An Anthropological Study of Folklore in Gilan Province with a focus on Lullabies

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Abstract: Folklore is the body of expressive culture, including tales, music, dance, legends, oral history, proverbs and Lullabies. Study about lullabies as part of Folklore is relatively new science, however collection of its material is a very difficult job because this treasure mostly collected and obtained from the memory of illiterate and uneducated people. It needs a great effort and stability for educated people of a nation to do so since if one is careless and ignorant, there will be sometimes a fear to forget a major part of folklore. Accordingly, regarding the importance of 'the study of folklore of Gilan province with the focus on Lullabies 'the researcher conducted this project with the same title. The Aims and objectives of this paper is To get data about the different form of Gilanian Lullabies and analysis them. The method in this paper is quality and also action research and tools of data collection is documental, Informal interviews and participant observations. It is mention in the theoretical framework the present research for its analysis of data, are based on, Structural Functionalism School. And Symbolic-Interpretive Anthropology Approach.

Keywords: Anthropology, Folklore, Gilan Province, Lullaby.

Introduction

Folklore or popular culture is one of the components of culture. All known cultures in the world whether in primitive societies and villages benefited from simple and poor technology and tools and whether in advanced industrial societies of both sophisticated technology and powerful tools all are eligible to have popular culture as they apply its Different forms. Folklore is a component of human knowledge and traditions of his social heritage. Some thinkers define oral literature as folklore and believe that popular culture itself is related to literary, artistic and cultural issues. Others believe that all customs, traditions, rituals and celebrations, arts and literature refer to popular culture. Folklore is the body of expressive culture, including tales, music, dance, legends, oral history, proverbs and Lullabies. Lullabies are elements of popular culture having specific cultural meanings and significance. These cultural elements have existed for a long period in different nations, cultures and civilization. The lullables constitute an effective and a significant medium for a meaningful. Determining the exact origins of the primary lullabies as communication whit children part of popular culture is a challenging job because of its verbal characteristic. But to be sure, there are lullabies among all nations and perhaps it can be said that they are considered as the world's first musical works. Themes and the semantic structure of lullabies reflect the internal feelings and wishes of individuals and society.

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Study about lullabies as part of Folklore is relatively new science, however collection of its material is a very difficult job because this treasure mostly collected and obtained from the memory of illiterate and uneducated people. It needs a great effort and stability for educated people of a nation to do so since if one is careless and ignorant, there will be sometimes a fear to forget a major part of folklore. Accordingly, regarding the importance of 'the study of folklore of Gilan province 'the researcher conducted this project with the same title.

Problem Statement

Repeatability and reliability is the main feature of folklore and its transmission to future generations. Therefore, the folklore of each region can be a set of behaviors, speeches, customs and habits that the people of the region have inherited from their ancestors and forefathers. These habits may have been started from the beginning of humanity or at least belonged to very ancient eras. Generally, folklore can be considered as the spiritual and ethnic heritage of a nation. In fact, it is a folklore which gives meaning to their lives greatly and if the folklore is omitted from a nation, a large part of the national identity will be lost. Although, folklore makes distinctions between ethnicities and nationalities on one hand, but, a large percentage of their folklores is shared and rooted in their infrastructure on the other hand, if one looks at the tribal folklore in a region or in a country. For example, uniform dialects attires, music, folk songs and Lullabies of various people is a factor to create a bond of friendship to prevent enmity and war between them.

Although, Iran is very rich regarding the folklore sources, but many of the traditions had been forgotten and changed due to modernity and structural changes which have taken place quickly in the community. If no project and program are conducted to gather them, many of these national treasures will be lost soon. This is one of the concerns and problems that is the center of thinking in the mind of the researcher. It is the major issue in this paper.

Therefore, the task is to identify, to compile and to collect different Iranian ethnic folklores to encourage and develop positive functions and cohesive effects in the community to prevent it from being forgotten.

