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Cultural values in Acehnese farming-related proverbs
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ABSTRACT

Cultural values play a significant role in society as they determine what actions are best to do. In the Indonesian province of Aceh, there are many farming-related proverbs, or locally called *hadith maja* (HM), which have rich cultural values that have been transferred for generations in the society for centuries. However, research on cultural values in Acehnese farming-related HMs is scant. This study identifies and interprets the cultural values embedded in the Acehnese proverbs. The data sources emanate from documents (books and dictionaries) and fourteen purposively selected respondents in Aceh, collected through document analysis and Focus Group Interview (FGI). The data were then analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques. The results reveal eight cultural values embedded in Acehnese farming-related proverbs (HMs): trustworthiness, consistency, usefulness, patience, diligence, discipline, responsibility, and gratefulness. The cultural values emanating from the proverbs are crucial for shaping people's personal and cultural identities in Aceh. This study concludes that the farming-related proverbs in the Acehnese language have many positive cultural values essential for life that need to be incorporated into the school curricula to make students competent in understanding and using them in and for their lives.

Keywords: Acehnese proverbs; cultural values; farmers' attitude; *hadith maja*

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INTRODUCTION

Proverbs are an integral part of a language. Almost all communities have proverbs (Al-Azzam, 2018), and there is no culture on earth without proverbs (Dwairy, 2015). Proverbs have multiple functions in societies, such as determining what actions are best taken by the cultural members of the society and people's attitudes and actions. They are essential cultural products that reveal and direct a particular culture's values, behavior, and worldview (Richardson et al., 2017). Proverbs are a repository of wisdom that emerges through generations of people who have based their verbal reactions on keen observations of social, political, and cultural events (Billy, 2013). Another definition is proverbs are "an important part of cultural references, figurative, functional and formulaic language; thereby, they lend themselves well to enhancing communicative competence" (Can-Dagkin & Hatipoglu, 2019, p. 57). However, as Ehemso et al. (2012) argue, one needs excellent competence and knowledge such as the kinship system, the oral traditions, values, and attitudes of a people, to appropriate interpretation and use of sayings.

Yusuf and Yusuf (2014) state that Acehnese have rich cultural traditions reflected in language, food, arts, dances, and customs. As part of the language, proverbs play a significant role in helping Acehnese society live harmoniously (Nasir, 2015). Nasir (2015) has researched the values of HMs in the education context and found that the Acehnese proverbs contain values that are useful for teaching people about courtesy, advice, and feeling ashamed for doing nasty things. In the farming context, the

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Cultural values in Acehnese farming-related proverbs

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4 Cultural values in Acehese farming-related proverbs

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Yusuf and Yusuf (2014) state that Acehese have rich cultural traditions reflected in language, food, arts, dances, and customs. As part of the language, proverbs play a significant role in helping Acehese society live harmoniously (Nasir, 2015). Nasir (2015) has researched the values of HMs in the education context and found that the Acehese proverbs contain values that are useful for teaching people about courtesy, advice, and feeling ashamed for doing nasty things. In the farming context, the

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Acehnese language society has many proverbs that have affected Acehnese people's attitudes and actions. An instance of Acehnese farming-related proverb is "*Pangulèe buet ibadat, pangulèe hareukat jak u blang*" (the principal deed is worship and the main work is farming). This proverb has shaped the ways Acehnese people live: worship Allah as the primary worship and work in making a living. It also creates people's confidence that farming is a noble job. However, the meanings of some proverbs, as locally called *hadih maja* (henceforth HM), have been forgotten by the young generations in Aceh today.

