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## SPREADING THE UNDERSTANDING OF WOMEN'S IDENTITY WITHIN THE METO CULTURE THROUGH THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SPACE USING THE CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING MODEL

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### **Abstract**

Women in Meto culture have a uniqueness that can only be understood if they understand the construction of Meto culture. In general, many people always associate women's issues with patriarchal culture whose assumptions are oppressive and unfair to women. Women are often seen as marginalized. This paper aims to build a new understanding of women's identity in Meto culture that is more positive in patriarchal culture. There are discussions of women's identity in the Meto culture and its approach through Christian education. This positive understanding is then formed in dialogue with the appropriate biblical texts. Furthermore, the process of seeding this understanding can be carried out in the Christian education space with the Contextual Teaching and Learning learning model. This research was carried out using a literature study that is relevant to the issue of women's identity in the Meto culture and the results found as content in the Christian education space are that the identity of women in the Meto culture is unique, relational, collective, and cosmic.

**Keywords:** Meto culture; Women's identity; Christian education; Contextual teaching; Learning model.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Global capitalism is very influential in the lives of especially women. The values exhaled by global capitalism are individualistic, materialistic and exploitative towards humans and nature. Capitalism has constructed the mindset of society, especially women, through various media such as advertisements, magazines, social media or television shows. Capitalism has also homogenized the meaning of beauty and made women objects of consumption.<sup>1</sup> Capitalism also lowers the wages of women who work in the formal and informal sectors. Women only receive 89% of wages compared to men

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<sup>1</sup> Revin Mangaloksa Hutabarat, "Perempuan Dan Kapitalisme," 2018, <https://nusantaranews.co/perempuan-dan-kapitalisme/>.

even though they work full time.<sup>2</sup> By 2022, the global gender gap index level for equal pay in equal work is 0.7 with 1 indicating absolute parity and 0 indicating extreme inequality. Indonesia is ranked 92 out of 146 countries in terms of gender gap. Compared to the gender gap in 2021, Indonesia's ranking improved by 9 points.<sup>3</sup> Most NTT women aged 15 years and above are only able to work in the primary sector (agriculture) with a percentage reaching 53.07 percent (National Labor Force Survey Results 2016). The status of the majority of women who work is only as family workers or unpaid workers.<sup>4</sup> Women also experience oppression and exploitation in the workplace, such as Sales Promotion Girls who have to dress sexy to attract consumers.<sup>5</sup> Capitalism makes women have a dual role as workers and housewives. Women have to take care of domestic work and children while working outside the home. Women are also often victims of domestic violence and legal discrimination.<sup>6</sup>

The presence of global capitalism has contributed to perpetuating the position of women's subordination or placing women in a disadvantageous position.<sup>7</sup> Global capitalism has also given rise to the problem of gender inequality which causes discrimination against marginalized people, especially women. Even worse, this discrimination is also supported by the patriarchal culture that lives in society. This culture believes that men have power over everything,<sup>8</sup> sehingga tidak jarang perempuan mendapat perlakuan tidak adil dalam berbagai hal.

The presence of women is often found always secondary to men in the community. Women are seen as less competent in living a life outside of domestic work. This patriarchal value appears in the view that men are considered more rational than women. Men are considered stronger, more powerful, and more appropriate to do

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<sup>2</sup> Fisipol, "Menelaah Perempuan Dan Perspektif Kelas Dalam Kapitalisme," *Fisipol UGM*, 2018, <https://fisipol.ugm.ac.id/menelaah-perempuan-dan-perspektif-kelas-dalam-kapitalisme/>.

<sup>3</sup> Magdalena Triasih Dumauli, "Banyak Wanita Indonesia Bekerja Di Sektor Informal: Apakah Mereka Puas Dengan Pekerjaan Ini?," *Unair.Ac.Id*, last modified 2023, <https://unair.ac.id/banyak-wanita-indonesia-bekerja-di-sektor-informal-apakah-mereka-puas-dengan-pekerjaan-ini/>.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Donda Munthe, "Peran Perempuan NTT Di Era Globalisasi," *BPS Provinsi NTT*, last modified 2018, <https://ntt.bps.go.id/news/2018/04/23/95/-opini--peran-perempuan-ntt-di-era-globalisasi.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Hutabarat, "Perempuan Dan Kapitalisme."

<sup>6</sup> Miftahul Falah, "Dilema Perempuan Di Tengah Kapitalisme," *Republika*, 2012, <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/mfmiez/dilema-perempuan-di-tengah-kapitalisme>.

<sup>7</sup> Nurus Shalihin and Firdaus, "Transformasi Gender: Strategi Pembebasan Perempuan Dari Jerat Pembangunan Dan Kapitalisme," *SAWWA: Jurnal Studi Gender* 14, no. 1 (2012): 109-140, <https://journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/sawwa/issue/view/372>.

