

# THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE KOMERING ETHNIC GROUP IN THE SAMBUT SEBIDUK SEHALUAN DANCE IN EAST OGAN KOMERING ULU REGENCY

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## Abstract

The Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance is a welcoming dance originating from East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency, South Sumatra, officially created in 2007 as a representation of the cultural identity of the Komering community. Historically, Komering culture does not stem from the Malay tradition but developed under the geographical and cultural influence of the neighboring Lampung region, while Malay elements emerged later through historical interactions, transmigration processes, and regional cultural policies following administrative division. This study aims to analyze the representation of Komering cultural identity in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance by examining the meaning of the dance's name, movement structure and quality, its relationship with the Komering River, costumes, properties, and the religious values underlying its formation. The research employs a qualitative approach using dance ethnography, with data collected through performance observation, in-depth interviews with the founder of the art studio, and documentation and historical studies. The findings show that the concept of *Sebiduk Sehaluan*, meaning "one boat, one shared goal," reflects the Komering community's life philosophy centered on togetherness, harmony, and ecological relationships with the Komering River. The dance movements are dominated by flowing qualities inspired by the dynamics of the river and the community's daily activities. Strong Islamic values are reflected in the dancers' bodily ethics, spatial limitations of movement, and the ceremonial presentation of the *tepak* as a symbol of respect and openness. This dance represents Komering cultural identity rooted in river cosmology, Islamic religiosity, and the region's historical dynamics.

**Keywords:** *The Sebiduk Sehaluan Welcome Dance, Komering Culture, Komering River, Cultural Identity, Ethnochoreology, Dance Semiotics.*

## INTRODUCTION

Regional division is an administrative process that not only affects governance structures but also necessitates the formation and strengthening of cultural identity as a marker of the existence of a new autonomous region. East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency (OKU Timur) in South Sumatra Province is one such region formed through regional division, officially established under Law Number 37 of 2003. The establishment of this regency is rooted in the long history of the Ogan Komering Ulu governmental system, which has evolved from the colonial period through the post-independence era. Within this context, the need for cultural symbols becomes an essential part of consolidating the social and cultural identity of the OKU Timur community. The cultural identity of a region is formed through historical processes, social relations, and ongoing dynamics of cultural policy. Performing arts, particularly dance, play a strategic role as a medium for representing identity because they embody values, history, worldviews, and symbolic systems of the supporting community. Therefore, dance should not be understood merely as an aesthetic expression, but also as a cultural text that represents social structures, belief systems, and human relationships with the environment.

In the context of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency, the **Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance** functions as the official welcoming dance used to receive distinguished guests visiting the region. This dance was created in 2007 on the initiative of local artists with the support of the East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency Government, as part of efforts to build a regional cultural identity following regional division. The creation of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance originated from the idea of Mrs. Febrita Lustia Herman Deru, the wife of the Regent of East Ogan Komering Ulu at the time, who wished for the regency to have an official welcoming dance as a distinctive cultural

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identity. This idea was realized through the active involvement of local artists in formulating a dance form that represents the cultural identity of the Komering ethnic community. From its inception, this dance was not intended as a form of general entertainment, but rather as a representative and symbolic welcoming dance. Conceptually, the term *Sebiduk Sehaluan* derives from two words: *sebiduk*, meaning “one boat,” and *sehaluan*, meaning “one shared goal.” This meaning represents the life philosophy of the Komering community, which emphasizes togetherness, harmony, and collective orientation in achieving common goals amid the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency. This philosophy is inseparable from the geographical conditions of the region, which is traversed by the Komering River. Since ancient times, the river has served as the center of community life, functioning as a transportation route, a space for economic activities, and a medium for social and cultural interaction. The relationship between humans and the natural environment particularly the river is strongly reflected in the movement structure of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance. The dance movements are dominated by flowing qualities inspired by the dynamics of the Komering River and the daily activities of communities living along its banks. From an ethnocoecological perspective, these movement qualities function not only aesthetically but also represent the ecological and cosmological experiences of the Komering people, shaped through long-term relationships with their natural surroundings.

