

## Katoba as The Media of Character Education on Munanese Society

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### ABSTRACT

*Character education is a slogan that is touted or cried out by every element of society in instilling values and moral messages on children. It is more relevant nowadays, when children that become the hope of nation, do not bear good characters that eventually results in generations having no manners and do not give priority to ethics. In actuality, for the Munanese society, katoba has been an instrument of character education that has been inherited through generations. With katoba, children are taught to know Islamic values and behavior in the society, implemented on the basis of respecting the parents.*

**Keywords:** Katoba, Media, Character, SEducation.

### INTRODUCTION:

The main problem faced by our nation nowadays is the declining of values of honesty, politeness, and of intelligences in daily life primarily for young generations or children. When they are not honest and not polite to do something, they do not care with what they do, and as if it were not a forbidden thing. It has happened today because our nation, primarily of children or young generations have got accustomed to seeing the show or spectacles, both directly through printed media and/or electronic media, which every day show brawls, juvenile delinquency, children that disobey their parents, the younger sibling does not respect the elder etc. who are influenced by in which that as if it were not an astonishing thing.

As a matter of fact, the cause for this moral degradation may be attributed in two parts: first, in light of external side, i.e. the strong flow of globalization that comes so rapidly from another country as though the world did not have any limits (globalization). The strength of globalization flow not only teaches free association or free sex and western ethics, but also breaks all principles and tradition of customs taught to the children in actuating social life. Second, an internal side, i.e. children that do not consider it important any more to value the essence of life, particularly moral messages in every traditional ceremony or rituals; they carry out the duties without knowing and understanding its meanings, and thereby are least interested in implementing its lessons in their lives.

For the Munanese society, children's character education has always played a crucial role through the traditional ceremony of *katoba*. *Katoba* is a part of a tradition of the process of Islamization for children (sons and daughters) within the age of 7-10 years. It is believed that this tradition originated since the era of the 16<sup>th</sup> King of Muna, named La Ode Abdul Rahman with a title of *Sangia Latugho* (1671-1718). La Ode Abdul Rahman accepted this tradition from an Arabic sophisticated person named Syarif Muhammad, commonly known as Saidhi Raba (La Niampe, 2008). From this perspective, *katoba* not only becomes the media of conveying moral messages and ethics to children, but it also denotes a religious process for a child to be Islamized. Even, some scientific studies seemed to have concluded that this ritual constitutes an effort of strengthening and legitimating a child in Muna to be Islamic (Hadirman 2009; Sarmadan 2013).

It is understood that with implementing moral messages found in the ritual of *katoba*, it is expected that the children can grow to have a good personality, can adapt their self in every lineage of society and become the hope of a young nation. *Katoba* is capable of guiding and directing children in societal life and the nation.

## RESEARCH METHODS:

The research method used has been descriptive-qualitative. In other words, it involved both field and study of extant literature. For the field study, the researcher takes data in the field by means of interviews and observations, whereas literature study denotes one of research methods that aims at giving solution about a problem by referring to literature resources, such as: books that are relevant to the problem of research, e-book, scientific journals, scripts, theses, dissertations, along with notes that are closely related to the research problem.

## DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS:

### Concept of *Katoba*:

*Katoba* in Munanese language derives from the morpheme of *ka-* and the root word of *toba*. The morpheme of *ka-* in Munanese language means (1) nominalization of a verb (abstract noun, tool, result), such as: on the word of *kaghosa* means 'strength', *kaharo* means 'broom', (2) prefix on adjective, such as: *sala kawanta* means 'trousers', (3) prefix on verb, such as: *nekarato* meaning "He comes suddenly", (4) with repetition on the noun: something small, such as: *kawale-wale* meaning a small cottage', and (5) with repetition on adjective that means rather, such as: *nokapongke-pongke* meaning 'he is rather deaf'. The word *toba* in Munanese language means (1) repentance, such as: *pogauno toba* means 'language of repentance', (2) repentance, aware, such as: *notobamo* meaning he has been aware, *noangkafimo katangarino imamu* meaning "he has followed the advices of the priest" (great Muslim leader), (3) it is not found in metaphoric language, (4) *tobatkan* (a religious ceremony for the children at the age of 6 years: it is taught all of forbidden things and good deed by a great Moslem leader (*imam*) and is witnessed by relatives and invitations, such as: "*pada dongkilo anahi, dotobadamo*" (after the children are circumcised, they are Islamized). The etymology of *katoba* above is actually related to the ceremony of the 'tobat' (Hadirman, 2017).

