

## Study of Meaning and Function in Koa Baradaik Game in Nagari Duo Koto, West Sumatra

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**ABSTRACT:** Koa game is one of the activities carried out by Minang men that still exists today. Generally, Koa games are played by four people in pairs (Mandan) in a sitting position and facing each other. In the Koa game, there is a game concept called Baradaik. Koa Baradaik is a form of game based on normative ethics applied in each game. This paper aims to discuss the meaning in the game Koa Baradaik and its correlation to social life. The method used in this paper is a qualitative research method of analysis with an ethnographic approach. The data type consists of primary data and secondary data with data sources consisting of field observations, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out using normative ethical theory. The results of the study stated that the Koa Baradaik game is a game that adopts the Minangkabau philosophy which aims to bind and prevent deviant behavior by each individual. In addition, Koa baradaik gives birth to functions consisting of (1). Means of thought (2). Koa baradaik becomes a cultural identity in the form of games that contain normative ethics.(3). Koa Baradaik as a means of forming social interaction.

**Keywords:** Koa, Baradaik, Duo koto, West Sumatra.



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## INTRODUCTION

Play is a physical activity that is carried out voluntarily and earnestly to get a sense of pleasure from the activities carried out. In addition, play is a playful behavior that has qualities that are not "earnest" or "serious" overall. According to (Huizinga, 1990, p. 90) in the game something comes into play something that transcends the immediate desire to maintain survival, and inserts a meaning into it. A game can also be called an illustration as it is said (Herbert Mead, 2018, p. 287) game is an illustration of a situation from which an organized personality emerges. Basically, the word game has various definitions according to the concept of the game being carried out.

Generally, games always exist in various aspects and various forms, this is inseparable from how the game is influenced by its own environment, such as in the *Koa* game which will be the object of research material this time. This paper game is a game that develops in various regions with different names such as in Bali this game is called *Manceki*, in Java it is called "Javanese Card" while in Minangkabau this game is called *Koa*.

*Koa* game is one of the cultural products that still exist today in West Sumatra. The continuity of this game has occurred for generations and has become the local wisdom of the Minang people, in other words, this game has been used as a game for nagari children. Men in Minangkabau are used to playing *Koa* or *Ceki/Koa* games also referred to as "anak nagari" games in the Minangkabau region (Fitri, 2022)(Fitri, 2022), the history of the *Koa* game is an object that does not belong to the original people of West Sumatra, but *Koa* paper belongs to ethnic Chinese. According to stories from traditional elders in Minangkabau, this *Koa* game originally came from China (Harry, 2019) In line with what is said ((Fitri & Yogica, 2018) This black and white card game is thought to come from Chinese culture descendants who live in the area around the Strait of Malacca (Singapore and Malaysia) then spread widely brought by Malays, even to Minangkabau.

*Koa* game is an activity to play cards consisting of 30 different motifs and names whereas, the shape of the back of the card consists of plain yellow and green colors. These names are sourced from the names of animals, plants, and other objects. Names are also pinned to give names to the *KOA* cards. In addition, the naming also aims to explain the existence, identity and rules of the *koa* card game. Everything that has a name will have meaning in it (Harry, 2019) Sistem *Koa* game consists of three forms namely *Koa Baradaik*, *Koa Barandai* and *Koa Pacu*. *Koa Baradaik* is played in pairs called *mandan* with four players, while *Koa Barandai* and *Koa Pacu* consist of six players without using *mandan*. *Mandan* is a couple who has a good quality understanding of the *Koa* game, this aims to avoid falsification during the *Koa* game.

Usually *Koa* games are carried out by parents at *Lapau* (stalls), weddings or other events. In Minang, usually people who play *koa* can only be found in coffee shops that are only open at night and played by older people only, almost none from among teenagers (Rahman, 2014) *Koa* games usually have a stipulation based on the place used. If *Koa* is played at a *Lapau* (stall), then *Koa* paper is provided by the stall owner with the rule that the losing player will pay rent. The *Koa* game is one of the routines carried out by the Minangkabau community in *Lapau* where in this *Koa* game they have to pay table money as a form of rent for a place in *Lapau* (Hidayat, 2022)(Hidayat, 2022). Another case when *Koa* game activities are carried out at the *Alek* (wedding party) event, *Koa* paper is provided by the *pangka* (host) without rent. The *Koa* game system consists of three sets with pre-agreed conditions, namely, to achieve absolute victory, players must be able to win as many as three rounds or get three points.