However, in many previous studies, the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance has often been generally positioned as part of South Sumatran Malay culture. This understanding reflects a tendency to generalize cultural identity while overlooking ethnic complexity and local history. Historically and culturally, the Komering community does not fully belong to the Malay cultural group, but rather developed under the geographical and cultural influence of the Lampung region, which directly borders the Komering area. This geographical proximity has shaped the lifestyle and movement characteristics of the Komering people. The Malay cultural elements visible in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance are more accurately understood as the result of later cultural interactions arising from transmigration dynamics, government policies, and social developments in East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency. In addition to ethnic and ecological aspects, the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance also represents the religious values of the Komering community, which are strongly influenced by Islamic teachings. Islamic principles play a significant role in shaping bodily ethics, attitudes, and value systems within the dance’s movement structure. These values are reflected in the limitation of movement space, the respectful demeanor of the dancers, and the ceremonial presentation of the *tepak* containing betel leaves as a symbol of respect, openness, and proper etiquette in welcoming guests. Based on this background, this study aims to examine the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance as a representation of the cultural identity of the Komering community following the regional division of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency, through an analysis of movement structure, symbolic meanings, ecological relations with the Komering River, and the underlying religious values.

The main research problem addressed in this study is how the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance represents the cultural identity of the Komering community within the context of regional division, and how the movement structure, costumes, properties, and ceremonial processes construct symbolic meanings rooted in river cosmology and Islamic values. By employing ethnocoecological and cultural semiotic approaches, this study positions the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance not merely as a performing art work, but as a cultural expression that reflects regional history, human–nature relationships, and the value system of its supporting community. This approach also serves as a corrective effort toward previous studies that tended to lack depth in interpreting the historical, ecological, and ethnic contexts of the Komering community. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant academic contribution to the study of Indonesian regional dance, particularly in understanding the role of performing arts as a medium for the formation and representation of cultural identity in regions formed through administrative division.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Dance as a Representation of Cultural Identity

Dance in the context of traditional societies cannot be understood merely as an aesthetic expression, but rather as a medium for representing cultural identity that reflects value systems, social structures, and the worldview of the supporting community. Kaeppeler (2000) emphasizes that dance is a “cultural system” encompassing the relationship between the body, symbols, and social structures; therefore, its existence is always tied to a specific cultural context. From a cultural studies perspective, Stuart Hall (1997) argues that cultural identity is not static but is formed through representational practices that are continuously negotiated. Performing arts, including dance, constitute an important medium in this representational process. Accordingly, the creation of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance can be understood as a practice of representing the cultural identity of the

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Komering community in response to social change, particularly following the regional division of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency. Several previous studies on welcoming dances in South Sumatra generally position dance as a symbol of hospitality and respect toward guests. However, these studies tend to remain at a descriptive level, without deeply examining the relationship between dance, regional history, and the construction of cultural identity in the post-regional division context. This gap is what the present study seeks to address.

## Ethnochoreology: The Relationship between Dance, Environment, and Social Life

An ethnochoreological approach is employed to understand dance as a cultural practice rooted in the living environment and social system of the supporting community. Hanna (1987) states that dance is always related to patterns of social life, including human–nature relations, belief systems, and social structures. In the context of the Komering community, the Komering River functions not only as a transportation route and a source of economic livelihood, but also as the center of cultural cosmology. Therefore, the flowing movement characteristics of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance represent the lived experiences of a community whose life depends on the river. Dance movements inspired by river-based activities and natural phenomena demonstrate a reciprocal relationship between the dancers' bodies and their ecological environment. The ethnochoreological approach allows this study to interpret dance movements not merely as a sequence of forms, but as cultural constructions emerging from long-term interactions between the Komering people and the Komering River environment.

## Semiotics of Dance Movement as a System of Meaning

To reveal the symbolic meanings embedded in the movements of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance, this study employs a semiotic approach. Geertz (1973) views culture as a system of symbols, in which human actions including dance movements can be read as meaningful texts. In semiotic theory, Peirce (in Chandler, 2007) categorizes signs into icons, indexes, and symbols. Dance movements in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance primarily function as symbols, as their meanings are understood through cultural conventions within the Komering community. For example, the *tabur* movement is not merely a physical action, but a symbol of prayer, respect, and acceptance of guests. Through this approach, each movement structure from the *sembah* gesture and *tabur* movement to the ethical limitations placed on the dancers' bodies is interpreted as a sign representing values of togetherness, caution, and religiosity that are deeply embedded in Komering society.

