

Islam, Local Culture, and the Motto *Maja Labo Dahu* in Bima: a Foucauldian Critical Discourse Analysis of Power and Institutionalization

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Abstract:

*This study is grounded in concerns over the transformation of local cultural values amid modernization, which may weaken their role in shaping social behavior. It examines the philosophical meaning and socio-discursive role of *maja labo dahu* within the Bima community of West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The discussion focuses on the integration of Islam and local culture, the construction of moral discourse, and the role of power relations in sustaining social norms. This study aims to analyze (1) the philosophical values embodied in *maja labo dahu*, (2) its function as a dominant moral discourse from a Foucauldian perspective, and (3) the role of power relations in its institutionalization within social institutions. This research employs a qualitative approach with a critical discourse analysis framework. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using inductive and deductive techniques. Data validity was ensured through triangulation. The findings reveal that *maja labo dahu*, meaning “shame and fear,” represents a synthesis between Islamic teachings and local cultural values that forms the ethical foundation of Bima society. From a Foucauldian perspective, it functions as a dominant moral discourse reproduced through educational, religious, and governmental institutions. The study concludes that *maja labo dahu* is a dynamic discursive practice shaping moral subjectivity, collective identity, and social order, while reflecting the operation of power-knowledge in contemporary society.*

Keywords: *maja labo dahu, Islam and local culture, critical discourse analysis, power-knowledge, Bima society*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia’s national identity is inseparable from its vast cultural diversity, which shapes distinctive social characteristics across regions (Supratikno, 2022). Within this plurality, local philosophies and mottos function not merely as cultural expressions but as normative systems that regulate behavior and construct collective identity (Jarrah et al., 2025). In Kabupaten Bima, the motto *Maja Labo Dahu*, meaning “shame and fear,” serves as a moral

foundation that guides both individual conduct and social relations (Anwar Hasnun, 2020). However, the accelerating forces of modernization, globalization, and socio-cultural transformation have increasingly challenged the relevance and internalization of this value system (Zuriatin et al., 2025). The emergence of social problems such as juvenile delinquency, violence, and drug abuse indicates a weakening of moral control mechanisms rooted in local wisdom. This condition raises a critical question: how does *Maja Labo Dabu* operate in contemporary society as a discourse that shapes norms, regulates behavior, and sustains social control?

Previous studies have predominantly examined *Maja Labo Dabu* through anthropological, sociological, and educational perspectives, emphasizing its role as a moral guideline and cultural identity that supports character formation (Jumriati et al., 2024). Comparable studies on local wisdom, such as *siri' na pacce* in Bugis-Makassar culture, similarly position cultural values as ethical frameworks that reinforce social cohesion (Aziz et al., 2025). While these approaches offer valuable descriptive insights, they remain limited in explaining how such values are produced, legitimized, and maintained within complex networks of power in contemporary society. In particular, these perspectives often prioritize observable practices and cultural meanings without sufficiently interrogating the discursive mechanisms that construct “truth,” normalize behavior, and shape subjectivity. Consequently, a more critical analytical framework is required to uncover the embedded operations of power within cultural values (Hilmy et al., 2019). This study addresses this gap by repositioning *Maja Labo Dabu* not merely as a cultural or ethical value, but as a discursive formation embedded within power–knowledge relations, thereby offering a more critical and analytical perspective compared to prior studies.

In this context, the theoretical framework of Michel Foucault particularly his concepts of discourse, power/knowledge, and regime of truth provides a comprehensive lens to reinterpret *Maja Labo Dabu* beyond its normative and cultural dimensions. From a Foucauldian perspective, discourse is not merely a reflection of social reality but a productive force that shapes knowledge, constructs norms, and forms disciplined subjects (Poorghorban, 2023). Thus, *Maja Labo Dabu* can be understood as a discursive formation embedded within power relations that continuously produces and reproduces moral standards in society. This perspective enables a deeper analysis of how local wisdom operates not only as ethical guidance but also as a mechanism of social regulation and control. Building upon this framework, this study argues that *Maja Labo Dabu* is not merely a cultural heritage or ethical doctrine, but a dynamic discursive mechanism that operates through subtle forms of power across social institutions. Through religious teachings, educational systems, family structures, and governmental narratives, the motto contributes to the formation of disciplined individuals who internalize norms of shame and fear as self-regulating principles. In this sense, *Maja Labo Dabu* functions as a local “regime of truth” that defines what is considered moral or deviant within the socio-cultural context of Bima.

