

Rekonstruksi Nilai Dalihan Na Tolu dalam Hukum Adat Batak Angkola sebagai Model Penguatan Civic Character pada Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan

Helmi Suryana Siregar^{a,1,*}, Yusniar Harahap^{a,2}, Siti Maryam Pane^{a,3}, Nur Hakima Akhirani Nasution^{b,4}

^a Universitas Graha Nusantara, Indonesia;

^b Institut Agama Islam Padang Lawas; Indonesia.

¹hilmiputrisiregar@gmail.com; ²yusniarharahap65@gmail.com; ³sitimaryam.pane@gmail.com;

⁴nurhakima1992@gmail.com

*Correspondent Author; hilmiputrisiregar@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 13-05-2026

Revised: 23-06-2026

Accepted: 12-08-2026

Keywords:

Dalihan Na Tolu;
Angkola customary law;
civic character; local
wisdom; Civic Education

ABSTRACT

Civics Education (PKn) in Indonesia still tends to emphasize mastery of civic knowledge, while the formation of civic character has not been firmly rooted in the cultural experiences of students. This article aims to reconstruct the values of Dalihan Na Tolu in Batak Angkola customary law and formulate it as a model for strengthening civic character in PKn learning. The research uses a qualitative approach with a library study method. Data were collected from Angkola-Mandailing customary literature, customary law studies, civic education theory, educational regulations, and previous research results, then analyzed through content analysis and hermeneutic interpretation in three stages: deconstruction, reinterpretation, and recontextualization. The results of the study indicate that the principles of somba marmora, manat markahanggi, elek maranak boru contain values of respect, caution in equal relations, compassion, responsibility, deliberation, and mutual cooperation that are in line with the dimensions of private character and public character in civic education theory. The rotating nature of positions in Dalihan Na Tolu, where everyone can be a mora, kahanggi, and anak boru, can be reconstructed into the principle of citizen equality. This article proposes a five-stage learning model: Martutur, Marpokat, Markobar, Marsialapari, and Manopot Poda. This model has the potential to strengthen contextual civic character without neglecting the principles of inclusivity and nationality. Empirical validation of the model is recommended for further research.

This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



Introduction

Developing good citizens is the primary mission of Civic Education. In the framework developed by the Center for Civic Education, civic competency encompasses three interrelated components: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions (Branson, 1998). Of these, civic character is often viewed as the most substantive component because it determines whether the knowledge and skills are truly embodied in citizens' actions in the public sphere (Mulyono, 2017).

In practice, Civics education in schools still faces various obstacles in building student character. Civics teachers bear a significant responsibility because their task is not limited to developing civic knowledge but also civic skills and character (Widiatmaka, 2016). Learning tends to be verbal and cognitive, leading to civic values being understood as normative memorization, rather than as lived experiences. Furthermore, the phenomena of intolerance, bullying, individualism, and polarization in the digital space demonstrate that strengthening civic character remains a pressing task.

One approach widely proposed to bridge this gap is the integration of local wisdom into civics learning. Local wisdom provides a context of values closely related to students' experiences, so that civic values do not feel foreign. A study by Chotimah et al. (2018) concluded that the values of local wisdom are essentially values that are generally found in every region and can strengthen national integration. Other research has developed a character education model based on local wisdom and civic virtue in higher education (Zuriah & Sunaryo, 2018) and integrated local texts into civics learning (Ramdani & Sapriya, 2017).

Legally, these efforts have a strong foundation. Article 18B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms the state's recognition and respect for the unity of indigenous legal communities and their traditional rights, while Article 32 paragraph (1) emphasizes the state's obligation to advance national culture. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System also mandates that the curriculum be developed with attention to the diversity of regional and environmental potential.

The Angkola Batak people, who inhabit South Tapanuli Regency, Padangsidimpuan City, and the surrounding areas, have a system of customary values and laws known as *Dalihan Na Tolu* (three hearths). This system regulates the relations between three kinship elements: *mora* (the wife-giver), *kahanggi* (relatives of the same clan), and *anak boru* (the wife-receiver). More than just a kinship system, *Dalihan Na Tolu* serves as a behavioral guideline, a decision-making framework, and a mechanism for resolving customary disputes (Harahap & Siahaan, 1987).

