

## Examining The Meaning in The Lyrics of The *Buai Anak* Song

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study examines the emotional and educational themes depicted in the song "*Buai Anak*," focusing on the role of the mother in the upbringing of her child. The research aims to analyze the cultural and moral values conveyed through the lyrics and their connection to family life in Indonesian society. **Method:** A semiotic approach was used to interpret the symbols and signs present in the song's lyrics. The analysis focused on the expressions that represent a mother's emotional closeness, hopes, and prayers for her child. Additionally, the study explored the cultural and social context of Indonesian family dynamics, incorporating relevant historical and societal perspectives. **Results:** The song "*Buai Anak*" reflects the universal themes of maternal love, sacrifice, and perseverance. The lyrics portray both the sweet and bitter moments in the mother-child relationship, highlighting the importance of values such as patience, love, and education. The song also communicates a moral message about the significance of role models and the need for peace within the family. **Novelty:** This study emphasizes the profound cultural and educational messages embedded in the song, offering insights into how traditional Indonesian values related to family, education, and generational relationships are transmitted through music. The analysis also sheds light on the song's broader impact, encouraging listeners to reflect on their own family bonds and the deeper meanings of life.

## INTRODUCTION

Literature is a form of human expression poured into written or oral works, based on thoughts, opinions, experiences, and feelings, which are usually manifested imaginatively or as a reflection of reality. Etymologically, the word literature comes from the Indonesian Sanskrit language, which is a combination of the word *sa* (guiding, teaching, and giving instructions) and the suffix *tra*, which is usually used to indicate a tool or source. According to Sopiati, literary works are a reflection of the dynamics of life experienced or witnessed by writers in their social environment. Diverse life phenomena, such as social, cultural, political, economic, humanitarian, religious, moral, and gender aspects, are the main inspiration in the creative process of a writer.

Through his imaginative power, a writer is able to capture the reality of life, choose certain aspects, reflect on them deeply, examine their meaning, and process them into an aesthetic work. This process involves the sedimentation of ideas and emotions, which are then expressed through the main medium of literary works, namely language. Language in literary works is not only a means of communication, but also a vessel for artistic expression that allows readers to reflect on life from a deeper and more meaningful perspective. Literary works, thus, become a space of reflection that connects readers, authors, and social reality in a complex harmony.

So if these two words are combined into the word literature, then etymologically it is interpreted as a means of teaching, guidance and teaching [1]. This understanding suggests that literature is a tool that functions to educate or convey information to readers. In Indonesian society, the understanding of literature is still gray, there is no definite understanding to define the word literature itself. However, the understanding of literature often refers to literature that uses the prefix *ke-an*. "*su*" means good or beautiful, and literature means writing or painting."

Literary works are a branch of art created based on ideas, feelings, and creative thoughts related to cultural elements expressed through language. Literary works are full of values of life experiences, such as religious values, psychological values, socio-cultural values, and moral values as the basis for developing character and attitude education. [2]. Literary works function as a medium to convey messages about the truth. These messages can be conveyed by the author explicitly or implicitly in a subtle way. In addition, literary works are often used to describe what the author observes from the life around him. In terms of content, literature is usually said to be a composition that does not contain facts but fiction.

Literary works, authors convey their views on various aspects of life in their surroundings. Various life values can also be found in literary works. Literature is not just a writing that has high artistic value, but literature must also be understood as a written work that is not an imitation of reality, but a creative work that contains personal and aesthetic values. It is said to be personal because every literary work is created by a writer based on his thoughts and feelings, and aesthetic because literary works have high beauty value [3].

Literary works are often a means for authors to convey an ideal life model according to their moral views. In literary works, morals are applied through the attitudes, speech, and behavior of the characters, which reflect the author's views on life values. Through the journey of the story and interactions between characters, readers are invited to reflect on the meaning behind the actions of the characters. The wisdom contained therein becomes a moral message that is implicitly or explicitly conveyed by the author. This message usually aims to provide lessons or inspiration to readers about how to behave and act in real life. Literary works are the result of someone's thoughts presented in the form of beautiful writing and language [4].

A song is a series of notes combined with a harmonious rhythm and complemented by lyrics that form a beautiful harmony. Songs are often used as an effective medium to convey messages to others because songs can capture and evoke patterns of feelings such as hope, desire, joy and even madness. Songs as a form of verbal message delivery consist of non- verbal elements (eg tone, dynamic signs, instruments) and verbal elements (language elements) [5].

Songs are one of the art media that are currently in great demand and are widely listened to by many people. One of the important things in the cultural industry in the current era of globalization is music. The copyright of music or songs is owned by the original creator of a musical or song creation. Technically, the owner of the music

copyright is called a composer. "A composer is someone who changes a work into a work." [6].