## The Body, Ethics, and Religious Values in Traditional Dance

In Indonesian traditional dance, the body is not value-free; rather, it is regulated by social norms, ethics, and belief systems. Suryodiningrat (1993) explains that bodily ethics in traditional dance are closely related to concepts of propriety, harmony, and self-control. In the Komering community, which is strongly influenced by Islamic teachings, the bodies of female dancers are regulated through specific movement restrictions, such as prohibitions against excessively raising the arms to the point of exposing the armpits. These rules are not merely choreographic techniques, but reflections of the religious and moral values upheld by the community. Hanna (1987) emphasizes that the dancer's body functions as an ideological medium through which cultural values and beliefs are visually manifested. Thus, the dancers' bodies in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance serve as concrete representations of Islamic values and the social ethics of the Komering community.

## The Position of This Study within Previous Research

Based on the literature review, previous studies on the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance and other welcoming dances in South Sumatra generally focus on their welcoming function and descriptive aspects of movement. This study positions itself differently by integrating analyses of regional division history, river cosmology, movement structure, and religious values within a single, comprehensive analytical framework. Accordingly, this research not only complements previous studies but also offers a new perspective in understanding welcoming dances as representations of cultural identity shaped by historical dynamics, environmental contexts, and belief systems of the community.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive–interpretative method, aiming to understand and interpret the symbolic meanings of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance as a representation of the cultural identity of the Komering community following the regional division of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency.

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The qualitative approach is chosen because the object of study is a form of traditional performing art that embodies symbolic, historical, ecological, and religious values, thus requiring in-depth understanding through the researcher's direct engagement with the social and cultural context in which the dance is practiced.

## Type and Research Approach

This research is qualitative and interpretative in nature, focusing on reading the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance as a cultural text. A descriptive method is used to present empirical data concerning movement structures, costumes, properties, and dance rituals, while an interpretative approach is applied to analyze the symbolic meanings of dance movements based on the theoretical frameworks of semiotics, ethnochoreology, and the theory of cultural identity representation. Through this approach, dance is understood not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a cultural practice that represents the collective values of the Komering community.

## Research Site and Duration

This study was conducted at SMAN 3 Martapura, East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency. This location was selected because SMAN 3 Martapura is one of the educational institutions that actively plays a role in preserving and teaching the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance, particularly to younger generations, making it a relevant site for observing dance practices within educational and cultural contexts. Field data collection was carried out on February 24, 26, and 27, 2025, coinciding with Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance rehearsal sessions. Conducting the research during rehearsals enabled the researcher to observe the process of movement mastery, the dynamics of the dancers' bodies, and to obtain direct, contextual explanations of the meanings embedded in the dance movements.



**Figure 1.** The field research process was conducted during the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance practice at SMAN 3 Martapura (Researcher Documentation, 2025).

## Research Object and Subject

The object of this research is the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance, focusing on the structure of the dance movements, the symbolic meanings contained within each movement, and their relationship to the cultural identity of the Komering community. The research subjects included the dance instructor and dancers involved in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance rehearsals at SMAN 3 Martapura. The key informant in this research was Latifah Amaliyah, S.Sn., the dance instructor, founder, and head of the studio, who possesses in-depth knowledge of the history of the dance's creation, movement structure, philosophy, and cultural values underlying the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance.

## The Role of the Researcher

In this research, the researcher acted as a direct observer, participating in the dance rehearsal process without influencing the learning and presentation of the dance. The researcher's involvement was both

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observational and analytical, with the goal of objectively and contextually understanding the dance's movement practices and symbolic meanings.

## Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted using the following techniques:

### 1. Participatory Observation

Observations were conducted directly by observing the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance practice at SMAN 3 Martapura. Observations focused on the sequence of movements, execution techniques, the dancers' body movement patterns, and the relationships between movements in building the structure of the dance performance. The researcher also observed the instructor's delivery of material and the dancers' responses in understanding the meaning of the movements.

### 2. In-Depth Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Latifah Amaliyah, S.Sn., on February 24, 26, and 27, 2025, during dance practice. The interviews aimed to elicit information about the names of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance movements, the symbolic meaning of each movement, and the cultural philosophy and social values contained within them. Conducting interviews at the practice location and at Latifah Amaliyah's residence allowed for explanations of the meaning of the movements to be directly linked to the practice being studied.