Based on the identified theoretical and empirical gap, this study aims to critically analyze *Maja Labo Dabu* as a discursive formation within a Foucauldian framework. Specifically, the objectives are: (1) to examine the philosophical meaning and socio-cultural significance of *Maja Labo Dabu*; (2) to analyze its discursive structures in shaping norms and moral subjectivity; and (3) to explore the power relations that sustain its function as a regime of truth in contemporary Bima society. To achieve these objectives, this study employs a qualitative research design using Foucauldian critical discourse analysis (CDA). The data are derived from cultural texts, religious narratives, educational practices, and relevant scholarly

literature. Data analysis is conducted through interpretative and contextual approaches, focusing on the interrelation between discourse, knowledge production, and power mechanisms. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how local wisdom operates not only as a cultural value but also as a productive force within networks of power and knowledge in contemporary society.

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design to explore empirical phenomena in depth within real-life contexts. A qualitative approach is used to emphasize meanings, interpretations, and social constructions surrounding the motto *Maja Labo Dabu*, rather than statistical analysis. This research is categorized as field research, involving direct interaction with participants to obtain rich, contextual data. The study was conducted at Museum Asi Mbojo and several government institutions in Kabupaten Bima, West Nusa Tenggara, selected for their relevance to the preservation of *Maja Labo Dabu* values. The analysis integrates historical, anthropological, and sociological approaches. The historical approach traces the origin and development of the motto, the anthropological approach examines its relation to cultural practices and value systems, while the sociological approach analyzes its internalization and reproduction in social life.

Data were collected through participatory observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations captured natural social interactions, while semi-structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with 12 purposively selected informants, including traditional leaders, religious figures, academics, cultural practitioners, and government officials. Snowball sampling was applied to expand informant selection. Documentation included archives, policy documents, and relevant literature. Data sources comprised primary data (observations and interviews) and secondary data (books, journals, and official records). The researcher acted as the main instrument, supported by interview guides, field notes, and recordings.

Reflexivity was maintained by acknowledging the researcher's positionality and potential bias due to familiarity with local culture. Analytical rigor was ensured through critical reflection, continuous verification, and triangulation. Data analysis employed both inductive and deductive approaches. Deductively, Foucauldian critical discourse analysis was used to examine discourse and power relations, while inductively, themes were derived from empirical data. The analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source, technique, and time triangulation to enhance credibility and consistency. Through these procedures, the study aims to produce rigorous and accountable findings while contributing to the development of critical discourse analysis of local wisdom in Bima society.

DISCUSSION

The The Integration of Islam and Local Culture in the Motto *Maja Labo Dahu*

Maja labo dabu is a cultural motto of the Bima community that functions as an ethical principle and moral guideline governing individual and collective behavior. Etymologically, *maja* means "shame," while *dabu* means "fear." Together, the phrase conveys the principle of "shame and fear," which serves as a moral mechanism guiding individuals in their relationships with fellow human beings and with God (Fahrurizki, 2020; Henri Chambert-Loir, 2004). In the Bimanese worldview, these two concepts are not understood as separate values; rather, they form a unified ethical framework that integrates social responsibility with spiritual consciousness.

Philosophically, *maja labo dabu* occupies a central position within the ethical system and social structure of the Bima community. It is not merely a cultural expression or moral slogan, but a way of life that shapes collective consciousness and regulates social relations, political conduct, and spiritual orientation (Anwar Hasnun, 2020; Nurnazmi & Maksum, 2023; Sahrain & Irawan, 2019). Within this ethical framework, shame represents the social dimension of morality an awareness of communal judgment and social reputation while fear reflects the transcendental dimension, namely consciousness of divine supervision and accountability before Allah. The integration of these two dimensions creates a balanced moral system in which ethical behavior is guided simultaneously by social norms and religious values.

