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Transmitting Knowledge Through Cultural Performance in *Mandiek Anak*

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates *mandiek anak*, a distinctive marriage ritual of the Langgam Saripado community in Nagari Salareh Aia, West Sumatra, as a medium of cultural transmission. Employing a qualitative ethnographic approach, data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The analysis applies the concept of cultural performance to examine how the ritual preserves and communicates Minangkabau cultural values. The findings indicate that *mandiek anak* functions not only as a ceremonial tradition; it also serves as a performative mechanism for transmitting knowledge of the matrilineal system, customary leadership, oral literature, ritual performances, and traditional food practices. The active involvement of traditional leaders, *bako*, and the wider community ensure the continuity of these cultural values across generations. The study concludes that *mandiek anak* remains an essential cultural institution that strengthens community identity while contributing to the preservation and sustainability of Minangkabau intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords:

Cultural transmission, *mandiek anak*, Minangkabau, cultural performance, matrilineal

INTRODUCTION

Cultural transmission is an important global issue to be examined. Especially in traditional societies that depended on the sustainability of their civilization on the continuity of their customs (Sari & Dani, 2026). Failure of cultural transmission might degrade the community's cultural identity (Irawati, 2019). As the transmission is not carried out in a written document, the only way is through various activities that serve as carriers of the culture. These cultural transmission tools are usually in the form of rituals, such as marriage, medication, and death. A form of cultural transmission is found in one of the series of *baralek gadang* ceremonies known as *mandiek anak*.

Baralek gadang is a series of marriage rituals commonly observed in the Minangkabau cultural area of West Sumatra (Ramanta & Samsuri, 2020: 194–195). Each cultural area in West Sumatra has characteristics that distinguish the *baralek gadang* in one location from that in another. *Baralek gadang*, or a big banquet, is held for 15 days or up to a month, depending on the agreement among the *niniak mamak* (traditional leaders) (Isman et al., 2017: 76). It takes time because *baralek gadang* consists of various rituals. In Minangkabau culture, as in many others, *baralek gadang* is one of the most important life-cycles events and a significant rite of passage (Atmaca, 2023; Mahmud, 2022; Noori Nezhadi & Sakhaie, 2024) for the people of Minangkabau.

Minangkabau is an ethnic group in Indonesia. With a population representing 2.7% of Indonesia's population, it is the sixth-largest ethnic group in Indonesia (Na'im & Hendry, 2010). Consisting a population of around 6.5 million, the Minangkabau are the largest ethnic group in the world that adopts the matrilineal lineage concept (Evers & Korff, 2001). The matrilineal system in Minangkabau culture is a kinship principle that traces lineage through maternal descent (Arifin, 2018). There are several characteristics of the matrilineal system practiced by the Minangkabau people, including possession of communal inheritance and property (high ancestral property/*harato pusako*), which are held by women (mothers) and led by *Bundo Kanduang*. The eldest male in the group serves as leader, but still in accordance with the directions, instructions, and agreement of *Bundo Kanduang*. The inheritance of the customary title is also based on the maternal line of descent; the newly married couple will live in the wife's family (matrilocally) (Arifin, 2018; Stark, 2013), thus building a concept in which men are considered 'guests' in their wives' homes (Nasir et al., 2021).

As the ritual takes a long time and involves many activities, it requires much effort. Nevertheless, it still exists with some modifications over time; however, several assignments remain obligatory. Because some of these matters are the identity of the entity in question.

Nagari Salareh Aia is a form of regional government, administratively equivalent to a *desa* (village), and is led by a Wali Nagari. The same regulations that manage *desa* in other parts of Indonesia also regulate the existence of *nagari* in the West Sumatra region (Arliman, 2020: 60–64). An election determines whether Wali Nagari serves for five years and can be re-elected for a second term (Interview with Iron Maria Edi, 5 June 2021). In Nagari Salareh Aia, a customary

government is also known as *langgam*. Nagari Salareh Aia consists of two *langgams*: Langgam Rajo Nan Balimo and Langgam Saripado (Edi, 2019: 5).

These two *langgams* have different jurisdictions from *nagari* but stand alongside each other. *Langgam* is a customary governance structure that regulates customary matters, excluding formal administrative aspects within the *nagari* (Edi, 2019; Erdila, 2022: 19–20). Langgam Saripado is led by a king called Datuak Saripado. Even though they are called kings, *datuak* are not appointed by heredity but are elected alternately within one *suku*, which consists of several families from the same *suku* (Rahmat & Maryelliwati, 2019). Each family has the opportunity to propose the *suku* leader according to a predetermined turn (Edi, 2019). *Langgam* has authority over customs-related matters, such as *baralek gadang* (weddings) and other customary events (Erdila, 2022).

