



# The Philosophical Meaning of Batak Toba "Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi", A Study of Character Education

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## Abstract

The Batak' tribe is famous for its customs that are thick with a wealth of life philosophies. Batak' people uphold the noble values that become these traditions. One of the philosophies taught for generations by parents to their children is: "Naso matanggak di Hata, naso matahut di bohi". The sentence has the meaning of daring to say right and wrong. The aims of this research are to describe the philosophy of Toba Batak' culture Naso Matanggak Di Bohi, Naso Matahut Di Hata, towards the character education of children as the next generation. The Method used in this research is descriptive with a literature study approach. The Result of this research is the person will dare to appear different and firm with principles. With the philosophy that has been passed down from Batak' ancestors, children as the next generation of the nation can understand the meaning implied in it and learn a good lesson. This paper can be a useful contribution for anthropologists as a reference in exploring and understanding the philosophy of Toba Batak' culture in character education for organization, society and socializing with others.

**Keywords:** *Batak' Tribe, Batak' Philosophy, Character Education*

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## INTRODUCTION

Child character education is a process of forming the character or personality of a child which will be used as a provision from childhood to adulthood so that it can be applied in community life. Quoting from Sudaryanti that character education has a higher meaning than moral education, because in character education what is taught is not just teaching and telling what is wrong and what is right. But more than that, in character education instills good habits so that they understand and are able to distinguish what is right and what is wrong.

What makes character education such an important foundation that should be given to children? Because the main purpose of education itself is; Able to produce a mature human personality both intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually (Sudaryanti, 2015). That is, that there are basic values that children really need in the future. Therefore, the role of the family in children's character education is very important. As we know, the family is the first place for children to grow and socialize.

Character building can be done through ethics education, which involves aspects of knowledge (cognitive), feelings (feeling), and action (action). Character education will be more effective if you pass these three parts (Sudaryanti, 2015). Children's character education can be said to be an important education,

because this education involves important aspects in children's growth which will be used as provisions from children to grow into adults to be applied in community life.

Therefore, support and education are needed for the development of character formation. Character strength will form by itself if there is strong encouragement and support from the surrounding environment, both family, school, community. Therefore, the role of the family, especially parents, will greatly impact the formation of children's character. The first and foremost character education for children is the family environment. In the family environment, a child will learn the basics of behavior that are important for his later life. Character is learned by children through family members around them, especially parents with habits that are taught every day.

Indonesia is a large country that has many islands and regions, where each island and region has many tribes with their own characteristics. Meanwhile, each ethnic group in Indonesia has its own culture. The culture of each tribe is referred to as regional culture that enriches national culture (Nadia, 2022). In addition to different languages, cultural customs are different, and this is the wealth of the Indonesian nation that should be preserved. The diversity of Indonesian tribes and cultures is a wealth that should be its own pride. Each tribe has its own values such as; cultural values, customary values, traditional values and religious values. The author will discuss one of the largest tribes in Indonesia.

The Batak tribe is one of the third largest tribes in Indonesia that has a variety of customs, cultures, languages, ornaments or symbols as characteristics and philosophies of life. Batak is very famous for its philosophy of life, often called *umpasa halak Batak* which is inherited by parents to their children and becomes a provision in the next life journey. What is meant by *umpasa* is a proverb or proverb Batak Toba. Quoting Turnip in *umpasa* and *umpama*, *umpasa* is a combination of admonitions or exhortations in the symbolic Toba Batak language which is packed with its brick values, so it has aesthetic and conceptual values. It also has a linguistic aesthetic-poetic concept (Turnip, 2022).