<sup>8</sup> Zuhri Saifuddin and Amalia Diana, "Ketidakadilan Gender Dan Budaya Patriarki Di Kehidupan Masyarakat Indonesia," *Murabbi: Jurnal Ilmiah dalam Bidang Pendidikan* 5, no. 1 (2022): 17-41, <https://www.ejournal.stitalhikmah-tt.ac.id/index.php/murabbi/article/view/100>.

important things outside the public space.<sup>9</sup> Women are seen as more dominant in affective and emotional attitudes so they are considered to have deficiencies in doing public work because they tend to involve feelings rather than thoughts.

The influence of global capital is also felt by the people of East Nusa Tenggara, including women, who have experienced the bitter fruits of exploitation of their human and natural resources by superpower countries such as the United States and countries in Europe. Violence and injustice resulting from global capital are felt, for example, by women and children in the Mollo area in South Central Timor. This can be seen through the presence of foreign mining companies in collaboration with national companies and the East Nusa Tenggara regional government itself "has resulted in significant environmental damage where the Mollo women have been forced to deal with the destruction of traditional land, removal of forests, and pollution of water sources." Their life." A situation like this of course places women's position as the backbone of the family whose job it is to ensure food security and family health becomes very vulnerable. Agricultural lands that have been destroyed mean that women can no longer farm so that their families do not have access to food.<sup>10</sup>

In situations like this, it is not uncommon for Mollo women to travel long distances just to get food for their families.<sup>11</sup> This is driven primarily by the basic nature of women in patriarchal areas like Timor who have been taught from birth to always make sacrifices and prioritize the interests of family members who are under their care and care. This is where these women always place all the family burdens on their shoulders. The result of this principle of living is that when food sources are scarce, women deliberately choose to eat only after their husbands and children have eaten. It is not surprising that many women are malnourished so they are easily attacked by various diseases. This situation becomes even more dangerous, especially when some of them are breastfeeding. Of course, their babies will not get enough nutrition to develop so they will experience stunting or failure to grow due to malnutrition. This affects the

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<sup>9</sup> Jessica Noviandriani, "Peran Perempuan Dalam Budaya Patriarki," *Kompasiana.Com*, November 19, 2022, [https://www.kompasiana.com/jessicanoviandriani/63777c497bda020f74378902/peran-perempuan-dalam-budaya-patriarki?page=3&page\\_images=1](https://www.kompasiana.com/jessicanoviandriani/63777c497bda020f74378902/peran-perempuan-dalam-budaya-patriarki?page=3&page_images=1).

<sup>10</sup> Ira Desiawanti Mangililo, "Teologi Perempuan Dan Pengimajinasian Ulang Komunitas Inklusif Di Gereja Masehi Injili Di Timor(GMIT)," *Kurios: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen* 8, no. 1 (2022): 225–242, <https://www.sttpb.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/kurios/article/view/160/210>.

<sup>11</sup> Ira Desiawanti Mangililo, "Teologi Perempuan Dan Pengimajinasian Ulang Komunitas Inklusif Di Gereja Masehi Injili Di Timor(GMIT)".

physical and brain development of these babies. It is not uncommon for mothers and children to die because they are unable to survive.<sup>12</sup>

The attitude of sacrifice and willingness to bear family burdens is also shared by young women in various regions in East Nusa Tenggara. Due to food shortages and social conflicts caused by the exploitation of human and natural resources in various regions, quite a few young women are leaving their respective regions and working as migrant workers. With knowledge and skills that are below average, they cross the safe space and work to survive. Some of them work well and send money to their families in the village, but it is not uncommon for some to become victims of human trafficking and then be exploited in various forms of forced labor. There are also those who become sex workers. Sad stories about the suffering, struggle and even death of women victims of human trafficking have left deep wounds on the people of East Nusa Tenggara.<sup>13</sup> Here it is not an exaggeration to say that "the central government and local political elites such as in East Nusa Tenggara, together with the superpower countries, are the ones who enjoy the main benefits from economic globalization because they are the ones who have direct access to local assets owned by indigenous peoples; Meanwhile the small people remain poor and suffering."<sup>14</sup>

These views that weaken women in a patriarchal culture also form a negative paradigm towards women's identity. Women are considered weak, powerless, have no advantages, have power before men or society. This results in women experiencing various discrimination and gender inequality in various aspects of life. Many women in East Nusa Tenggara experience this discrimination. East Nusa Tenggara women have not received proper treatment in the household and in the public sphere. Many women in East Nusa Tenggara experience gender inequality in terms of marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, violence, and multiple workloads,<sup>15</sup> including women in the Meto culture (one of the tribes in East Nusa Tenggara).

Even though there are a number of negative views and experiences of women dealing with global capitalism, there are women's strengths based on local wisdom in

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<sup>12</sup> Ira Desiawanti Mangililo, "Teologi Perempuan Dan Pengimajinasian Ulang Komunitas Inklusif Di Gereja Masehi Injili Di Timor(GMIT)".

