

Presentation Structure and Symbolic Meaning of Sekapor Sireh Dance: An Ethnochoreological Study

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ABSTRACT

Sekapor Sireh Dance is a welcoming dance of the Pontianak Malay community performed in customary, cultural, and state ceremonies. As a cultural product, the dance functions not only as an aesthetic performance but also as a medium for expressing cultural values and symbolic meanings. This study aims to analyze the presentation structure and symbolic meanings of Sekapor Sireh Dance from an ethnochoreological perspective. The research employed a qualitative method with an ethnochoreological approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation at Sanggar Bougenville, West Kalimantan, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman combined with ethnochoreological analysis. The findings reveal that the presentation structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance consists of movement, musical accompaniment, makeup, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns that form an integrated performance system. The symbolic meanings of the dance are constructed through the interrelationships among these elements, representing values of respect, acceptance, hospitality, openness, prayer, protection, and the cultural identity of the Pontianak Malay community. From an ethnochoreological perspective, these meanings emerge through the interconnectedness of all presentation elements, which collectively form a system of cultural symbols.

KEYWORDS

Sekapor Sireh Dance
Ethnochoreology
Symbolic Meaning
Pontianak Malay
Community

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INTRODUCTION

Sekapor Sireh Dance is one of the traditional Malay dances that developed in Pontianak City, West Kalimantan, and functions as a welcoming dance for honored guests in various customary, cultural, and state ceremonies. The dance was created by the late Yanis Chaniago in 1974 at the request of the local government to welcome the visit of Indonesia's second Vice President, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, to West Kalimantan. Based on an interview with Yuza Yanis Chaniago, the creation of Sekapor Sireh Dance was influenced by the social composition of West Kalimantan, where the Malay and Dayak ethnic groups constitute the dominant communities. Consequently, the initial concept of the dance incorporated movement elements from both ethnic traditions as a representation of the social harmony that characterizes the region. Over time, Sekapor Sireh Dance underwent transformations in both form and function and eventually became recognized as a distinctive Pontianak Malay presentation dance performed to welcome honored guests at customary ceremonies, weddings, inaugurations, and other ceremonial events.

The existence of Sekapor Sireh Dance demonstrates that traditional dance functions not merely as entertainment or a complement to ceremonial activities but also as a medium of cultural expression that embodies various social meanings. Performance elements such as

movement, music, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns represent values of respect, hospitality, courtesy, openness, and blessings for welcomed guests. These values form part of the worldview of the Pontianak Malay community and have been transmitted across generations through various cultural practices, including performing arts. Research by Faisal et al. (2026) indicates that Sekapor Sireh Dance contains not only aesthetic values but also educational values that contribute to cultural transmission and character formation among younger generations. Therefore, Sekapor Sireh Dance can be understood as a cultural medium that both preserves tradition and transmits social values within society.

Studies on Sekapor Sireh Dance have been conducted from various perspectives. Mauluddin et al. (2018) examined the movement structure of the dance and contributed to documenting its choreographic forms. Furthermore, Faisal et al. (2026) investigated its aesthetic and educational values and highlighted its role in cultural preservation and character education. However, these studies primarily focused on movement structure, aesthetics, and educational values. The continued use of Sekapor Sireh Dance in customary, cultural, and state ceremonies demonstrates its important position in the social life of the Pontianak community. Nevertheless, studies examining the relationship between performance structure and the cultural meaning system embedded within the dance remain limited. Most existing research has emphasized form, movement structure, aesthetics, or educational functions. As a cultural product, however, dance does not merely present visual beauty but also represents the norms, values, and worldview of its supporting community (Kaeppler, 2000; Narawati, 2013). Therefore, further research is needed to explain how performance elements contribute to constructing, representing, and communicating cultural meanings within the Pontianak Malay community.

Within the field of ethnochoreology, dance is understood not merely as a sequence of aesthetic movements but also as a cultural phenomenon that reflects the values, beliefs, identities, and social life of the community that sustains it. Kurath (1960) argues that dance should be examined through the relationship between choreographic form and the socio-cultural context in which it emerges. Similarly, Kaeppler (2000) views dance as a cultural system that organizes and communicates knowledge, values, meanings, and social identity within a society. This perspective enables dance to be understood as a cultural text containing symbols that can be interpreted through its presentation structure, function, and performance context. Unlike previous studies that focused on movement structure, aesthetic values, and educational values, this study positions Sekapor Sireh Dance as an object of ethnochoreological inquiry by examining the relationship between presentation structure and the symbolic meanings embedded in its performance elements. The study not only describes the components of the dance but also interprets how these elements form a cultural symbol system representing respect, hospitality, courtesy, and openness as values upheld by the Pontianak Malay community. In this way, the research offers a more comprehensive perspective for understanding Sekapor Sireh Dance as a cultural representation.

