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Manujai: The Social Function, Local Cultural Values, and Universal of Lullabies from West Sumatra, Indonesia

Ninawati Syahrul*

Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional, Indonesia

*Correspondence: E-mail: ninawatisyahrul.bahasa@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Lullabies are a phenomenon that is both local and universal across the globe. Despite their deep local roots, lullabies exist in nearly all cultures worldwide. The Minangkabau society in West Sumatra, Indonesia, have a traditional lullaby practice known as *manujai*. However, this tradition is gradually eroding and beginning to fade due to the influence of technology and modernization. Beyond its primary role as a lullaby to lull children to sleep, *manujai* also functions as a medium for conveying messages, especially cultural and religious values, intended to be embedded in children's minds. This study aims to describe, reveal, and analyze the meanings and functions of *manujai* as a cultural expression of the Minangkabau community, while connecting its universal values to lullabies in other cultures worldwide. This study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, with data collected through an analysis of *manujai* texts. The findings reveal that *manujai* texts serve three social functions: (1) expressing feelings, thoughts, and life attitudes; (2) teaching cultural values through advice, messages, and hopes; (3) presenting linguistic beauty, comfort, tranquility, and well-being for the listening child. The shared essence of lullabies worldwide lies in their expressions of love, gentleness, and care. Many lullabies possess a peaceful, hyponic quality. Fatigue, the darkening night, difficulties in falling asleep, and the act of sleeping itself are universal elements that inspire the melodic and lyrical threads of lullabies worldwide.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is a significant relationship between parenting and child development during the first 1,000 days of life (Valentine *et al.*, 2024). The golden age, spanning 0-5 years, is a critical period for cultivating children's potential (Rijkiyani *et al.*, 2022). This phase is ideal for instilling values that shape a child's character and future personality (Dini, 2022). According to Gardner (2001), early childhood is crucial for brain development, with 25% brain growth achieved at birth, 50% by age four, and 80% by age eight, with the remaining growth continuing until the age of 18. Optimal brain development during this phase requires proper stimulation (Patmonodewo, 2003). A child's development is maximized when supported by stimulation from their environment, which can be categorized into nutrition, health, and psychosocial stimulation (Windarta, 2021).

Psychosocial stimulation involves activities that stimulate a child's vision, speech, hearing, and touch, often provided by parents, caregivers, or family members. This stimulation accelerates child development compared to children who lack it (Hashim, 2017). Among the Minangkabau society, this stimulation is known as *manjujai*, a traditional practice introduced to children aged 0-5 years. *Manjujai* is a form of Minangkabau cultural knowledge that involves lullabies or caregiving methods used to nurture children (Lestari *et al.*, 2023). The word *manjujai* refers to stimulating a child's development through singing, physical movements, and facial expressions. It includes conversing with children who mimic their mother's language (a language of emotion) or with children who can only produce limited vocabulary. Thus, *manjujai* represents a culturally rooted Minangkabau parenting approach that incorporates conversation, play, and singing.

Beyond its function as a lullaby, *manjujai* serves as a medium to convey messages, especially those pertaining to cultural and religious values, which are intended to be deeply ingrained in children's minds (Asifa, 2021). It also fosters early character education delivered by the extended family, not just parents. Furthermore, *manjujai* strengthens the emotional bonds between parents and children, enhances children's motor skills, and boosts cognitive intelligence (Fitriana and Wirdanengsih, 2024). Parents and close family members play a vital role in fostering a child's language development and communication skills. Furthermore, early childhood is the ideal period to establish the foundation for physical, linguistic, socio-emotional, self-concept, moral, artistic, and religious development. This stage is crucial for shaping attitudes, values, behaviors, and personality traits that will define the child's future (Hurlock, 2013).

The oral tradition of *manjujai* in the Minangkabau society is in decline, becoming less recognized and practiced due to the preference for electronic media, such as television or gadgets, as parenting tools. This situation threatens the survival of *manjujai*, which contains local knowledge conveyed through songs filled with messages and hopes for children. Lullabies, considered part of the ancestral folklore tradition, risk being forgotten despite their cultural significance (Endraswara, 2009).

In the daily lives of the Minangkabau society, rocking a child to sleep is typically done using cradles made from rattan or long pieces of cloth. During the *manjujai* process, the child is placed in the cradle or carried using the cloth and gently rocked while accompanied by soothing lullabies sung with soft, calm, and repetitive melodies and affectionate words. This creates a relaxing atmosphere and induces sleepiness in the child. Bonnár (2014) states that listening to lullabies can enhance a child's emotional sensitivity, fostering feelings of happiness and joy.

