

Role Structure and Rhythmic Nomenclature of Indang Music in Nagari Tandikek

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to comprehensively describe the internal role structure of performers and the local nomenclature of rhythmic patterns produced by the *rapai* instrument in the Indang traditional performance within Nagari Tandikek. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach with an ethnomusicological perspective, data were gathered through in-depth interviews with a maestro and *tukang dikie* of Indang, supplemented by direct field observations of drumming techniques. The findings reveal that Indang Tandikek possesses a highly specific and rigid role structure consisting of *tukang dikie*, *tukang karang*, *tukang darak*, *tukang lalu*, *tukang apik*, *tukang aliah*, and *tukang panuruikan*. Each role fulfills a distinct musical function crucial to maintaining performance continuity. Regarding organology and drumming techniques, the study identifies distinct local interlocking variations: *darak panjang* serves exclusively as the opening pattern, while the *darak pendek* group—comprising *darak katereang*, *darak patiang jongkek*, and *darak tujuh*—is played during vocal (*dendang*) pauses. Furthermore, the overall dynamics and tempo esclations are governed collectively through intuition (*feeling*) and technical mastery of the primary players rather than strict mathematical counts. This study concludes that the rhythmic complexity of Indang Tandikek functions not only as a visual aesthetic regulator but also as a preservation mechanism for social rhythms through a transmission system rooted in the *kulipah* (school lineage).

Keywords: *Indang Traditional Performance, Rythmic Nomenclature, Role Structure, Nagari Tandikek, Ethnomusicology*

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INTRODUCTION

Traditional arts represent the crystallization of social, aesthetic, and spiritual values embedded within an indigenous community. In West Sumatra, one of the socio-religious communal performances that persists as a vital agent of social integration is Indang. Historically, the emergence of Indang coincided with the spread of Islam along the western coast of Sumatra, closely tied to the collective memory of Syekh Burhanuddin's passing in Ulakan, Padang Pariaman, in 1111 Hijriah (approximately the early 18th century). In its early development, Indang was not merely visual entertainment; it served as a primary medium for Islamic proselytization (*dakwah*) initiated by religious and customary

functionaries such as *labay*, *katik*, and *tukang rebana* (Navis, 1984). This art form uniquely harmonizes oral literature in the form of quatrains (*pantun*) and praises to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad with the rhythmic beats of the *rapai* (frame drum) instrument played communally (Kartomi, 2012). The rhythmic structure itself was originally designed to induce a state of spiritual concentration, aligning the physical movements of the performers with the metaphysical dimension of Islamic mysticism, particularly associated with the Syattariyah Sufi order prevalent in the region (Navis, 1984).

Within the local socio-political context of Nagari Tandikek, Indang occupies a sacred structural position in the customary hierarchy. The institutionalization of Indang in Tandikek is historically intertwined with the appointment of the *kapalo mudo*—an official customary functionary recognized by the *niniak mamak* (clan elders), who holds absolute responsibility for youth discipline, social order, and the execution of communal rituals across the *korong* (sub-village) (Amir, 2011). Historically, an Indang performance was a mandatory requirement during the inauguration of a *kapalo mudo*, functioning as a cultural validation of leadership and a space to gather the community (*silaturahmi*) (S. Ilyas, personal communication, April 15, 2026). Over time, the functional role of Indang has transformed from an exclusive medium for the religious and customary elite into an inclusive cultural identity, allowing younger generations, school students, and cultural enthusiasts to participate. Nonetheless, the authenticity of its performance structure, its specific rhythmic configurations, and the transmission of knowledge remain strictly bound by customary regulations, particularly through the *kulipah* (khalifah) system, which signifies a lineage-based apprenticeship and *ranji* (genealogy) of schools passed down through generations (S. Ilyas, personal communication, April 15, 2026).