In this study, the ethnochoreological perspective focuses on three main aspects: the presentation structure of the dance, the symbolic meanings of its performance elements, and the representation of Pontianak Malay cultural values. These aspects serve as the analytical framework for understanding the relationship between performance form, cultural function, and the value system underlying the dance. Through this perspective, Sekapor Sireh Dance is understood not only as a performing art but also as a cultural medium that constructs and transmits social meanings within community life. Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the presentation structure and symbolic meanings of Sekapor Sireh Dance through an ethnochoreological approach. The study is expected to contribute to the

development of ethnochoreological scholarship, enrich academic documentation on Sekapor Sireh Dance, and support efforts to preserve the cultural values of the Pontianak Malay community.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with an ethnochoreological approach. Qualitative research was used to gain an in-depth understanding of cultural phenomena through the interpretation of meanings embedded in performing arts practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Meanwhile, ethnochoreology was applied to examine dance as a cultural phenomenon encompassing not only performance forms but also the socio-cultural contexts, functions, and meanings that develop within the supporting community (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000). Through this approach, Sekapor Sireh Dance was understood as a cultural product representing the value system, identity, and social life of the Pontianak Malay community. The study was conducted at Sanggar Bougenville, West Kalimantan, Pontianak City, one of the art studios actively engaged in preserving and performing Sekapor Sireh Dance. Data collection was carried out from September 2025 to February 2026. Field observation was conducted during a Sekapor Sireh Dance performance on October 18, 2025, to directly examine its presentation structure, including movement, musical accompaniment, makeup, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns.

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique in which informants are chosen based on their knowledge, experience, and direct involvement with the research subject (Sugiyono, 2019). The key informants consisted of H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago, who possesses extensive knowledge of the history and development of Sekapor Sireh Dance; Anne Yurika Mauluddin, a researcher with expertise in the form and presentation of the dance; and Runi Desiana, a trainer and member of Sanggar Bougenville who has been actively involved in its preservation and performance. The study utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago on September 15, 2025, Anne Yurika Mauluddin on October 1, 2025, and Runi Desiana on February 15, 2026. Secondary data were gathered from relevant books, journal articles, and previous studies concerning Sekapor Sireh Dance, cultural symbolism, and ethnochoreology. Documentation included photographs, performance videos, and archival materials obtained from Sanggar Bougenville, West Kalimantan.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation to enhance the credibility of the findings (Alfansyur & Mariyani, 2020). Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, while technique triangulation involved comparing data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. From an ethnochoreological perspective, the analysis was conducted in four stages. First, dance text analysis was employed to identify the presentation structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance, including movement, musical accompaniment, makeup, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns. Second, cultural context analysis was undertaken to understand the socio-cultural background underlying the existence of the dance within the Pontianak Malay community. Third, symbolic interpretation was applied to examine the meanings of each performance element based on observation, interview, and documentation data. Fourth, form-function relationship analysis was used to explain how the performance elements collectively form a symbolic system representing values of respect, hospitality, courtesy, and

openness within the Pontianak Malay community (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000). Through these stages, the analysis focused not only on the performance form but also on the cultural meanings embedded within it.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Presentation Structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance

The presentation structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance comprises an integrated set of performance elements, including movement, musical accompaniment, makeup, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns. As a welcoming dance of the Pontianak Malay community, these elements function not only as aesthetic components but also as cultural media through which meanings and values are communicated to guests and audiences.

From an ethnochoreological perspective, dance is understood as a cultural product that reflects the values, identity, and social life of the community that sustains it (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000). Accordingly, the elements of Sekapor Sireh Dance are viewed as components of a performance system that collectively construct symbolic meanings. These meanings emerge through the relationships among performance elements rather than from individual elements in isolation. Through this system, values of respect, hospitality, courtesy, and openness upheld by the Pontianak Malay community are communicated within the welcoming tradition. Therefore, the following discussion examines how movement, musical accompaniment, makeup, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns contribute to the construction of symbolic meanings in Sekapor Sireh Dance.

