

Research Article

Function of Lasuang Music in Gandang Lasuang Arts During A Wedding Ceremony in Jorong Pasa Lamo, Sasak Ranah Pasisie District, West Pasaman Regency

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ABSTRACT

Gandang Lasuang is a traditional musical art that originates from Jorong Pasa Lamo, Sasak Ranah Pasisie District, West Pasaman Regency. The main instrument, called lasuang, is traditionally made of wood and was initially used as a tool for pounding rice. Over time, this functional household tool was transformed into a musical instrument that produces rhythmic sounds when struck with wooden sticks. Historically, Gandang Lasuang was used as a form of self-entertainment, particularly by women while pounding rice or by fishermen during bright moon nights when they did not go to sea. Today, Gandang Lasuang has taken on a more significant role in the social and cultural life of the community. It is performed not only for entertainment but also as part of important traditional events, especially wedding ceremonies, traditional rituals, national holidays, and various community celebrations in Jorong Pasa Lamo. This research aims to analyze the functions of lasuang music within wedding ceremonies. A qualitative descriptive method was used, with data collected through literature studies, field observations, and interviews with key informants including members of the Nyiur Melambai art group, traditional leaders (Ninik Mamak), and local residents. The study finds that lasuang music serves various functions in wedding ceremonies: emotional expression, entertainment, communication, physical engagement, response stimulation, reinforcement of social norms, cultural preservation, and fostering of community integration. These functions highlight the cultural importance of Gandang Lasuang as both a musical tradition and a means of strengthening social bonds in the local community.

Keywords: Gandang Lasuang; Music Function; Lasuang Music; Gandang Lasuang Music

1. INTRODUCTION

Art plays a crucial role in shaping, maintaining, and asserting the cultural identity of a society. It is not merely a form of entertainment but a manifestation of the values, beliefs, and collective experiences of the community that creates it. As stated by (Sriwulan et al., 2023), art is a cultural product born from and for society, reflecting social dynamics and serving as a medium for emotional, spiritual, and aesthetic expression. (Asril, 2019) adds that art encompasses various elements—beauty, communication, skill, and sincerity—which make it a profound reflection of human existence and emotion. In Indonesia, traditional art once held a central position in community life. It served not only as a source of entertainment but also as an educational, communicative, and symbolic medium in various customary ceremonies. However, today's reality shows that traditional art is experiencing a decline in existence. The wave of globalization, which brings popular foreign cultures, along with the shifting interests of younger generations toward modern culture, poses a threat to the continuity of traditional art. (Izzati & Pamungkas, 2024; Pulu et al., 2024) emphasize that many local art forms are being abandoned and gradually forgotten, even by the communities to which they belong. This phenomenon not only causes a cultural identity crisis but also hinders the transmission of local wisdom to future generations.

The Minangkabau, as one of the major ethnic groups in Indonesia, possess a rich and unique array of traditional arts. Performing arts such as the Piriang Dance, Randai, Indang, and Payung, as well as oral traditions like Pantun and Bakaba, are inseparable from the cultural identity of West Sumatra's society. Traditional music also plays a vital role through instruments like the Saluang, Rabab, and Gandang Tabuik. These art forms serve not only as aesthetic expressions but also as vehicles for strengthening communal solidarity, conveying moral messages, and upholding the values of adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah. Among the diverse forms of Minangkabau art, Gandang Lasuang stands out as a unique cultural expression, particularly in West Pasaman, specifically in Jorong Pasa Lamo, Sasak Ranah Pasisia Subdistrict (Arsih et al., 2019; Irianto et al., 2020; Kadir, 2020). This tradition originated from the daily activity of pounding rice, which

eventually evolved into a musical performance integrated into various traditional events, especially weddings. Over time, Gandang Lasuang has become more than just entertainment; it has transformed into a symbol of identity and a medium of cultural communication for the local community. Its distinctive sound creates a profound emotional atmosphere and enriches ceremonial rituals, making it essential in the conduct of traditional wedding ceremonies (Irfan & Suminto, 2019).

