

The Functional Reception of Qur'an and Hadith in the *Massulapa' To Mate* Tradition: Integrating Ritual and Educational Values

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ABSTRACT

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The *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition, practiced in Polewali Mandar, West Sulawesi, Indonesia, constitutes a functional reception of the Qur'an and Hadith, enacted through the recitation of specific verses during the lowering of the deceased into the grave. This study aims to explore the functional reception of the Quran and Hadith texts within the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition among Mandar people, which is hypothesized to serve a dual function: a religious-ritualistic role and an educational-practical one. The research method used in this study is a qualitative method through observation and interviews with religious leaders, mosque administrators, and the general public. First, the findings of this study indicate that the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition originated from interpretive efforts on Hadith texts narrated by Abdullah bin Umar and Ibn Abbas, which were contextualized by highlighting their functional dimensions in alignment with the cultural constructs and social position of the Mandar community. Second, in addition to serving as a death rite, this tradition fulfils an educational function, which can be broadly categorized into three areas: Quranic literacy education, character education, and the instilling of values of moderation amid diversity. These findings show how the mystical magical dimension of the verses of the Quran transcends its function as an educational resource that is deeply rooted in the Polewali Mandar community.



Keywords: *Functional Reception, Islamic Education, Massulapa' To Mate, Living Al-Qur'an and Hadith, Polewali Mandar*

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INTRODUCTION

The custom of reciting the Quran during death rituals is traditionally believed to be only taken place before and after the funeral (Bahadur, 2020; Nuraini & Jannah, 2020), appears to be different in the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition of the Muslim community in Polewali Mandar. In practice, the recitation of Quranic verses begins when the body is being lowered into the grave, involving four people who recite specific surahs. The reciters (*passulapa'*) are selected by the imam of the mosque based on certain criteria, and are usually members of the mosque management (*parewa masigi*). Each recites a selected surah on the four sides of the body in a loud voice while accompanying the process of lowering the body into the grave and covering it with soil. After the burial, the *passulapa'* are given a special gift by the bereaved family as a token of gratitude.

Massulapa' To Mate as a cultural heritage has existed for a long time in the Mandar tribe community and has been passed down from generation to generation. The strong solidarity of the community and the depth of knowledge of the Mandar scholars support the existence of this tradition (Wawan & Alimuddin, 2022). Despite differences in opinion, this tradition continues to exist across generations. In fact, it can be said that the majority of the Polewali Mandar community carries out this tradition in every funeral agenda, which is consistently prepared collectively. The gifts given to the *passulapa'* in this case are also not only borne by the bereaved family, but also by the community who come to pay their respects. Hence, it is evident that traditions involving collective community participation demonstrate the integration and profound foundation of Quranic teachings and social solidarity within the practices of Mandar society.

Scholarly works examining the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition as a primary subject remain exceedingly scarce. Most researchers have focused solely on analyzing the practice of Qur'anic recitation at gravesites in other places/regions, which can be broadly classified into two main categories. First, inquiries into the legality of the tradition. Nuraini & Jannah (2020) traced the theological basis used and found five hadiths about the condition of the deceased in the grave as the main source. Several studies have successfully demonstrated the plurality of views among scholars and mass organizations in Indonesia (Azzahra, 2025; Bahadur, 2020; Lukman Hakim & Achmad Junaidi, 2024). Second, exploratory efforts on the historicity and process of tradition implementation. The living Quran-hadith research model is the most dominant in this section. The diversity of forms of reception by the community – Banjar, Wiringin, and Purbalingga – of the hadith, which is the source of reference in the implementation of traditions, is found in the research by Jannah and Avina (Mustaghfiroh, 2020; Nuraini & Jannah, 2020). In line with this, Garda and Hanif successfully identified the various meanings contained in the *Nyadran* (honoring ancestors) tradition at the *Sewu Wijirejo tomb* (Putri & Mudhofar, 2024).

As for research that specifically examines *Massulapa' To Mate*, only one article was found that attempts to highlight the differences in legal views between the two largest organizations in Indonesia, namely Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. It is concluded that Nahdatul Ulama fully agrees with the *Massulapa'* tradition based on various sources of turok books, including the work of Ali Jum'ah al-Fatawa al-'Ashriyah li Mufti Al-Diyar al-Misriyyah and the hadith of the Prophet found in the books Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah takes a different position by neither prohibiting nor recommending it, based on several verses of the Quran; QS. al-Maidah/2:3, QS. al-Najm/53:38-39 (Wawan & Alimuddin, 2022). Although in-depth, this study tends to focus only on the existence of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition as a cultural heritage, ignoring the living Quran-Hadith aspect as a phenomenon of the Mandar community's reception of the Quran-Hadith text.