Justification and Significance of Study

In the contemporary society we are constantly struggling to go back to our own roots and to maintain our ethnic identities. "Who am I?' is a question that has been scrutinized by us in diverse forms in our lives. As a matter of fact, we are living in such an unpredictable position where we are enforced to rethink, redefine and elucidate our identities to different social institutions. Many communities have been persistently debating on the concept of ethnic cleansing and ethnic assertion but when we are asked about the elements that constitute this very ethnicity, we do not have answer to give. Folklore studies may facilitate us to discover the roots of distinctive communities, the past, the commonality of varied cultures and of course our ethnic identities. By studying the various aspects of folklore and Gilan folklore includes one can observe the evolution of the culture with the times, traditional aspects of culture and the changes that have occurred from the past till the present and the possible reasons for such changes. One gets to study the influence of the various socio-economic-religious-culturalpolitical and environmental factors that continue to mold the life of a community through the passage of the time .the study about Gilan folklore will be a good contribution to the disciplines of cultural anthropology, sociology and other social sciences at this juncture it is very appropriate to record their folklore.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

- To get data about the different form of Gilanian Lullabies
- To understand and analyze the relation between folklore and everyday life.
- Functionalism Symbolic analysis of Gilanian Lullabies

Methodological Considerations

The method in this paper is quality and also action research and tools of data collection is documental, Informal interviews and participant observations.

Location of the Study

Gilan Province

Located in the north of Iran, stretching between the Alborz and Talesh Mountain Ranges. According to the latest divisions of the country in the year 1996, the townships of the province are: Astara, Astaneh Ashrafieh, Bandar Anzali, Rasht, Roodbar, Roodsar, Somiehsara, Fooman, Lahijan, Langerood, Talesh and Shaft. Rasht is the provincial capital. Gilan province, shares borders with the provinces of Ardabil on the west, Mazandaran on the east, Zanjan to the south and the Caspian Sea and the Republic of Azerbaijan to the north. In the year 2011, this province had a population of 2.481 million (http://www.orient-travel-pars.com).

Theoretical Framework

It is mention in the theoretical framework the present research for its analysis of data, are based on:

- i. Structural Functionalism School.
- ii. Symbolic-Interpretive Anthropology Approach.

Structural Functionalism

In the social sciences specifically sociology and socio-cultural anthropology, functionalism also functional analysis, is a sociological philosophy that originally attempted to explain social institutions as collective means to fill individual biological needs. Later it came to focus on the ways social institutions fill social needs, especially social solidarity. Functionalism is associated with Emile Durkheim and more recently with Talcott Parsons (Marshall, 1994: 190). Since functional analysis studies the contributions made by socio-cultural phenomena to the sociocultural systems of which they are a part many functionalists argue that social institutions are functionally integrated to form a stable system and that a change in one institution will precipitate a change in other institutions; expressed by Durkheim and others as an organic analogy. Functionalism, originating as an alternative to historical explanations, was one of the first twentieth century anthropological theories, until it was superseded by structural-functional analysis or structural-functionalism. Structural-functionalism takes the view that society consists of parts (e.g. police, hospitals, schools, and farms), each of which have their own functions and work together to promote social stability. Structural-functionalism was the dominant perspective of cultural anthropologists and rural sociologists between World War II and the Vietnam War. Along with conflict theory and interactions functionalism is one of the three major sociological traditions.

Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology Approach

The main method that is used in symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology is participated observation which was coined by Malinowski, who is the key figure for functionalism. It is generally believed by anthropologists today that field work is very important in anthropology and studying a culture and this is especially true in Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology.

The main reason for this is the fact that symbols mean different things to different cultures and can also be interpreted differently by different people within one culture. Symbolic and Interpretive anthropology uses many ideas and concepts from anthropological fields that were developed before this concept came about. It looks at things from an emic perspective, meaning Symbolic and Interpretive anthropologists interpret the symbols in the context of the culture they are currently studying, as opposed to applying it to their own culture or another culture which would be ethic (Mc. Granahan, 2010).

Comparisons from culture to culture are often made but this is generally after the anthropologist believes that they fully understand the ideas that they are studying. Symbolic and Interpretive anthropologists use cultural hermeneutics when attempting to determine what a symbol means. Hermeneutics is "the study of meaning, especially in literary texts, applied by interpretive and postmodern anthropologists to the study of culture". Symbolic and Interpretive anthropologists also use the method of field work in order to absorb the culture that they are studying as much as possible. One concept that is specific to Symbolic and Interpretive anthropology is" thick description", a term coined by Clifford Geertz, which is "interpretive culture as text". Geertz "developed his own semiotic perspective on interpretive anthropology" (Erickson, and Murphy:2008) Semiotic meaning "pertaining to the relationship between symbols and what they represent" Rituals are also very important within the field of Symbolic and Interpretive anthropology, for example Turner's Symbolic Anthropology (Mc. Granahan, 2010).