<sup>13</sup> Ira Desiawanti Mangililo, "Teologi Perempuan Dan Pengimajinasian Ulang Komunitas Inklusif Di Gereja Masehi Injili Di Timor(GMIT)".

<sup>14</sup> Ira Desiawanti Mangililo, "Teologi Perempuan Dan Pengimajinasian Ulang Komunitas Inklusif Di Gereja Masehi Injili Di Timor(GMIT)".

<sup>15</sup> Juanda, "Gender Phenomenon in Short Story by Fanny J. Poyk in Media on Line, Indonesia," *KAFA'AH JOURNAL* 8, no. 2 (2018): 135-148, <http://kafaah.org/index.php/kafaah/article/view/216/158>.

the Meto culture that can become spiritual in facing various injustices and inequalities. The strength of women's identity in Meto culture is what will be described in this paper as a form of women's resilience. So this paper focuses on exploring the positive identity of women in Meto culture. The purpose of this paper is to build an understanding that women in the Meto culture have a positive identity. This positive identity becomes spirituality and strength for women in the Meto culture to face global capitalism and make various changes in society. The identity of women in Meto culture is an important content in Christian formation or education. This paper uses literature research methods that are relevant to the topic of women's identity in Meto culture. There is a number of previous studies related to women and patriarchy in meta-culture, such as Lopies and de Haan's writings on the "Application of Cross-Cultural Counseling and Postcolonial Feminist Studies Against Patriarchal Cultural Oppression".<sup>16</sup> They take a counseling approach to this. Meanwhile, this paper uses a Christian education approach.

This paper uses a descriptive qualitative method.<sup>17</sup> The descriptive method can be interpreted as research that is carried out continuously so as to obtain comprehensive knowledge about problems, phenomena, and social forces that are obtained if the relationships of phenomena are studied over a long period.<sup>18</sup> The author begins by describing the problems faced by women in the Meto culture and describes a number of women's identities in the Meto culture as strengths for women's resilience and shared learning. Furthermore, the author connects a positive identity that contains the values of justice and equality with the text of the Bible as the foundation for the implementation of Christian education. In the end, the author offers the Contextual Teaching and Learning learning model as a learning model in the Christian education space to instill the value of women's identity in Meto culture for the struggle for justice and equality.

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<sup>16</sup> Paula Alfa Loppies and Arly Elisabeth Maria de Haan, "Penerapan Konseling Lintas Budaya Dan Studi Feminis Poskolonial Terhadap Penindasan Budaya Patriarki," *Ciencias : Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pendidikan* 1, no. 1 (2018): 40-45, <https://ejournal.upg45ntt.ac.id/ciencias/article/view/14>.

<sup>17</sup> Sonny Zaluchu, "Strategi Penelitian Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif Di Dalam Penelitian Agama," *Evangelikal: Jurnal Teologi Injili dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat* 4, no. 1 (2020): 28-38, <https://journal.sttsimpson.ac.id/index.php/EJTI/article/view/167/pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Sandra L Siedlecki. "Understanding Descriptive Research Designs and Methods." *Clinical nurse specialist CNS*, 34, no. 1 (2020): 8-12, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1097/NUR.0000000000000493>; Carrie Williams. "Research Methods." *Journal of Business & Economics Research (JBER)*, 5, no. 3 (2007): 65-72, <https://doi.org/10.19030/jber.v5i3.2532>.

## DISCUSSION

### Images of Women and their Identity in Meto Culture

Women in the Meto culture become part of global capitalism as well as the patriarchal culture that drags them to stereotypes of weak women under male power. This is a general view that is attached to women, including in the Meto culture. Even Pranowo emphasized that women in (almost) every culture are placed in a position under male domination.<sup>19</sup> The life of women in the Meto culture is interesting to study because they have a unique identity in the midst of a patriarchal culture. The Meto culture is a culture that comes from the Atoni tribe, who inhabit the island of Timor, especially West Timor.<sup>20</sup> Meto culture has the concept of *feto-mone*, which means feminine-masculine, to explain the relationship between women and men, humans and God, as well as humans and nature. This concept shows that women and men are one unit that complements and cannot be separated. However, in practice, the concept of *feto-mone* also has an impact on the division of labor and social roles between women and men. Women mostly take care of domestic affairs, such as cooking, washing, entertaining guests. Meanwhile, men are more responsible for public affairs, such as fighting wars, building relationships with the wider community, and working in the garden. This shows that women are still considered subordinate to men in Meto culture.