Mandiek anak is a ritual that only exists in the Langgam Saripado area. At Langgam Saripado, nine kinds of rituals must be performed sequentially during the *baralek gadang*: *duduak samo awak* (nuclear family meeting), *duduak pangulu* (nuclear family meeting with custom elders), *malam bainai* (night to decorate hands with henna), *manjampuik marapaulai* (picking up the groom), *manantuan gala* (giving a customary title to the groom), *akad nikah* (wedding vows), *basandiang* (parting), *mandiek anak* (seeing a child), *manjalang mintuo/maanta sala* (meeting in-laws), and closed with *manyudahi alek* (ending the celebration) (Sri Nanda, 2016: 2). These various rituals have an essential meaning and complement each other as a series of performances. Generally, the ritual series during *baralek gadang* in various areas of Minangkabau is quite similar. Only *mandiek anak* distinguishes the *baralek gadang* in Langgam Saripado from other places. There have been studies on the various cultural aspects of Minangkabau society. However, research on the specific ritual *mandiek anak* is limited.

Literature review

1. *Mandiek Anak*

Mandiek Anak aims to honor a child and to show the presence of *bako* (Sriwulan et al., 2014: 53–54), in front of the mother's family, and to become one of the series of *baralek gadang*. According to the matrilineal concept adopted by the Minangkabau ethnic group (Putri et al., 2019: 198–199), a man must stay in his wife's family home after marriage and is known as *sumando* (Mutiarra et al., 2020: 242–247). For women, *baralek* signified the addition of a new member to the *rumah gadang* (Ramanta & Samsuri, 2020). *Sumando's* position in Minangkabau society is like ashes on a rock, easily blown away by the wind (Erdila, 2022). It shows that *sumando's* position is very vulnerable and, therefore, particular efforts are needed to ensure his existence is recognized by his wife's extended family. With this assumption, it is necessary to have *mandiek anak*.

At Langgam Saripado, *mandiek anak* is required by the female's family, either from the bride's father or groom's father, and is known as *bako* (Warman et al., 2023). On this occasion, *bako* and their relatives will gather at a mutually agreed place at the *duduak pangulu* meeting. For *bako*, *mandiek anak* is an event also known as *manjalankan adat*, or the customs process. The oldest

bako house, or the closest to *anak pisang*'s house, is usually a gathering place. *Bako* will be present with the people of *Salareh Aia* who have been *panggia* or invited. They will go together to the house of their brother's son or daughter, known as *anak pisang*.

2. Cultural Performance

Mandiek anak is an event with various elements that the supporting community must understand running smoothly. It is necessary to study all events and their supporting elements (Norget, 2003). Milton Singer, via Marfin Carlson, states that specific cultural media transmit the cultural content of a tradition (Carlson, 1998: 14; Ping-Ann, 2009). Murgianto added Singer's opinion that various cultural performances neatly wrap the cultural content that could be shown outside the community and to each other (Murgiyanto, 2018: 18). The description and observation of how this cultural content is organized and transformed on occasions through special cultural media can help to understand the cultural structure of the tradition concerned (Shevchuk, 2025). These various forms of cultural organization are called cultural performances: wedding ceremonies, musical performances, plays, and drama (Carlson, 1998; Murgiyanto, 2018; Simatupang, 2013: 63). This approach considers *mandiek anak* as performance and analyzes its constituent elements and performative aspects for the supportive community (Schechner, 2006; Sheranova, 2023).

Mandiek anak as part of a marriage ritual is considered a rite of passage, a ritual that a person experiences once in a lifetime (Fagbola et al., 2023; Turner, 1982: 25). It is evident in the rituals related to the phases of birth, childhood into adulthood, and the existence of marriages, which then turn into parents and end with death (Tripathi, 2022; Turner, 1982). This liminal stage is when the ritual subject experiences another state in relation to the phenomenal world. The subject is in an ambiguous state, neither here nor there, experiencing an intermediate state (Turner, 1969: 95). Most performance genres in society at all levels are a liminal phenomenon.

Performances are held at a specific place and time, separate from places to work, eat, and sleep (Turner, 1988: 25). According to Schechner, there are six allusions to theater and anthropology. These include Transformation of Being Consciousness, Intensity of Performance, Audience-Performer Interaction, Whole Performance Sequences, Performance of Knowledge, and How Performance is Generated and Evaluated (Schechner, 1985).

Turner explains the relationship between theater and society, which states that there is a dialogical relationship between social drama and drama on stage-the two influences each other (Liu, 2020; Turner, 1982). Religious aspects are inseparable from theatrical events. There is much historical evidence that shows this. Prehistoric artifacts found signs of singing and dancing as a form of worship to the gods (Carlson, 1993; Carlson & Shafar, 1990; Hartnoll, 1995: 7). Historically, ritual is the origin of theater (Carlson & Shafar, 1990, p. 5). Even traditional theater in Indonesia is still synonymous with ritual (Bandem & Murgianto, 1996: 13; Santyaningtyas & Noor, 2016). Analyzing *mandiek anak* in terms of performance is possible because of the broad scope of performance (Schechner, 2006: 28–51).