Movement

Movement serves as the primary medium through which the cultural values and meanings of Sekapor Sireh Dance are communicated. In ethnochoreological studies, movement is understood not merely as an aesthetic element but also as a form of cultural communication that represents the knowledge, values, and identity of the supporting community (Kaeppler, 2000). Sekapor Sireh Dance consists of four principal movement motifs: *nganyon*, *sembah*, *petek bunge*, and *nabor*. Together, these movement motifs form a sequence of welcoming actions that represent the traditional protocol of receiving guests within Pontianak Malay culture.

Nganyon functions as the opening movement and is characterized by soft and flowing gestures. Based on an interview with Anne Yurika Mauluddin (October 1, 2025), *nganyon* marks the beginning of the dance and is comparable to a greeting in the welcoming process. Symbolically, the movement signifies the dancers' readiness to receive guests and serves as an introduction to the subsequent movement sequence. Its gentle quality reflects the value of courtesy that is highly regarded in Malay culture.

Sembah constitutes the principal identity of Sekapor Sireh Dance. According to H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), this movement was established as the distinctive feature of the dance because it symbolizes the sincere acceptance of guests. Within Malay culture, *sembah* represents respect, courtesy, and appreciation toward those who arrive. Yuza Yanis Chaniago further explained that significant changes occurred in the movement structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance during the 1990s. In its early development, the dance combined Malay and Dayak movement elements to reflect the multicultural social composition of West Kalimantan. However, as Dayak communities and dance studios developed their own welcoming dances, Sekapor Sireh Dance became increasingly identified as a distinctive Malay presentation dance. This transformation contributed to the establishment of *sembah* as the primary identity of the dance. Field observations conducted

on October 18, 2025, revealed that *sembah* is performed while the dancers directly face the guests before the presentation of *tepak sireh*. This position reinforces its function as a form of nonverbal communication expressing respect and acceptance. These findings indicate that *sembah* functions not only as a choreographic element but also as a symbol of cultural identity shaped by historical processes and social developments within the supporting community (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000).

Petek bunge functions to enhance the aesthetic dimension of the performance. According to Runi Desiana (February 15, 2026), this movement symbolizes beauty and is closely associated with the image of female dancers, who are often identified with gentleness and elegance. In Malay culture, beauty is understood not only as physical appearance but also as a reflection of courtesy and proper conduct. Therefore, *petek bunge* enriches the visual quality of the performance while simultaneously representing the image of the graceful and well-mannered Malay woman. *Nabor* serves as the concluding movement in the sequence of Sekapor Sireh Dance. Based on an interview with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), the movement symbolizes prayers and good wishes for the welcomed guests through the act of scattering yellow rice. This practice is rooted in Malay tradition, where yellow rice represents blessings, safety, and prosperity. Consequently, *nabor* not only expresses hospitality toward guests but also conveys hopes for their well-being and success in their future endeavors.

From an ethnochoreological perspective, the movement structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance demonstrates that movement functions not merely as a choreographic form but also as a cultural symbol system. The sequence of *nganyon*, *sembah*, *petek bunge*, and *nabor* represents a progression of welcoming actions that communicate values of respect, acceptance, courtesy, beauty, and prayer. Through these movements, the Pontianak Malay community expresses cultural values that continue to be maintained and transmitted through dance performance.



Figure 1. Movement sequences of Sekapor Sireh Dance (*nganyon*, *sembah*, *petek bunge*, *nabor*; from left to right)

Together, these four movement motifs form a unified sequence of welcoming actions, beginning with *nganyon* as the opening movement, followed by *sembah* as a symbol of respect, *petek bunge* as a representation of beauty and grace, and *nabor* as a symbol of prayer and goodwill. Although each movement serves a distinct function, they complement one another in constructing a coherent system of welcoming. The meanings of respect, beauty, and blessing do not emerge independently but are produced through the relationships among the movement motifs as they unfold sequentially within the performance structure. This demonstrates that Sekapor Sireh Dance functions not only as a choreographic expression but

also as a medium of cultural communication that represents the values of respect, courtesy, hospitality, and sincerity that characterize the cultural identity of the Pontianak Malay community (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000).