This study emphasizes the significance of examining the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition within the Mandar community through the living Quran-Hadith approach and educational theory, particularly utilizing Ahmad Rofiq's concept of functional reception. This approach explores how the Quranic texts, including the Prophet's hadiths, are received, interpreted, and applied in the Mandar socio-cultural context. The primary aim is to understand how the functional reception of these sacred texts is embedded in the *Massulapa'* tradition, which embodies various Islamic educational values grounded in local culture.

The research argues that the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition is not isolated but emerges from the expansion of meanings of the Quran and hadith, interwoven with Mandar cultural elements. This functional reception shapes a unique tradition that serves not merely as a death ritual but as a rich repository of meaning and values. It manifests a deep appreciation for the spiritual and social dimensions, rooted in the collective identity of the Mandar people. Additionally, the tradition illustrates how the mystical and symbolic aspects of Quranic verses transcend their text, becoming a vital educational resource within the community.

METHOD

Research on the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition within the framework of living Quran-Hadith studies was chosen based on previous research trends that only questioned its legal aspects. Reviews of its legal status only look at the *Massulapa To Mate* tradition from a *fiqh* perspective and ignore the various substantial meanings behind its implementation. If *Massulapa' To Mate* is explored using the living Quran-Hadith perspective, then the various values, meanings, and their relationship with the sacred texts that live in Mandar society will be revealed. Therefore, this study attempts to examine the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition not only as a death rite, but also as a

manifestation of the Mandar community's understanding and appreciation of Islamic teachings that have been internalized in their lives.

This research is classified as field research using descriptive-qualitative methods with a critical paradigm. The data sources in this study come from two categories, namely primary and secondary data sources. The primary data for this study comes from religious leaders – in Clifford Geertz's terms, cultural brokers – who will explain knowledge related to *Massulapa' To Mate*, namely mosque imams and mosque administrators (*parewa masigi*). Meanwhile, secondary data consists of books, journal articles, and documents relevant to the main theme of this research. The data collection techniques used were in-depth interviews and participatory observation. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, taking into account their direct involvement in the implementation of traditions and their understanding of Islamic teachings, particularly in the subdistricts of Campalagian, Balanipa, and Tinambung.

The data collected through this method was then analyzed in two theoretical steps. First, it explored the dimensions of reception of the Quran and hadith in the implementation of tradition using Ahmad Rofiq's approach. According to Rofiq, the forms of reception of texts, especially the Qur'an and Hadith, can be classified into three forms, namely exegetical reception, aesthetic reception, and functional reception (Rafiq, 2014). Second, the analysis of the dimensions of local education in the implementation of tradition is based on the integration of three main foundations. First, Thomas Lickona's theory, which emphasizes the importance of forming moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action in character education. Second, Paulo Freire's proposal regarding transformative humanism, which emphasizes critical awareness, dialogue, and liberation as the core of education (Freire, 2012). Third, local-religious values that are alive in society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The central position of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition as a cultural heritage formed from the interpretation of the texts of the Quran and hadith intertwined with elements of Mandar locality is presented in this section. This will be explained in two broad categories. The first category will first present the results of the research, which will be described descriptively based on the data collected in the field. This section covers two important points, namely the history of the transmission of the *Masulapa' To Mate* tradition and the functional reception of the Quran and hadith surrounding the practice of the tradition. The second category is the discussion section, which will analyze the data analytically using the approaches and theories described above.

Results

History and Transmission of Knowledge of the *Massulapa' To Mate* Tradition in Polewali Mandar Society

The history of the emergence of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition in Polewali Mandar cannot be separated from the role of religious scholars as holders of religious knowledge authority. The existence of religious scholars with established scientific capacity and affirmation of local culture was the main key to acceptance by the community. From the interviews, it was found that this tradition existed at the same time as the arrival of Islam in the Mandar tribe.

Although it is not known exactly when it arrived in Mandar and who initiated it, what is certain is that the Massulapa' To Mate tradition has existed since the beginning and has been passed down from generation to generation (MSN).

