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Folktales as a Means of Ecological Education for Society in Bejiharjo Village, Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta

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ABSTRACT

Literature and society are closely connected. Literature arises, grows, and thrives in the society. One of the examples is a folktale which exists as one of the literary works that contain many messages. Bejiharjo Village located in Gunungkidul subdistrict, the special region of Yogyakarta, possesses a lot of folktales describing its indigenous traditions. The local indigenous traditions reflect moral values held by the society. One of the moral values is about ecology. The Bejiharjo's folktales related to the environment are Asal – usul Bersih Kali, Asal – usul Goa Sriti, and Tragedy Kali Semilih. These traditions and stories have proven that the people still preserve and cling to their culture. Moreover, it also can be utilised as a means of ecological education for the society. This study discusses folktales contained environmental which can be used as a good carrier of messages in order to maintain the natural surroundings. Moreover, through these folk tales, people are made aware of the important existence of the environment in human lives. Then, the traditions are not only to be followed, but also to be understood its meaning through the folktales. The value of ecological education that is contained in the three folk tales are related to deforestation, preservation of forest ecosystems, and due to the destruction of springs. The ecological education can be carried out in the form of oral storytelling, providing reading materials and increasing interest of reading, and the preservation of the traditions associated with the folktale. This education involves all members of society from children, youths, and adults. Learning about nature can be carried out by understanding the variety of folk tales with an environmental theme.

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INTRODUCTION

In the Great Dictionary of Indonesian Language, ecology is the science of the mutual relationship between living things and conditions of the surrounding nature or environment. The relationship is a long-established relationship by both. Moreover, It can be seen how humans understand the nature around them since ancient times from early humans who always rely on nature (HISKI, 2016: 67). At the first time, humans try to recognize the nature or environment of life, and then humans try to adjust themselves. Moreover, about the environment, it has a carrying capacity which is the ability of the environment to support human life and other living things. Therefore, everything that exists in the environment can be utilized by humans to meet human needs. Not only the environment that can affect human attitudes and behavior, more than that, humans have tried to change the environment for the sake of needs and welfare. However, the lack of human awareness of environmental existence creates a heavy burden for natural resources such as uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, waste generation, pollution, and poverty.

Based on records from the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, at least 1.1 hectares or 2% of Indonesia's forests are shrinking every year. Moreover, the Ministry of Forestry mentions that of the approximately 130 million hectares of forest left in Indonesia 42 million hectares of them have been cleared. In addition, based on National Geographic sources, about 68% or the majority of river water quality in 33 provinces in Indonesia is in seriously polluted status. The main source of polluted river water in Indonesia is mostly from domestic or household waste. The Waste discharged into the river affects water quality degradation. In a big city like Yogyakarta for example, in it, some areas of E-coli content exceed the threshold that is not only in the river but also in the residential wells. Therefore, it, of course, affects natural ecosystems and endanger the health of the population.

Some research results showed that the cause of various disruptions that occur rooted from the basic human traits as imperialist creatures that require the necessity to eat and reproduce regardless of the limitations of natural resources in providing the necessities of life for himself and his descendants. It can be concluded that if the human consumption pattern remains at a high level, so the quality of the environment will certainly decrease drastically to the point of damage.

Everyone has known that nature plays a very big role for human life. Everyone needs nature to survive, and nature also needs people for its sustainability. Thus, it can not be said that nature has an enormous influence on man and all his activities. Moreover, in this connection, Peter Barry asserted:

For the ecocritic, nature really exists, out therebeyond ourselves, not needing to be ironisedas aconcept by enclosure within knowing inverted commas, but actually present as an entity which affects us, and which we can affect, perhaps fatally, if we mistreat it. Nature, then, isn't reducible to a concept which we conceive as part of our cultural practice (as we might conceive a deity, for instance, and project it out onto the universe (Barry, 2002).

Thus, environmental issues cannot be solved technically solely, but the most important are to change the mental and awareness of the importance of environmental management. The mental role in each person will certainly be much more to change the good, and of course, the role in each of the values of life is more emphasis on each message delivered.

