

Linguistic Hybridity and Religious Identity: A Socio-Pragmatic Analysis of Kalindaqdaq in Mandar Sayyang Pattu'du

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Abstract

This study uses a qualitative method in analyzing the Sayyang Pattu'du tradition from the perspective of Islamic scholarship. The primary data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews with religious scholars and cultural figures, participant observation in traditional ceremonies and examination of documentation including visual recordings and ceremonial artefacts. The tools were complemented by a literature review of peer-reviewed journals and academic publications that discussed the theological and cultural aspects of Sayyang Pattu'du. The analysis was of a descriptive nature and involved the interpretation of the researcher and related theoretical frameworks in order to produce key findings. The results show that the majority of Islamic scholars see Sayyang Pattu'du as a cultural preservation and an effective tool for religious education, especially to help children memorize the Qur'an. In the community, the practice is widely accepted and considered compatible with Islamic principles as long as it is done within the proper religious parameters. In addition, it is a space for communal celebration and spiritual expression that strengthens social cohesion and cultural identity of the Mandar community. The results confirm that indigenous traditions can link religion and culture if Islamic principles are stressed. The paper explores the influence of the tradition on the moral and spiritual development of the younger generations, and argues for its inclusion in holistic frameworks of culturally contextualised Islamic education. The triangulated data from interviews, observations and documentation create a greater validity of the findings and provide a comprehensive understanding of the promotion of religion transmission by local behaviours and at the same time maintain the uniqueness of the culture.

Keywords: *Sayyang Pattu'du; Ulama Perspective; Islamic Tradition; Cultural Preservation; Local Tradition Integration*

Introduction

Indonesia is famous for its rich culture, which is manifested in a variety of local customs as well as religious rites that stand for the layers of historical acculturation in the archipelago. One specific tradition is the Sayyang Pattu'du or 'dancing horse' which is a ceremonial practice from the Mandar ethnic group in West Sulawesi and is a combination of cultural history and Islamic beliefs (Idi & Priansyah, 2023; Yani, 2021). Sayyang Pattu'du is a tenacious local tradition that demonstrates the symbolic intersection of Islam and indigenous practices, showing Indonesia's long history of religious adaptation and cultural heterogeneity. The rite is a public celebration of Qur'anic reading by the young and a symbol of collective identity, balancing the delicate interplay of spiritual devotion and cultural performance.

Sayyang Pattu'du's emergence is historically connected to the Islamization of Mandar society in the 16th century. Local ulama and religious leaders utilized this ritual as a bridge to reconcile Islamic teachings with local customs and foster the acceptance of religious practices in a culturally relevant manner (Idi & Priansyah, 2023; Sulaiman et al., 2022). In its canonical form, the tradition consists of the procession of a decorated horse, usually with colorful fabrics, sequins and ornaments, with a child who has recited the Qur'an successfully. The ceremonial horse ride is frequently accompanied by religious chants, rebana drumming, and kalindaqdaq poetry, creating a multi-sensory ritual that combines sacred recitation with festive community engagement (Yani, 2021; Ramlah et al., 2019). Sayyang Pattu'du is mostly performed during religious or community celebrations to strengthen social cohesion, reaffirm spiritual identity, and celebrate inter-generational continuity in the Mandar community (Sulaiman et al, 2022; Fadhilah et al., 2023; Titaley et al., 2010).

In recent decades, there have been significant sociocultural changes affecting the performance and perception of Sayyang Pattu'du, which have given rise to new phenomena that question its spiritual authenticity. Field observations and recent reports indicate that ritual is increasingly influenced by modernisation, globalisation and digitalisation. "Now many events are documented and shared on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, increasing the visual spectacle and often moving the focus from religious devotion to performative aesthetics. Traditional rebana rhythms that traditionally accompanied barzanji have increasingly been replaced by more upbeat kasidah and dangdut variations, creating a festive atmosphere that appeals to younger audiences but may detract from the sacred nature of the ritual (Indarwati et al., 2024). Kalindaqdaq poetry, which traditionally had a lot of moral and religious teaching, now often includes humorous or romantic themes, suggesting a shift in generations towards entertainment-oriented material. This process of aesthetic secularisation exemplifies the wider dilemma faced by many local Islamic traditions in the digital age.

These aesthetic and functional changes have coincided with an intensifying debate about the compatibility of the ritual with Islamic teachings. Some religious scholars and community members think that the inclusion of indigenous cultural elements like decorative horse painting, festive music, and public displays may undermine adherence to Islamic orthodoxy (Bansu, 2023; Musyarif et al., 2020). Others believe that the basic function of religious gratitude is maintained, and sharia fulfillment is fulfilled (e.g., modest dress, actual Qur'anic literacy), Sayyang Pattu'du is a valid cultural da'wah and religious education (Mualifah et al., 2023). These different perspectives in turn reflect an ongoing debate about the role of local traditions in the construction of Islamic identity, especially in places where religious and cultural practices have historically overlapped (Bansu, 2023).

Beyond doctrinal disputes, contemporary sociological phenomena further complicate the discussion. The commercialization and festivalization of Sayyang Pattu'du is increasingly evident in urban and semi-urban areas as local governments and tourism initiatives are promoting the ritual as a cultural attraction. The strategy offers economic benefits and cultural exposure, but also raises concerns about over-festivalization and the weakening of spiritual importance. Young people's reinterpretation of tradition brings opportunities and risks. The main organizers and performers of intergenerational transmission are the younger generations. On the other hand, social media-driven participation often values aesthetic appeal and social visibility rather than theological depth (Krzywosz, 2022). This dichotomy highlights the need for culturally sensitive

preservation frameworks that protect religious authenticity and allow for adaptive continuity.