Although extensive research has been conducted on the Indang tradition in West Sumatra, existing literature predominantly focuses on the textual dimensions of oral lyrics (*dendang*) or its overarching sociological function in fostering social cohesion (Phillips, 1981). Scholars have heavily analyzed how the political messages or moral values are conveyed through *pantun*, yet they frequently overlook the intricate musical matrix that supports these texts. A significant knowledge gap exists regarding the organological aspects of the music, the detailed internal task distribution among performers, and the local nomenclature of the *rapai* rhythmic patterns utilized (Kartomi, 2012). Many external researchers apply Western musicological frameworks—such as standard meter, fixed time signatures, and mathematical tempo divisions—to analyze Indang rhythms, thereby obscuring the indigenous knowledge (*emic perspective*) possessed by field practitioners (Merriam, 1964). Western notation often fails to capture the subtle microtonal variations, shifting accents, and intuitive tempo alterations that define the true aesthetic value of traditional Minangkabau drumming (Otani, 2017).

Furthermore, previous studies often generalize Indang across West Sumatra as a monolithic art form, neglecting the sharp stylistic variations that exist between different sub-regions or different *kulipah* lineages. For instance, the stylistic boundary between the Ulakan tradition and the Tandikek tradition represents not just a musical difference, but a historical and geopolitical demarcation of regional identity (Amir, 2011). By investigating

the specific style of Nagari Tandikek, which adheres to the *Katik Sata* lineage, this research fills a critical gap in documenting how local nomenclature and internal role structures safeguard structural authenticity amidst modern shifts (S. Ilyas, personal communication, April 15, 2026).

Therefore, this study specifically aims to deconstruct the internal role structure of the performers and classify the various *tingkah* (interlocking) drumming patterns in the Indang of Nagari Tandikek from the practitioners' own conceptual framework. The methodological approach utilizes qualitative framework to capture these deeply embedded cultural nuances (Sugiyono, 2018). The contribution of this research is expected to enrich the field of Indonesian ethnomusicology by providing an empirical model of indigenous rhythmic analysis, while simultaneously documenting the local knowledge system of Minangkabau to prevent its erosion by globalization and cultural modernization. Through a meticulous examination of the *Katik Sata* school, this article serves as a baseline for understanding how communal traditional music balances structural rigidity with intuitive, collective performance dynamics.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with an ethnomusicological descriptive approach to uncover, interpret, and document the musical structure of the Indang performance based on empirical field conditions. The primary subject was selected purposively, namely Mr. Suwandi Ilyas (affectionately known as Anjang Iyaih, 60 years old), a maestro with an extensive trajectory in the Indang tradition since 1979. He masters the lineage silsilah of the *Katik Sata* school (*kulipah*) and holds a crucial role as the *tukang dikie* (the core narrative vocalist) and a former *tukang karang*. Primary data were acquired through structured in-depth interviews using an interview instrument, participant observation of playing postures and drumming techniques, and close-up audio-visual recording sessions to precisely document drumming variations. Data analysis involved field data reduction, categorization based on indigenous nomenclature, descriptive rhythmic transcription, and a functional interpretation of the relationship between the *rapai* beats and the vocal lyrics (*dendang*). This qualitative validation cycle ensures that the emic descriptions match the empirical performance output.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

The results of the questionnaire about how students' perception towards the implementation of online learning during the covid-19 pandemic is based on their own experiences have previously experienced lecturers with a direct face-to-face learning system and also experienced lectures with online learning. Based on findings, it is indicated that students in the English education program at FKIP Universitas Tanjungpura have a relatively high percentage of perception, which is 70% overall.

This has shown that the majority of students accept online learning and retrieved positive perceptions on the implementation of this online learning. Based on (Qiong, 2017)

positive perception describes all knowledge (both known and unknown) and the responses conveyed when using it. It continues to accept and support the object actively or sensing, while negative perception describes all knowledge (knowing or not knowing) and reactions that are not oriented to the object of perception.