The Massulapa' tradition is estimated to have existed alongside the arrival of Islam in Mandar (SAF).

Specifically, Ustaz Muhsinin also emphasized that this tradition was formed as a result of the adaptation between religious texts and the cultural framework and social position of the Mandar community. This statement is in line with the explanations of Hannani (Hannani et al., 2022; Kawu, 2011; Somba & Syahrudin Mansur, 2020) who state that since its inception, Islam has coexisted peacefully in Mandar thanks to the concept of *da'wah* (proselytizing) promoted by scholars who were very tolerant of local cultural beliefs. The position of the scholars who came to spread Islam in the 16th/17th centuries – who were referred to as *wali* (the saint) by the local community at that time – played an important role in the formation of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition. The hadith text about the virtue of reading the Quran for the deceased in this case is interpreted contextually and adapted to the social conditions of the community. Based on the results of interviews, two hadiths were explicitly mentioned by two religious figures who were also informants

First, the hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Umar regarding the command to recite the beginning and end of Surah al-Baqarah on both sides of the corpse. This hadith was conveyed by KH. Bisyri (*Imam of the al-Taqwa Mosque in Pambusuang*) to the researcher by showing him a book entitled *al-Fatwa al-Ashriyah li Mufti al-Diyar al-Misriyyah* by Ali Jum'ah, which explains the articles on reciting verses from the Quran over the deceased. Second, the hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas tells of the Prophet's reaction when he passed by a garden in Medina and heard the cries of people being punished in their graves. This second hadith was conveyed by KH. Abdul Syahid Rsyid (Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council of Polewali Mandar Regency) with an explanation deeply rooted in the early Islamic understanding in Mandar, which

was initiated by scholars known as *wali*. The two hadiths in question are as follows (Al-Bukhari, p. 53; Al-Thabrani, p. 444).

إِذَا مَاتَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلَا تَحْسِبُوهُ، وَأَسْرِعُوا بِهِ إِلَى قَبْرِهِ، وَلْيُقْرَأْ عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ بِفَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ، وَعِنْدَ رِجْلَيْهِ بِخَاتَمَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ فِي قَبْرِهِ

Meaning:

If one of you dies, do not delay in taking him to his grave, and recite the beginning of Surah al-Baqarah at his head and the end of Surah al-Baqarah at his feet (HR. al-Tabrani).

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ مَرَّ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِحَائِطٍ مِنْ حِيطَانِ الْمَدِينَةِ أَوْ مَكَّةَ فَسَمِعَ صَوْتَ إِنْسَانَيْنِ يُعَذِّبَانِ فِي قُبُورِهِمَا فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُعَذِّبَانِ وَمَا يُعَذِّبَانِ فِي كَبِيرٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ بَلَى كَانَ أَحَدُهُمَا لَا يَسْتَتِرُ مِنْ بَوْلِهِ وَكَانَ الْآخَرُ يَمْشِي بِالنَّمِيمَةِ ثُمَّ دَعَا بِجَرِيدَةٍ فَكَسَرَهَا كِسْرَتَيْنِ فَوَضَعَ عَلَى كُلِّ قَبْرٍ مِنْهُمَا كِسْرَةً فَقِيلَ لَهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لِمَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا قَالَ لَعَلَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفَّفَ عَنْهُمَا مَا لَمْ تَيَبَسَا أَوْ إِلَى أَنْ يَيَبَسَا

Meaning:

From Ibn Abbas, who said, "The Messenger of Allah passed by the gardens of the people of Madinah or Makkah, and he heard the voices of two people being punished in their graves. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, 'They are being punished, and they are not being punished for a major sin.' He then explained, 'One is being punished for not purifying himself after urinating, while the other is being punished for spreading discord.' He then asked for a fresh palm branch, split it into two pieces, and planted each piece on the two graves. He was then asked, "Why did you do this, sir?" He replied, "Perhaps their punishment will be lightened as long as the branch remains wet." (HR. al-Bukhari).

According to KH. Abdul Syahid Rasyid, this argument is the basis for the permissibility of reciting verses from the Quran to the deceased, as in the Massulapa' To Mate tradition. The purpose of reciting selected surahs during Massulapa' is none other than to make the grave of the deceased spacious, bright, and peaceful. It then becomes a means of purification of four things within a person to meet the angels, namely the body, heart, soul, and secrets (Wawan & Alimuddin, 2022).