The identity of women in Meto culture in West Timor is a unique, relational, collective and cosmic identity according to Kolimon.<sup>21</sup> The four identity models are described by Kolimon as follows:

#### *Identity is Unique*

According to Kolimon, in certain respects a woman's identity is unique. There are special things that women have in relation to their position, role and responsibilities in the community. The things that differentiate the identities of women and men in this cultural community are clothing and the division of work space. Women wear sarongs and men wear blankets. Even though the sarongs and blankets are the work of women

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<sup>19</sup> Yogie Pranowo, "Identitas Perempuan Dalam Budaya Patriarkis: Sebuah Kajian Tentang Feminisme Eksistensial Nawal El Sa'adawi Dalam Novel 'Perempuan Di Titik Nol,'" *Melintas* 29, no. 1 (2013), <https://journal.unpar.ac.id/index.php/melintas/article/view/266>.

<sup>20</sup> Uman Rejo, "Sifon, Nain Fatu, Dan Humanitas Perempuan Dalam Fiksi 'Kutukan Perempuan Celaka' Karya Felix K. Nesi," <http://jurnal.unimor.ac.id/PSN/article/view/1674> (2021): 1-17.

<sup>21</sup> Mery Kolimon, *Misi Pemberdayaan Perspektif Teologi Feminis* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2022).

and the motifs on the sarongs and blankets are the same, women are not allowed to wear blankets. On the other hand, men are not allowed to wear sarongs. The blanket (mau) is long and has tassels at both ends, while the sarong (tais) is round and closed. The process of making sarongs and blankets is not much different. However, when the weaving is finished, the tassels of the two ends of the blanket are not cut off and the tassels are not sewn together, while the sarong for women is cut by the tassels and the two ends are sewn together. This is an illustration of spatial arrangements for women and men.<sup>22</sup>

In the division of work space, women are responsible for domestic matters such as managing the family's food in the barn, cooking, washing, weaving, and raising children. Meanwhile, men play a role in the public space, including cultivating land, leading rituals of worshiping ancestors and the Divine and managing customs. In other words, women's workspaces are more limited in size compared to men's workspaces, which is more or less reflected in the difference in clothing between them (covered sarong and uncovered blanket). This condition has been rooted in the Meto culture for generations.<sup>23</sup>

However, in recent years, the emergence of Christian education in the Meto community has opened new opportunities for empowering women's identity. Christian education that adopts a contextual teaching and learning model can function as a medium to redefine the boundaries of women's identity and role in the Meto culture. By entering the learning process around the students' cultural context, the contextual teaching and learning model encourages the incorporation of local wisdom and practices into the curriculum, which can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Meto culture among students.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Mery Kolimon, *Misi Pemberdayaan Perspektif Teologi Feminis*.

<sup>23</sup> M.S. Morgan and R. Winkler. "The Third Shift? Gender and Empowerment in a Women's Ecotourism Cooperative." *Rural Sociology*, 85, no. 1 (2019): 137-164, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ruso.12275>; N.H. Yue. "Perceptions of Gender Inequality at Work in Hong Kong". *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, 7, no. 1 (2001): 111-132, <https://doi.org/10.1080/12259276.2001.11665900>.

<sup>24</sup> G.A.W. Ng. "Toward Wholesome Nurture: Challenges in the Religious Education of Asian North American Female Christians." *Religious Education*, 91, no. 2 (1996): 238-254, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0034408960910208>; B. Chilisa and G. Ntseane. "Resisting dominant discourses: implications of indigenous, African feminist theory and methods for gender and education research." *Gender and Education*, 22, no. 6 (2010): 617-632, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2010.519578>.

Women work around the house or in limited spaces while men work outside the home or public spaces. The division of work space between men and women is strictly maintained. In the traditional Meto house, which has a round shape, the part of the attic directly above the cooking stove is used as the family barn. Food stored there can be preserved by the smoke when the cooking stove is lit. Men may not climb into the family barn; only women, especially mothers in the household, are allowed to go up there to pick up groceries. If these cultural rules are not followed, it is believed that no matter how much the harvest will not meet the food needs of the family throughout the year.<sup>25</sup>

Conversely, women are not allowed to participate let alone lead the ritual. Women are considered not to have enough mental strength to communicate with nature spirits and ancestors. Only men were thought to be mentally capable of leading the rites in the face of angry gods. In relation to women's domestic tasks, there are things that are unique to women in that through the woven (*sarong* and blanket) they produce, women also play a role in maintaining community identity. Each sub-ethnicity in Timor has a specific woven motif that defines who they are, and it is women who are tasked with maintaining that ethnic identity through the weaving.

### ***Identity is Relational***

The word used in Meto to refer to women, *bife* (the giver), refers to the meaning that women's identity is not a closed identity. Women's domestic roles as described above place women in relationships with other community members such as adult men and children. Women do not live for themselves but together and in their community. In this community, women have unique roles and responsibilities that make their contribution to life together irreplaceable by other parties. Women are different from men who are called *atoni*. The word *atoni* which can literally be interpreted as a man or a person who gives an appropriate and suitable answer. The concept of *atoni* can only be interpreted as giving an answer to life's challenges, but it can also be interpreted as giving a commensurate response to women's gifts. Women provide food and offspring, men respond to the gift.<sup>26</sup> The relationship between women and men, therefore, is a reciprocal relationship: mutual giving and receiving. Both of them shouted, greeted each other and, more than that, supported each other in life.

