

## Formation of Tolerant Character Through Marsialap Ari Culture in Pakantan Mandailing Natal

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### Abstract

The Marsialap Ari Culture, a deeply rooted tradition of communal cooperation in Pakantan, Mandailing Natal, has played a significant role in shaping a tolerant and united community character. This study aims to explore how Marsialap Ari, as a social and cultural practice, contributes to the development of tolerance values among the Pakantan community. Through a qualitative approach employing observation and in-depth interviews, this research finds that Marsialap Ari not only serves as a platform for collaborative efforts in completing collective tasks but also to instill a sense of togetherness, respect for differences, and strengthen individual solidarity. The findings reveal that active participation in Marsialap Ari activities teaches the community the importance of mutual respect and support, regardless of ethnic, religious, or social background. Consequently, this tradition plays a crucial role in maintaining social harmony and reinforcing community cohesion. In conclusion, Marsialap Ari holds great potential as a model for fostering tolerant character that can be adapted to various societal contexts.

**Keywords:** Marsialap Ari, Tolerance, Mandailing Culture

### INTRODUCTION

In the community of Pakantan, located in Mandailing Natal Regency, there exists a deeply rooted cultural practice known as Marsialap Ari (Fanani, 2018). This tradition embodies the spirit of gotong royong, or communal cooperation, and serves as a longstanding custom that emphasizes working together for the common good (Khomariah, 2023). It plays a significant role in shaping the character of the Pakantan people, fostering values of unity and tolerance. The tradition's influence extends beyond mere collaboration in daily tasks, forming the foundation for a strong and cohesive social structure.

Marsialap Ari is not just a social activity but a cultural phenomenon that contributes to community solidarity and the development of tolerant attitudes (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). It is a collective practice where individuals come together to assist each other in various communal activities, ranging from agricultural work to the organization of social events. The very act of participating in these collaborative efforts encourages mutual respect and strengthens bonds among members of the community, regardless of their backgrounds. This collective sense of purpose and respect for one another fosters a supportive environment where differences are not only acknowledged but appreciated.

The current study aims to explore how Marsialap Ari, as both a social and cultural practice, contributes to the development of tolerance within the Pakantan community. By understanding the underlying values embedded in this tradition, it becomes possible to see how Marsialap Ari acts as a medium through which the principles of cooperation, unity, and respect for diversity are cultivated. The community members learn to work together harmoniously, setting aside any personal

differences to achieve shared goals, which enhances their ability to live together peacefully and respectfully.

Central to Marsialap Ari is the idea of togetherness and the importance of community over the individual. It instills in the participants a profound sense of solidarity and belonging, teaching them that cooperation and mutual support are essential components of a harmonious society. By actively engaging in Marsialap Ari, individuals internalize the values of tolerance and unity, understanding that every person, regardless of their social, ethnic, or religious background, plays a valuable role in the community. This experience, in turn, shapes their behavior and attitudes towards others, promoting inclusivity and social harmony.

The influence of Marsialap Ari is evident in how it shapes social dynamics in Pakantan. Through consistent practice, the community has built a resilient social fabric where tolerance is not merely an ideal but a lived reality. Respect for one another and a willingness to cooperate are traits that have been nurtured over time through the tradition of Marsialap Ari. It acts as a natural form of social education, where the values of tolerance and unity are transmitted from one generation to the next, thus preserving the integrity of the community's cultural identity.

In summary, Marsialap Ari is more than a tradition of communal labor; it is a cultural institution that plays a crucial role in fostering a tolerant and united character within the Pakantan community. The practice teaches the importance of togetherness and the appreciation of differences, thereby reinforcing individual solidarity and maintaining social harmony. It serves as an exemplary model for developing a tolerant character that can potentially be adapted to other social contexts, demonstrating the power of cultural traditions in promoting social cohesion and understanding.

## **METHODS**

This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing both observation and in-depth interview methods (Lickona, 1991). The observations are focused on activities associated with Marsialap Ari, enabling the researcher to gather a firsthand understanding of how this tradition manifests in daily communal life. Meanwhile, the in-depth interviews are conducted with members of the Pakantan community to gain comprehensive insights into the role and impact of Marsialap Ari on the development of tolerance values and social cohesion. These interviews are designed to uncover nuanced perspectives on how this cultural practice influences interpersonal relationships and contributes to a harmonious community environment.

Data analysis is carried out using thematic techniques to identify patterns and themes related to tolerance that emerge through the practice of Marsialap Ari. By systematically examining the collected data, the researcher is able to pinpoint recurring themes and underlying values that define the community's collective behavior and attitudes. This thematic analysis helps to reveal how the practice of Marsialap Ari cultivates tolerance, cooperation, and solidarity within the community, offering a clearer understanding of its role in fostering social cohesion and inclusivity.

## **RESULTS**

The findings of this research reveal that Marsialap Ari functions not only as a means of collaboration in completing collective tasks but also as a medium to instill a sense of togetherness, appreciation for differences, and to strengthen solidarity among individuals within the community.