However, the Gandang Lasuang tradition is now facing serious challenges. Modernization, changing entertainment preferences, and a lack of institutional support have caused this art form to gradually lose its appeal, especially among the younger generation. Many young people no longer understand the meaning or function of Gandang Lasuang, and the number of preservation groups is decreasing. Amidst this threat, the “Nyiur Melambai” group from Jorong Pasa Lamo has remained consistent in performing and innovating to preserve the existence of Gandang Lasuang. They not only maintain its original form but also develop performances by incorporating modern musical instruments and expanding their stage to district and provincial levels. The uniqueness of the “Nyiur Melambai” group reflects a cultural revitalization process that deserves further study (Indrayuda et al., 2020). Their ability to maintain Gandang Lasuang as a dominant art form in traditional wedding ceremonies shows that they are not merely preservers but also agents of cultural transformation. This demonstrates that traditional art does not need to remain static; it can adapt and stay relevant amid changing times.

The urgency of this research lies in two main aspects: first, the importance of documenting and analyzing Gandang Lasuang as a highly valuable intangible cultural heritage; and second, the need to understand the local community strategies, especially those of the “Nyiur Melambai” group, in sustaining and developing this art form. Although several prior studies exist—such as (Arslanbek et al., 2022) which examined the function of Gandang Lasuang in wedding ceremonies, and (Cetinic & She, 2022; Ngoe & Fikri, 2024) who explored the performance and musical aspects—these studies have not thoroughly addressed the social function of Gandang Lasuang from the perspective of cultural revitalization and the sustainability of traditional art in the face of modern challenges. Therefore, this research fills a gap in the study of Minangkabau traditional arts, particularly regarding community-based preservation and innovation strategies. This study also enriches the discourse on how traditional art can survive and evolve amid modernization pressures, and provides concrete contributions to strengthening local cultural identity in Indonesia (Kashif et al., 2024).

Based on the above background, the research questions posed are: What is the function of Lasuang music in Gandang Lasuang performances during wedding ceremonies in the community of Jorong Pasa Lamo, Sasak Ranah Pasisia Subdistrict, West Pasaman Regency? How does the “Nyiur Melambai” art group strive to preserve and revitalize Gandang Lasuang so that it remains relevant in modern society?. The objectives of this study are: To describe and analyze the function of Lasuang music in Gandang Lasuang performances in the context of wedding rituals in Jorong Pasa Lamo. To reveal the preservation and artistic innovation strategies implemented by the “Nyiur Melambai” group as efforts to sustain the Gandang Lasuang tradition amid socio-cultural change. Through this research, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of the role of traditional art in constructing cultural identity will be achieved, as well as the development of strategic recommendations for the preservation and community-based development of traditional art.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the cultural significance and local understanding of the Gandang Lasuang traditional performance. The research was conducted in Jorong Pasa Lamo, Sasak Ranah Pasisia District, West Pasaman Regency an area known for its strong cultural heritage and enduring community-based traditional practices. Data collection techniques included literature review, field observation, and in-depth interviews, all of which were designed to obtain a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the tradition within its native setting. Informants were selected through purposive sampling and included administrators and performers from the Gandang Lasuang art group, as well as local residents who were familiar with the tradition. The use of a qualitative approach was deemed essential for capturing the values, meanings, and community narratives associated with the performance. This aligns with the perspective of (Sugiyono, 2019) who emphasize the importance of immersive and interpretive methods in cultural research to reveal indigenous knowledge and identity. Such an approach ensures that the socio-cultural context of traditional arts is not only preserved but also interpreted in a way that resonates with the lived experiences of the local community.

The findings of this study reveal that Lasuang music, as performed in Gandang Lasuang, plays a multifaceted role in traditional Minangkabau wedding ceremonies. Specifically, it functions as a medium of emotional expression, entertainment, symbolic communication, physical engagement, reinforcement of social norms, cultural continuity, and community integration. These functions are deeply embedded within the ceremonial life of Jorong Pasa Lamo, reflecting the dynamic relationship between traditional art and community values. The literature review undertaken in this study served to establish a theoretical and historical foundation for understanding Gandang Lasuang within the broader context of Minangkabau culture. Field observations during wedding ceremonies allowed the researcher to directly experience the performance, observe its ritual elements, and appreciate its role within the cultural framework of the community. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants including group leaders, musicians, and long-time observers or participants, enabling a rich, insider perspective on the meanings and functions of the tradition.

