



Oral Tradition as Indigenous Arts Pedagogy: Transmitting Moral Values through Narrative Performance

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Submitted: May 16, 2025. Revised: July 16, 2025. Accepted: December 25, 2025

Abstract

This study explores the inheritance patterns and educational significance of *Iyabelale*, a traditional Bugis lullaby, as a medium for character building and cultural preservation. Against the backdrop of globalisation and digital transformation, this study aims to assess the symbolic structure, cultural function, and pedagogical relevance of *Iyabelale* in the Bugis community. Using a qualitative ethnographic case study approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation in rural and urban settings in South Sulawesi. The findings of this study reveal that *Iyabelale* functions as a multidimensional cultural artefact, conveying values such as empathy, responsibility, and spiritual awareness through its metaphorical language and melodic structure. Although its delivery has been weakened by technological shifts and changes in family structures, the lullaby remains a potential tool for culturally grounded character education. Integrating *Iyabelale* into modern curricula through community collaboration and digital innovation can foster emotional bonds, cultural identity, and moral learning. This study contributes to the growing knowledge about indigenous oral traditions and offers practical pathways for revitalisation in contemporary educational contexts.

Keywords: Bugis culture; character education; oral heritage; customary pedagogy; *Iyabelale*

How to Cite: Manggau, A., Jayadi, K., Ismail, A. S., & Prusdianto, P. (2025). Oral Tradition as Indigenous Arts Pedagogy: Transmitting Moral Values through Narrative Performance. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*, 25(2), 283-294

INTRODUCTION

Traditional lullabies have a prominent place in the fabric of indigenous cultural heritage, serving as a channel through which values, language, emotions, and social norms are transmitted across generations. In oral societies, lullabies are not simply lullabies, but also vessels of cultural knowledge that preserve intangible traditions in melodic form. Lullabies encapsulate a community's wisdom and ethical framework, nurturing individual identity

and collective memory. Simeon and Pugh-Kitingan (2021) underline the critical role of lullabies in fostering cultural continuity by instilling cultural awareness in children. Through these performances, the intergenerational transmission of heritage is facilitated and ritualised, reinforcing identity in both personal and communal settings.

In Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, oral traditions such as lullabies face increasing vulnerability due to globalisation. The disruption of modern digital culture and global media dominance has

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profoundly affected how young people engage with heritage practices. Zulkifli et al. (2025) and Limpo et al. (2022) highlight that the forces of globalisation often marginalise indigenous expressions, creating a cultural divide that disconnects young people from ancestral traditions. This disconnection reduces familiarity with local customs, contributing to eroding social norms rooted in folklore and oral performances. Limpo et al. (2022) further argue that the challenge lies in preserving these expressions and ensuring that they meaningfully adapt to contemporary ways of life. Consequently, revitalising oral traditions amidst global pressures becomes a cultural endeavour and a pedagogical necessity.

This study emerged from the observed decline in the practice of *Iyabelale*, a traditional Bugis lullaby rich in symbolic and pedagogical value. As *Iyabelale* becomes less prevalent, so does the transmission of Bugis cultural norms, values, and identities to future generations. Therefore, the primary research question is twofold: how have the patterns of *Iyabelale* transmission changed in the context of modern life, and how can it be repurposed as a viable tool for contemporary character education? While global entertainment media increasingly dominate early childhood environments, traditional practices such as *Iyabelale* offer a localised, meaningful, and affective medium for cultural education. The need to investigate and document this transformation is urgent, especially since oral traditions are difficult to preserve without proactive intergenerational engagement.

In contemporary Bugis households, especially in urban centers, traditional lullabies like *Iyabelale* are increasingly replaced by digital entertainment such as animated videos, mobile games, and Western nursery rhymes. While these resources offer convenience and broad exposure, they often lack the cultural specificity and emotional depth embedded in indigenous oral traditions. The dominance of screen-based content diminishes opportunities

for parent-child bonding through culturally meaningful interaction, resulting in a weakened transmission of local values and identity. This digital shift, while inevitable, presents a crucial challenge: how can communities retain the essence of oral traditions amidst the pervasiveness of modern media?