Manjujai, as an oral tradition, often employs the *pantun* (traditional poetry, each verse of which consists of two couplets: the first suggests the second by sound or other similarity),

although its melodies resemble lyrical poetry. The structure of *manjujai* typically consists of four lines or stanzas with the first two lines serving as the introduction (*sampiran*), while the last two lines contain the main content, often following an ab/ab rhyme scheme. The main content generally conveys advice, teachings, or “pearls of wisdom” derived from *petatah petitih* (proverb), expressions, guidance, and aphorisms.

Research into the format, content, and social functions of Minangkabau lullabies classifies them as functional folk songs, where both lyrics and melodies are equally significant (Brunvand, 1973). It is considered functional because both the text or lyrics and the melody align seamlessly with the rhythm of specific human activities. The lullaby texts of the Minangkabau society resemble poetry more than prose. As poetry, the texts are divided into two formats: physical format (lines, stanzas, sound, diction, imagery, and figurative language) and intrinsic format (theme, message, intonation, and setting). The physical structure tends to closely with classical poetry bound by lines, stanzas, rhyme, and rhythm. However, a limited number of these hymn texts can also be found in the form of free verse, unconstrained by lines, stanzas, rhyme, and rhythm.

Practically, the *manjujai* method can be implemented through *badendang* (Katik, 2018). In Minangkabau language, *badendang* means ‘berdendang’ or ‘bernyanyi’ in Indonesian. *Badendang* is derived from the root word *dendang*, which is prefixed with *ba-* to signify ‘doing’, *dendang* means ‘song’, and *badendang* refers to ‘bernyanyi (the act of singing)’ (Rustiyanthi, 2014). *Dendang* serves as an emotional provision and defense, expressed through musical formats or the gentle vocal expressions of lyric emotionally tied to a sense of togetherness within the *nagari* (village) structure. *Dendang* is an art form in Minangkabau culture that conveys human emotions to others (Tarmizi, 2010). It involves singing *pantun* with calm, joyful, or melancholic melodies (Rustiyanthi, 2015).

Dendang is a form of traditional musical art performed vocally or through sounds produced by the human voice. *Badendang* does not follow specific rules, such as Western notation systems, solmization scales, or chord structures. Nevertheless, traditional Minangkabau *dendang* has its own set of unwritten guidelines, which cannot be explicitly defined as in formal notation systems. This allows performers (*pendendang*) to develop their own unique methods and styles of singing (Rustiyanthi, 2014).

The practice of *manjujai* is traditionally performed by mothers, or *mande*, with men rarely engaging in this activity. This tradition is closely tied to the cultural role of the *mande* as primary caregivers and the transmitters of foundational moral values. *Manjujai* is typically performed in harmony with a child’s sleep schedule, whether in the morning, midday, afternoon, or evening. Parenting within Minangkabau society is deeply rooted in the community’s values and norms, as articulated in the Minang proverb: *adaik basandi syara’, syara’ basandi kitabullah; syara’ mangato, adaik mamakai, alam takambang jadi guru* (customs are based on Islamic law; Islamic law is based on the Qur’an; nature serves as the ultimate teacher). Central to child-rearing in Minangkabau culture is the instillation of noble character, known as *malu jo sopan* (shame and politeness), which is considered essential. Additionally, fostering caution in actions, communication, and behavior—emphasizing *raso jo pareso* (empathy and consideration)—is a cornerstone of parenting in this society. Minangkabau child-rearing practices have long focused on nurturing positive and responsive attitudes to equip children for life’s challenges.

The lullabies examined in this study originate from the inland regions, or *darek*, of Minangkabau. In Minangkabau culture, two main types of lullabies exist: those from *darek* (the inland regions) and those from *pasisia* (the coastal regions). Inland lullabies are more widely recognized and practiced throughout the Minangkabau community, including in

coastal areas, whereas coastal lullabies, known as *lela* or *balela*, are typically known only among residents of the coastal regions.

In Minangkabau tradition, *lela* (a mother's or grandmother's gentle singing) is an effective way to soothe and calm children, quieting their cries, easing their distress, and lulling them to sleep. This practice is also referred to as *manjujai anak*. The musical structure and lyrics of inland and coastal lullabies exhibit significant differences. Inland lullabies are based on a pentatonic (five-note) scale, whereas coastal lullabies are closer to the diatonic tonal system. Moreover, inland melodies reflect the natural sounds of the mountains, while coastal melodies emulate the roaring of the ocean. The foundational melody of inland lullabies is derived from the rhythm of the *saluang* (a traditional bamboo flute), while coastal lullabies are built around the rhythm of the *rabab* (a traditional bowed string instrument).

Each region has its own unique variation of *bajujai* (the act of singing lullabies). In the South Coast region, *bajujai* is typically accompanied by the *rabab*, while in inland areas (*darek*), it is performed with the *saluang*. In Padang, *bajujai* often features violin-based melodies, such as the *biola Pauh*. The teachings embedded in these lullabies are reflected in the mother's technique of singing to the child in the cradle, often incorporating phrases of *tauhid*, such as *la ilaha illallah* (there is no god but Allah).