Research on Sayyang Pattu'du is still limited, which mostly discusses its historical origin, cultural function, and anthropological aspects, but ignores the religious-scholarly perspective (Musyarif et al., 2020; Amiruddin et al., 2024). The existing gap has led to a lack of understanding on the views of Islamic scholars regarding the tradition, particularly in terms of its consistency with doctrinal principles and role in religious education (Bansu, 2023). Development and symbolism of the ritual have been traced in historical narratives and cultural analyses. However, the theological interpretations and practical guidance to reconcile cultural expression with Islamic authenticity have not been sufficiently studied (Irmayanti & Rodiah, 2024). The meaning of continuity, adaptation, and educational function of Sayyang Pattu'du in modern Islamic practice by ulama and religious scholars requires empirical research (Huda & Farikhah, 2023).

This research tries to study the views of Islamic scholars about the religious orientation and educational function of Sayyang Pattu'du. In this paper I examine the retention of tradition as a culturally and religiously meaningful act. I look at ways to retain doctrinal integrity while allowing performative modifications. The present study is based on three important questions, (1) To what extent Sayyang Pattu'du satisfies the Islamic teachings? How does tradition help in religious education and the transmission of morals? What strategies can help maintain its spiritual character in the face of modernisation and digitalisation? In answering these questions, this study provides a multi-dimensional understanding of the Islam-culture relationship, demonstrating that contextualised Islamic traditions can flourish and still be authentic.

The importance of this research is three-fold. First, it contributes to Islamic and cultural studies by looking at the convergence of doctrinal principles and local customs, showing the possibility of harmonious coexistence in a pluralistic society. Second, it offers tangible directions for policy and community actors in designing cultural codification, ritual guidelines, and educational frameworks that reinforce cultural heritage and Islamic values. Third, it situates Sayyang Pattu'du in broader discussions of religious adaptation, cultural resilience, and changes in the digital era, providing a replicable model for the preservation of indigenous Islamic traditions in Southeast Asia. This study shows the duality of Sayyang Pattu'du as a cultural performance and pedagogical tool, confirming the potential of a strategically managed, spiritually based, and socially relevant tradition, which connects heritage and religiosity in contemporary Indonesia.

The historical background and anthropological role of Sayyang Pattu'du has been well documented in previous research. However, there is still a considerable gap in research about the linguistic and theological transformation of the core oral tradition, *kalindaqdaq*, in the context of modern digitalization. Most existing literature does not address how the changing diction and thematic content of these oral poems reflect a broader shift from sacred religious education to performative entertainment. The present study fills this gap with a multidisciplinary analysis that interweaves sociolinguistics changes with Islamic scholarly perspectives. This research is novel in the sense it actualizes the idea of 'aesthetic secularization' in the Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji system to provide a new conceptual framework on negotiation of indigenous Islamic rituals to authenticity in the face of global digital currents. This study presents a replicable model for cultural governance and linguistic heritage preservation in contemporary Muslim societies in Southeast Asia.

Method

This research applies a descriptive qualitative design with a communication ethnography approach to dissect the linguistic and theological dimensions in the Sayyang Pattu'du tradition. The research informants were selected thru purposive sampling techniques to ensure data authority, with criteria including customary leaders who understand the structure of Kalindaqdaq, Muslim scholars or intellectuals who understand the laws of cultural integration, and tradition practitioners. Thus, three main informants were established: Kurniadi Ahmad (culturalist), Ustadz Usman Ar-Rahman (scholar), and Thamrin (practitioner). To achieve data triangulation, primary data collection was conducted thru in-depth interviews using semi-structured guidelines focusing on the shift in lexical meaning in Kalindaqdaq, participant observation during ritual processes to record verbal and symbolic interactions, and documentation studies of 15 audio-visual recordings of Kalindaqdaq from the period 2015–2025. All the collected data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, integrated with Clifford Geertz's Thick Description technique to interpret linguistic and cultural symbols in a deep and comprehensive manner.

Three main methods were used to collect primary data in the qualitative study: semi-structured interviews, participant observation and document analysis. The data were collected in Mandar District, West Sulawesi where the Sayyang Pattu'du tradition is actively practiced. Informants were purposively selected through purposive sampling to achieve depth and relevance. The research identified three key informants to represent the key elements of the tradition: religious leader for doctrinal interpretation, cultural expert for history and symbolism, and community leader for grassroots involvement. These three roles are chosen because their authoritative positions and active involvement in the practice provide a holistic and representative understanding of the practice of Sayyang Pattu'du from theological, sociocultural and communal dimensions. The interviews gave rich insights into theological interpretations, cultural adaptations and intergenerational interpretations of the tradition, especially with regard to Islamic principles and changing social contexts. We observed several Sayyang Pattu'du ceremonies to document the ritual process, the symbolic artifacts, the audience's involvement, and the changes in performance aesthetics. This method enabled researchers to document social interactions and embodied expressions of religion and identity in real time. At the same time, the analysis of the documents included photographic records, ceremonial documentation and community announcements to verify ritual frameworks, costume symbolism and performative changes.

To ensure methodological accuracy, data triangulation was applied through the cross-referencing of interviews, observations and documentation. Thematic analysis showed recurring patterns which were grouped into three main themes; religious adherence, cultural continuity and pedagogical function. In the analytical process, no coding framework was used but rather the interpretive approach to culture as developed by Clifford Geertz was used as a theoretical lens through which the contextual meanings of symbols and rituals emerged through deep description and comparative interpretation. The study was also enhanced by the integration of cultural adaptation theories with the literature of religious education. The lack of quantitative data restricts the statistical generalisability; nevertheless, the methodological framework provides a strong basis for understanding the intersection of Islam and indigenous culture in contemporary Mandar society. Future research should involve a mixed-method design including survey and

generational comparisons to better empirically understand the changing dynamics of Sayyang Pattu'du.

Results

a. Sayyang Pattu'du as Religious Gratitude

This study attempts to explain the different perspectives of the *Sayyang Pattu'du* tradition by using semi-structured interviews with three informants, namely Kurniadi Ahmad (community leader), Ustadz Usman Ar-Rahman (religious scholar), and Thamrin (cultural expert). Each informant provided useful insights, including communal, religious and cultural perspectives. Below is a comparative matrix outlining different and overlapping perspectives on the meaning, the participants, the youth engagement and the changing nature of the tradition. All informants agree that *Sayyang Pattu'du* is a medium of Qur'anic literacy, moral education, and cultural preservation, but also identify different priorities, including communal engagement and continuity, religious compliance, and historical and aesthetic dimensions. This comparative perspective reveals the complexity of the tradition and highlights the tension between spiritual authenticity and performative adaptation, a major theme of the study's conclusions.

