

The Acehnese and “Ratéb Dôda Idi”: Instilling Compassion Based on Religious Values in Lullabies

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Published online: 31 October 2023

To cite this article: Yusri Yusuf, Yunisrina Qismullah Yusuf and Jarjani Usman. 2023. The Acehnese and “Ratéb Dôda Idi”: Instilling compassion based on religious values in lullabies. *KEMANUSIAAN the Asian Journal of Humanities* 30(2): 57–80. <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2023.30.2.4>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2023.30.2.4>

Abstract. “Ratéb Dôda Idi” is a traditional lullaby passed on from generation to generation in Aceh society of Indonesia, as one of the mediums for cultivating religious and other important values in children. There is a scarcity of studies that specifically examine the lullaby concerning its kinds of compassion based on the religious teachings of Islam. Hence, this study intends to fill in the gap by probing the kinds of compassion embedded in “Ratéb Dôda Idi” and how religion plays a role in immersing these teachings. It employed an ethnographic case study to analyse the verses by interviewing 17 Acehnese elders to obtain data. The results showed that the lullabies contain five kinds of compassion essential to Acehnese society – compassions for parents, teachers, society, nature and the homeland. It is necessary to preserve this tradition of local wisdom because language, religion and cultural heritage reflect and shape the values, beliefs and aspirations that define and keep their integrity as an Acehnese society. This kind of study thus helps our understanding of the values expressed in lullabies from many cultures and these beliefs are mirrored in the society of the singers (i.e., speakers).

Keywords and phrases: Acehnese lullaby, compassion, early-childhood education, Islamic values, Acehnese culture

Introduction

There are lullabies in almost every culture around the world. They carry the historical background of the singers and lyrically emphasise protection and direction to young children (Evered 2020). On these grounds, the soothing rhythm and melodies across cultures as lullabies universally deliver messages of tranquillity, hopes and dreams, social and political concerns, and religious symbolism of the singers (i.e., society). In Vietnam, for example, nursery rhymes frequently have a sad and ominous melody because they talk about how much the singers (i.e., Vietnamese parents/caretakers) care about their native land and the people (Thuong 2019). Meanwhile, some contain prayers from the parents to their children, such as “Nani, Nani” from Oltenia, Romania (Kozlovsky 2018). Cradle songs that touch on the problems relating to humanity and the natural world, serving as satires criticising social vices and acting as a platform for the singers (i.e., Nigerian parents/caretakers) to express their emotions are found in Nigerian lullabies (Iwaketok 2009). Then there is “American Lullaby”, which tells the story of a home nurse who looks after a newborn while the parents are preoccupied with their own life (Evered 2020). Thereupon, learning a traditional language reveals both the characters of the speakers and the worth of the local knowledge or values (Lubis 2019).

Based on those descriptions, lullabies can be said as a type of music for infants that parents and caregivers have traditionally sung. Brooks says they are known “to soothe, calm and lull babies to sleep, fostering an emotional closeness and forming an association between music, comfort and security” (Brooks 2016, 83). The word lullaby appeals to more than just gentle music in many languages; some important actions and functions associated with this type of song, such as rocking, swaying, protection and even lamenting, are powerful aspects underlying the etymological meaning of lullaby (Castro 2013). Accordingly, a lullaby is a means of sharing stories orally with infants and toddlers and is critical in building their literacy skills (Birckmayer, Kennedy and Stonehouse 2008). It is also a medium for cultivating life values (Hasanuddin, Emidar and Zulfadhli 2020).

The lullaby, for instance, is among how people in Aceh, Indonesia, instil Islamic values in their children. It contains the pillars of faith (i.e., Islam), respecting parents and teachers, social harmony, protecting the environment, working hard and being responsible human beings (Yusuf 2013). The traditional lullaby in Aceh is known as “Ratéb Dôda Idi”, composed in verses and sung to children while they are sleeping in their cradles or on the lap of their mothers, grandmothers or other caretakers (Gade 2018).

Aceh is one of the provinces in Indonesia located on the northern tip of Sumatra Island. This province has implemented Sharia law for three decades. However, before it received the government’s endorsement of Sharia law implementation, the people of the autonomy-granted province had embraced Islam for hundreds of years (Yusuf and Yusuf 2014). It can be said that since the 13th century when Islam arrived in Southeast Asia and Islamised its traditions, the people of the province have embraced Islam (Bustamam-Ahmad 2007). Islamic values have coloured up every facet of the Acehnese people’s life, including education from early childhood to adulthood. An illustration of how close Islamic law and the people’s tradition in Aceh society, a proverb says, *hukôm ngon adat lagèe zat ngon sifeut*, which means that “(Islamic) law and tradition is such as a substance and its properties” (Usman 2015). In this regard, the presence of Islam in Aceh has resulted in the Islamisation of the people’s traditions and social situation (Alfian 2005). For instance, it affects how they educate their children from birth and this is reflected, among the examples, through “Ratéb Dôda Idi”. Another word for it is *éh dodi*, meaning young children who “sleep in baby swings or cradles”.