Of the five aspects that obtained the highest percentage was the student achievement aspect (76%). Students have perceived that this online learning has a significant impact on their improvement in academia. These findings are in line with (Mandasari, 2020) who also revealed that in terms of learning motivation, learning achievement, and learning engagement, online learning has a beneficial effect on students' academic performance. Furthermore, the positive perception that has been shown is from learning completeness. Most students have been able to follow online learning well. From the result obtained, they can easily understand the material provided. These findings are in line with the findings of (Siahaan, 2021) who has explained that there is a significant effect of online lectures on student understanding which is 37 respondents (74%). A study from (Ramadhan,2021) also found that there is a significant effect of online-Based learning on the effectiveness of student learning in Malang.

Based on empirical field research, structured in-depth interviews, and close-up audio-visual analysis of the musical executions by Mr. Suwandi Ilyas (Anjang Iyaih), the primary data regarding the internal mechanism of Indang Tandikek are categorized into three fundamental axes: socio-musical transmission, anatomical sound production, and indigenous rhythmic taxonomy.

1. The Genealogies of Transmission and Customary Institutionalization

The performance of Indang in Nagari Tandikek is fundamentally defined by its attachment to a highly structured spiritual and artistic lineage known as the kulipah (khalifah) system. Mr. Suwandi Ilyas represents the Katik Sata school of Indang. The transmission of this musical knowledge is not arbitrary; it follows a strict hereditary and apprenticeship ranji (genealogy) that dates back to his early training in 1979 under Datuak Ayam in the Lubuak Aluang area.

Historically, the institutionalization of Indang within Nagari Tandikek was tied to the political and customary infrastructure of the nagari. Specifically, an Indang performance was a mandatory socio-legal requirement for the formal inauguration of a kapalo mudo—a high-ranking customary functionary recognized officially by the niniak mamak (clan elders). The kapalo mudo holds absolute jurisdictional responsibility over the discipline, security, and socio-religious activities of the youth within the korong (sub-village). Thus, Indang served as a tool for communal gathering (silaturahmi), youth consolidation, and cultural validation of local governance.

2. Hierarchical Role Structure and Ensemble Dynamics

An Indang performance in Tandikek relies on a highly rigid internal division of labor among the performers sitting in a single linear row. The formal classification of these roles based on the field data is structured as follows:

Local Role Name	Number of Players	Primary Structural & Musical Functions
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Tukang Dikie	1 Person	The absolute core, intellectual brain, and narrative lifeline of the ensemble. Responsible for delivering primary melodies, initiating philosophical or poetic challenges, and instantly answering the counter-verses (<i>pantun</i>) thrown by the opposing group.
Tukang Karang	1 Person	Positioned adjacent to the <i>Tukang Dikie</i> (often functioning simultaneously as a <i>Tukang Apik</i>). Responsible for spontaneously composing lyrical extensions, vocal harmonizations, and reinforcing the <i>dendang</i> (vocal phrases) initiated by the <i>Tukang Dikie</i> .
Tukang Darak / Paningkah	2 People	The master rhythmic improvisers. Tasked with executing complex syncopated filling patterns, accents, and cross-rhythms (<i>darak</i>) against the steady pulse.
Tukang Lalu / Dasar	1 Person	The metronomic pulse-keeper. Responsible for executing and maintaining the fundamental steady up-beat pulse (<i>pola up</i>) that stabilizes the entire ensemble.
Tukang Aliah	1 Person	Seated precisely in the center of the physical row formation. Functions as the physical and choreographic commander. He initiates the first strike on the <i>rapai</i> and signals physical choreography changes.
Tukang Apik	2 People	Seated directly flanking the <i>Tukang Aliah</i> on his left and right sides to support visual and structural alignment.
Tukang Panuruikan	Dominant Majority	The ensemble row members whose strict faddish duty is to precisely replicate the primary underlying beat dictated by the <i>Tukang Darak</i> and <i>Tukang Lalu</i> .
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3. Spatial Posture and Anatomical Sound Production

The physical performance requires strict spatial discipline. The performers sit in a tightly compressed, straight cross-legged line. Linear physical unity is maintained by a customary rule: each player must position their right knee directly on top of the left knee of the adjacent player seated to their right. This compression ensures tactile feedback and collective physical synchronization.