From this, it is understood that the name *Massulapa' To Mate* cannot be separated from the elements of Sufism, which is characteristic of the early understanding of Islam in Mandar brought by the saints. This concept is adapted to the social construct of early Mandar society, which was closely associated with animism (Hannani et al., 2022). In this case, *Massulapa' To Mate* is synonymous with the four concepts of purification for the deceased (body, heart, soul, and secrets) and eschatology (torment in the grave). This finding is also evident in the results of the interview MSN.

“The term *sulapa'* means square (*sulapaq aapeq*). *Massulapaq tomate* means reading *surahs* in four directions, namely the head, feet, right and left sides of the corpse.” (MSN).

Massulapa' To Mate, as a tradition that encompasses these two aspects, has been passed down from generation to generation by scholars and the community collectively. In his research, Alimuddin refers to this tradition as a cultural heritage of the Mandar tribe's ancestors that has been preserved from generation to generation (Wawan & Alimuddin, 2022). This is also in line with Sayyid Ahmad Fadlu al-Mahdaly's view that *Massulapa' To Mate* has become a standardized norm in Mandar society. It has become an integral part of the funeral agenda of the Mandar tribe's Muslim community. Specifically, there are four important aspects surrounding the implementation of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition in Polewali Mandar. The author presents these aspects in the form of a table:

Table 1: The implementation process of *Massulapa'*

Category	Time Implementation	Deskription
Determining <i>Passulapa'</i>	Before funeral prayers	The selection of <i>passulapa'</i> is chosen from the mosque management circle (<i>parewa masigi</i>) and the bereaved family if it has been prepared in advance.
Determining position	Arrival at the cemetery	In general, the <i>passulapa'</i> position occupies four sides, namely at the head, feet, and right and left sides of the corpse. The <i>passulapa'</i> position, which is shaped like a <i>sulapaq aapeq</i> (square), is believed to be a fortress for the corpse.
Recitation of selected <i>surahs</i>	When the body is placed in the grave	As the body was lowered into the grave, the <i>passulapa'</i> began to recite selected verses on the four sides of the body.
Giving <i>Sarongs/Envelopes</i>	After reading the <i>talqin</i>	Given after reading the Quran by the family, prepared collectively by the community who came to pay their respects.

Source: Interview with MSS and RPP

In its development, based on facts in the field, it was found that there was diversity in the implementation of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition among the Polewali Mandar community. Specifically, the differences lie in two main aspects. First, in the number of *passulapa'*. Based on the results of interviews, different views were found, especially in the Limboro sub-district. According to Ustaz Hasbi Ray (Imam of the Miftahul Ihsan Lemosusu Mosque, Limboro Sub-district), in addition to its religious dimension, this tradition can also function as social control. In this case,

it controls the community so that they do not talk about it, allowing them to better absorb the meaning and purpose behind the funeral process in Islam. Therefore, for him, the more people read the surah, the better. Second, the difference lies in the choice of surahs read during *Massulapa' To Mate*. The following is the data on the differences in question:

Table 2: Differences in the choice of surahs recited in the practice of *Massulapa'* tradition

Place	Selected Surah	Source
Campalagian and Limboro Subdistricts	Surah Yasin (Head), al-Sajadah (Right), al-Mulk (kiri), al-Naba (kaki)	Hasbi dan Pauli
Tinambung Subdistrict	Surah Yasin (kepala), al-Sajadah (kanan), al-Mulk (Left), al-Dukhan (Feet)	Muhsinin
Balanipa Subdistrict	al-Sajadah, al-Ikhas (eleven times), al-Nas (once), al-Falak (once), al-Baqarah (verses one to seven)	Rukkawali

Based on the data, it is evident that the selection of verses recited in the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition is not absolute. According to one informant, this difference is natural because there is basically no clear argument that mentions this. The scholars in Polewali Mandar generally understand that reciting verses from the Quran is significantly beneficial for the deceased.

The functional reception of the Quran and Hadith; from religious function to educational function in the *Massulapa To Mate* tradition

The expansion of meaning in texts used as theological foundations is clearly evident in the practice of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition. This is directly confirmed by several religious leaders who served as informants for the author. As Ustazd Muhsinin emphasized, this tradition did indeed begin with the interpretation of texts by religious leaders, then developed and expanded in significance in accordance with the cultural framework and social position of the Mandar community. Similarly, K.H. Syauqaddin emphasized the principle of the usefulness of reciting verses from the Quran for the deceased in the implementation of the tradition. Then, KH. Bisyri himself sees from the generality of the commands in the text that it is possible to interpret and practice it contextually.