METHOD

As a study that considers ethnographic aspects (Meier zu Verl & Meyer, 2024), minor differences in mainstream culture are essential to its existence. It follows the primary purpose of ethnography, which is to describe and analyze various forms of culture to the most minor extent (Koentjaraningrat et al., 1983; Winarno, 2015: 260–261). In other words, ethnography rejects cultural generalizations (Shoko, Tabona & Chirara, 2025). Although a pattern similar to *mandiek anak* is not unique in the *baralek gadang* series in the Minangkabau cultural area, *mandiek anak* is a characteristic of specific regional communities.

Malinowski assumes that all elements of culture benefit the society in which they exist. In other words, the functionalist view of culture maintains that every pattern of behavior that has become a habit, every belief and attitude that is part of the culture in society, fulfills several essential functions in the culture concerned (Kristianto, 2019: 70). The basic assumptions of functional theory in anthropology are as follows:

1. a social and cultural unit is a separate system consisting of its parts;
2. each element or part does not stand alone but is interdependent;
3. each of these elements or parts exists because it is needed;
4. the interdependence or interrelatedness does not occur by chance, but the presence of the whole is oriented toward the survival of the system as a whole;
5. changes in an element or part can result in changes or affect the existence of other parts (Kristianto, 2019).

This premise considers that *mandiek anak* has a particular function in a society that makes it sustainable. This research adopts a qualitative methodology, which facilitates the description of events, phenomena, and social conditions relevant to the study (Endraswara, 2006). Data collection involves observation and in-depth interviews with individuals engaged in *mandiek anak* practices among the people of Langgam Saripado, using a snowball sampling technique (Ting et al., 2025). Interviews were conducted among traditional leaders and local residents involved in the *mandiek anak*. Data are categorized as primary (in-depth interviews and direct observations) and secondary (visual documentation, such as videos and photos, and field notes). This section explains the method used by the author in the research. The technique used is described by referring to the theory and its application to the study conducted.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Several things arise in the process of cultural transmission. Firstly, it is about how the community performs *mandiek anak* as cultural performance. At this event, there will also be elements that evoke cultural expressions of the Langgam Saripado community, including matrilineal concepts, social life, food processing, and oral literature. These all matter as the cultural identity of being the people of Langgam Saripado.

3. Conducting *mandiek anak*

On the day and at a place determined during *duduak pangulu*, a group of people doing *mandiek anak* or so-called *pandiek* gather to start the journey to the *anak pisang*'s house. What must be present in this event, especially the elements of traditional stakeholders, namely: one *penghulu/mamak*, one woman to carry the tray, one woman to carry the *lapiak*, one woman to carry the *lapiak pandak*, two women to carry the *aguang*, *mamak kaciak* (who, whenever possible, is the youngest nephew of the one to be visited) to take care of *alam*, one woman to carry *carano ketek*, one woman to carry *carano gadang*, one woman to carry *salendang*, and an odd number of *pasilek galombang* or martial arts experts (Erdila et al., 2022; Mahmudin & Andayani, 2018: 82–88).

The journey to the event venue begins after the Asr prayer. The group of *pandiek* walks, preceded by *mamak kaciak*, who bring *alam* (as seen in figure 1). During the journey, the women carrying the *aguangs* sound it nonstop. As soon as they arrived at their destination, the sounds will stop. The elders took their designated places, and the *mamak* will signal the *pasilek galombang* to take a position to fight. The greeter will take a similar position. The two groups face each other and demonstrated offensive and defensive *silat* moves. At some point, the *panunggu alek* will place a *carano* between the two groups. It signifies the host welcomes the guest (Erdila et al., 2022: 48–49).

After the fight, the *bako* hand over the *baban* or gift to *anak pisang*. The group put the *baban* in front of the bridegroom. Then they open it together and show it to the bridegroom and the audience. Next, *induk bako* signals the *silek galombang* group to *maarak* (parading) the bridegroom around the village, accompanied by *talempong* music, *gandang*, and other traditional musical instruments. *Induk bako* determine where the bridegroom should stop for the next *balimau* ritual. It is to wipe *limau* (lemon) water on the forehead of the bride and groom. As it finishes, the parading group return to take the bridegroom to the aisle to witness the unloading of the *baban*.

Based on the explanation above, the *mandiek anak* process is a form of performance. It is held at a specific place and time, separate from places where people work, eat, and sleep (Sathotho, 2023; Turner, 1988). The *mandiek anak* process itself determines how the *bako* family maintains its existence. The rules in this ritual show that *mandiek anak* is an integral part of the Langgam Saripado community.

In addition, the process contains various cultural elements that are embedded in every aspect of *mandiek anak*. These elements begin with the concept of *mandiek anak* itself, followed by various rules and equipment. Equipment in this context also encompasses various elements of ritual complements, such as the *pandiek* group's organizational structure and gifts in the form of food or other deliveries.