Musical Accompaniment

Musical accompaniment plays an important role in Sekapor Sireh Dance by creating the atmosphere of the performance and regulating the rhythm of the dancers' movements. In ethnochoreological studies, music is understood not merely as a supporting element of dance but also as part of a performance system that contributes to the construction of meaning and the communication of cultural messages (Kaeppler, 2000). The musical ensemble consists of the gong (tawaq), rebana, gendang panjang, and accordion. The combination of these instruments produces a gentle and flowing musical texture that creates a solemn yet welcoming atmosphere during the process of receiving guests.

Based on an interview with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), the gong (tawaq) functions as a rhythmic instrument that marks counts and transitions between sections of the performance. Its sound helps dancers recognize changes in movement motifs and maintain synchronization between music and choreography. Therefore, the gong (tawaq) serves not only as an accompanying instrument but also as a structural marker that connects the musical and choreographic dimensions of the performance. In addition to the gong (tawaq), the rebana and gendang panjang play important roles in establishing the rhythmic patterns of the dance. According to Yuza Yanis Chaniago, the rebana is an instrument closely associated with Malay culture and is commonly used in various ceremonial and entertainment activities. Its presence reflects the strong relationship between the dance and Malay cultural traditions. Meanwhile, the gendang panjang functions to maintain tempo and reinforce rhythm, creating harmony between the musical accompaniment and the dancers' movements. The combination of these instruments produces a stable rhythmic structure that supports the gentle and controlled character of the choreography.

The accordion functions as the primary melodic instrument in the musical accompaniment. Its use is a distinctive feature commonly found in Malay musical traditions and therefore reinforces the Malay cultural identity represented in the performance. The melodies produced by the accordion create a warm and harmonious atmosphere that aligns with the function of the dance as a medium for welcoming guests. According to Anne Yurika Mauluddin (October 1, 2025), the musical character of Sekapor Sireh Dance is intentionally designed to support its role as a welcoming dance. Consequently, the musical patterns tend to be gentle, orderly, and moderately paced in order to create a respectful atmosphere. Within the context of Malay culture, this atmosphere is intended not only to provide comfort during the performance but also to express respect and appreciation toward the guests. Thus, the musical accompaniment becomes an important medium through which cultural values are communicated through sound.

From an ethnochoreological perspective, the musical accompaniment of Sekapor Sireh Dance functions not only as a regulator of movement and performance structure but also as a cultural symbol system that conveys meanings embedded within the welcoming tradition. The interaction between rhythmic and melodic elements supports the communication of values such as respect, hospitality, harmony, and courtesy. Through this musical system, the Pontianak Malay community expresses cultural values that are closely associated with the tradition of receiving and honoring guests (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000).



Figure 2. Musical instruments of Sekapor Sireh Dance
(gong/tawaq, rebana, gendang panjang, and accordion ; from left to right)

Field observations conducted on October 18, 2025, revealed that the musical accompaniment was closely synchronized with the dancers' movements. The gong (tawaq) marked transitions between movement motifs, while the rebana, gendang panjang, and accordion accompanied the performance continuously. This integration demonstrates that music and movement function as interconnected elements in constructing the welcoming atmosphere of the dance. Symbolically, the gentle melodies, stable rhythms, and harmonious musical texture communicate values of respect, hospitality, and courtesy that characterize the Pontianak Malay community. From an ethnochoreological perspective, musical accompaniment functions not only as a structural component of the performance but also as a medium through which cultural values are expressed and communicated (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000).

Makeup

The makeup used in Sekapor Sireh Dance is characterized as realistic makeup, intended to enhance the dancers' natural facial features without altering their original appearance. Based on an interview with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), the use of realistic makeup is closely related to the historical development of Sekapor Sireh Dance since its early emergence. According to him, the makeup style was adapted to the geographical conditions and performance settings in which the dance was originally presented. In addition, as a welcoming dance, Sekapor Sireh emphasizes elegance and courtesy; therefore, realistic makeup is considered more appropriate for supporting the atmosphere of welcoming honored guests.

This view is reinforced by Runi Desiana (February 15, 2026), who explained that Sekapor Sireh Dance is not an entertainment-oriented performance intended to be highly dramatic or to portray specific characters. Consequently, the makeup is designed only to refine the dancers' appearance and clarify facial expressions during the performance without obscuring their natural facial characteristics. These findings indicate that the selection of makeup is influenced not only by aesthetic considerations but also by the function of the dance and the values of courtesy that characterize Malay culture. Field observations conducted on October 18, 2025, revealed that the makeup employed soft and natural color tones, creating an impression of elegance, simplicity, and restraint. These characteristics are consistent with the function of Sekapor Sireh Dance as a welcoming performance that emphasizes respect and courtesy toward guests. Rather than creating a particular stage character, the makeup serves to enhance the dancers' facial expressions so that the messages conveyed through the performance can be more effectively communicated to the audience.