Definition of Lullaby

A lullaby or cradle-song, also spelled *cradle song*, is a soothing song or piece of music, usually played or sung to children or adults. The purposes of lullabies vary. In some societies they are used to pass down cultural knowledge or tradition. In addition, lullabies are often used for the developing of communication skills, indication of emotional intent, maintenance of infants' undivided attention, modulation of infants' arousal, and regulation of behavior (Doja, 2014). Perhaps one of the most important uses of lullabies is as a sleep aid for infants. As a result, the music is often simple and repetitive. Lullabies can be found in many countries, and have existed since ancient times (Opie, 1997).

Characteristics

Lullabies tend to share exaggerated melodic tendencies, including simple pitch contours, large pitch ranges, and generally higher pitch. These clarify and convey heightened emotions, usually of love or affection. When there is harmony, infants almost always prefer consonant intervals over dissonant intervals. Furthermore, if there is a sequence of dissonant intervals in a song, an infant will usually lose interest and it becomes very difficult to regain its attention (Trainor, 2002).

To reflect this, most lullables contain primarily consonant intervals. Tonally, most lullables are simple, often merely alternating tonic and dominant harmonies. In addition to pitch tendencies, lullables share several structural similarities. The most frequent tendencies are intermittent repetitions and long pauses between sections. This dilutes the rate of material and appeals to infants' slower capacity for processing music. Rhythmically, there are shared patterns. Lullables are usually in triple meter or 6/8 time, giving them a "characteristic swinging or rocking motion." This mimics the movement a baby experiences in the womb as a mother moves. In addition, infants' preference for rhythm shares a strong connection with what they hear when they are bounced, and even their own body movements (Pouthas, 1996). The tempos of lullables tend to be generally slow, and the utterances are short. Again, this aids in the infant's processing of the song.

Lullabies almost never have instrumental accompaniments. Infants have shown a strong preference for unaccompanied lullabies over accompanied lullabies (Ilari and Sundara, 2009). Again, this appeals to infants' more limited ability to process information. Lullabies are often used for their soothing nature, even for non-infants. One study found lullabies to be the most successful type of music or sound for relieving stress and improving the overall psychological health of pregnant women. These characteristics tend to be consistent across cultures. It was found that adults of various cultural backgrounds could recognize and identify lullabies without knowing the cultural context of the song. Infants have shown a strong preferences for songs with these qualities (Trainor, 1996).

Lalaee (Lullabies) of Gilan Province and their Symbols

Lullabies are elements of popular culture having specific cultural meanings and significance. These cultural elements have existed for a long period in different nations, cultures and civilization. The lullabies constitute an effective and a significant medium for a meaningful. Determining the exact origins of the primary lullabies as communication whit children part of popular culture is a challenging job because of its verbal characteristic. But to be sure, there are lullabies among all nations and perhaps it can be said that they are considered as the world's first musical works. Themes and the semantic structure of lullabies reflect the internal feelings and wishes of individuals and society. In Gilan, Lullabies represent seven things:

1. Mother's Image

Lullabies are considered as the most important popular forms in which the role of women as mothers is emphasized more than any other issue. The main reason for this may be found in the primary means of communication and functions of lullabies regarding the relation of mothers with children. These mothers have the most important relationship with their children in their parenting role and responsibility through their role in the process enculturation of children. Therefore, the language of the lullabies is more motherly and feminine oriented. According to the documents, the themes of lullabies with regards to the role of women as mothers in families and society can be classified in the following components and propositions:

2. Role of care of Children and enculturation

One of the important roles of women in family and society is taking care of the children. In other words, the mission of training the next generation is the primary responsibility of the mothers. Mothers encourage children to reach perfection. In other words, based on the traditional ideology child care and household chores were the responsibilities of women in general, read winning was the responsibility of the men. According to such a natural division of labor, household chores to be done by women also got associated and linked whit feminist. House hold chores were considered to be easier and convenient indoor activity. On the other hand, the outdoor activities were considered to be difficult and more challenging. In this sense lullabies as an element of popular culture is rich in contrast themes. The lullabies play a dual role in reflecting the features of division of labor and relationship in the family.