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<sup>25</sup> Mery Kolimon, *Misi Pemberdayaan Perspektif Teologi Feminis*.

<sup>26</sup> Mery Kolimon, *Misi Pemberdayaan Perspektif Teologi Feminis*.



It is clear that the meaning of these two concepts (bife and atoni) refers to relations. However, we need to be careful about the implications of these concepts which can lead to unequal relations between women and men. The concepts of atoni and bife can be interpreted in an egalitarian way as I do here, but it can also be interpreted negatively to demand that women always give themselves so as to place them in a position that is vulnerable to exploitation. Kolimon chose to give positive meaning to encourage more equal relations between women and men.<sup>27</sup> Today's meto women must read cultural concepts anew in order to confirm their identity and existence.

This is in line with research conducted by Yunardi Kristian Zega. In responding to the issue of gender inequality that occurs in most parts of Indonesia. Zega emphasized that gender is a characteristic that can be exchanged between each other and can be shared by both. Allah differentiates between human genders but does not differentiate between the roles of the two. Both can be related in equality. Therefore, Christian education plays an important role in building an understanding of gender equality within the family, society, especially in the field of education and in the church.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Identity is Collective***

The identities of Meto women and men are collective because these identities do not stand alone. Their proper names always consist of two words: first name and last name. His first name is always a name inherited from one of the ancestors. Ancestors can be from the mother's or father's side. In this way the connection with the ancestors and the inherited traditions is maintained. More than that, the community is understood not only to consist of family members who are still alive but also includes ancestors who have returned to the world of ancestors.<sup>29</sup>

This also shows the importance of ancestors in Timorese beliefs. Ancestors are seen as a link between humans and the Divine. Meanwhile, the last name is always the

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<sup>27</sup> Yunardi Kristian Zega, "Perspektif Alkitab Tentang Kesetaraan Gender Dan Implikasinya Bagi Pendidikan Agama Kristen," *Didaché: Journal of Christian Education* 2, no. 2 (2021): 160–174.

<sup>28</sup> Yunardi Kristian Zega, "Perspektif Alkitab Tentang Kesetaraan Gender Dan Implikasinya Bagi Pendidikan Agama Kristen," *Didaché: Journal of Christian Education* 2, no. 2 (2021): 160–174, <https://journal.sttsimpson.ac.id/index.php/DJCE/article/view/431/pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> Kolimon, *Misi Pemberdayaan Perspektif Teologi Feminis*.

surname that connects the individual to the extended family of the father or husband collectively (patrilineal). A child is seen as belonging to the father's family. Because it continues the family surname. When a woman marries, she leaves her father's clan (kaos nono) and becomes part of her husband's clan (*saeb nono*).

### ***Identity is Cosmic***

That identity is also cosmic, meaning that it relates to nature. The surnames of the Meto people are understood as those connected with certain stones and wood (hau kanaf, faut kanaf). In the napoitan li ana rite, namely the welcoming of a child into his community which was carried out in pre-Christian times, a child is welcomed by connecting his identity with the wood and stone of his family's name. This creates an obligation to care for nature and protect it from damage. Actually hau kanaf and fatu kanaf explain the origin of certain clans and also their relationship with the ancestors. Humans are believed to come from the world of ancestors and when they die will return there. The ancestral land is a mystical world, symbolized by the world beyond the stone and wood.<sup>30</sup>

Agriculture and livestock are the source of life in the Dawan philosophy of life. A man who wants to marry a woman must have a garden and raise livestock; likewise, a woman who is ready to be married not only knows how to weave but is good at organizing food products in a round house. Therefore, the introduction of identity as farmers and breeders is the first and foremost education in educating a child to become a tenacious farmer and breeder, who at least the fruit does not fall far from the tree; children become workers; diligent like their parents in taking care of the garden and raising livestock.<sup>31</sup>

Identity education starts from the moment the child is born! Almost all traditions suggest that a baby's placenta should be planted. Some believe that the placenta should be planted around the yard of the house, some believe that the placenta should be planted in the hamam of the in-laws' house, some believe that the grave of the placenta should be lighted for several months and there are many other beliefs. Meanwhile, the

<sup>30</sup> Mery Kolimon, *Misi Pemberdayaan Perspektif Teologi Feminis*.

<sup>31</sup> Neno Anderias Salukh, "Bagaimana Suku Dawan (Timor) Memperkenalkan Jati Diri Sebagai Petani Kepada Anak-Anak?," *Kompasiana.Com*, last modified 2020, accessed June 10, 2023, <https://www.kompasiana.com/neno1069/5fddc9d8d541df3ec03231f2/pendidikan-pengenalan-identitas-suku-dawan-timor>.