This multi-method strategy was crucial to achieving the depth and nuance expected in cultural studies. As noted by (Yusuf, 2014) the integration of observation and interviews in ethnographic and heritage research allows for a more holistic and context-sensitive understanding of traditional practices. Through this approach, the study captured not only how Gandang Lasuang is performed, but also how it is experienced, interpreted, and preserved by the local community. Jorong Pasa Lamo was purposefully chosen as the research site due to its ongoing commitment to preserving the Gandang Lasuang tradition. Unlike many other areas where such practices have faded, this community continues to feature Gandang Lasuang as a vital component of wedding rituals. This setting offered a valuable opportunity to investigate how traditional arts can persist and adapt within the realities of contemporary rural life. The informants provided key insights into the symbolic meanings of the music, as well as how its performance reflects both continuity and change in response to modern influences. Following the recommendations of (Haryono, 2023) the selection of informants prioritized those most directly involved with the tradition to ensure authenticity and depth in the interpretation of cultural data.

The research findings show that Gandang Lasuang music enables the expression of deep emotional states during wedding processions. The tempo and resonance of the instruments accompany different ritual moments such as welcoming guests or presenting the bride—thereby helping to create a solemn and joyful atmosphere. Beyond its emotional role, the music also serves as a source of entertainment, energizing the event and engaging both local attendees and guests from neighboring areas. The performance thus fosters communal celebration while maintaining a festive ambiance. Furthermore, Gandang Lasuang operates as a medium of non-verbal communication. Through rhythm and structure, it conveys messages of respect, honor, and gratitude—toward guests and ancestral spirits alike—without the need for spoken words. These shared cultural codes are understood by the community, reinforcing social cohesion and collective memory.

The music also evokes physical responses from both performers and spectators. Movements such as foot tapping, body swaying, and hand gestures reflect the audience's instinctive engagement with the rhythm, creating an immersive sensory experience that connects mind, body, and spirit. At the same time, the performance reinforces community norms and ethical behavior, particularly regarding conduct during ceremonial events. The structure and etiquette of Gandang Lasuang mirror values such as mutual respect, unity, and social responsibility. Importantly, the ongoing practice of Gandang Lasuang ensures the transmission of cultural knowledge across generations. Its role in wedding ceremonies serves as a conduit for passing down traditions, performance techniques, and artistic values, making it a vehicle for cultural continuity amid the pressures of modernization. Moreover, the communal nature of the performance promotes intergenerational integration and strengthens the social fabric of the village. In sum, Lasuang music in the Gandang Lasuang tradition is far more than a form of entertainment. It is a multidimensional cultural expression that encapsulates emotional depth, ritual communication, and social cohesion. It reflects and preserves the foundational values of Minangkabau culture and plays a vital role in maintaining the identity and unity of the local community. Through its persistent presence in ceremonies and its adaptation to contemporary conditions, Gandang Lasuang remains a living tradition—one that continues to embody and transmit the cultural richness of Jorong Pasa Lamo across generations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The existence of Gandang Lasuang art in Jorong Pasa Lamo, located in the Sasak Ranah Pasisia District of West Pasaman Regency, has become deeply ingrained in the everyday life of the local community. Once regarded merely as a form of traditional entertainment, Gandang Lasuang has now evolved into a cultural necessity, playing a central role in various customary ceremonies. These include the turun mandi ritual a baby bathing tradition weddings, circumcision ceremonies, and welcoming events for esteemed guests. The integration of this traditional art form into social life reflects not only its enduring presence but also its dynamic relevance in contemporary Minangkabau society. Community enthusiasm for the revival of Gandang Lasuang has been particularly evident in recent years, with growing participation from local women who have shown an eagerness to learn the performance techniques and assist in the preparation and maintenance of instruments. This increased involvement from women represents a significant cultural shift, as it expands the traditionally male-dominated art form into a more inclusive domain of shared heritage. The local Gandang Lasuang group, Nyiur Melambai, has been motivated by this rising interest and has taken active steps to ensure the tradition's continuity. Government support has also played a key role in sustaining the growth and preservation of this cultural practice (Birsyada & Utami, 2024). The local administration has provided valuable assistance to the Nyiur Melambai group by supplying modern musical instruments such as keyboards, violins, bansi (traditional flutes), and sound equipment. While these additions may not be part of the original Gandang Lasuang ensemble, they reflect a thoughtful adaptation that allows the tradition to evolve and remain engaging for wider audiences without losing its core identity. Such institutional support affirms the government's recognition of Gandang Lasuang as a vital cultural asset and a symbol of regional pride. The synergy between community initiative and governmental backing has enabled this traditional art form to flourish, not only within the Sasak Ranah Pasisia District but also across neighboring areas.