In the tradition of Munanese society, *katoba* is a part of Islamization procession for children (sons and daughters) in the age group of 7-10 years.

The procession of *katoba* is preceded with the phase of circumcision. According to the Muna traditional customs, the circumcision is followed with *katoba*, and is obligatory for every child who has neared the adult age. After passing this procession, it begins to be regarded to be legal to undertake the learning-process of Islamic religion primarily learning to read the Koran and learning to do obligatory prayers and learning Muna traditional custom that is initiated with listening to the advices or lessons from their parents (La Niampe, 2008).

### Character Education:

In the English language, some words refer to the activity of education. The word of education, for instance, is closer than the element of instruction which is highly scholastic. Whereas, for the word of growth and caring, the term that is employed is bringing up (this is closer to the meaning of caring and maintenance in the context of family). The word of training refers more to giving of exercise, i.e. a process that makes someone to have the capabilities to act (*skills*). The elements of instruction, caring, and training are all parts of an educational process itself (Santoso).

In accordance with Marimba, education is the conscious guidance or leadership given by an educator towards the development of soul and body of students to form the main personality (Ahmad Tafsir, 2005). In the bill of Indonesian Republic No. 20 in 2003 about National Education System, Chapter I article 1 states that education is a conscious and planned effort so that students actively develop their self potential to own the spiritual strength of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, personality, good conduct, and the skill that is required by himself, society, nation and country.

### Meaning of *Katoba* as the Media of Character Education on the society of Muna:

The Munanese people greatly glorify the values of local wisdom. It is sharpened by the system of oral culture inheritance, and eventually causes values that are contained in the messages of local wisdom become something mystical. However, for the Munanese society, it is even the thing that becomes the sacredness of messages that are conveyed from generation to generation from their ancestors.

*Katoba* is one traditions that is being religiously followed as a habit for the Munanese society from generation to generation. In reality, it turns out that this tradition is even a tradition to uphold Islamic law with the customary media. Commonly, many people of Indonesia, in the practice of carrying out religion, cannot be separated from customary practice or local tradition.

Therefore, quoting the opinion of Jaya (2015) that *Katoba* etymologically comes from the word of *toba* that is absorbed from Arabic language, namely from the word of *taubah* (repentance). Philosophical perspectives of Munanese people regarded that children who have not reached adulthood (6-11 years) do not have the ability to decipher the good from the bad. Based on this, the tradition of *katoba* becomes a must for a child who's becoming an adult. The implementation of tradition of *katoba* can also become a form of social learning, namely the form of early protection that is striven by parents (represented by the great Moslem leader of village) to teach Islamic values and socio-cultural practices. Islam is reflected on the content of *katoba* in the form of the pronunciation of two sentences of the Islamic profession of faith, i.e. *Asshadu Alla Ilah Ilallah, Wa Asshadu Annamuhhammadan Abduhu Warasulullah* (there is no God other than Allah, and the Prophet of Muhammad is His messenger).

This sentence describes that Islam found on the Munanese society is the syncretic of Islam. It means that Islam that is idolized by Munanese people is the combination of pre-Islam belief and Islam belief. The above-mentioned phenomenon is largely found in each local wisdom owned by the Munanese society including *katoba*. The proof is that the phases of knowledge transfer from the great Moslem leader of village to the child that is Islamized is to avoid negative or despicable deeds in the sight of God and human being, to do Islamic laws, and to know the way of cleansing oneself after defilement and holy water that purifies. In addition, the expression of *syahadat* (the Islamic profession of faith) is the effort of parents to legitimate the Islamic law of a child in Muna (Sarmadan, 2013).