In playing *Koa* there is the term *Batu*, *Gantuang* and *Putuih* which serves as a marker or notification that there are already players who get points. The term stone in this case is not a hard object as generally understood, but a *stone* is a small object made of paper other objects that serve as a marker that there is already a winner in a set of games. *Gantuang* is a term that serves as a marker that there is a player who has earned two points while the term *putuih* means the end of a game with a winner. The elements mentioned above not only have functions according to the needs of a *Koa* game but also have a very deep meaning. This assumption rests on how the element remains in every *Koa* game.

On the other hand, the *Koa* game is used as a gambling container so that the view of the *Koa* game is more negative, this assumption is caused by deviations by certain individuals who change the basic function of the *Koa* game in the realm of gambling. Generally, *Koa* games get a

negative view by some people, because *Koa* is considered a gambling-based game (M Fadri, 2021). (M Fadri, 2021)

The principle of *Koa* is not a convention in the realm of gambling, but *Koa* is one of the games that gives birth to social interaction, and is able to form normative for each individual, as it is generally known that religion and customs in Minangkabau are inseparable, so if there are customs that are not in accordance with religion, these customs will gradually disappear. (Yulika, 2017, bk. 4) rule that reads *syara' mangato adat mamakai* (what is explained in religion is used in custom), therefore the importance of correction and comprehensive study to produce an underlying stigma about the game of *Koa*, how this practice is still carried out by the Adams. So why is it able to survive until the current era of advanced technology? Of course there are more fundamental things such as normative values related to social construction which of course are built on the basis of philosophy in a Minangkabau culture. Therefore, the focus of this study is focused on the meaning and background of the formation, a practice of *Koa* games that are able to grow and survive in different time spaces.

## **METHOD**

Method is a way to accomplish the mission, as well as this research which, this research uses qualitative methods, with an ethnographic approach. In producing this paper, a systematic method is needed in discussing the object of research which is then arranged in the form of writing. This research was conducted in the form of data collection in the form of field research and libraries. The process of observing, recording and conducting interviews through informants and resource persons with the observer as participant method is applied to obtain comprehensive data related to the subject's actions carried out spontaneously and reasonably in the *Koa Baradaik* game. The main instrument in this study is human or the researcher himself. In addition, supporting instruments consist of recording devices in the form of smartphones and stationery.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Meaning in the game *Koa Baradaik***

*Koa* game is a cultural phenomenon that occurs in people's lives with a series of mutually agreed rules. In general, each game has its own rules. Those rules set out what applies in the temporary realm it has restricted. The rules in a game are absolutely binding and should not be doubted as in the *Koa Baradaik* game.

Linguistically the word *Baradaik* means (regular), in the form of understanding the word *baradaik* refers to an action that is structured and well organized. The definition of *Koa Baradaik* is a game consisting of various rules with the priority of normative ethical principles. It is called normative, because ethics proposes values, offers ethical patterns, examines moral considerations and various sparks of action in concrete everyday human life.

Ethics is a human behavior viewed from good and bad values as far as can be determined by reason (Zaprul Khan, 2016, p. 89) *In the past, the Koa game was a Baradaik game that pelakunyo labiah prioritized*

*taratik, malu jo polite, promised sabalun main, batantuan tampeknyo.* This means that this game was once a game in which it contained all rules and moral values, and the place of the game was mutually agreed upon.

Based on the explanation above, *the Koa Baradaik* game is a practice carried out with normative ethical principles based on Minang philosophy which is implemented in a series of behaviors in every action. Action in the context of Baradaik can not only be seen in the form of Koa games, but the concept of Baradaik can be found if *Koa* games are carried out in different and closed spaces, so it is also called *Baradaik*.

Therefore *Baradaik* means an action that prioritizes social ethics. In the past, *the Koa* game was a *Baradaik* game performed by *Niniak Mamak* with limits that were constrained by normative values (interview, Datuak Tumbijo as a traditional figure). The above statement gives an understanding that the *game of Koa Baradaik* is the main principle in the beginning of its practice.