Several studies have examined *Dalihan Na Tolu* in the Angkola-Mandailing community. Nuddin (2021) examines the philosophical foundations of *Dalihan Na Tolu* in the Angkola-Mandailing Batak community and the values of multicultural Islamic education it embodies, while Hilda (2016) examines the revitalization of *Dalihan Na Tolu* in maintaining environmental harmony among the Mandailing Muslim community. However, these studies generally fall within the realms of anthropology, linguistics, or religious education. Studies that specifically position *Dalihan Na Tolu* as a customary legal system and reconstruct it as a model for strengthening civic character in civics are still limited. This is where this article's novelty lies.

Based on this description, this article aims to: (1) identify the values of *Dalihan Na Tolu* in Angkola Batak customary law; (2) reconstruct these values from kinship ethics to citizenship ethics; and (3) formulate a *Dalihan Na Tolu*-based civics learning model to strengthen students' civic character.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. This approach was chosen because the research objective is conceptual, namely to reconstruct values and formulate models, rather than to test empirical effectiveness. The data sources consist of two categories. Primary sources include Angkola-Mandailing customary literature (Harahap & Siahaan, 1987), classic works on Batak customary law (Vergouwien, 2004), and regulatory documents, namely the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Law Number 20 of 2003. Secondary sources include books on theories of civic education and character education (Branson, 1998; Lickona, 1991; Winataputra & Budimansyah, 2007), books on customary law (Hadikusuma, 2003; Soepomo, 1993), and relevant journal articles and theses.

Data were analyzed using content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018) combined with hermeneutic interpretation. The reconstruction process was carried out in three stages. The deconstruction stage unravels the structure, norms, and symbols of Dalihan Na Tolu from its traditional context. The reinterpretation stage interprets the meaning of these values within the framework of civic character theory. The recontextualization stage formulates the interpreted values into the Civics learning design. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, namely comparing explanations from traditional literature, academic studies, and regulations, as well as through critical reading of the differences in the traditional variants of Angkola, Mandailing, and Toba.

Results and Discussion

1. Structure and Values of Dalihan Na Tolu in Angkola Society

Literally, "dalihan" means a stone stove, while "na tolu" means three. The three stones supporting the pot serve as a metaphor for the fact that social life can only be balanced if the three elements of kinship support each other. If one stone is damaged or missing, the pot will topple over. This metaphor conveys a fundamental message of interdependence and role balance.

These three elements are as follows: Mora, the group of relatives who give wives, are held in a position of honor because they are seen as a source of blessings. Kahanggi, the group of relatives of the same clan, hold equal status and act as partners in managing customary affairs. Anak boru, the group of relatives who receive wives, play a role in implementing and supporting the work of every customary activity.

The relationship between the three is governed by the principle that in the Angkola-Mandailing variant is formulated as *somba marmora*, *manat markahanggi*, *elek maranak boru*, namely respect for mora, be careful and look after each other with kahanggi, and love and persuade anak boru. The Toba variant formulates it as *somba marhula-hula*, *manat mardongan tubu*, *elek marboru*. This difference in terminology shows that Dalihan Na Tolu is a shared value of the Batak people with local expressions that are unique to each sub-ethnic group.

The most important thing for reconstruction purposes is that positions in Dalihan Na Tolu are relational and rotating, not permanent. A person can be a mora in one ceremony, a kahanggi in another, and an anak boru in the next. Every member of the Batak community must be prepared to occupy the positions of mora, kahanggi, or anak boru (Nuddin, 2021). Consequently, no individual is permanently above or below. Everyone has been respected, been an equal partner, and served.

In addition to these core principles, the Angkola people recognize a number of supporting values. Holong (compassion) is seen as the glue of social relations. Hapantunon (politeness) is a measure of appropriate behavior in speech and action. Marsialapari is a

tradition of taking turns helping each other in work, especially agriculture and celebrations. Partuturon , a kinship greeting, serves as a means of understanding one's position and obligations in social relations.

2. Dalihan Na Tolu as a Customary Legal System

From the perspective of customary law, customary law consists not only of written rules but also of living norms that are adhered to and sanctioned within society (Soepomo, 1993; Hadikusuma, 2003). By this definition, Dalihan Na Tolu fulfills the elements of a customary legal system: norms, institutions, procedures, and sanctions.