Mandiek anak, or seeing a child, is a procession of seeing *anak pisang* when they get married. Conceptually, *mandiek anak* is coherent with the matrilineal logic of thought, which carries the mother's family name (Burnham, 2015; Munir, 2015). However, the Minangkabau are not officially obligated to put the mother's family name, as in Western patrilineal culture. In the



Figure 1. Mamak kaciak weaving alam in his hand, followed by group of pandiek (FS. 2021)

Minangkabau context, *suku* (clans) refers to the mother's family bloodline. It is often confused with formal administrative terms that refer to *suku* as an ethnic term in Indonesian. By contrast, "Minangkabau" refers to an ethnic group in the broader Indonesian context, alongside other ethnic groups such as the Javanese, Sundanese, and Batak. It is enough for the Minangkabau people to know that they are descendants of Bodi-Chaniago-Koto-Piliang or another *suku*. This knowledge is fundamental because the Minangkabau community adheres to a matrilineal system and practices exogamous marriages (Wirdanengsih, 2016). For instance, a woman from the Piliang family is not allowed to marry a man whose mother is from the Piliang family. The complex matrilineal concept manifests itself in all the elements that create *mandiek anak*.

The matrilineal values of the Minangkabau culture emphasize and prioritize the existence of Minangkabau women (Saputri et al., 2024). This can be seen in its practices, such as family lineage traced through the mother, leadership in the Minangkabau government system known as *Bundo Kanduang*, property ownership and economic resources held by women, as well as women's participation in customary decision-making alongside men. The concept of leadership in the Minangkabau culture is inseparable from the role of women. In this case, the term *Bundo Kanduang*, which generally means Minangkabau women and specifically means female elders of Minangkabau clans (*suku*), is involved in customary leadership (Sismarni, 2011). Each Minangkabau clan has its own *Bundo Kanduang*, but their duties and functions are the same. Their opinions become one of the clan's considerations and can even determine customary decisions. While other cultures in Indonesia position men as owners of economic resources and recipients of family inheritance, West Sumatra, especially the Minangkabau people, takes a different path. Based on their values, the Minangkabau people assign all family economic resources to women. The women or elders (*Bundo Kanduang*) also control the inheritance (Zainal, 2014).

Cultural performances refer to Marvin Carlson's notion, which explains that transmitting the cultural content of a group to a supportive community is necessary. Restraining cultural transmission will affect the culture's values. Specific cultural media transmit the cultural content

of a tradition (Carlson, 1998; Fitrianita et al., 2018). There are no institutions set up intentionally for learning purposes. Their tradition is passed down from one generation to the next, from one member of society to another, implicitly in various daily occasions (Irawati, 2019). The concept of culture refers to Danesi's opinion, which states that culture is a system of shared meanings based on a meaningful order, a complex system of various types of signs that are inherent in predictable ways into patterns of representation that individuals and groups can use to create or exchange messages (Kaprisma, 2019: 27).

The performance of this knowledge is explicitly wrapped in the *mandiek anak*'s rules, which are controlled by traditional elders. There is a dialogical relationship that enables the elders to survive. The functioning of these traditional elders will guarantee the existence of *mandiek anak* and all related matters. This approach treats *mandiek anak* as a performance, making it possible to analyze its constituent elements and performative aspects for the supportive community (Schechner, 2006). In other words, *mandiek anak*, as a cultural performance, serves as a medium for cultural transmission for the Langgam Saripado community. The performative aspect of a *mandiek anak* reflects the basic concept of the community's culture in which this event occurs.

The performance of this knowledge refers to various knowledge that in everyday life cannot be performed or shown to the public. Apart from the taboos that may exist, it is also because the performance of this knowledge requires a specific time and place.

During the *mandiek anak* ritual, many events show collective knowledge of the Langgam Saripado culture. Everything that appears in the *mandiek anak* process (before, during, and after) is a cultural expression that describes the interpretation of matrilineal concepts and the agrarian culture adopted by the local community. Culture in this context refers to both material and non-material aspects. Due to the nature of *mandiek anak*, which occurs only on a relatively small scale, *mandiek anak* is a subculture of Minangkabau Culture. This subculture is one of the terms used to define folklore. A *mandiek anak* has all the characteristics of folklore (Danandjaja, 2002: 4–6; Upadhyay, 2016). The characteristics of folklore that prioritize orality make it easy to change or disappear. Folklore will survive only as long as the community supports it.