For the Toba Batak people, descendants or children are very valuable treasures, therefore the success achieved by children as the next generation is a great pride for parents. In other words, if the offspring gets success then it is also the success of the parents. It is very clear that the role of parents in supporting the success of their children's lives is very influential. In the view of Toba Batak parents that children are very valuable treasures, as in a parent's expression to their children "*anakkoki do hamoraon di au*". This expression is very influential on the mindset, attitude, behavior, and lifestyle of the Toba Batak tribe in general (Haloho, 2022). Reflected in how parents educate and equip their children with a legacy in the form of a philosophy of life. Oktani further revealed that the philosophy has been rooted for generations in the Toba Batak family and has become a culture that is inherited and developed so as to form a character that instills the values of local wisdom of the Toba Batak people (Haloho, 2022).

The Toba Batak tribe has many philosophies that govern its life. *Naso Matanggak Di Hata*, *Naso Matahut Di Bohi* is one of the philosophies of life of the Toba Batak tribe that parents teach to children as the next generation. The meaning of the sentence is "dare to say the right is right and what is wrong is wrong" (Maros & Juniar, 2016). That is, as early as possible parents have taught their children to have fear in speech. Being able to say yes to yes and no to no once has to face a bad possibility. The Toba Batak tribe is famous for its loud and firm character and way of speaking (Harahap, 2018). Batak parents will always tell their children "*jolo dinilat lip asa nidok hata*" meaning be careful to guard the mouth from bad words, lies or dishonesty. The goal is not to speak untrue words, so that in the life lived by the Batak tribe uphold the principle of honesty.

The philosophy of *Naso Matanggak Di Hata*, *Naso Matahut Di Bohi*, is a philosophy in the form of advice that aims to teach generations of Batak families to be careful in their words. Elsa quoted (Simanjuntak, 2008) said that the Toba Batak tribe is known for its harsh, temperamental, rude character and when speaking in a loud voice like people who are angry or fighting. Furthermore, Elsa also revealed that the Toba Batak tribe is known for its firm, honest, open and straightforward attitude (Hutabarat & Nurchayati, 2021). Given the identical character of the Toba Batak tribe known for being rude, harsh and not long-winded, Toba Batak parents remind their children how important it is to maintain their mouths and words by upholding the principle of honesty.

The philosophy of *Naso Matanggak Di Hata*, *Naso Matahut Di Bohi* is one of the philosophies embedded in every mindset of the Batak Toba tribe, even in this case, it is required to be able to make it the basis for forming honest characters. Honesty is a very important and effective foundation in building communication to produce healthy relationships (Utami et al., 2013). By teaching honesty to children, the

relationship in the family, starting between parents and children, children and siblings will be harmonious, therefore it is important for parents to instill the character of honesty. From the smallest environment, namely the family, it educates children as the next generation to have an honest character that is considered ideal.

The results of previous research on character put forward by Syurya, et al, explained that understanding a person's character is the same as understanding personality or characteristics such as; disposition, lifestyle, distinctive traits formed and accepted from the environment (Muhammad Nur et al., 2019). Simorangkir said that character is the disposition, nature, character of a person, group, society and race that can develop and change so that one and another there are differences, it is acute with mental and mora (Sagala, 2021). Furthermore, Sudaryanti revealed that character building starts from home which is applied at an early age in order to form maturity and independence Children are good intellectually, emotionally and spiritually (Sudaryanti, 2015). Abrar (Manurung, 2019), in the Toba Batak family, character education is instilled in the next generation, the aim is to form individuals with quality personalities. The character education is based on noble philosophical values in Batak Toba culture, such as; Must do good to everyone, especially family, the values of the spirit of learning and working hard and the values of living harmoniously in society (Parinduri, 2020). From some of the opinions above regarding character, it can be concluded that it is important for parents to educate and instill good and correct values for their children so that good character is formed and makes them as an independent, qualified next generation with healthy spirituality.