The process of contextualizing the text is clearly evident in the implementation of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition of the *Mandar community*. The hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Umar, which contains the command to recite the beginning and end of Surah al-Baqarah to the deceased, is contextualized by emphasizing the functional dimension of the Quran. In this position, the determination of the surah to be recited is adjusted to the beliefs of the Mandar community, which are steeped in mysticism. The virtue of the surah, which can serve as a protection for the deceased from the

punishment of the grave, was chosen by Mandar scholars as an extension of the meaning of the hadith, which is the main source. In this case, the selection was based on other historical accounts. Ustaz Muhsinin and KH. Syauqaddin emphasized that:

“People recite Yasin and Tabara (al-Mulk) because of their many virtues. Judging from their virtues, these surahs are like charity, protecting us from the punishment of the grave and/or alleviating the punishment of the grave” (MSN).

“The selection of specific surahs is based on their functions. For example, al-Mulk serves as a shield against the torment of the grave, al-Ra’d helps ease the departure of the soul for the dying, and so on. All of this is grounded in strong hadith” (SYN)

Not only that, the most prominent result of the interviews and field observations was the educational function of tradition for the Polewali Mandar community in general. The *Massulapa’ To Mate* tradition is not only a means of practicing religious teachings in the form of a ritual recitation of verses from the Quran for the deceased, but also a medium for transmitting Islamic values, local culture, and intergenerational social solidarity. Through community involvement in the implementation of traditions—as an integral part of the series of death rituals in Polewali Mandar—the community is invited to understand Islamic teachings in a practical way, while also fostering spiritual and social awareness. At least three major categories of the educational function of the *Massulapa’ To Mate* tradition in the Polewali Mandar community have been identified. The author has included these in the form of a table below:

Table 3: The educational function of the *Massulapa’* tradition

Aspect	Result	Source
Quran literacy education	Passulapa’ cadre development and regeneration, etiquette for reading the Quran and listening to Quran recitations in the implementation of the <i>Massulapa’ To Mate</i> tradition	Religious Leader: Ustadz Hasbi, KH. Syauqaddin Community: Zulkifli, Pauli
Character Education	Concern for the deceased and their families, social ethos, and collective ethics in the implementation of the <i>Massulapa’ To Mate</i> tradition	Religious Leader: Ustadz Muhsinin Community: Ruzdan, Rahmat
Internalization of moderation values	Accommodating of local traditions and culture, mutual respect despite differing views (between the Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah organizations) on the <i>Massulapa’ To Mate</i> tradition	Religious Leader: KH. Bisyri, KH. Abd Syahid. Community : Taufiq, Nasrullah

Table 3 above shows that the reception of the Quran and hadith in the *Masulapa' To Mate* tradition does not only stop at the nihilistic aspect, but also develops into an important part of the social and religious education of the Mandar community. In terms of Quranic literacy education, it was found that this tradition became a means of regenerating the younger generation through *passulapa'* guidance. As stated by Ustadz Hasbi, especially in Lemosusu, Limboro District, teenagers are encouraged to learn to read the Quran well and understand the etiquette of reading. At the same time, the community is also taught the etiquette of listening to the Quran by not talking during the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition. Specifically, the informant mentioned one of the verses of the Quran (QS. al-A'raf: 7/204), which contains the command to listen to the recitation of the Quran properly in order to receive mercy from God (Interview, Ustadz Hasbi and Zulkifli, 2023).

In terms of character education, this tradition strengthens the sense of caring for the deceased and the grieving family. At the same time, it also succeeds in shaping the social ethos and collective ethics of the Polewali Mandar community. As Ustadz Muhsinin emphasized, it has become a custom for the Mandar community to come together to pay their respects and collectively take care of the deceased until the funeral procession is complete, even until the *tahlilan* (remembrance) ceremony. Social ethos and collective ethics are clearly reflected in the process of carrying out traditions, from determining the *passulapa'*, determining positions, reading selected surahs, to giving special gifts after *Massulapa to Mate*.