Songs as a form of verbal message delivery consist of non-verbal elements (e.g. tone, dynamic signs, instruments) and verbal elements (language elements) [5]. Related Songs are one of the most popular communication media in society, especially among young people. Through songs, someone can know, understand and appreciate the contents of the lyrics. Lyrics that contain messages from the songwriter to the listener or song enthusiast, both the feelings and thoughts of the songwriter. In song lyrics, of course, there is language as a medium to convey the message of a songwriter

According to KBBI (2014: 835), song lyrics are included in the literary genre because they are defined as "literary works (poetry) that contain expressions of personal feelings and are an arrangement of words in a song." Thus, song lyrics can be equated with poetry, except that lyrics are equipped with tones and rhythms that form a song. states that song lyrics are influenced by a mixture of diverse cultures and traditions. This cultural mixture certainly affects the development of vocabulary in song lyrics. The language used in song lyrics continues to develop over time, following changes in language in general. This development includes various aspects, such as lexicon, language style, and changes in the form and meaning of words.

West Sumatra, is one of the regions that has a variety of regional music that is quite popular. Each region has its own characteristic songs. The many musical spaces such as wedding parties, traditional events and other entertainment which then become a place for traditional music players. With enough land, traditional musicians arrange regional songs with their own versions. One of these regional songs is the song *Buai Anak*.

Lullabies are ancestral traditions found in various regions in the country and contain elements of local wisdom. Its existence in society today is generally not recognized, because today's parents prefer to listen to lullabies that do not come from traditional arts and culture. *Dendang Buai Anak darek* is a Minangkabau lullaby that is not widely found in records, such as in a study, books or others. This study aims to conduct research on the *Buai Anak darek* song, especially its musical aspects that are its characteristics by using Western musical idioms.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In a study, a method is needed that is relevant and appropriate to the object of study. This is certainly to help solve problems so that the objectives of the study can be achieved. As expressed by Patton that the depth and detail of a qualitative method comes from a small number of case studies. All of this is an interesting phenomenon to question. Case studies are useful when someone/researcher wants to understand a particular problem or situation in great depth and where people can identify cases that are rich in information, rich in the sense that a big problem can be studied from several examples of phenomena and usually in the form of questions [7].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

"*Buai Anak* " is a story that depicts a mother's journey in caring for and educating

her child. In this story, the mother tries to give the best for her child despite facing various obstacles and challenges. Through her sacrifice and affection, the mother shows the importance of values such as love, patience, and perseverance. Each chapter depicts the sweet and bitter moments in their relationship, as well as the valuable lessons learned along the way. This story touches the heart and reminds us of the power of a mother's love and how precious family ties are.

*Buai Anak* song studied is the *Buai Anak* song that comes from the darek area. In Minangkabau there are two types of *Buai Anak* songs, *Buai Anak* from the darek area and *Buai Anak* from the pasisia (coastal) area. Minangkabau society is generally more familiar with the *Buai Anak* song from darek than the *Buai Anak* song from pasisia. The *Buai Anak* song from pasisia is usually only known by coastal residents, while the *Buai Anak* song from darek is known almost throughout the Minangkabau area including the coastal area. The musical elements and lyrics of the *Buai Anak* song from darek and pasisia are also different. The *Buai Anak* song from darek consists of five notes, and the *Buai Anak* from the coastal area has diatonic notes.

Notes on the *Buai Anak* song are not found much in Minangkabau cultural literature, such as in research or books, although its popularity among Minangkabau society is quite widely known. This song is often used as a personal expression when lulling a child to sleep, or as part of a repertoire of performances in a traditional context, and is also often used as material in the exploration of traditional music into the context of industrial music. The following is an explanation of the analysis of the lyrics of *Buai Anak*.

*Nan babuai nan babuai piciankan mato  
oi nak kanduang lakeh lah anak gadang  
ka mambangik batang tarandam*

In this section, the meaning of the lyrics of *Buai Anak* is a father putting his child to sleep while rocking a sleeping cradle, a father who hopes that his child can change the fate of his family.

*Usah lah manangih mandeh nan rusuah pulo  
lalok lah nak lalok lah nak ayah bausao*

In this section, the meaning of the lyrics of *Buai Anak* is that both parents forbid their children from crying and remain calm so that the mother does not worry and the father continues to work.

*Alah den dendang den ayun, den buai sayang  
lalok nak kanduang oi sayang manangih juo*

In this section, the meaning of the lyrics of *Buai Anak* is that a child keeps crying and his father keeps putting his child to sleep in a swing bed.