As a literary work, HM takes the form of verse and has various rules. Some HMs begin with a couplet, but their messages are not in the couplet but at the end. It is evident in the following HM "*Meunyö hana parang bèk taceumeucah, meunyö hana meuphom bèk tapeugah*" (If you do not have a machete, do not chop. If (you do) not understand, do not speak). This HM contains a couplet in the form of "*Meunyö hana parang bèk taceumeucah*." Although this couplet sentence has a specific meaning, the HM's main message lies in the phrase "*meunyö hana meuphom bèk tapeugah*." This example clearly shows that a proverb guides the life of the people in Aceh (Hidayani et al., 2018), reflect cultural values (Keshavarz & Amro, 2019), and cultural background, and helps explain their historical development, perspectives about life, and attitude (Jegade & Osoba 2019).

Many studies have existed regarding the functions of proverbs in many disciplines. For instance, Mansyur and Suherman (2020), who have researched the Wolio proverbs, found several functions of proverbs, including teaching linguistic knowledge, training the performance of Wolio young people in speaking, instilling values wisdom for young people, controlling young people's behavior to conform to agreed norms, and educating Wolio youths to own and uphold their life principles.

This paper argues that exploring the proverbs related to farming in the Acehnese context is beneficial. The reason is that farming is the oldest profession of most people in Aceh until now, and hence the people's lives are inseparable from the proverbs. Cao et al. (2009) assert that the most successful agricultural programs are designed and planned based on people's attitudes and local social, economic, and environmental conditions. The farmers' knowledge, attitude, and behavior regarding pesticide use, for instance, are essential strategies and action plans to reduce and improve the amount and methods of pesticide use (Sharafi et al., 2018). Therefore, it is beneficial to know the Acehnese proverbs and their values in this field. However, to the best of our knowledge, the research on the Acehnese proverbs that are related to farming and farmers' attitudes is scant.

This study addresses this gap by examining the cultural values in the farming-related proverbs in the Acehnese language. It is appropriate because cultural heritage and ideology exist in the language spoken (Keshavarz & Amro, 2019). As Al-Azzam (2018) emphasizes, one should know the speakers' culture, traditions, and customs to know a language. The verbal code of the culture is the ability of a language with its structural elements to express the cultural specifics of a language-speaking community (Aly, 2010a & Nagel, 2020). Lotman et al. (1978) state that "no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language" (pp. 211-32). In this regard, Iakovleva and Nikolaeva (2016) also assert that any aspect of life experience necessary for culture is reflected in a group of proverbs with the same meaning.

METHOD

This study intends to identify and analyze the cultural values embedded in HMs related farming. In so doing, this study used a qualitative approach and ethnographic strategy. An ethnographic design is relevant because it describes specific cultural situations analytically and deeply.

This study collected data through document analysis and Focus Group Interviews (FGI). A focus group interview is referred to as "a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 2). The documents analyzed include *Peribahasa Aceh* by Hasjim (1977), *Hadih Maja, Filosofi Hidup Orang Aceh* by Norman (2011), *Kamus Aceh Indonesia* by Bakar et al. (1985), and *Bahasa Aceh* by Sulaiman (1979). Meanwhile, the FGI aiming at clarifying the meanings was carried out with respondents purposively selected with several criteria: farmers, native speakers, and masters of the Acehnese language who have good knowledge of HMs comprehensively, aged over 40 years and not senile, and have lived in Aceh for at least the past 20 years. Fourteen respondents participated in this study. We collected data on the proverbs' knowledge through formal or informal interactions with experts in the Acehnese language, literature, sheer perseverance, consultation with elders who have proven knowledge of proverbs, and reading the relevant literature (Billy, 2013).

We were fortunate in collecting and analyzing the data because we have the background knowledge on the proverbs (Can-Daşkın & Hatipoğlu, 2019). During FGI, the participants who knew about farming were invited to express all proverbs related to the farming systems. Their meanings were interpreted by the same participants in their own language, which were then later

translated into English. We also analyzed the values embedded in each of the farming-related proverbs expressed during the FGI. In this way, we grouped several proverbs based on the values inhered, such as trustworthiness, consistency, patience, and many more.

