



## Gender Representation in Banjar South Kalimantan Regional Song Lyrics

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### **Abstract**

The provided text discusses the positioning of women as objects in culture, particularly in the context of regional songs. The research aims to examine gender representations in Banjar regional songs. The study employs qualitative methods such as literature review, content analysis, observation, and interviews, focusing on gender roles in Banjar songs. The interpretations are then analyzed in relation to the values and culture prevailing in the Banjar community. The research findings indicate the domestication of women's roles in Banjar song lyrics, aligning with the values and culture of the Banjar society. The lyrics often emphasize aspects of beauty, the skills required by Banjar women in managing families, and devotion to Allah SWT as the highest criterion for evaluating women, in accordance with societal norms.

**Keywords:** *Gender; Women; Banjar Song Lyrics*

### **Introduction**

The term "representation" originates from the English word "representation," which is interpreted as an image, depiction, or portrayal. Stuart Hall, in his theory, defines representation as something meaningful to others. This can be understood as representation being a process of describing, evoking images, or imagination in our minds, and then placing the similarity of the object that is in our minds (Hall in Rahastine, 2023).

In the modern era, the concept of representation is often closely linked with the term "gender." Gender, initially revolving around the natural differences between males and females given by God, has shifted more broadly. It now pertains not only to natural differences but extends to the differences in roles within their social environments. Quoting Nicholson's opinion (1994), it is revealed in more detail that gender is the difference in roles caused by the differences in gender that are shaped by humans, particularly in social, cultural, and societal environments surrounding individuals. Furthermore, gender, according to Moses (2007) in Yenni Hayati (2016), is a set of roles visible through appearance, clothing, attitudes, and personalities that can be demonstrated by an individual, indicating whether they fall into the masculine or feminine category.

Highlighting gender as a divine given, Tyson (1999) states that gender as a divine gift cannot be exchanged. Conversely, a broader opinion is presented by Anderson, who considers gender as a process that arises from the environment that assigns different roles to women and men (Hayati: 2016).

Views on gender are interesting to explore, especially from the perspective of the global community. Nowadays, the shift in views on gender has become a complex topic, especially concerning the recognition and acknowledgment of diverse opinions on the equality of roles as human rights, whether one is a woman or a man.

Discussions about gender have always been interesting in society. Many conventional beliefs want to be continuously maintained regarding the positions and roles between men and women. However, the progression of time inevitably impacts the shifting mindset regarding the roles of men and women in society. Discussions about roles packaged in representation can be clearly seen in the field of art, one of which is through music and songs, serving as powerful means of expression in society.

As a means of expression for society, lyrics can portray emotions, life stories, or profound social reflections. Lyrics can serve as a reflection of the emotional state within the lyricist, which is sometimes challenging to express. At times, changes in societal perspectives, especially concerning gender, can be clearly observed in song lyrics. In some cases, lyrics have moved away from traditional gender stereotypes and begun to depict more inclusive stories, acknowledging gender diversity, as well as broader feelings and experiences.

Regional songs are a type of music that grows and develops within the distinctive cultural context of a region, passed down from generation to generation. Interestingly, the lyrics in these songs are often spoken in the local language, which may be somewhat challenging for those not familiar with the dialect to understand. Nevertheless, regional songs convey deep meanings and serve as tools for embracing the ethical values and local wisdom originating from the community or local knowledge. The melodic style in these songs tends to be simple, making them comfortable to be sung by both local residents and those from outside the region. Typically, regional songs are preserved and transmitted orally, evolving according to the situations in their respective regions. This factor causes regional songs in one area to differ from those in other regions. The lyrics reflect daily life and traditions held by the local community, including norms that characterize them.

In the Banjar cultural environment, the Banjar community is familiar with many regional songs whose lyrics are rooted in the values and customs of the society. Therefore, it is interesting to delve deeper into the gender representations portrayed in the lyrics of Banjar regional songs, whether they are still relevant to the evolving values of the Banjar community today or have undergone a shift.