Naso Matanggak di Hata, Naso Matahat di Bohi, the ones that are not big talk, the ones that are not timid face. Meaning: Dare to say right is right and wrong is wrong (Panjaitan, 2019). Based on the results of a search of research on the philosophy of the Toba Batak Tribe Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi there has been no specific research that describes the meaning behind the sentence. However, researchers previously discussed the Toba Batak philosophy which concerns the philosophy of Dalihan Na tolu. For example, Hutahaean, Agnes & Winarti discuss the role of Toba Batak cultural philosophy in the world of education (Hutahaean & Agustina, 2020). Sihombing, describes knowing Toba Batak culture through the philosophy of Dalihan Na Tolu (perspective of cohesion and descent) (Sihombing, 2018). And Pahala which describes character education in the umpasa of the Toba Batak tribe (Theofilus & Sumiyadi, 2020).

Based on some of the explanations above, this paper aims to describe the philosophy of Toba Batak culture Naso Matanggak Di Bohi, Naso Matahut Di Hata, towards the character education of children as the next generation of the Toba Batak family. How the Toba Batak philosophy is inherited from parents so that their children uphold the principle of honesty in life and association so that they can be accepted in the midst of society and succeed both in education and work.

In this research, the author tries to describe how character education in Toba Batak culture. The author hopes that this paper can give readers an idea of how the Toba Batak philosopher Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi educates the character of the Toba Batak tribe. This paper can be a useful contribution for anthropologists as a reference in exploring and understanding the philosophy of Toba Batak culture in character education. Researchers can also conduct advanced research in the field of Anthropology by considering the results of this study. It is hoped that the field of Indonesian Anthropology can develop contextually and contribute to preserving culture and philosophy in each region, especially the Toba Batak culture.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The writing of this article uses qualitative description methods and literature studies that refer to data or references related to the topic raised. Researchers collect various theories and information from literature materials, such as books, journals, online media, and other sources that can be accounted for academically. In this qualitative research, the presentation of words, sentences, expressions, narratives, and images is described. This research from start to finish was only carried out in the library.

In writing this article, the steps that the author takes first are to analyze the meaning of the Batak philosophy of *Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi*. Then, researchers conduct a review of some literature and previous research results to see the relevance to the topic of discussion in the research to be studied. The stages in the data processing process to obtain the final results of this research are: data reduction, verification and validation. The last step that the researchers took was to draw a conclusion about

this study, namely to propose and elaborate the dimensions of the Toba Batak philosophical meaning of "Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi", a study of Character Education.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Toba Batak Philosophy "Honest"**

The Toba Batak tribe has many philosophies that have been inherited from ancestors to their descendants for generations, one of which is about how to maintain life in honesty. That is, to guard the mouth from lying words, a nature that is only selfish (selfish). Be able to be assertive to say "yes to yes", and "no to no". In Batak language it is known as Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut DiBohi". The meaning of the above sentence is to dare to say right and wrong. Thanks to this philosophy, Batak people often uphold honesty. This is evidenced by typical blunt remarks. Although there are those who don't like the honesty, it will not waver just because of other people's opinions.

If applied in everyday life, the meaning of the philosophy is to always tell the truth and be open in everything. Don't be afraid of being considered bad by others just for telling the truth, stick to your stance, without focusing on rude stereotypes, ceplas-ceplos inherent in the character of the Toba Batak tribe. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to this so that such stereotypes are not intended for a negative or bad thing but as a form of character that shows that the Toba Batak tribe dares to appear to prove the wrong above wrong and right above right even though many people consider the Toba Batak tribe to have a rude and temperamental attitude and character. And indeed, in fact the Toba Batak tribe is different from other Batak tribes, especially from the accent of speech or way of communicating.

Dare to say yes to yes, and no to no, means that in expressing a word, the word must be in accordance with the facts that occur and must dare to be responsible for what is said. In expressing a word, do not use the wrong mouth so that it will cause quarrels, anger, hostility, and even division. Therefore, honesty is a principle that must be upheld. Being honest is not easy and just happens, of course, it must be instilled as early as possible so that it becomes an attitude and principle of life. By holding the principle of honesty, it will build character and integrity. In general, the Toba Batak tribe upholds the principle of honesty, this is also illustrated in the meaning of the colors of Ruma Bolon or Gorga and the placement of perpendicular poles towering upwards which means upholding honesty, upholding truth and justice.