*Jikok balayia oi kanduang isuak lah gadang,  
pituah mandeh jo ayah jan sampai lupo*

In this section, the meaning of the lyrics of *Buai Anak* is that both parents advise that if their child goes abroad, the parents' message should not be forgotten.

*Jikok malam tibo nak kanduang  
ambiak salimuik nak jan maraso*

*nak kanduang dingin nyo malam*  
*talompek kato nak kanduang binaso badan*

In this section, the meaning of the song *Buai Anak* is that a child must be careful of this world, so that he does not feel the bitterness of the world. Then the father tells his child to be careful when speaking because your mouth is your tiger.

The *Buai Anak* song is a traditional Indonesian parenting song that reflects the cultural and socio-linguistic aspects of the Banjar community in South Kalimantan [9]. The song's lyrics convey important values and beliefs related to Baiman-based education, which emphasizes faith, pious behavior, and the belief that all actions are supervised and rewarded by the Almighty [9]. The terms Baiman, Bauntung, and Batuah, which are derived from the Dindang Maayun Anak song, represent the Banjar community's emphasis on a life of faith, good fortune, and blessings [9]. These concepts are deeply rooted in the Banjar's cultural and religious traditions, and the song serves as a medium for transmitting these values to the younger generation [9].

The analysis of the *Buai Anak* song can be further enriched by drawing insights from the study of other traditional songs and their cultural significance, such as the Tujia working songs in Chongqing, China [20], the Deuda songs of Nepal ("Nature's Notes: Analyzing the Environmental Advocacy in the Deuda Songs of Nepal", 2024), and the Nanyue ritual songs in Hunan, China [21]. These studies highlight the role of traditional songs in preserving cultural heritage, fostering environmental awareness, and promoting literacy and cultural education [20]; [21].

Similarly, the Gutiao songs of the Mulao folk songs [15], the Mulao folk songs during the Zoupo Festival [17], and the Putian coastal folk songs in Fujian Province Wu (2023) encapsulate the national spirit, character, and aesthetic interests of their respective communities. These studies emphasize the need to protect and promote the intangible cultural heritage represented by these traditional songs [15]; [17]; [18].

The educational and literacy dimensions of traditional songs have also been explored in studies on Jiujiang folk songs in Jiangxi Province [5], Baima Tibetan folk songs in Gansu Province [13], and Yao Nationality folk songs in China [3]. These studies highlight the role of traditional songs in fostering cultural awareness, artistic expression, and the preservation of local dialects and traditions [3]; [5]; [13].

The analysis of the *Buai Anak* song can also benefit from insights gained from studies on the interpretation and translation of song lyrics, such as the translation of the song "Water Under the Bridge" by Adeke's Version [10] and the translation of Northern Shaanxi folk songs [17]. These studies emphasize the importance of maintaining the truth and cultural significance of the original lyrics while creating unique representations through translation [10]; [17].

Furthermore, the educational and literacy significance of traditional songs can be understood in the context of broader studies on the cultural connotation and inheritance of folk songs, such as the Pingxian folk songs in Qinghai Province [19] and the Tibetan folk music performing art in Qinghai Province [11]. These studies highlight the transformative power of traditional songs in fostering cultural awareness, artistic

expression, and educational development [11]; [19].

So, the analysis of the *Buai Anak* song can be enriched by drawing insights from a wide range of studies on traditional songs and their cultural, educational, and literacy-related dimensions. These studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the significance of the *Buai Anak* song within the broader context of Indonesian and global intangible cultural heritage.

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding :** The analysis of the song *Buai Anak* reveals its profound emotional and cultural significance, emphasizing the deep bond between mother and child. The lyrics reflect themes of maternal love, sacrifice, and protection, while also highlighting the role of the mother as a guide and role model in the child's upbringing. Through semiotic analysis, it was determined that each phrase in the song carries symbolic meaning that underscores the importance of values such as education, patience, and familial devotion. **Implication :** These findings emphasize the critical role of music in transmitting cultural and moral values within Indonesian society, particularly in terms of family dynamics, respect for parents, and the hopes for future generations. The song serves as a medium for reflection on familial bonds, encouraging listeners to appreciate the sacrifices made by parents and the role of education in shaping individuals. **Limitation :** However, the analysis is limited by the subjective interpretation of symbols in the lyrics and the inability to fully account for varying individual or regional interpretations of the song's meaning. Additionally, the study focused primarily on the linguistic and cultural aspects of the lyrics, leaving out musical elements that could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the song's impact. **Future Research :** Future studies could explore the musical elements of *Buai Anak* in relation to its lyrical content to provide a more holistic understanding of how music and words together convey emotional and cultural messages. Additionally, further research could examine how similar themes are portrayed in other Indonesian songs, comparing regional variations and their influence on the audience's perception of family and education.

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