Standard solutions to this problem often involve national campaigns to promote cultural preservation or the integration of local wisdom into the education system. In Indonesia, there is increasing policy-level recognition of the value of indigenous cultural elements in education. As Titin Setiartin and Casim (2021) explain, the 2013 national curriculum encourages the inclusion of local knowledge and customs in formal education. However, these efforts remain fragmented and often fail to reach the deeper emotional dimensions of cultural practices such as lullabies. Furthermore, the lack of comprehensive documentation and scholarly attention to lullabies' performative and educative aspects hinders their inclusion in broader pedagogical frameworks.

Specific solutions based on academic literature demonstrate the efficacy of integrating folklore and traditional narratives into character education models. Ilham and Rahman (2024) showed that using Bugis proverbs and stories as moral instruction significantly improved students' cultural identity and ethical reasoning. Similarly, Youpika et al. (2024) showed that using endangered Central Malay folklore in the classroom enhanced moral understanding and linguistic and literary skills. These studies support the idea that character education benefits from being rooted in cultural specificity, where local traditions provide context-rich narratives that engage students emotionally and cognitively. These insights strengthen the proposition that *Iyabelale* can function as more than just a historical artefact; it can be repositioned as a dynamic educational tool.

Further academic inquiry validates the urgent need to address the loss of oral traditions and their implications for

intergenerational knowledge. Ajayi (2019) notes that the disintegration of oral narratives undermines social cohesion and erodes the mechanisms through which communal values are transmitted. Limpo et al. (2022) corroborate this by showing that oral traditions lose relevance without active preservation and risk becoming obsolete. Specifically, Youpika et al. (2024) warn that reduced access to cultural storytelling minimises the capacity of young people to engage with and internalise the ethical frameworks encoded in the traditions. These insights make it clear that without deliberate educational and cultural interventions, the loss of traditions such as *the lyabelale* may represent more than cultural amnesia – it may lead to a hollowing out of identity and character-building processes.

Symbolic oral performances such as *lyabelale* also play an essential role in shaping emotional and moral sensibilities. For example, Yusuf et al. (2023) describe how Acehese lullabies communicate affection and social responsibility, instilling cultural values in children's emotional lives from a young age. This symbolic pedagogy, transmitted through tunes, metaphors, and ritual interactions, connects generations and makes cultural values feel alive and immediate. In this sense, lullabies transcend their musical form to become a methodology of artistic education, where aesthetic experiences reinforce ethical instruction. This parallels the *Bugis use of lyabelale*, which not only soothes children but also conveys religious aspirations, patience, and parental hopes through lyrical expression.

Indonesia's national education policy creates a framework that allows cultural heritage to be embedded in formal learning environments. Titin Setiartin and Casim (2021) argue that programs initiated by the Ministry of Education increasingly support incorporating oral traditions into character-building activities. This institutional recognition provides an opportunity to advocate for *lyabelale* and similar practices to be embedded in early childhood education. Furthermore, this policy aligns with global educational trends that empha-

size the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, reinforcing the urgency and relevance of such studies.

Despite this supportive environment, there remains a gap in the academic literature regarding the mechanisms and efficacy of specific oral traditions in achieving character education outcomes. While previous studies validate the pedagogical potential of folklore and storytelling, few have explored lullabies as a structured tool for such purposes. Even fewer have focused on the Bugis community or the specific case of *lyabelale*, despite its rich symbolic language and well-established social functions. This study seeks to address these gaps by providing a detailed examination of the structural elements of *lyabelale*, its mechanisms of inheritance, and its potential for adaptation in modern educational contexts.

This study aims to analyse the symbolic structure and inheritance patterns of *lyabelale* in Bugis culture and assess its relevance as a medium for character education. This study documents an endangered oral tradition and proposes a framework for integrating it into formal education. The novelty of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which bridges ethnographic observation, educational theory, and cultural analysis to propose a sustainable model of character education rooted in culture. By articulating how *lyabelale* can be recontextualised in the 21st century, this study contributes to cultural preservation, early childhood education, and indigenous knowledge systems. The scope of the survey covers communities in South Sulawesi, with particular attention to adapting the tradition in rural and urban areas. This will allow the survey to offer historical perspectives and forward-looking proposals for the revitalisation and pedagogical application of *lyabelale* in Indonesia and beyond.