Dawan people have a habit of planting ari-ari together with a plantation plant in one hole. This habit is not without meaning. The Dawan people believe that the placenta, which is the baby's food while still in the womb, is expected to continue to ensure the baby's survival when growing up through agricultural products.

### **The Call of Faith to Reject Dehumanization as the Basis of Christian Education**

The identity that is inherent in Meto women is a spirituality that can be lived as a force in life together. Therefore this identity can be inherited or shared with many people through the Christian education space. The content of Christian education based on local wisdom is interesting because it has been rooted in society. Through the Christian education space, it is hoped that many people can realize and understand a number of positive values of women's identity in Meto culture and then absorb the depth of the cultural spirit that strengthens and renews it. This is to respond to issues of gender inequality, individualism, materialism and even exploitation of humans and nature which are a common struggle. A number of these amplifying issues lead to dehumanization. The existence of humans, especially women, is harassed, neglect of human dignity and even nature is considered normal and cannot be controlled.<sup>32</sup> Justice and equality as a gospel that can help the marginalized along with the congregation consistently reject patriarchal values that differentiate humans based on degrees, including other negative values exhaled by global capitalism.

In Genesis 1: 26-28 it is found that God created humans, that is, men and women are equal.<sup>33</sup> God blesses men and women and gives equal rights and roles to be responsible for taking care of all of His creation. God created humans in the singular and then made them plural. Where are men with masculine adjectives and women with feminine adjectives.<sup>34</sup> Both of them are human beings who reflect the image of God and both are also blessed and given the same power by God in the world. So, even though men and women were created by God with different types biologically and with their

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<sup>32</sup> Ester Mariani Rihi Ga, "Woman Traffickingdan Respon Gereja Di Nusa Tenggara Timur," *Dunamis: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 6, no. 2 (2022): 635–646, <https://e-journal.sttintheos.ac.id/index.php/dunamis/article/view/605/277>.

<sup>33</sup> Zega, "Perspektif Alkitab Tentang Kesetaraan Gender Dan Implikasinya Bagi Pendidikan Agama Kristen."

<sup>34</sup> Zega, "Perspektif Alkitab Tentang Kesetaraan Gender Dan Implikasinya Bagi Pendidikan Agama Kristen."

own characteristics, God did not treat the two of them differently, but gave them equal/balanced duties and responsibilities, and blessed the two creations.

In the story of the New Testament also tells that, Jesus strongly opposed the discrimination that occurred in His time. John 8:2-11 tells that when the Jews caught a woman who committed adultery, then they brought her to Jesus and asked to punish the woman, but Jesus did not comply with their request.<sup>35</sup> In this story, it can be seen that the Jews only caught women who committed adultery but did not catch men who committed adultery. Therefore, Jesus emphatically told them "for whoever feels innocent should be the first to throw a stone at this woman" (John 8:7). These words of Jesus show that, Jesus was against the discriminatory acts that had been carried out by the Jews. This was done by Jesus because Jesus highly upheld gender equality. Jesus understood that God alone does not distinguish between men and women. Unfair treatment and discrimination are only actions that originate from human desires and are classified as dehumanization.

In connection with gender equality, or women and men have equal status in the eyes of God. The research of Melvi Noermala Hia and Riste Tioma Silaen also enriches the study in Galatians 3:28 which provides a clear confirmation that all humans created by God have the same essence, both men - both men and women.<sup>36</sup> From Galatians 3:28, it provides significant implications for gender equality that in Christ, there are no exceptions or differences due to gender, whether male or female. Both genders are seen as equal without discrimination from either gender. Men and women have the same existence before God the creator. It needs to be understood that gender differences are a gift from the Triune God who created humans. Furthermore, existing gender differences are not a tool to discriminate against one of the genders, but rather every man and woman should be respected and given the same opportunity to show the talents they have, and no role is more important than one of them.<sup>37</sup>

The belief that God wants humans to uphold humanization by living up to the values of justice and equality is the foundation for Christian education held in faith

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<sup>35</sup> Zega, "Perspektif Alkitab Tentang Kesenjangan Gender Dan Implikasinya Bagi Pendidikan Agama Kristen".

<sup>36</sup> Melvi Noermala Hia and Riste Tioma Silaen. "Makna Tidak Ada Perbedaan Antara Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan Berdasarkan Galatia 3:28 Dan Implikasinya Bagi Kesenjangan Gender," *Jurnal Teologi Cultivation* 6, no. 2 (2022): 191-209, <http://e-journal.iakntarutung.ac.id/index.php/cultivation/article/view/2254/471>.