The most critical part of transmitting culture in a *mandiek anak* is the concept of a *mandiek anak* itself, which includes various ideas about being the people of Langgam Saripado. It refers to *mandiek anak*, which only exists in the Langgam Saripado. The idea about the character of the Langgam Saripado people is contained in the proverb:

Pisang sikalek-kalek utan

Pisang batu nan bagatah

Bodi Caniago inyo bukan (Bodi Caniago, they are not)

Koto Piliang inyo antah (Koto Piliang they are unclear)

(interview with Nasrul Adip, June 2021)

The first and second lines of the rhyme are known as *sampiran*, which have no particular meaning, while the third and fourth lay the rhyme's meaning. In the above-mentioned rhyme, the four main *suku* are considered the oldest *suku*. They are Bodi, Chaniago, Koto, and Piliang. The Minangkabau believe that another *suku* derives from these four. Therefore, the Langgam Saripado people's self-identification that they are not part of the four main *suku* is only figurative. Because, in reality, the four *suku* and others coexist peacefully in the Langgam Saripado area (interview with Nasrul Adip, June 2021).

This proverb suggests that the people of Langgam Saripado have a less clearly defined identity compared with those of other *nagari* directly adjacent to Langgam Saripado. To the west of Langgam Saripado, it is directly adjacent to Tigo Koto Silungkang, which has a high style of Minangkabau language speech. It derives from Pagaruyung, the center of government of the Old Minangkabau kingdom. Meanwhile, the eastern part is directly adjacent to Ampek Nagari, which has a rougher speech. The Ampek Nagari people come from Kumpulan, Pasaman, which borders North Sumatra (Edi interview, June 22, 2021).

4. *Matrilineal concept and social order*

In accordance with the concept of *Bundo Kanduang*, the *baralek gadang* begins with the *duduak samo awak*. The four elements of the *saparuik* or *mamak nan ampek bagi* attend the event. The first *mamak sako*, the second *mamak pusako*, the third *mamak sakanduang*, and the fourth *mamak adat*. This meeting aims to ask permission from the customary elder to *manjalankan adat* or carry out the custom, which is *mandiek anak* (Erdila, 2022: 5). The *duduak samo awak* is followed by a *duduk pangulu* event, which is a meeting of traditional elders (*niniak mamak*) at the *bako* house to decide on matters related to the *baralek gadang*, including the *mandiek anak*. *Duduk pangulu*, related to *mandiek anak*, discusses who will serve as the group's leader, the martial arts players, gift bearers, and various other ceremonial instruments. The mandatory conditions that must be present in a *mandiek anak* are *dulang*, *mat*, *lapiak pandak*, pairs of *aguang* (small gong), *alam* (white flag), *bantiang* (calves), *carano ketek*, *carano gadang*, *salendang*, and *pasilek galombang* (interview with Dt. Marajo Lelo, June 24, 2021).

In the matrilineal concept that is adhered to, there are several things that appear in the *mandiek anak*, such as:

a. *Mandiek anak led by datuak.*

Datuak, who wears the clothes of the *suku*'s officials whom kings formerly used, will lead *mandiek anak*. This item of clothing consists of a *saluak*, worn on the head, a velvet shirt, *endong* pants, *sesampiang* (a cloth measuring approximately 50 cm worn around the waist), *salempang* (a woven cloth stretched across from the right shoulder to the left waist), a waist tie, *tarompa* (sandals), and a *keris* tucked in the waist cloth. However, this clothing is rarely used and has been replaced by modern suits, yet he still wears *saluak*, as seen in figure 2.

Datuak is a leadership concept in the Minangkabau community, including the Langgam Saripado community, which is no exception (interview with Dt. Marajo Lelo, June 24, 2021). As

a leader, *datuak* is responsible for his *suku* (Putriyah, 2016: 181). As mentioned, people follow the maternal line. So, even though the *datuak* is a man, he must maintain the honor of the woman's family name.

As a traditional elder, the *datuak* will lead various traditional events. Together with other traditional elders, the *datuak* will take various measures to ensure the ceremony is conducted in accordance with regulations. Therefore, it is a must for *datuak* to know various customary and religious rules (Putriyah, 2016; Sabella & S, 2021: 102).

b. *Mandiek anak is run by bako.*

In the matrilineal context, a *sumando* does not have a strong foothold in his wife's *gadang* house. The *bako*, or sister, must strengthen the brother's position to bolster his existence and honor. Zainal said that the position of men (especially *sumando*) in a woman's family was considered a foreigner or guest. It is, as the proverb goes, *seperti abu di ateh tunggua* (like ashes over the stump), which means that a husband depends on the kindness of his wife's family to support himself. Alternatively, he will suffer a fate like ashes ready to be flown when a strong wind comes (Zainal, 2014).

The relatively weak position of men in the wife's family requires the support of the male family. This pattern recurs in a circular pattern as long as a family has sons and daughters. A sister will protect her brother's honor, while her brother's wife will do the same for her brother (Hermayulis, 2008). Thus, this pattern repeats endlessly as long as they marry fellow Minangkabau.

