

The social functions of the Galombang Dance in the dynamics of Minangkabau community life in Padang City

Vinna Aulya^{*1}, Frendy Satria Palindo², Venny Rosalina¹, Robby Ferdian¹, Fabio Yuda³

¹Padang State University, Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka, Kampus Air Tawar, Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

²Indonesian Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta, Jl. Parangtritis Km. 6.5, Sewon, Bantul, Yogyakarta 55188, Indonesia

³Indonesian Institute of the Arts Surakarta, Jl. Ki Hajar Dewantara No. 19, Kentingan, Jebres, Kota Surakarta, Jawa Tengah 57126, Indonesia
e-mail: vinnaaulya@unp.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain the social functions of the Galombang Dance within the dynamics of the Minangkabau community life in Padang City. The Galombang Dance serves not only as a form of entertainment or aesthetic expression but also as a sociocultural medium that reflects traditional values, communal solidarity, and respect for guests. This research employed a qualitative method, with data collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The data were analyzed descriptively and analytically using an interpretive approach to understand the social and cultural meanings embedded in the performance of the Galombang Dance. The findings reveal that the Galombang Dance functions to strengthen community solidarity, reaffirm Minangkabau cultural identity, and adapt to ongoing social changes. Although its forms and modes of presentation have undergone transformation, the traditional values and social functions it embodies continue to be preserved by the supporting community. Thus, the Galombang Dance can be understood as a form of living local wisdom that remains adaptive to contemporary developments.

Keywords: Galombang Dance, social function, Minangkabau community, cultural change, performing arts

1. INTRODUCTION

A society is a group of people who live together in a certain area and produce culture as a result of their social interactions. According to [Koentjaraningrat \(2003:72\)](#), culture encompasses the entire system of ideas, feelings, actions, and works acquired by humans through the learning process and made common property. Thus, almost all human actions can be viewed as manifestations of culture. Art is an important element of culture, closely related to the value of beauty or aesthetics. Aristotle viewed art as a form of concrete expression that essentially imitates the concept of nature, so that art exists as a reflection of the human experience. Etymologically, the word "art" comes from the Sanskrit word *Sani*, which means worship, offering, and service, indicating that art has had the meaning of devotion since the beginning. In the context of this research, the Galombang Dance is understood not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a cultural product that represents the social dynamics of Minangkabau society. The transformation of the Galombang Dance into a creative form, especially with the dominance of women as dancers and Carano carriers, is evidence that performing arts are constantly moving in line with social changes, ideologies, and gender relations that develop in society. See Figure 1



Figure 1. Galombang dance by the UNP Sendaratasik Arts Group (Documentation by Vinna, September 9, 2019)

Every human society experiences sociocultural changes throughout its life. According to [Soekanto \(2009:258\)](#), social change is any variation in accepted ways of life, whether due to changes in geographic conditions, material culture, population composition, ideology, diffusion, or new discoveries. ([Mohammad Iqbal Ahnaf et al., 2023](#)). These changes can occur slowly (evolutionary) or quickly (revolutionary) and can have a narrow or broad impact on society.

[Koentjaraningrat \(2003:72\)](#) also emphasized that culture is the entire system of ideas, actions, and human works in social life, acquired through the learning process. Therefore, every social change will always be accompanied by a cultural change, including in the realm of art. In the context of Minangkabau art, one concrete form of sociocultural change can be seen in the Galombang Dance. This dance was originally performed in traditional ceremonies with a strong traditional silek nuance. However, based on observations at the Sarai Sarumpun Art Studio ([Padang, 2024](#)), the Galombang Dance form has now undergone various new adaptations to meet the needs of modern performances, although it still retains the basic elements of silek. This change demonstrates how culture adapts to the demands of the times while maintaining the values inherited from ancestors. See Figure 2(a) and 2(b).



Figure 2(a)



Figure 2(b)

Figure 2(a). disputes over the Galombang dance; Figure 2(b). Carano bearer and dance guard (Documentation by Vinna 09 September 201)

Art is a cultural product born from the creativity of society and continues to evolve with the changing times. Each region has its own distinctive art forms, whether in the form of music, dance, or drama, which are passed down through generations. Along with socio-cultural developments, various traditional art forms undergo adaptation and creation to remain relevant and acceptable to today's society. One traditional Minangkabau art form that has undergone this process is the Galombang Dance. This dance was originally deeply rooted in the silek tradition (Minangkabau pencak silat), which is rich in traditional and cultural philosophical value. (Fresti Yuliza, 2020). However, the Galombang Dance has undergone many new creations, especially in Padang, West Sumatra. This phenomenon is clearly visible in various artistic performances presented by the art studios in the city. See Figure 3



Figure 3. Galombang dance by the Sanggar Sarai Sarumpun Group (Documentation by Vinna, March 16, 2024)

Based on direct observation at the Sarai Sarumpun Art Studio, located at Rimbo Tarok, Taruko Tigo Complex, Gunung Sarik Village, Kuranji District, Padang, it was found that their Galombang Dance creation still maintains elements of silek and basic Minangkabau movements, but has been developed according to the tastes and needs of today's society. These changes indicate a close relationship between art and the sociocultural dynamics of society. In sociological studies, this phenomenon can be linked to the theory of multiculturalism, which views cultural diversity as a wealth that must be maintained and respected. Multiculturalism emphasizes that changes in culture do not always eliminate old values but can enrich the identity of society through the process of adaptation.