Honest in the Big Dictionary Indonesian means; straight-hearted, do not lie, tell as you are, and do not cheat (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kementerian Pendidikan Kebudayaan Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, n.d.). Kebung (2018) cites the opinion of Foucoult, a French philosopher in the 20th century, in a seminar talking about Parrhesia. Parrhesia comes from Greek which means; To tell the truth, to be honest, openness, freedom of speech, subtlety is to express everything that comes to mind. The expression of this language is more precisely in the word franc-parler or free speech, meaning; telling or telling the truth, speaking honestly and politely bravely even when faced with danger, risk or criticism to help others or oneself (Kebung, 2018). Being honest in words means giving information both orally and in writing with the intention of telling something based on existing facts or facts. This philosophy in addition to being the value of local cultural wisdom, is also the inner attitude of the Toba Batak tribe in civilization in the midst of society. The Toba Batak tribe upholds the principles of this philosophy to achieve success.

### **"Hardworking"**

The Toba Batak tribe is famous for its will and hard work, loves challenges, so that in the face of a situation the principle is never give up. That is why the Batak tribe often goes out of their homeland to migrate only with "desperate capital". It is also one of the principles of Batak people in finding optimistic jobs and not choosing what they want (Sipahutar, 2017). Meanwhile, according to Elsa (Gultom; 1992), the reason the Toba Batak tribe migrated was because of a strong desire to improve the family's economic condition. This reason is reinforced by the infertile soil in the area of most Toba people, namely North Tapanuli district including the "poverty map" area (Hutabarat & Nurchayati, 2021).

### **"Justice, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance"**

The philosophy of life or umpasa, is an interesting thing from the Toba Batak tribe to talk about, because in this philosophy regulated procedures and styles in adapting to the surrounding environment. This philosophy is an identity and heritage from ancestors, the meaning of teaching is still alive and carried out by today's generation. How life must be organized and always related to traditional values, is the concept

of life of the Batak Toba people, known as the four H principles, namely; hamoraon (wealth), hagabeon (welfare), hasangapon (honor), and hamajuon (progress) (Sipahutar, 2017). The Toba Batak tribe also upholds the principle of kinship and is a very thick cultural value. This kinship is symbolic in the social system of the Toba Batak tribe which is implied to be full of meaning with a complete, distinctive and specific vocabulary set forth in the philosophy of Dalihan Na Tolu (Sihombing, 2018). This implied meaning is the basis for the Toba Batak tribe to cultivate the character of the principles of justice, cooperation and mutual assistance.

### “Wise”

Another philosophy is Mata Guru (Roha Sisean). In Situmeang Diana's view as a human being, in everyday life should act and make decisions must think christically using common sense and conscience so that the decisions taken do not harm others (Situmeang & Hutahaean, 2021). In Indonesian the teacher's eyes (roha sisean) can be interpreted as eyes must be used as teachers and guidelines for something that is seen and witnessed. While the heart or feelings must be used to consider decision making. Through our eyes we learn and experience and with our hearts we are accepted everywhere.

### Character Education in Review of Toba Batak Philosophy and Culture

The social and emotional development of a child is formed from the age of toddlers. For this reason, the role of parents is very important in teaching children about good things that children can do to interact with others and also how children control the emotions they feel in themselves. Quoting from Manurung Shiyamu, et al, that sociologically, the basic institution of all social institutions in society is the family. That is, the family is the most important place in providing and instilling good values (Manurung & Manurung, 2019). Children will acquire traits and character traits in themselves through the environment in which they grow. Parents play a very important role in this, because the behavior and lifestyle of parents will be a mirror for their children.