RESULTS

After analyzing twenty-two farming-related HMs expressed by the respondents, this study identified eight cultural values: trustworthiness, consistency, usefulness, patience, diligence, responsibility, discipline, and gratefulness. They are explained as follows.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the result of honesty. By following the HM, farmers in Aceh become trusted individuals. This value reflects in the following HM proverbs:

- (1) *Paléh blang hana jeuet padé, paléh glé hana jeuet lada.* (Damn the rice fields that do not grow rice well. Damn the hill that does not grow pepper).
- (2) *Harab keu pageue, keubeue lam padé. Harab keu bacé, peucikoe paya.* (Hoping to the fence to protect the rice, but it turns out that buffaloes are inside eating rice. Hoping to catch the fish, but the cock fish muddies the swamp).
- (3) *Bèk tameu-adèe di keue manok.* (Do not dry your rice in front of the chicken).

HM (1) illustrates that it is necessary to avoid such a bad attitude. Rice and pepper are two primary commodities in Aceh used in this HM. Rice plants are still planted by farmers in Aceh now, while pepper plants have grown since the Dutch colonial period. They plant rice in rice fields and plant pepper in the hills. Because of rice and pepper's importance for farmers in Aceh, the place to grow these two crops is also significant. Unfortunately, the farmer did not get maximum results after planting rice in the fields, planting pepper on the hill, and maintaining and caring for these plants as much as possible. That is when the farmer said "*Paléh blang hana jeuet padé, paléh glé hana jeuet lada.*" This HM illustrates how rice fields and hills expected to produce rice and pepper are disappointing. The HM then figuratively described those who were expected but were finally disappointed.

HM (2) also illustrated the attitude that needs avoiding. This HM describes the role of *pageue* (fence), *keubeue* (buffalo), and *padé* (rice). The farmers usually fence to protect their rice from being attacked by the buffaloes. However, the fence in the HM represents a person hired to protect one's

belonging, but he then immorally breaks his promise. In other words, the person is untrusted.

The meaning is nearly similar to that of another HM (2) "*bacé peucikoe paya.*" The farmers intend to catch the cork fish, but it runs away and makes muddy water, making them disappointed because of the difficulty of catching other fish.

A similar meaning is conveyed in HM (3): *Bèk tameu-adèe di keue manok* (Do not dry your rice in front of the chicken). This proverb describes *meuadée* (drying) activities and *manok's* (hen) attitude. In Aceh, farmers traditionally dry rice in their house yard or other open places in direct sunlight before being pounded. During the process of drying the rice, some domestic chickens might come to eat the unattended rice. However, figuratively, this proverb contains a suggestion to not rely on an untrusted person.

Consistency

The following Acehnese farming-related proverbs teach us to be consistent in life:

- (4) *Alée di gob, leusong di gob. Gata meutop, peu kareuna?* (Pestle is not ours, mortar is not ours, so why do you get mashed?)
- (5) *Gròb guda, gròb cangguk. Ban meusuruek, ka patah pha.* (When a horse jumps, a frog jumps too. When it falls, it breaks the thigh).
- (6) *Meu-ék ta ayôn ngon ta antôk, dalam bak jôk ji teubit nira.* (If we want to swing and hit, the sapon comes out of the sap).

HM (4) contains a prohibition to interfere with other people's business. It has a similar meaning to an English proverb: "Mind your own business." This HM describes one of the routine activities of farmers, namely *mutée* - the process of pounding *padé* (rice) that has been dried into *breueh* (rice) and or pounding rice into flour. In this process, they use traditional pounders, called *jingki*, *alée*, and *leusong*. *Alée* and *leusong* are two of the spare parts mounted on the *jingki*. This process involves at least two farmers; one in *iku jingki* regulates *alée* movements in pounding rice and the other in *leusong* who regulates the amount of rice in *leusong* and winnow the rice from husks using *jiée*.

In regulating the rice in *leusong* (mortar), the farmer sitting near *leusong* uses her hands to move back rice coming out of the mortar. If it is wrong to do so, one of the worst risks is that the moving *alée* crushes her hands.