According to oral traditions in the Banjar society, Banjar songs are mostly crafted in the form of poetic verses and proverbs in the Banjar language, accompanied by Banjar style panting music (Sjarifuddin in Kamaliah 2020). After the world gained independence, the music scene in Indonesia flourished, giving rise to many artists, especially Banjar song composers. One of them is the Maestro H. Anang Ardiansyah, who believes that Banjar songs can be classified into three categories: riverside pantun, mainland pantun, and coastal pantun. Hence, the researcher is interested in exploring the local cultural values revealed in the lyrics of regional songs, especially in the context of Banjar regional songs, which are a crucial part of the nation's cultural heritage.

The object of this research is Banjar songs, both with modern rhythms accompanied by modern musical instruments and traditional Banjar songs with various forms of pantun, whether they are pahuluan (introductory), daratan (mainland), or pesisir (coastal), accompanied by panting music. This aims to explore the representation of gender in their lyrics with the goal of gaining a clearer understanding of the shifting societal mindset reflected in the lyrics of Banjar regional songs. This serves as a form of representation of values and culture evolving in society, specifically the Banjar community in this research.

## **Methodology**

The method employed in this research is qualitative, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentary analysis. Documentary analysis involves gathering data related to Banjar songs, selecting songs that depict gender in their lyrics, and subsequently analyzing and interpreting the meaning of these lyrics in the research document. This method is chosen with the expectation that it will yield results aligned with the researcher's objectives.

Data sources for this study include documents containing lyrics of Banjar regional songs, Banjar cultural experts, and the Banjarmasin community, selected purposively. The data analysis technique employed in this research involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2014: 245). The researcher selected up to five Banjar songs which representing gender, validated by cultural experts, and confirmed for their implementation in the community, allowing for conclusive findings in the research.

## **Gender Representation in Banjar Song Lyrics**

Banjar songs refer to musical compositions that utilize the Banjar language. The Banjar language is used by the Banjar ethnic community in various aspects of social, economic, and cultural life (Hapip, 2008). Banjar songs typically take the form of pantun or sung verses. According to H. Anang Ardiansyah, an artist and creator of Banjar songs (as quoted in Ideham, 2005), there are three variations of typical Banjar songs: pantun that grows along the riverbank, pantun that develops in inland areas, and pantun that evolves along the coastal areas. According to Lambut (2016), Banjar songs encompass musical compositions with traditional Banjar characteristics, modern popular songs that may not have a direct connection to Banjar culture, folk songs of Banjar, and songs from the South Kalimantan region that are considered to have similarities with Banjar songs.

The lyrics, of course, are not exempt from the representations attached to them. Representation is the way language is used to convey understanding, concepts, and ideas about something. In the context of song lyrics, representation becomes crucial because through lyrics, ideas and perspectives on a topic, such as gender, can be strongly expressed. Lyrics have the power to serve as a strong medium for representing various aspects of life, including the roles and gender identities in society. Based on the analysis results in this study, gender representations were found in Banjar songs. In several Banjar songs, the depiction of interactions between men and women is metaphorically portrayed, both through symbols and physical descriptions that are characteristic of each gender. As seen in the following lyrics:

*Galuh Banjar bakamban habang*

*Bakakamban habang*

*Tapih basulam baju Sasirangan*

In the lyrics of the song "Galuh Banjar," composed by H.M. Tamjid Wijaya, there are identifiable gender representations. In these lyrics, there is a specific portrayal of a girl from the Banjar culture referred to as "galuh." The subsequent lyrics depict symbolism associated with her, specifically the word "kakamban." Kakamban is the Banjar term for a shawl, which is a part of women's attire. This is reinforced by the following lyrics, "tapih basulam." Similar to kakamban, tapih basulam is also a traditional Banjar women's attire that was popularly worn in the past.

Furthermore, in the song "Damar Dua" composed by Thamrin, the gender representation of a woman is depicted in the lyrics "Bajudu jangan, kacil mulikay, lawan nang lain." The portrayal of women in the song "Damar Dua" is implicitly conveyed through the phrase "kacil mulik-ay," which translates to

small and charming. These words are commonly used in the daily life of the Banjar community as a compliment to describe women who are petite yet elegant. Therefore, it is evident in these lyrics that the representation is of a Banjar woman.