In this case, through a messenger media which is folklore that is loaded with the environment can contribute to the formation of environmentally responsible behavior. In addition, nature has become a part of literature which literature is created because its main function is to be involved in the midst of community life through the value system contained in the story (Semi, 1989:56). Through images of the value system of a story, the mindset of a person or community may be affected. Moreover, the value system can contribute to shaping the mindset of the people because of the existing values are regarded as rules that are believed to be true.

When literature has put forth the right thing in its imagination, it will in turn affect social attitudes in society, and as social society undergoes change, it will be able to bring up a literature with a new value. The point is that they are two mutually supportive things which literature can arise because of social change of society, and the social change that exists is also the result of the creation of a literary work. For example, the story of the Scandinavians regarding Thor and his hammer that when drought and crop failures struck, the people of the time made a story to find an explanation for why it did not rain. The Scandinavians even also run religious ceremonies associated with the story. They take action to invite the rain, so the plants will be able to thrive as Thor did when he was about to steal a thunder hammer from a gigantic herd (Gaarder, 1996).

The same applies to folklore in the village of Bejiharjo. Bejiharjo village is a village area located in the district Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, which many myths or legends are still trusted by the local community. According to KabarHandayani (2016), the villagers of Bejiharjo are known as traditional agrarian societies which the community still performs various traditions such as Bersih Kali, Rasulan, Gumbregan, and Ruwahan. Moreover, this is reinforced by the maintenance of water sources, the heritage of puppet, and classical and traditional arts that have made the Bejiharjo Village as a Culture Village since 1995 through the decree of the Provincial Governor of Yogyakarta Number 325 / kpts / 1995 on the determination of 32 Desa Bina Budaya.

The natural wealth and traditions, both oral and non-verbal in the village of Bejiharjo are still trusted by citizens that reflect the values of life held by the people. One of them is about ecology. The Folktales in this village related to the environment are Tradisi Bersih Kali, Tragedi Sungai Semilih, Telaga Mliwis Putih, Asal-usul Goa Sriti, and Tradisi Rasulan. In addition, the folklores that are charged with the environment can be used as a means of ecological education for the community especially as a message carrier to safeguard the natural surroundings well. Through these folktales, the society is made aware of the importance of the environment and its existence in human life. Moreover, the purpose of this paper is to explain what kind of environmental education is contained in the literature based on folktales in the village of Bejiharjo and to know the application of the value of ecological education contained in the folktales.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method, and the technique used is content analysis technique with ecocriticism approach. Ecocriticism is a study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Ecocriticism itself can be limited as a study of the relationship between literary works and the physical environment. (Glotfelty, in Greg Garrard, 2004). The subject of this study is folktales in Bejiharjo village, Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta. There are three folktales that are analyzed as data sources, Asal – usul Bersih Kali, Asal – usul Goa Sriti, and Tragedi Kali Semilih, and the three stories were chosen purposively. The focus of the analysis is the value of environmental learning contained in the folktales and the form of ecological learning in the community through folktales. In addition, data collection is done by intensive reading, content analysis, observation, and interviews, data analysis is done qualitatively, and the validity of data is done by triangulation of data and expert judgment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. A Brief Story of the Three Folktales in Bejiharjo Village

The folktales raised in this research are the Asal– usul Bersih Kali (AUBK), Asal – usul Goa Sriti (AUGS), and Tragedi Kali Semilih (TKS). AUBK from the Gunungbang sub-village, Bejiharjo tells about a village in Java with a very abundant water source. However, almost half the forest is cleared to agricultural land. The people continue to cut timber in the forest until they are not aware if the water source that is around them increasingly receded. When the long dry season has hit the village, they are all distressed to find water sources. Then, there was a middle-aged man came to the village to help the residents. The man had done the meditation, and in his meditation, he got a clue to perform a joint prayer ritual and was given a description of the village before the drought that the village community was cutting trees excessively and not replanting the tree.

Then, the residents also prepare everything according to what the man ordered. The ritual procession begins with cleaning up the river or clean times and praying together. All the residents began to clean up the source where there are three sources that were called the source of Wedok, Sumber Lanang, and Peceren. Then, suddenly in the evening, it rained heavily after they had cleared the river. Since then, the people always keep the natural environment, and the residents no longer cut down trees in the forest. And the tradition of the ritual is still running until now that the citizens named the ritual as *Bersih Kali* or *Bersih Sumber*.