Tabel 1. Comparative Perspectives on the Sayyang Pattu'du Tradition

Aspect	Kurniadi Ahmad (Community Leader)	Ustadz Usman Ar- Rahman (Religious Scholar)	Thamrin (Cultural Expert)
Meaning of Sayyang Pattu'du	A demonstration of gratitude to Allah for the completion of Qur'anic recitation by children, serving as a point of local pride.	A manifestation of spiritual appreciation, allowed within the framework of <i>sharia</i> (ensuring modesty, steering clear of superficial exhibition).	Part of <i>Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji</i> , representing a significant shift in religious and historical context.
Primary Participants	Children who have finished Qur'anic recitation celebrated with community backing	It is essential that the children genuinely excel in Qur'anic reading, rather than merely participating for the sake of appearance.	Originally, it was noble children who completed the recitation of the Qur'an; this practice has now broadened to include local festivals.
Youth Involvement	Young individuals play a crucial role in organising and promoting the tradition, while parents offer their support.	Young individuals need direction to ensure that the tradition does not devolve into mere entertainment.	Observes a transition towards festivalization and entertainment driven by generational impact.
Shifts in the Tradition	Transformations primarily take place in the presentation to enhance	Undergoes a transformation in values, transitioning from genuine spiritual	Demonstrates a transformation in aesthetic values through modern

	attractiveness, while the core substance stays unchanged.	commitment to a focus on performative and aesthetic trends.	music and non-religious <i>kalindaqdaq</i> .
Expectations / Solutions	The tradition must be upheld and fostered, particularly through horse-training initiatives.	Uphold spiritual principles, offer guidance on modesty and its deeper significance.	Advocacy for the establishment of cultural frameworks and guidelines to align religious and aesthetic principles

The conversations with the three key informants, namely *Kurniadi Ahmad* (community leader), *Ustadz Usman Ar-Rahman* (religious scholar), and *Thamrin* (cultural expert) show a mixture of common and different opinions about the *Sayyang Pattu'du* tradition. The three all agree that the tradition is a way of showing religious appreciation for children who have memorized the Qur'an, as well as a way of preserving culture and passing knowledge on from one generation to the next. But each perspective emphasizes different things. 'For the community, community pride and the continuity of tradition are important,' stresses *Kurniadi Ahmad*. 'There's a procession of kids that have memorized the Qur'an and they do it with much community involvement, with the youth being the main organizers,' he notes. *Ustadz Usman Ar-Rahman* said that from the religious point of view, it is important to follow sharia, but warned not to reduce it to a matter of performance or superficial display. He emphasizes the importance of making sure that participants are truly Qur'anic-literate and that they respect requirements of modesty. In the mean time, the cultural perspective of *Thamrin*, places *Sayyang Pattu'du* in the ceremonial context of *Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji*. This connection highlights the ritual's connections to historical processes of Islamisation. A trend of aesthetic secularisation can be observed, which manifests itself in the transition from traditional rebana and religious *kalindaqdaq* to themes focusing on popular music and entertainment. .

To conclude, the convergence of these perspectives reveals that *Sayyang Pattu'du* is a multi-dimensional tradition, acting at once as a mode of religious expression, a pedagogical instrument, and a facet of cultural heritage. But the faith is gradually shifting from genuine spirituality to performative approach, partly due to generational shifts and partly due to the influence of modernization and digital media. This transformation underscores the imperative need for systematic educational programs, cultural archives and regulatory systems to safeguard its spiritual essence and to ensure ongoing cultural progress. The uniqueness of this study is that it applies a multidisciplinary approach by including religious, cultural and social perspectives in analyzing *Sayyang Pattu'du* more than a local ceremony. This work throws light on the changing values and the commercialization of rituals in the digital age, and presents *Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji* as a holistic conceptual framework linking rituals, clothing, music, religious poetry and Qur'anic education. The paper offers a practical and replicable framework for protecting local Islamic traditions that ensures the continued continuity of religious and cultural literacy in the face of the challenges of modernization. .

This comprehensive understanding of *Sayyang Pattu'du* is further exemplified through field documentation, which encapsulates the educational and spiritual essence of the tradition. Prior to the commencement of the ceremonial horse procession, children who have successfully completed their Qur'anic recitation engage in organised

religious gatherings, led by community elders and local religious leaders. This phase functions as both a validation of spiritual achievement and a collective recognition of the child's ethical and religious preparedness. This figure illustrates the preparatory stage, emphasising the public celebration of faith-based learning and its integration into the wider cultural expression of the Mandarpeople.



Photo 1. Community elders supervise children reading the Qur'an (personal documentation)

This emphasizes how the tradition strengthens Islamic teachings via a culturally ingrained manifestation of devotion. This emphasizes how the tradition strengthens Islamic teachings via a culturally ingrained manifestation of devotion. In Photo 1, a group of young boys clad in traditional Islamic attire are engaged in a recitation session, earnestly reading the Qur'an under the guidance of community elders and religious leaders. The circular seating arrangement, the focused expressions, and the neatly arranged bottles of water indicate a formal religious gathering, probably associated with the completion ritual preceding the *Sayyang Pattudu* procession. This visual documentation underscores the authenticity and spiritual foundation of the tradition, demonstrating that Qur'anic literacy is honored in both ceremonial and communal expressions of devotion.

b. Youth Involvement and Cultural Transmission

The *Sayyang Pattu'du* procession draws significant involvement across generations, highlighting the lasting communal connection to this tradition. Throughout the event, young individuals and community participants engage in the planning and implementation of the ritual, as onlookers of different ages assemble to observe the adorned horses, musical acts, and ceremonial proceedings. This visual documentation highlights the collective engagement that supports the tradition's social vibrancy and cultural persistence. The younger generation, especially millennials, is crucial in both organising and maintaining the *Sayyang Pattu'du* tradition. *Kurniadi Ahmad* states, "Many of those involved in the organising committee are young people." As experienced individuals, we primarily assist and enable their requirements. Meanwhile, *Ustadz Usman Ar-Rahman* observed a change in the motivations of certain youths, remarking, "Some simply desire to ride the horse, apply makeup, and be noticed, irrespective of their ability to read the Qur'an".



