



The Existence of The Mystique of The Protected Forest as A Form of Student Character Education Value

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study is to explore the protected forest mystique in Wonosalam, Jombang Regency, as a form of character education for students. The protected forest's myths promote personality development by incorporating moral principles, such as, patience, honesty, and sincerity into character education. The novelty of the research highlights local myths and traditions that are rich in spiritual, material, and moral qualities, which in turn help students develop their character and preserve their culture in the face of globalization. **Method:** Employed in this research is a qualitative approach, bolstered by data collection techniques such as interviews with the village head, recordings of stories, documentation of the surrounding environment and observation of Wonosalam village. The data analysis technique used is descriptive. The research focuses on the myth of the Wonosalam protected forest. **Results:** Analysis based on Niels Mulder's mystical theory and Imam Ghazali's character education concept show that the protected forest mystique has interrelated material, spiritual, and moral dimensions. These mystical stories contain moral values such as honesty, patience, and sincerity that are crucial for students' character education. By understanding these mystics, students can develop a balanced character and appreciate traditional values and local spirituality. **Novelty:** this research lies in the approach that integrates mysticism with Islamic value-based character education. The technique that combines Islamic value-based character education with mysticism is what makes this research novel.

INTRODUCTION

Mysticism is intricately linked to secrecy. People often view mystical practice as a private matter, as it involves their personal beliefs and spirituality (Hermansya & Subandiyah, 2021). Mystical practice is a personal pursuit, a unique journey to reconnect with one's roots, aimed at revealing the mysteries of existence or liberating oneself from earthly attachments (Niels, 2013). Consequently, it is considered discourteous to explore mysticism extensively, as it relates to personal convictions that necessitate thoughtful articulation.

Mystical existence, according to Mulder, symbolizes the unity of existence at its center, which includes everything in *Sang Hyang* (the Single One), *Hyang Sukma* (the Supreme Soul), and *Urip* (Life), from which existence originates and returns (Nova, 2024). Although the order in which life in this world is an expression or shadow of a higher truth, this unity of existence is unknown. The idea of unity and interpenetration is reflected in the concept of "God". Mystics believe that the essence of "God" is inherent in creation, existing within everything. The goal of existential mysticism is to clarify the genesis of mystical practice and the ongoing practice of mysticism.

Folklore, including myths, is essential component of cultural wealth that plays an important role in preserving the identity and traditional values of a nation (Kholifatu, 2022). Myths are not only a narrative, but also serve as a vehicle for transmitting moral values, norms, and knowledge from one generation to the next (Raharjo, 2022). Given the effects of shifting

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