The motto therefore reflects a synthesis between local cultural traditions and Islamic teachings. Historically, the concept of shame (*maja*) was rooted in the indigenous Bimanese cultural system that emphasized honor, dignity, and social harmony. With the arrival and institutionalization of Islam in Bima, the concept of fear (*dabu*) acquired a deeper spiritual meaning associated with *taqwa*, or consciousness of God's presence in every human action. These two elements gradually merged into a distinctive ethical system in which cultural heritage and Islamic values reinforce one another rather than exist in opposition. Consequently, *maja labo dabu* represents a form of local wisdom that has undergone a process of Islamization of meaning, where religious teachings enrich and deepen existing cultural values (Hilmy et al., 2019).

In Bimanese society, the philosophy of *maja labo dabu* functions as a moral mechanism that maintains social order and encourages responsible conduct. Ethical behavior is not evaluated solely through formal legal compliance but also through internal moral awareness and sincerity of intention. A person who possesses both shame before society and fear of God is considered to have achieved a high level of moral maturity, because such a person is capable of restraining themselves from violating social norms or divine commandments. In this sense, *maja labo dabu* operates as an internal system of ethical control that reduces the need for external coercion or formal sanction (Anwar Hasnun, 2020; Henri Chambert-Loir, 2012; Siti Maryam R. Salahuddin, 2015).

However, from a critical perspective, this internalization of shame and fear also invites further reflection on its potential implications for individual freedom and social power relations. The strong emphasis on conformity to social norms may, in certain contexts, create pressure that limits individual autonomy and suppresses alternative expressions of identity or behavior. Individuals who deviate from dominant moral expectations may experience not only social disapproval but also symbolic exclusion, suggesting that the value system can function as a subtle mechanism of control. In this regard, *maja labo dabu* may carry a hegemonic potential, where dominant moral norms are internalized as unquestioned truths, shaping individuals to regulate themselves according to socially constructed standards. From the perspective of Michel Foucault, such a system reflects how power operates through discourse by producing obedient subjects, not through overt coercion but through normalization and internalized discipline. Thus, while *maja labo dabu* promotes ethical behavior, it may simultaneously function as a disciplinary mechanism that constrains individual agency within the boundaries of accepted norms.

The epistemological significance of *maja labo dabu* also illustrates that the Bima community possesses its own indigenous system of ethical knowledge derived from collective historical experience and cultural reflection (Amiruddin, 2019; Diana T Laurenson, 1972; Malingi, 2016). These values were not produced through formal doctrinal imposition

but through a long process of social internalization transmitted across generations through language, customary rituals, oral traditions, and moral education. As a result, *maja labo dabu* functions not only as a cultural motto but as a philosophical worldview that shapes perspectives on morality, authority, social responsibility, and the human relationship with God.

Fundamentally, the philosophical meaning of *maja labo dabu* aims to cultivate faith (*iman*) and piety (*taqwa*) among the Bima people, enabling them to fulfill their role as Allah's vicegerents (*khalifah*) on earth and to draw closer to Him through acts of worship (*'ubudiyah*) and social interaction (*mu'amalah*) (Al-Islami et al., 2024; Amiruddin, 2019; Nasution et al., 2024). Through processes of internalization within families, educational institutions, and religious institutions, the value becomes embedded in the collective consciousness of society. Individuals who violate these values may experience not only legal consequences but also social or moral sanctions, demonstrating how cultural and religious norms operate simultaneously in regulating behavior (Rasyid et al., 2024).