This concept was also evident during the preparation of the *mandiek anak* in the *duduak samo awak*, which was attended only by the nuclear family and the *mamak nan ampek bagi*. *Mamak nan ampek bagi* consists of *mamak pusako*, *mamak sako*, *mamak adat*, and *mamak sakanduang* (Erdila, 2022). They consist of traditional elders from the mother's line and do not involve the bridegroom's father's line, who will be *diek*.

c. *Anak Pisang*

Anak Pisang is a term for a brother's nephew (Wirdanengsih, 2016). The existence of a man (husband) in the wife's family is vulnerable. To keep a brother respected by his wife's family, a married man's family tries to make a good impression on his wife's extended family. When a man has a child (called *anak pisang* by the father's extended family) (Wirdanengsih, 2016), and when they marry, the father's extended family will try to show that the child's father comes from a respectable family. It is the basic concept of implementing *mandiek anak*. The concept for treating *anak pisang* relates to efforts to demonstrate the social status of the father's family through the mother's line. In other words, to maintain the honor of the father of the mother's family.

d. *Pitih Siadaik and Baban*

Pitih siadaik (customary money) is money donated by men, from *datuak*, *niniak mamak*, *urang sumando*, and *anak kamanakan*. It can be said that *pitih siadaik* is a donation from men for their



Figure 2. DT. Marajo Lelo wearing special saluak as he is the king, collecting pitih siadaik in carano (FS. 2021)

nephew's son (Erdila, 2022). It is present at every traditional Langgam Saripado event involving men and *niniak mamak*. The money will be handed over to the *anak pisang* or the bride/groom at the *balerong* when the *mandiek anak event* is officially over. Bako led the bride and groom to the *balerong*. Then they will sit in front of the member of *niniak mamak* before the collected *pitih siadaik* is handed over using a *carano* (see figure 2) (Sathotho, 2022: 45). In the *balerong*, the groom will be introduced to traditional leaders as a provision to become a *sumando* or *niniak mamak* when the time comes.

Baban is a donation from the relatives who join the *pandiek* group. If men donate money, women donate goods known as *baban*. It is brought by *induk bako* and differentiated by the gender of the *anak pisang*. If the *anak pisang* to *diek* is male, the *baban* contains 4 liters of rice and two coconuts. The *baban* for the female *anak pisang* contains 4 liters of rice and one piece of long cloth. Other women need to bring according to their abilities (interview with DT. Marajo Lelo, 24 June 2021).

The *baban* is put in a container and wrapped in batik cloth. It will be placed and opened in front of the aisle or another suitable place. The goal is for the public to know how much the *bako* appreciates their *anak pisang*. It is the same as when *pitih siadaik* announced the contributors' names and the amount of each donation. After the *baban* is publicly opened, the host will replace the parcel with food placed in the container previously used to carry the *baban*. The parcel will then be re-wrapped using the batik cloth previously used. The wrapping of the batik cloth signifies ownership, so as not to be confused.

e. *Bantiang*

The delivered goods are community agricultural products such as rice and coconut. Other delivery goods include *bantiang*/calf, which is one of the mandatory conditions for *mandiek anak*.

It means that in the future, the calves, when they grow up, can be used to plow the fields. It is clear here how the agrarian concept becomes the primary basis for giving the *bantiang*.

The Langgam Saripado, as a cultural area in Nagari Salareh Aia, is an agricultural area (Edi, 2019; Erdila, 2022; Sri Nanda, 2016). Farmers and cultivators shape the cultural pattern. Many cultural expressions refer to their work as farmers and cultivators (Sumardjo & Caturwati, 2010). The characteristics of an agrarian society are visible through the delivery of goods carried by the *bako* and the group accompanying the *bako*.

5. Food preparation

The food prepared and served throughout the ceremony is primarily made from agricultural products harvested by the host family. The availability of these materials depends on the local people's crops. In general, the community will calculate the harvest time for *baralek gadang*. The first reason, of course, is calculating the availability of raw materials for the party. The second reason is that they hope to be at the *baralek* when the guests have products or money to donate (interview with Dt. Marajo Lelo, June 24, 2021).

Some types of food are only prepared or consumed at certain times. Frequently, making these foods requires time, space, and special skills. Because of their nature, these foods are not prepared and served regularly. A community must have a specific reason to make and serve it. A place and times to make and serve these foods is a ritual event, such as *mandiek anak*.

a. *Silamak*

Cooking fifty kilograms of sticky rice into *silamak* takes about five hours. The preparation starts at 09:00 am while waiting for the fire to be ready. Experienced women do this job because it requires tenacity in stirring and steaming to make the *silamak* fluffy. Making *silamak* requires two cooking processes. First, steam the sticky rice until it is half-cooked. The next step is to put the half-cooked sticky rice on top of the old betel nut known as *upiah* (see figure 3).