At the normative level, Dalihan Na Tolu establishes the rights and obligations of each element in customary legal events, such as marriage, death, inheritance distribution, and house construction. At the institutional level, customary law is led by the harajaon (customary authority or traditional king) and hatobangon (elders), which in contemporary developments also involve religious scholars (ulama) and intellectuals. At the procedural level, customary decisions are made through customary deliberation known as markobar, a customary discourse and deliberation involving all three elements in turn. In traditional ceremonies (horja), whether horja siriaon (joy), horja siluluton (mourning), or horja siulaon (collective work), no decision is valid without the presence and consent of all three elements. At the sanction level, violations of customary norms can result in reprimands, customary fines, and even social sanctions in the form of exclusion from customary activities.

The legal function of Dalihan Na Tolu is clearly evident in conflict resolution. The three elements of Dalihan Na Tolu play a crucial role in bringing together conflicting family members, provided all three elements are involved, and also involving other community leaders if the conflict is prolonged (Nuddin, 2021). This pattern demonstrates the communal, deliberative, and restorative nature of customary law, rather than solely punitive. This restorative nature is relevant to civics education, which prioritizes peaceful and civilized conflict resolution as a key skill for democratic citizens.

3. Value Reconstruction: From Kinship Ethics to Civic Ethics

The reconstruction in this article is not intended to change customs, but rather to reinterpret their values so they can function in a broader public sphere. The values of Dalihan Na Tolu initially applied within a genealogical context, namely relationships between clans. In a pluralistic nation-state, these values need to be expanded to a more universal level so they can apply to all citizens, including those of non-Batak ethnicity.

As an interpretive framework, this article uses the concept of civic dispositions, which are divided into private character traits, such as moral responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for human dignity, and public character traits, such as concern for public affairs, civility, respect for the law, critical thinking, and willingness to deliberate and compromise (Branson, 1998). This framework is complemented by Lickona's (1991) concept of character, which emphasizes the integration of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The reconstruction results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Reconstruction of Dalihan Na Tolu Values into Civic Character Dimensions

Elements/Principles of Custom	Meaning in the Context of Custom	Meaning of Reconstruction Results	Civic Character Dimensions
<i>Somba marmora</i>	Respect to the one who gives the wife as a source of blessings	Respect for the dignity of others, legitimate authority, law, and science, accompanied by a polite critical attitude.	Respect for the law; <i>civility</i> ; respect for human dignity

Elements/Principles of Custom	Meaning in the Context of Custom	Meaning of Reconstruction Results	Civic Character Dimensions
<i>Manat markahanggi</i>	Caution and mutual care between relatives of the same surname	Equality of citizens; protecting the feelings and rights of others; avoiding horizontal conflict	Tolerance; equality; willingness to compromise
<i>Elek maranak boru</i>	Affection and concern for the recipient's wife who is the work executor	Concern for serving or weaker groups; nurturing leadership	Empathy; social concern; justice
Rotating positions	Everyone can be a <i>mora</i> , <i>kahanggi</i> , and <i>anak boru</i>	No citizen is forever in power or forever dominated; equal status before the law	Equality; awareness of rights and obligations
<i>Markobar</i> (customary deliberation)	Customary decisions are valid if all three elements are present and agreed	Inclusive and argument-based democratic deliberation	Deliberation; participation; critical thinking
<i>Marsialapari</i>	Help each other in turns at work	Mutual cooperation and active participation in public affairs	Social responsibility; civic participation
<i>Hapantunon</i> and <i>holong</i>	Politeness and compassion in social relations	Ethics of public communication, including in digital space	<i>Civility</i> ; self-discipline

The most important finding of this reconstruction lies in the principle of rotating positions. At first glance, Dalihan Na Tolu can be read as a hierarchical system because morals are placed in a position of honor. However, because everyone inevitably occupies all three positions in their social life cycle, the hierarchy is situational, not structural. This reading is in line with the idea of equality of citizens before the law in Article 27 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. In other words, Dalihan Na Tolu teaches that respect is given to roles, not to a person's permanent status. This is a strong cultural foundation for democratic education.