Figure 3. Makeup of Sekapor Sireh Dance performers

From an ethnochoreological perspective, makeup in Sekapor Sireh Dance functions not merely as a visual element but also as a cultural representation of values upheld within the Pontianak Malay community. The use of realistic makeup reflects ideals of modesty, courtesy, and elegance that are closely associated with the image of Malay women. Its natural appearance reinforces the welcoming character of the dance and supports the communication of cultural values embedded in the performance. Thus, makeup contributes not only to the aesthetic quality of the dance but also to the construction of symbolic meanings that connect performance form with the cultural identity of the Pontianak Malay community (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000). Within Malay culture, ideals of modesty, courtesy, and elegance are closely associated with the image of women. These values are reflected in the use of realistic makeup that emphasizes natural beauty rather than dramatic transformation. Consequently, the makeup of Sekapor Sireh Dance reinforces the representation of Malay femininity while supporting the communication of respect and hospitality embodied in the welcoming performance.

Costumes

Costumes in Sekapor Sireh Dance function not only as performance attire but also as a medium for representing the cultural identity and social values of the Pontianak Malay community. From an ethnochoreological perspective, costumes constitute part of a symbolic system that communicates the identity, status, and cultural values embedded within a community (Kaeppler, 2000). Therefore, the costumes used in Sekapor Sireh Dance cannot be separated from the historical development of the dance and the cultural context of the Pontianak Malay community. The costumes in Sekapor Sireh Dance vary according to the roles of the performers, including the main dancers, the *tepak sireh* bearers, and the royal umbrella bearers. The main dancers wear baju kurung combined with corak insang cloth or songket. The *tepak sireh* bearers wear either Malay dare attire or traditional Dayak costumes from West Kalimantan, while the royal umbrella bearers wear baju telok belanga paired with corak insang setengah tiang cloth and a head covering in the form of a tanjak or kopiah. These costume variations reflect the different functions and roles of performers within the structure of the performance.

Based on an interview with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), the costumes of Sekapor Sireh Dance have undergone changes in response to the evolving functions and cultural development of the dance. When the dance was first created in 1974, the costumes consisted of sleeveless garments inspired by traditional Dayak attire and were combined with songket cloth as a representation of the identity of West Kalimantan. According to Yuza, this concept emerged because Sekapor Sireh Dance was originally

designed as a welcoming dance representing the people of West Kalimantan as a whole. However, as the dance developed primarily in Pontianak, it gradually became recognized as a distinctive presentation dance of the Pontianak Malay community. This transformation also influenced the costumes, which later shifted to the use of baju kurung as a representation of the Malay woman, characterized by courtesy, modesty, and respect for social decorum.

Malay cultural identity is further reflected in the dominant use of yellow and green costume colors. According to Yuza Yanis Chaniago, these colors were selected because they are closely associated with Malay culture and frequently appear in cultural symbols, including traditional Malay houses in West Kalimantan. Yellow symbolizes grandeur, dignity, and prosperity, while green represents harmony, fertility, and serenity. Within the performance, these colors not only strengthen the visual identity of the dance but also communicate cultural values upheld by the Malay community. In addition to color symbolism, local Pontianak identity is represented through the use of corak insang cloth. According to Yuza Yanis Chaniago, corak insang is a traditional textile commonly worn by the people of Pontianak in various customary and cultural activities. Its gill-inspired motif symbolizes the life of communities that have grown and developed along the Kapuas River. Therefore, the use of corak insang cloth in Sekapor Sireh Dance functions not only as a costume component but also as a symbol of the community's connection to the geographical and cultural environment in which the dance developed.



Figure 4. Costumes of Sekapor Sireh Dance performers
(main dancer, *tepak sireh* bearer, and royal umbrella bearer ; from left to right)

Field observations conducted on October 18, 2025, revealed that costume variations are used to distinguish the roles of performers within the presentation structure. The main dancers wear Malay attire that emphasizes elegance and courtesy, while the *tepak sireh* bearers and royal umbrella bearers wear costumes that reinforce their symbolic functions in the welcoming process. Symbolically, the costumes represent the cultural identity of the Pontianak Malay community while preserving traces of the dance's multicultural origins. The coexistence of Malay and Dayak costume elements reflects the historical development of Sekapor Sireh Dance within the diverse cultural landscape of West Kalimantan. From an ethnochoreological perspective, costumes function as cultural symbols that connect identity, history, and social values, thereby reinforcing the symbolic meanings communicated through the performance (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000).

