



The impact of *Marpaniaran* ‘traditional dance of women’ of Toba Batak wedding ceremony for women’s physical and mental health[☆]

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: The purpose of this paper is to describe (1) the benefits of *marpaniaran* ‘traditional dance of women’ for the women’s physical and mental health, (2) the meanings and functions of *marpaniaran* at the Toba Batak traditional wedding ceremony.

Methods: This study observed by using an anthropological approach with the analytic parameters is interconnection, valuability, and sustainability. The qualitative paradigm with the ethnography model used in this study.

Results: *Marpaniaran* has good benefits for women’s physical and mental health. The movement performed between hands and feet require good physical health because dancing must be done well and long at the wedding ceremony. Feelings of pleasure, gratitude, and welfare of women for what they receive will increase the mental health of women. There are several meanings and functions of *marpaniaran*, namely as a ritual worship of God and *hulahula* ‘wife giver’, asking for blessings from God and *hulahula*, and encouraging the soul of the bride in running household.

Conclusion: *Marpaniaran* is required a strong women’s physical and mental health very much. The body movements and feelings of welfare of women in *marpaniaran* make the Toba Batak women physically and mentally healthy and strong.

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Introduction

Health is a condition in which a person can develop physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially so that she realizes her abilities, she can handle pressure, she can work productively, and she can contribute to her community. A person’s body is said to be truly healthy if she takes care of her physical and mental health at the same time because both are interconnected. Poor physical health can increase the risk of mental health problems. Otherwise, poor mental health can lead to the deterioration of our physical health.

Women tend to experience physical and mental health problems. The mental health problems experienced by women can be caused by the influence of the environment around them and the lack of gratitude and feelings of happiness felt by women. This triggers women to experience emotional disturbances, which results in their physical health and decreases their quality of life. Improving the quality of life of women to improve the physical and mental condition of women in fulfilling their rights and necessities of life.^{1,2}

In fulfilling the rights and needs of women, especially the Toba Batak women have the right to have a good social status in their community. One of the social statuses they hope for is to be married and have a happy family. In the Toba Batak custom, the union of two community members through marriage cannot be separated

from the interests of the community group concerned. Marriage for the Toba Batak community is an institution that does not only bind a man and a woman but also binds the entire extended family, namely *paranak* ‘the family of male party’ and *parboru* ‘the family of the female party’.

Performances in the traditional wedding ceremony of the Toba Batak community, first held a *pamasumasuon* (blessing) a religious ceremony, after which it is continued with the Toba Batak traditional ceremony.³ In this traditional ceremony, there is a *marpaniaran* event staging in front of all family members including the *hulahula* ‘giver wife’, and *dongan sahuta* ‘village friend’. *Marpaniaran* is one of the cultural performances or cultural traditions of the Toba Batak community.^{4,5}

Based on the description above, this research is intended to illustrate and describe what the benefits of *marpaniaran* ‘traditional dance of Toba Batak women’ for the physical and mental health of Toba Batak women, and the meaning and function of *marpaniaran* in the traditional Toba Batak wedding ceremony.

Method

This research conducted using a qualitative paradigm with the ethnographic model developed by Spreadley by applying twelve steps to both interview and observation methods. Data collection in this study applied the interview and observation methods as shown by the qualitative paradigm with the ethnographic model. The method of observation was carried out by direct and participatory observation.⁶

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Fig. 1. *Marpaniaran* traditional dance.

The technique of collecting interview data was done by using ethnographic notes, descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions, while the observation data collection was done by using descriptive observation techniques, focused observation, and selected observations. Analysis of data collected from interviews carried out using ethnographic interview analysis techniques, domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, and component analysis, while data analysis collected from direct, participatory observation was also carried out using domain analysis techniques, taxonomic analysis, and component analysis.⁷

The data collected by interview and observation were then analyzed by the four kinds of analysis. Continued data analysis was the discovery of cultural themes (discovering and taking cultural themes) as a result of interpretation to conclude the benefits of *marpaniaran* 'traditional dance of Toba Batak women' for the physical and mental health of Batak Toba women, and what the meaning and function of *marpaniaran* in traditional ceremonies Toba Batak marriage. The approach used in this research is anthropolinguistic studies.^{5,8}

Result

The benefits of Marpaniaran 'traditional dance of women' for the women's physical and mental health

Marpaniaran describes denotatively the dance of the wives together with the bride which is carried out at the Toba Batak wedding ceremony. Its function is to find out and identify whether the wives and prospective bride are physically and mentally healthy by paying attention to their traditional dance performance in front of the *hulahula* 'wife-giver', *dongan tubu* 'the same surname party', and *boru* 'wife-receiver party'.^{3,9}

Marpaniaran is usually performed during traditional marriage ceremonies so that it requires that the wives and prospective brides be strong and physically and mentally healthy. If women can stand dancing for a long time, they consider physically fit.⁹ This dance requires not only a physically fit woman but also a mentally healthy woman. She must feel happy and full of gratitude because she is facing the wedding party so that she can dance well and beautifully.

The traditional dance of *marpaniaran* is performed in front of all family members. The bride will dance standing beside her mother-in-law and husband, while her husband will dance standing beside his father. The performance of dance begins with the entrance of the bride and groom into the building, and then all the customs of the Toba Batak community are carried out. It is called *adat na gok* (Fig. 1).