Photo 2: Youth Involvement and Cultural Reproduction (personal documentation)

This highlights a contrast between genuine cultural preservation and the commodification of tradition for visual or performative purposes. The findings demonstrate that the intergenerational transfer of the *Sayyang Pattu'du* tradition is strong, with younger individuals playing a crucial role in its continuation. This generational shift brings forth new factors, such as changing ideals and motivations that could influence the spiritual integrity of the practice. Despite these challenges, the practice continues to thrive as a vibrant cultural expression that strengthens community identity and pride, all while adapting to contemporary socioeconomic conditions. This investigation highlights a rarely scrutinized tension between religious intent and performative adjustment in contemporary Islamic cultural practices. Youthful participants emerge not just as inheritors but as dynamic agents of reinterpretation, intertwining religious symbolism with social visibility. This nuanced perspective offers a fresh contribution to the discourse surrounding cultural sustainability in Muslim communities, particularly regarding ceremonial practices in indigenous Indonesian society.

Sayyang Pattu'du embodies a vibrant tradition that harmonizes spiritual commitment, cultural preservation, and engagement of the younger generation, even in the face of challenges posed by performative changes and commercialization. The active participation of the younger generation guarantees the continuity of intergenerational transmission, while also requiring focused direction and cultural oversight to preserve its religious and moral core. This study's uniqueness stems from its multidisciplinary and ethnographic methodology, revealing the conflict between spiritual intention and performative adaptation within a rural Islamic cultural setting. The text highlights the evolving role of young individuals as proactive interpreters, blending religious symbolism with social visibility, and provides a fresh viewpoint on cultural sustainability in indigenous Muslim communities in Indonesia. This work enhances the discussion surrounding ceremonial Islam by illustrating the ways in which local traditions can evolve and persist in the face of modernization and shifts across generations.

c. Shifts in Aesthetic and Ritual Value

Comprehensive field observations carried out during various *Sayyang Pattu'du* processions indicate a significant evolution in the utilisation and performance style of the *rebana* (frame drum), which has traditionally functioned as the main rhythmic

foundation of the ritual. Historically, the *rebana* was performed at a deliberate and reverent pace, frequently accompanying *barzanji* recitations and various devotional chants that emphasised the event's spiritual and ceremonial significance. The gentle, rhythmic patterns fostered a sacred auditory environment, harmonising the musical element with the procession's role as a collective expression of gratitude for the completion of the Qur'an. In recent years, observations reveal a significant shift from this traditional musical identity, as younger performers are increasingly embracing faster and more upbeat rhythms that echo *kasidah* modern and even dangdut music. The modern rhythms create an energetic and celebratory atmosphere, altering the auditory environment of the ritual into a more communal event. *Thamrin S.Pd., M.Pd.*, a cultural informant, emphasised this transformation by stating, "In the past, the *rebana* was gentle and spiritual, filled with *barzanji*; now it sounds more like *kasidah* or even *dangdut*." This evolution showcases a generational shift in musical expression, where the auditory components of the ritual are becoming more aligned with popular and performative aesthetics, moving away from a focus on strictly religious solemnity.

The *kalindaqdaq*, a unique type of *Mandar* oral poetry central to the *Sayyang Pattu'du* tradition, has undergone notable shifts in both themes and performance styles. Historically, *kalindaqdaq* performances were intricately connected to religious and moral narratives, delivering educational messages that motivated children to engage with Qur'anic literacy, upheld communal ethical standards, and commemorated the spiritual achievement of khatam Qur'an. The recitations acted as a vital link to Islamic teachings, guaranteeing that every public performance served as an ongoing lesson in faith and ethics. Recent observations indicate a trend towards content that prioritizes entertainment, as many current performances integrate humorous stories, light-hearted exchanges, and romantic references, especially among younger performers aiming to connect with wider audiences. This thematic dilution of religious content illustrates how socio-cultural pressures and audience expectations are transforming the symbolic role of *kalindaqdaq* from a means of religious instruction into a form of social entertainment. The change is particularly noticeable in performances influenced by urban culture, where amplified sound systems and casual delivery styles stand in stark contrast to the ritualistic seriousness that has typically characterized the poetic form.

The changes noted in *rebana* performance, *kalindaqdaq* content, and processional music suggest a significant shift from sacred ritual to performative spectacle, driven mainly by generational shifts, urban influences, and socio-cultural modernization. These adaptations have revitalized the tradition, fostering active youth participation, expanding the audience, and enhancing cultural visibility. Conversely, they present considerable obstacles to maintaining the ritual's authentic religious essence, as the incorporation of popular music and entertainment elements threatens to undermine the spiritual foundation that has traditionally characterized *Sayyang Pattu'du*. This duality illustrates a nuanced interplay between authenticity and adaptation, a persistent theme in the development of Islamic cultural practices in rural Indonesia. The results highlight the importance of intentional cultural management approaches, such as community-driven education and established ritual protocols, to guarantee that aesthetic modernization does not completely overshadow the tradition's devotional roots. These measures play a vital role in protecting the passing down of religious knowledge and cultural identity across generations, ensuring that the tradition stays dynamic and pertinent amidst continuous modernization.

d. Historical Origins and Cultural Framework

Oral histories and ethnographic interviews suggest that *Sayyang Pattu'du* developed during the period of Islamization in the *Balanipa* Kingdom, located in West Sulawesi. The ritual has its roots in royal acknowledgement for children who have successfully recited the Qur'an, marking a significant spiritual achievement within Mandar society. Cultural informant *Thamrin S.Pd., M.Pd.* states, "During the reign of the fourth *Maradia* (king), a child who completed the Qur'an would be rewarded by being placed on a horse, and this event marked the origin of the tradition." This practice represented a form of religious gratitude and social recognition, publicly validating a child's accomplishment while integrating it into a communal celebration. The change from the pre-Islamic title *puang tunggal luar* to the Islamic title *Maradia* reflects a significant political and cultural transformation towards Islamic values, positioning the ritual as a religious symbol and a means of identity formation throughout the local Islamization process.