Accessories

Accessories in Sekapor Sireh Dance function not only as complements to the costume but also as components of a cultural symbol system that represents identity, social values, and the historical development of the dance. From an ethnochoreological perspective, accessories constitute visual elements that communicate cultural meanings while reinforcing the characteristics represented in the performance (Kaeppler, 2000). Therefore, the use of accessories in Sekapor Sireh Dance cannot be separated from the Pontianak Malay cultural context that underlies its creation and development.

The main dancers wear various accessories, including *teratai penutup dada* (lotus chest ornament), *pending* or waist belt, waist sash, *sanggul lipat pandan*, *kembang goyang*, *bando melati*, a crown, and earrings. These accessories not only enhance the dancers' appearance but also reinforce the image of Malay women associated with elegance, courtesy, and refinement. Field observations conducted on October 18, 2025, revealed that the combination of accessories, costumes, and makeup creates a harmonious visual appearance that supports the welcoming character of the dance. Based on an interview with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), several accessories are closely related to the cultural identity of the Malay community in West Kalimantan. One of these is *sanggul lipat pandan*, a traditional Malay hairstyle characterized by a shape resembling the number eight. This form is interpreted as a symbol of prayers that never cease. Thus, *sanggul lipat pandan* functions not only as a hairstyle but also as a representation of spiritual values and hopes embedded within Malay culture. Another significant accessory is *kembang goyang*, a traditional head ornament that remains widely used today and continues to serve as part of the visual identity of Malay women in various customary and cultural activities.

Symbolic meanings are also reflected in the use of the crown. According to Yuza Yanis Chaniago, the crown represents the royal environment in which Sekapor Sireh Dance first developed, namely the Kadariah Palace of Pontianak. According to Yuza Yanis Chaniago, the crown symbolizes the royal environment of the Kadariah Palace of Pontianak, where Sekapor Sireh Dance first developed. As such, it represents honor, authority, and the historical connection between the dance and the Malay royal tradition. According to Anne Yurika Mauluddin (October 1, 2025), accessories in Sekapor Sireh Dance function not only to support the dancers' appearance but also to represent the cultural values embodied in the performance. She explained that several accessories have changed over time as the dance evolved. In its early development, Sekapor Sireh Dance incorporated *kelat bahu* and jasmine ornaments that were adapted to the characteristics of the honored guest being welcomed, namely Indonesia's second Vice President, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX. The inclusion of these elements reflects a process of cultural adaptation within the presentation of the dance. As the dance continued to develop, *kelat bahu* was no longer used, whereas jasmine ornaments were retained because they had become part of the visual identity of Sekapor Sireh Dance. These changes demonstrate that performance elements are dynamic and continue to adapt to the evolving socio-cultural context of the supporting community.

Tabel 1. Accessories of Sekapor Sireh Dance Performers

No	Accessories	Image	Function	Symbolic Meaning
1.	<i>Teratai penutup dada</i>		Chest ornament	Beauty, courtesy, and a symbol of Malay women's elegance
2.	<i>Pending or ikat pinggang</i>		Fastens the costume	Orderliness and honor
3.	<i>Selendang pinggang</i>		Costume complement	Beauty and balance
4.	<i>Sanggul lipat pandan</i>		Hairstyle arrangement	The elegance of Malay women
5.	<i>Kembang goyang</i>		Head ornament	Gentleness and dynamism
6.	<i>Bando melati</i>		Head accessory	Purity and sincerity
7.	<i>Mahkota</i>		Main head ornament	A symbol of honor, authority, and royal heritage
8.	<i>Anting</i>		Ear ornament	Elegance and femininity

