

An Analysis of the *Barabah Mandi* Dance Style in Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra Province

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the style of the *Barabah Mandi* dance found in Nagari Koto Tinggi, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra Province. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method. Through this method, the researcher described the data obtained in the field and then analyzed them according to the focus of the study. The theoretical frameworks used in this research were Alan Lomax's theory of style and M. Jazuli's theory of dance form. *Barabah Mandi* is a newly created dance that has grown and developed in Nagari Koto Tinggi, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra Province. The dance was inspired by a local legend that tells the love story of a young couple. This legend was subsequently transformed into a dance work that possesses distinctive characteristics, which can be observed through its dance form. These distinctive features are influenced by the region's agrarian environment and the fact that the majority of the local community works as farmers. Therefore, the style of the *Barabah Mandi* dance can be categorized as a *darek* style, a characteristic cultural style associated with the inland regions of Minangkabau.

Keywords: *Barabah Mandi* Dance, Dance Style, Alan Lomax's Theory, Agrarian Region, Nagari Koto Tinggi Community

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INTRODUCTION

Nagari Koto Tinggi is located in Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra Province. The nagari consists of several jorongs, one of which is Jorong Sungai Dadok. A jorong is the smallest administrative unit under the nagari government system in West Sumatra Province. Jorong Sungai Dadok is home to various traditional performing arts, including Randai, Mak Inang Pulau Kampai Dance, and Barabah Mandi Dance. Barabah Mandi Dance, which has become an icon of the jorong, was created by Rosmawati in 1966. In the past, the dance was frequently performed as a form of entertainment during theatrical performances, Islamic holiday celebrations, and wedding ceremonies in Jorong Sungai Dadok. The performance involves nine dancers, consisting of one male dancer and eight female dancers. The dance was inspired by a local legend from Jorong Sungai Dadok, Nagari

Koto Tinggi, which tells the love story of a young woman named Barabah and her lover. This legend was later transformed into a dance work that possesses its own distinctive characteristics, which can be observed through its dance style (Interview with Rosmawati, October 18, 2025).

Meyer Schapiro, as cited in Walker, defines style as a constant quality of form in a work of art that refers to three artistic aspects: motifs, relationships, and formal qualities that create distinct characteristics (Yasraf Amir Piliang, 1999)(Yasraf Amir Piliang, 1999). Viewed from its dance form, *Barabah Mandi* Dance consists of several important elements, including dancers, movement, music, theme, make-up, costume, and other supporting components. In terms of movement, the dance comprises fifteen movement motifs: *Malenggang*, *Manjapuik*, Giving the Ring, Comforting, *Lapeh salendang*, *Lapeh Baju*, *Lapeh Lambak* (skirt), *Lapeh Galang*, *Lapeh Subang*, *Simbua aia*, *Simbua aia*, *Bamanuang*, Searching, Diving, and Playing Kites. These movements are predominantly performed with an upright posture slightly inclined forward and low foot positions with bent knees. Based on observations, the style of these movements is influenced by the geographical environment and the agricultural activities that dominate the lives of the local community. According to H. R. Warsito, the natural environment greatly influences regional culture, while social interactions shape the character and distinctive features of a community (Drs. H.R Warsito, 2012). This influence becomes a distinctive characteristic of *Barabah Mandi* Dance and differentiates its movements from those of other dances.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in examining *Barabah Mandi* Dance from the perspective of dance style, which constitutes one of its most distinctive characteristics as reflected in its movement forms. Dance style represents the embodiment of the cultural practices of the supporting community; therefore, both internal and external factors that shape the style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance play a crucial role in defining its cultural uniqueness. This study is important because the original performers of *Barabah Mandi* Dance are now elderly. In addition, younger generations show limited interest in performing the dance because they perceive it as old-fashioned. As a result, the quality of movement execution has declined, and if this situation continues, the established movement conventions of *Barabah Mandi* Dance may gradually disappear.