The production of sound on the *rapai* frame drum involves specific anatomical configurations of the hand. The upper half of the palm—utilizing the four fingers combined while completely excluding the thumb—acts as the primary striking surface. The field observations identified two primary phonetic-acoustic outputs:

- a. **The "Tak" Sound (High Pitch / Choke):** This sharp, high-frequency sound is produced by striking the center of the membrane with the upper four fingers while the non-striking hand, which grips the inner wooden frame (*bodi rapai*), firmly presses against the inner edge of the skin. This internal pressure increases membrane tension, choking the sustain.

- b. **The "Dung" Sound (Low Pitch / Resonance):** This deep, resonant, low-frequency sound is produced by striking the center of the membrane using only a single loose index finger. Simultaneously, the hand supporting the wooden frame releases all pressure, allowing the membrane to vibrate freely without damping.

4. Indigenous Rhythmic Taxonomy (*Nomenklatur Pukulan*)

Practitioners of Indang Tandikek categorize their rhythmic repertoire into two overarching structural groups based on their structural placement within the performance timeline:

- a. **Darak Panjang:** A highly complex, long-duration, continuous rhythmic overture executed exclusively as the grand musical opening of the entire Indang performance series before any vocals are introduced.
- b. **Darak Pendek:** A group of shorter, highly explosive interlocking fills executed precisely during the structural pauses of the vocal delivery. When the *Tukang Dikie* or *Tukang Dendang* concludes a poetic stanza, the vocal line stops, and the *Darak Pendek* immediately fills the acoustic void. The *Katik Sata* school subdivides the *Darak Pendek* into three distinct patterns: *Darak Katereang*, *Darak Patiang Jongkek*, and *Darak Tujuh*.

5. Textual Structure of Vocal Lyrics (*Dendang*)

To fully understand the interlocking mechanism of *Darak Pendek*, it is essential to observe the structural placement of the vocal lyrics (*dendang*). The *Katik Sata* school utilizes specific traditional quatrains (*pantun*) that serve as a poetic opening to mark their sonic territory before the *Darak Pendek* erupts. Below is the primary textual formula used by the ensemble:

- **Minangkabau (Original Text):**

Ala, alai a lara o, yo ma rah siden,

Rapai ditabuah jalin-menjalin,

Adat batungkek ka nan bana,

Agama tagak dek kulipah.

- **English Translation:**

Ala, alai a lara o, oh the respected audience,

The rapai is struck, interlocking with one another,

Customary law is leaned toward the ultimate truth,

Religion stands firm protected by the sacred lineage.

The phrase "*yo ma rah siden*" is a crucial linguistic marker exclusive to the *Katik Sata* lineage. Immediately after the last syllable of this stanza is voiced, the vocal line stops, giving a strict acoustic cue to the *Tukang Darak* and *Tukang Lalu* to launch the *Darak Katereang* fill.

DISCUSSION

The empirical findings from Nagari Tandikek expose a highly sophisticated, unwritten musical system that challenges conventional assumptions regarding the loose or improvisational nature of communal folk music. The absolute reliance on the *kulipah* system reveals that traditional Minangkabau music is governed by strict intellectual property rights and artistic boundary lines rooted in spiritual lineages.

A critical comparative finding emerged regarding the socio-geopolitical differentiation of styles. The Tandikek style, which preserves the *Katik Sata* lineage, shares underlying rhythmic structures with the Sungai Saria tradition (*Hosen* lineage). However, it stands in complete stylistic opposition to the Ulakan tradition (*Tangkarin* lineage). While the *Tangkarin* school utilizes a splayed, loose-finger drumming technique that produces a continuous rolling texture, the *Katik Sata* school relies on highly compressed, tightly closed finger strikes that prioritize sharp micro-accents and sudden structural silences.