In addition to the main dancers, accessories are also worn by the *tepak sireh* bearers and the royal umbrella bearers according to their respective roles. The *tepak sireh* bearers dressed in traditional Malay dare attire wear a head-covering shawl, bogam, earrings, and sanggul lipat pandan, while those wearing traditional Dayak attire use hornbill (rangkong) feathers as markers of Dayak cultural identity. The royal umbrella bearers wear a tanjak or kopiah, both of which symbolize honor and authority within Malay tradition. The coexistence of Malay and Dayak accessories within a single performance reflects the multicultural background of Sekapor Sireh Dance and the cultural diversity of West Kalimantan society. Although the dance later became closely associated with the Pontianak Malay community, elements of Dayak culture remain visible through specific accessories preserved in the performance tradition. Symbolically, accessories function as cultural markers that communicate identity, historical continuity, and social values. Sanggul lipat pandan, kembang goyang, jasmine ornaments, and the crown collectively represent ideals of Malay femininity, while distinctive Dayak accessories reflect the multicultural origins of the dance. From an ethnochoreological perspective, these accessories form part of a broader cultural symbol system through which cultural diversity, historical memory, and community values are communicated in performance (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppler, 2000).

Properties

Properties in Sekapor Sireh Dance function not only as performance complements but also as media that communicate the cultural values of the Pontianak Malay community. From an ethnochoreological perspective, properties form part of a symbolic system that helps explain the relationship between performance form and the cultural meanings embedded within it (Kaeppler, 2000). Therefore, the use of properties in Sekapor Sireh Dance cannot be separated from the function of the dance as a medium for welcoming honored guests. The principal properties used in the dance consist of *tepak sireh*, a bokor containing yellow rice, and a royal umbrella. Although each property serves a distinct function, together they construct the welcoming meanings that constitute the core of the performance. Field observations conducted on October 18, 2025, revealed that the properties are closely integrated with the movement sequence of the dance. Consequently, they function not only as visual complements but also as media for conveying symbolic messages to the welcomed guests. *Tepak sireh* symbolizes the acceptance of guests into the venue or place being visited. Based on an interview with H. Yuza Yanis Chaniago (September 15, 2025), *tepak sireh* contains green betel leaves, slaked lime, gambier, and young areca nuts, all of which are closely associated with the tradition of betel chewing in Malay society. In the past, this tradition formed part of everyday social life and was commonly practiced during gatherings with family members, relatives, and neighbors. Therefore, the presentation of *tepak sireh* to guests symbolizes the host's sincere acceptance of their presence. In Sekapor Sireh Dance, *tepak sireh* is presented during the *sembah* and *petek bunge* movement motifs as a symbol of respect and acceptance toward the guests being welcomed.



Figure 5. Properties of Sekapor Sireh Dance
(*tepak sireh*, *bokor* containing yellow rice, and royal umbrella ; from left to right)

In addition to *tepak sireh*, the *bokor* containing yellow rice constitutes another important element in the welcoming process. According to Yuza Yanis Chaniago, the use of a golden-yellow *bokor* is closely related to the function of the dance as a welcoming performance. The golden-yellow color symbolizes honor and the highest form of welcome offered to guests. Meanwhile, the yellow rice placed within the *bokor* represents prayers and blessings for the guests. The scattering of yellow rice is performed during the *nabor* movement motif as a symbol of hopes for safety, well-being, and prosperity. Beyond its spiritual significance, yellow rice also represents the prosperity of West Kalimantan, giving it strong social and cultural meanings within the performance. Another important property is the royal umbrella, which is used during the welcoming procession as a symbol of protection for the guests. Yuza Yanis Chaniago explained that this meaning is related to the practical function of an umbrella in protecting people from sunlight and rain. Within Malay tradition, the royal umbrella also represents honor, authority, and respect for guests of high status. Therefore, the royal umbrella functions not only as a visual component of the performance but also as a symbol of the esteem and respect extended to honored guests.

The role of properties in Sekapor Sireh Dance is reinforced by Anne Yurika Mauluddin (October 1, 2025) and Runi Desiana (February 15, 2026), who emphasized that properties support both the welcoming function of the dance and the communication of cultural meanings. As part of the choreography, they help clarify performers' roles and interact with movement, musical accompaniment, costumes, makeup, and accessories in constructing the symbolic meaning of the performance. Symbolically, *tepak sireh*, the *bokor* containing yellow rice, and the royal umbrella form an integrated system of meanings representing respect, acceptance, prayer, protection, and hospitality in Pontianak Malay culture. These meanings emerge through the relationships among properties rather than from individual objects in isolation. From an ethnochoreological perspective, the properties function as elements of material culture that communicate social values, traditions, and cultural identity within the performance (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppeler, 2000).