HM (4) suggests that we should not take part in other people's business. Everything, "the pestle" and "mortar," belong to others; why should we interfere. This HM teaches farmers to focus and consistently manage their own business without taking care of other people's business unnecessarily.

HM (5) figuratively states: when horses jump, frogs do it too. Horses and frogs have the same jumping habit, but their body size and jump height are different. Just because a horse jumps, frogs want to jump as a horse does. As a result, the frog fell and broke his thigh. Despite using horses and frogs, this HM refers to humans, suggesting that we should live the way we afford, not to follow the lifestyle of others.

For the farmers, the HM (6) informs about doing a job consistently, professionally, and patiently to result in good results. This is, for instance, illustrated in HM (6), which presents *ayôn* (swing) and *antôk* (hit) as part of an effort made to produce sap from palm trees. To get the sap from palm fibers, farmers must choose the right stem and sap bunches. The sap needs to be hit and then swung for about 15 minutes. If the process is rightly done, the palm fruit bunches will produce sap.

Not all farmers are interested in doing this activity because it needs to do repetitively and professionally to produce sap. Besides, it requires much energy so that only strong and experienced farmers can do it. It also requires equipment, namely machetes, knives, and ropes. Additionally, it takes years to wait for palm trees to be ready to harvest. However, the HM (6) teaches farmers to do the job consistently, repetitively, and professionally.

Usefulness

HM also stresses the importance of the beneficial elements in various activities. This is reflected in the following HM proverbs:

- (7) *Jak, jak langai, duek, duek arè, plueng, plueng nyèh.* (Walk like a plow, sit like arè-a traditional rice measuring scale made of bamboo- r like a planner).
- (8) *Bèk tacet buleuen ngon puténg sadeueb, laôt taseuet ngon paleuet jaroe.* (Do not strike the moon with a sickle. Do not dry the ocean with your palm).
- (9) *Bèk tatak ateueng bak padé masak.* (Do not clean the rice field dike when the rice is ready to harvest).

These HMs figuratively stress the importance of doing valuable things. Several traditional agricultural tools exemplify it in Aceh, such as plows and planers. These HM also prohibits putting things out of place and doing fruitless deeds like cleaning the rice field dike during harvest.

These HM also mean that the farmer should not expect and do something impossible to obtain, such as striking the moon with *puténg sadeueb* (sickle) and drying the ocean with palm. *Sadeueb* is a traditional rice cutting tool used by farmers in Aceh. *Sadeueb* is curved and made of iron with a wooden handle of about 20 cm, which accordingly is unable to reach the moon.

Patience

The following farming-related proverbs suggest that we have to be patient in this life:

- (10) *Meunyö hana parang bèk taceumeucah, meunyö hana meuphom bèk tapeugah.* (If you do not have a machete, do not chop. If you do not understand, do not speak).
- (11) *Bijèh bèk leumah kulét, penyakét bèk leumah nyata. Ka sakét bah di dalam, bèk hiram bak ie muka.* (Do not show the skin of seed, do not show up your disease. If you feel hurt, let it be inside. Do not show your pain through your face).

The HM (10) means that if no ability, one should not have many desires to do things. Do not be helpless; be patient. The HM (11) figuratively means that one should not show it in his eyes if he feels hurt. One should be patient because of scarce resources for living. Spiritual beliefs one embraces also strengthen his patience. The Acehese people are encouraged to live patiently because this way of living will end with a happy life, as in the well-known proverb, "*Ureueng saba luwah lampôh* (patient persons have big gardens). The purpose of this HM is that Allah pities a patient person. The patient people always get happiness in the world and the hereafter. The mention of "big garden" in the proverb means open-hearted.