The existence of the *practice of Koa* games in Minangkabau traditional proverbs is called by the term *Adaik Babuhua Sentak* the meaning of this word is that binding rules can be changed. The meaning of this term is that the game of *Koa* is not an act that is a necessity or an obligation. *Koa* games can be eliminated or replaced with other games and do not contradict customs and religions however, ethical principles in *Koa Baradaik* games are something that must exist in every individual. This term is called *Adat Babuhua Mati* which means that normative ethics is a rule that must not be violated or changed.

Generally, *Koa Baradaik* is carried out by men who have positions as traditional leaders. As a traditional leader, each individual is able to provide an understanding of an action which of course is based on normative. Customary stakeholders are people who have good knowledge of various things. This provision will function for customary stakeholders to solve various problems that occur in the race and community. (*badiri mamak sapakaik kaum*) which means that customary stakeholders are determined through a deliberation and agreement from a tribal group or clan.

As a *Baradaik* game, this practice is carried out in the position of "*Duduak Bahamparan Di Lapiak Nan Rancak Ba Adok Adang*" (sitting cross-legged on a clean mat and facing each other). The point of this philosophy is that the game of *Koa Baradaik* separates itself from ordinary life in terms of place and time, closed, limited. It is played within a certain time limit and place it takes place and is meaningful in itself.



Figure 1. *Koa Baradaik Game*  
(Documentation: Hasan Basri Durin March 8, 2023)

Actions in the *game Koa Baradaik* are always supervised by normative rules. One example of what *Baradaik* means is how to take, or when coding the next action using the right hand. Likewise, when there is a player who is *coki*, it is expressed and symbolized using a snap of the finger on the game mat. In general, every game will end in victory and defeat and get prizes and sometimes there is a financial loss from the losing side.

This is also true in the game of Koa Baradaik however, success in achieving a victory in *Koa Baradaik* does not result in a profit or loss financially but rather, every player who wins or loses will get a positive assessment of the quality of intelligence and ethics possessed. The concept of ethics in *the game Koa Baradaik* is also called *Nanang Saribu Aka Pikia Palito Hati, Raso Pareso Malu Jo Sopan*. The term *Nanang Saribu Aka, Pikia Palito Hati* (think as much as possible think with feeling) has the meaning that every action to be done must be thought out in reps to find maximum results.

The results of the thought conversation are analyzed or a re-filter using feelings. Using thoughts and feelings when performing an action can give good results so, the decisions taken are no-. As contained in the *game Koa Baradaik* which is reflected when changing card motifs by each player unhurriedly and calmly.

The philosophy of *Raso dibaok Naik Pareso dibaok Turun* (taste brought up, check brought down). The understanding of philosophy is directly related to religious norms and customs. *Raso*\*rasa* is defined as an attempt to understand and discover a truth through the feelings of the heart while *Pareso* means check with meaning, that something to be decided must be rethought. The essence of the philosophy teaches how an action must be directed at the good between fellow living beings and living beings towards their creator. *Koa Baradaik*, in this case, is reflected in a game that does not produce a loss in material aspects and does not intersect with aspects of negligence in performing worship.

*Raso Jo Pareso* is wisdom in interacting with others or feeling in this case is the deepest instinct in a person in the form of courtesy, ethics, and manners. People who have no feelings, mean no instincts, less polite in speaking, less ethical in acting and less moral in society. This principle in *Koa Baradaik* has the potential to maintain relationships between players in the form of each player taking and placing papers using the right hand properly.

Another form is not to say in a loud tone when the player is in a win-lose situation. The use of sign language in the form of snapping fingers on the game mat is an ethical concept that is maintained in playing *koa*.

*Malu Jo Sopan* is a tendency towards individuals in an effort to maintain dignity and attitude. Mutual respect for each other is an important part in maintaining the social life order of the Minang people. Mutual respect for each other is a principle that has been inherent in the social life of the Minang people.

The principle mentioned above is also constructed in the game *Koa Baradaik*. When *the game of Koa Baradaik* is carried out by individuals who do not have close kinship, such as security with *mamak*, or playing with brother-in-law. It aims to avoid mistakes in behavior that is considered unethical in a society, so that it is able to maintain and maintain social integrity.