<sup>37</sup> Melvi Noermala Hia and Riste Tioma Silaen. "Makna Tidak Ada Perbedaan Antara Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan Berdasarkan Galatia 3:28 Dan Implikasinya Bagi Kesenjangan Gender".

communities. The values of justice and equality reinforce women's unique, relational, collective and cosmic identities in Meto culture. Women have a unique identity understood from the description of the sarong as an identity that shows women's workspace and the unique role of women as guardians of identity through determining the distinctiveness of tribal weaving motifs. Women have a relational identity that can be understood from the meaning of Bife which refers to the giver and recipient of responses in relationships within the community. Equivalence relations can be seen through mutual giving and receiving between women and men in the community. Women with collective identities are understood through connectedness with extended family and ancestors which are marked by innate clans and clan transitions after marriage. Women with a cosmic identity are understood through connectedness to nature. Christian education based on local wisdom that values justice and equality also supports humanization and enriches insights with new perspectives on women's identity in Meto culture. This new understanding is able to strengthen and build the capacity of women and the wider community for the transformation of various dehumanizations.

### **Christian education with the CTL learning model as a space for strengthening women's identities**

Christian education specifically means the process of forming students according to Christian values.<sup>38</sup> In the Christian education space, the values of justice and equality through the idea of women's identity as unique, relational, collective and cosmic can be instilled to strengthen women in the community of faith. This strengthening through the idea of local wisdom really supports humanization. For this need, Christian education can be carried out using a contextual teaching and learning model. The contextual teaching and learning model is a holistic learning process and aims to help students understand the meaning of teaching materials and relate them to the context of their daily lives.<sup>39</sup> Contextual learning is an attempt to make students active in pumping their

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<sup>38</sup> Merensiana Hale, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Kristiani Bagi Generasi Alpha," *Teruna Bhakti* 5, no. 1 (2022): 1–13, <http://stakterunabhakti.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/teruna/article/view/141/75>.

<sup>39</sup> Nurdyansyah and Eni Fariyatul Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran* (Sidoarjo: Nizamia Learning Center, 2016).

own abilities without losing sight of and relating to the real world. The essence of the CTL approach is the linkage of each learning material or topic to real life.

Contextual learning (contextual teaching and learning) or commonly referred to as the CTL learning model is a learning concept that can help teachers relate the material taught to students' real-world situations and encourage students to make connections between the knowledge they have and its application in their lives as family members and public. CTL (contextual teaching and learning) is a holistic learning process and aims to help students understand the meaning of teaching materials by relating it to the context of their daily lives (personal, social and cultural contexts), so that students have dynamic and flexible knowledge/skills to actively construct their own understanding.<sup>40</sup> Contextual learning as a learning model that provides facilities for student learning activities to seek, process, and find learning experiences that are more concrete through the involvement of student activities in trying, doing, and experiencing for themselves. Thus, learning is not only seen from the product side, but the most important thing is the process.

In contextual learning, the teacher's job is to help students achieve their goals.<sup>41</sup> The teacher's task is to manage the class as a team that works together to discover something new for class members (students). The characteristics of CTL are marked by seven main components,<sup>42</sup> namely 1) Constructivism; 2) Inquiry; 3) Questioning; 4) Learning Community; 5) Modelling; 6) Reflections; and 7) Authentic Assessment. Before carrying out learning using CTL, the teacher must make a learning design/scenario as a general guideline and at the same time as a control tool in its implementation. In essence, the development of the CTL component in learning can be done through the following steps:<sup>43</sup> 1) Develop students' thinking to carry out more meaningful learning activities, whether by working alone, discovering themselves, and constructing students' new knowledge and skills. 2) Carry out inquiry activities for all topics taught. 3) Develop curiosity through questions. 4) Creating a learning community, such as through group discussion activities, question and answer, and so on. 5) Presenting

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<sup>40</sup> Nurdyansyah and Eni Fariyatul Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*.

<sup>41</sup> Nurdyansyah and Eni Fariyatul Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*.

<sup>42</sup> Nurdyansyah and Eni Fariyatul Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*; Sharan B. Merriam and Gabo Ntseane. "Transformational Learning in Botswana: How Culture Shapes the Process." *Adult Education Quarterly*, 58, no. 3 (2008): 183-197, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0741713608314087>.

<sup>43</sup> Nurdyansyah and Eni Fariyatul Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*; Sharan B. Merriam and Gabo Ntseane. "Transformational Learning in Botswana: How Culture Shapes the Process": 183-197.

examples of learning through illustrations, models, and even actual media. 6) Familiarize children to reflect on every learning activity that has been carried out. 7) Conduct an objective assessment, namely assessing the actual ability of each student.