The second folktale is AUGS from Karang Tengah sub-village, Bejiharjo which tells about Angling Dharma, a baby who was born without a father from a mother named Pramesti from Mamenang kingdom. He is the incarnation of Lord Vishnu who has a tremendous power of magic. He loves hunting, and he has even crippled 3 lions, but he always releases his quarry because he does not want to damage nature. One day when Angling Dharma was hunting at night, he met three beautiful princesses named Widata, Widati, and Widiningsih. The three princesses fell in love with Angling Dharma and kept him with them. However, Angling Dharma feels there is something odd with what the three princesses are doing because of they often out at night. Then, Angling Dharma disguised himself as a Sriti bird to investigate the activities of the three princesses. Apparently, the three princesses are always partying and eating the flesh of wild animals. Angling Dharma then knows that the three princesses are magicians who prey

on animals to eat. But the disguise Angling Dharma was known by the three princesses, and they were ultimately at odds with each other. Then finally, Angling Dharma defeated by the three princesses and cursed into a Sriti bird in accordance with his disguise. Then, Sriti bird is flying up to the location of the kingdom Bojanagara and maintained by a young man named JakaGeduk. JakaGeduk takes him to a forest where there is a cave flown by the river. The Sriti bird said that he want to stay in the cave and ask JakaGeduk to make a place to meditate and ask JakaGeduk to leave him alone. The Sriti bird which is an incarnation of King Prabu Angling Dharma is meditating in the cave until the time that is not known by people.

TKS is the third folklore that tells of tragedy in a barren and dry village, but it has a river having very clear water and never experienced drought despite the dry season. There is a young man who cannot speak but having a kind heart coming from another village to gain the clarity of the water. Then one day, he met a grandfather who watches the river asked to always maintain its sustainability for its sustainability remains immortal. When the young man went to perform rituals to the river at night, hundreds of gamelan instruments and lined of puppets voiced without anyone to ring. He ventured to keep on praying for the sake of the river and then drank a drink of river's water and cleans up some garbage around the river. Thanks to that mouthful of water, he recovered from his muff and could speak normally. Then, the young man tells it to all citizens that whoever is willing to join prayers to pray for sustainability and keep the river to stay natural, it will recover from any disease just by drinking a sip. Then, the Residents also flocked to perform rituals at night with a view of hundreds of gamelan and puppets that would make them shocked and afraid. Since then, Semilih has become more awake, even the clarity of the water is well known to the whole regions, and no one is sick. They live peacefully without any problems even though the drought comes. But a tragedy suddenly comes, there was one of the citizens who stole one of the gamelan instruments from the river. Then, the Semilihriver is dry, and the water is no longer clear. If a drought comes, the water no longer emits.

Relevant research that has been done related to oral literature and environmental studies is Moh. FathulHidayat (Biology Education FKIP University of PGRI Ronggolawe (UNIROW) TUBAN) with the title "Role Of Oral Tradition To Conserve Environmental:Study On Ecological Culture Ngerong Cave RengelTuban", and this study has been presented in Proceedings of National Seminar II Year 2016, Cooperation of Biology Education FKIP with Center for Environmental and Population Studies (PSLK) University of Muhammadiyah Malang with the results of research are: (1) Oral tradition has proven its role to participate in conservation and ecological development. Therefore, reinforcement of the oral tradition is needed, (2) Efforts to strengthen the oral tradition in order to preserve the ecology, as well as gives an impact on the preservation of oral tradition. It is an alternative to the program of preservation of local culture as the nation's cultural richness (3) Oral tradition is a form of strengthening ecological development of society, and based on the research, there are equations of the method used that is the ecological approach.

2. Ecological Education Elements in the Folktales

There are three issues related to ecological education in the three folklores. That are deforestation, forest ecosystem maintenance, and the result of damaging the balance of springs.

Deforestation

Deforestation can be seen in the Asal – usul Tradisi Bersih Kali. The abundant river water becomes dry because the trees in the forest that are useful to help the impregnation and storage of water are continuously cleared for agricultural purposes. As a result, the pervasive water to the ground continues to flow into low areas. This is a quote in folklore that illustrates it.