In addition to its historical roots, *Sayyang Pattu'du* is integral to the *Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji* system, which serves as a thorough ceremonial and educational structure within Mandar culture. This comprehensive system includes ceremonial clothing, poetic performances (*kalindaqdaq*), spiritual education, ethical development, and community recognition of Qur'anic proficiency. Community informants highlight that the tradition cannot be comprehensively grasped by examining the horse procession in isolation, as the ritual encompasses a web of symbolic components, including ceremonial garments such as *badawara* and Arabic robes, which represent spiritual achievement and social esteem. The visual documentation captures children riding ceremonial horses, adorned in *jubah*, *keffiyeh*, and Mandar traditional attire, showcasing the blend of Islamic symbolism with indigenous cultural identity. Breaking the ritual down into just an equestrian performance would undermine its educational and spiritual importance, as the practice serves as a rite of passage that encompasses moral growth, Qur'anic knowledge, cultural acknowledgement, and the continuity between generations.

The findings indicate that *Sayyang Pattu'du* is experiencing both functional and aesthetic transformations, shaped by modernisation and shifts in generational perspectives. Observations reveal a transition from strictly sacred ritual to a performance-focused spectacle, as seen in the adaptation of music, reinterpretation of poetry, and visual rebranding of the event. Traditional *rebana* rhythms, which were once solemn and dedicated to *barzanji*, have now been replaced or supplemented by *kasidah* and *dangdut*-inspired beats, resulting in a more vibrant and commercially appealing soundscape. Similarly, *kalindaqdaq*, which has traditionally centred on religious teachings and moral guidance, is now increasingly incorporating humour, playful banter, and romantic elements, showcasing reinterpretations driven by youth that seek to engage a wider audience. The integration of synchronised choreography, celebratory clothing, and social-media-friendly visuals strengthens the movement towards performative adaptation, which boosts cultural visibility while also posing a threat to the ritual's fundamental devotional essence.

In light of these challenges, *Sayyang Pattu'du* continues to be a vibrant educational and cultural institution, facilitating the intergenerational transmission of religious literacy and communal identity. The historical foundations in royal-Islamic acknowledgement, the incorporation within the *Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji* framework, and the adaptive approaches in the digital age illustrate a dynamic case of how local Islamic traditions navigate the balance between authenticity and modernity.

The results underscore the importance of intentional efforts to preserve culture, which should encompass the creation of formal guidebooks, incorporation into educational programs (like the *Pancasila* Student Profile Project/P5), and the establishment of community-driven regulatory frameworks. These measures are essential to maintain the spiritual essence of the tradition while allowing its social and cultural roles to adapt and progress. This study offers a detailed examination of the interplay between Islamization, cultural sustainability, and performative adaptation within indigenous Muslim communities in Southeast Asia.

e. Linguistic Examination of Sayyang Pattu'du Rituals' Kalindaqdaq

The blending of Islamic beliefs and Mandar local identity through language is examined in this section. Kalindaqdaq is a discursive space that transmits religious and educational implications in addition to being an aesthetic addition to the ritual.

1. Ritual Invocation and Religious-Educational Messages in Traditional Kalindaqdaq

Based on observations, before the rebana is played to accompany the horse in the Sayyang Pattu'du procession, incense is burned while a ritual chant is recited. The chant is as follows:

Kalindaqdaq Text:

Undung masarrinna Allah Ta'ala

Daeng Marrakka sangamu

Suro' di lino

Suro' di Nabi

Suro' di Allah Ta'ala

Palla'bano di Banua Pitu

Ma'gulilin lao mai di Allah Ta'ala.

Translate:

The Incense of Allah SWT's Fragrance

His name is Daeng Marrakka, His messenger from Earth,

A messenger from Allah SWT

Flowing to the seventh world

Returning to Allah SWT.

In this instance, the statement indicates that the aromatic incense known as Daeng Marrakka is believed to be under the control of Allah SWT. It is believed that incense serves as a message of Allah SWT, the Prophet, and the world. Before returning to Allah SWT, its scent is supposed to pass through Banua Pitu. This statement helps establish a religious atmosphere before the horse parade and marks the beginning of a series of rites. While Daeng Marrakka and Banua Pitu emphasize the cultural and cosmological features of the Mandar group, their mention of Allah Ta'ala, the Prophet, and the messenger demonstrates the use of Islamic vocabulary. The statement regarding burning incense requests safety and protection in addition to describing ceremonial practices. This statement has a benedictive function from a socio-pragmatic perspective since it contains prayers and wishes for safety. Additionally, the statement marks the change from everyday to ceremonial social interactions. Thus, the cultural rituals performed before the drum accompanying the horse are imbued with religious significance through language.

1) Safety messages are also found in the following Kalindaqdaq verse:

Kalindaqdaq Text:

Bismillah tununna undung

Baca doa Pateha

Salama' nasang

Inggannana pa'banua.

Translate:

Burning Incense with Bismillah

Reciting Prayers

Surah Al-Fatihah

Everyone is safe,

All inhabitants of the Earth

The verse contains the meaning that incense is burned while reciting Bismillah, followed by prayers and Surah Al-Fatihah, so that all the inhabitants of the land may attain safety. The use of the words Bismillah and Pateha shows the incorporation of Arabic elements into the structure of Mandar speech. The safety request is not only directed toward the organizers of the ceremony or the families hosting the event, but also to the entire community.

2) The value of steadfastness in worship is found in the following verse:

Kalindaqdaq Text:

Manu-manu di Suruga

Saicco Tallewoi

Mappetuleang

To Sukku Sambanyanna

Translate:

Birds (Angels) in Heaven

Sometimes Showing Oneself

Questioning

I am steadfast in performing prayers.