This study examines the lullabies of the Minangkabau society, known as *manjujai*. This research is significant as it contributes to the documentation of Indonesia's cultural literacy, supporting the preservation of cultural heritage to prevent its disappearance or extinction. Additionally, lullabies are the most natural and effective method for soothing children to sleep, as they leverage the familiarity of a mother's voice. Mothers are encouraged to sing lullabies whenever they put their children to bed.

The lyrics of *manjujai* embody noble values, hopes, prayers, and serve as a symbol of parental sincerity in raising their children. A lullaby typically also involves gentle movements that align with the song's tempo. The purpose of this study is to describe, uncover, and analyze the meaning and function of *manjujai* as a cultural expression of the Minangkabau society. However, existing studies on *manjujai* (We and Fauzian, 2021; Asifa, 2021; Delima et al., 2019; Helmanizar and Rahmy, 2020) have not yet explored the social functions and the connection between the local and universal values embedded in this tradition. Therefore, this article focuses on the social functions of Minangkabau lullabies, or *manjujai*, including their expressive, directive, and aesthetic roles.

2. METHODS

This article is based on the results of qualitative research. The data for this study consists of the functional aspects of the oral tradition text found in the Minangkabau community's lullabies. Data collection was carried out through an inventory process using library research (document analysis) based on the book by Helmanizar and Rahmy (2020). The *manjujai* texts were then analyzed in terms of their format, content, and descriptions of their social functions. The analysis of the social functions of these folk songs was conducted using Danandjaja's (2002) folkloristic function theory, as applied to *manjujai*.

The primary approach employed to analyze the issues was the folklore function approach (Danandjaja, 2002). This approach identifies children's lullabies as a form of folk song where both the lyrics and the melodies play equally significant roles, aligning seamlessly with the rhythms of specific human activities. The social functions of these lullabies include serving as a projection system, as an educational tool for children, as a form of recreation, and as a medium for transmitting oral traditions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As an oral tradition, the lullabies of the Minangkabau society are considered anonymous, with their authorship unknown. For this reason, the Minangkabau people regard these songs as part of their collective heritage and strive to pass them down to future generations. Another hallmark of the oral tradition in Minangkabau lullabies is the flexibility of *manjujai*; it can be easily altered in format, structure, or content. This phenomenon aligns with the characteristics of folklore and oral literature, where texts are often transmitted through repetition, spontaneity, and close ties to everyday life. These lullabies are not confined to village (*nagari*) settings but have a broader geographical spread and are derived from various sources.

The content of *manjujai* oral tradition texts primarily consists of prayers, messages, hopes, and advice, reflecting the feelings and thoughts of the mother singing the lullaby. In the cultural context of traditional Minangkabau society, families lived in *rumah gadang* (traditional communal houses), which were inhabited not only by the nuclear family but also by the extended family. This communal living significantly influenced the development of values and norms, embodied in the Minangkabau adage *adat basandi syara', syara' basandi kitabullah* (customs are based on Islamic law, and Islamic law is based on the Qur'an). Within the *rumah gadang*, the responsibility for raising children did not rest solely on the parents but was shared among many individuals, including those living in and around the house. The collective stimulation and care for children often involved the practice of *manjujai*.

As a result, the content of these lullabies reflects not only the feelings and thoughts of a mother or father for their child but also those of grandparents for their grandchildren, aunts (*etek*) for their nieces and nephews, or even siblings for their younger brothers or sisters. A child nurtured by their extended family through *manjujai* is more likely to thrive emotionally, benefiting from an optimal emotional connection with their mother, grandmother, *etek*, siblings, or caregivers.

Based on the structure, format, and content of lullabies from the inland regions of the Minangkabau community in West Sumatra, as described above, these lullabies fulfill multiple social functions. The most prominent among them are expressive, directive, and aesthetic social functions.

3.1. The Function of Expressing Emotions, Thoughts, and Life Attitudes (Expressive)

The expressive function refers to the role of language as a medium for conveying emotions, thoughts, and attitudes toward life. Emotions, in this context, relate to the inner state of the mother while singing *manjujai*, such as feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, or anxiety. According to Echols and Shadily (2014), expressive refers to an expression that conveys emotions. Below are examples of verses that reflect a mother's happiness while singing the songs *Tapuak Ambai-Ambai* and *Buai*.