This cultural practice extends beyond mere cooperation, embedding values that emphasize the importance of mutual support and shared responsibility. Marsialap Ari promotes a sense of unity, teaching individuals to value the collective welfare over individual interests and fostering an environment where communal bonds are prioritized.

Active participation in Marsialap Ari activities reinforces the importance of mutual respect and support without regard to ethnic, religious, or social background. Through this tradition, members of the Pakantan community learn to embrace diversity, understand the significance of each other's roles, and develop empathy towards one another. This practice creates a foundation for inclusive social interaction, encouraging members to work harmoniously together and to view differences as strengths that contribute to the overall well-being of the community.

The cultural values embedded in Marsialap Ari have proven effective in maintaining social harmony and enhancing community cohesion. By promoting tolerance and mutual respect, Marsialap Ari sustains a social order where peaceful coexistence is not only possible but actively pursued. The practice fosters an interconnected community, where solidarity and support are fundamental principles. Consequently, Marsialap Ari serves as an essential cultural mechanism for nurturing unity and fostering an inclusive society that embraces all its members, thus preserving social harmony and reinforcing a strong sense of communal identity.

## **DISCUSSION**

The tradition of Marsialap Ari plays a crucial role in fostering a tolerant character within the Pakantan community. This cultural practice is not solely aimed at completing collective work; it also serves as a learning platform for instilling the values of tolerance, such as mutual respect and maintaining togetherness. By actively participating in communal activities, individuals learn to appreciate the significance of cooperation and the necessity of upholding harmonious relationships within their community. This sense of communal solidarity teaches the value of respecting others' rights, opinions, and differences, thereby promoting an environment conducive to tolerance.

Marsialap Ari is deeply rooted in the principles of gotong royong, which emphasize the importance of working together for a common goal. This traditional form of communal cooperation provides a framework through which members of the community engage with one another and navigate social dynamics. The hands-on experience of collaborative efforts not only promotes practical skills but also cultivates moral and social values essential for living in a diverse society. By participating in Marsialap Ari, community members develop empathy, understanding, and the ability to respect one another, which are the core components of a tolerant character.

The potential of Marsialap Ari to serve as a model for character development extends beyond its local context. As an established tradition that fosters tolerance and inclusivity, this practice can be adapted to various social settings, contributing to the development of character education programs that emphasize tolerance as a central value. In an increasingly interconnected world, where social complexities are ever-growing, the principles underlying Marsialap Ari offer a timeless approach to fostering mutual respect, social cohesion, and inclusivity.

In a broader social context, Marsialap Ari can inspire the development of inclusive and harmonious communities. Its practice demonstrates how traditional cultural values can effectively respond to modern challenges of social diversity and fragmentation. By upholding principles of togetherness and cooperation, Marsialap Ari reinforces the idea that community well-being is achieved through collective action and shared responsibility, making it a powerful example of how cultural traditions can contribute positively to social cohesion and harmony.

Moreover, the Marsialap Ari tradition is significant in strengthening the social fabric of the Pakantan community. The principles of cooperation, mutual aid, and shared purpose provide a foundation for strong social bonds, which are vital in maintaining peace and understanding within the community. Through Marsialap Ari, individuals experience firsthand the benefits of collaboration and the value of contributing to a collective effort, reinforcing the importance of tolerance and unity as key factors in community resilience and social harmony.

In conclusion, Marsialap Ari offers a valuable cultural model for character education and the promotion of tolerance in diverse social settings. Its emphasis on collective work, mutual respect, and community support makes it a rich source of moral and social lessons that can be applied in various contexts. The tradition not only sustains the social harmony of the Pakantan community but also provides a blueprint for fostering inclusivity, solidarity, and tolerance in wider society, suggesting that cultural practices such as Marsialap Ari have a vital role to play in developing harmonious and cohesive communities.

## CONCLUSION

Marsialap Ari holds a significant role as a model for fostering a tolerant character within the Pakantan community. This cultural practice is instrumental in promoting values of acceptance, mutual respect, and solidarity, contributing to the creation of a socially harmonious environment. The tradition encourages active cooperation and instills the importance of inclusivity, which helps to shape a community where differences in ethnicity, religion, and social status are respected and appreciated. By fostering these values through communal activities and collective efforts, Marsialap Ari serves as an effective means of character development, guiding individuals towards greater social understanding and tolerance.

Moreover, Marsialap Ari has the potential to be adapted in various social contexts to strengthen tolerance and social cohesion. The principles of collaboration, shared responsibility, and respect for diversity embedded in this tradition provide a versatile framework that can be applied to different communities facing similar challenges of social diversity and integration. By adapting the practice of Marsialap Ari, other communities can benefit from its capacity to reinforce social bonds, promote inclusivity, and cultivate a sense of unity. This adaptability suggests that Marsialap Ari is not only valuable for the Pakantan community but also serves as a broader model for building and sustaining tolerant, cohesive societies.

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