

REPRESENTATION IN THE GANDRUNG DANCE MARSAN, BANYUWANGI REGENCY: A PERSPECTIVE JUDITH BUTLER'S PERFORMATIVITY

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze gender representation in the Gandrung Marsan Dance of Banyuwangi through its performance elements and to explain the practice of gender performativity embodied by the dancers from Judith Butler's perspective. Gandrung Marsan Dance is inspired by the historical figure of Marsan, a male *gandrung* dancer who performed female characters. This phenomenon indicates that gender identity in dance is not solely determined by the biological sex of the dancer but is constructed through the elements of the dance performance. This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature review. The data were analyzed using Stuart Hall's theory of representation with a constructionist approach and Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. The findings reveal that gender representation in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is constructed through movement and movement quality, make-up, costume, properties, musical accompaniment, and spatial patterns. These performance elements function as a system of signs that produces feminine and masculine meanings. Soft movements, feminine make-up, Gandrung costume, fan, scarf, and gentle musical accompaniment represent femininity, while strong movement quality, masculine movement variations, fake mustache, and dynamic musical accompaniment represent masculinity. From Judith Butler's perspective, gender identity in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is understood as a performative practice enacted through the repeated use of bodily movements, gestures, facial expressions, costumes, and bodily practices throughout the performance. Thus, the dancer's body becomes the site of gender performativity, while the dance performance serves as a system of representation that constructs gender meaning.

Keywords: Representation, Gender Performativity, Gandrung Marsan Dance, Stuart Hall, Judith Butler.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dance is a form of performing art that serves not only as a medium of entertainment but also as a means of cultural expression that represents a society's values, norms, identity, and outlook on life. As a cultural practice, dance conveys meaning through a combination of movement, the dancer's body, makeup, costume, music, and other artistic elements. All of these elements form a presentation that allows the audience to interpret the meaning conveyed in the performance. Thus, dance is understood not only as a work of beauty but also as a space for the production of representations of social meaning.

One social identity often represented through performing arts is gender. Unlike biological sex, gender is a societal perception that shapes how a person is perceived as feminine or masculine. In dance, this perspective is manifested through presentational methods such as the quality of energy, makeup, costume, props, accompaniment, and

spatial patterns that support the character. These elements not only contribute to the aesthetic value of a dance but also construct a specific representation of gender that can be read by the audience. Therefore, the form of dance presentation is an important aspect to examine in understanding how gender representation is constructed and performed.

One traditional art form that demonstrates the dynamics of gender representation is the Gandrung Dance of Banyuwangi. The term *gandrung* in various Javanese literature is interpreted as a feeling of love, fascination, or deep attraction. The meaning of *gandrung*, which is related to love, was then adopted as the name for the performance tradition that developed in Banyuwangi and underwent a historical process to become the Gandrung performance art form. The Gandrung Dance has become one of the most prominent cultural icons and represents the identity of the Banyuwangi people. The beauty of the movements, makeup, costumes, and distinctive musical accompaniment have made this dance widely appreciated, both locally and internationally (Munawaroh, 2007). In its presentation, the Gandrung Dance has a performance structure that is divided into three main parts: *jejer*, *paju*, and *seblang subuh*, each of which has its own meaning and function within the overall performance (B. Soelarto and Ilmi 1979).

This historical phenomenon was then revived through the Gandrung Marsan dance, created by Subari Sofyan in 2009 at the Sayu Gringsing Dance Studio in Banyuwangi Regency. This dance is performed by nine male dancers who alternately portray gentle and expressive feminine characters and assertive and dashing masculine characters in one performance. Through makeup, costume, and feminine movement, the dancers present the image of women, as is typical of Gandrung. However, at the end of the performance, the male identity is reaffirmed through the use of fake mustaches and the removal of *omprok*, thus revealing a change in character within the same dancer's body. These changes demonstrate that the dancer's body becomes the primary vessel for presenting and transforming gender representation throughout the performance.

2. METHOD

The research "Gender Representation in the Gandrung Marsan Dance Work of Banyuwangi Regency" uses a descriptive qualitative interpretative approach with a performance case study design. The case study focuses on one work, namely the Gandrung Marsan Dance by Subari Sofyan, with special attention to the process of representation and gender performativity through the body, movement, make-up, costume, properties, and dramaturgical structure of the performance. The researcher acts as a key instrument, data collection techniques through triangulation, data analysis is inductive and qualitative, and the results of the study emphasize more on meaning through research methods (Sugiyono, 2012:9). This study aims to analyze the Representation of Gender in the Gandrung Marsan Dance of Banyuwangi: Judith Butler's Performativity Perspective. The research process is carried out through the stages of collecting, processing, analyzing, and presenting data objectively, so that the findings obtained can help answer and solve the research problem formulation systematically.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

3.1.1 *Historical Context and Choreography of the Gandrung Marsan Dance*

The historical context and choreographic concept of the Gandrung Marsan Dance of Banyuwangi serve as a foundation for understanding gender representation in the performance. The description includes the history of Gandrung Lanang, the role of Marsan in the development of Gandrung Banyuwangi art, Subari Sofyan's concept for creating the Gandrung Marsan Dance, and the performance version that serves as the object of analysis. This contextual explanation is necessary to understand the analysis of gender representation and performativity in the following section based on the historical, cultural, and artistic background.