**Figure 2.** Interview process conducted by the researcher with Latifah Amaliyah, S.Sn., as trainer, Head of the Studio, and co-founder of the Sebiduk Sehaluan Studio  
(Researcher Documentation, 2025)

## Dance Movement Analysis

Movement analysis was conducted simultaneously during the observation and interview process. Each movement was analyzed based on its name, visual form, and symbolic meaning as explained by the informant. This analysis aimed to uncover the relationship between the structure of the dance movements and the values of togetherness, openness, caution, assertiveness, and religiosity that characterize the culture of the Komering community.

## Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data from observations, interviews, and movement analysis were classified based on main themes: dance movement structure, symbolic meaning, ecological relationships with the Komering River, and religious values reflected in the dancers' bodily practices. The analysis process was conducted systematically, referring to the established theoretical framework, ensuring that the results were contextual and academically sound.

## Data Validity

Data validity was maintained through technical triangulation, which involved comparing data from observations, in-depth interviews, and dance movement analysis. This triangulation was used to ensure data consistency and validity and minimize subjectivity in the interpretation process.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Overview of the Sebiduk Sehaluan Welcome Dance

The Sebiduk Sehaluan Welcome Dance is a welcoming dance from South Sumatra Province, originating from the East OKU Regency. It was officially created in 2007 as part of an initiative by artists and the East OKU Regency government to build regional cultural identity through dance following the regional expansion. This dance emerged within the social and political context of the formation of the new regency, and from the outset, it was positioned as a representative symbol of Komering culture, serving to welcome important/honored guests visiting the Bumi Sebiduk Sehaluan region. Unlike other entertainment or ritual dances, the Sebiduk Sehaluan Welcome Dance has a specific function and is limited to official ceremonial contexts. The requirement for an odd number of dancers three, five, or seven reflects the principles of balance and harmony inherent in the Komering community's value system. One of the main processions in this dance performance is the handing over of a tepak containing a betel nut, which is a symbol of expressing respect, happiness and acceptance towards guests, as well as opening up space for friendship and family relations. The existence of the Sebiduk Sehaluan Welcome Dance cannot be separated from the geographical and ecological context of the Komering River which is the center of community life. The river not only functions as a transportation route and economic resource, but also shapes the activity patterns, perspectives and symbolic systems of the Komering people. This relationship is reflected in the flowing, continuous and uninterrupted character of the dance movements, resembling the dynamics of nature and community activities along the river.

### Movement structure of the Sebiduk Sehaluan dance

Based on observations of the training process at SMAN 3 Martapura as well as interviews with Latifah Amaliyah, S.Sn., the movement structure of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance is composed of a series of movements that have local names and interrelated symbolic meanings. Each movement does not stand alone, but forms a dramatic plot that represents the life attitudes and social values of the Komering people.

**Table 1.** Structure of the Sebiduk Sehaluan dance movement and symbolic meaning

No.	Movement Name	Movement Description	Symbolic Meaning	Photo
1	Kuruk Movement	Basic synchronized walking movement in a circular pattern	Symbolizes togetherness and unity of the Komering community	
2	Sembah Tuha Movement	Salutation gesture with an upright body posture	Expression of respect and hospitality	

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3	Nyambuk Sepiak Lambung Movement	Opening the hands forward to the sides	Openness in welcoming newcomers		
4	Nabo Mulang Bertolak Dilom Movement	Holding motion directed inward	Caution in attitude and behavior		
5	Nabo Bertolak Luah Movement	Pushing movement directed outward	Vigilance against negative influences		
6	Mejong Muto Pungu Movement	Gentle and controlled hand swings	Refinement of character and politeness		
7	Sembah Mejong Pudak Movement	Salutation with a lowered body position	Humility		

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8	Sambut Muka Pudak Movement	Welcoming movement facing forward	Sincere acceptance of guests		
9	Tabo Dibah Lua Movement	Outward sweeping motion	Rejection of improper behavior		
10	Tabo Dibah Dilom Movement	Inward sweeping motion	Self-control		
11	Tabo Dibah Bertolak Dilom Movement	Combination of holding and inward pushing movements	Social caution		
12	Tabo Dibah Bertolak Lua Movement	Combination of holding and outward pushing movements	Firmness in upholding customary values		