This study is also related to previous research conducted by (Robiansyah., T., Erlinda Erlinda, 2019), entitled "The Existence of *Barabah Mandi* Dance in the Community of Jorong Sungai Dadok, Nagari Koto Tinggi, Gunung Omeh District, Lima Puluh Kota Regency." The study discussed the existence of *Barabah Mandi* Dance as one of the dances still recognized by the people of Jorong Sungai Dadok. The research served as an important reference for the present study and helped avoid duplication while providing information regarding the existence of the dance. However, based on field observations, the researcher found several discrepancies between the data obtained during this study and those reported in the previous research. Robiansyah's study stated that the creator of the dance was unknown, whereas this research identified Rosmawati as its creator. Furthermore, the story presented in the third section of the previous study differs from the information obtained during fieldwork. Differences were also found regarding the number of movement

motifs and the year in which the dance was created. Although both studies focus on the same dance, they approach it from different perspectives. The present research specifically examines the style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance, a topic that has not been addressed in previous studies.

METHOD

Research methods are scientific procedures employed to obtain data for specific purposes (Sugiyono, 2013). This concept is useful for collecting field data because it is relevant to the topic under investigation. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Several stages were carried out throughout the research process, beginning with the determination of the research site. The study was conducted in Nagari Koto Tinggi, specifically in Jorong Sungai Dadok, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra Province. The research was systematically conducted through several stages, including observation. Observations were carried out over approximately three months through direct examination of the research object, namely the *Barabah Mandi* Dance.

The next stage involved the collection of primary and secondary data. Primary data are data obtained directly from the original sources. In this study, primary data were collected through interviews with informants in the field. Information was obtained from nine informants, including Rosmawati as the creator of *Barabah Mandi* Dance, Wilda Aviva as an artist, Irfan as a customary leader and community elder, Safendra and Newan as dancers, Hafizd as the composer, and Mifta as a youth actively involved in the arts in Nagari Koto Tinggi. Interviews were conducted both directly in Jorong Sungai Dadok and indirectly via telephone. In addition, documentation was undertaken to record various aspects of the dance, including movement, performers, make-up, costumes, and performance venues. Secondary data are sources that do not provide information directly to the researcher but are obtained through documents or other intermediary sources. In this study, secondary data were collected through literature reviews of journals, books, undergraduate theses, and other scholarly works related to *Barabah Mandi* Dance, dance form, and dance style.

The final stage was data analysis. Data analysis is the process of systematically organizing and interpreting data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process involves categorizing data, breaking them down into units, identifying patterns, selecting relevant information, and drawing conclusions that are understandable and meaningful (Sugiyono, 2013). The results of data analysis and processing constituted the final output of the qualitative research process in the form of a written research report. To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques. Triangulation is a method used in qualitative research to verify the validity of data through multiple perspectives (Nurfajriani et al., 2024). This technique was implemented by comparing data obtained from the same sources through different methods, such as observation findings that were subsequently verified through interviews and documentation. Through this process, the research findings can be scientifically justified and considered credible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of the *Barabah Mandi* Dance in Nagari Koto Tinggi

Culturally, Minangkabau consists of three Luhak (traditional cultural regions), namely Luhak Tanah Datar, Luhak Agam, and Luhak Lima Puluh Kota. Geographically, these regions are located in the highlands, commonly referred to as the *Darek* (inland) area. Each Luhak possesses its own distinctive characteristics and identity. Luhak Lima Puluh Kota, for example, is described through the expression that “its land is cool, its water is clear, its fish are tame, and its flag is blue.” This expression symbolizes a community whose people are gentle, calm, and peace-loving (Erlinda, 2023). The distinctive characteristics of each Luhak are influenced not only by geographical factors but also by social processes that have been transmitted from generation to generation through language and cultural practices. This can be seen in Jorong Sungai Dadok, located within Luhak Lima Puluh Kota, where the local community primarily earns a living through farming and trading.

The jorong is also known as the tourism village of *Kampung Saribu Gonjong*, commonly abbreviated as *Kampung Sarugo*. The village is home to various traditional arts, one of which is the *Barabah Mandi* Dance. The dance was created by Rosmawati in 1966 while she was still a student at a vocational high school. She created the *Barabah Mandi* Dance as an effort to preserve a local legend or folktale that developed in Nagari Koto Tinggi, particularly in Jorong Sungai Dadok. The dance tells the story of a young woman named Barabah and her lover, who were unable to unite because their relationship was not approved by Barabah’s parents. This story was subsequently interpreted into dance movements that portray both the happiness and sorrow experienced by Barabah and her beloved. Therefore, the dance functions not only as a form of entertainment but also as a medium for transmitting cultural values to the community.