The reach of Gandang Lasuang has now extended beyond its original ceremonial boundaries. While its most prominent and culturally significant role remains in traditional Minangkabau wedding ceremonies, its performance is no longer confined to such events. In weddings, Gandang Lasuang provides more than just musical accompaniment; it functions as an expression of collective emotion, a symbol of cultural continuity, and a marker of social identity. Its rhythmic patterns and ritual placement elevate the ceremonial atmosphere, transitioning moments from the mundane to the sacred. As the art form gains popularity, it is now being invited to weddings not only within Sasak Ranah Pasisia but also in other parts of West Pasaman Regency and beyond. This expansion highlights how Gandang Lasuang serves as a cultural ambassador for the community, bringing the rich traditions of Sasak to broader audiences while reinforcing the distinctiveness of Minangkabau identity (S. Wang et al., 2023; X. Zhao et al., 2024; Zui & Min, 2024).

Beyond weddings, Gandang Lasuang has found a vibrant role in various community and public events. At informal party gatherings or local festivities, the music fosters unity and joy, energizing the crowd and strengthening the social fabric through shared participation in traditional performance arts. Its presence in such settings demonstrates the art's flexibility—it adapts to both sacred and secular spaces, offering a bridge between heritage and everyday celebration. Welcoming ceremonies for guests from outside the region also frequently feature Gandang Lasuang. Whether the visitors are government officials, cultural delegations, or tourists, the performance serves as a powerful cultural gesture of hospitality (Mendes et al., 2024; Z. Wang et al., 2024). In the Minangkabau worldview, welcoming guests is an act infused with values of respect, honor, and community pride, and Gandang Lasuang becomes a medium through which these values are expressed. Through its performance, the community not only honors its visitors but also asserts its cultural identity in a dignified and celebratory manner. Further elevating its profile, Gandang Lasuang has been featured in official events held at the West Pasaman Regent's office. The local government recognizes the value of traditional arts in shaping regional identity and has made Gandang Lasuang a key component in cultural showcases and formal state ceremonies. Its institutionalization in such contexts signifies a transition from an informal, community-based practice to a formal cultural symbol of the regency. This governmental endorsement helps legitimize the art form and provides a platform for its preservation and continued relevance.

One of the notable milestones in the broader exposure of Gandang Lasuang is its participation in large-scale public events such as the Tour de Singkarak a prestigious national and international cycling event held in West Sumatra. During this event, which took place in Payakumbuh, Gandang Lasuang was showcased as part of the opening ceremonies, offering participants and spectators a glimpse into the rich cultural traditions of West Pasaman. Its appearance at such events reflects a growing trend of integrating traditional arts into modern tourism and promotional platforms. These moments present an opportunity to introduce West Sumatran heritage to global audiences, fostering cultural appreciation while opening up possibilities for sustainable cultural tourism. Another significant occasion was the inauguration of the Sasak Tourism Pier. As infrastructure for tourism development expands in the region, traditional performances like Gandang Lasuang have been incorporated into opening ceremonies to lend cultural depth and festive spirit to these milestones. Its presence at such inaugurations reinforces the region's commitment to grounding development in cultural roots and ensuring that modernization does not come at the cost of heritage. The performance not only entertains but also reminds attendees of the historical and spiritual values embedded in local traditions.

Gandang Lasuang was also featured during the official welcoming ceremony for the Governor of West Sumatra at Muaro Sasak Beach. The use of traditional performance in such high-profile visits underscores its role as a vehicle of cultural diplomacy, one that expresses local pride, hospitality, and respect for authority. It allows the people of Sasak to present their identity on their own terms, through an art form that speaks both to their history and their present. In these settings, Gandang Lasuang is not merely performed it is presented as a cultural emblem, a living testimony to the enduring vitality of Minangkabau traditions. Through its widespread presence in diverse contexts from intimate village ceremonies to official regional and national events Gandang Lasuang has transcended its original function as a purely ceremonial performance. It now occupies a dynamic role in the cultural life of West Pasaman, symbolizing a resilient local identity that continues to thrive amid the forces of change and modernization. The adaptability of Gandang Lasuang is a testament to the community's commitment to heritage preservation and innovation. While the essence of the performance its rhythms, its instruments, and its meanings remains grounded in tradition, the ways in which it is presented have evolved to suit contemporary needs and platforms (Ramachandra & Natarajan, 2024).