*Katoba* is of course the form of initiation ritual on the Munanese society. Studying ritual is studying the symbols and for that reason, Geertz (Hadirman, 2016) put ritual as the text that is found in symbols that have any relations to one another so that it forms one totality of a system of meaning within the society. The symbol becomes a main and important part in the life of a human being. With symbol, a human being thinks, feels, behaves, converses or even keeps silent. In *katoba* of Muna, interpretation and analysis are done comprehensively towards symbols that are covered in tool/material used, symbols of time and place of ritual, symbol of leader and participant of ritual, symbol in advices used in *katoba* (*wambano toba*), symbol in practice and action of ritual, and relation between one symbol to another holistically.

If traced from history, *katoba* in the past was considered as being the obligation of parents to wipe away sins (*odhosa*) that are regarded as dirt or grime that sticks to their body. Therefore, it becomes obligatory for every parent to do the ritual of *katoba* for their children. The above-mentioned obligation also sticks together with the label of their names, namely *La* for man and *Wa* for woman. This label is stuck to the first name of children in Muna that constitutes the representation from two sentences of the Islamic profession of faith; (*La*)*ilaaha illallah, (Wa)**asyhadu anna Muhamaddarrasulullah*, so that Munanese society regards that every name of *La* and *Wa* in Muna must be Islamized (*dikatoba*).

Even though, it is closely related with Islam, the ritual of *katoba* is to keep the symbols of tradition and local practices, such as: burning of incense, belief and treatment towards incense, availability of food of *haroa* (a certain ritual program by providing certain food while saying a prayer, or to ask for any blessing, fortune, and safety to God). On the other hand, the obligation of both parents and children to actuate *katoba* has undergone reinterpretation and negotiation of meaning in the society. A part of society carries out *katoba* that is considered to be more Islamic or that gives education or Islamic-ism that is regarded as the core of *katoba*. However, there are still many more who conduct *katoba* and keep defending the symbols of tradition and interpret them as the part of way to be Islamic. The difference of understanding towards the symbols of *katoba* finally results in a variety of kinds of variants of Islam in the society of Muna.

In light of the way and process of conveying it, *katoba* has the capability in teaching *syahadat*, self-purification, and moral advices and ethics to a child who will be Islamized (*di Katoba*). Therefore, the tradition of *katoba* constitutes a ritual that is relevant with the identity of religion and belief system. The Munanese society perceives this tradition as a must, denoting the form of ritual of a human being's life cycle, which needs to pass on socio-cultural and religious values to the child.

From generation to generation, the tradition of *katoba* has the capability to bind and tighten the sense of friendship and kinship of relatives among societal citizens of Muna. Effectively, the implementation of *katoba* involves several elements, one of them is the family of child that will be Islamized (*dikatoba*). Ritual of *katoba* can be interpreted as the form of supporting, that is, close relatives witnessing the preparation of a good quality generation. A good child is the hope of family, and can make their big family proud. Based on that, the group of close relatives lend support with the hope that the child becomes the pride of their big family (Hadirman, 2016). Therefore, the Munanese society believes that tradition of *katoba* is the most powerful media to create a better

generation to comprehend the essence and orientation of their life, whether as creature of God, as personal thing, as member of family, or as member of society.

As has been touched on before, the Munanese society solely knows oral tradition in each of their local wisdom, ritual of *katoba* is crystallized in the form of oral language in this case the customary language that can be understood by the child that is Islamized (*dikatoba*). Even if it only uses symbolic language, but the great Moslem leader (*imam*) that leads the ritual keeps adapting with the capability of child that is Islamized (*dikatoba*) in understanding moral languages of the abovementioned customs. It is exactly here that the sacredness of the tradition of *katoba* lies, besides being only done orally, but it also uses customary language that probably is not comprehensible to the child even if the great Moslem leader (*imam*) keeps adapting with the reasoning capability of the child that is Islamized (*dikatoba*).