The Song *Tapuak Ambai-Ambai*

<i>Tapuak ambai-ambai</i>	(Tap lightly)
<i>Bilalang kupu-kupu</i>	(Grasshopper and butterfly)
<i>Batapuak anak pandai</i>	(Clap for the smart child)
<i>Diupah aia susu</i>	(Rewarded with milk)
 <i>Aia susu lamak manih</i>	 (Sweet and delicious milk)

<i>Basantan karambia mudo</i>	(Enriched with young coconut milk)
<i>Anak jan manangih</i>	(Child, do not cry)
<i>Bak batambahlah cadiaknyo</i>	(As if growing smarter)
<i>Aia susu lamak manih</i>	(Sweet and delicious milk)
<i>Diagiah ka anaknyo</i>	(Given to the child)
<i>Anak jan manangih</i>	(Child, do not cry)
<i>Bak batambahlah cadiaknyo</i>	(As if growing smarter)
(Helmizar and Rahmy, 2020)	

The song *Tapuak Ambai-Ambai*, commonly sung by Minangkabau parents to their children, expresses a mother's happiness toward her child through the text of the lullaby. This song reflects the mother's joy at the presence of her child in her life. In addition to conveying happiness, it also expresses a mother's love and affection, celebrating the child's health and growing intelligence (*Bak batambahlah cadiaknyo* – 'As if growing smarter'), as well as milestones such as the ability to clap hands (*Batapuak anak pandai* – 'Clap for the smart child') and the child's physical growth. The mother's joyful feelings, expressed through rewarding the child for their achievements, are captured in the phrase (*Diupah aia susu* – 'Rewarded with milk').

The lyrics of *manujai* are written in the form of *pantun*. *Pantun* is a traditional form of poetry bound by specific structures. In the Minangkabau context, *pantun* is not only sung as part of lullabies but also incorporated into Minangkabau song lyrics. Generally, *pantun* contains prayers, advice, hopes, messages, cultural values, religious teachings, aesthetic wordplay, and rhythmic beauty.

Manujai, as practiced in Minangkabau society, takes the form of emotional expressions conveyed through lines and couplets grouped into stanzas and verses. Regarding the meaning of *pantun*, Navis (2015) in *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru* explains that *pantun* is synonymous with *umpama* (a parable or analogy). The word *pantun* originates from the Minangkabau term *petuntun* (or *patuntun*), which means 'a guide' or 'a parable' (Zuber Usman, 1970). The phonetic shift from *petuntun* to *pantun* is a natural occurrence in the Minangkabau language.

This song incorporates elements of joyful *pantun*. Joyful *pantun* is a form of poetry that expresses delight and happiness in response to a particular event or situation.

<i>Tapuak ambai-ambai</i>	(Tap lightly)
<i>Bilalang kupu-kupu</i>	(Grasshopper and butterfly)
<i>Batapuak anak pandai</i>	(Clap for the smart child)
<i>Diupah aia susu</i>	(Rewarded with milk)

The *pantun* elements in the song make it easier to understand its meaning and message. For instance, the title of the song, *Tapuak Ambai Ambai*, translates to 'clap softly', while *bilalang kupu-kupu* translates to 'grasshopper and butterfly', symbolizing the gentle fluttering of a butterfly. When these elements are combined, the song conveys the idea of clapping softly, like a butterfly gracefully flapping its wings as it flutters around a garden. The purpose of the song is to calm a child, preventing them from crying, while fostering a sense of joy and encouraging them to drink their milk happily.

The Song *Babui*

<i>Tabang alang-alang tabang sukiki</i>	(Fly, alang-alang, fly, Sukiki)
<i>Inggok di ranting si kayu gadang</i>	(Perch on the branch of a large tree)
<i>Lalok babuai sambia bamimpi</i>	(Sleep while dreaming)
<i>Lalok barayun mandeh bandendang</i>	(Sleep while swinging, as mother sings a lullaby)

<i>Gadanglah aia di Malalak</i>	(The water rises high in Malalak)
<i>Hanyuik sagalo batang padi</i>	(All the rice stalks are swept away)
<i>Mari baayun sambia galak</i>	(Come swing while laughing)
<i>Usah nak kanduang baibo ati</i>	(Do not let the child feel sadness)

(Helmizar and Rahmy, 2020)

The song *Babuai* represents an expression of a mother's thoughts, emotions, and attitudes of love and happiness as she soothes her child to sleep. The thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and experiences expressed in the song are the result of deep reflection on the obstacles and challenges encountered in life, giving rise to lyrics that convey joy while inviting the child to sing along before falling asleep (*Mari baayun sambia galak* – 'Come swing while laughing'). This song also conveys the mother's hopes and feelings for her child, including wishes for the child to always be healthy, happy, and free from sadness. These emotions are expressed through lines such as (*Lalok barayun mandeh bandendang* – 'Sleep while swinging, as mother sings a lullaby') and (*Usah nak kanduang baibo ati* – 'Do not let the child feel sadness').

Babies are naturally drawn to light, gentle, and high-pitched voices, especially those of their mothers. This explains why babies often stop crying when their mothers sing to them, a response not typically elicited by others. Interestingly, the absence of a mother's soothing voice can impact a baby's brain development. While singing, mothers often gently pat their child's bottom or softly stroke their back and head with tenderness and love, creating a comforting environment that helps the child drift off to sleep.