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative ethnographic case study design to explo-

re the symbolic meaning and inheritance patterns of *Iyabelale*, a traditional lullaby among the Bugis people of South Sulawesi. Ethnographic case studies are well-suited to examining cultural practices transmitted through oral tradition, as they allow researchers to capture lived experiences and nuanced meanings embedded in local customs. Following best practices in indigenous cultural research, this design involves the researcher's immersion in the community and emphasises the importance of building relationships to generate authentic data (Syarif et al., 2023).

Fieldwork was conducted in two central locations: Makassar and Bone, areas in South Sulawesi with significant Bugis populations. These locations were chosen for their varying cultural relevance and levels of urban influence, providing insight into the continuity and change of *Iyabelale* practices in both rural and urban contexts. The two communities represent a spectrum of traditional and modern lifestyles, allowing for comparative observations of how the lullaby tradition is maintained, transformed, or abandoned.

Participants included mothers, grandmothers, PAUD teachers (early childhood education educators), traditional elders, and traditional performers familiar with *Iyabelale*. These individuals were selected using purposive sampling, a method appropriate for ethnographic research that aims to gather rich and relevant insights from well-informed informants. The selection criteria included familiarity with *Iyabelale*, experience transmitting or performing lullabies, and willingness to share their perspectives. The sample size was determined by data saturation, where additional data no longer yield new insights.

Several qualitative techniques were used to collect data, ensuring depth and authenticity. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all participants. The interview format provided flexibility, allowing the researcher to delve deeply into the cultural meanings, personal experiences, and evolving perceptions

of *Iyabelale*. Questions focused on how participants learned the lullaby, how they passed it on, the values they believed it embodied, and factors that influenced its continued use or discontinuation. Participant observation was also an important component. The researcher was involved in community events, family gatherings, and educational activities where *Iyabelale* might be sung or discussed. This immersion allowed the researcher to witness the context of performance and understand how the lullaby functions in everyday life. Syarif et al. (2023) emphasise that this level of involvement fosters trust and uncovers cultural practices that may not be revealed in interviews alone. To complement these methods, photographs, audio recordings (with consent), and field notes were used to document the physical, verbal, and non-verbal elements of *Iyabelale*. In addition, any written or recorded materials available in the community, such as books or cassettes containing *Iyabelale*, were reviewed.

Data were analysed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which involves three concurrent streams of activity: data reduction, data display, and drawing/verifying conclusions. Data reduction involved coding and categorising interview transcripts, observation notes, and recordings. Patterns and themes were then revealed through a thematic matrix, allowing cross-case comparisons. Finally, conclusions were drawn inductively and refined iteratively through further engagement with the field. To ensure validity and reliability, the study used triangulation of data sources, combining interviews, observations, and documentation (Firstater et al., 2015). This method helped to corroborate the findings and provide a more complete understanding of the cultural role of lullabies. Member checking was also conducted, where selected participants reviewed initial conclusions and interpretations to ensure accuracy and cultural congruence (Firstater et al., 2015). The principal investigator maintained a reflexive journal to account for personal biases and monitor their influence on data

collection and interpretation, which aligns with Lo's recommendations (2014).

This study followed ethical standards appropriate for research involving children and elders in indigenous communities. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including parental consent when involving children. Participants were given clear information about the purpose of the study, the use of their data, and their right to withdraw at any time. Respect for cultural practices was prioritised throughout the research process. As Atout et al. (2019) suggested, sensitivity to ritual meanings, gender roles, and linguistic etiquette was strictly maintained. The presence of researchers during community rituals was always negotiated with cultural authorities, and local protocols guided participation. Privacy and confidentiality were strictly upheld. Identity information was anonymised, and audio-visual materials were stored securely, with only the research team able to access them. Participants were allowed to decline recording and request withdrawal of data at any time. These procedures align with guidelines to protect vulnerable populations and ensure cultural knowledge is not exploited or misinterpreted (Atout et al., 2019; Fikri et al., 2023).