In the Banjar song titled "Karindangan," the representation of an ideal man is illustrated through the lyrics "bamalaman kada taguring ku tabayang si dada bidang." The phrase "dada bidang" conveys a portrayal of a physically robust stature for a man, and within the song's context, it signifies the ideal physical attributes desired by the woman. The use of the term "dada bidang" explicitly communicates that the lyrics in the song convey a message about the preferred qualities of the man.

In several Banjar song lyrics, the clear distinctions in roles between men and women are depicted, stemming from societal values and customs. An example can be found in the song "Latifah," composed by H. Anang Ardiansyah.

*Siapa nang basandar*

*Latifah katuju aku lawan di ikam*

*Di watun rumah baanjung*

*Nang pintar mangaji nang pintar jua baharaguan*

*Pipi licin muhanya langkar*

*Latifah katuju banar aku wan ikam*

*Jariji lantik mangulay sarudung*

*Imbah katam aku badatang*

*Ikam kah nang mangaji*

*Bulan mulut kita kawinan*

*Wayah bami'rajtan malam tadi*

*Taranay urang nang mandangar*

*Rasa taparak banar wan takdir Illahi*

"Latifah" portrays gender roles that reflect the values of the Banjar community. The character Latifah, depicted as a beautiful Banjar woman, is evident in the lyrics "Pipi licin muhanya langkar," which translates to smooth cheeks and a beautiful face. This is further confirmed by the subsequent lyrics "Jariji lantik mangulay sarudung," indicating having graceful fingers while adjusting the scarf. In Banjar society, the term "jariji lantik" is often used to describe a woman's beauty, typically associating it with cleanliness and self-perfection. Women with graceful fingers are considered adept at taking care of themselves.

The expectation of an ideal woman in Banjar society is clearly depicted in this song. If earlier there was a clear exposition regarding the beauty of Banjar women, the subsequent lyrics describe the piety of Banjar women in the lines "ikam kah nang mangaji, wayah bami'rajtan malam tadi." As a society closely tied to Islamic culture, being pious (sholeh/sholehah) is the primary expectation of parents for their children or prospective daughters-in-law. Thus, piety remains the most crucial factor for acceptance in Banjar society. The piety of Latifah is further reinforced by the following lyrics, "Latifah katuju aku lawan di ikam, nang pintar mangaji nang pintar jua baharaguan," confirming Latifah's piety through the phrase "pintar mangaji," which is the main factor that the writer admires in her. In the subsequent lyrics, "nang pintar baharaguan" portrays Latifah's life skills, emphasizing her competence as reflected in this song.

"Latifah," depicts the ideal type of woman that is hoped for in Banjar society. To this day, the prevailing perception in Banjar society is that the ideal woman is one who is "langkar," as evidenced by her habits of self-care and cleanliness. A pious woman is also highly valued, one who is knowledgeable

about religion, adept at reciting Quranic verses, and proficient in her prayers. Additionally, an ideal Banjar woman is portrayed as someone who is skilled at managing her family. These three ideal characteristics of a Banjar woman are clearly illustrated in the song "Latifah."

This aligns with the theory presented by Lippa (Rosyidah : \_\_\_\_), where gender, in its terminology, is defined as cultural expectations for both men and women. Furthermore, the history of differences between men and women in terms of gender has undergone a highly continuous process and has been shaped by various factors, including socio-cultural conditions, religious aspects, and the political situation of a country.

The lyrics depicted in the song "Latifah" clearly outline the domestic role of women. In the subsequent lyrics, the songwriter decides to propose to Latifah after observing three criteria that vividly portray her characteristics in the song. A good woman is described as one who is skilled in managing household affairs, signified by the phrase "pintar baharaguan," which implies proficiency in cooking. Here, cooking can be represented as a skill that women should possess being adept at managing their families.