3.2. The Function of Directive

Echols dan Shadily (2014) define *adjektiva direktif* (the directive adjective) as referring to guidance, expression, or instruction. The directive function involves speech that aims to encourage the listener to perform actions aligned with the speaker's intent. One method employed by Minangkabau mothers or women to instill cultural and religious values in children from an early age is through the tradition of *manjujai*. This practice can begin as early as the child is in the womb, but the method must be adjusted to the child's age. The lyrics of lullabies are used by the Minangkabau community as a medium to convey messages, advice, prayers, and requests, as well as teachings about truth and morality. These elements are evident in the song *Anak Kandang*, a reflection of this tradition.

The Song *Anak Kandang*

<i>Anak Kandang</i>	(Biological Child)
<i>Anak kanduang si biran tulang</i>	(A biological child, the heart and soul)
<i>Ubek jariah palarai damam</i>	(The remedy for exhaustion)
<i>Anak kanduang capeklah gadang</i>	(Biological child, grow up quickly)
<i>Buliah tabangkik batang tarandam</i>	(To bring honor and dignity to the family)

<i>Muluik manih kucindan murah</i>	(Speak gently)
<i>Budi baiak baso katuju</i>	(Behave with kindness and politeness)
<i>Anak gadih rajin sikola</i>	(A young girl diligent in school)
<i>Pandai mangaji jo malagu</i>	(Skilled in reciting the Qur'an and singing)
<i>Kok bajalan sapanjang balai</i>	(Walk with grace)
<i>Pado pai suruik nan labiah</i>	(It is better to be humble)
<i>Kok bakawan upiaklah pandai</i>	(A young girl skilled in making friends)
<i>Rang panuruik anak salehah</i>	(Obedient and pious daughter)
(Helmizar and Rahmy, 2020)	

The song *Anak Kandung* serves as a medium for instilling or teaching cultural values through advice, messages, aspirations, and prayers. In Minangkabau society, where Islam is the predominant religion, prayer plays a central role in daily life, especially the prayers of a mother for her child as she soothes them to sleep. This reflects a mother's hopes for her child and serves as a highly effective means of fostering a loving and close bond between mother and child. The song's lyrics also function as a tool for character building, teaching children to prioritize education (*Anak gadih rajin sikola* – 'A young girl diligent in school') and religious study (*Pandai mangaji jo malagu* – 'Skilled in reciting the Qur'an and singing') so that they grow up to be virtuous, faithful, and righteous individuals (*Rang panuruik anak salehah* – 'Obedient and pious daughter').

The lullaby's lyrics are sung as the child enters a theta brainwave state—a subconscious state associated with sleep—which enhances the transfer of advice, messages, aspirations, and prayers. According to medical and psychological experts, messages conveyed during this state are more likely to be absorbed. The mother's lullabies, therefore, act as a form of subconscious interaction, reflecting her hopes and dreams for her child.

The song also serves as parental advice and a reminder for children to uphold the values of politeness and Minangkabau customs, particularly the concept of *Raso jo Pareso*—a sense of fear and reverence toward God, coupled with modesty and politeness in interactions with others. These values include kindness and respectful communication (*Budi baiak baso katuju* – 'Behave kindly and speak politely'), mutual respect, empathy, and a consideration for others, as well as the importance of gentle and pleasant speech (*Muluik manih kucindan murah* – 'Speak gently and kindly').

In Minangkabau culture, *malu* (a sense of shame) is an essential part of one's identity, reflecting the society's adherence to Islamic teachings. This is encapsulated in the Minangkabau principle: *Adat bersanding syariat, syariat bersanding Kitabullah* (Customs align with Islamic law, and Islamic law aligns with the Qur'an). The lyrics of *Anak Kandung* emphasize the importance of cultivating this sense of shame as a protective moral guide. For Minangkabau society, shame serves as a moral compass, to the extent that it is considered better to die than to live in disgrace. Modesty and humility are also reflected in the song's advice, such as (*Kok bajalan sapanjang balai* – 'Walk with grace') and (*Pado pai suruik nan labiah* – 'It is better to give way').

Minangkabau customs act as a binding force, shaping children's roles and identities within the community from the stages of childhood (*taratak*), to adolescence (*nigari*), and eventually to adulthood and migration (*merantau*). Through this song, it is evident that mothers aspire for their children to grow up practicing Minangkabau customs in their daily lives, ensuring their survival and cultural preservation.

In Minangkabau society, children are often referred to as *anak kanduang sibiran tulang* (a biological child, the heart and soul, and a remedy for exhaustion). This highlights the profound importance of children in the lives of their parents. Children are viewed as the realization of their parents' dreams, and as such, parents treat them with utmost care and hope for their success. The aspiration is to raise pious children (*Rang panuruik anak salehah* – 'Obedient and pious daughter').