Floor Pattern

The floor pattern of Sekapor Sireh Dance consists of horizontal and diagonal lines that collectively form an arrangement resembling the letter "A." This pattern results from the combination of dancer formations facing the guests and the dancers' movements toward the right and left sides of the performance space. The floor pattern functions to organize movement directions and positional transitions, thereby creating order, balance, and unity within the dance presentation. Field observations conducted on October 18, 2025, revealed that the dancers' arrangement creates a spatial formation oriented toward the welcomed guests while simultaneously establishing a pathway for the welcoming procession as an integral part of the performance. In addition to regulating spatial organization, the floor

pattern supports the function of Sekapor Sireh Dance as a welcoming performance. The horizontal formation facing the guests signifies respect, while the diagonal lines created through the dancers' movements generate an open space that directs attention toward the welcoming process. This arrangement helps clarify the role of each performer while creating an orderly and harmonious atmosphere throughout the reception.

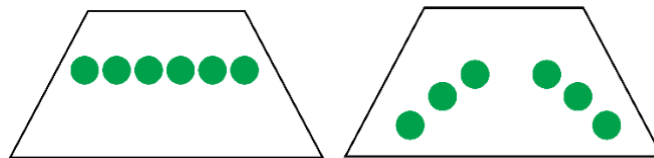


Figure 6. Floor pattern of Sekapor Sireh Dance
(from left to right: consisting of horizontal and diagonal lines forming an “A” shape)

Within the context of welcoming, the floor pattern can be interpreted as a representation of openness and acceptance toward the guests being received. The space created through the dancers' arrangement functions not only as a performance area but also as a visual expression of the process of receiving guests as the central focus of the dance. From an ethnochoreological perspective, floor patterns are understood not merely as spatial arrangements for movement but also as components of a cultural system that connects performance forms with the social values of the supporting community (Kurath, 1960; Kaeppeler, 2000). Therefore, the floor pattern of Sekapor Sireh Dance serves not only a technical function but also communicates values of respect, openness, and hospitality that characterize the culture of the Pontianak Malay community.

Overall, the floor pattern of Sekapor Sireh Dance demonstrates the relationship between aesthetic form and socio-cultural function. Its structured spatial arrangement supports the communication of welcoming meanings while reinforcing the connection between performance form and the cultural values represented through the dance. Thus, the floor pattern forms part of a broader system of cultural symbols that contributes to the expression and communication of respect, openness, and hospitality as core values of the Pontianak Malay community within the performance of Sekapor Sireh Dance. The floor pattern in Sekapor Sireh Dance is composed of horizontal and diagonal lines that form an “A” shape. This pattern regulates the direction of the dancers' movements, creating a sense of order and balance within the performance. Beyond its function as a spatial arrangement, the floor pattern also carries symbolic meaning. The “A” shape can be interpreted as a symbol of openness and acceptance, reflecting the attitude of the Pontianak community in welcoming guests with sincerity and warmth. This indicates that the floor pattern in Sekapor Sireh Dance is not merely technical in nature but also plays a role in constructing symbolic meaning that aligns with the function of the dance as a welcoming performance.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings reveal that the presentation structure of Sekapor Sireh Dance consists of movement, musical accompaniment, makeup, costumes, accessories, properties, and floor patterns that are interconnected in forming an integrated performance system. These elements function not only as aesthetic components but also as media through which the cultural values and meanings of the Pontianak Malay community are communicated. The symbolic meanings of Sekapor Sireh Dance are constructed through the relationships among performance elements. The *sembah* movement and *tepak sireh* represent respect and acceptance toward guests, while the *nabor* movement and yellow rice symbolize prayers,

safety, and prosperity. The royal umbrella serves as a symbol of protection and honor. Meanwhile, costumes, accessories, makeup, musical accompaniment, and floor patterns reinforce values of courtesy, openness, hospitality, and the cultural identity of the Pontianak Malay community. Together, these elements form a cultural symbol system that reflects the Malay tradition of welcoming guests. From an ethnochoreological perspective, Sekapor Sireh Dance represents a cultural expression that connects performance forms with the values, identity, and social life of the supporting community. The symbolic meanings of the dance do not reside in individual elements but emerge through the interrelationships among all components of the presentation. Therefore, Sekapor Sireh Dance functions not only as a welcoming dance but also as a medium for preserving cultural identity, transmitting social values, and representing the cultural heritage of the Pontianak Malay community across generations.

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