On one hand, the lullabies help to reproduce the relationship in the family. On the other hand, women were criticized for expressing their feelings, desires and their beliefs about relationship. It sounds quite natural that a woman would certainly have limitations in frank expression of her feeling. This fact is true among all Iranian peoples, regardless of their cultural peculiarities. Hence there is no difference between different parts of Iran. It is possible to come across difference in expression in local dialects in different regions.

Lala Lala, my cradle, Lala Lala

My house, I'm out, Lala Lala,

You take rest and sleep

I'm taking care of you, Lala

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"I'm taking care of you" signifies the protecting role of a mother for her child.
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I say lullaby to help you sleep, I'm waiting for the moon to disappear, I have sacrificed myself as you grew up. *** To help you grew up and stand on your own, I have tolerate of all pains, Lala Take rest and sleep at your home, My dear lamb in your cradle, Only the morning star and me, Taking care of you, In this dark night, I'm taking care of you.

3. Women's Need for Having Child

The need for having a second child is the central theme in some of these lullabies. It seems that the need for having child reflects some significant cultural considerations. Women, giving birth to children are the most important expectation of the Iranian society, Childbearing and having child is looked upon as a guarantee for the future security of the women in the Iranian society. In the past societies, men had access to power due to having access to:

- i. "economic and material capitals" in terms of material ownership;
- ii. "Social capitals" in terms of participating in the public arena and having more communication;
- iii. "Symbolic capital" due to social character;
- iv. "Political capital" with potential for having power opportunities.

However, apart from those exceptional women of special classes, women have not accessed to such capitals, powers, security, hope by creating such opportunities and reciting these lullabies. *"My dear child, I taste life with you,*

I bear hundreds of difficulties and pains only for you,

Hopefully, to be comfortable and peaceful under your shadow in the future" Mother wants her child to give her the gift of peace in future, to repay her sacrifices. ***

"Lala my dear, my eye sight, In my old age and bad days, You'll be my walking stick." ***

Mother looks at her child as a support for her coming old days. "When you grow up as a strong youth, Don't forget me."

4. Sacrificial Role of Mother

One of the themes shows the segregation of the roles of women and men in the domain of child rearing and care of children. This role is so important and it is synonymous with self-sacrifice in the folk culture. Mothers sacrifice themselves in the entire process of child bearing, child birth, child rearing and all responsibilities their relation with children and their related to care of children. This results in a peculiar bond between the mother and the child .the society expects the mothers to be sacrificed in this role. the society expects the mother to transfer and inculcate the same ideology in her children as well the scarified role of women which is apparently normal and natural ,is also subjected to challenging and difficult social conditions. Women and mothers facing challenging and difficult situations express themselves by using specific phrases

such as being sacrificed tolerating pains this expression is considered to be normal under the challenging social conditions.

In different social conditions, expressing feelings and desires of children becomes significant and fore grounded. In other words, this literature and associated semantic expression is deep rooted in the living experiences of women in difficult social conditions. In such a condition, being sacrificial for a child is something normal, natural and desirable according to the cultural values and norms.

My dear child, I say lullaby for you,

I wish God gives all your pains to me, Lalai,

Mother wishes that all troubles, diseases and pains of her child should be given to her by god, Her child should be healthy and happy.

I love you only and I'll sacrifice myself only for you, My dearest and nearest I want to sacrifice all my belongings to see you safe, ***

To see you look healthy, I love watching your beautiful eyes.

5. Wishful Role of Mother for Children

In this class of lullabies, a great variety of mothers wish to see growing up of their children, healthy, getting marriage and giving birth to children. The mother's desire for children's material and spiritual progress are represented. In this lullabies however, among all these aspirations and wishes, much of lullabies represent mother's desire for her devoted son's Marriage. Putting emphasis on marriage and marital life in the frame of lullabies and expressing mother's wishes show the importance of the family canon and structure in the context of Iranian culture. In my opinion Family is undoubtedly one of the most important institutions in the Iranian society and the developments in this area represent a profound change in cultural layers of society. Child's maturity and independence in Iranian culture is defined by his/her marriage. In fact, marriage is an opportunity for an individual to consolidate his/her position in the family system and among the relatives.