Many studies have been carried out on the lullaby songs used in Indonesia and other parts of the world. In Pakistan, Anzak, Sultana and Zulfiqar (2019) studied the functions of lullabies in Pakistanis culture. Among their main findings are that the functions of lullabies to these people are to relieve tension, grant relaxation and support the feeling of security to both the children and parents. Lullabies are a genuine source of socio-cultural interpretation and a ventilative and therapeutic medium in Nigeria (Enobong 2009). Meanwhile, the lullabies in Persian are known to express mothers’ wishes and reflect their psychological role in the psychic health of the children, especially in creating a positive self-concept, feeling of peace and security, reduced stress and reinforcement of cognitive abilities as well as other psychological aspects (Majd and Bakhshaliyev 2016). Their lullabies also inform of the family structure, such as emotional relationships and polygamy.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the functions and values in the children’s lullabies (or *mampauva*) of the Kaili community in Central Sulawesi are to inform, educate, command and entertain (al-Afandi 2015). Meanwhile, the values of these cradle songs include moral, philosophical, religious, social and aesthetic values. Similarly, the values of the *nandung* performance (oral literature in the form of a poem) by the people of Rengat, Indragiri Hulu in Riau, are religious, moral and educational (Suardi and Sunarto 2017).

In Aceh, related studies on the lullaby of “Ratéb Dôda Idi” ascertained that they are one of the mediums with a certain format and content (Anwar 2015) to instil ethnonationalism spirit in children (Muhaini and Nasir 2020). Other studies on

this traditional lullaby investigated how they can assist in building children's characters (Harahap, Kahar and Nasution 2018; Inayatillah 2017) and instil values of the Acehese culture in education, religion, art and solidarity (Fahmi, Ismawan and Zuriana 2016; Yusuf et al., 2022a). Nevertheless, none of the studies has specifically examined the lullaby concerning its kinds of compassion based on the religious teachings of Islam. Accordingly, this study intends to fill in the gap. This study attempts to investigate the Acehese perceptions of how the verses in "Ratéb Dôda Idi" introduce compassion based on Islamic teachings to their young children by answering the following research question: What are the kinds of compassions based on religious teachings (i.e., Islam) embedded in "Ratéb Dôda Idi"?

This research is deemed important because exploring the perceptions of Acehese people on compassion used in their traditional lullaby can enrich the literary world from the dimension of early education based on religion and culture. Grounded on our preliminary observations, the lullaby "Ratéb Dôda Idi", like many lullabies in many parts of Indonesia, is slowly starting to disappear from being used by young Acehese parents today. The advancement of science and technology and the impact of global culture have reduced Acehese's awareness of this tradition. For instance, some women known by the researchers who live in cities in Aceh (i.e., Banda Aceh, Lhokseumawe and Langsa) no longer care for and educate their children with this lullaby. The advancement of technology and information, such as YouTube, which contains songs of various types and styles, has replaced this traditional lullaby in lulling and soothing their children to sleep.

Lullabies appear to share many universal characteristics despite the apparent diversity of cultural and linguistic encoding (Unyk et al. 1992). Lullabies are a fundamental part of human infancy because they are an experience infants share. Songs that lull children to sleep are also known to be parents' hopes, concerns and future dreams (Harahap et al. 2018). The lullaby tradition is a global phenomenon that supports the emotional needs of parents and children and their educational and social growth (Anzak et al. 2019). Therefore, this study contributes to understanding the values of lullabies from societies around the world and how these songs affect the body and mind of the speakers and are reflected through their culture.

Literature Review

Lullaby as an oral tradition

Lullaby is one type of oral tradition reproduced from generation to generation in society. Oral tradition is the discourse conveyed from generation to generation by using spoken language (Pudentia 2007). It is shared, listened to and lived together

on certain events, with specific aims and objectives. It is an important and valuable cultural asset of the nation because it is a cultural force in shaping character and identity to build a civilisation (Sibarani 2012).

From Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory’s (SCT) perspective, a lullaby, in which language is used, is a cultural artefact that can mediate children in learning. SCT is a psychology theory that looks at society’s significant contributions to individual cognitive development (Vygotsky 1978). According to Vygotsky, infants have fundamental intellectual abilities known as “elementary mental functions”, which include attention, sensation, perception and memory. These will be used in social interaction between the social actors, such as teachers, parents, caregivers or peers, as the more knowledgeable others and children through which learning occurs. Hence, culture, as represented by the language used in the lullaby, plays a crucial role in children’s learning and development.

From the Islamic perspective, lullaby can be understood from many aspects, as suggested by many modern Islamic scholars (Husein 1970). Even though all agree that the Quran is the most essential for education, hence lullaby is among the mediums to spread the values that are contained in this holy book, such as on manners (*adab*) (Husein 1970), “oneness” (*tawhid*) (Yusuf, Amiruddin and Gade 2020), educational development (*tarbiyya*) (al-Taftazani 1986) and faith (*iman*) (Suardi and Sunarto 2017). The belief that education is the primary means of awakening one’s inner self is widely held among them.