There is a positive and significant correlation between CTL strategies by Christian religious education teachers and student learning activeness. Learning in the context of CTL is not just listening and taking notes, but learning is a process of direct experience. Through the process of experience, it is expected that development in cognitive aspects only, but also affective and psychomotor aspects. Activeness can create an active learning situation. Active learning is a learning system that emphasizes the activeness of students both physically, mentally, intellectually, as well as between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. And learning activeness is the desire of students to do and carry out learning activities so that they will gain knowledge, understanding and skills of the material they learn.<sup>44</sup> Contextual learning components include:<sup>45</sup> 1) making meaningful connections; 2) doing significant work; 3) self-regulated learning; 4) collaborating; 5) critical and creative thinking; 6) nurturing the individual; 7) strive for achieving high standards; 8) using authentic assessments. The CTL approach is learning that allows students to apply and experience what is being taught by referring to real-world problems, so that learning becomes more enjoyable.

CTL learning model has been proven effective to improve students' Christian character.<sup>46</sup> In essence, the development of each CTL component can be done as follows:<sup>47</sup> 1) Develop students' thinking to carry out more meaningful learning activities whether by working alone, Learning Model Innovations, discovering themselves, and constructing their own new knowledge and skills that they must have. 2) Carry out as far as possible inquiry activities for all topics taught. 3) Develop students' curiosity through raising questions. 4) Creating a learning community, such as through group discussion activities, question and answer, and so on. 5) Presenting models as examples

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<sup>44</sup> Hesron Situmeang, "Pengaruh Strategi(Ctl) Oleh Guru Pendidikan Agama Kristen Terhadap Keaktifan Belajar Siswa Kelas V Dan Vidi Sd Negeri 173366 Parmonangan Tahun Ajaran 2021/2022," *JURNAL JURDIKBUD* 3, no. 1 (2023): 89–101, <https://journal.amikveteran.ac.id/index.php/jurdikbud/article/view/1378/1209>.

<sup>45</sup> Nurdyansyah and Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*.

<sup>46</sup> Magdalena Elly Kurniawati, "Model Pembelajaran Contextual Teaching Learning Dalam Pendidikan Agama Kristen Untuk Meningkatkan Karakter Siswa Kristiani," *Epigraphe: Jurnal Teologi dan Pelayanan Kristiani* 3, no. 1 (2019): 28–40, <http://jurnal.stttorsina.ac.id/index.php/epigraphe/article/view/45>.

<sup>47</sup> Nurdyansyah and Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*.

of learning, can be through illustrations, models, and even actual media. 6) Familiarize children to reflect on every learning activity that has been carried out. 7) Conduct an objective assessment, namely assessing the actual ability of each student. In contextual learning, the learning program is a class activity plan designed by the teacher, namely in the form of a step-by-step scenario about what will be done with students during the learning process. The program must clearly reflect the implementation of the seven CTL components, so that each teacher has complete preparation regarding the plans to be implemented in guiding teaching and learning activities in class.<sup>48</sup>

Christian education in faith communities can absorb the principles of the CTL learning model to instill positive values in local culture or wisdom. With the CTL learning model, students including women in faith communities can be assisted by educators to examine and criticize local wisdom as an integral part of everyday life. This process must be accompanied by competent educators. Contextual learning can help educators link the idea of women's identity in Meto culture with real-world situations of students in this case issues of gender inequality and dehumanization and encourage students to make connections between the knowledge they have and its application in their lives as family and community members.

CTL (contextual teaching and learning) is a holistic learning process and aims to help students understand the meaning of women's identity in Meto culture by relating it to the context of their daily lives (personal, social and cultural contexts), so that students have dynamic and flexible knowledge/skills to actively construct their own understanding. Students are expected to understand that there are a number of local wisdom values that can be absorbed, especially the idea of female identity in Meto culture. The values of justice and equality that can be learned are absorbed from the meaning of the idea of women's identity in Meto culture as follows. Women have a unique identity understood from the description of the sarong as an identity that shows women's work space and the unique role of women as guardians of identity through determining the distinctiveness of tribal weaving motifs. Women have a relational identity that can be understood from the meaning of Bife which refers to the giver and recipient of responses in relationships within the community. Equivalence relations can be seen through mutual giving and receiving between women and men in the

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<sup>48</sup> Nurdyansyah and Fahyuni., *Inovasi Model Pembelajaran*.



community. Women with collective identities are understood through connectedness with extended family and ancestors which are marked by innate clans and clan transitions after marriage. Women with a cosmic identity are understood through connectedness to nature. Para pelajar atau naradidik akan sangat terbantu melalui pembelajaran berbasis kontekstual sebab mereka diarahkan untuk menghidupi konteksnya dan belajar menyerap sejumlah hal positif untuk mengatasi persoalan hidup yang nyata.

## CONCLUSION

Christian education is an important space in the process of seeding a new understanding of women's identity in Meto culture. This process was greatly assisted by starting to realize the challenges of dehumanization issues especially for women and trying to understand the local culture and wisdom of the Meto culture. CTL (contextual teaching and learning) is an interesting learning model to instill the idea of women's identity in a Meto culture that is unique, relational, collective and cosmic in order to build women's capacity in the midst of a patriarchal culture and global capitalism. A good understanding of this unique identity allows Meto women to increase their capacity.

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