Based on the findings of this study, the dance has not yet been fully taught to younger generations. This is partly due to concerns that the traditional conventions and established movement patterns embodied in the dance may not be properly understood and mastered by future generations. The limited interest among young people, combined with the perception that the dance is old-fashioned, has become one of the main factors restricting the regeneration of dancers. As a result, *Barabah Mandi* Dance is currently performed predominantly by individuals between 40 and 60 years of age. This condition highlights the importance of continuous preservation efforts to ensure that *Barabah Mandi* Dance remains safeguarded and can be passed on to future generations as an integral part of the cultural identity of the Nagari Koto Tinggi community.

The Style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance in Nagari Koto Tinggi

Style is a distinctive characteristic or pattern found in movement composition or choreographic form, particularly in relation to individual expression, group identity, and the specific socio-cultural background that shapes the emergence of choreography as an artistic form (Hadi, 2012). The stylistic characteristics of *Barabah Mandi* Dance can be observed through its dance form.

The organization of the elements in *Barabah Mandi* Dance also demonstrates a close relationship between the cultural values of the community and the creativity of the

choreographer. This relationship strengthens the character and distinctive features of the dance style. This perspective is consistent with Alan Lomax's theory, which states that style is the factor that produces distinctive or specific forms as a result of both internal and external influences. According to Lomax, dance style can be identified through the region in which it develops, the type of dance, and its formal characteristics (Lomax Alan, 2017). This theory serves as the analytical framework for examining the style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance. Based on Lomax's perspective, the dance style may be analyzed through the following aspects.

a) Region of Practice

Minangkabau dance traditions are generally categorized into two major styles: *darek* and *pasisie*. The *darek* region, regarded as the cultural center of Minangkabau, is located in the highlands and is characterized by an agrarian way of life. In contrast, the *pasisie* region developed along the coastal areas, where cultural life tends to be more open and dynamic due to trading and maritime activities (Wahyuni, W., & Suharti, 2018). These geographical differences influence the movement characteristics of each dance style. *Pasisie* dances are generally characterized by light and varied footwork, such as *basitinjek*, *pijak baru*, *rantak cupu*, and *rantak kudo*, accompanied by a forward-leaning body posture (Wahyuni, 2017). In contrast, *darek* dances are characterized by an upright posture that leans slightly forward, coordinated arm movements, and structured movement patterns that reflect the agrarian lifestyle of the community.

Based on this classification, *Barabah Mandi* Dance belongs to the *darek* style, as it developed in Nagari Koto Tinggi, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra. The dance is strongly influenced by the natural environment and the livelihood of the local people, most of whom work as farmers. Their daily interaction with the land shapes bodily attitudes that appear grounded and directed toward the earth. This condition influences the movement style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance. Furthermore, interview findings indicate that although the dance narrates the love story of a young couple, its artistic expression remains closely connected to agrarian activities (Yerlita, personal communication, February 23, 2026). This influence can be observed in movement motifs such as *lapeh baju*, *lapeh galang*, *lapeh lambak*, *lapeh subang*, *lapeh salendang*, *berenang*, *menyelam*, and *simbua aia*. Although these movements are inspired by bathing activities, their movement patterns also resemble agricultural activities such as preparing the soil and weeding rice fields.

In addition, environmental conditions and social interactions contribute to the formation of local cultural characteristics. Warsito explains that the natural environment influences both culture and the character of a community (Drs. H.R Warsito, 2012). The people of Nagari Koto Tinggi are known for being gentle, calm, and peace-loving. These characteristics are reflected in the movements of *Barabah Mandi* Dance, which are smooth, graceful, and performed at a moderate tempo. Therefore, the movement style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance reflects the values and way of life of the Nagari Koto Tinggi community and can be categorized as a *darek* dance style.

b) Dance Type

Barabah Mandi Dance is classified as a newly created dance (tari kreasi baru) because it was not originally based on established traditional patterns and instead emphasizes freedom in movement exploration and presentation. This is consistent with Sudarsono's view that newly created dances are characterized by freedom of expression and are no longer bound by traditional forms (Sudarsono, 1977). Rather than developing from an existing traditional dance, *Barabah Mandi* Dance was created as an original work depicting community life, including the activity of bathing together after agricultural work (Rosmawati, personal communication, October 18, 2025).