The spirit of mutual cooperation in preparing the instruments for carrying out traditions—such as gifts for *passulapa'*, which are usually in the form of sarongs or envelopes—reflects the collective ethics of the Polewali Mandar community. Furthermore, the duality of function contained in the *Massulapa'* tradition, according to Mushinin and Pauli, embodies a high social ethos. *Massulapa'* is understood as a form of almsgiving to the deceased by the *passulapa'*, and the giving of special gifts by the bereaved family is understood as a form of almsgiving and/or a gift to the *passulapa'*.

Meanwhile, the aspect of instilling moderate values can be seen in how the people of Polewali Mandar are able to harmoniously integrate Islamic teachings with local culture. Religious leaders do not reject local elements in tradition, but rather provide space to adapt religious practices to the local culture as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of Islam. This inclusive attitude is reflected in the acceptance of various views in the practice of *Massulapa' To Mate*, for example, in the selection of different surahs but with mutual respect for one another. Similarly, the response of the community and religious leaders, especially between the Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah community organizations, which despite their different views on legality, are still able to work together harmoniously without blaming one another.

Discussion

The functional reception of the Quran and hadith found in the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition of the Polewali Mandar community, with its dense meaning and surrounding local Islamic educational values, can be seen from two significant findings revealed in this study. First, the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition was indeed formed from the process of interpreting the Prophet's hadith about the command to read *Surah al-Baqarah* on both sides of the corpse – the narration of Ibn Abbas – which was contextualized based on the social, cultural, and religious constructs of the Mandar community. The depth of knowledge of Mandar scholars who are friendly to local culture plays an important role in the process of transmitting the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition. Second, in its implementation, this tradition not only reflects a complete belief in the function of the Quran as a sacred text but also contains complex local Islamic educational values, including Quranic literacy education, character education, and the instilling of moderation values. These two findings successfully demonstrate how the *Masulapa' To Mate* tradition not only functions as a death rite but also contains a variety of practical educational functions.

The findings of this study support the position of Jeynes and Mahliatussikah that state that local culture-based education is far more effective than theoretical-academic education models (Jeynes, 2019; Mahliatussikah et al., 2023). Similarly, Jailani believes that integrating local culture with Islamic teachings can foster deeply rooted in character education (Jailani, 2025). In a similar vein, Firmansyah et al., (2025) assert that multicultural integration is essential for fostering an inclusive environment. Because a rigid and arrogant approach to local traditions is likely to provoke strong resistance (Pajarianto et al., 2022). Conversely, efforts to integrate religious teachings with deeply rooted local culture are key to community acceptance (Rachmat Effendi et al., 2020). However, an in-depth exploration of the substantial meaning of both is key to ensuring that religious teachings remain aligned their moral ideals or core values.

The representation of religious and educational functions formed from the *Massupa' To Mate* tradition underscores the importance of a comprehensive understanding of the dialectic between sacred texts and cultural contexts in the formation of local religious traditions. A deep knowledge of the historical, social, and cultural contexts is essential to ensure that Islamic teachings remain relevant and alive in society without losing their substantial meaning (Ilyas, 2023; Maulidin et al., 2024). In this position—as in Ahamad Rofiq's theory—the formation of the *Massulapa'* tradition basically departs from exegetical reception first, namely the acceptance of the texts of the Quran and hadith through the act of interpreting, then shifting to aesthetic reception and functional reception (Qudsy & Dewi, 2018; Rafiq, 2014).

In the reception of the *Masulapa'* tradition, Mandar scholars play an important role in positioning religious texts amid the complexity of Mandar tribal localities. Based on the moral ideals of the text – the usefulness of reading verses from the Quran to the deceased – the significance of the original meaning is expanded and linked to the cultural constructs and social positions of the Mandar community. This is understandable given that changes in the factual reality of society, which are internalized from socio-cultural, geographical, ethnic, and other aspects, are inevitable (Marsyam, 2020). Through the interpretative process that incorporate local elements, a tradition has been formed that simultaneously serves two functions.

Further, the findings of this study also show the importance of responsive and contextual Islamic education. In this case, it can accommodate local elements as a medium for character building as well as a means of preserving religious values (Pabbajah, 2021). Referring to Lickona's theory, the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition can also be said to reflect a character education model that successfully shapes three main aspects, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Lickona, 1991). In this case, *Massulapa' To Mate* has become an effective medium for character education to internalize moral values in community life.