Besides, the messages in the language of *toba* (*wambano toba*) are full of philosophical meaning because each of its speeches contains implicit messages. For that reason, before this ritual is held, usually the child that will be Islamized (*dikatoba*) is taught by his parents to always answer or give response with the word “*umbe*” that means “*ya*” on each of the end of *katoba* messages. To make it sure, every child that actuates ritual is always taken on the lap of his family or his relatives to guide in responding the language of *toba* (*wambano toba*).

The followings are some quotations of moral messages towards the child that is Islamized (*dikatoba*) (Hadirman, 2016) as the effort of child’s character education:

- *Motehie amamu, kapae amamu itu lansaringino kabolosino ompu Allah Taala* “please obey your father because your father is like the substitute of the God (Allah Taala)”
- *Motehie inamu, kapae inamu itu lansaringino kabolosino anabi Muhammadi.* “please obey your mother because she is like the substitute of the Prophet Muhammad”
- *Motehie isamu, kapae isamu itu lansaringino kabolosino malaekati* “please obey your elder brother/sister because he or she is like the substitute of the angel”
- *Moasiane aimu, kapae aimu itu lansaringino kabolosino muumini* “please love or affect your younger brother or sister because he or she is like the substitute of the believers or the faithful”
- *Omoghondohi Ompu Allah Taala omaiane nehama, amamu itu kabolosino Ompu Allah Taala mentaleano. Nikonando ama maitu suano kaawu amaomu sakotu-kotughuno, taaka lahae-lahaemembalino kamokula moghane amamuo itu, tabeano dotehie itu* “looking for the God (Allah Taala) will be found everywhere, your father is like the substitute of real God. The one that is called as father is not only a real father, but also any man that has been old must be obeyed”
- *Omoghondohi omputo anabi Muhammadi omaiane nehama; inamuo itu kabolosino Ompu Allah Taala mentaleano. Nikonando inando itu suano kaawu ina motobusaangko ne dhunia ini, taaka lahae-lahaemembalino kamokula robhine, inamuo dua itu, tabeano dotehie itu* “Looking for the Prophet Muhammad will be found anywhere, your mother is like the substitute of the real Prophet Muhammad, the one that is called as the mother is not only the mother that gives us birth to the world, but also all women that have been old must be obeyed.”
- *Omoghondohi malaikati omaiane nehama; isamuo itu kabolosino malaikati mentaleano. Nikonando isando itu suano kaawu kapokakutahando ghule, taaka lahae-lahaefoliuno umuru isamuo dua itu, tabeano dotehie itu* “looking for the angel will be found everywhere, your elder brother/sister is the substitute of the real angel, the one that is called as elder brother or sister is not solely our real elder brother or sister, but also anyone that is older than us must be obeyed”
- *Okoasigho o ne ai maitu bea dapototoane bhe kaasigho ne mie bhari. Nikonando ai maitu suano kaawu ai kapokakutaha ghule, taaka lahae-lahaeniliumu umuru, aimuo itu, tabeano doasiane itu* “the affection and love to the younger brothers or sisters are equalized with the affection and love with plurality or other people. The one that is called as the younger brother or sister is not solely your real younger brother or sister, but also anyone that is under your age, they have also been your younger brother or sister as well, and they must also be affected or loved”.

By virtue of some quotations of the above moral messages, in actuality, the Munanese society has instilled since ages to their young generation to always implement all advices and moral messages in the language of *toba*. Such a deep advice has been found by every child in Muna when being Islamized (*dikatoba*), this in turn is expected to be capable of preventing all of despicable conducts in actuating their life in the world.

## CONCLUSION:

*Katoba* is a traditional ceremony had by Munanese society which becomes the media of character education to children and is the process of Islamization for children. In the lustrous influence of globalization that impedes

the development of local wisdom values, the reflection of values and moral messages contained in the ceremony of *katoba* becomes the best alternative. In *katoba*, it is clear that the substitute of God (Allah) in the world is the father, whereas the substitute of the Prophet Muhammad is the mother. This comprehension has become the core ism of the ceremony of *katoba* because in the tradition of Munanese society admits that serving devotedly to our father and mother is the success key of the world and hereafter because we are away from the despicable deeds.

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