Upiah is an old betel nut preserved for approximately 3 months by various processes (Erdila, 2022). The first process is to soak the *upiah* in running water for a week. The second is to peel the outer skin, scraping the epidermis until the betel nut's inner part is reached, which has a more flexible texture and is not easy to tear. Then, it will be left to dry in the sunlight for 1 day to reduce moisture content. The *upiah* will be folded and tied as small as possible before being stored on the fireplace as the final preservation stage. The longer it is kept and smoked on the fire, the better the *upiah* will be (Erdila, 2022).

After the sticky rice is placed on the *upiah*, the cooks gradually pour a concentrated coconut milk mixture seasoned with turmeric and salt over it. The solution is poured slowly over the sticky rice until everything is well mixed, then the cooks put it back into a large pot and steam it once more until cooked perfectly. After it is perfectly cooked, the *silamak* will be stored in *upiah* by pouring it slowly while compacting it so that the *silamak* does not go stale quickly.

As a unique food in the Langgam Saripado tradition, it is unavailable daily (interview with Dt. Marajo Lelo, 24 June 2021). The food is typical and only available on certain occasions. At the



Figure 3. Processing kukuih to wrap in betel nut known as upiah (FS.2021)

same time, there is no place to learn to make it specifically. Participating in the event is the only way to learn to make it. Therefore, events such as *mandiek anak* must still exist to sustain these foods and the accompanying concepts.

b. *Kukuih*

Kukuih is processed sticky rice, half-cooked, mixed with a heavy palm sugar syrup, and finished with coconut milk. *Kukuih* is also a food only available during traditional events, one of which is *mandiek anak*. Making this food is tricky, and not everyone can do it. The manufacturing process is as follows:

First, cook the sticky rice until half-cooked, then let it cool overnight. The cook must dissolve the palm sugar in a large skillet the next day. After the palm sugar has dissolved and melted, the cooled sticky rice is slowly added to the pan and stirred. To avoid burning, the cook must maintain a steady fire while continuously stirring the mixture.

Cooking 30 kilograms of *kukuih* takes 3 hours of stirring to cook to perfection. Once cooked, it is placed on top of the *upiah* and pressed until it reaches a thickness of approximately 2 cm. Then the *kukuih* is wrapped and tied so it does not go stale. Usually, the *kukuih* can last for a month as it stays in an *upiah* wrapping.

c. *Rendang*

Rendang is a widely known dish from West Sumatra. Currently, rendang is not a particular food that refers only to a particular occasion. It has various versions at events and restaurants across Indonesia. However, the rendang served in the *mandiek anak* has several differences that make it unique.

For the *duduak pangulu* event, which around thirty people will attend, the beef prepared is approximately 7 kg. It is enough for lunch and the *duduak pangulu* dish. The women worked in the spice milling section, grinding the prepared spices with a *cobek* (mortar) and *ulekan* (pestle). She deftly grinds the spices one by one, starting from garlic, shallots, turmeric, ginger, and

coarsely chopped galangal. This process was followed by grinding coriander, nutmeg, and other spices. After everything is finely ground, the spices are added to the pan, followed by the meat, coconut milk, and ground chili. To cook rendang, she uses a big iron pan. It is her family heritage and is often lent to anyone who needs it. An iron pan for making rendang helps achieve the perfect texture because it conducts heat better than aluminum pans. The iron skillet, with a diameter of approximately 70 cm, is a family heirloom of the Sinun family (interview with Sinun, June 2022).

It takes five hours to cook 7 kg of rendang, starting from grinding the spices. The women (*Sinun*) who are used to it look agile and enjoy the process of making rendang, with three young women helping. To make delicious rendang, people use only cinnamon trees as firewood. It is what distinguishes rendang from other dishes served in daily events or restaurants. To cook rendang perfectly, one has to control the fire to a perfect heat. It is not simple to use firewood to make a fire. Someone must add and remove wood from the stove when needed. Only someone who has the experience is capable of doing so. It is occasionally common for the same person to do the same job in one cooking process after another.

Knowing how to make rendang in large quantities differs from making rendang for daily needs. Someone can only learn these skills on certain occasions, one of which is a *mandiek anak*. The equipment used on this occasion indirectly also becomes communal property. It is because not all families have the equipment in question. To overcome this, borrowing each other's tools and equipment, such as *mandiek anak*, is common.

Food is an important cultural expression. It is the perfect symbol for forming identity and for expressing the reality of "we are what we eat" in cultural and individual contexts (Lewis, 2006). The concept of how to cook and serve it is considered one of the hallmarks of the supporting culture's advancement. In addition, many foods are related to ceremonies or rituals (Salleh et al., 2020: 121). The explanation shows that, in addition to showing some types of food that are only available at certain times, the Langgam Saripado community can preserve food. The ability to preserve food is knowledge passed down as folklore and orally (Bascom, 1965; Danandjaja, 2002; Endraswara, 2013).