The main issue that arises is how society accepts the Galombang Dance, which has undergone a creative process of change. Whether these changes are still seen as a form of cultural preservation or are

actually considered to shift cultural values inherited from ancestors depends greatly on society's perspective of understanding cultural dynamics. In this case, multicultural education is important because it is a concept or philosophy that recognizes cultural and ethnic diversity as a factor that shapes lifestyles, social experiences, personal identities, and educational opportunities for individuals and groups (Banks, 2004, p. 28). From a multicultural perspective, cultural change can be interpreted not only as a threat to tradition but also as part of the process of adaptation and intercultural dialogue (Putraningsih, 2020). Therefore, this study focuses on "Galombang Dance in the Context of Socio-Cultural Change in the Community in Padang City." This research is important because it provides an overview of how traditional Minangkabau art, especially the Galombang Dance, can survive amidst the development of the times, while also showing how society adapts to change without losing its cultural roots. From a broader perspective, art, as a part of culture, has continually evolved over time. These changes stem from human activity in developing our senses, evolving from simple forms to the more complex forms of modern art (Dadas, 2025).

2. METHOD

This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. This study aimed to describe the phenomenon of socio-cultural change reflected in the Galombang Dance in Padang City. This research focuses on the presentation form of the creative Galombang Dance, especially the movements, music, costumes, and properties. Cultural values and symbolic meanings that are still maintained or have changed. We also looked at the views of the community and artists towards changes in the Galombang Dance. Data collection techniques will be carried out through direct observation by observing the Galombang Dance performance at the Sarai Sarumpun Art Studio. In-depth interviews were conducted with the studio leader, dancers, and community leaders. Documentation, in the form of photos, videos, and field notes. The analysis is carried out qualitatively through three stages: Data reduction, selecting and focusing relevant data. Data presentation, compiling findings into a descriptive narrative form. Drawing conclusions and interpreting data based on the theory of sociocultural change and multiculturalism (Sudrajat & Sufiyana, 2024).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted on Galombang Dance performances by arts groups in the Minangkabau community, particularly during guest-welcoming ceremonies at alek nagari (traditional ceremonies) and weddings. Based on field observations, Galombang Dance performances have undergone several changes from their original form. Previously, the Galombang Dance was performed exclusively by men, with movements heavily influenced by silek (martial arts). However, in recent practice, it has been found that Galombang Dance dancers are no longer exclusively male, but also include women. Furthermore, the movement aspect exhibits new variations. This aligns with Sedyawati's opinion that the choreographer's processing is an effort to renew the face of traditional dance in a fresher form. This renewal is evident in various elements of the performance, such as movement, costumes, floor patterns, musical accompaniment, props, and the choice of venue and time (Rahmada et al., 2019). Basic movements such as kudo-kudo, gelek, siku-siku, ambek, tapuak, langkah duo, langkah tigo, and langkah ampek are still maintained but are given additional touches of movement that are more aesthetic and rhythmic to suit the needs of today's performances. The accompanying music has also undergone changes, from using only traditional musical instruments to being combined with modern instruments. In the procession section, the function of the Galombang Dance, which was initially limited to escorting important guests, has now expanded to include the opening of performing arts events or cultural festivals at the school and university levels. This phenomenon shows that art as a form of culture is always evolving. These changes in function are a consequence of human activity in cultivating feelings that continue to increase, so that the Galombang Dance has evolved from simple to more complex forms according to the demands of the modern art

era (Mulyadi & Padang, 2024).

Interviews with trainers and dancers indicated that these changes were made to make the Galombang Dance more appealing to the younger generation and to adapt to the tastes of today's audiences. However, Minangkabau traditional values and symbols of respect for guests remain a core element of the performance. The phenomenon of change in the Galombang Dance can be understood from the perspective of social change theory (Ahnaf et al., 2023). According to Selo Soemardjan and Soelaiman Soemardi, every change in a social institution causes changes in other institutions in society. In this case, the younger generation's values and social interaction patterns influence their interpretation and performance of the Galombang Dance. The shift in dancers from only men to a mix of men and women reflects changes in the social structure of society, which is increasingly equal and inclusive. In addition, this change can also be studied using the salad bowl theory of multiculturalism, which describes heterogeneous societies living side by side while maintaining their respective cultural characteristics (Habiburrozzaq et al., 2023). Galombang Dance has undergone adaptations in form to suit the global cultural context (for example, the use of modern costumes or mixed music), but still maintains the core identity of Minangkabau as a symbol of respect and courage.