Based on the number of performers, *Barabah Mandi* Dance is categorized as a group dance because it is performed by nine dancers, consisting of three principal dancers and six supporting dancers (*inang*). A group dance is defined as a dance performed by more than two dancers (Hadi, 2012). In its presentation, interaction among dancers plays a significant role in creating unity, harmony, and effective storytelling through movement patterns, spatial arrangements, and controlled tempo.

The theme of *Barabah Mandi* Dance is love, which corresponds to one of the dance themes identified by (Sal Murgianto, 1986). The performance structure consists of three scenes. The first scene portrays Barabah and her lover going to the river together to bathe, expressing feelings of happiness and affection. This scene represents a harmonious and loving relationship between the two characters, reflected through cheerful interactions, togetherness, and emotional intimacy. In addition, the scene serves as an introduction to the storyline by depicting Barabah's life before the emergence of the conflict that later affects her journey. This scene can be seen in the figure below.



Figure 1

Malenggang Movement

(Source: Documentation by Anggini Syahril, March 23, 2026.)

The second scene depicts Barabah's sadness when she is left by her lover who goes away to migrate (*merantau*). The feelings of grief and loss are expressed through movements that reflect emotional decline and sorrow. In this scene, Barabah's older sister appears to provide support and comfort, representing values of care, affection, and family solidarity in facing emotional hardship. This scene also functions as a development of the conflict, illustrating Barabah's changing emotional condition after being separated from her lover, as shown in the figure below:



Figure 2

***Bamanuang* Movement**

(Source: Documentation by Anggini Syahril, March 23, 2026.)

The final scene depicts the sorrow experienced by Barabah's lover after learning that Barabah has been married to another man. This event generates disappointment and deep emotional suffering, as the love that had grown between them cannot culminate in marriage. Through expressive movements that convey profound grief, this scene represents a strong emotional conflict arising from separation and the failure of their hope to be united. In addition to serving as the climax of the narrative structure, this scene also emphasizes themes of sacrifice, fate, and sorrow resulting from unfulfilled love. This scene can be seen in the figure below:



Figure 3

Figure 3. Barabah's Lover and the Supporting Dancers (*Inang*)

Source: Documentation by Anggini Syahril, March 23, 2026.

Based on the description above, *Barabah Mandi* Dance presents a harmonious performance structure through a sequence of movements that depict the love story of Barabah. The movements, which are derived from everyday community activities as well as symbolic gestures representing happiness, hope, separation, and sadness, are developed in an integrated manner with spatial and temporal elements. The unity of these elements creates a structured and meaningful performance, enabling the audience to clearly understand the narrative conveyed.

c) Dance Form

The term "form" in the Indonesian Dictionary (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*) is defined as something that can be visually perceived or physically manifested. According to (Jazuli. M, 2008), dance form refers to the overall presentation of a dance, which includes the integration of its core elements (performers and movements) as well as supporting components such as music, theme, costume, make-up, performance space (stage), lighting, sound design, and properties. This theoretical framework is used as an analytical tool to examine the form of *Barabah Mandi* Dance as a performance presented to the audience.

The performance form of *Barabah Mandi* Dance in Jorong Sungai Dadok consists of core elements (performers and movements) as well as supporting elements such as music, theme, costume, make-up, performance venue (stage), lighting, sound system, and properties. The following section describes the elements of *Barabah Mandi* Dance.

a.) Dancers (Performers)

Dancers are the primary element in a dance performance, as they function as the agents who communicate expression through bodily movement. A dancer is expected to possess expressive ability so that the movements performed can be understood by the audience (Hadi, 2012). In *Barabah Mandi* Dance, the dancers are

approximately 40–60 years old; therefore, physical limitations influence the quality of movement and overall performance. These dancers have been performing the dance since they were in junior high school and continue to perform it up to the present time.