“Ratéb Dôda Idi” as the Acehese traditional lullaby

Etymologically, “Ratéb Dôda Idi” consists of three words, including *ratéb*, *dôda* and *idi*. In Acehese, *ratéb* is payers to Allah SWT (i.e., God as the supreme one, the all-powerful and all-knowing ruler of the universe and the creator of all that exists) that are sung in certain rhythms. It cannot be associated with the songs because, to the Acehese, *ratéb* is only chanted in certain religious actions (such as after prayers) and religious events. Acehese people identify *ratéb* identic to *dhikr*, which is a form of devotion that is absorbed in the rhythmic repetition of the name of Allah SWT or His attributes. Moreover, the word *dôda*, as in *peudôda*, means to sway, cradle or sing (Muhaini and Nasir 2020) and hence, *dôda idi* means lullaby, singing while cradling or softly swaying children to sleep.

“Ratéb Dôda Idi” is a type of poetry used to sing children to sleep in a traditional cradle (as shown in Figure 1). The child does not necessarily be in the swing, swaying him or her in the arms or simply sitting or sleeping next to the child while singing is also referred to as *dôda idi* by the Acehese. It does not only

convey ethical and aesthetic values, but it also contains philosophical values about education that are known to shape the children's mindsets, personality, oneness or *tawhid* doctrine, family integrity, compassion, social relations, national defence, culture, religion, work ethic, studying, preserving the environment and forming an identity (Yusuf et al. 2020). Hence, educating children by singing a lullaby means filling and improving children's cognitive development (Harahap et al. 2018; Inayatillah 2017). Furthermore, with traditional lullabies, children acquire language in a pleasant atmosphere (Anzak et al. 2019). They also contribute to developing young children's vocabulary in their cognitive map (Hermida 2019) because the regular metrical framework of simple texts used in the lullabies makes them easier to evoke (Horn 2007).



Figure 1. The Acehnese traditional baby swing with the mosquito net to sway babies to sleep (photographed and consented to by Yunita Ningsih)

The Acehnese believe that when the children start to understand the meaning of the words in the lullaby, then later, as they grow older, the meaning is to be lived out and put into practice. This is what Vygotsky's theory proposes, the words and meaning contained in the lullaby impact the children's intellectual development (Vygotsky 1978). The value-laden substance of "Ratéb Dôda Idi" is anticipated to become an identity and a guide in their daily activities. The Acehnese sees this beautiful and meaningful chant of the traditional lullaby as an enjoyable educational model for teaching their children.

Functions of lullaby

The lullaby has many functions and is classified into several categories. The first classification is lullaby functions into expressive, directive and aesthetic functions (Hasanuddin et al. 2020). Hasanuddin et al. (2020, 147) note that expressive function refers to the function of a lullaby “to vent feelings, thoughts and attitudes to life”, while directive function teaches “the values of character mainly through advice, messages and expectations” and aesthetic functions presents “the beauty of language, comfort, calm and prosperity, and arousing doziness for those who listen to it, especially children”.

Other studies have classified lullabies as entertainment, advice and education (Anwar 2015; Muhaini and Nasir 2020; Inayatillah 2017). As entertainment, a lullaby works to distract a child from crying. Mothers usually sing a lullaby to calm their young children in the cradle; the rhythms of the lyrics should soothe the upset child. Therefore, the ability of a mother to sing rhythmically and soothingly with patience is crucial in singing lullabies. As for advice, the function is seen through the lyrics used. The lyrics contain advice, such as being pious to God, loving the prophets, caring and obedient to parents, and being courageous in defending their homeland from intruders or colonialism. Finally, with education, lullabies contain values that the child should have, as expected by society. In this regard, education transfers cultural values from generation to generation (Langgulung 2003).

Prior studies on the values of lullaby

Many educational values are embedded in a lullaby, depending on the society that owns it. For instance, the values embedded in the Acehese “Ratéb Dôda Idi” are heroism, loyalty, militancy and generosity (Anwar 2015). The children are expected to be strong, intelligent, diligent and heroic when they grow up. Besides, a lullaby also has religious values in that it educates children to believe in God and this is primarily used in lullabies in Indonesia (Hasanuddin et al. 2020). Another value of a lullaby is artistic, which means that a lullaby should be sung artistically and rhythmically by the mothers or caretakers. This value can help distract children from crying and make them fall asleep (Anwar 2015). Therefore, the role of a mother in singing a lullaby is instrumental when cradling or swinging her child. A lullaby can help shape children’s personalities and characters (Harahap 2015).

Compassion is sensitivity to one’s own and others’ suffering and a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it (Gilbert 2009). As a result, it is caring on purpose, mindfully aware, deliberately thoughtfully and chosen (Gilbert 2009). Among the important values taught to children through various mediums (Kohler-Evans and

Barnes 2015) and among them is the lullaby (Yusuf et al. 2020). One example is the meaning and function of ethnic Malays' singing lullabies, which contain three functions in the form of messages containing local cultural values, one of which is compassion and the others are honesty and loyalty, as well as parents' prayers for a child (Harahap et al. 2018). Moreover, compassion comprises spirituality, empathy and caring, and it is the heart's education (Kim 2011). Introducing compassion to young children could make a big difference in decreasing violence as they grow older. Berwick reminded us that "to become caring and compassionate individuals, we need to go inside to where we can be in touch with our soul and the sacred" (Kim 2011, 4). By seeking meaning and happiness within the heart and soul, an individual connects to God as the source of love and compassion (Yusuf 2013). Therefore, from birth, lullabies can be used in the character formation of a child as expected by his or her community.