Literally, the verse describes birds in heaven that sometimes appear and question those who steadfastly perform prayers. In local interpretation, the expression "manu-manu di suruga" can be associated with celestial beings or angels. However, this interpretation should be understood as a societal one, not as a direct lexical translation.

3) A more direct religious message is found in the verse:

Kalindaqdaq Text:

Passambanyang Mo Dai

Pallima Wattu'mo Naung

Iayyamo Tu'u

Pebongan di Akhera

Translate:

Pray, you should.

Perform the five daily prayers.

That's why

Provision for the Hereafter

The verse commands performing the five daily prayers because these acts of worship are provisions for the afterlife. The form of *passambayang* demonstrates the use of directive speech, which aims to encourage the listener to take action. Meanwhile, the expression "pebongan di akhera" indicates an eschatological orientation, as prayer is presented as a spiritual provision for the afterlife.

4) *Kalindaqdaq* also conveys the value of education thru verses:

Kalindaqdaq Text:

Passikolamo Naung

Me'guru mattonga-tongan

Diang Dallemu Manini

Musoali Tomauwengmu

Translate:

Go to school.

Study diligently

At some point, there will be fortune

Will enjoy with your parents

The verse conveys the message that children should go to school and study diligently. Education is linked to the hope of obtaining sustenance in the future and the ability to enjoy the results with one's parents. These findings indicate that the message in *Kalindaqdaq* is not limited to ritual obligations, but also encompasses hard work, the future, family responsibilities, and respect for parents. Education is understood as part of the formation of moral values and family well-being.

5) The social values and solidarity of the community are evident in the following stanza:

Kalindaqdaq Text

Inggai para sipakainga

Para sipakala'biq dzi lalan lino

Sawa lyya mo tu,u pappogauan

Na mappamalakka palluluarean

Translate:

Let's remind each other

Mutual respect in the world

That's why the treatment

Who extends the bonds of friendship

The stanza invites us to remind and respect one another as we live in the world, because such behavior can strengthen and prolong the bond of brotherhood. The use of the word "inggi," which means "let's," indicates a hortative function, as the speaker invites both the speaker and the listeners to take action together. Meanwhile, the expressions *para sipakainga* and *para sipakala'biq* emphasize the importance of reciprocal relationships in Mandar society.

2. Theological and Academic Terminology

Strong religious and educational vocabulary is a defining feature of traditional *Kalindaqdaq*, especially when it comes to the celebration of kids finishing their Qur'anic

recitation. From a sociolinguistic standpoint, the Mandar language has undergone phonological and semantic modification of numerous vocabulary items that are taken from Arabic.

Table 1. Theological Lexical Features in Traditional Kalindaqdaq

Lexical Item	Source Language	Semantic Domain	Function
Qur'anna	Arabic	Religion	Marker of Qur'anic literacy
Akherat	Arabic	Eschatology	Orientation toward afterlife
Lampu (metaphor)	Local	Symbolic	Representation of divine guidance

Kalindaqdaq Text:

"Lampu-lampu di lino, pattannang di akherat, bacaanna Qur'anna, mupake di maccanmo."

Translation:

"Lights in the world, provisions in the hereafter, your Qur'anic recitation will guide you when you become proficient."

Analysis:

The employment of Qur'anna and akherat, which show the incorporation of Arabic-derived religious language into regional discourse, is one way that the lexicon composition reflects a dominant Islamic semantic field. In Islamic theology, lampu (light) can be understood as a metaphor for nur (divine light). This metaphorical mapping illustrates how universal religious concepts are expressed using local linguistic conventions. Additionally, the repeated mention of the hereafter implies that Kalindaqdaq serves as a didactic discourse that upholds the community's moral principles and religious goals. In this way, language serves as both an educational tool for da'wah and a means of communication.

3. Pragmatic Shift: From Theological Instruction to Performative Aesthetics

The linguistic role of Kalindaqdaq has undergone a substantial change, according to recent developments. The diction employed in modern performances has grown more adaptable and entertainment-focused due to the impact of digital media and shifting audience expectations.

Table 2. Comparison of Traditional and Contemporary Kalindaqdaq

Aspect	Traditional Kalindaqdaq	Contemporary Kalindaqdaq
Semantic Field	Religious	Aesthetic / Performative
Function	Didactic (educational)	Entertainment
Lexical Source	Arabic-influenced	Local-dominant
Temporal Orientation	Afterlife	Present-world
Pragmatic Function	Moral instruction	Audience engagement

Contemporary Kalindaqdaq:

"Kuda menari-nari, kemora di lino, meloqna di pikkiri, mappalambi' paraka."

Translation:

"The horse dances, joy fills the world, desires arise in the mind, conveying one's wishes."

Analysis:

The information shows a distinct pragmatic trend away from religious education and toward performative aesthetics. In contrast to the traditional Kalindaqdaq, the modern version places more emphasis on descriptive and expressive aspects of celebration and emotion while minimizing religious terminology. This change represents what can be called aesthetic secularization, as language's primary purpose shifts from didactic to performative. Adaptation to digital audiences is suggested by the growing usage of visually striking and emotionally compelling expressions, especially in social media situations where spectacle and interaction are valued. This change should not, however, be seen as a total loss of religious significance. Rather, it symbolizes a process of identity negotiation in which younger generations maintain symbolic continuity with the past while reinterpreting tradition to conform to modern cultural dynamics.

4. Linguistic Hybridization and Cultural Negotiation

One example of language hybridization is the cohabitation of native Mandar idioms and religious words inherited from Arabic. The more general process of cultural integration, in which Islamic principles are assimilated through regional linguistic contexts, is reflected in this hybrid form. This phenomenon reflects an adaptive strategy in which global religious notions are localized through metaphor, poetic construction, and semantic reinterpretation rather than signifying cultural conflict. As a result, Kalindaqdaq serves as a place of language inculturation where the Mandar community's cultural and communication practices incorporate religious identity fall apart and be misunderstood. Cooperation between religious leaders, cultural practitioners and munic.