Initially, the dance was performed by nine dancers, consisting of one male dancer as Barabah’s lover, one female dancer as Barabah, one female dancer as Barabah’s older sister, and six female dancers as inang-inang (supporting dancers). Over time, the number of dancers has decreased due to the lack of regeneration. At present, the dance is performed by only seven dancers. This condition affects the performance structure, particularly floor patterns and overall presentation quality. Therefore, regeneration efforts are necessary to preserve both the form and quality of the dance.

b.) Movement

Dance movement is the result of artistic processing through stylization and distortion, which produces two types of movement: pure movement and meaningful movement. Pure movement refers to movements created primarily for aesthetic purposes without specific meaning, while meaningful movement (gesture) refers to movements that carry meaning or intention and are derived from the stylization of natural or everyday movements (Jazuli. M, 1994). Based on interviews, the movements in *Barabah Mandi* Dance are categorized as meaningful movements that represent activities such as bathing, playing, and social interaction at the riverside bathing area. These movements constitute the distinctive characteristics of *Barabah Mandi* Dance and can be described in the following table:

Table 1. Movement Motifs of *Barabah Mandi* Dance

No	Movement	Characteristics of Style	Meaning of Movement	Description
1	Malenggang	Upright body posture, turning movements, with inward rotation of the wrists.	The gentle character of the people of Luhak Lima Puluh Kota.	Based on the description above, <i>Barabah Mandi</i> Dance is characterized by an upright body posture with a slight forward lean, the right leg crossed forward in a low position, and bent knees (pitunggue). The dance also features a strong emphasis on flexible wrist movements with inward rotation, as well as the use of hand gestures. Transitional movements consistently employ
2	Manjapuik	Small running steps, tiptoeing, left hand positioned in front of the chest.	The happiness of going to bathe together.	
3	Giving the ring	Small movement volume with subtle flicking accents in the fingers.	The love bond between a couple.	
4-8	Lapeh Baju,	Simple	A representation	

	Galang, Lambak, Subang, Selendang	movements from a single direction, slow-to-medium tempo, and soft energy quality.	of the self-cleansing process performed before bathing in the river.	manjapuik and malenggang . These movement characteristics are influenced by the daily habits of the local community as well as the agrarian background of the society that supports the dance.
9-11	Simbua aia, Berenang, Menyelam	Medium level and medium movement volume, flowing quality, representing togetherness.	Togetherness, social interaction, and harmonious relationships among community members formed through the shared activity of bathing in the river.	
12	Bamanuang	Emotional gesture, slow tempo, static body position.	Barabah's sadness after being left by her lover who goes away to migrate (merantau).	
13	Mencari	Medium-to-large movement volume, low bent-knee small running steps, medium tempo.	Care, affection, and responsibility of an older sibling in searching for Barabah as a reflection of strong family ties.	
14	Menghibur	Body facing diagonally to the front-right, medium movement volume, left hand directed toward the front-right diagonal, with moderate energy.	The love and care of the older sibling in comforting and advising Barabah so she does not remain in prolonged sorrow and is able to continue life with resilience.	
15	Main Layang - Layang	Medium movement volume, medium level, flowing energy quality.	Happiness, gratitude, and hope felt by Barabah's lover after returning from migration.	

c.) Music

Music is an essential element in dance performance as it supports and enhances the atmosphere of the performance (Hadi, 2012). Initially, *Barabah Mandi* Dance was accompanied by live music using instruments such as guitar, violin, bass guitar, accordion, cello, drum, *bansi*, *saluang*, piano, and *talempong*. However, due to the limited regeneration of musicians, the choreographer later adopted techno music as the dance accompaniment.

Techno music is a form of electronic dance music (EDM) with a tempo ranging from 120–140 BPM (Putri et al., 2024). Its 4/4 rhythm is capable of creating an energetic and positive atmosphere (Gernandt & Merrill, 2024). The opening section of the dance is accompanied by the song *Mudiak Arau*, while the closing section features vocal chanting performed by the male dancer and the *inang-inang* (supporting dancers). According to the composer of *Barabah Mandi* Dance, the music was developed based on spontaneous humming from the choreographer and dancers (Hafizd, personal communication, May 12, 2026). In addition, there is a vocal section that narrates the sorrow of Barabah's lover, whose love cannot be united in marriage.