The Minangkabau expression *ubek jariah palarai damam* (a remedy for exhaustion and pain relief) conveys the idea that children bring comfort and relief to their parents, especially after the hardships endured in raising them. The phrase *ubek* (remedy) and *jariah* (effort) reflect a reward for the hard work and struggles parents face, while *damam* (illness or fever) symbolizes physical and emotional fatigue. Thus, *palarai damam* implies that children serve as a balm for their parents' struggles, providing solace and pride in their accomplishments.

Parents often endure significant challenges, from raising their children as infants to funding their education and meeting their life needs. When a child succeeds in their education and secures a respectable career, parents feel immense pride and happiness, viewing their child's success as a reflection of *ubek jariah palarai damam*. Children who show gratitude, behave well, are diligent in worship, and excel academically embody this concept, bringing joy and fulfillment to their parents. Parents work tirelessly to build a better future for their children, and the children, in turn, become a source of emotional solace for their parents.

The phrase *mambangik batang tarandam* (reviving buried honor or dignity) is another important metaphor in Minangkabau culture. It literally means 'to raise a submerged branch', but it symbolizes restoring long-lost values or reviving family honor and pride that may have been diminished due to circumstances. This message is conveyed through the song *Anak Kandung*, emphasizing the importance of understanding religion, adhering to Minangkabau customs, and striving to restore family honor and dignity.

3.3. The Function of Aesthetics

The *manjujai* lyrics or lullabies in Minangkabau society, which are diverse and multifaceted, demonstrate the creativity of the Minangkabau ethnic group in West Sumatra in transforming ordinary vocabulary into poetic lyrics or verses. These lyrics are rich in euphony and stylistic elements. Euphony refers to musical effects, while stylistics relates to language and style. One of the most commonly analyzed elements in literary works (e.g., poetry) is rhyme, which plays a dominant role in creating euphony in literary compositions. The euphonic and stylistic dimensions of these lyrics reflect an aesthetic quality deeply rooted in literary traditions.

In this context, the *manjujai* lyrics, presented in the form of *pantun*, carry an aesthetic function. As a literary genre, the lullabies of the Minangkabau people inherently embody the qualities of literature, which include aesthetic and artistic value. *Pantun* is considered one of the most significant forms of oral literature for the Minangkabau society (Navis, 2015).

Due to the intrinsic aesthetic nature of literary works, the verses in *manjujai* lyrics inherently serve an aesthetic function. Thus, the aesthetic function is carried by the entirety of the *pantun* verses found within the lullaby lyrics.

Historically, Minangkabau *pantun* was often written in Jawi script and included in *Schoolschriften* (school notebooks) compiled by former students of the *Sekolah Radja* (Royal School) in Fort de Kock, Bukittinggi. These were later collected by Van Ophujsen and Van

Ronkel and are now preserved in the Library of Leiden University. Despite their historical and cultural significance, these manuscripts remain largely unexplored. Additionally, hundreds of *pantun* verses were collected by Dutch researchers from various regions in Minangkabau during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Regarding the aesthetics of Minangkabau *pantun*, it is not an exaggeration to refer to Minangkabau as "The Ancestral Home of the Malay Language," as noted by an English scholar in the early 19th century (Marsden, 1807). The figurative and layered nature of the Minangkabau language also indicates its antiquity.

Pantun is recognized as one of the classical forms of structured poetry, consisting of four lines with an *abab* rhyme scheme. The first two lines serve as the *sampiran* (preface), while the last two lines convey the main message. This distinctive structure is also present in the Minangkabau poetic genre, referred to as *pantun*. However, Minangkabau *pantun* possesses unique qualities and aesthetics, particularly its richness in meaning. The content of *pantun* is often filled with figurative language, metaphors, satire, and analogies. The aesthetics of Minangkabau song lyrics are dominated by the *pantun* pattern, as exemplified in the lyrics of songs such as *Rambahlah Paku* and *Timang Lado-Lado*.

The Song *Rambahlah Paku*

<i>Kok Upiak Lah Gadang</i>	(When Upiak grows up)
<i>Bao rotan ka tali timbo</i>	(Bring rattan to make a water bucket rope)
<i>Kok upiak pai ka ladang</i>	(If Upiak goes to the fields)
<i>Adaik sopan nan ka dijago</i>	(Customs and politeness must be upheld)

<i>Upiak rambahlah paku</i>	(Upiak, cut the ferns)
<i>Tarang jalan ka parak</i>	(To clear the path to the garden)
<i>Upiak eloklah laku</i>	(Upiak, be graceful in conduct)
<i>Sayang urang bakeh awak</i>	(So that people cherish and respect us)