This stylistic segregation is heavily protected by a strict socio-spiritual taboo (*pantangan*). Customary law strictly prohibits the physical intermixing of performers from different *kulipah* lineages on a single performance stage (*indak buliah basalang pinjam*—literally translated as the prohibition of borrowing or blending styles/spaces). According to the collective memory of historical ancestral oaths (*sumpah niniak mamak*), violating this physical and lineage boundary on stage is believed to invoke severe metaphysical afflictions or spiritual illness, locally conceptualized as *tumbuhan ibilih* or *kanai sewai*.

In a modern ethnomusicological analysis, this taboo functions as a vital structural defense mechanism. By criminalizing the blending of styles through metaphysical fear, the community successfully safeguards the stylistic authenticity (*gaya selingkung*) of their respective schools, preventing the homogenization of traditional drumming patterns into a generic regional style. This lineage isolation is also encoded textually in the sacred opening vocal phrases; while other schools use generalized Islamic salutations, the *Katik Sata* school marks its specific sonic territory by chanting the distinct classical phrase: "*Yo ma rah siden*".

From a structural musicological perspective, the *jalinan* (interlocking) mechanism between the *Tukang Darak* and the *Tukang Lalu* displays an advanced understanding of polyrhythmic tension. The ensemble does not operate under Western metronomic concepts, nor do the players calculate beats mathematically. The entire eslation of tempo, the control of the performance momentum, and the management of the audience's psychological excitement (*hype*) rely entirely on a shared, deeply cultivated collective intuition (*feeling*).

The *Darak Pendek* group (*Darak Katereang*, *Darak Patiang Jongkek*, *Darak Tujuh*) serves an essential structural function as a musical "fill-in." Because the performance involves intense lyrical battles, the vocalists require physical rest between stanzas. The *Darak Pendek* patterns erupt instantly during these vocal pauses, acting as a rhythmic bridge that prevents any drop in the aesthetic energy or kinetic tension of the performance.

When the ensemble needs to shift its physical choreography, the transition is signaled not by vocal commands, but through a minimal, highly precise sonic cue known as *manggantiak rapai*. The *Tukang Aliah* (the central commander) sharply snaps his fingernail directly against the wooden body or the tight edge of the membrane. This high-pitched click cuts through the dense wall of drumming sound, instantly alerting the entire row of *Tukang Panuruikan* to alter their physical movements simultaneously. This highlights how intricate somatic awareness and acoustic signals replace Western visual conducting methods in indigenous Indonesian music.

Limitations of the Study: This study only examines local nomenclature and role structures from the perspective of a single lineage, the Katik Sata school in Tandikek. Future research is required to mathematically transcribe the *darak katereang* and *darak patiang jongkek* patterns into Western staff notation or cipher notation to facilitate a more precise comparative analysis of interlocking mechanisms across other *kulipah* schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on data obtained from all respondents, the level of perception of FKIP students at Tanjungpura University in the English Education study program is relatively high, at 70%, this reflects that as many as 70% of students have a high enough enthusiasm for the implementation of online learning during the covid19 pandemic. This is proven by the calculation of 5 aspects that contribute to the implementation of the online learning. On the aspect of learning completeness getting a score of 67% this aspect is classified as high. Second, for the aspect of the ability of teachers in managing learning the results are 69% which is quite high. The third, the infrastructure that supports learning gets a score of 69% this aspect is also quite high. Furthermore, the aspect of learning activities with a percentage of 66% is high. And lastly, the aspect of student achievement with a percentage of 75% and in the high category.

English education students at FKIP Untan showed acceptance of the implementation of online learning due to the ease of accessibility and showed positive and negative perception. Positive perception including understanding the material that is felt easier to understand, students have adequate infrastructure to follow online learning, an increase in discipline and self-reliance. Meanwhile, negative perceptions include students facing problems in internet network connectivity, the number of assignments that are calculated, and also the interaction between lecturers and students.

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