This evolution has not diminished its cultural value. On the contrary, it has amplified its relevance and visibility. The continued interest from younger generations, including women and youth, signals a healthy future for the tradition. Their involvement ensures that Gandang Lasuang is not merely a relic of the past, but a vibrant, living practice that grows and transforms alongside the community. With institutional support, community engagement, and increasing visibility on regional and national stages, Gandang Lasuang has become a cornerstone of cultural identity in West Pasaman. In conclusion, the development and dissemination of Gandang Lasuang highlight how a traditional art form can thrive in a modern context without losing its soul. Rooted in the rituals and customs of the Minangkabau people, it continues to serve both sacred and social functions, enriching community life while also representing the region in broader cultural spheres. From weddings and local gatherings to government events and international tourism festivals, Gandang Lasuang exemplifies the power of tradition to connect people, convey meaning, and adapt with time. Its story in Jorong Pasa Lamo

and beyond is a compelling example of cultural resilience, where heritage is not just preserved, but lived—every beat of the drum echoing with pride, memory, and a shared future.

3.2 Discussion

The Gandang Lasuang instrument is an integral part of traditional Minangkabau music, especially among the community in Sasak Ranah Pasisia. Classified as a percussion instrument, it is made from simple, locally sourced materials such as wood and metal, embodying the resourcefulness and creativity of the local people. While it may resemble other percussion instruments found in various regions, Gandang Lasuang holds a unique cultural significance for the Sasak community, as it originates from the ancestral practice of pounding rice using a wooden mortar (*lasuang*) and pestle (*alu*). This ancient domestic activity, once central to communal and household life, gradually evolved into a rhythmic tradition that became formalized as a cultural performance. Over the years, the musical ensemble accompanying Gandang Lasuang has expanded to include several complementary instruments, enriching the overall texture and complexity of the performance. Among these is the *Talempong*, a traditional Minangkabau instrument made of small, circular bronze or brass gongs arranged horizontally on a wooden frame and played by two individuals. The bright, metallic tones of the *Talempong* contribute melodic patterns that blend harmoniously with the percussive elements of the *Lasuang*, elevating the artistic quality of the performance. Another vital addition is the *Gandang*, a double-headed drum played by two people, each handling one drum. This instrument provides deep, resonant rhythms that serve as the foundational tempo, symbolizing energy, strength, and movement (Xia & Yang, 2023). The inclusion of the *Cenang*, a percussion instrument made from small metal or bamboo tubes played simultaneously by three performers, introduces sharp, rhythmic accents that balance the heavier tones of the *Gandang* and the melodic flow of the *Talempong*, thus maintaining rhythmic continuity throughout the performance. Also present are modern instruments such as *Maracas*, small handheld shakers filled with seeds or beads. Though not traditionally Minangkabau, *Maracas* have been integrated creatively to add a subtle rattling layer that enhances the percussive depth of the ensemble. In addition, recycled used bottles either glass or plastic are often repurposed and played by striking or shaking, introducing a distinctive timbre and highlighting the community's innovation in maintaining tradition with easily accessible materials. The ensemble is further complemented by the *Belaik*, a locally crafted percussion instrument made from wood or bamboo, played by one or two performers. Its hollow, resonant sound adds a low-end richness and anchors the overall rhythm of the performance. Vocalists, often equipped with microphones or amplifiers, perform traditional songs, chants, or poetic verses that narrate cultural stories, deliver messages of praise, or convey ceremonial sentiments. These vocal elements add an emotional and cultural layer to the performance, allowing the audience to connect more deeply with the traditions being presented. Despite the introduction of these additional instruments, the core elements *alu* and *lasuang* remain central to the identity of the performance. They are not merely musical tools but powerful cultural symbols that represent the historical continuity and identity of the Jorong Pasa Lamo community. For the local people, *alu* and *lasuang* symbolize life itself, reflecting their connection to both ancestral traditions and current cultural practices. These instruments serve as markers of communal identity and are considered irreplaceable in the performance of Gandang Lasuang. As such, the researcher's focus lies in exploring how these instruments are perceived as vital elements of life and cultural expression in the region, particularly in their role within musical storytelling and ceremonial engagement (Mendes et al., 2024; Ramachandra & Natarajan, 2024).