The moral foundation of *maja labo dabu* is rooted in two forms of consciousness: moral consciousness and spiritual consciousness. A person who loses their sense of shame is considered to have lost their identity as *dou mbojo* (a Bimanese person) (Henri Chambert-Loir, 2012; Siti Maryam R. Salahuddin, 2021). Thus, the value functions as a cultural mechanism for forming moral subjects who understand the boundaries of acceptable conduct and their responsibilities within society. This ethical orientation is consistent with Islamic teachings emphasizing the relationship between knowledge, faith, and reverence toward God. The Qur'an affirms this principle in Surah Fatir (35:28): "Indeed, among His servants, only those who have knowledge fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Almighty and Most Forgiving."

From a theoretical perspective, *maja labo dabu* can be understood through the framework of power and social discipline. The internalization of shame and fear enables self-regulation without reliance on external authority. These values function as embedded forms of discipline within everyday practices, cultural narratives, and moral education, where ethical conduct becomes normalized as part of individual identity rather than imposed through coercion. In contemporary Bima society, *maja labo dabu* remains a relevant moral reference amid modernization and globalization, which often challenge traditional values. Despite these pressures, it provides a framework for balancing social progress with moral responsibility, ensuring that material advancement does not erode dignity, honor, and spiritual integrity (Malingi, 2022).

Ultimately, *maja labo dabu* represents a dynamic synthesis of Islam and local culture that shapes the moral identity of the Bima community. It functions not only as cultural heritage but as a living ethical system that regulates behavior, maintains social harmony, and reinforces spiritual consciousness.

The Motto *Maja Labo Dahu* as a Dominant Moral Discourse: A Foucauldian Perspective

Michel Foucault argues that systems of knowledge never exist independently of power relations; rather, knowledge and power are mutually constitutive within social structures. In this framework, discourse is not simply a set of statements or linguistic expressions but a system that determines what may be said, who is authorized to speak, and how truth is produced, circulated, and legitimized within society (Agbon, 2024). Understanding *maja labo dabu* as a dominant discourse in Bima society therefore requires examining how this motto has historically been produced, institutionalized, and reproduced through networks of social, cultural, and political institutions.

Historically, the emergence of the *maja labo dabu* discourse is closely related to the Islamization of the Bima Sultanate in the seventeenth century, when Islamic teachings were integrated into the political and administrative structure of the kingdom. During this period, religious scholars (*ulama*) and political authorities, particularly the sultans, played a decisive role in formulating and promoting *maja labo dabu* as a moral foundation for social life. The motto thus developed as a religious–ethical discourse aimed at shaping a disciplined and morally ordered society aligned with Islamic principles (Idrus et al., 2022). Within this historical process, *maja labo dabu* functioned as a form of symbolic power through which rulers and religious elites established moral legitimacy by integrating Islamic teachings with local cultural values.

Initially, the motto was articulated as a normative framework regulating interpersonal relations and communal conduct within Bima society. However, over time, it evolved into a broader moral discourse embedded within institutional structures. As a distinctive cultural principle of the Bimanese people, *maja labo dabu* derives its authority not only from indigenous tradition and Islamic religiosity but also from its continued production and dissemination through governmental institutions, educational systems, and cultural narratives from the sultanate era to the modern administrative system (Haris & Anwar, 2023). In contemporary contexts, the motto has been institutionalized as part of the bureaucratic and cultural identity of Bima Regency, shaping public ethics and civic conduct.

From a Foucauldian perspective, this institutionalization reflects the operation of what Foucault terms a “regime of truth,” a system in which certain values and norms are constructed as authoritative truths through the legitimizing role of institutions and social authorities. Within this regime, *maja labo dabu* functions not merely as a cultural expression but as a moral discourse that guides behavior and regulates relationships between the state, society, and individuals in Bima Regency (Waliyudin et al., 2023). The discourse establishes a normative horizon within which actions are evaluated as honorable or shameful, moral or deviant.

Foucault emphasizes that discourse is reproduced through institutional mechanisms that shape knowledge and subjectivity. Schools, religious institutions, and governmental bodies serve as arenas where values are continually revitalized, interpreted, and disseminated to society (Umar et al., 2025; Waliyudin et al., 2023). Through these institutions, *maja labo dabu* becomes embedded within everyday practices and moral education. In Foucauldian terminology, these institutions function as *dispositifs* networks of power knowledge relations that structure behavior and cultivate particular forms of subjectivity.