“Hinggasaatnya sudah separuh hutan lebih yang sudah dibuka menjadi lahan pertanian. Mereka terus menerus menebang kayu di hutan, membakar hutan, dan menjadikan lahan untuk bercocok segala macam tanaman. Namun mereka tidak sadar jika sumber air yang ada di sekitar mereka semakin surut. Hingga saatnya musim kemarau panjang telah melanda di dusun tersebut. Mereka semua kesusahan untuk mencari sumber air.” (AUBK)

Every element of nature is interacting with each other like forming a system. When the forest is destroyed without replanting, it will certainly affect the other parts of nature that in this case is the river. Moreover, when the drought occurs because the river recedes, it will also affect the other parts of nature, in explanation the agricultural fields become barren and the plants withered. Here is a quote in folklore about the issue.

“Siang hari ketika para tani sedang beristirahat di gubuk sambal memandang tanaman mereka yang semakin hari semakin layu dan kering...Lelaki itu diberikan gambaran tentang desa tersebut sebelum kekeringan bahwa masyarakat desa tersebut memang serakah, mereka menebang pohon secara berlebihan dan tidak menanam kembali pohonya. Sehingga alam pun murka hingga sumber air yang biasa mengalir di dusun tersebut kering kerontang. Kemudian lelaki tersebut memohon ampunan dan berjanji untuk senantiasa bersama warga menjaga lingkungan yang memberikan sumber kehidupan.” (AUBK)

Repairing and restoration of deforestations, dry rivers, and barren agricultures are done by making a ritual procession where the procession is sacred because it is a form of binding promise to keep nature. Begin by cleaning the river and praying, the nature is as feeling a form of appreciation for itself. The river begins to be cleansed, and prayer ritual is offered, so rain fall.

“Tepat di hari senin pahing para warga sudah menyiapkan segala sesuatu sesuai dengan apa yang diperintahkan lelaki tersebut. Seperti uborampe berupa jenis makanan hasil bumi yang dibawa masyarakat seluruh dimasukan dalam “Encek” sebuah tempat yang terbuat dari pelepah pisang yang dibuat berbentuk segiempat. Prosesi acara ritual tersebut dimulai dengan membersihkan sungai atau bersih kali. Semua warga memulai membersihkan Sumber ada tiga sumber yang di bersihkan yaitu sumber Wedok, Sumber Lanang, dan Peceren. Upacara tersebut dipimpin langsung oleh lelaki paruh baya tersebut orangnya menyebutnya sebagai juru kunci...Malam hari setelah ritual yang dilaksanakan tiba-tiba suara petir bergemuruh disertai dengan hujan yang lebat.” (AUBK)

Conservation of Forest Ecosystems

Concern for the natural ecosystem is contained in the story of Asal – usul Goa Sriti. Releasing hunted animals is a form of concern for forest ecosystems. Whatever the prey, large or small animals, many or few will still affect the balance of ecosystems in the forest. In a food chain, when one animal population is hunted, it will certainly affect other animal populations, which will further damage the food chain system itself. Here is a quote in folklore that illustrates it.

“Selain belajar persilatan dan ilmu dalam Angling Dharma juga belajar berburu. Bahkan dia sangat menyukai berburu, suatu ketika dia berburu di hutan dan berhasil melumpuhkan 3 ekorsinga. Namun iya sadar bahwa dia tidak boleh merusak alam. Maka iya melepaskan singa tersebut untuk kembali ke Hutan.” (AUGS)

As human beings who always interact with nature, of course must stop anyone who has destroyed the natural ecosystem. Here is a quote in folklore that illustrates it.

“Namun Angling Dharma merasa ada yang ganjil dengan apa yang di lakukan ketiga putri tersebut karena kerap keluar di malam hari. Kemudian Angling Dharma menyamar menjadi seekor burung Sriti untuk menyelidiki aktivitas ketiga putri tersebut. Ternyata ketiga putri tersebut senantiasa berpesta dan memakan daging hewan–hewan buas.” (AUGS)

Maintaining and protecting the natural ecosystem is the duty of all living creatures that always interact with nature. Humans, animals, and plants, all have their respective rights and obligations to nature. When one of nature's ecosystems that strives to be preserved but fails, it certainly can protect and conserve other natural ecosystems. Here is a quote in folklore that illustrates it.