Traditionally, Gandang Lasuang was performed without the accompaniment of additional instruments. In earlier times, the art form was primarily associated with everyday activities, particularly the rhythmic pounding of rice, and was performed more for recreational purposes during communal work rather than for ritualistic use. The performance involved basic components such as the *lasuang*, simple attire, vocal chants, and synchronized movements, but lacked the more elaborate instrumentation and staging seen today (Liang et al., 2024; Xia & Yang, 2023; Q. Zhang, 2023; Y. Zhang et al., 2023). Over time, as cultural expression evolved and community events became more formalized, Gandang Lasuang transitioned into a multifaceted art form performed at various social and ceremonial functions. This transformation reflects the increasing appreciation for the aesthetic and symbolic value of traditional arts. Today, the performance is often seen at major events, including district anniversary celebrations, tourism promotions, and formal state gatherings. Performers typically wear traditional attire such as *baju kurung basiba*, creating a cohesive and visually appealing presentation that draws the audience's attention and enhances the artistic experience. The combination of visual aesthetics, coordinated choreography, and musical harmony elevates Gandang Lasuang from a communal activity to a recognized and celebrated art form.

In terms of function, Gandang Lasuang exemplifies the multifaceted nature of traditional art. According to (N. Wang et al., 2024) art generally serves three main purposes: ritual, aesthetic presentation, and personal enjoyment. First, as ritual art, Gandang Lasuang plays a crucial role in the ceremonial life of the Sasak Ranah Pasisia community. It is often performed during traditional weddings, baby bathing rituals (*turun mandi*), circumcisions, and welcome ceremonies for esteemed guests. In these contexts, the performance carries deep spiritual and symbolic meanings, reinforcing communal values such as respect, unity, and reverence for ancestors. The rhythms and movements performed are imbued with cultural symbolism, and the music functions not only as entertainment but as a vessel for transmitting tradition and sacred narratives

(Arslanbek et al., 2022; Kadir, 2020; Ngoe & Fikri, 2024). Second, in the context of aesthetic presentation, Gandang Lasuang is appreciated for its beauty, form, and creative execution. The visual elements—colorful costumes, coordinated movements, stage layout—and the sonic qualities—instrumental harmony, rhythm complexity, vocal performance—all contribute to a rich sensory experience that celebrates the community's artistic heritage. This function of art encourages appreciation of the craftsmanship, effort, and cultural refinement embedded in the performance (Al-Salmi et al., 2023; B. Zhang et al., 2023; Y. Zhao, 2024). Lastly, the function of art for personal enjoyment should not be overlooked. For both performers and audiences, participating in or witnessing a Gandang Lasuang performance can be a deeply satisfying experience. Musicians, dancers, and vocalists often express a sense of pride, joy, and belonging through their involvement, while audience members are entertained, emotionally moved, or reminded of their cultural roots. These personal and emotional connections strengthen community bonds and help preserve cultural identity across generations.

Overall, the evolution of Gandang Lasuang from a utilitarian practice into a sophisticated cultural performance illustrates the dynamic nature of tradition. It shows how ancestral customs can adapt to modern contexts without losing their original essence. The Nyiur Melambai group, among others, has played a significant role in this preservation and innovation, maintaining the authenticity of alu and lasuang while embracing complementary instruments that make the performance more resonant and accessible to diverse audiences. Whether performed in small villages or on large public stages, Gandang Lasuang continues to be a powerful expression of Minangkabau identity, resilience, and artistic vitality (Ju et al., 2024; Karimimoshaver et al., 2021). Its enduring relevance speaks not only to the skill of its practitioners but also to the deep cultural values that it embodies values that link the past with the present, the sacred with the celebratory, and the individual with the collective.



Figure 1. “Minangkabau Women in the Tradition of Pounding Rice: Preserving Culture through Music and Mutual Cooperation”

The photo above captures a group of Minangkabau women performing the traditional art of Gandang Lasuang, a distinctive cultural heritage from Sasak Ranah Pasisia, West Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The performers are dressed in traditional Minangkabau attire, consisting of black embroidered baju kurung (traditional tunic) with gold thread and red headscarves, symbolizing the cultural richness and dignified role of Minangkabau women in ceremonial contexts. On the right side of the image, two women are playing the alu (pestle) and lasuang (mortar) tools originally used for pounding rice, now repurposed as percussion instruments in traditional music performances. On the left, performers are seen playing the talempong, a set of small gongs, accompanied by other supporting instruments such as gong, maracas, and vocals amplified through microphones. A banner in the center background reads "Seni Tradisional Nyiur Melambai Nagari Sasak," indicating that the performers are part of a local cultural group committed to preserving Minangkabau traditions through music and performance. Such performances are typically held during traditional weddings, guest welcoming ceremonies, and cultural festivals, serving as powerful expressions of communal identity, ancestral wisdom, and cultural resilience. This photo illustrates how Minangkabau women actively contribute to preserving and revitalizing cultural heritage, showcasing the living traditions of their community through meaningful and dynamic artistic expression (Gupta et al., 2024). When, Function as entertainment is displayed during entertainment events such as weddings and circumcisions, where gandang lasuang is performed as part of the program. The entertainment function is evident when the audience requests specific songs. The songs performed are typically music and lyrics that make the audience dance along with the performers (Dehouche & Dehouche, 2023). Some of the popular songs include: ratok pasaman, cogok mancogok, sinona, bugih lamo, and others. The attire worn during these performances is more relaxed, with performers wearing everyday clothes or muslim attire, as these performances usually take place in the evening at the bride's house.