Within the educational system of Bima Regency, for example, the values of *maja labo dabu* are transmitted through disciplinary practices, moral instruction, and character education programs (Haris & Anwar, 2023). Schools become sites where individuals learn to internalize the principles of shame (*maja*) and fear (*dabu*) as ethical dispositions guiding their conduct. In this sense, the discourse operates not through overt coercion but through subtle mechanisms of self-regulation and internalized discipline. Individuals regulate their own behavior because they have absorbed the moral expectations embedded in the discourse (Supratikno, 2022).

The reproduction of *maja labo dabu* extends beyond formal education and permeates broader social and cultural activities. Government officials frequently invoke the motto in public speeches, policy statements, and ceremonial events as a means of reinforcing moral identity and collective values. Moreover, community organizations and religious institutions actively promote the philosophy through cultural programs, sermons, and social movements

emphasizing moral character and social responsibility. Through these practices, *maja labo dabu* is continuously reinterpreted and adapted to contemporary contexts while maintaining its normative authority.

In recent decades, the regional government has explicitly incorporated *maja labo dabu* into its development vision, particularly within the concept of “Bima Bermartabat” (Dignified Bima). This political articulation demonstrates how the motto has been transformed into a normative framework guiding governance, emphasizing ethical leadership, accountability, and spiritual responsibility (Haris & Anwar, 2023; Waliyudin et al., 2023). Within Foucault’s framework, such integration illustrates how moral discourse can function as a technology of governance that shapes public conduct and administrative culture.

The processes of production and reproduction of the *maja labo dabu* discourse reveal how local cultural values can operate as productive social forces shaping moral consciousness. The discourse is produced historically through religious teachings, political authority, and cultural narratives rooted in the Islamic and local traditions of Dana Mbojo (the land of Bima). At the same time, it is reproduced through everyday practices family upbringing, educational instruction, governmental policy, and religious guidance that continually reaffirm its moral authority (Haryono, 2017; Nurrahmania et al., 2025).

From a Foucauldian perspective, these processes illustrate the operation of power/knowledge relations in the formation of moral subjects. Power does not merely repress behavior but produces forms of knowledge that shape how individuals understand themselves and their responsibilities within society (Amrin et al., 2022).. Through the discourse of *maja labo dabu*, individuals internalize norms of honor, responsibility, and piety, thereby regulating their own conduct according to socially constructed standards of morality (Abdullah et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the normalization of *maja labo dabu* occurs through its continuous circulation in public discourse. Repeatedly taught and displayed in social institutions and public spaces, the ethos of shame and fear forms a moral framework through which individuals evaluate their behavior and that of others. This discourse shapes collective perceptions of dignity, honor, and ethical responsibility, and persists as a normative reference despite social contradictions.

In this sense, *maja labo dabu* operates as a dominant moral discourse in Bima society. It is not merely a cultural motto, but a discursive structure that organizes social relations and moral expectations through power–knowledge networks. As a mechanism of internalized discipline and ethical normalization, it shapes moral identity and sustains a social order grounded in honor, responsibility, and spiritual awareness. From a Foucauldian perspective, *maja labo dabu* represents a dynamic field of power where cultural values, religious teachings, and institutional practices converge to produce morally conscious subjects and maintain the ethical fabric of society.

Power Relations and the Institutionalization of *Maja Labo Dahu* in Bima Society

Michel Foucault conceptualizes power not as a centralized authority, but as a dynamic network of relations operating throughout society. Power does not belong exclusively to the state; rather, it circulates within everyday social practices, shaping how individuals think, behave, and position themselves (Raúl & Velásquez, 2025). Unlike conventional views that associate power with domination, Foucault sees power as productive generating knowledge, norms, and forms of subjectivity that guide human conduct.