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13	Kibas Pungu Lua Movement	Outward hand flicking motion	Firmness and strength of character		
14	Kibas Pungu Dilom Movement	Inward hand flicking motion	Inner strength		
15	Sepiak Dibah Muka Movement	Opening movement directed forward	Honesty and openness		
16	Sembah Mejong Diburi Movement	Salutation facing backward	Respect for ancestors		
17	Cakak Muto Pungu Movement	Active and dynamic hand movements	Readiness and resilience		

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18	Sembah Diburi Lambung Movement	Crossed salutation movement	Balance in social relationships		
19	Mulang Movement	Returning to the initial position	Returning to customary values		

Source: Interview with Latifah Amaliyah S.Sn

Overall, the movement structure of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance demonstrates a predominance of flowing and gentle movements, with a controlled tempo. This characteristic reflects the close relationship between the dancer's body and the natural environment, particularly the Komering River, which forms the basis of the cultural cosmology of the Komering people.

### **Symbolic Meaning of Movement from the Perspective of Komering Cultural Identity**

The movements in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance can be read as cultural texts that represent the social, ecological, and religious values of the Komering people. The Kuruk and Sembah Tuha movements, for example, emphasize the importance of togetherness, respect, and social ethics in interpersonal relationships. These values are the main foundation of life in the Komering community. The Nyambuk Sepiak Lambung movements represent an attitude of openness toward newcomers, which is relevant to the history of East OKU as a transmigration region and a meeting place for various cultural backgrounds. However, this openness is not limitless, as demonstrated in the Nabo Bertolak Luah and Tabo Dibah Dilom/Luah movements, which symbolize caution and the ability to filter out external influences that are inconsistent with local values. In addition to social values, religious values are also internalized in the structure of the dance movements. The composed body posture, gestures of worship, and non-aggressive rhythm reflect the strong influence of Islamic teachings in the Komering community. These values are related to the spread of Islam, which holds a significant place in the community's belief system.

### **Costumes, Accessories, and Props as Representations of Visual Identity**

The costumes, accessories, and props in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance serve as visual identity markers and symbols of Komering cultural values. The dancers wear traditional Komering attire, reflecting elegance, honor, and a connection to ancestral traditions.

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**Table 2.** Costumes and Accessories for the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance

No.	Costume / Accessory Element	Description	Representative Meaning	Photo
1	Baju Kurung	Traditional Komering women's attire	Modesty and religiosity	A red and gold patterned traditional Komering women's attire (Baju Kurung) displayed on a white tiled surface.
2	Sungkit (Songket) Cloth	Traditional Komering patterned woven fabric	Cultural identity	A yellow and gold patterned traditional Komering patterned woven fabric (Sungket) displayed on a white tiled surface.
3	Selempang Menjangan	Worn over the right and left shoulders	Honor	A gold-colored traditional Komering shoulder ornament (Selempang Menjangan) displayed on a white tiled surface.
4	Pending	Metal belt	Firmness and balance	A gold-colored traditional Komering metal belt (Pending) displayed on a white tiled surface.
5	Kalung Tigo	Layered necklace	Harmony	A gold-colored traditional Komering layered necklace (Kalung Tigo) displayed on a white tiled surface.

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6	Gelang Kano/Duri	Hand bracelet	Women's resilience	
7	Pilis Tumanggal	Forehead ornament	Elegance	
8	Gandik Tungkah	Head accessory	Authority and dignity	
9	Pating Ayun	Side head ornament	Aesthetic refinement	
10	Ulam Jughai (Jasmine Flowers)	Floral arrangement	Purity	

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11	Kulibang (Tajuk Beringin)	Head crown	Strength and protection	
12	Sumping	Accessory worn on the ears or near the temples	Elegance and propriety	
13	Bunga Rampai	Complementary floral ornament	Prayer and fragrance	

Source: Observations and Interviews by Latifah Amaliyah, S.Sn

**Table 3.** Props for the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance

No.	Property	Description	Symbolic Meaning	Photo
1	Tepak	Container holding betel leaf offerings (sekapur sirih)	Expression of welcome	
2	Sekapur Sirih	Main contents of the tepak	Symbol of friendship	



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3	Carved Table	Surface used to place the tepak	Respect for guests	
4	Tanggai	Accessory worn on eight fingers	Elegance and flexibility	

Source: Sebiduk Sehaluan Art Studio Documentation

The tepak (a wooden stick containing sekapur sirih) is the symbolic centerpiece of this dance, emphasizing the values of openness, respect, and the desire to foster friendship, as key principles in Komering culture.