d.) Make-up and Costume

Make-up functions to enhance and clarify the dancers' facial expressions so that they are visible to the audience (Hidayat, 2013). Initially, this dance did not use stage make-up; however, it currently employs simple beauty make-up. The costume of *Barabah Mandi* Dance for female dancers consists of *suntiang*, *tingkuluak baikat*, *baju kurung*, *songket* skirt, shawl, and various accessories. The *suntiang*, shaped like a *gonjong*, symbolizes Minangkabau cultural identity and women's responsibility (Husni & Riza, 2022). The *tingkuluak baikek*, shaped like buffalo horns, symbolizes determination and courage (Gustrisia et al., 2026). The red and black *baju kurung* symbolizes bravery, modesty, and perseverance (Yangsen, 2023). *Songket* skirts, shawls, necklaces (*kalung gaban* and decorative necklaces), belts, *subang telepon*, and brooches function as aesthetic complements while also carrying symbolic meanings of Minangkabau womanhood.

The male dancer's costume consists of *baju taluak balango*, *sarawa galembong*, *sesamping*, a belt, and *destar*. The *baju taluak balango* symbolizes dignity and generosity of Minangkabau leaders, while the *sarawa galembong* symbolizes wisdom in taking steps. The *destar* represents authority and honor of Minangkabau men.

e.) Floor Pattern

Floor pattern refers to the formation of dancers' movements on stage, consisting of straight and curved lines (Hidayat, 2013). The floor patterns used in *Barabah Mandi* Dance include straight lines, face-to-face positions, circles, two-line formations, and curved lines. The first formation involves two dancers, Barabah and her lover, representing a couple. They move from the left side of the stage toward the center, with a diagonal orientation facing the right side of the stage. The second formation involves male and female dancers positioned at the center of the stage in

a straight-line formation, facing forward. The third formation depicts a female dancer moving at the center of the stage, also facing forward.

The fourth floor pattern depicts both dancers still positioned at the center of the stage, forming a straight-line formation while facing each other. The fifth floor pattern also places both dancers at the center of the stage in a straight-line formation facing each other, representing the moment when Barabah receives a ring from her lover. The sixth floor pattern shows Barabah positioned at the center of the stage facing forward. This formation appears when Barabah removes her clothes before bathing and puts them back on after bathing. The seventh floor pattern shows Barabah's sister moving from the left side toward the center of the stage in a straight-line formation. After reaching the center, she moves in a curved path toward the back stage area. This pattern is used when Barabah's sister searches for Barabah's whereabouts. The eighth floor pattern shows two female dancers (Barabah and her sister) positioned at the center of the stage in a straight-line formation with two opposing orientations, facing each other from the left and right sides of the audience. The ninth floor pattern shows eight female dancers forming a circular formation with inward-facing orientation.

The tenth floor pattern shows eight female dancers forming two straight lines (two rows), each consisting of four dancers. This formation represents Barabah and her inang-inang enjoying the happiness of bathing at the riverside, accompanied by movements such as *Simbua aia* and *Simbua aia*. The eleventh floor pattern shows Barabah and her sister facing diagonally toward the back-left of the stage, with their backs toward the audience, accompanied by the *malenggang* movement. This formation represents Barabah being taken by her family to be married to another man. The twelfth floor pattern shows a male dancer at the center of the stage representing Barabah's lover who has just returned from migration (*rantau*) in a joyful state while playing a kite.

The final floor pattern shows six female dancers facing the front-right diagonal of the stage, while one male dancer faces the back-right diagonal. This formation represents Barabah's lover asking the inang-inang about Barabah's whereabouts.

f.) Performance Venue

The performance venue is an essential element in performing arts, as a dance cannot be presented without a space for performance. It refers to the place where a dance performance takes place. Based on interview findings, this dance can be performed anytime and anywhere, either on a stage or in an open field, depending on the venue provided by the event organizers. It is commonly performed in open spaces during theatrical performances, Islamic holiday celebrations, and wedding ceremonies (Rosmawati, personal communication, October 18, 2025).

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that both internal and external factors, as stated by (Lomax Alan, 2017), play an important role in shaping dance style. In line with this, (Maghfirah, 2019) argues that internal factors are

reflected in movement structure, while external factors are visible in make-up, costume, narrative background, and the socio-cultural conditions of the supporting community. Thus, the style of *Barabah Mandi* Dance is not only formed by movement, but also by the cultural context that shapes it.