This study acknowledges several limitations inherent in ethnographic fieldwork. First, the researcher's presence can influence participants' behaviour, particularly in formal interviews. While participant observation helps mitigate this effect, the possibility of reactivity cannot be eliminated. Second, relying on oral narratives and memory-based retellings may lead to inaccuracies or romanticisation, particularly among older participants. However, triangulation and member checking were employed to counteract such biases.

Furthermore, because *Iyabelale* is a local tradition with limited documentation, its interpretation is inherently contextual. As such, the findings may not be generalisable to all Bugis communities or lullabies in other cultures. However, the aim of this study was not statistical generalisation

but analytical depth and cultural insight, which remain true within the qualitative paradigm.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Structural and Symbolic Features of *Iyabelale*

Iyabelale lullaby, rooted in Bugis oral tradition, features rich structural and symbolic elements that function aesthetically and didactically. Like many other Southeast Asian lullabies, *Iyabelale* uses simple vocabulary, repetitive refrains, and rhythmic phrases that facilitate memorization and oral delivery (Syahril & Idris, 2019). The melodic line typically follows a gentle contour and slow tempo, which Loewy et al. (2013) argue can promote calm and emotional bonding between caregiver and infant. This auditory gentleness helps create a supportive environment and conditions the infant to associate these sounds with feelings of safety.

Iyabelale song lyrics serve as a powerful pedagogical mechanism. Using natural and spiritual metaphors, these lullabies convey maternal affection, moral guidance, and aspirational hopes for the child. For example, references to nature, such as "the wind that guides dreams" or "the stars that protect sleep," serve as metaphors for parental care and divine protection. Ruud (2013) and Bainbridge et al. (2020) emphasize that such metaphors in traditional songs are crucial for encoding moral and emotional lessons. The figurative imagery in *Iyabelale* songs transforms them from mere lullabies into symbolic narratives that convey values such as resilience, obedience, and humility—key principles in the Bugis cultural ethos.

This finding aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which states that children internalize social values and norms through culturally mediated interactions (Elkoshi, 2014). In this context, *Iyabelale* becomes a participatory educational tool in early development, bridging music, narrative, and ethical instruction. The use of poetic language also aligns with the fin-

dings of Syahril & Idris (2019), which show that literary and musical devices in lullabies support cultural identity and memory formation.

In addition to its symbolic content, the *performative dimension* of *Iyabelale*—how it is sung, the tone of the voice, the physical closeness between the caregiver and the child—plays a crucial role in creating an embodied learning experience. These aspects contribute to what scholars term affective pedagogy, where emotional warmth and repetition reinforce the values being transmitted. The lullaby's oral transmission, often accompanied by rocking movements or light touch, generates an intimate atmosphere that nurtures trust and receptiveness in infants. This embodied learning experience cannot be replicated by impersonal digital content, reinforcing the irreplaceable nature of oral traditions in early character formation.

From an ethnomusicological perspective, *Iyabelale* exhibits several distinctive musical features that enhance its pedagogical and emotional functions. Structurally, the lullaby employs a repetitive melodic contour with limited tonal movement, characteristic of pentatonic or modal systems commonly found in Southeast Asian oral traditions. The melodic line, as seen in the transcribed score, revolves around a narrow pitch range with frequent recitation-like phrasing, contributing to its hypnotic and soothing effect. Rhythmically, *Iyabelale* is performed in a quasi-free meter, allowing the singer to adjust the tempo and phrasing according to the child's emotional and physical responses. This flexibility reflects a dialogic relationship between performer and listener, typical of intimate,

domestic music-making. The monophonic texture and absence of harmonic accompaniment further emphasize the centrality of the voice as both musical and emotional vehicle. Sung in a gentle, often hushed vocal tone, the lullaby's delivery is marked by softness and elongated syllables, aligning with its purpose of calming the infant and establishing affective resonance. These musical features are not merely aesthetic; they encode affective cues and narrative cadences that facilitate memory retention and emotional bonding, reinforcing *Iyabelale*'s role as both a pedagogical and affective tool in Bugis child-rearing practices.