In this framework, power is inseparable from knowledge. Knowledge actively constructs “truth” systems that regulate behavior, leading individuals to internalize norms perceived as natural (Haugaard, 2022). Thus, power operates through discourse systems of meaning that define what is true, legitimate, and morally acceptable through which culture and social order are continuously reproduced (Poorghorban, 2023). In Bima society, *maja labo dabu* (“shame and fear”) functions as a moral discourse that shapes social consciousness and regulates communal life. It acts as a cultural mechanism guiding individuals to conform to shared ethical standards. From a Foucauldian perspective, it represents a “regime of truth” that defines what is honorable, proper, or deviant, while normalizing values such as honesty, responsibility, and self-restraint.

The institutionalization of *maja labo dabu* reflects how local values are embedded within power–knowledge structures. These values are reinforced not only through cultural transmission but also through key social institutions education, religion, and government which play a central role in shaping moral subjectivity (Nisa’u, 2025; Salam, 2025; Zuriatin et al., 2025).

In Foucault’s framework, education is a strategic site of subject formation. In Bima Regency, the implementation of *maja labo dabu* can be observed in school-based character education programs. For example, several schools integrate the values of shame (*maja*) and fear (*dabu*) into daily disciplinary practices, such as morning assemblies, moral instruction sessions, and student behavior assessments.

An informant (a local teacher) stated: “*Kami selalu menanamkan kepada siswa bahwa melanggar aturan bukan hanya salah secara sekolah, tetapi juga memalukan secara sosial dan berdosa secara agama*”. This indicates that students are not only regulated through formal rules but also through internalized moral awareness. In practice, students who violate norms—such as cheating or disrespecting teachers may receive not only formal sanctions but also moral advice emphasizing *maja labo dabu*. From a policy perspective, this approach is aligned with regional educational initiatives that incorporate local wisdom into character education, particularly within the framework of “Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter (PPK)” adapted at the local level in Bima.

Religious institutions play a crucial role in reinforcing the moral authority of *maja labo dabu*. In mosques and religious gatherings, preachers frequently integrate the concept into sermons (*kebutbah*), linking *dabu* with Islamic teachings on *taqwa*. A religious leader explained: “*Dabu itu bukan sekadar takut, tetapi kesadaran bahwa Allah selalu mengawasi. Jadi orang akan menjaga diri walaupun tidak ada yang melihat*”. In practice, this can be seen in community religious activities such as *majelis taklim*, Friday sermons, and Qur’anic studies, where *maja labo dabu* is used as a moral reminder to avoid unethical behavior such as dishonesty, corruption, or social conflict. These practices demonstrate how religious discourse continuously reproduces *maja labo dabu* as a moral truth, strengthening its legitimacy through theological justification.

Government Institutions

In Foucauldian thought, power does not simply flow hierarchically from the state to society. Instead, it circulates through networks of discourse, institutions, and practices that shape collective behavior. Government institutions play a central role in this process by producing policies, narratives, and symbolic representations that define social norms and public morality.

Within the governance structure of Bima Regency, *maja labo dabu* has been adopted as a moral framework guiding public administration and community development. The

motto frequently appears in official speeches, governmental visions and missions, and public development programs emphasizing the ideals of dignity, responsibility, and ethical leadership. Through these institutional forms, the government participates in reproducing the discourse of *maja labo dabu* as a normative reference for both public officials and society at large.

In this context, *maja labo dabu* operates as a discursive technology of power that shapes collective consciousness regarding proper conduct within governance and public life. By embedding the motto within bureaucratic identity, governmental authority appears grounded in ethical and cultural legitimacy rather than coercive control. This reflects what Foucault describes as modern power: a form of power that works through normalization, moral persuasion, and voluntary compliance rather than direct repression.

However, Foucault also emphasizes that where power exists, resistance inevitably emerges. The discourse of *maja labo dabu* can therefore function not only as a mechanism of social discipline imposed from above but also as a moral resource utilized by society to critique authority. Members of the community may invoke the principles of *maja labo dabu* to challenge unethical behavior among public officials or social leaders. In this sense, the motto operates bidirectionally as an instrument of governance and as a source of moral legitimacy within society.