3.1.1.1 History of Gandrung Lanang

Gandrung Lanang is an early form of Gandrung Banyuwangi performance. During its development, male dancers portrayed female characters. In the performance, the dancers used makeup, costume, movements, and expressions that resembled female Gandrung dancers. The existence of Gandrung Lanang demonstrates that in the early development of Gandrung art, female characters were not always portrayed by women but could also be embodied through the bodies of male dancers. Over time, the role of Gandrung dancers shifted to women, leading to increasingly rare performances of the Gandrung Lanang tradition.

One of the most well-known Gandrung Lanang figures in Banyuwangi is Marsan. He was known as a dancer who mastered the Gandrung character and remained active until he was around 40 years old. Marsan's popularity made his name synonymous with Gandrung Lanang performances during that era. His presence in various performances led to the public's familiarity with the performance as "Gandrung Marsan." Therefore, Marsan is considered a pivotal figure in the history of the Banyuwangi Gandrung art form.

3.1.1.2 The Concept of the Gandrung Marsan Dance by Subari Sofyan

Subari Sofyan is a dance artist from Banyuwangi who is known as a choreographer and preserver of Banyuwangi's traditional arts and culture. His interest in dance developed at a young age through his studies at the Putra Dance Studio in Temenggungan Village. This experience served as the foundation for developing his artistic abilities and understanding of Banyuwangi's traditional performing arts (Interview with Subari Sofyan, June 30, 2026). As a manifestation of his commitment to cultural preservation, Subari Sofyan founded the Sayu Gringsing Dance Studio in Banyuwangi as a platform for fostering the younger generation, providing dance training, and developing dance works based on local culture. Through various dance works, such as the Omprog Semi Dance, the Gandrung Marsan Dance, and the Jaripah Dance, he demonstrates his commitment to elevating Banyuwangi's cultural identity through performing arts.

The concept of the Gandrung Marsan dance centers on reinvigorating Marsan as a key figure in Gandrung Lanang in the history of Banyuwangi art. The name "Marsan" was chosen as the work's

identity because it represents the history of Gandrung Lanang and serves as a form of respect for the figure who influenced the development of Gandrung performance. Through this work, Subari Sofyan attempts to bring back cultural memories regarding the existence of male dancers who perform female gandrung characters without eliminating the aesthetic values that are characteristic of the Banyuwangi Gandrung Dance (Interview with Subari Sofyan, June 30, 2026).

3.1.1.3 Performance Version Analyzed

This study uses a single version of the Gandrung Marsan Dance performance as the object of analysis. The performance analyzed is a choreographic work created by Subari Sofyan, performed at the Nusantara Dance Parade competition held at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah in 2009. Research data was obtained through video documentation and interviews with the choreographer (Subari Sofyan) and dancer (Wanai). The selection of a single version of the performance ensured a clear focus for the analysis, allowing for in-depth identification of choreographic elements, visual elements, and gender performativity practices.

3.1.2 Gender Code in the Presentation Structure of the Gandrung Marsan Dance

In this study, the presentation of the Gandrung Marsan Dance is not described in detail as in a choreographic study, but rather focuses on the performance elements that shape gender legibility. These elements are understood as signifying practices that represent feminine and masculine characters in the performance. Based on Stuart Hall's (1997) perspective, these presentation elements are not understood as stand-alone artistic elements, but rather as representational systems that shape gender meaning. Movement, makeup, costume, props, accompaniment, and spatial patterns function as cultural signs that enable the audience to read the dancer's body as feminine or masculine. Thus, the presentational structure of the Gandrung Marsan Dance serves as the basis for analyzing gender representation through Stuart Hall's constructionist approach, which is further deepened through Judith Butler's performativity perspective.

3.1.2.1 Movement and Energy Quality

Dance movement in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is a presentational element that plays a crucial role in building the dance's character. According to Subari Sofyan, the creator of the Gandrung Marsan Dance, the movements in the Gandrung Marsan Dance remain based on the movements of the female Gandrung Dance as the basis of its choreography (interview, June 30, 2026). However, these movements are then developed by incorporating male movement characteristics, resulting in a performance that combines elements of softness, flexibility, strength, and assertiveness.

This aligns with Soedarsono's (1977:17) opinion that dance is an expression of the human soul manifested through beautiful rhythmic movements. In the context of the Gandrung Marsan Dance, movement is not only the main element of the performance but also shapes the character of the performance through a blend of soft and firm movement qualities.