Figure 1 presents a transcription of the *Iyabelale* melody, which illustrates the musical characteristics discussed above.

Moreover, the *symbolic economy* of *Iyabelale* reflects the broader cosmology of Bugis society, where nature, spirituality, and family coexist in harmony. Each metaphor used in the lullaby is not arbitrary but embedded in a cultural worldview that assigns meaning to environmental and spiritual elements. For instance, invoking stars or winds is not just poetic, but also serves as a subtle introduction to the Bugis understanding of divine order and the interconnectedness of all life. Therefore, teaching *Iyabelale* to younger generations is not merely an act of cultural preservation but also a transmission of philosophical and ethical frameworks deeply rooted in indigenous knowledge systems.

Functions of *Iyabelale* Culture

Beyond its structural components, *Iyabelale* serves as a channel for Bugis cultural identity. Singing lullabies is a culturally



Figure 1. transcription of the *Iyabelale* melody

rooted practice that strengthens the emotional bond between parents and children while reinforcing the transmission of social values. Loewy et al. (2013) found that the emotional act of singing lullabies enhances parent-child attachment, a function confirmed in field interviews with Bugis mothers and grandmothers. *Iyabelale* cultural performances are often performed in dim and quiet environments where intimate interactions are possible, which aligns with traditional child-rearing practices.

In addition, spiritual and religious teachings are also woven into the content of lullabies. Similar to *Ratéb Dôda Idi* from Aceh (Yusuf et al., 2023), *Iyabelale* instills values of piety, patience, and divine protection. Phrases invoking God's blessings or the Prophet's intercession illustrate how lullabies introduce children to a religious framework in an emotionally resonant way. These values are further reinforced through singing together during bedtime, particularly in multigenerational households, which offer a shared space for intergenerational teaching.

Lullabies also affirm collective memory and strengthen cultural identity. When *iyabelale* is sung in rural and urban Bugis homes, it evokes shared experiences of caregiving and kinship. Vicente et al. (2020) and Syarif et al. (2023) note that repeating such oral practices fosters cultural continuity that ties individuals to their heritage. In group settings, such as community gatherings or traditional ceremonies, *iyabelale* is a unifying oral artifact, evoking shared symbols and emotional memories.

The role of *Iyabelale* in shaping cultural identity is further emphasized by its integration into rites of passage and community rituals. In some Bugis communities, lullabies are sung not only to infants but also as part of ceremonial practices such as naming rituals (*Mappanre Temme*) or healing songs (*bissu* chants). These events reaffirm the lullaby's broader social significance beyond domestic space, embedding it within communal expressions of belonging and spiritual protection. The multivocal nature of *Iyabelale*—spanning

affection, spirituality, and collective identity—underscores its depth as both a pedagogical and performative tradition.

Moreover, in times of social disruption or migration, *Iyabelale* acts as an anchor of identity for diasporic Bugis families. Mothers and grandmothers who have moved away from ancestral lands often retain the practice of singing lullabies as a way to reconnect children with their roots. This emotional transmission helps preserve a sense of home and heritage, even in displacement. In this context, *Iyabelale* becomes a cultural resilience mechanism, allowing families to maintain continuity of values despite external change.

Given these findings, the cultural function of *Iyabelale* also confirms its pedagogical relevance. As Young (2008) states, music and storytelling enhance emotional and social learning, while Halimah et al. (2020) argue that the communal nature of traditional performances allows children to engage meaningfully with local values. Thus, *Iyabelale* should be preserved as a cultural heritage and revitalized as a living tool in community-based and formal learning contexts.

***Iyabelale* Inheritance Pattern**

Transmission of *Iyabelale* traditionally occurs through the mother figure, indicating a matrilineal emphasis in its inheritance pattern. Mothers and grandmothers are the primary keepers of lullabies, singing them at bedtime and during ceremonial occasions. This is in line with findings from Titin Setiartin and Casim (2021), who stated that matrilineal structures often position women as the primary agents of oral tradition transmission. Informants in Bone emphasized how *Iyabelale* is learned by ear, memorized through daily repetition, and accompanied by tactile movements such as rocking or carrying.