Diligence

English has a famous proverb, "No pain, no gain," which is similar to the following Acehese proverbs:

- (12) *Meukeusut seunang peugèt rumoh, meunafsu méhmoh meukawén dua, meunafsu kaya jak ceumatok, meunabsu krèk-krok jak meuniaga.* (If you want to be happy, build a house. If you want hassles, marry two wives. If you want to be rich, farm diligently. If you want to be busy, go on business).
- (13) *Keubeue beumeureugoh, sagoe umong beumeulampôh, breuh bu bèk putôh, rumoh tangga bek riyôh.* (Buffalo must be fat, the rice field must be ready to plant. Do not run out of rice; don't be idle in the family).
- (14) *Sabé ta-ék glé tatrôn palôh, sabé tamita sabé tapajôh.* (We go to the farm together, we go down a cliff together; we work together, we eat together).

HM (12) contains a consequence for everything we do in life. It reminds us that happiness will be gain if we build a house, possible rich we reach if we do farming, hassle if one gets marry more than one wife, and business when doing a business.

The HM (13) suggests that farmers earn a living and work diligently to fulfill their daily needs. Specifically, HM (13) further explains how to reach success in farming involving four essentials. The first one is *keubeue beumeureugoh* (buffalo must be fat), which means that the buffalo, an animal used by traditional farmers in Aceh to plow fields, needs to provide enough healthy food.

HM (13) mentions that the second essential to have happiness is *sagoe umong beumeulampôh* (the rice field must be ready to plant). Some farmers deliberately make a big mound on the corner of their rice field. They call this part *côt*. *Côt* is where to stack *nibai* - a group of rice on the stems. It is also used as a place to dry the rice grains.

Apart from being a place for stacking *nibai* and threshing rice grains, *côt* is also used as a place where to build *ranggang blang* - a walled hut with a size of about 1.5 to 3m built in the rice field area. *Ranggang blang* is used to rest after the farmers have worked for several hours in the fields. *Ranggang blang* is where farmers install their swings and put their babies to sleep for those who have babies. In the pre-harvest rice season, *ranggang blang* functions as a center for bird pest control that wants to eat rice.

Another function of *côt* is as a *lampôh* (garden). In addition to handling rice in *umong* (paddy fields), farmers also use *côt* as a place to grow vegetables such as pumpkin, long beans, *gambas*, tomatoes, and chilies. The other part of the paddy field, also used as a garden, is the rice field bund, which farmers do not pass. After working from morning to noon, they harvest vegetables grown at this location and then take them home to cook for lunch. That is, farmers in Aceh, while growing rice, are also diligent in using even one meter of land to grow vegetables for their own consumption.

As stated in HM (13), the third condition for success in life is *breuh bu bek putôh* (Do not run out of rice). *Breuh* is rice that has been brushed through the milling process, while *bu* is the cooked rice and is ready to eat. For successful farming, farmers must ensure the availability of *breuh* and *bu* in their households. That is because *bu* is the staple food of farmers in Aceh. The meaning of the word "*breuh bu*" here includes side dishes eaten with *bu*, including vegetables harvested from *côt* earlier. So, what is meant here is the basic needs to stay healthy, strong, and do farming.

As mentioned in HM (13), the fourth condition for success in farming is *rumoh tangga bek riyôh* (Do not argue or quarrel in the family). The purpose of this statement is that husband, wife, and children stay well and solid to support each other and jointly succeed in agricultural activities. The four conditions mentioned in HM (13) are essential for the success of a farmer. Only diligent farmers can fulfill these four essentials. That means

only diligent farmers are successful in their farming business. Even without meeting these essentials, people in Aceh cannot farm. However, most Acehnese people are farmers.

Another HM (14) suggests that doing things together is necessary for reaching happiness in a family. The wife and husband need to work together to do chores and work outside.

Discipline

A famous proverb in English reads, "Time is money." Farming-related proverbs in Aceh also teach people, including farmers, to manage their time properly and be disciplined in life. This is in accordance with the following HM proverbs:

(15) *Teulah sithôn ureueng meugoe, teulah siuroe ureueng meurusa*. (One year regret for farmers, one day regret for deer hunters).

(16) *Sira tajak-jak tapluek situek, sira taduek-duek tajob tima*. (While walking, we peel an upih, while sitting, we sew it for a bucket).