Moreover, the ease of access to social media and the influence of negative shows today has led children to lose compassion during their growing years. As Kohler-Evans and Barnes (2015) noted, compassion was the one characteristic that stood out as both the most essential in humankind and the most lacking in today's world. Therefore, instilling compassion helps young children to develop a strong sense of empathy (Wasserman 2016). This will further help them build a sense of security and stronger relationships with others in their social life and further encourages tolerance and acceptance of others. Hence, conducting relevant research on this issue is expected to raise public concern and attention to the use, importance and existence of the "Ratéb Dôda Idi" tradition in teaching compassion to children from a very young age.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative and is carried out to comprehend phenomena concerning the experiences of research subjects, such as their behaviour, perception, motivation and action, in a specific natural context (Austin and Sutton 2014). It intends to generate descriptive data from people in the form of written or oral words, as well as observable behaviour, based on observations in humans (Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault 2015). It emphasises the natural environment and is carried out to present the social world and its perspective in terms of the concepts, behaviours, perceptions and problems of the humans being studied (Mohajan 2018). This ethnographic case study was done to study the kinds of compassions based on Islamic educational values found in the traditional lullaby, well-known in Aceh as "Ratéb Dôda Idi". At the micro-level, we interviewed native Acehnese, considered as *yang dituakan dalam masyarakat* or "elders in society" through one-on-one interactions with the researchers.

A series of interviews with recruited participants were conducted. A number of 17 native Acehnese consented and participated in this study; they were 12 men and 5 women. They were from various professions, such as clerics, teachers (i.e., religion teachers), chiefs of villages, traditional artists, culturalists, government officers and homemakers. They ranged in age from 53 years old to 76 years old. They came from all over Aceh (i.e., Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Nagan Raya, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Utara, Langsa, Pidie Jaya, Lhokseumawe, Aceh Timur and Aceh Barat). They were familiarised with “Ratéb Dôda Idi” from their parents or grandmothers and passed it on to their children and grandchildren. They speak fluent Acehnese, are physically and mentally healthy, and their education levels were at least high school or the equivalent. The participants were interviewed in Acehnese so that the essence of their explanation of the traditional lullabies could be grasped. They were inquired about their impressions of the kinds of compassions based on their religion (i.e., Islam) within “Ratéb Dôda Idi”. Each interview with one participant lasted about one hour and the sessions were recorded using a tape recorder. The recording or audiotaping of the sessions enhanced the transcripts and assisted the researchers in understanding the details of the response. The recording was further transcribed and translated into English to write this article.

The data were analysed qualitatively in accordance with the stages of the reduction of the data, the exploration of the data and the integration of the exploration (Attride-Stirling 2001). In the reduction of the text, the data from the interviews were carefully selected and unnecessary information that did not answer the research questions was excluded. In the exploration of the text, the data were organised and categorised into themes based on the formulation of the research problems. Finally, the categorised data were integrated to refine the themes continually. In this article, the participants are coded as A1 for Acehnese participant number 1 and so forth, until A17. The orthography of the Acehnese language in this article follows the latest proposed related work in Acehnese phonetics and phonology by Yusuf et al. (2022b), Iskandar et al. (2020), Yusuf and Pillai (2013) and Pillai and Yusuf (2012).

Results and Discussions

This research intends to study the kinds of compassions embedded in “Ratéb Dôda Idi”, a traditional lullaby sung by the Acehnese while cradling their young children to sleep, based on their religious values. From the analysis of data from the interviews, five themes emerged as the answer to the research problem. These themes are discussed in the following sub-sections. The Quran translation in this paper is based on Usmani (2016).

Compassion for parents

Based on A1's explanation, children's love for their parents are the feeling of respect, upholding the parents' dignity, not hurting their parents, following their advice, fulfilling their requests and taking care of them. In general, the participants repeatedly said the word "affection" when talking about having compassion for parents. A14 further interpreted affection as reflections of respecting, nurturing, loving, caring and empathising with both mother and father. Not just to Acehnese, devotion to parents is obligatory in any religion (Tambunan and Hasibuan 2018). A2 informed that the value of compassion is found in the following verse of "Ratéb Dôda Idi":

Excerpt 1:

<i>Laa ilaaha illallah</i>	(There is no god, but Allah)
<i>Mudah leupah tamöng syuruga</i>	(It is easy to enter Heaven)
<i>Gaséh keu poma, sayang keu ayah</i>	(Love your mother, love your father)
<i>Yang larang Allah bèk takeurija</i>	(Do not do what is forbidden by Allah)

Excerpt 1 explained that, to the Acehnese, those who are loving and obedient to their parents and do not conduct any of Allah's prohibitions will go on straight to heaven after their deaths. Consequently, heaven is promised to those who please their kind parents on earth. They also believe that Allah SWT will love those who love their parents. That is why, since childhood, teaching children of affection towards their parents is essential (Yusuf 2013; Harahap et al. 2018).

