an ingrained habit among the residents of Larangan Luar as a form of mutual aid. Typically, this tradition involves acts of assistance and collaboration among the Bertah Hamlet community members. Based on research conducted by the researcher, the following activities are central to the practice of *Ghutong Rojhung* in the Larangan Luar community:

a. Construction of Water Channels

In Larangan Luar Village, Bertah Hamlet, the *Ghutong Rojhung* activity is carried out through the construction of water channels. The residents build these channels to facilitate the flow of used water, such as wastewater from washing dishes or bathroom water, by directing it through pipes buried underground. This ensures that the water flows unobstructed and ultimately reaches a public drainage area, a designated spot for the disposal of household wastewater. The goal is to prevent water stagnation, particularly during the rainy season, when the risk of flooding increases. According to Mr. Gandar, a community member involved in the water channel construction, this initiative was conceived to prevent stagnant water from disrupting daily life.



Image 1. Activity of Constructing a Water Channel

The collaborative effort in building these water channels can be observed in the documents provided, where local residents willingly participate in these activities. Despite the lack of monetary compensation, the community members display great enthusiasm. Mr. Gandar further elaborates that the tools used for this project, including pipes and water pumps, were generously donated by community members such as Mrs. Asim's family and Mr. Rusdi, who contributed water from his well to help facilitate the project. Residents who benefit from the water channels also contribute their labor, such as digging the earth, moving rocks, and shifting soil. This reflects the spirit of cooperation and mutual support within the Bertah Hamlet community, demonstrating how *Ghutong Rojhung* continues to thrive as a longstanding practice, independent of financial incentives.

b. Home Renovation

Another manifestation of the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition in Larangan Luar Village is home renovation. This activity goes beyond mere assistance; it represents a deep sense of respect and solidarity among the community members. While skilled builders in the village lead the renovations, other local

residents frequently lend a hand to help complete the task. This shows that the tradition is rooted not only in social obligation but also in the awareness and shared values of the community. Even though those who are directly involved in the renovation are experts, the spirit of mutual help ensures that the entire village participates in the process.



Image 2. House Renovation (Excavating and Calibrating the Soil)



Image 3. House Renovation (Demolition of Residential Walls)



Image 4. House Renovation (Casting Process Using Sand and Cement)

c. Tahlilan

The practice of Tahlilan, originating from the Arabic term "tahlil," refers to the recitation of the Islamic declaration of faith "la ilaha illallah" (there is no god but Allah). Tahlilan, a central aspect of Javanese Islamic tradition, involves a collective recitation of this phrase along with other sacred words by a group of people at a specific time.



Image 5. Communal Prayer Gathering (Tahlilan)

In Larangan Luar Village, the Tahlilan tradition remains strong, with the community gathering to commemorate the death anniversary of Mrs. Hapsah. The event was held at the home of Mr. Aziz, a well-known community figure, and it serves as an example of how *Ghutong Rojhung* is manifested in spiritual solidarity. As shared by Mr. Aziz in an interview, though not all invited members were able to attend due to other commitments, many sent representatives, including even young children. This reflects the tradition of mutual support, where presence at such events, even in proxy, is valued. The *Ghutong Rojhung* spirit is evident in how the community comes together to pray and honor the deceased, demonstrating the importance of participation in local customs..

"Masyarakat hadir sesuai undangan, namun seperti biasa terkadang masyarakatnya itu tidak selalu bisa hadir semua, karena ada dari masyarakatnya yang punya agenda (acara) lain yang bebarengan, namun diwakilkan oleh anaknya walaupun kecil-kecil, tapi dengan niatnya sudah hadir dan di gantikan itu sudah sangat baik, juga biar terbiasa melakukan tahlilan seperti ini anaknya, karena disini kalau tidak bisa hadir diwakilkan ke keluarganya yang bisa hadir, walaupun anak kecil gak papa, karena ini bukan larangan, tapi untuk siapapun yang ingin melakukan tahlil". (Bapak Aziz/Addus, 2024)

d. Kamrat

Kamrat is a regular religious activity performed by the residents of Larangan Luar Village. It is a form of communal gathering within a network of kinship, often referred to as "kompolan," which denotes a familial or blood-related group. The word "kompolan" derives from the Madurese term for gathering and is associated with familial solidarity. (Fatchor Rahman, 2016).

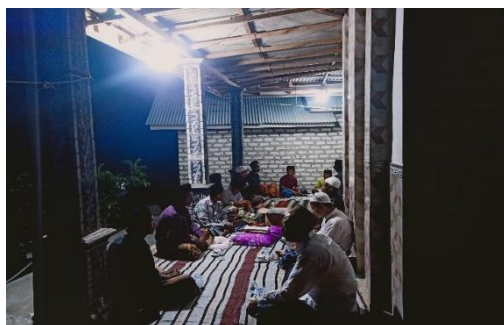


Image 6. Execution of Community Mutual Assistance (Kamrat Implementation)

In Larangan Luar, Kamrat is conducted on a rotating basis, with each member taking turns to host. This tradition is particularly marked by the practice of reading "manaqib" (hymns praising religious figures) and holding group recitations of religious texts. This custom is inclusive, allowing both adults and children to participate, with children joining under the guidance of their parents. According to Ustadz Lihen, a religious leader, this practice not only promotes spiritual unity but also ensures the preservation of religious traditions. Moreover, it fosters a sense of discipline in the correct recitation of the Qur'an, contributing to the moral and spiritual development of the entire community.

The Kamrat tradition continues to be an important aspect of communal life in Larangan Luar Village, emphasizing the significance of collective action and spiritual solidarity. Without the active participation of its members, the success of the Kamrat gatherings would not be possible, as noted by Ustadz Lihen.

II. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results gleaned from the analytical discourse in the preceding discussion, this study delves into two primary domains: first, the embodiment of character education values in Larangan Luar Village, particularly within Dusun Bertah; and second, the living presence of the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition in the same locale. Character education, in this context, is not an abstract notion confined within institutional walls but rather a dynamic element fostered organically through daily communal practices, ultimately crystallizing into distinctive character traits. A salient manifestation of this phenomenon is observable in the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition, wherein the residents of Larangan Luar Village continue to preserve and enact these practices even in contemporary settings. The *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition reveals itself consistently across various communal ceremonies and collective endeavors. Specific instances include the cooperative construction of irrigation channels, the communal prayers (tahlilan) that are performed with regularity, and the joint efforts in erecting new structures. Embedded within these activities are rich deposits of character education values, intricately woven into the fabric of social life. Each expression of the *Ghutong Rojhung* tradition is not monolithic

but rather embodies a spectrum of character values — notably religious devotion, collaborative spirit, and mutual assistance, among others. Moreover, the findings of this research illuminate that *Ghutong Rojhung* has transcended its status as a mere tradition; it has evolved into an intrinsic social habit, deeply inscribed in the character of the community members. In constructing water channels, repairing homes, participating in communal prayers, and engaging in fellowship (kamrat), the people of Larangan Luar enact these values with an effortless spontaneity, absent of external coercion. Thus, *Ghutong Rojhung* in Larangan Luar is not simply performed; it flows naturally through the veins of communal life, nurtured by an ingrained ethic of solidarity. This organic cohesion has fostered an environment where communal contribution is not an exception but the norm, thereby sustaining the *Ghutong Rojhung* spirit vibrantly to this day.

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