Discussion

The photographic documentation of the Sayyang Pattu'du tradition highlights a ritual dynamic that demonstrates the transition from sacred religiosity to performative adaptation within the framework of modernisation. The analysed images identify four critical moments: the preparation stage, the horse-dancing procession, the participation of children and local elders, and the engagement of the public. During the preparation phase, community members adorn horses with silk fabrics, golden sequins, and traditional ornaments. This act represents the recognition given to children who have successfully completed Qur'anic recitation and reflects the core values of Mandar communal solidarity. This stage exemplifies communal ritual preparation, wherein the community unites to establish a sacred atmosphere prior to the central procession. The Sayyang Pattu'du tradition serves as a medium for preserving religious and cultural values while also providing a platform for social adaptation, thereby maintaining the ritual's relevance in the face of societal change. This tradition exemplifies profound religious and cultural values, fostering gratitude to God and respect for ancestral heritage, as similarly observed in other local practices such as Bersih Desa (Sundawa & Wadu, 2021; Fatmawati et al., 2023). In the context of Sayyang Pattu'du, these values extend beyond ceremonial formality, forming a crucial aspect of the community's social identity that continues to be relevant in contemporary society (Muis et al., 2022).

Results pertaining to the recital of incense burning and traditional Kalindaqdaq lyrics demonstrate that Sayyang Pattu'du's holiness is constructed not only by the

apparatus, attire, and stages of the procession but also by language used to frame the ritual. The Mandar language's mention of Allah Ta'ala, the Prophet, Bismillah, Pateha, sambayang, and akhera exemplifies the process of linguistic inculturation, which is the acceptance and transmission of Islamic ideas through language and local cultural imagination. In this setting, burning incense is portrayed as a local cultural ritual that gains religious importance through prayers, the recitation of Al-Fatihah, and requests for the community's safety rather than as an Islamic theoretical instruction. the tendency of contemporary performances that emphasize entertainment, visuality, and audience engagement.

The horse-dancing procession, as visually documented, demonstrates rhythmic movements synchronised with rebana drums, amidst an enthusiastic crowd that reflects collective gratitude and joy. The performance, traditionally characterised by solemn barzanji chants that express Islamic values and reinforce social connections beyond funerary contexts to various life-cycle rituals (Hamra et al., 2022), has evolved through the incorporation of contemporary kasidah and dangdut rhythms. This transformation indicates a process of cultural commodification and aesthetic secularisation, where performative elements increasingly eclipse the ritual's spiritual foundation. Melodic transcription is crucial for preservation (Ocktarizka & Andiko, 2023), and innovative adaptations can uphold social and spiritual significance in contemporary settings (Masriani et al., 2021). However, the challenge lies in preserving heritage without compromising its core essence (Fatimah & Hayati, 2021). The involvement of children in traditional attire with elders represents a rite of passage within the Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji framework, a ceremonial system that incorporates Qur'anic education, cultural symbolism, and communal celebration. Cultural expert Thamrin highlights that simplifying the ritual to a mere horse-dancing performance, lacking educational and religious content, threatens to diminish its fundamental spiritual importance.

The substantial crowds and increased public engagement facilitated by mobile device usage illustrate the digital transformation of the Sayyang Pattu'du ritual, promoting festivalization and enhanced visuality on platforms like TikTok and Instagram. The incorporation of technology into religious practices suggests that modern rituals tend to prioritise visual and participatory elements over theological substance (Amiruddin et al., 2024), establishing a connection between spirituality and contemporary communication methods.

Sayyang Pattu'du has historically functioned as a Qur'anic completion procession that expresses gratitude to Allah, promotes Islamic education, and reinforces Mandar communal identity (Amiruddin et al., 2024; Bansu et al., 2023). Modernisation, globalisation, and digitalisation have altered its aesthetics into a hybrid space where authentic spirituality coexists with adaptive performance (Nasir et al., 2023). This reflects broader trends in which religious traditions are reshaped by media and cultural exchange (Sumiala & Jacobsen, 2024). Social media enables the spread of culture and innovative forms of interaction (Amiruddin et al., 2024), framing Sayyang Pattu'du as a localised manifestation of global influences and a recontextualization of community values in the digital age (Musyarif et al., 2020).

Photographic and ethnographic evidence highlights the essential function of partnerships between local government and communities in the preservation of tradition from a cultural governance viewpoint. The Village Government of Lombong has established Sayyang Pattu'du as an annual event, designating village funds for horse rentals, ceremonial costumes, and cultural education programs for children to enhance

heritage awareness (Azijah et al., 2022). This initiative demonstrates focused efforts to sustain continuity through active community participation (Chen, 2024). Collaborations between authorities, spiritual leaders, cultural representatives, and youth groups enhance resilience through the integration of traditional leadership and formal governance (Chotib, 2024; Harmawan et al., 2022). Nonetheless, ethical and religious regulations are largely informal, rendering the ritual susceptible to commercialisation and a decline in intrinsic value (Ardiyansah et al., 2022; Erlina et al., 2022, 2023). To address these challenges, a comprehensive preservation strategy is necessary: establishing cultural guidelines to ensure compliance with moral-religious principles (Riza et al., 2023), integrating these guidelines into the Pancasila Student Profile curriculum to improve cultural literacy (Ardiyansah et al., 2022), and employing intergenerational education to avert aesthetic changes that undermine spiritual authenticity (Handayani & Suparno, 2023; Astara & Wesna, 2023). These measures combine legal frameworks with educational initiatives to safeguard tradition while facilitating its adaptation to modern contexts (Jing, 2024; Asare, 2022).