The value of children's love for their parents is based on the beliefs and views of the Acehnese people. Allah's commandments in the Quran say:

And Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him and do good to parents. If any one of them or both of them reach old age, do not say to them "uff" (a word or expression of anger or contempt) and do not scold them and address them with respectful words and submit yourself before them in humility out of compassion and say, "My Lord, be merciful to them as they have brought me up in my childhood". (Surah al-Isra' 17:23–24)

This verse of the Quran teaches us how to behave towards parents by extending love to them. From an early age, the Acehnese children have been instilled with the value of affection for their parents. Moreover, A3 enlighten another value of children’s affection for their parents, that is politeness, and vivid in the following verse:

Excerpt 2:

<i>Oh watèe rayeuk si nyak Tuhan bri</i>	(When you grow up, oh my dear child, may Allah give)
<i>Ngon ayah-umi beujroh bahasa</i>	([that you] Speak politely to father and mother)
<i>Bèk sagai meudhöt ayah ngon umi</i>	(Never raise your voice to them)
<i>Malah beutabri peu-peu nyang hawa</i>	(Give them what they need)

A2 described that the lines *Oh watèe rayeuk si nyak Tuhan bri* (When you grow up, oh my dear child, may Allah give) and *Ngon ayah-umi beujroh bahasa* ([that you] speak politely to father and mother), essentially remind the child to be polite in words (i.e., language) and actions towards their parents. Politeness is the primary key to achieving harmonious interaction and communication, especially between children and their parents (Mislikhah 2014). This is also reflected in Allah SWT’s commandments in Surah al-Isra’ (17:23–24).

Furthermore, the next lines, *Bèk sagai meudhöt ayah ngon umi* (Never raise your voice to them) and *Malah beutabri peu-peu nyang hawa* (Give them what they need) emphasise that children are not allowed to raise their voices when talking to their parents. Parents are happy when interacting and communicating with their children when they know and feel their children love them, and vice versa. Loving parents, especially when they are old, in the view of the Acehnese, is a kind of worship. This value is also salient in Surah al-Isra’ (17:23–24).

A5 explained that since Islam entered Aceh, Acehnese people have always taught their children to follow Islamic teachings, including those about children’s love for their parents. Therefore, Acehnese parents must cultivate children’s affection for both parents. One of the media to cultivate this affection is the lullaby of “Ratéb Dôda Idi”. A6 added that the value of love instilled in the verse is how the Acehnese should live because Islam is a religion that teaches compassion. One form of children’s affection for their parents is their devotion to their parents. This aligns with the commandments of Allah SWT in Surah Luqman (32:14–15), which say:

We commanded man (to be good) in respect of his parents. His mother carried him (in her womb) despite weakness upon weakness and his weaning is in two years. (We said to man,) Be grateful to Me and your parents. To Me is the ultimate return. However, if they force you to ascribe partners to Me about whom you (can) have no (source of) knowledge, then do not obey them. Remain with them in this world with due fairness, but follow the way of the one who has turned himself towards Me. Then, towards Me is your return, so I shall tell you what you had been doing. (Surah Luqman 31:14–15)

Luqman was the great-grandfather of Prophet Ibrahim, who lived for 500 years; he was a carpenter, tailor, shepherd and judge. Allah SWT asked him to choose between prophecy and wisdom, and he chose wisdom. As the Quran spoke of him, Luqman was wise and God gave him wisdom and separated the speech, then made him grateful for his grace. He gave good advice to his children on how to be devoted beings to God and parents, and Muslims know his advice to be best for children even today.

Compassion for teachers

In Islam, teachers are the same as scholars, who place the greatest and noblest ideas in front of their students and guide them to achieve those goals (Khan 2005). Teachers function as agents of hope, the candles of a time, the lamps of their era and the stars of the horizons of the ages. It is from the teacher that humans get light and sees their way in the dark. The teacher guarantees lighting, even the safety of many people (Khan 2005).

Teachers function as educators, instructors, guides, directors, coaches and assessors for their students. These functions are played with full responsibility to develop children's potential and develop their physical and mental abilities to achieve maturity and independence in carrying out their duties as caliph (meaning leader, deputy or representative) on earth (Jamaluddin 2015).

Given the significant role of teachers in educating children, the Acehnese tell their children to love and respect their teachers. This message was imprinted on the souls of their children from the cradle. The message of children's affection for their teacher is found in the following verse as sung by A3:

Excerpt 3:

<i>Allah hai dô kudôda idi</i>	(Allah, [I am] putting [my] child to sleep)
<i>Beugöt budi neuk watèe raya</i>	(Be kind, my child, when you grow up)
<i>Keu jasa gurèe neuk ta-ingat</i>	(Remember your teachers' kindness, my child)
<i>Nyang peuteupat hukôm agama</i>	(Who teach you of religion)

A3 explained that the lines, *Keu jasa gurèe neuk taingat* and *nyang peuteupat hukôm agama*, contain a message to children always to remember the kindness and services of their teachers who have educated them about Islam, about halal (lawful or permitted in Islam) and haram (forbidden or proscribed by Islam), and about various things that are beneficial to life. A14 further explained that a person's success in various endeavours could not be separated from the education his or her teacher has given. To the Acehnese, teachers are among those who instil religious values in children from childhood to adulthood.