Moreover, the findings indicate that the *Massulapa To Mate* tradition embodies what Paulo Freire refers to as transformative humanism, evident in the community's openness towards the tradition (Freire, 2012). Despite differing views on its legality, the people of Polewali Mandar continue to support one another, demonstrating that diversity can coexist with mutual respect. Thus, the *Massulapa To Mate* tradition serves as a concrete example of how Islamic education can be enriched through the integration of local culture, thereby fostering moderate character and deep Qur'anic literacy.

This research notably differs from prior studies, such as Wawan and Alimuddin which primarily regarded *Massulapa' To Mate* as a death ritual with disputed legal standing (Wawan & Alimuddin, 2022). Instead, the present study highlights that the tradition reflects a functional reception of the Qur'an and Hadith, evolving beyond ritual into an educational tool for Qur'anic literacy, character building, and inculcating moderation within the Polewali Mandar society.

Nevertheless, it contrasts with Parningsih's study of Mattampung in Bone, South Sulawesi, which viewed the tradition mainly as Quranic recitation at graves for spiritual rewards (Parningsih, 2021), and Mustaghfirah's examination of living hadith practices in Purbalingga, which focused on religious and social dimensions without addressing the educational significance underpinning the tradition (Mustaghfirah, 2020).

Based on findings that successfully demonstrate the complexity of meaning and value surrounding the implementation of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition, this study recommends that educators, religious leaders, and policymakers in religious

education should prioritize local wisdom as a vital resource in fostering contextual learning methods. This approach will not only deepen religious insight but also strengthen social identity and become a means of realizing an inclusive and harmonious society (Mudijono et al., 2025; Ruslan & Irham, 2022).

The *Massulapa To Mate* tradition illustrates that local religious practices, deeply rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith, can evolve into significant and valuable educational instruments. It serves not only as a component of death rituals, but also as a means of Quranic literacy education, character building, and promoting religious moderation within Mandar tribal society. This confirms the importance of an educational model that is friendly and responsive to local aspects, with cultural wisdom as the foundation of education to strengthen religious identity and social cohesion at the same time.

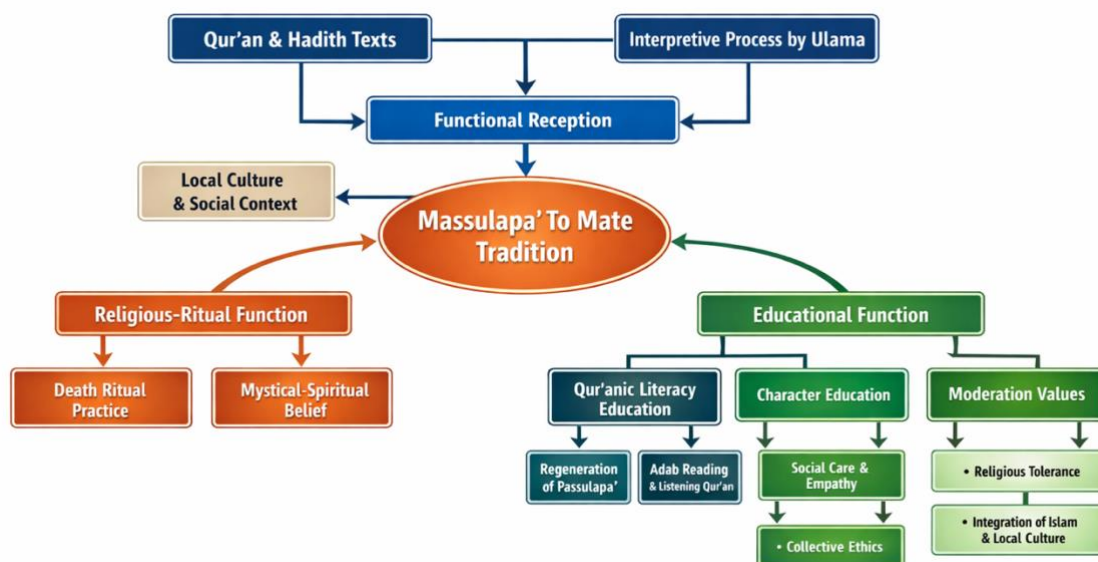


Figure 1: *Massulapa' to Mate* Tradition

Figure 1 shows that the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition is the result of a process of functional reception of the Qur'an and Hadith texts, mediated by ulama interpretation and contextualized within the social and cultural construction of the Mandar community. This tradition functions as a multidimensional entity that not only represents religious ritual practices but also serves as a locally based instrument of Islamic education. Conceptually, the model integrates textual, cultural, and educational dimensions within a single framework that illustrates a dialectical relationship between divine revelation, interpretation, and social praxis. Thus, *Massulapa' To Mate* acts as a medium for the transmission of values, producing Qur'anic literacy, collective character formation, and the internalization of moderation values within the society.