Get married, enjoy life and travel,

Keep your hands around my neck,

Ride your horse strongly like other youths,

I have a very beautiful flower which I did not smell,

As Iam afraid I'll be tired of that.

6. Mother's Communication of suppressed feeling to her Children

Monologue (soliloquy) of mother with her child is one of the most important themes presented by the mother in the lullabies. The analysis of this theme contains several important aspects. Regardless of the positive functions of dialogue which helps the mother to get relief from mental stress, the themes of lullabies in monologues express the suppressed feeling of the mother. These lullabies are the unwritten and oral expression of mother's suppressed feeling which she desired to convey to her children. These suppressed feeling are related to mothers loneliness. Perhaps, the main reason of opening such suppressed feeling in front of children can be attributed to the fact that in Iranian family, the woman has no scope for free dialogue and communication with members in the family. Hence, the gender disparity in the family leads to a situation where the woman takes an opportunity to unilaterally express her suppressed feelings in front of her children.

In the past, in Iranian society, inter spouse communication in front of elders was not encouraged in the family. Thus, the mothers relieved their mental stress and tension by communicating their suppressed feelings to their children, through lullabies. In the past, husband's remarriage was a serious concern for the wife, in Iranian society. The young mothers were disturbed by the idea that their husband would re-marry another woman. This anxiety resulted in the dependency of the mothers on their sons. In fact, the mothers had a sense of security through their sons. This issue related to husband's remarriage was so much sensitive that the women had a fear that if they raise this issue in the family it would result in their exclusion from the family. Hence, communication with children through lullabies were appropriate opportunities and spaces for the mothers to express their Suppressed feelings. The theme of the following lullaby refers to a mother's attempt to get relief from mental stress by communicating her concerns with her children (quoted from mahbano mohseni, a gilani lady teacher).

Lalalala cumin flower, why don't you sleep?

Lalalala poppy flowers, God bless your Dad;

Your father wants to remarry and your mother will die of grief.

Mother is telling her Secret desire to her teen son and sharing her grief of stress and sadness.

7. Representation of Sister's Maternal Role

One of the themes reflected in lullabies is the mother's role as a sister. This theme is important in many aspects. In terms of socialization, today's sisters are future mothers. Hence, they are expected to learn the mother's role in the family so that they would be able to fulfill the social expectations related to housekeeping, cooking, child rearing and child care. If they do not fulfill the expectations, their parents will be blamed for negligence. The gender based responsibilities are cha channelized at a very early stage at family level. Female individuals are taught to be responsible for taking care of children. Accordingly, female Individual has to prepare for an important role as mothers, In the future. Hence, the daughters were a helpful company of the mothers and joined them even in singing of lullabies. Similarly, the daughters played an important role in helping their mothers in child care. In this way the sisters accepted a performed the role of mothers. It can be said that in the process of socialization the mothers taught the daughters the most boundary line between these two roles was extremely thin and these two roles got intermingled with each other's.

Brother brings pear tree Throw them down by a stick, brother

Our uncle's wife will take them, brother Would pack them, brother

That's a pomegranate pack, brother

Agha Sheikh Mahdi, brother

What did you purchase, brother?

Pharmacy, brother

Lighted bicycle, brother

Take a cup of oil, brother

I wish God sacrifice your sister for your dear brother.

Not only the mother is expected to sacrifice for the son, but even the sister is expected to sacrifice for the brother.

Some of Gilani Lullabies

Mother, Mother, why did you force me to marry in exile? Why did you marry me to an unfair husband? If I live longer, I'll come to serve you. Even if I die, I want you to be healthy. Mother, Mother, why did you marry me to a Taleshi (one of Gilani tribe) husband? Why did you marry me to a Galeshi (one of Gilani tribe) man? Mother, Mother, Why am I confused? Why am I always smiling and crying? | International Journal of Social Sciences, 5(4), 75-85 | 2015

I'm smiling for the friend and foe, I'm crying for my life story. I have tied you calotte (a kind of cap). I'm my father's daughter, isn't it? Why did you force me to marry an old man? Did you mean I didn't deserve a young one?