A7 also demonstrated how important teachers are in shaping a child's character by teaching religious knowledge so he or she can grow up to be an obedient and noble human being. The Acehnese believe that besides parents, teachers also play a significant role in determining a child's success and future. As a result, A9 informed of a proverb in Acehnese that says, *Keu jasa guree, neuk, ta-ingat* (Child, you must never forget the service [and kindness] of your teachers). The following verse in “Ratéb Dôda Idi” is presented by A4, which shows the value of educating the child's love for the teachers.

Excerpt 4:

<i>Ayah ngon umi sereuta gurèe</i>	(Father, mother and teacher)
<i>Ureung nyan ban lhèe tapeumulia</i>	(The three people need to be glorified)
<i>Jampang meurumpök meu'ah talakèe</i>	(When you meet them, always apologise)
<i>Akherat teuntèe meuteumèe pahala</i>	(In the hereafter [you] will obtain rewards)

A10 explained that teachers are people who must be honoured and valued. Excerpt 4 also contains a message that if a child blames his parents and teachers, he or she must immediately apologise (Nurhayati 2019). The Acehnese believe parents and

teachers can do no wrong against their children or students. If done so, it is as “an unintentional mistake” as A11 voiced it. A17 further said the lullaby is a tradition and wisdom of respect and honour for parents and teachers.

The line, *Akherat teutèe meuteumèe pahala* (In the hereafter will obtain rewards) means that if a child is humble and always apologise to parents and teachers even for the most minor mistakes, Allah SWT will give him or her an enormous reward on the Day of Judgment (i.e., hereafter, after death). A17 further illuminated that asking for an apology in Islam is not only recommended when a child has wronged his parents or teachers but should be done anytime and anywhere to anyone, he or she has wronged so he or she can become respectful and honourable.

Compassion for the society

The value of compassion for society is found in the following verse of “Ratéb Dôda Idi”, as expressed by A5 in:

Excerpt 5:

<i>Meusoe nyang tawok beugöt taseuot</i>	(Whoever calls you, please answer politely)
<i>Meubek meudhöt-dhöt suara gata</i>	(Do not raise your voice)
<i>Ureung lakèe tulong bagah tasambôt</i>	(Anyone who needs help, please help immediately)
<i>Beulemah leumbôt ngon ureung lingka</i>	(Be gentle with those around you)

The verse in Excerpt 5 calls for children to love and respect others. The first line implies that when a child is called upon (by someone), he or she must answer politely in a gentle voice (in the second line). If the child is asked for assistance, he or she must give it sincerely (in the third line). Finally, society requires a child to be kind and polite with neighbours and people in the village or community (in the fourth line). In this verse, A2 explained that the value of children’s love is for society so that life becomes peaceful and beautiful. He continued by saying that as social creatures, humans need each other and should respect each other in living this life (De Cremer and Mulder 2007). As mentioned by Vygotsky, the age of infancy is a good time to form their fundamental abilities for intellectual development, known as “elementary mental functions” and one of the abilities is attention (Vygotsky 1978). Making them have attention or awareness from an early age of their society and environment shall shape their development to become an individual who is beneficial to others and their religion (i.e., Islam).

A13 further enlightened that the value of compassion for society is expected to build children to become “the light” for others in need and not a disaster. When someone benefits others, the Acehnese believe that he or she will be loved by society. Likewise, in life, parents hope their children get along with their surroundings and positively impact their environment. A15 said it is a pride for every Acehnese parent when their children become useful people for their nation (Muhaini and Nasir 2020), state and religion (Yusuf 2020). A6 presented another value of children’s affection for society in the following “Ratéb Dôda Idi” verse:

Excerpt 6:

<i>Jak lôn timang putiek mancang</i>	(Oh, let me cradle you, my dear)
<i>Banta seudang rupa samlakoe</i>	(My beautiful little child)
<i>Oh, watèe rayeuk boh haté nang</i>	(When you grow up, oh my heart)
<i>Beu jisayang lé bandum nanggroe</i>	(May everyone/everything [in this world] love you)

In Excerpt 6, *Beu jisayang lé bandum nanggroe* (May everyone [in this world] love you) means that the parents contemplate their children to receive love from everyone around them. A15 uttered that true love would grow in people’s minds when combined with conscience and religious values.