The conceptual model from this research highlights a paradigm shift in understanding the local religious tradition of *Massulapa' To Mate*, recognizing it not merely as ritual but as an epistemological and pedagogical mechanism grounded in functional reception of sacred texts. Unlike previous studies that treated tradition normatively or descriptively, this model shows that the Qur'an and Hadith are interpreted by scholars in context to produce socially productive educational practices. It systematically establishes a dialectical link among text, context, practice, and education, in which functional reception simultaneously mediates the religious, cultural, and educational dimensions. Tradition is thus reframed as a dynamic agent that shapes contextual Islamic education and produces Qur'anic literacy, character formation, and religious moderation. The model also expands the living Qur'an-Hadith framework by emphasizing reception beyond symbolism into transformative social praxis, impacting community cohesion and religious identity.

From the perspective of education and local wisdom, this conceptual model highlights how the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition embodies a dynamic process where sacred texts—the Qur'an and Hadith—are interpreted by religious scholars and adapted within the social and cultural fabric of the Mandar community. This shows that religious teachings are not just static doctrines but living practices shaped through meaningful dialogue with local culture and community values.

Educationally, the tradition fulfills a dual function: acting as a spiritually symbolic ritual and as an indigenous Islamic educational practice that fosters Qur'anic literacy, character development, and the internalization of religious moderation. By integrating moral, emotions, and actions into everyday life, this tradition provides a platform for holistic character education, enhancing social cohesion, deepening religious consciousness, and nurturing of an inclusive, moderate society grounded in local wisdom.

Academically, it highlights a dynamic integration between traditional religious-cultural practices and modern educational needs. By demonstrating how the *Massulapa' To Mate* Tradition functions both as a religious ritual and an educational tool, the model provides a framework for incorporating local cultural wisdom into formal education. This encourages the development of curriculum and teaching methods that are culturally relevant and promote *Qur'anic* literacy, character education, and moderation, including religious tolerance. The model also supports the role of educators (ulama) in interpreting religious texts in ways that resonate with contemporary students, advancing both educational theory and practice, especially in contexts where religion and culture intersect.

Socially, this model fosters the strengthening of community ethics and social empathy, which can positively influence students' social behavior and interpersonal relationships. It promotes values of collective ethics and social care that extend beyond the classroom into the broader society. By integrating local culture and

encouraging religious tolerance, the model supports social cohesion and peaceful coexistence in diverse communities. This makes education a platform not only for knowledge acquisition but for social harmony and cultural continuity.

CONCLUSION

The view that has long positioned the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition as merely a death rite is not justified. This article shows that the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition not only functions as a ritual but also has a significant educational function. The use of theoretical concepts in reading the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition has succeeded in showing a different perspective. By using the theory of reception of the Quran and hadith—as part of the living Qur'an and hadith approach—this study successfully reveals that the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition was formed from interpretive efforts on the hadith text—the accounts of Abdullah bin Umar and Ibn Abbas—which were contextualized by highlighting its functional dimensions in accordance with the cultural constructs and social position of the Mandar community. Furthermore, the use of educational theory in this paper shows that the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition not only reflects a complete belief in the function of the Qur'an as a sacred text but also contains complex local Islamic educational values, including aspects of Qur'anic literacy education, character education, and the instilling of moderation values. Since this paper focuses only on an in-depth exploration of the *Massulapa'* tradition as a phenomenon of the Qur'an and Hadith that is alive in society using two data analysis tools, it certainly has many limitations. These limitations necessitate further research examining, for example, the resistance of traditionalist groups—Mandar scholars—to exclusive religious movements that tend to claim local traditions such as *Massulapa' To Mate* as *bid'ah* (heresy). It could also be researched using a psychological approach to measure the extent to which the practice of the *Massulapa' To Mate* tradition has an impact on the inner peace of bereaved families and the community who hear the recitation of the Quran.

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