Marpaniaran has good benefits for women's physical and mental health. The body movements performed between hands and feet require good physical health because they must be done well and for a long time at traditional wedding ceremonies. The benefits

Table 1

Marpaniaran has a meaning and function in the traditional wedding ceremony of the Toba Batak community.

No.	The meanings of <i>Marpaniaran</i> for the Toba Batak community	The functions of <i>Marpaniaran</i> for the Toba Batak community
1	<i>Marpaniaran</i> is a dance found in the life of the Toba Batak community that has an important role in their life activities. It relates to their spiritual life and the social relations of their community.	The ritual of worshipping God and the <i>hulahula</i> 'wife-giver'
2	The body movement in the <i>marpaniaran</i> is important. The body movements in this dance are adjusted to the dancer's position in the <i>Dalihan Na Tolu</i> kinship system.	Asking for God's blessing
3	Physically, <i>marpaniaran</i> is a dance, but its meaning is more than the movements show that <i>marpaniaran</i> is a medium of communication, because through the media of the movement presented there is an interaction between ceremony participants.	Encouraging the soul of the bride in running the household

of traditional *marpaniaran* dance for women's physical health is the body movement make the body strong, balanced, and healthy. Besides, the feeling of pleasure, gratitude, and the well-being of women for what they receive will improve women's mental health. If a woman feels happy and physically and mentally healthy, she will dance well and beautifully in front of all family members.

The meanings and functions of Marpaniaran at the Toba Batak traditional wedding ceremony

Marpaniaran in a wedding ceremony is a traditional Batak Toba dance which has its specialties, apart from having the uniqueness of conveying meaning in dance. It is also the process of giving and receiving customs in the kinship system of *Dalihan natolu* 'the philosophy of the Toba Batak people' (Table 1).

Discussion

Marpaniaran is a dance found in the life of the Toba Batak community that has an important role in their life activities. It relates to their spiritual life and the social relations of their community. It is a dance that moves the whole body to the acclaimed rhythm of *gondang* 'traditional Toba Batak music', with the center of movement on the hands and fingers, feet, and soles of the feet, back and shoulders. The body movement in this dance is very important. The movements are adjusted to the dancer's position in the *Dalihan Na Tolu* kinship concept 'the Batak Toba philosophy'. The philosophy of *dalihan na tolu* is a family system that regulates Batak tribe among one another. Every Batak person will enter this element.

This movement requires the physical health of women to be able to dance well and beautifully. She must be able to dance for a long time, and move all of her limbs well, and balance to the beat of the music of *gondang* 'traditional music of Toba Batak'. If the bride can dance for a long time and well and she can follow the rhythm of the *gondang*, she is considered a physically healthy woman. If the bride has physically healthy, the Toba Batak people believe that she will be able to be a good wife for her husband and a good mother for her children because she will be able to take good care of her family. Besides, the traditional *marpaniaran* dance has several functions for the Toba Batak community in the Toba Batak wedding ceremony. There are several functions of the traditional *marpaniaran* dance, namely (1) as a ritual of worshipping God and the *hulahula* 'wife-giver', (2) asking for the blessing of God, and the *hulahula*, and (3) encouraging the soul of the bride in running the household.

The first function of the *marpaniaran* 'traditional dance of women' is ritual worship of God and *hulahula* 'wife-giver'. This dance has a ritual process, which is a ritual of worshipping obedience to God Almighty which is shown through offerings of the traditional music to God before the dance begins. Then, this dance is continued with ritual worship for the ancestors and people who are respected.

The second is a ritual asks for the blessings from God and *hulahula* 'wife-giver'. The prayers of blessings are requested so that the customary ceremony runs smoothly, and well. There are no obstacles in the process of performing the customary wedding ceremony. For the Toba Batak community, the prayers of blessings are not only asked from God but also from *hulahula* as the giver of the wife from the bride's family. They believe that *hulahula* is considered a manifestation of God and has a respected position. So, they are considered important to be respected and asked for blessings from *hulahula*.

The third is to encourage the soul of the bride in running the household. The bride must be given encouragement and prayer so that she feels happy, excited, and full of gratitude for her marriage. If the bride feels happy and grateful for her marriage, she will be mentally healthy. If the bride is mentally healthy, her emotional health will not be disturbed because of the happy feelings women feel in running her household. The mental health that the bride feels will trigger her physical health. Poor mental health will lead to a decline in women's physical health. If the bride lacks gratitude and feelings of unhappiness experienced, it will cause emotional disturbance to her. It can cause mental illness and affect her physical health.

Therefore, the bride must feel happy in undergoing her marriage and must be full of gratitude for her wedding so that she is physically and mentally healthy. Physical and mental health are interrelated. Poor physical health will affect mental health. Otherwise, poor mental health will affect physical health. For this reason, the brides and other Toba Batak women require to have physical and mental health.

Conclusion

In traditional dance, *marpaniaran* needs women who are physically and mentally healthy. Good, strong, and long body movements

require good physical health from women. Meanwhile, the feeling of prosperity in the traditional *marpaniaran* dance will make Toba Batak women mentally healthy and strong. The physical and mental health of Toba Batak women is greatly improved in performing the ritual traditional *marpaniaran* dance.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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