In this perspective, the criteria for an ideal woman may seem traditional, as in the modern era, societal perceptions of an ideal woman may have shifted, no longer solely based on these three factors. However, it is essential to emphasize that the lyrics of this song stem from observations of prevailing customs, particularly within the Banjar community.

This perspective is not only depicted in one song; rather, views regarding the criteria for an ideal woman in society are also evident in the song titled "Ading Bastari" by Syahrani Mataya, with the following lyrics:

*Lamah lambat cacantung panjang*

*Putih kuning maambun pupur*

*Aduhai ading bastari*

*Kada tatinggal gawi di dapur  
Adat asli jangan dibuang*

*Bibir habang bakas manginang*

*Hilangkanan 'ku pakai jua*

*Tanda ading nang baik budi*

*Paninggalan urang bahari*

*Ading sayang manang di alis*

*Kada lupa sampai ma*

*Aduhai bulan sahiris*

In the song "Ading Bastari," the representation of women is clearly evident in its opening lyrics, represented by the phrase "lamah lambat cacantung panjang." This is further emphasized in the subsequent lyrics, "bibir habang bakas manginang," which depicts Banjar women as gentle and soft-spoken, with red lips after the act of "manginang." In Banjar culture, "manginang" is a practice predominantly carried out by women. It involves chewing betel leaves, lime, gambier, and areca nut together. This activity is typically done as a way to maintain oral and dental health. In the past, this practice was quite common among Banjar women, but due to changing times, it has become less prevalent. With just these two lines of lyrics, the depiction of Ading Bestari as a Banjar woman is vividly portrayed.

In the subsequent lyrics, "tanda ading nang baik budi" portrays the virtue of Ading Bestari's character, emphasizing her good nature. Following that, "ading sayang manang di alis, aduhai bulan sahiris" describes Ading Bestari as someone who takes care of her appearance, with the depiction of her eyebrows resembling a crescent moon, adding a physical allure to her. This captivates the songwriter. The

physical attraction is further emphasized in the lyrics "putih kuning maambun pupur, kada tatinggal gawi di dapur." Once again, these lyrics depict the Banjar women's tradition of caring for their appearance, renowned for having fair or light yellowish skin. Additionally, the lyrics "kada tatinggal gawi di dapur" accentuates the traditional role of women, highlighting their duty not to neglect the kitchen.

After elaborating on the songwriter's attraction to Ading Bestari's physical attributes, her adeptness in grooming, and her distinct fair or light yellowish complexion, the lyrics also add the perfection of Ading Bestari's character, namely, "kada tatinggal gawi di dapur." Undoubtedly, these lyrics can be seen as emphasizing the role of women solely focused on managing the

Quoting the opinion of Kasiyan (2008) Siswati (2014), a tendency in gender representation, especially concerning women, particularly in the context of advertisements or songs, revolves around three main aspects: the exploitation of women's sexual attractiveness, the exploitation of women's physical attributes or body parts, and the exploitation of women's domestic roles. This is clearly depicted in the lyrics of the song "Ading Bestari." While the context of this song doesn't explicitly touch on the sexual allure of Banjar women, it is implicitly felt and even visibly present in the chosen lyrics.

In the song "Diang Katinting" by H. Anang Ardiansyah, it reinforces the concept of gender representation, aligning with the portrayal of Banjar women in the song "Ading Bestari." According to his theory, the song demonstrates the songwriter's fascination by emphasizing two out of the three factors that contribute to the attractiveness of Banjar women through the following lyrics :

*Tumatan di higa kupandang si Diang Katinting*

*Hidung mancung yahai, rambut ikal mayang*

*Umai bungas banar warangai, hatiku karinyiman*

*Diang ikal mayang yahai, di atas katinting*

The author's interest in the physical attributes, which is the main subject of this song, is evident in the phrase "tumatan di higa ku pandang si Diang Katinting," meaning "from the side, I see Diang Katinting," emphasized in the subsequent lyrics "hidung mancung yahai, rambut ikal mayang," meaning "a sharp nose indeed, curly mayang hair." "umai bungas banar warangai, hatiku karinyiman" "very beautiful, making my heart flutter," "diang ikal mayang, di atas katinting" "oh girl with curly mayang hair on the boat." The lyrics clearly depict the physical attractiveness or body parts possessed by the girl on the boat. The attraction to the girl is portrayed by the lyricist through words of praise for the physical features and appearance exhibited by the figure of Diang Katinting.