Mother calms down her child with these lullabies. In addition, she tries to become relaxed with the outlet of lullabies. These couplets are associated with a bit of grief and sadness tracing the mothers' very old tales. These couplets originate from experiences of a goal after her marriage. The mother complains about the decisions taken by her parents in relative to her marriage. The mother narrate experience and life story through the lullaby. She indicates her dissatisfaction about being homesick because her marriage took her away from her childhood home. She asks her parents the reason for marrying her with an old man.

In the olden days, (Lords) in the village were powerful and dominant. They suppressed the poor people. These Lords had many wives, as if it was their status symbol. Despite already having many wives, if any old (master) 'liked' a very young girl, then he would have a desire to win her at any cost. The parents of such a young girl were pressurized and tormented by such master. As the presence became un-tolerable, the parents would give up and would force their young daughter to marry an old man in this way the young girl was forced to sacrifice herself for the sake of her family. After giving birth to a child, she expresses her grief in the form of couplets of lullabies she sings whole she is besides the cradle of her child.

Alai, Lai, Lai, sleep dear baby,

My dear little brother sleeps peacefully, Alai, Lai, Lai, I put you in the cradle, Alai, Lai, Lai, I was broken when I was young, Alai, Lai, Lai, Lai, you are not honest and loyal with me, *My dear brother, whom you gave me?* How long we have to sit up at night, To find a light on the sea shore, I wish God turned light to me. I wish patience for all even for disbelieving, Long distance and long waiting is so bad. The separation of mother and child is so bad. Why you're so fickle (giddy-Changeable), my dear child? Why were you separated from your mother, my dear child? I ask the wind to send my message to Langrood (the name of city in gilan). To send my message to my Muhammad, Tell him your mother died of your unfaithfulness, Alai, Lai Lai Lai now sleeps my dear baby, Alai, Lai Lai, now sleeps my red and white flower. You did my little red and white flower harm and damage.

In this lullaby a mother is sitting by her baby's cradle, singing with grief stricken words from the bottom of her heart, This Lullaby is a mode of expression of mother's feelings. Contemplating her agony after her child goes away from her family after his marriage. In this Lullaby, Mother is lamenting about homesickness, loneliness, and vein hope. The mother is saying: dying is better than waiting. Mother is troubled by her child's unfaithfulness and separation. She asks God to grant her the light. She does not wish such a destiny even for disbelievers. The mother says that she would ask the wind to send her message to Langrood land and tell her son "your mother died due to your unfaithfulness". The mother sacrificed herself for her son to make him successful and expected him to be her support and walking stick when she is weak and old. When her son married and moved away from the family did not show compassion for the family. Mother is under such circumstances; in this lullaby the mother contemplates her agony, after her child goes away from the family, after his marriage.

Functions of Lullabies

More recent research has shown that lullabies sung live can have beneficial effects on physiological functioning and development in premature infants. The live element of a slow, repetitive entrained rhythm can regulate sucking behavior. Infants have a natural tendency to entrain to the sounds that surround them. Beat perception begins during fetal development in the womb and infants are born with an innate musical preference. The element of live breathing sounds can regulate infant heart rate, quiet-alert states, and sleep. Live lullabies can also enhance parent-child bonding, thus decreasing parental stress associated with the intensive care. In short, live lullabies sung by music therapists induce relaxation, rest, comfort, and optimal growth and development. (Loewy and Stewart, 2013).

Totally the functions of lullabies have always been tension relieving, granting relaxation and support with feeling of security for the children as well as parents. The repetition of the pleasant rhythms used in lullabies provides relaxation and a sound sleep to the children. Moreover, the lullabies provide a unique opportunity for mothers to get relief from agony, pains, sufferings and wishes. This significantly reduced the psychological presences, stress and tensions. The lullabies have a useful medium for the child to learn the language in a natural way.

Conclusion

Lullabies are elements of popular culture having specific cultural meanings and significance. These cultural elements have existed for a long period in different nations, cultures and civilization. The lullabies constitute an effective and a significant medium for a meaningful. Determining the exact origins of the primary lullabies as communication whit children part of popular culture is a challenging job because of its verbal characteristic. In Gilan, Lullabies represent seven things:

Mother's Image- Role of care of Children and enculturation -Women's Need for Having Child-Sacrificial Role of Mother--Wishful Role of Mother for Children--Mother's Communication of suppressed feeling to her Children-and Representation of Sister's Maternal Role:

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