These HMs mean that all things we do must always be right on target. All commands must be obeyed and disciplined too. Do not waste time. Use time wisely to get the best results.

Specifically, HM (15) reminded farmers not to waste time because this attitude would lead to regret and loss. The farmers may regret for a year because they do not use the time well in farming. A year loss for farmers is due to farming in an area where there is no irrigation. As such, they can only do farming once a year with rainwater. The English proverb suggesting the same thing reads, "Opportunity seldom knocks twice."

Prompts to make good use of time are also likened to deer hunting activities carried out by farmers in the forest. This activity only takes a day, and if not disciplined, they will regret it all day. The regrets of the rice farmers and the deer hunters were expressed in the words "*Ta nging di gob padè jipuwoe, ta ngiang bak jaroe tijik sie rusa*" (We see other farmers bring rice home, we see them carrying deer meat in his hand). To avoid feeling regret, several HMs encouraged farmers to be disciplined and use their time well.

The examples of discipline and efficient use of time are described in HM (16). This HM even directed farmers to be able to do two beneficial activities at once. This proverb (16) describes peeling the areca leaf sheath while sitting and sewing a bucket while walking. A bucket is a tool used by farmers to draw water from ground wells. Traditional farmers make buckets from the areca leaf sheath. Farmers can easily obtain these raw materials in gardens that they usually pass by every day. While passing through the garden, farmers usually pick up the areca leaf sheath. While resting

at home, they make the areca leaf sheath into a bucket. This is an example of the attitude of Aceh's farmers in utilizing time as directed in HM.

Responsibility

Acehnese farming-related proverbs also teach people to be responsible in their daily life. Some of the following HM proverbs have become guidelines for farmer.

- (17) *Gob pajôh boh panah, geutanyoe meuligan g'utah.* (Someone else ate the jackfruit, we are the ones stuck on the p.).
- (18) *Aneuk nyang hana tuah: tabri rumoh jipeugèt keu rangkang, tabri lampôh jipeugèt keu blang, tabri inong jipeugèt keu jalang.* (Children who have no luck: (we) give him a house, he made it as a hut, (we) give him a garden, he made it as a rice field, (we) give him a wife, he treats her like a bitch).
- (19) *Aseè glé pajôh jagông, aseè gampông keunong geulawa.* (Coyotes eat corn, but village dogs get the hit).

These proverbs assert that farmers need to take responsibility for their deeds. HM (17) figuratively describes that one unexpectedly receives the bad effects of one else's deeds. Jackfruit is very popular with the people of Aceh. They get used to processing jackfruit into various food snacks. However, the part of jackfruit that makes farmers angry is the sticky sap that may stick to one's body parts. Therefore, the HM is used to represent an irresponsible attitude.

A similar meaning is also apparent in HM (19). Figuratively, this proverb illustrates the irresponsible attitude of a person that makes an innocent person blamed. The village dog in this context represents an innocent person, and a coyote in this HM refers to a person who committed a bad thing.

HM (18) also represents irresponsible work. The proverb presents the misuse of valuable things or people. However, all these proverbs apply to everyone, not only to farmers.

Gratefulness

The following farming-related HMs also illustrate the value of gratefulness:

- (20) *Hana guna u na guna teubèe, hana guna jinoe na guna dileè.* (When sometimes a coconut is not useful, sugarcane is. When something is not used now, it was used once).
- (21) *Tapula bugak di ateueh beunteung, bugak maté beunteung pi patah. Tapula guna bak aneuk ureueng, bak aneuk bajeueng guna han leumah.* (Planting bugak on the fence, the bugak will die, the fence will

break. Providing services for people's children, but services for adultery child will not be remembered).

- (22) *Hana leumah lé buet langai, ka leumah buet creueh.* (The work of langai, a traditional cultivating tool used in Aceh, has been forgotten, but the recent work of ke has been not).
- (23) *Jirhom geutanyoe deungon bajoe, tarhom jih ngon nuga. Jirhom geutanyoe deungon tumpoe, tarhom jih ngon bada.* (He throws us with a wedge, we throw him with a wooden hammer. He throws us with tumpoe-a traditional cake in Aceh, we throw him with fried bananas).