## B. Koa Game Functions

Function can be interpreted as the use of an object, use and work performed by a group of activities belonging to the same type based on nature, application or other factors. Functions can also be interpreted as details of tasks that are similar or closely related to each other. This should be done by one person based on similar groups of activities depending on their nature or implementation. The definition of function according to the Complete Dictionary Indonesian (2008) is the usefulness of a thing, its usefulness and the work done.

Function is something that is shown in a desire function related to the reason for the formation of something. (Sriwulan, 2021, l. 79) defines function as a partial contribution to all activities that are part of it. The function of using some particular social activity is to contribute to the whole of social life, as a function of the whole social system.

The above understanding provides an understanding that function is as a certain aspect of a particular task. The continuity of the *Koa* game includes various rules consisting of various elements, these elements are present in different forms and sources from each other. The continuity of the *Koa* game is rooted in various rules or certain elements, simply the *Koa* game is able to produce a function in this case also called the term latent function and manifest function.

Robert King Marton in his structural functional theory gives a different view of function, where Marton says function is not only concerned with what is intended or wants to be presented from an action. Functions can be present without having to be planned, Marton calls manifest functions and latent functions. Tracking in a field study, basically the manifest function of the *Koa* game is as a means of entertainment and to solve a problem.

*The Koa* game used to function as a means of solving a problem, the problem in question was not oriented towards the criminal realm but in other forms. An example of this is when there is a child who will hold a wedding, both parties will meet to discuss the subject concerned. As an introduction to the individual concerned (*mamak*) and to reduce tension in this situation, the application of *Koa* games is a means used to dialogue and discuss a problem so as to present an impression that is not too rigid (interview, with gilang).

The explanation of this expression provides knowledge that the *Koa* game has a very instrumental function in bridging to solve a certain problem in the community. Therefore, there are two manifest functions of the *koa* game, namely as a container of entertainment and as a means of solving problems. The study, and analysis of the function of the *koa* game performed, provides a series of important answers about how there is a latent function that even becomes a dominant function in the realm of structure and spark of action in the social environment.

### 1. Educational Functions

Education is a process by which students accumulate all knowledge as capital in understanding and living life events. The most important part of education is to avoid thoughts and behaviors towards a series of mistakes that will adversely affect an individual or group. So far, education is better understood as a provision of knowledge that is applied in a place that is formal. In reality,

an education can be collected through various activities contained in a society without formality as a forum for learning.

It can be found in a game of *Koa Baradaik*. A simple understanding of education is a human effort to grow and develop innate potentials both physically and spiritually in accordance with the values that exist in society and culture (Rahman et al., 2022, 1. 3) Because a culture is basically the main form of education in a society. As mentioned earlier, *Koa Baradaik* can be a means of education, although the basic concept of a place is as a container in which only contains elements of pleasure.

The essence of education in the game *Koa Baradaik* is the system of teaching morality. Moral education can be found through the principles of *Koa* games such as using the right hand, speaking politely, not playing with the closest people (mamak and kamanakan) and others. This form teaches how important it is to understand and use morals to avoid mistakes in social relationships.

## **2. Think**

Each type of traditional game has its own patterns that require the ability to act using the mind as the main capital in completing a game. Processing a lot of thinking requires concentration of thinking, calmness, ingenuity, and strategy. This game is competitive individually, or in pairs. In *the game of Koa*, a victory is not only determined by luck but requires accuracy in acting using the mind.

The mind is used to understand the pattern of the game. These game patterns are formulated in the mind by seeing and calculating the number of cards that are visible and invisible. This is because the *game Koa Baradaik* consists of various motifs with different names and the number of cards consisting of 180 sheets. Therefore, in this section each player performs a strong analysis in understanding the pattern of the game which is then, formulated to make a decision in taking action.

## **3. Social Control (Preventive)**

All forms of social control in the form of prevention of *deviation* behavior so that social life remains conducive to human behavior arise from an impulse. Motivation is an innate tendency to react to a particular attitude that shapes the social order. *Koa Baradaik* is able to become preventive social control caused by moral construction in the realm of play.

This morality is implemented in each individual's environment against other individuals as social control. Social control, like that operating in self-criticism, directs itself very intimately and broadly toward human behavior. Behavior plays a role in integrating individuals and actions in their relationships, with social processes encompassing organized experiences and behaviors and involving them.