The lyrics above represent the lyrics of a Banjar song that reflects gender roles, specifically related to assumptions about the roles of women and men based on the values, norms, and customs of the Banjar community. However, it is important to note that the development of technology, influenced by modernism, which touches on all aspects of life, has the potential to bring about shifts in the perspectives of society, especially the Banjar community.

Discussing the domestication of women's roles confined to the responsibilities as housewives is clearly reflected in the demand for cooking skills. In some Banjar communities, women are still obligated to be proficient in cooking because the ability to cook signifies the capability to manage and care for their families. It is not surprising that these criteria become expectations or the ideal type of woman in society. Discussing the domestication of women's roles confined to the responsibilities as housewives is clearly reflected in the demand for cooking skills. In some Banjar communities, women are still obligated to be proficient in cooking because the ability to cook signifies the capability to manage and care for their families. It is not surprising that these criteria become expectations or the ideal type of woman in society. Top of Form

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### ***Discussion***

Songs are a result of a series of creative activities that emerge, can be used as a portrayal of feelings, entertainment media, and even as a way to convey messages. Lyrics are a crucial part of a song, as they contain stories or messages that need to be conveyed to the listeners. In the context of regional songs, the role of lyrics is not much different; lyrics still serve to transfer feelings, messages, or even values that develop or are taken from the community, especially the Banjar community. When viewed from the portrayal of Banjar regional song lyrics, there are several implicit meanings regarding the domestic role of women. This comes after being confirmed through interview techniques with the Banjar community, consisting of working women, housewives, and students aged 17-58 years, indicating that there has been a shift.

The emphasis on the domestic role of women, where women must be able to take care of themselves to please their husbands, must be able to cook, manage the household, and stay at home due to the influence of globalization, has shifted. From randomly selected informants, it was found that the ease of access to technology and information, coupled with education which is now mandatory and seen as the responsibility of parents, government, and society, has led to a change in views on the domestic role of women with all household tasks being replaced with "the important thing is to be able to help the husband economically." For childcare and family matters, alternatives such as childcare services, hiring domestic helpers, or entrusting them to close family members are considered. This view is also affirmed by male informants, who now see proficiency in household management as no longer a necessity. The condition is that if a woman works, she must still be able to set aside time for her husband and children when she returns from work. This is in line with what Miftah Toha (2003: 154) explained, where he stated that there are several factors that influence perception, one of which is the presence of external factors such as obtained information, knowledge, and surrounding needs. This is consistent with what Jalaluddin Rahmat (2004: 52) proposed, that shifts in perception may occur due to experiences and personality motivations obtained from the education process.

This then explains that what is depicted in Banjar song lyrics, some of which demand that women have good domestic skills, is no longer relevant in South Kalimantan today. The hopes of mothers-in-law or men are just to get a good spouse who loves the family, and if she can manage the household well, then that is just a bonus and is no longer a primary requirement.

### ***Conclusion***

Gender is widely represented in the lyrics of Banjar regional songs. This includes gender in the sense of symbolizing the differences between the sexes, namely men and women, as well as gender in a broader sense, related to the roles of men and women. The representation of gender in Banjar regional songs is rooted in the values, norms, and customary practices that have evolved within the Banjar community, as seen in songs such as Latifah, Ading Bestari, and Dian Katinting. The lyrics of these songs depict the allure of Banjar women, highlighting their intelligence in maintaining their bodies, their ability to serve their families, and their devotion to God. However, nowadays, what is depicted as the ideal woman in Banjar songs has undergone a shift. This is due to the influence of easy access to information, technological advancements, and education.

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