Dance Style Analysis of *Barabah Mandi* Dance

The analysis of *Barabah Mandi* Dance style refers to Lomax's theory (Lomax Alan, 2017), which states that dance style can be observed through body posture, transition types of movement, movement dimensions, body parts in action, as well as action and effort.

a. Body Posture

Body posture in *Barabah Mandi* Dance is characterized by an upright head position with gaze following arm movements, a slightly forward-leaning torso, and moderate arm volume. The hands are rotated inward, while the right leg is crossed forward in a low bent position (*pitunggue*), accompanied by tiptoeing, stepping, and small running movements. This posture reflects the character of the *darek* community living in an agrarian environment. The forward-leaning body position symbolizes daily agricultural activities closely connected to the soil, such as planting, cultivating, and weeding rice fields. The low and shifting footwork reflects the close relationship between the community and the land as the main source of livelihood.

In addition, body posture is also related to the local tradition of bathing together in the river after working in the fields (Yerlita, personal communication, February 23, 2026). Movements such as *simbua aia*, diving, and swimming express joy and social togetherness after completing agricultural activities. Thus, body posture in *Barabah Mandi* Dance not only conveys aesthetic values but also reflects the agrarian lifestyle and geographical conditions of the *darek* society.

b. Transition Types of Movement

According to (Sungam et al., 2021), transition types of movement function as connectors between initial and subsequent movements. In *Barabah Mandi* Dance, movement transitions are relatively simple, consisting mainly of *manjapuik* and *malenggang*. The *manjapuik* movement is performed facing forward, with the left hand bent in front of the chest, the right hand extended diagonally backward, and the right leg lifted in a tiptoe position while moving toward the center of the stage. This movement symbolizes Barabah's happiness when going to bathe with her lover.

Meanwhile, *malenggang* is performed with an upright posture and rotational movements while facing each other. The right hand is positioned in front of the chest, the left hand behind the body, with inward wrist rotation, and footwork combining tiptoeing and stepping with a rising and falling body motion. This movement represents the gentle character of the people of Luhak Lima Puluh Kota. The repetitive use of these transitions creates a structured movement pattern that ensures continuity between sections and demonstrates the dancers' control of performance space.

c. Movement Dimension

Movement dimension refers to spatial aspects such as height, reach, and depth (Wahyuni, W., & Suharti, 2018). The movement dimension of *Barabah Mandi* Dance can be categorized into three types. First, simple movements observed from a single direction, such as *lapeh salendang*, *lapeh baju*, *lapeh lambak*, *lapeh galang*, and *lapeh subang*. These movements use medium volume, medium level, slow-to-medium tempo, and produce soft and flowing energy quality. Second, movements observed from multiple angles (right and left sides), such as *simbua aia* and “giving a ring” (*memberi cincin*).

These movements use small volume with medium level and medium tempo, producing soft energy with small accent impulses at the end of movements. Third, movements with more complex spatial exploration, such as *malenggang*, *manjapuik*, swimming, diving, and kite-playing. These movements involve medium to large volume, medium and high levels, slow-to-medium tempo, and soft, flowing energy. Overall, the spatial dimension of *Barabah Mandi* Dance is dynamic and expressive due to the dominant use of arm movements that give meaning to each gesture (Wahyuni, 2017).

d. Active Body Parts

The active body parts in *Barabah Mandi* Dance include the forearms, inward-rotating wrists, and legs. The forearms perform smooth and gentle movements, while the legs function as support and directional elements for movement transitions. The use of these body parts creates distinctive expressive movements. A key characteristic of the dance is the use of hand gestures as a medium of expression. According to (Humphrey Doris, 1958), gesture is a movement pattern used by humans to express feelings and function as a form of communication. In *Barabah Mandi* Dance, three types of gestures are identified: social, functional, and emotional gestures.