“Hingga Angling Dharma pun mengetahui bahwa ketiga putri tersebut adalah penyihir yang memangsa hewan untuk dimakan. Namun penyamaran Angling Dharma pun diketahui oleh ketiga Putri tersebut, mereka pun akhirnya berselisih hebat. Hingga akhirnya Angling Dharma takluk oleh ketiga putri tersebut dan mengutuk Angling Dharma menjadi seekor burung Sriti sesuai dengan penyamarannya. ... Burung Sriti jelmaan Prabu Angling Dharma tersebut bersemedi di dalam Goa hingga waktu yang tidak ketahu oleh orang.” (AUGS)

Destruction of Water Balance

The tragedy of the destruction of the river balance is contained in the story of Tragedi Kali Semilih. Java society believes that every appearance of nature such as rivers, mountains, forests, or trees have a magical element that is hard to believe in a real life. The form of respect for the magical element is usually a ritual of prayer and offerings of holy flowers and followed by the preservation of nature such as cleaning the river and others. Here is a quote in folklore that illustrates it.

“Hingga pada malam jumat, warga pun berbondong–bonding untuk melakukan doa ritual dengan masing membawa segenggam bunga mawar. Ada beberapa dari mereka yang menggendong saudara mereka yang sedang sakit, serta ada pula yang membawa ternaknya yang sakit. Sesampainya di kali, seluruh warga benar–benar dibuat takjub akan ratusan gamelan sertawayang yang bersuara dengan sangat merdu tanpa ada yang membunyikan.” (TKS)

Not only the real thing as throwing garbage in the river but if the magical thing is damaged, it also affects the balance of nature. This is a brief story that illustrates it.

“Namun ada salah satu warga yang datang dengan bermaksud jahat. Yakni ia ingin mengambil salah satu gamelan magis dari sungai itu. Maka setelah ritual yang kesekian itu tengah dilakukan, dan ketika warga tengah sibuk mempersiapkan sesajen, ia mengambil satu alat music yakni bonang, yang ia sembunyikan dalam tempayan sesajen miliknya.

Pagi-pagi sekali ia membawa boning itu untuk dijual ke pusat kota. Alhasil, pada malam jumat berikutnya, warga dibuat bingung dengan ketidak munculan gamelan-gamelan serta wayang magis di sungai itu. Dan kali semilih yang terkenal akan keistimewanya, kini menjadi kering tak lagi melimpah dan airnya tak lagi jernih. Jika kemarau datang, kalinya tak lagi memancarkan air.” (TKS)

3. Forms of Ecological Education through Folktales for the society

The purpose of ecological education is to make people aware and sensitive to the environment with various problems. Communities are expected to have the knowledge, attitude, motivation, and willingness to work individually or in groups towards the solution and prevention of the surrounding environmental problems. Some folktales that grow and develops within the scope of residence of the Bejiharjo community have environmental education values that should be applied in their daily lives. The applications are manifested in the oral narrative, the provision of reading the material and reading culture, and the preservation of the traditions associated with the folktales.

(1) Application in the Form of Oral Literature

Oral literature is one of the literary manifestations that have its own peculiarities. The special feature of oral literature that this literary type of presence is attached with "artist". This is in contrast to the written literature which, upon completion of writing, the literature will become "orphan" literature and the author is considered dead (the death of the author) (Barthes 1987: 8). Oral literature Asal-usulBersih Kali (AUBK), Asal-usul Goa Sriti (AUGS), and Tragedi Kali Semilih (TKS) of Bejiharjo Village became a storytelling that was performed in various activities as in the rituals of clean river tradition, puppet performances, Jathilanart,andKetoprak. In the clean river ritual, the oral literature will be the core event that accompanies the prayers in the ritual. A caretaker or elder while reading the prayer will also insert some oral stories which of course contain the advice as a guide in the life of the society. Then, in the puppet show, Jathilan art and ketoprak, oral literature Asal-usulBersih Kali (AUBK), Asal-usul Goa Sriti (AUGS), and Tragedi Kali Semilih (TKS) will be tucked into the storyline. The form of the oral narrative will certainly affect the learning of the society to keep the balance of the environment.