In relation to Islam, humans are social creatures who need cooperation to achieve common goals, namely the happiness of living in this world and salvation in the hereafter. Therefore, fellow human beings need compassion, regardless of ethnicity, race, religion and skin colour (Astuti 2019). In Surah al-Hujurat (49:13), Allah SWT says:

O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female and made you into races and tribes so that you may identify one another. Surely the noblest of you, in Allah’s sight, is the most pious of you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surah al-Hujurat 49:13)

The verse tells us that Allah created humans in various tribes and nations so that they would know each other and so by knowing each other, humans would foster their love of each other. *Ar-Rahman* (meaning, Most Compassionate) is one of the names of Allah SWT, which shows His compassionate nature. *Ar-Rahman* comes from the root word *ra-hi-ma*, with the adjective of the root word as *rahim*, which means gracious, while *ar-Rahman* as a superlative means “Most Gracious” (Jahja 2010, 112). For that, the nature of compassion is a noble end that Allah SWT loves. On the other hand, Allah SWT detests humans who have hatred in the

heart, including those who do not have a love for their brothers and sisters. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said, *Laa yu'мину ahadukum hatta yuhibba li akhihi maa yuhibbu linafsihi*, which means that “None of you (truly) believes until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself”. This hadith (a collection of traditions containing the Prophet Muhammad SAW’s sayings and accounts of his daily practice, known as the Sunnah) means that the love of a Muslim is not only for fellow Muslims but also for all humankind.

Compassion for nature

In Excerpt 6, A6 explicated that the word *bandum* (everyone/everything) *nanggroe* (nation) also shows that the message of compassion is not only for fellow humans but also for other creatures of Allah SWT’s creation, such as animals and plants on earth. In fact, Islamic teachings also teach how to love animals and plants:

To Thamud, (We sent) their brother, Salih. He said, ‘O my people, worship Allah. You have no god other than Him. There has come to you a clear sign from your Lord. This is the she-camel of Allah, a sign for you. So, leave her to eat on the Earth of Allah and do not touch her with mischief, lest a painful punishment should seize you. (Surah al-A’raf 7:73)

Islam encourages people to care for trees and cultivate the land, as these are good deeds that will be rewarded. This is made abundantly clear when Allah says:

Have you not seen that to Allah prostrate all those in the skies and all those on the Earth and the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the animals and many from mankind? And there are many to whom punishment has become due. And the one whom Allah puts to disgrace, there is none to give him respect. Surely Allah does what He wills. (Surah al-Hajj 22:18)

The verse clearly illustrates that Allah SWT’s creations are among the many signs of His existence and thus, all of them must be cared for on earth. Furthermore, even if the world is coming to an end, Allah SWT’s messenger, Prophet Muhammad SAW, has commanded us to plant trees: “If the end of the world approaches and one of you has a seedling (or plant) in his hand if he can plant it before the end comes, let him do it”. He also says, “If a Muslim plant a tree or sows seeds and then a bird, a person or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift for him until the Day of Judgment”. This is a piece of advice about compassion that needs to be guarded even in a state of war. Islamic teachings still radiate affection for humans, animals and plants.

Compassion for the homeland

To love the homeland or one’s native country is a feeling that arises from a citizen’s heart and soul to serve, maintain, defend and protect his homeland from all threats and disturbances (Rinjani and Bestari 2020). Affection for the homeland is a sense of pride, belonging, respect, high regard and loyalty that each individual has in the country in which he or she lives, which can be reflected in the behaviour of defending his or her homeland, protecting his or her homeland, willingness to sacrifice for the interests of his or her homeland and love of the people’s customs and culture (Nurmantyo 2016). Affection for the homeland can be interpreted as attitudes and behaviours that reflect pride, loyalty and care for the land of their birth. Loving the homeland manifests in respecting language and culture, obedience to the law and protecting the potential of nature and the environment. A12 ascertained that people who love their homeland would not be tempted by offers from other nations that can harm their people. The value of love for the homeland taught by the Acehese parents to their children can be seen in the following verse of “Ratéb Dôda Idi”, as provided by A8.

Excerpt 7:

<i>Allah hai dô ku dôda idang</i>	(Allah, [I am] putting [my] child to sleep)
<i>Seulayang blang ka putôh taloe</i>	(A kite in the rice field has a broken thread)
<i>Beurijang rayeuk hai muda seudang</i>	(Grow up soon, oh, dear son)
<i>Tajak bantu prang tabela nanggroe</i>	(Help fight to defend [our] homeland)

The value of children’s affection for the homeland is in the fourth line of Excerpt 7, *Tajak bantu prang tabela nanggroe* means “Help fight to defend (our) homeland”, in which the mother, father or caregiver singing the lullaby expects the child to grown to love their homeland and willing to defend it from any attacks. Although their children are still very young and do not understand the circumstances, the parents believe that instilling this compassion since birth will help the child develop their love for their homeland as they grow older. A8 continued to explain that in this array, the meaning of fight does not necessarily relate to war with the invaders who want to seize their homeland, for instance. However, it is also about being appreciative of the services of people who are or who had struggled for the existence of their homeland. What is more, “Ratéb Dôda Idi” has existed in the Acehese culture for hundreds of years and A6 informed of the situation during the Dutch’s occupation of Aceh from 1873 to 1913 (Missbach 2010), hence

during that time, this verse was aimed to defend their homeland from the Dutch. A1 provided other verses related to the time of the Dutch's occupation:

Excerpt 8:

Wahèe aneuk bèk taduek lé	(Oh, my son, do not sit (i.e., rest) anymore)
Beudöh saré ta bela bangsa	(Raise together to defend the country)
Bèk tatakôt keu darah ilé	(Do not fear [if your] blood flow)
Adak pih maté poma ka réla	(If you are killed, I [i.e., your mother] am sincere)

Excerpt 8 demonstrates how important it is for every Acehnese to protect their homeland and death caused by doing so should not be feared. Even a mother should be sincere if their children died during their fight to defend their homeland during the Dutch's occupation in Aceh. This situation is also relevant to the recently resolved Acehnese conflict of the Acehnese rebellions with the Indonesian government from 1973 to 2005 (Harun, Yusuf and Karnafi 2020). It was a war caused by the Indonesian government's lack of social and administrative responsibilities in Aceh (Ronnie 2016). During this time, A15 also put in the picture of how mothers, especially in certain areas in Aceh, had their husbands or sons involved in one of the rebellions known as Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) or the Free Aceh Movement (Usman and Fauzan 2020). This verse shows how every mother should be willing and compliant should their sons join fights to defend Aceh. A2 provided another following verse that contains children's compassion or love for Aceh by building peace, creating prosperity and improving the nation's welfare.

Excerpt 9:

<i>Alah hai dô lôn dôda idi</i>	(Allah, [I am] putting [my] child to sleep)
<i>Cicém keudidi jipoe cõt uroe</i>	(The wading bird is flying at noon)
<i>Beurijang rayeuk nyak putéh</i>	(Grow up soon, oh, my dear child)
<i>Jak bantu abi jak bangun nanggroe</i>	(Help father to develop [our] country)

The line *Jak bantu abi jak bangun nanggroe* in Excerpt 9 means that parents invite their children to build their nation and homeland together. A2 alleged that since childhood, Acehnese parents have prayed for their children that when they become adults, they can build the country and nation with science and technology

and optimise the natural resources for the people’s prosperity based on Islam. To conclude, the value of compassion for the Acehese homeland is fighting against the invaders and maintaining unity and peace, respecting differences and protecting the children of the nation.

The importance of understanding the homeland as a region or a state is not clearly stated in the Quran. However, the values of compassion for the homeland (known as *hubb al-wathan*) are mentioned in it (Rohmati 2020). The values emphasise unity (also known as *ukhuwah Islamiyyah*) and the guidance always to respect one’s fellow humans. According to Surah al-Hujurat (49:13), one of the values of compassion for the homeland exists in the Quran:

O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female and made you into races and tribes so that you may identify one another. Surely the noblest of you, in Allah’s sight, is the one who is most pious of you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surah al-Hujurat 49:13)

The verse can be interpreted as a form of human conscience towards the land of his birth, implying that humans should naturally love their homeland from birth (Shihab 2014). In line with this, Hadratussyekh Hasyim Asy’ari’s book entitled, *ar-Risalah (The Message)* explains that defending the country is essential and from this viewpoint arose the term *Hubbul wathan minal iman*, which was popularised by K.H. Wahab Hasbullah (Jamaluddin 2015). Rohmati explained that it means “Loving the homeland is part of faith” (Rohmati 2020, 39).

Conclusion

The lullaby “Ratéb Dôda Idi” is one of Acehese society’s traditions that functions to educate the value of compassion to children from the cradle, from birth to two years old. The tradition has been practised for hundreds of years and still going strong, especially in village areas in Aceh. The values of compassion instilled in the children are the values of their love for their parents, teachers, society, nature and their homeland. The values of affection are arranged in verses with rhythmic patterns. The lullaby is sung into the child’s ear repeatedly, starting from putting him or her to sleep until the child falls asleep in the cradle or the arms of his or her mother, father or caretaker. The messages conveyed in “Ratéb Dôda Idi” are anticipated to embed in the heart and soul of the child.

The values of compassion that Acehese parents instil in their children are universal and based on their belief in Islamic teachings. They are an educational investment that reflects the past, present and future of children’s love for the people of Aceh

and their religion (i.e., Islam) in life. With the values of compassion, Acehese parents envision their children embracing differences in religion, race, ethnicity and profession and respecting their parents, teachers, society, nature and their homeland. Not just to the Acehese, but as a universal part of infancy development, the custom of lullabies cradles little children to sleep around the world reflects their parents' worries, aspirations and hopes. This kind of study thus helps our understanding of the values expressed in lullabies from many cultures and these beliefs are mirrored in the society of the singers (i.e., speakers).

This present study has answered the research question of the kinds of compassion based on religious teachings (i.e., Islam) embedded in "Ratéb Dôda Idi" of the Acehese society. Hence, this study was conducted with limitations as it focuses on only the values of compassion in this traditional lullaby. As noted by the literature, future related research is expected to look further into other values embedded in lullabies. Involving more participants to grasp more profound local wisdom and knowledge on this issue and perhaps even comparing the existence of the values with other societies and cultures should also be considered.

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