Figure 2. The Excitement of Dulang Jo Gadang Music Tradition

The **Figure 2** depicts a vibrant indoor performance of Gandang Lasuang, a traditional Minangkabau musical art form, being held in what appears to be a wedding or ceremonial setting. The space is decorated with colorful fabrics, lights, and traditional ornaments, including a red decorative chair often used in Minangkabau wedding rituals, suggesting the cultural significance of the event. In the center of the image, members of the “Nyiur Melambai” traditional music group are actively performing. The performers, mostly women, are dressed in a variety of colorful traditional and modern clothing, indicating flexibility in costume while still honoring the local tradition. Instruments being played include talempong (small kettle gongs), alu and lasuang (wooden pestle and mortar), maracas, and even recycled materials such as plastic bottles, showing the creative integration of both traditional and contemporary elements (Ceticic & She, 2022; Xing et al., 2024; Zhuang et al., 2024). The women are positioned in an organized ensemble, with some playing instruments, others singing or preparing to perform. Despite the modest setting, the atmosphere appears lively, communal, and full of cultural energy, emphasizing the collective spirit and intergenerational participation that characterizes traditional Minangkabau performances. This scene reflects not only a commitment to preserving cultural identity but also the adaptive and inclusive nature of Gandang Lasuang as it continues to evolve in contemporary settings. Community enthusiasm in singing and dancing together (entertainment function) (documented by: willa maida putri, may 28, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Lasuang music, as performed in the Gandang Lasuang tradition, serves as a vital cultural expression that reflects the values and identity of Minangkabau society. More than just a musical performance, it functions as a symbolic representation of honor, responsibility, emotional connection, and hospitality, all of which are deeply rooted in the traditional values of the Minangkabau people. Within the context of wedding ceremonies in Jorong Pasa Lamo, Lasuang music plays a central role not only as a source of entertainment, but as an important medium of emotional expression, spiritual communication, and social interaction. The rhythmic patterns of the music help create a balance between emotional strength and tenderness, reflecting the duality and harmony between male and female roles in Minangkabau culture. Strong and powerful beats often symbolize the protective and assertive qualities associated with men, while softer, more graceful rhythms represent the nurturing, respectful, and hospitable nature associated with women. This duality of sound becomes a metaphor for the social structure and cultural equilibrium that underpins Minangkabau life, particularly during important communal rituals such as weddings.

Furthermore, Lasuang music acts as an emotional bridge during ceremonies, enabling participants to share feelings of joy, solemnity, and cultural pride. It reinforces social cohesion, strengthens communal identity, and transmits ancestral wisdom and values across generations. Even as other instruments such as talempong, maracas, and vocals have been added in modern performances as seen in the ensemble “Nyiur Melambai” the core instruments, alu and lasuang, remain central, maintaining the authenticity of the tradition. In the face of growing globalization and cultural homogenization, preserving the integrity of Gandang Lasuang is critical. Its continuity not only protects the cultural identity of the Minangkabau community but also contributes to the broader understanding of how traditional music can carry deep symbolic, emotional, and social meanings. Therefore, this study encourages further research into regional variations of Lasuang music, the adaptation of traditional music in contemporary settings, and how musical symbolism reflects broader societal values in Minangkabau and other Indonesian cultures. In conclusion, Lasuang music in the Gandang Lasuang performance is a powerful cultural artifact one that carries more than rhythm and sound. It is an embodiment of tradition, a reflection of

social harmony, and a living medium through which the Minangkabau community continues to express its values, identity, and worldview. As such, it deserves both academic attention and cultural preservation efforts in order to thrive in future generations.

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