In the culture of the Toba Batak tribe, there are several factors that support the strengthening of character education development in the midst of the family, including; clan, the existence of children, the role of parents, the philosophy of life of Halak Batak Toba and the concept of Dalihan Na Tolu who live in every family and become elements of laws, rules and ordinances that regulate relationships between family members (Manurung & Manurung, 2019). In the Toba Batak philosophy, there are always good character values that are taught and instilled in children as the next generation. The character values contained in the Toba Batak philosophy include; religious values, moral values, mutual aid values, gratitude values, harmony values and integrity values. That is why, Toba Batak parents on every occasion both in joyful events and mourning events always remind the philosophies that are inherited from ancestors to become a benchmark in everyday life.

The philosophy of anakkoki do Hamoraon Di Au, and the philosophy of hagabeon, hamoraon, hasangapon are the vision of Batak parents in building their children's character. This philosophy is used by Toba Batak parents in educating, determining and controlling children's behavioral values so that they are in accordance with behavioral standards, especially among Toba Batak so that children understand speech (genealogy) to place themselves in the order of community life. In addition, the concept of Dalihan Na Tolu in the Toba batak family is closely related to social relations between individuals, families and communities. In the concept of Dalihan Na Tolu, parents teach their children how to live in equal unity. The children of the Toba Batak tribe are taught to Somba Marhula-hula, Manat Mardongan Tubu, Elek Marboru (Theofilus & Sumiyadi, n.d.). The meaning of this philosophy is to teach children to respect each other, be wise and have humility.

In Toba Batak culture, the application of character education is carried out in conjunction with indigenous education. For parents from the Toba Batak tribe, education is very valuable and very important. In general, Batak Toba parents, will make every effort so that their children can get the highest education possible. However, Toba Batak parents will still teach their children in terms of customs to balance with the education received formally. The goal is for children in the Toba Batak family to grow into children who have character, morals, integrity, and become civilized human beings.

Character education in the Toba Batak family and culture in general is based on philosophical values that are instilled repeatedly from generation to generation. This coaching and development have become a habitual pattern in communication in the midst of society. Examples of Toba Batak philosophy such as

(Edwar, 2015) (Muhammad Nur et al., 2019); 1) Ditoru Tangan Mangido, Di Ginjang Tangan Mangalehon, means that when asking for help should be done with humility, 2) Mangangkat Rap Tu Ginjang, Manimbuk Rap Tu Toru, means the principle of mutual cooperation or cooperation. Have a sense of shared responsibility and selflessness, 3) Disi Tano Di dege, Disi Langit Ni Junjung, that is, teaches to be able to adapt to the environment wherever we are, have a tolerant and unselfish nature, 4) Manatap Tu Jolo, Manaili Tu Pudi, meaning; Look ahead but don't forget the past. This philosophy teaches not to be like "a nut forgets its skin". Some of the examples above can illustrate how philosophy is the way parents teach character to their offspring as the next generation.

## CONCLUSION

The character education of the Batak' Toba tribe is based on the values contained in philosophies that are instilled for generations. The meaning in Batak' Toba philosophy, not only is full of formal education, but also means moral and ethical (attitude). This philosophy is used by Batak' Toba parents in educating, determining and controlling children's behavioral values so that they are in accordance with behavioral standards, especially among Batak' Toba. The philosophy of Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi, is one of the philosophies taught to build healthy, dignified and trustworthy generational morals. This philosophy, became a message from generation to generation to be careful in making decisions and expressing opinions. So, through this research it can be concluded that character education through the philosophy of Batak' Toba Naso Matanggak in Hata, nasu Matahut in Bohi shows the importance of integrity for a child in decision making, expressing opinions, consistency in the qualities of honesty and character evaluation. Therefore, the study of the philosophy of Naso Matanggak Di Hata, Naso Matahut Di Bohi becomes a foundation for coaching and development in communication in the midst of society so as to contribute to the scope of character education studies.

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