The dynamics of Sayyang Pattu'du can be analysed through Durkheim's theory of ritual, which posits that collective effervescence promotes social solidarity and belonging, alongside Geertz's cultural interpretation that perceives enduring traditions as adaptive negotiations between identity and external influences (Cai, 2024). The ritual serves as a negotiation between faith and performance, reflecting Islam's contextual interpretation in a modern context. It demonstrates resilience and adaptability, preserving spiritual integrity while engaging with contemporary realities. Sayyang Pattu'du serves as a platform for community-based education and cultural reinforcement, allowing local Islamic traditions to adapt to modernisation, globalisation, and digitalisation, while fostering unity and social cohesion (Rimé & Rovira, 2023). This highlights the necessity for preservation strategies that maintain indigenous practices in the face of rapid change, confirming that rituals serve as dynamic means for conveying religious beliefs and cultural knowledge (Nur & Saraswati, 2023). Sayyang Pattu'du presents a model for preserving indigenous Islamic traditions in the digital era, emphasising the relationship between faith, culture, and modernity to enhance communal identity and enrich social and spiritual life.

This study contributes to understanding Sayyang Pattu'du as a dynamic indigenous Islamic tradition in three ways. First, it conceptualizes Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji as an integrated educational and spiritual system combining horse processions, rebana drumming, kalindaqdaq poetry, and symbolic Arabic attire, reflecting the interplay of Islam and local culture as observed in other Islamic educational contexts (Saepurrohman et al., 2023; Hakim, 2023; Ihsan et al., 2021; Erawadi & Setiadi, 2024). Second, it examines the digital transformation and aesthetic enhancement of local Islamic rituals, where spiritual elements are reinterpreted as performative, festival-like experiences shaped by social media, thereby increasing visibility while challenging spiritual depth. Third, it underscores the potential of incorporating Sayyang Pattu'du into the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) curriculum to enhance religious literacy, foster cultural resilience, and support youth identity formation, aligning educational goals with cultural heritage. In conclusion, sustaining Sayyang Pattu'du through historically grounded yet adaptive approaches can strengthen Islamic education, ensuring its relevance in a rapidly changing world.

This study is distinguished by its unique combination of visual ethnography, cultural governance analysis, and digital-era religious studies, aimed at exploring the transformation of Sayyang Pattu'du. This study distinguishes itself from earlier works

that mainly emphasised historical or anthropological narratives by examining the connections among ritual digitalisation, aesthetic secularisation, and intergenerational participation, and by suggesting a comprehensive preservation framework with three key components. This study presents Sayyang Pattu'du as a contextualised Islamic ritual and a community-focused educational platform, offering a replicable model for preserving indigenous Islamic traditions amidst the challenges posed by modernisation, globalisation, and the impact of social media.

The Socio-Pragmatic Negotiation between the Sacred and the Profane. The Sayyang Pattu'du ceremony exemplifies a convergence of religious principles and cultural expression, with Kalindaqdaq serving as a socio-pragmatic conduit via which the Mandar community navigates the demarcation between the holy and the profane. Collective Effervescence and Social Cohesion. Utilizing Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence, the synchronization of the dancing horse, rebana rhythms, and Kalindaqdaq reciting creates a communal emotional environment that enhances social cohesion. The Mandar language functions as a "identity adhesive," strengthening a sense of belonging and illustrating that Islamic integration transpires through symbolic harmonization rather than cultural uniformity. In-depth Analysis: Interpreting the Composite Symbols. Geertz's detailed account reveals the rite as a culturally rooted text characterized by hybridity, evident in the coexistence of Islamic garb (jubah and turban) and local symbols (badawara). Kalindaqdaq exemplifies a linguistic negotiation between Arabic and Mandar, signifying a process of linguistic inculturation wherein Islamic principles are assimilated into local identity. Negotiating Authenticity in the Digital Age. In the digital age, social media platforms transform Kalindaqdaq from a vehicle of moral education into a performance medium targeting worldwide audiences, generating tension between sanctity and contemporary performativity. This indicates that the sustainability of Sayyang Pattu'du relies on harmonizing linguistic innovation with the maintenance of its religious core.

Conclusion

The study reconfirms Sayyang Pattu'du as a living interface of Islamic values and Mandar cultural traditions. The practice, which began as a way of celebrating the success of children in Qur'anic recitation, has grown into an essential way of promoting religious education, social cohesion and the preservation of cultural heritage. The results of the interview and observation showed that the ceremony was widely supported by religious leaders and the local community as a form of Islamic appreciation and learning, as long as it was carried out with ethical guidelines. What makes this study unique is the contextualization of Sayyang Pattu'du with the broader Tomissawe Totamma Mangaji ceremonial context that intertwines religious attire, poetry and moral lessons to provide a holistic pedagogical model. Also in focus are aesthetic transformations and digital developments that threaten to dislodge the ritual from its spiritual roots. This study has implications for educational and cultural policy. Authenticity can be maintained by integrating Mandar culture into educational curricula and developing systematic guidebooks. This study offers a systematic approach to culturally relevant Islamic education and shows that tradition and religious principles can work together and adapt to modern contexts.

This research concludes that the Sayyang Pattu'du tradition is not merely a ritual celebration, but a space for linguistic negotiation where Islamic and local Mandar identities harmoniously blend. The main contribution of this research lies in identifying the shift in the function of Kalindaqdaq from a medium of pure theological education to

esthetic performativity in the digital era. The novelty found is the existence of a 'linguistic inculturation' mechanism, where the Mandar community uses mother tongue metaphors to internalize the values of the Quran, so that religion is no longer viewed as a foreign entity. Globally, this finding offers a model for preserving oral traditions in modern Muslim societies facing the challenges of digital secularization. Further research is recommended to explore social media algorithms in influencing the popularity of certain diction in this oral tradition.

Recommendation

This research is in line with the implementation of the Sayyang Pattu'du tradition into formal education through the Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) program to improve early literacy of culture and religion, so that it is preserved and authentic. Without such standardized guidebooks that elaborate on ethical standards, ritual practices, and symbolic interpretations, things would ipal authorities should be improved to ensure institutional support and reduce the risks of commercialization. Moreover, it should be noted the impact of modern media, but the tradition should be propagated by appropriate online platforms which emphasize its educational and spiritual value, rather than its entertainment. The amalgamation of these endeavours is crucial for the preservation of the religious, educational and cultural importance of Sayyang Pattu'du in contemporary Mandar society.

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