<i>Cubadak masak di batang</i>	(The jackfruit ripens on the tree)
<i>Tumbuah luruih dakek Parigi</i>	(Growing tall near Parigi)
<i>Nak rancak दिलेक urang</i>	(To be admired by others)
<i>Budi aluih mamikek ati</i>	(Kindness and virtue win hearts)

<i>Upiak rambahlah paku</i>	(Upiak, cut the ferns)
<i>Tarang jalan ka parak</i>	(To clear the path to the garden)
<i>Upiak eloklah laku</i>	(Upiak, be graceful in conduct)
<i>Sayang urang bakeh awak</i>	(So that people cherish and respect us)

(Helmizar and Rahmy, 2020)

The lyrics of the song *Rambahlah Paku* showcase linguistic beauty through a structured poetic form that adheres to lines, stanzas, rhyme, and rhythm. Its aesthetic appeal relies primarily on rhythm and diction. The song employs repetition as a literary technique, with words, phrases, or clauses repeated within the same line, across different lines in the same stanza, or even across lines in different stanzas.

Minangkabau *pantun* is characterized by polysemy, or multiple layers of meaning. When read only at the surface level, the deeper meaning remains elusive. The essence of *pantun* lies in its second half, known as the *isi* (content lines), which conveys the intended message.

In *Rambahlah Paku*, the name *Upiak* is used as a familiar address for a young Minangkabau girl. The lyrics encapsulate prayers and aspirations, as reflected in lines such as *adaik sopan nan ka dijago* (customs and politeness must be upheld), *Upiak eloklah laku* (Upiak, be graceful in conduct), and *sayang urang bakeh awak* (so that people cherish and respect us). Additionally, an important moral lesson is embedded in the phrase *nak rancak दिलेक urang, budi aluih mamikek ati* (to be admired by others, one must possess kindness and virtue).

The text of *Rambahlah Paku* is not merely written, read, or recited as a song; it is creatively composed by integrating sound elements and careful word choice (diction), transforming it into a poetic literary text with strong aesthetic value. The song follows a free-verse poetic format, with its lines, stanzas, rhyme, and rhythm not bound by a fixed pattern. The aesthetic quality of *Rambahlah Paku*, as a free-verse poem, emerges from its rhythm, which generates a sense of cacophony and evokes a deeply emotional atmosphere. Furthermore, the artistic essence is enhanced through meticulously arranged diction, producing a harmonious blend of sound and rhythm that contributes to the song's overall beauty.

The Song *Timang Lado-Lado*

<i>Timang lado-lado</i>	(Rocking the chili pepper)
<i>Lado panggulai paku</i>	(Chili for cooking ferns)
<i>Sajak si upiak ado</i>	(Since little Upiak arrived)
<i>Lah ado nan ka dipangku</i>	(There is now someone to cradle)
<i>Timang lado-lado</i>	(Rocking the chili pepper)
<i>Lado panggulai baluik</i>	(Chili for cooking eel)
<i>Sajak si upiak ado</i>	(Since little Upiak arrived)
<i>Lah ado kawan bagaluik</i>	(There is now a friend to play with)
<i>Iyo bana sanang hati alah tibo</i>	(Truly, joy has arrived)
<i>Kini nan di nanti</i>	(The one we have awaited)
<i>Iyo bana angek hati lah basuo</i>	(Indeed, happiness has come with our meeting)
<i>Iyo nan dicari</i>	(The one we have longed for)
<i>Timang lado-lado</i>	(Rocking the chili pepper)
<i>Lado campua jo kunik</i>	(Chili mixed with turmeric)
<i>Sajak si upiak ado</i>	(Since little Upiak arrived)
<i>Lah ado nan ka diulik</i>	(There is now someone to tickle)

(Helmizar and Rahmy, 2020)

The word *timang* refers to 'the act of holding and gently rocking a child while showering them with affectionate praise'. The repetition of *timang lado-lado* (rocking the chili pepper) and *iyo bana* (truly, indeed) within a single line, as well as the repetition of phrases or clauses from one line to another within the same stanza or across different stanzas, is a key feature of *manjujai* that enhances the aesthetic appeal of the song *Timang Lado-Lado*.

Repetition—whether within the same line or carried over to the next—creates a rhythmic and melodic pattern that heightens the musicality of the lullaby. The recurrence of words and sounds at specific intervals enhances the song's aesthetic value, making it more

soothing and pleasing to the ear. In addition to establishing rhythm, repetition also serves to emphasize important words or phrases, reinforcing their significance within the lyrics.

As a work of oral literature, *Timang Lado-Lado* naturally embodies artistic beauty. Each stanza within the lullaby carries an aesthetic function, contributing to the overall poetic quality of the song. Thus, the song's aesthetic value is embedded in its lyrical composition as a whole.