Social gestures appear in movements such as giving a ring, comforting, waving goodbye, *simbua aia*, and kite-playing, representing social interaction. Functional gestures are seen in *lapeh salendang*, *lapeh baju*, *lapeh lambak*, *lapeh galang*, *lapeh subang*, swimming, searching, and diving, which represent bathing-related activities. Emotional gestures, according to (Humphrey Doris, 1958), express specific emotional states. In *Barabah Mandi* Dance, the *bamanuang* movement represents Barabah's sadness after being left by her migrating lover (*merantau*), while happiness is expressed through *malenggang* and *manjapuik*, characterized by rotational body movements, small running steps, and tiptoeing.

e. Action and Effort

Action in *Barabah Mandi* Dance is dominated by leg and forearm movements. The right leg steps forward and crosses while moving back and forth, while the forearms produce smooth, flowing, and gentle movements with moderate energy quality. Action and effort in this dance reflect the social and cultural values of the Luhak Lima Puluh Kota community, which lives in an agrarian environment. The structured and interconnected movement patterns reflect agricultural life that is aligned with natural cycles and

embody values of perseverance, patience, and harmony. Thus, action and effort function not only as aesthetic elements but also as representations of agrarian life.

This is in line with (Ananda & Loravianti, 2023), who state that art does not only function as entertainment but also as a medium for conveying life values, legends, and emotional experiences of its supporting community. From an emic perspective, the people of Nagari Koto Tinggi perceive *Barabah Mandi* Dance as a cultural heritage that preserves local legend. The dance is understood as both entertainment and a narrative medium for local folklore. Its movements reflect communal bathing practices after farming activities, serving as a space for social interaction between men and women. The slow and continuous movement quality symbolizes the gentleness of the Nagari Koto Tinggi community (Rosmawati, personal communication, October 18, 2025).

From an etic perspective, *Barabah Mandi* Dance demonstrates movement characteristics such as an upright posture with a slight forward lean, bent low knees (*pitunggue*), and dominant coordinated hand movements with soft and flowing qualities. These characteristics reflect Minangkabau cultural values of gentleness as well as geographical influences on dance formation. Thus, *Barabah Mandi* Dance can be understood as a form of cultural expression that functions as a medium of cultural preservation and identity reinforcement for the people of Nagari Koto Tinggi, especially in Jorong Sungai Dadok. This aligns with (Metro et al., n.d.), who state that Minangkabau arts and cultural traditions function not only as entertainment or physical activity but also as a medium for transmitting cultural values, shaping character, and maintaining cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research on *Barabah Mandi* Dance in Nagari Koto Tinggi, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra Province, it can be concluded that *Barabah Mandi* Dance is a newly created dance that developed in Jorong Sungai Dadok, Nagari Koto Tinggi. Its existence is closely related to the socio-cultural background of the *darek* region, characterized by gentle, calm, and harmonious values, as well as an agrarian lifestyle. The dance narrates the love story of Barabah and her lover through a sequence of movements that also include dialogue and song, rooted in local legend and community life experiences, particularly the tradition of bathing together in the river after working in rice fields.

The stylistic characteristics of *Barabah Mandi* Dance as a representation of the *darek* region are reflected in the use of dialogue, hand gestures, and simple, soft, and communicative movements. The dance consists of fifteen movement motifs: *Malenggang*, *Manjapuik*, Giving a Ring, Comforting, *Lapeh salendang*, *Lapeh Baju*, *Lapeh Lambak*, *Lapeh Galang*, *Lapeh Subang*, *Simbua aia*, *Simbua aia*, *Bamanuang*, *Mencari*, *Menyelam*, and Playing Kites. Technically, the movement style is characterized by an upright body posture slightly leaning forward, low bent knees (*pitunggue*), crossed right leg positioning, coordinated arm movements, and inward wrist rotation. These characteristics represent the aesthetic identity of the *darek* style in Luhak Lima Puluh Kota and reflect values of gentleness, calmness, and peace within the supporting community.

This research contributes to dance studies by expanding the scientific understanding of dance style analysis in West Sumatra. It also contributes to Minangkabau cultural studies by explaining the relationship between dance form, environmental conditions, community practices, and cultural values. It further demonstrates that dance style is the result of interaction between choreographic elements and socio-cultural context. Therefore, this study is expected to serve as an academic reference and support the preservation, development, and transmission of *Barabah Mandi* Dance as part of Minangkabau cultural heritage.

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