However, in contemporary contexts, resistance to the discourse of *Maja Labo Dabu* can also be observed, particularly among younger generations in Bima. The increasing exposure to global popular culture through digital media, social networks, and transnational lifestyles has introduced alternative value systems that may not always align with traditional moral frameworks. For instance, individualism, expressive freedom, and shifting perceptions of shame and authority may challenge the internalization of *maja* (shame) and *dabu* (fear) as guiding ethical principles. From a Foucauldian perspective, this resistance should not be understood merely as a rejection of local values, but as an inevitable effect of power relations in which competing discourses interact and contest one another. In this sense, the weakening of *Maja Labo Dabu* among youth reflects not the disappearance of the discourse, but its transformation within a broader field of power shaped by globalization. This condition implies the need for a strategic recontextualization of *Maja Labo Dabu*, where its values are not only preserved but also reinterpreted in ways that remain relevant to contemporary social realities.

The institutionalization of *maja labo dabu* illustrates how local cultural values can become embedded within networks of power, knowledge, and social practice. Through educational, religious, and governmental institutions, the motto is continuously reproduced and normalized as a guiding ethical principle within Bima society. From a Foucauldian perspective, this process demonstrates how power operates productively shaping moral consciousness, forming disciplined subjects, and sustaining social order through internalized norms rather than coercive force. Consequently, *maja labo dabu* functions not only as a cultural heritage but also as a dynamic moral discourse that continues to organize social relations and ethical life within the Bimanese community.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that *maja labo dabu* constitutes a fundamental ethical philosophy within Bima society, reflecting a synthesis between Islamic teachings and local cultural traditions. As a moral principle meaning “shame and fear,” *maja labo dabu* integrates social awareness and spiritual consciousness into a unified ethical framework that guides individual

behavior and communal life. The concept of *maja* (shame) represents social responsibility and sensitivity to communal norms, while *dabu* (fear) embodies spiritual accountability before God. Together, these values form a moral system that encourages dignity, self-restraint, and ethical conduct in both social and religious dimensions.

From a Foucauldian perspective, the motto can be understood as a dominant moral discourse that shapes collective consciousness through the interplay of power and knowledge. The discourse of *maja labo dabu* produces a normative framework that defines what is considered honorable, appropriate, and morally acceptable within Bima society. Through its continuous circulation in cultural narratives, institutional practices, and public discourse, the motto functions as a “regime of truth” that guides behavior and shapes moral subjectivity.

Furthermore, the persistence of *maja labo dabu* is closely linked to its institutionalization within key social institutions. Educational institutions transmit its values through character formation, religious institutions reinforce its ethical dimensions through spiritual teachings, and governmental institutions reproduce it through policy frameworks and public narratives. These processes demonstrate that power operates productively by internalizing norms and forming disciplined subjects rather than through coercion.

However, in contemporary contexts, the sustainability of *maja labo dabu* faces significant challenges due to the growing influence of globalization and popular culture, particularly among younger generations. This condition indicates that local moral discourses are increasingly confronted by competing value systems that may reshape their meaning and relevance. Therefore, strengthening *maja labo dabu* requires not only preservation but also adaptive reinterpretation within contemporary social realities.

Based on these findings, this study recommends several directions for future research. First, further studies are needed to examine the dynamics of resistance, negotiation, and transformation of *maja labo dabu* among younger generations in the context of globalization and digital culture. Second, future research should adopt interdisciplinary approaches such as combining discourse analysis with ethnographic or participatory methods to capture both discursive structures and lived experiences in society. Third, it is important to investigate the role of digital media, educational systems, and public policy as strategic arenas for the revitalization and contextualization of local wisdom. Finally, comparative studies across different regions and cultural frameworks are recommended to understand how similar local value systems operate, adapt, and sustain their relevance in diverse socio-cultural settings. These directions are expected to enrich the academic discourse and provide practical insights for preserving and transforming local wisdom within rapidly changing global contexts.

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