However, changes in family structures, urbanization, and digital media consumption have disrupted these traditional patterns of transmission. Parents are increasingly relying on recorded media or abandoning the practice altogether, resul-

ting in a weakening of intergenerational transfer. As Mindell & Williamson (2018) and Shilton et al. (2023) have argued, technological shifts can reduce the context of oral communication, contributing to the loss of cultural knowledge. In urban areas such as Makassar, only a small proportion of parents report knowing or using *Iyabelale*, highlighting the urgency of revitalization efforts.

These changing dynamics in transmission patterns are summarized in Figure 1, which contrasts traditional and modern pathways of *Iyabelale* inheritance.



Figure 2. Transmission Patterns: Traditional vs. Modern

Despite this decline, several community-led initiatives have attempted to preserve the tradition. Schools, particularly those implementing a local content curriculum, sometimes incorporate *Iyabelale* into classroom activities. Teachers report that children respond positively, suggesting that the oral tradition remains an effective educational tool. Halimah et al. (2020) found similar success in integrating storytelling into school programs to reintroduce urban youth to folklore.

Digital media offers both opportunities and challenges in this area. While Yu (2023) and Youpika et al. (2024) highlight that digital platforms can help document and distribute traditional songs to new generations, Kirillova (2023) warns that decontextualized digitization can diminish the cultural depth of oral traditions. Thus, revitalization strategies must include community collaboration to ensure that digital adaptations remain authentic and relevant.

Beyond serving as a tool for preservation or dissemination, digital media functions as a dynamic social space where *Iyabelale* is actively renegotiated by members of the Bugis community, particularly the younger generation. Rather than simply

replicating traditional forms, digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok enable creative reinterpretations of *Iyabelale*—including contemporary musical arrangements, visual storytelling, and multilingual translations—without detaching from its core values. These user-generated adaptations often incorporate modern aesthetics while retaining the lullaby's emotional and cultural essence, thereby broadening its relevance and reach. As Yu (2023) and Kirillova (2023) suggest, such participatory digital practices reflect a form of cultural agency, where tradition is not statically preserved but reimagined through negotiation, innovation, and community discourse. This indicates that digital engagement, when rooted in cultural consciousness, can become a generative process that sustains oral heritage in new and meaningful forms.

Educational Values Embedded in *Iyabelale*

The educational value of *Iyabelale* lies in its capacity to convey character-building lessons through emotionally engaging and culturally meaningful content. The lyrical narrative of this lullaby presents themes of empathy, respect, and responsibility—character traits commonly prioritized in early childhood education (Halimah et al., 2020; Shih, 2021). For example, lyrics emphasizing the importance of obedience to parents and kindness to siblings strengthen social cohesion and respect for authority.

These moral values are embedded in poetic and metaphorical language, offering both emotional comfort and ethical instruction. Table 1 presents selected moral values found in *Iyabelale* lyrics along with their pedagogical meanings. In addition, the musical and performative aspects of *Iyabelale* facilitate the development of emotional intelligence. According to Dunbar (2023) and Stewart et al. (2022), music enhances children's emotional articulation and social interaction. Singing *Iyabelale* in a group setting encourages collaboration and shared emotional experiences, while solo performances between parents and

children encourage introspection and emotional security. These dynamics support Vygotsky’s theory of the Zone of Proximal Development, where learning is built through meaningful social interactions.

In addition, *Iyabelale* offers a culturally grounded medium for early moral instruction. The moral teachings embedded in its lyrics provide abstract ethical concepts through concrete, culturally familiar imagery. As Bainbridge et al. (2020) argue, the metaphors and symbolism in lullabies act as cognitive frameworks that help children understand complex social values. In this way, *Iyabelale* acts as a linguistic and moral scaffold, allowing children to internalize lessons in their socio-cultural context.

The alignment of *Iyabelale* with the national character education framework further strengthens its relevance. As Muassomah et al. (2020) and Ilham & Rahman (2024) argue, traditional songs can be effectively integrated into formal education by aligning their themes with national goals such as integrity, empathy, and responsibility. Teachers who have introduced *Iyabelale* in the classroom have observed increased student participation, deeper emotional engagement, and an increased understanding of social values.