The principle of *somba marmora* also needs to be carefully reconstructed. Respect in the context of citizenship is not synonymous with blind obedience. Good citizens respect the law and legitimate authority, but retain the ability to think critically and express opinions politely. The value of *hapantunon* bridges the gap between respect and criticism: criticism can still be expressed, but with manners that maintain the dignity of all parties.

4. Civic Character Strengthening Model Based on Dalihan Na Tolu

Based on the reconstruction results, this article formulates a learning model called the DNT-CC (*Dalihan Na Tolu–Civic Character*) Model. This model is built on three layers. The value layer contains the reconstructed values in Table 1. The norm layer utilizes customary legal institutions, such as customary deliberation and restorative dispute resolution, as learning resources about existing law in society. The practice layer embodies these values and norms in learning steps that can be directly experienced by students.

The model syntax consists of five stages named using Angkola traditional terms so that students feel cultural closeness, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Syntax of the DNT-CC Learning Model

Stage	Meaning of Custom	Learning Activities	Strengthening Civic Character
<i>Martutur</i>	Recognizing relationships and positions through kinship greetings	The teacher maps out the roles of students in work groups that mimic a three-element structure: discussion leader (<i>mora</i>), peer reviewer (<i>kahanggi</i>), and implementer (<i>anak boru</i>). Roles are rotated at each meeting.	Awareness of rights and obligations; equality
<i>Marpokat</i>	Agree to formulate the problem	Groups identify real citizenship issues in the school or community environment, such as bullying, littering, or hoaxes.	Concern for public affairs
<i>Markobar</i>	Customary deliberation in turns	Each element presents arguments in turn using polite language, then the group draws up an agreement.	Deliberation; critical thinking; <i>civility</i>
<i>Marsialapari</i>	Working together in turns	Groups carry out simple citizenship actions or projects based on agreement.	Responsibility; active participation
<i>Manopot Poda</i>	Get advice and lessons	Reflection with teachers, and if possible, present traditional figures (<i>hatobangon</i>) as resource persons to link learning experiences with traditional values and Pancasila values.	Moral awareness; self-discipline; commitment to values

This model has several characteristics. First, the role rotation in the *Martutur stage* translates the principle of rotating positions into real-life classroom experiences, so that each student has led, considered, and implemented. Second, the *Markobar stage* revives the tradition of customary deliberation as an exercise in deliberative democracy. Third, the *Marsialapari stage* ensures that values do not stop at discourse but are realized in action, in line with Lickona's (1991) emphasis on *moral action* . Fourth, the *Manopot Poda stage* opens up space for collaboration between schools and indigenous communities, so that Civics learning is connected to the students' cultural ecosystem.

This model is also relevant to curriculum policies that emphasize project-based learning and strengthening the Pancasila student profile, particularly the dimensions of mutual cooperation, global diversity, and faith and noble character. The model's stages can be integrated into intracurricular Civics learning and project-based co-curricular activities.

Civic character assessment in this model should be authentic and ongoing, for example through observation of attitudes during discussions, peer assessments during role rotation, student reflection journals, and assessment of civic action products. The assessment rubric can be developed based on the indicators in the last column of Table 1.

5. Challenges and Limits of Reconstruction

Reconstructing traditional values for civic education is not without challenges. The first challenge relates to inclusivity. Schools in the Angkola region are not exclusively populated by students of the Batak Angkola ethnic group. Therefore, this model must be presented as local wisdom open to all students, rather than as the exclusive identity of one group. Within the framework of multicultural civic education, local cultural identities need to be balanced with national identity and global awareness (Banks, 2008; Kymlicka, 1995).

The second challenge relates to the patrilineal structure. *Dalihan Na Tolu* is rooted in a patrilineal kinship system, which, in certain customary practices, places women in a different position. Reconstruction of values in learning must emphasize that role rotation applies to all students, regardless of gender, so that the values taught align with the principles of gender equality and human rights.

The third challenge relates to the risk of romanticization. Local wisdom should not be taught as something that is always right and free from criticism. Students need to be encouraged to critically consider which elements of tradition are relevant and which need to be aligned with the values of Pancasila and the constitution. It is precisely through this process of critical consideration that mature *civic character is formed*.