6. Oral Literature

Pasambahan is a rhyming language used to demonstrate the speakers' knowledge of the language. Before eating, *pitunggu alek* will start the *pasambahan kamakan*, which is shown to the *niniak mamak* and other guests. This *pasambahan* contains words inviting the audience to note that all the food has been served and is ready to eat. The *datuak* will take over the event and invite the members of the *duduak pangulu* to eat. After eating, the event will be closed with a prayer to thank Allah for today's sustenance and the smooth running of the event the next day. *Niniak mamak* will again ask for permission from *pitunggu alek* with the so-called *pasambahahan katagak* before leaving. There is a sample of *pasambahan siriah*, which means offering *siriah* or betel, as seen in figure 4.



Figure 4. Ninik Mamak Nan Ampek Bagi doing pasambahan (FS.2021)

Siriah sacabiak mintak dikunyah (a piece of betel to chew)

Pinang sagatok mintak dimakan (a slice of areca nut to eat)

Kok gambia minta dikupia (gambir to pick up)

Kok sadah mintak dipalik (a lime to poke)

Karajo nan bapokok, silang nan bapangka (work is the most important).

Untuak anak kamanakan rajo bagindo. (for the nephew of the King)

Pasambahan is one of the oral literatures in Minangkabau (Arriyanti, 2017: 123; Riezka & Basri, 2020: 35–38). Among the many oral literatures in Minangkabau, such as *bakaba*, *sularwaik dulang*, and *pasambahan*, *pasambahan* is the official language used in traditional ceremonies. It is commonly used in traditional ceremonies such as weddings, *batagak pangulu*, *duduak pangulu*, and other traditional ceremonies (Rahmadani et al., 2013: 73–74; Yunis, 2018: 130).

As part of oral literature often used in various ceremonies, *pasambahan* is a way of speaking in subtle Minangkabau, filled with allusions, poetic language that conveys values, and parables full of meaning. Therefore, *pasambahan* is *challenging* to translate into Indonesian or any other language, as it would lose its cultural values. *Pasambahan* is not a daily form of language. Therefore, events such as *mandiek anak* are essential to ensure *pasambahan* survives in the community.

Generally, there is no formal institution for learning the skills required to perform *pasambahan*. *Pasambahan* performers, generally male, gain knowledge by following and learning directly during traditional ceremonies. In addition, they also study in a *surau* with boys from the same village who traditionally do not have room in the *rumah gadang* (Abdullah et al., 2015: 91). Young Minangkabau boys are used to sleeping in a *surau* where they read the Koran, study religion, martial arts (*silat*), and various other aspects of culture.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that *mandiek anak* is not merely one of the ritual sequences within the *baralek gadang* ceremony but a comprehensive cultural performance that functions as an effective medium for transmitting cultural knowledge in the Langgam Saripado community. The ritual integrates symbolic actions, customary regulations, performative expressions, oral traditions, social organization, and traditional culinary practices into a unified cultural event through which the community reproduces and reinforces its collective identity. Rather than relying on formal educational institutions, knowledge is transmitted through direct participation, observation, and interaction among traditional leaders, family members, and the wider community. Consequently, the continuity of *mandiek anak* depends on the sustained involvement of community members in performing and preserving the ritual in accordance with customary principles.

The findings further reveal that the ritual embodies the fundamental principles of the Minangkabau matrilineal system. The respective roles of *datuak*, *bako*, *anak pisang*, and other customary actors illustrate how kinship, leadership, social responsibility, and family honor are maintained through ritual practice. In addition, cultural knowledge is transmitted through ritual objects, oral literature, such as *pasambahan*, and traditional food preparation, all of which require specialized knowledge acquired through repeated participation rather than written instruction. These elements demonstrate that *mandiek anak* preserves not only ceremonial procedures but also the values, worldview, and practical knowledge that define the cultural identity of the Langgam Saripado community.

Moreover, the study confirms the relevance of the cultural performance perspective in understanding the function of ritual as a dynamic process of preserving and communicating intangible cultural heritage.

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Source Person

Iron Maria Edi, 40 years old, Padang Koto Gadang, Wali Nagari Salareh Aia.

Nasrul Adip, 36 years old, Guguak, Jorong Kampuang Tengah Timur, Jorong Kampuang Tengah Timur.

Dt. Marajo Lelo, 65 years old, Sungai Layah, Jorong Kampung Tengah Timur, Farmer

M. Kari Mudo, 56 years old, Sungai Layah, Jorong Kampuang Tengah Timur, Farmer

St. Marajo Lelo Nan Tuo, 62 years old, Tanjuang Village, Jorong West Tengah Village, Merchant

ST. Mudo, 40 years old, Padang Datar, Jorong Kampung Tengah Timur, Farmer

Silai Jaliang, 50 years old, Subarang Aia, Jorong Subarang Aia, Merchant

Sinun, 70 years old, Tanjuang Village, Jorong West Tengah Village, Farmer.

Ernawati, 50 years old, Sungai Layah, Jorong Kampung Tengah Timur, Farmer