(2) Provision of Reading Materials and Increasing interest of reading

The level of reading culture among people has a vertical relationship to the quality of a nation. Of course, high interest in reading will affect the insight and behavior of a person. In this case, with the culture of literacy, a person's behavior towards the surrounding environment will be very influential. The village community of Bejiharjo is an emerging society to solve illiteracy for its citizens. Drs. Ali Ridlo, MM. explained In KabarHandayani (2014) that the library program is a program of reading culture development by transforming the role of Regional Library through cooperation program with Village Library. In 2014, there are 4 village libraries that cooperate with the PerpuSeru program and by 2017 it has become 24 village libraries. Moreover, one of the 24 libraries is Bejiharjo Village Library through Library Khasanah Info in Padukuhan Sokoliman II, Bejiharjo Village.

Not only from the government program, some cultural activists of reading held a guidance study of Wirasisata Goa Pindul located in Gelaran, Bejiharjo. In the guidance, the community will be guided in reading, and there are several collections of books. The

community especially parents who have early childhood (early childhood, elementary school, junior high school, and general are very supportive when their children play while learning to read. Indeed in the availability of special books of Bejiharjo folklore does not exist. The story Bejiharjo village people are still in literature, but the existence of reading empowerment in society will influence oral literature to literature and of course it will increasingly influence to environmental progress of Bejiharjo Village.

(3) The Preservation of Traditions Associated with the Folklore.

The village of Bejiharjo is rich in traditions that are still maintained by the society that is accordance with the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Regulation number 10 of 2014 on guidelines for the preservation of tradition part III chapter 4 that discuss the object of preservation of tradition. With the existence of the regulation, the society continues to preserve the tradition. These include traditional ceremonies and folklore as in Oral Literature of Asal-usul Bersih Kali (AUBK) which the preservation of clean tradition times continues to be implemented once a year. Moreover, the celebration of the tradition as well as other big day celebrations such as Eid-Fitri day. Each village in bejiharo village celebrates the date that has been determined from generation to generation by the ancestors. The village of Gunungbang, Bejiharjo is a village that begins in a ceremonial tradition of clean times that held every Monday Pahing in Javanese calendar. This ceremony is done of course because of the cultural tradition that must continue to be preserved and also as gratitude towards the creator of all the pleasures that have been delegated. Includes the pleasures of nature. In addition, as a form of community togetherness.

The people of Bejiharjo village who have understood the results of the folklore studies above need to be applied content of environmental education values. The application can be started from the simple thing that is by raising public awareness of the hygiene of their residence and environment. With the values of the folklore can help awaken the public to the need to maintain the balance of nature and avoid deforestation, ecosystem destruction by hunting wild, and destruction of river balance.

Another is to assist the community in obtaining basic-understanding of the function of the natural environment as a means of supporting the welfare of the community. People should know that the over-exploitation of nature can actually bring disaster and harm to themselves and the community. Moreover, with the values of folklore, it is expected to bring awareness of the community which subsequently changes the attitude of the community regarding the treatment of the environment.

CONCLUSION

Studies that link literature and nature or the environment are not yet widely discussed and nurtured completely, and not many activities that connect everything with nature that it is also in literary works. Literature in the environment is like a newborn baby who strives to grow with parental mentoring. Literature has been heavily indebted to an environment that is literally constructing social life. In other words, nature becomes meaningful when the author gives meaning to it after it has established a kind of "intersection" with its existence. The value of the environmental education contained in three folklores from Bejiharjo village is, Asal-usul Bersih Kali which has the value of ecological education which also related to forest destruction. Asal-usul Goa Sriti which has the value of ecological education destruction of wild forest poaching

ecosystems. Tragedi Kali Semilih has the value of destroying the river balance. The application of the value of ecological education to the community contained in the folklore of Bejiharjo village is done in several ways: the oral narration, the provision of reading material and reading culture, and the preservation of the traditions associated with the folklore. These such means touch in the awareness of society, knowledge, and attitudes. Awareness is to awaken the community in maintaining and preserving the environment. Knowledge provides knowledge to the community related to the maintenance and preservation of the environment, especially about preserving and forest ecosystems and preserve the river. Moreover, attitude gives the pattern of behavior to become accustomed and entrenched in maintaining and preserving the environment.

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