The fourth challenge is the weakening of traditional practices among the younger generation due to urbanization and globalization. This model can also serve as a means of cultural revitalization, as students relearn traditional terms, institutions, and values that they have become increasingly exposed to in their daily lives.

Conclusion

Dalihan Na Tolu in the Batak Angkola community is not just a kinship system, but a customary legal system that has norms, institutions, deliberation procedures, and sanctions. The principles of *somba marmora*, *manat markahanggi*, *elek maranak boru* along with their supporting values, namely *holong*, *hapantunon*, *markobar*, and *marsialapari*, contain the values of respect, equality, care, deliberation, responsibility, and mutual cooperation that are in line with the dimensions of private character and public character in the theory of civic education.

The main contribution of this article is the reading of the nature of rotating positions in *Dalihan Na Tolu* as a cultural foundation for the principle of equality of citizens, as well as the formulation of the DNT-CC Model with five stages: *Martutur*, *Marpokat*, *Markobar*, *Marsialapari*, and *Manopot Poda*. This model offers a way to internalize civic character through learning experiences that are contextual, participatory, and rooted in the culture of the learners.

As a conceptual study, this article has limitations because the proposed model has not been empirically tested. Further research is recommended to conduct expert validation, limited trials, and effectiveness testing of the model in schools in the South Tapanuli region and Padangsidempuan City, for example through research and development (R&D) or classroom action research.

References

- Banks, J. A. (2008). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational Researcher*, 37(3), 129–139. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X08317501>
- Branson, M. S. (1998). *The role of civic education*. Center for Civic Education.

- Chotimah, U., Alfiandra, A., Faisal, E. E., Sulkipani, S., Camelia, C., & Arpannudin, I. (2018). Pengintegrasian nilai-nilai kearifan lokal dalam pendidikan multikultural. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 15(1), 19–25. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v15i1.17288>
- Hadikusuma, H. (2003). *Pengantar ilmu hukum adat Indonesia*. Mandar Maju.
- Harahap, B. H., & Siahaan, H. M. (1987). *Orientasi nilai-nilai budaya Batak: Suatu pendekatan terhadap perilaku Batak Toba dan Angkola-Mandailing*. Sanggar Willem Iskandar.
- Hilda, L. (2016). Revitalisasi kearifan lokal Dalihan Na Tolu masyarakat Muslim Mandailing dalam menjaga harmonisasi lingkungan hidup. *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman*, 40(1).
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural citizenship: A liberal theory of minority rights*. Clarendon Press.
- Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for character: How our schools can teach respect and responsibility*. Bantam Books.
- Mulyono, B. (2017). Reorientasi civic disposition dalam kurikulum Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan sebagai upaya membentuk warga negara yang ideal. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 14(2).
- Nuddin, M. (2021). *Pendidikan Islam berbasis multikultural: Analisis konsep dalihan na tolu masyarakat Batak Angkola-Mandailing* [Tesis magister, IAIN Padangsidimpuan]. <http://etd.uinsyahada.ac.id/7147/>
- Ramdani, Y. A., & Sapriya. (2017). Integrasi nilai kearifan lokal berbasis naskah Amanat Galunggung pada pembelajaran Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan. *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan dan Politik*, 30(4), 418–427.
- Republik Indonesia. (1945). *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945*.
- Republik Indonesia. (2003). *Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*.
- Soepomo, R. (1993). *Bab-bab tentang hukum adat*. Pradnya Paramita.
- Vergouwen, J. C. (2004). *Masyarakat dan hukum adat Batak Toba*. LKiS.
- Widiatmaka, P. (2016). Kendala Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan dalam membangun karakter peserta didik di dalam proses pembelajaran. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 13(2), 188–198. <https://doi.org/10.21831/civics.v13i2.12743>
- Winataputra, U. S., & Budimansyah, D. (2007). *Civic education: Konteks, landasan, bahan ajar dan kultur kelas*. Program Studi Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan Sekolah Pascasarjana Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.
- Zuriah, N., & Sunaryo, H. (2018). Rekayasa sosial model pendidikan karakter berbasis nilai kearifan lokal dan civic virtue di perguruan tinggi. *SOSIOHUMANIKA: Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*, 11(2), 159–174.