These HMs suggest how we should respond to one's services and behavior on us. We are suggested not to forget other people's good service for us. In HM (20), we are suggested not to forget someone who has done a favor for us. HM (20) advises that our kindness to others will surely be remembered by a good person, even though a wrong person might forget it.

HM (21) uses langai and creueh as two traditional plows used in traditional farming in Aceh, but they have different functions. Farmers at first use langai to plow the soil in the rice field and then use creueh. Therefore, one should not forget the work of langai. It suggests that we should not forget the person who has supported us at the beginning of our journey to success.

Suggestion to respect and thank others is also evident in HM (22). It describes that evil deeds will indeed receive punishment, and good deeds will receive rewards. Its meaning is like that of the stick and carrot proverb. Bajoe and nuga are wooden tools used by carpenters in Aceh. Bajoe and nuga in HM (22) represent evil deeds, while tumpoe and bada represent good deeds in the Acehnese language. Tumpoe is made from fried glutinous rice flour, while bada is fried banana. Tumpoe is only served at a particular ceremony, while bada is a cake sold daily in Aceh.

DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that many values are embedded in the farming-related proverbs in the Acehnese language, as illustrated in HMs. They include trustworthiness, usefulness, patience, diligence, consistency, discipline, responsibility, and gratefulness. The proverbs have supported the forming of Acehnese people's characters, such as (1) reactive, (2) militant, (3) optimistic, (4) consistent, and (5) loyal, as found in Harun's (2008) research findings. This study's results have extended Harun et al.'s (2015) research findings that Acehnese HMs consist of seven basic principles and

23 characteristics of Acehese people's work values ethics relevant to learning materials in character education. Nevertheless, even though the research findings are farming-related proverbs, the findings share some cultural values of proverbs analyzed by Mansyur and Suherman (2020) and Nasir (2015), who found that the Acehese proverbs contain values that are useful for teaching people about courtesy, advice, and feeling ashamed for doing bad things.

This finding aligns with Michael (2014), who asserts that proverbs are useful for instruction or advice. Khalsiah et al. (2018) report that HM contains a philosophical element used as advice or explanation and warning as a guide in life. Nasir (2015) also reports that people learn values, etiquette, prohibitions, and other aspects of life that they must know through proverbs as part of their social identity.

Especially for the prohibitions, most HM passages contain figurative language. This is because Acehese people embrace oral tradition and speak indirectly. In fact, for the people of Aceh, the prohibitions with figurative language are more imprinted than direct prohibitions. The figurative language prohibition is also believed to be able to protect the dignity of a person who is prohibited because the person and his activities are not mentioned directly. People who do not understand the customary language also do not understand what the speaker is saying. This protects the dignity of the prohibited person even more. An example of an HM with a figurative meaning is "Bèk tatak tanda bak kayèe udeb" (Do not put a mark on the living plant). This HM contains a prohibition on putting a mark on a living plant. However, this passage's true meaning is never to promise or trust people who are not trusted. Making a promise or giving trust to them is like putting a mark on a living plant. The promise or trust will change as the plant's mark also changes due to the change in the living plant.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the analysis of the farming-related proverbs in the Acehese language has brought many positive cultural values that are crucial in shaping people's characters in Aceh. Overall, they contain local knowledge on advice and prohibitions, even though some have forgotten them in present days. The proverbs were created by intelligent and wise people and passed for generations for life guidelines. Therefore, HMs need to be explored and maintained by incorporating them into school curriculums, such as for local content curriculum.

However, this study is limited to the cultural values embedded in the Acehese farming-related proverbs in Indonesia. Further research on proverbs is necessary to do in order to excavate the essential

values embedded. Other topics related to proverbs in the Acehese are worth exploring, such as the use of HMs to identify and interpret the attitudes of other professions.

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