The concept of ethics in the game *Koa Baradaik* gives social control over the behavior of its players which depends on the attitudes of other individuals. The development of this process forms the so-called and acceptance of collective norms. In *the game Koa Baradaik*, the attitude of a group of individuals is engaged in a common response and different roles involve each other.

As long as the player takes the stand of an individual in the group, the individual must take the stand of all involved in the process. Social control (preventive) with *Koa Baradaik* media is one of the efforts to prevent interference or violation of norms in society. In addition, *Koa* games that

are carried out at night indirectly contribute to monitoring the environment from things that are contrary to the rules that apply in certain places.

#### **4. As a cultural characteristic**

*Koa Baradaik* as a characteristic can be understood in its aspect of the game which is based on normative concepts. This concept is very rarely found in similar games so, this situation becomes a reality in understanding the *game Koa Baradaik*. The characteristic in question is derived from the concepts and principles played by the Minang community in general (*Baradaik*). This characteristic will be more visible if the game of *Koa Baradaik* is carried out in a different environment. For example, Nagari Duo Koto nomads who live in Jakarta present *Koa Baradaik* games in a multiethnic environment.

#### **5. Social Interaction Function**

*Koa Baradaik* is fundamentally able to form social interactions before the start of a game or after the end of the game. Another form is *the Koa* game as capital in forming social relationships. In this context, the *Koa* game is likened to a proverb that reads *ba kabau sikua babendi ciek* (interview, Mr. Mawan as a *koa* player). The purpose of such a saying is that *Koa* games can be part of forming social relationships by playing *Koa* between individual groups with which social interaction functions are obtained that are able to maintain social order in the form of:

##### **a. Strengthening Relationships between Individuals.**

The main function of social interaction is to strengthen relationships between individuals. If between individuals interact with each other with good communication, then good relations will certainly continue to be established. An example of this one function is to establish good relationships with fellow *Koa* players, visitors who do not play *Koa* place owners or well-established friendships will foster strong bonds as well. Therefore, friendship relationships between each individual in the social environment will be more closely established thanks to social interaction.

##### **b. Get to know and open up to other individuals.**

As well as strengthening relationships between individuals, social interaction also serves to recognize and assess new individuals. A bond between individuals can be formed with good social interaction in everyday life. Through social interaction, a person can get to know the specific character, attitudes, and thoughts of others. Social interaction can build strong relationships between individuals. Social interaction also serves to keep individuals open and familiar with social life. Social interaction can trigger oneself to communicate and know every incident in the surrounding environment. In addition, social interaction also leads someone to be able to get to know different points of view. Playing *Koa* has the opportunity to open up to other individuals and produce a unique paradigm.

##### **c. A means of exchanging information as an opening of insight.**

Social interaction can be a medium or a place to exchange information and open insights. To deal with events in everyday life, it is necessary to have social interaction with others in order to gain new insights. If someone wants to be open with others, then new information and knowledge will



be obtained easily. Exchanging ideas allows someone to appreciate differences of opinion because they are open to each other.

## **6. Economic Functions**

*Lapau* or warung is a place that provides various needs in meeting daily needs. *Lapau* is one of the places allocated as an effort to improve the economy. (Safri, 2018, 1. 3) said, economics relates to every action or process that must be carried out to create goods and services aimed at meeting human needs or desires. *Lapau* in Minangkabau not only functions as it should, but rather, *Lapau* is a space that is able to be part of certain activities.



Figure 2. Koa *Lapau* Game

(Documentation: Hasan Basri Durin 4 April 2023)

## **CONCLUSION**

However, *lapau* can also be used as a place to play *Koa* by some humans. Providing space for *Koa* players is indirectly able to affect the microeconomic system, called micro because the area of the economy is in a relatively small but continuous increase. Therefore, the *Koa* game carried out in *lapau*, can revive the economy for *lapau* owners . Economic improvement in this context is carried out by *lapau* managers by providing *Koa* cards and other consumer goods.

The cards provided will later be paid by *Koa* players after the completion of a game. This economic increase is not only based on the use of cards but rather, income is also obtained from the purchase of drinks, food and cigarettes. Therefore, with the *Koa* game carried out in *lapau*, it will provide a function to the owner of the *lapau* with an increase in income sourced from the beginning of the *Koa* game action.

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