### Social and Educational Function of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance

Research results show that the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance functions not only as a welcoming dance in the context of official ceremonies but also as a medium for cultural education. Dance practice at SMAN 3 Martapura demonstrates how this dance serves as a means of passing on Komering cultural values to the younger generation. Through the practice process, the dancers not only learn the techniques and movement structure but also understand the symbolic meaning, values of togetherness, social ethics, and religious attitudes embodied in the dance. Thus, the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance functions as a living tradition, a living tradition that is continuously studied, practiced, and passed down in a dynamic social space.

### Research Position in the Context of Previous Studies

Previous studies on the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance generally focused on describing the dance's form and general welcoming function. This study expands on these studies by emphasizing the ecological relationship of the Komering River, the post-regional expansion context, and the internalization of religious values within the dance's movement structure. This approach allows for a reading of the dance as an expression of cultural identity formed through the interaction of history, the environment, and the belief systems of the Komering community.

### End-of-Chapter Reflection

Overall, the research results indicate that the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance represents the complex cultural identity of the Komering community. The movement structure, costumes, and props function not only as aesthetic elements but also as a symbolic system that represents the social, ecological, and religious values entrenched within the community. In the post-regional expansion context of East OKU Regency, this dance plays a crucial role as a marker of cultural identity and as a medium for transmitting values to the younger generation.

## CONCLUSION

### Conclusion

Based on the research and discussion conducted, it can be concluded that the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance is a welcoming dance that serves not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a representation of the cultural identity of the Komering community following the expansion of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency. This dance was born as a cultural initiative by the local government and local artists in 2007, aiming to emphasize Komering's identity through the performing arts, namely dance, within the social, historical, and political contexts of regional culture. The movement structure of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance is systematically structured

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and rich with symbolic meaning. Each movement, such as Gerak Kuruk, Sembah Tuha, Nyambuk Sepiak Lambung, and the closing sequence, represents the values of togetherness, respect, social openness, vigilance, assertiveness, and social etiquette rooted in the Komering community. The process of handing over the tepak (a basket containing sekapur sirih) is the symbolic core of the dance, emphasizing the values of respect, acceptance, and efforts to build harmonious social relationships between hosts and guests. The costumes, props, and makeup used in the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance reinforce Komering's cultural identity through the use of traditional clothing, accessories, and tepak and tanggai props, which convey symbolic meanings of elegance, honor, and nobility. All of these elements demonstrate that this dance is the result of an integration of local cultural value systems, the cosmology of the river as the living space of the Komering people, and Islamic religious values that shape the ethics and social attitudes in the performance. Thus, this research contributes to enriching the study of Indonesian ethnochoreology by positioning the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance as a cultural practice that represents the identity of the Komering people, shaped by the historical dynamics of regional expansion, the ecological relationship with the Komering River, and the internalization of Islamic religious values in the movement structure and dance procession.

### Recommendations

Based on these conclusions, the researcher offers the following recommendations. First, the local government of East Ogan Komering Ulu Regency hopes that the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance will continue to be preserved through sustainable cultural policies, including support for art studios, dance documentation, and the organization of cultural activities that emphasize this dance as a regional identity. Second, educational institutions, particularly secondary schools in the East Ogan Komering Ulu region, should continue to develop the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance as part of local arts and culture education. This is crucial for instilling an understanding of cultural identity in the younger generation and maintaining the continuity of Komering cultural values through formal education. Third, arts and culture researchers hope this research can serve as a starting point for more in-depth follow-up studies, such as comparative analysis with other regional Sambut dances in South Sumatra, more detailed choreographic studies, or studies on the transformation of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance within the context of tourism and the cultural industry. Fourth, for art practitioners and cultural actors, the results of this study are expected to be a reflection material in the development of the Sambut Sebiduk Sehaluan Dance performance so that it remains based on local cultural values without losing its relevance to current developments.

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## THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE KOMERING ETHNIC GROUP IN THE SAMBUT SEBIDUK SEHALUAN DANCE IN EAST OGAN KOMERING ULU REGENCY

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