While the integration of *Iyabelale* into

formal education offers promising pathways for cultural preservation and character development, caution must be taken to avoid reducing it to a mere instructional tool. Over-formalizing this oral tradition within rigid curricular frameworks risks stripping away its emotional intimacy, spiritual depth, and communal context—elements that are central to its original function. When detached from the everyday practices of mothers, grandmothers, and traditional performers, *Iyabelale* may lose its intergenerational resonance and become a decontextualized learning object. As Kirillova (2023) warns, cultural digitization or institutionalization, when done without community participation, may unintentionally commodify or distort traditional expressions. Therefore, any educational integration of *Iyabelale* must be carried out in close collaboration with cultural bearers to preserve its authenticity and lived meaning.

By combining musical, emotional, spiritual, and moral dimensions, *Iyabelale* exemplifies a holistic approach to character education. Lullabies engage multiple intelligences—musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal—and thus meet the needs of a diverse range of learners. Their aesthetic form enhances memory, while their emotional resonance fosters empathy and mo-

Table 1. Core Moral Values in Iyabelale Lyrics

Moral Value	Sample Lyric (translated)	Meaning / Educational Implication
Affection (<i>Kasih sayang</i>)	<i>Iyabelale ana, atinro ni mai ana</i> (Sleep now, my child, you are resting here)	Expresses parental love and emotional bonding through soft, caring repetition.
Obedience (<i>Ketaatan</i>)	<i>A ja’ mu terri terri ana tuoki malampe sunge ta ana</i> (Do not be restless, my child, you are going to sleep peacefully)	Reinforces respect for parental authority and trust in the caregiver’s presence.
Patience (<i>Kesabaran</i>)	<i>Tuo malampe sunge ta ana</i> (You are growing with peaceful sleep)	Teaches children to embrace calmness and grow steadily through restful patience.
Gratitude (<i>Syukur</i>)	<i>Nammu ri ala pa to la pallalo ana</i> (I pray you will become a child of good virtue)	Introduces spiritual awareness and parental gratitude for the child’s future.
Humility (<i>Kerendahan hati</i>)	<i>De i gaga indo mu ana</i> (You are strong, just like your mother)	Encourages modest strength and respectful admiration of parental example.

ral reasoning. These multifaceted values underscore the potential of oral tradition as a modern pedagogical tool, especially in contexts where culturally relevant education is needed.

In summary, this study's findings confirm that *Iyabelale* has significant structural, cultural, and educational value in Bugis society. Despite challenges posed by globalization and technological change, this lullaby offers a meaningful framework for character development, cultural preservation, and emotional well-being. Its symbolic richness, emotional depth, and pedagogical potential position it as a valuable heritage practice worthy of revitalization and integration into contemporary educational settings.

CONCLUSIONS

This study confirms that *Iyabelale*, a traditional Bugis lullaby, is not merely a bedtime ritual but a multidimensional oral tradition that preserves cultural memory, fosters emotional bonds, offers spiritual guidance, and facilitates character education. Through its metaphorical lyrics and melodic structure, *Iyabelale* transmits moral values, social norms, and religious beliefs across generations. Despite its decline, particularly in urban settings, its pedagogical relevance remains significant. The findings show that *Iyabelale* embodies an indigenous approach to character education aligned with modern theories such as sociocultural learning and emotional development, promoting empathy, patience, resilience, and respect while strengthening intergenerational ties. The study highlights two key implications: first, *Iyabelale* can serve as a culturally rooted medium for character education within Indonesia's national curriculum, enriching students' learning experiences and preserving intangible heritage; second, efforts to revitalize this tradition must adapt to contemporary realities, including digital consumption and shifting family dynamics, through strategies like digital documentation, school-based cultural programs, and

intergenerational storytelling. This research contributes to the broader discourse on indigenous knowledge and culturally responsive pedagogy, offering empirical evidence and practical pathways for preserving oral traditions. While centered on the Bugis community, the study's insights hold relevance for other cultures facing similar challenges and suggest future exploration of comparative and longitudinal educational impacts.

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