<i>Timang lado-lado</i>	(Rocking the chili pepper)
<i>Lado campua jo kunik</i>	(Chili mixed with turmeric)
<i>Sajak si upiak ado</i>	(Since little Upiak arrived)
<i>Lah ado nan ka diulik</i>	(There is now someone to tickle)

The lyrics of *Timang Lado-Lado* follow the traditional *pantun* structure, consisting of four lines with an alternating *a-b-a-b* rhyme scheme. The first two lines serve as the *sampiran*, while the final two lines contain the *isi*. Minangkabau *pantun* is a form of classical poetry that employs the Minangkabau language and is deeply rooted in the region's oral traditions. The *pantun* in this lullaby conveys a mother's joy following the birth of her daughter, alongside parental hopes for the child to lead a prosperous and fulfilling life in the future.

<i>Timang lado-lado</i>	(Rocking the chili pepper)	: <i>sampiran</i>
<i>Lado panggulai paku</i>	(Chili for cooking ferns)	: <i>sampiran</i>
<i>Sajak si upiak ado</i>	(Since little Upiak arrived)	: <i>isi</i>
<i>Lah ado nan ka dipangku</i>	(There is now someone to cradle)	: <i>isi</i>

In Minangkabau *pantun*, the *sampiran* and *isi* may not always be directly related. Additionally, *pantun* is bound by syllabic structure, with each line traditionally containing a set number of syllables. Ideally, Minangkabau *pantun* follows a pattern of nine to ten syllables per line. However, in *Timang Lado-Lado*, the first to third lines contain nine syllables each.

<i>Timang lado-lado</i>	(Rocking the chili pepper)
<i>Lado panggulai baluik</i>	(Chili for cooking eel)
<i>Sajak si upiak ado</i>	(Since little Upiak arrived)
<i>Lah ado kawan bagaluik</i>	(There is now a friend to play with)

While minor variations in syllable count may occur, these deviations are adjusted by the composer to maintain the overall rhythm of the song. If the rhythm requires adaptation, the number of syllables per line may be slightly increased or reduced. Minangkabau *pantun* is regarded as unique due to its linguistic diversity. Unlike a singular poetic form, Minangkabau *pantun* exists in multiple variations, each employing different stylistic approaches and linguistic features. A notable example is *pantun bidarai*, a specialized poetic form found in lullabies such as *Laloklah Nak* (Sleep, My Child). These variations highlight the richness and adaptability of Minangkabau poetic traditions, reinforcing their enduring cultural and literary significance.

The Song *Laloklah Nak*

<i>Sanang laloklah nak kanduang</i>	(Sleep peacefully, my beloved child)
<i>Sanang babuai si birantulang</i>	(Sway gently, my heart and soul)
<i>Elok lakulah nak kanduang</i>	(Behave well, my dear child)

Nak baguno jikok lah gadang (So you may be useful when you grow up)
(Helmizar and Rahmy, 2020)

The lyrics of *Laloklah Nak* belong to the category of *bidarai kato* or *pantun bidarai*. Unlike traditional pantun, which are typically composed of four-line stanzas, *pantun bidarai* is more flexible and may consist of more than four lines. In the broader context of poetry studies, poetic forms such as *bidarai kato* can be categorized as *syair*. *Syair* is a form of classical poetry in which every line conveys meaning, rather than following the pantun structure where the first two lines (*sampiran*) serve as an introduction and the last two (*isi*) contain the main message.

In *bidarai kato*, meaning is present from the very first line, and each subsequent line is closely connected to the previous one. This distinguishes it from conventional *pantun*, where the *sampiran* and *isi* may be unrelated. Due to this distinctive structure, *bidarai kato* is sometimes also referred to as *pantun bidarai*.

Functionally, lullabies serve as both a psychological and emotional release for mothers as they soothe their children to sleep. At the same time, these songs convey optimism and aspirations, reflecting a mother's hope that her child will grow up to have a far better life than she or her parents experienced.

4. CONCLUSION

The content of *manjujai* texts in Minangkabau society contains guidance in the form of noble teachings. These texts serve three primary social functions: (1) expressing emotions, thoughts, and attitudes toward life, (2) imparting cultural values through advice, messages, and hopes, and (3) presenting the beauty of rhythm and diction through the repetition of words, phrases, or clauses, whether within the same line, across different lines in the same stanza, or across different stanzas. The synergy between free-form poetry and structured poetic patterns creates both aesthetic and ethical value. The *manjujai* texts achieve three social functions: (1) they convey emotions, thoughts, and life attitudes; (2) they teach cultural values through advice, messages, and aspirations; and (3) they evoke a sense of linguistic beauty, comfort, tranquility, and well-being, offering a calming and reassuring experience for the child who listens. This beauty fosters a sense of security, peace, and serenity for the child, enriching the emotional connection and overall well-being.

5. REFERENCES

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