Furthermore, according to Indrayuda and Ardpal (2017), dance is a human product that must be developed from the aspects of movement, costume, music, and space rationally following the development of community behavior. Thus, changes in the Galombang Dance are a logical consequence of the development of society itself (Cunningham & Hammond, 2025). This shift is also in line with the idea of the democratization of art, where the creation of works of art is no longer the exclusive privilege of traditional artists but can be done by every member of society in a participatory manner. Thus, the changes in the Galombang Dance demonstrate the close relationship between the social dynamics of the Minangkabau people and the art forms they perform, while also emphasizing that traditional art is adaptive to changing times without losing its cultural value (Nurhana & Indrayuda, 2024).

This study found that the Galombang Dance has undergone changes in its presentation, from the dancers, movements, music, and performance function, while still maintaining the Minangkabau cultural values. This change is a result of social changes in Minangkabau society, which is becoming increasingly open, inclusive, and adaptive to the times (Aulia, 2024). This phenomenon supports the theory of social change and the salad bowl theory in multiculturalism, which states that culture can develop through the blending of new elements without losing its original identity. Similarly, the experiences of young adult migrants in Sweden show that despite being exposed to new cultures, they maintain elements of their original identity in social interactions (Qamar, 2024). A similar phenomenon can be seen in Minangkabau performing arts, particularly the Galombang Dance, which, despite undergoing adaptations in form for example, through the use of mixed music or modern costumes retains its core identity as a symbol of respect and courage. Thus, the Galombang Dance can be understood as a concrete manifestation of the salad bowl model in multiculturalism, where new elements are combined without losing the distinctive characteristics of Minangkabau culture.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it was found that the existence of culture in society has a direct and significant role in shaping the way individuals think and act. Field data shows that each generation does not start from scratch, but continues the inherited cultural knowledge and practices, then develops them according to the needs of the times. This is evident in the community's artistic activities, which are continuously maintained and modified, so that they remain relevant to their current social context. Other findings indicate that the community is the primary party maintaining the continuity of these arts through binding them to local customs. Thus, it can be concluded that cultural preservation cannot be separated from the existence of its community, because the community is not only a connoisseur but also the main inheritor and developer of cultural values.

Ethical Approval

This study involved direct observations and interviews with cultural practitioners, dancers, and community members associated with the performance of the Galombang Dance. All research activities were conducted respectfully and did not involve sensitive, private, or high-risk information. Formal ethical approval was not required under institutional guidelines, as the study did not include experiments, minors, medical procedures, or the collection of personal data that would necessitate official ethical clearance. Nevertheless, the researchers ensured that all interactions were carried out ethically, responsibly, and with full respect for local cultural norms.

Informed Consent Statement

All participants involved in interviews and observations were informed about the purpose of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate. Verbal informed consent was obtained before data collection. No personal or identifying information was recorded, and the privacy and anonymity of all participants were fully protected throughout the research process.

Authors' Contributions

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article. The conceptualization and formulation of the research focus were carried out collaboratively. The literature search, data selection, and analytical synthesis were jointly conducted by the authors. The drafting, revision, and finalization of the manuscript were completed through shared effort and mutual supervision. All authors have read and approved the final version of this manuscript.

Disclosure Statement

The authors declare that they have no known financial, personal, or institutional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the conduct of this research or the preparation of this manuscript. The study was carried out independently, and all interpretations and conclusions were based solely on academic considerations. No external parties affected the neutrality, integrity, or outcomes of this work.

Data Availability Statement

This study is based on qualitative field data obtained through direct observations, interviews, and documentation of Galombang Dance performances in Padang City. The primary data consist of non-identifiable field notes, interview summaries, and photographic documentation collected during the research process. These data are not publicly available due to privacy and cultural protocol considerations but may be provided by the authors upon reasonable request for academic or research purposes. All secondary sources referenced in the manuscript are cited accordingly.

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Notes on Contributors

Vinna Aulya

Vinna Aulya is affiliated Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

Frendy Satria Palindo

Frendy Satria Palindo is affiliated Indonesian Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Venny Rosalina

Venny Rosalina is affiliated Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

Robby Ferdian

Robby Ferdian is affiliated Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

Fabio Yuda

Fabio Yuda is affiliated Indonesian Institute of the Arts Surakarta, Indonesia

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