In this study, based on Stuart Hall's (1997) constructionist approach, the movement variations in the Gandrung Marsan Dance

function as a sign system that generates gender meaning. Soft, flowing movements create a feminine readability because they have become a cultural convention in the Banyuwangi Gandrung Dance, while movements that utilize strong power, wide range of motion, and solid body positions construct a masculine readability. Thus, the movement qualities not only distinguish the character of the dance but also form a gender representation that is recognizable to the audience. Therefore, the subsequent analysis focuses on how these movement qualities represent gender identity in the performance. The basic movements used in the Gandrung Marsan Dance include jejeran, ngiwir, right and left sagah, step lombo, kegol, nglayung, silatan, kelit, nyonggo langit, kegol lanang, trisig, and ngeber. A complete description of each movement is presented in the appendix to this study.

3.1.2.2 Makeup, Costume, and Silhouette Formation

Makeup and costume are visual elements that play a crucial role in shaping character and gender in the Gandrung Marsan Dance. According to Soedarsono (1978), makeup serves to clarify the character of the character portrayed by the dancer, while costume supports the formation of the character's identity and enhances the aesthetics of the performance. In the Gandrung Marsan Dance, these two elements serve not only as artistic complements but also as visual media that construct the representation of the female gandrung character through the male dancer's body.

The makeup used refers to the Banyuwangi Gandrung makeup style, emphasizing the shape of the eyebrows, eyes, and lips to create a feminine impression. The use of black, brown, and red eyeshadow, false eyelashes, and red lipstick aims to soften facial features so that the dancers' expressions are more clearly visible on stage. According to Subari Sofyan, the use of female makeup is not solely intended to enhance appearance, but also represents Marsan's disguise strategy as a man playing a female character when carrying out his role as a spy during the Dutch colonial period (Interview with Subari Sofyan, June 30, 2026). Thus, makeup serves as a visual marker that reinforces the character's transformation in the performance.



Figure 1. *Front and Side View of the Gandrung Marsan Dance Makeup*

3.1.2.3 Props

According to Soedarsono (1978:21–36), dance props are supporting elements in a performance, serving as props or movement aids to enhance the aesthetic value and emphasize the character of the dance. Props not only serve as visual complements but also help

build atmosphere, clarify meaning, and reinforce the identity of the characters portrayed in a performance.

In the Gandrung Marsan Dance, props are used not only to complement the choreography but also as visual markers that shape gender representation. The props used include a fan, a shawl, and a fake mustache. These three props have different functions but complement each other in developing the character of the Gandrung Marsan.

The fan is a prop inherited from the Banyuwangi Gandrung Dance tradition and is used to reinforce the female Gandrung character. The use of the fan, combined with smooth, flexible, and rhythmic hand movements, creates a feminine impression in the dancer's performance. Thus, the fan not only functions as an aesthetic complement but also serves as a visual marker that strengthens the interpretation of the female character in the performance. In addition to the fan, the shawl is the main prop used almost throughout the performance. The shawl is used as a medium for exploring movement through various movements, such as *giwir* (swinging), swinging, throwing, wrapping around the body, or unfurling to the rhythm of the music. The use of the shawl expands the dancer's range of motion while enhancing the soft and supple qualities of the movements. At the same time, the shawl also adapts to changes in energy as the dancer performs more assertive movements, thus supporting the blend of feminine and masculine characters in the Gandrung Marsan Dance.

The most distinctive prop in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is the fake mustache. Unlike the fan and shawl, which construct a feminine image, the fake mustache serves as a visual marker that directs the audience's understanding of the masculine identity of the Marsan character. The mustache is used at the end of the performance as a symbol to remind the audience that the female *gandrung* character is portrayed by a male body. The presence of this prop is a key difference between the Gandrung Marsan Dance and the Banyuwangi Gandrung Dance performed by female dancers.





Figure 2. Property

3.1.2.4 Relevant Accompaniment

Accompaniment is a presentation element that supports the character, atmosphere, and movement dynamics in a dance performance. According to Soedarsono (1977:46), music in dance not only regulates tempo and rhythm but also creates an atmosphere that enhances the delivery of the dancer's character and expression. In the Gandrung Marsan Dance, the accompaniment supports the quality of the movement while also reinforcing the reading of the feminine and masculine characters displayed through the dancer's body.

The accompaniment for the Gandrung Marsan Dance uses a Banyuwangi gamelan ensemble consisting of kethuk, kendang, gong, saron, angklung, tambourine, jedor, kluncing, and a violin. According to Subari Sofyan, the use of these instruments is based on the Banyuwangi Gandrung Dance pieces, thus maintaining the musical identity of this dance's traditional Banyuwangi music (Interview, June 30, 2026). However, the music is adapted to the choreographic concept to adapt to the changing movement quality and dynamics of the performance.

Changes in tempo, drum accents, and gamelan dynamics follow the development of the dance scene. In sections featuring female gandrung characters, the accompaniment tends to be moderate in tempo with a soft melody, supporting smooth, flowing, and supple movements. Conversely, when the dancers perform various male-style movements such as silatan, kegol lanang, and ngeber, the tempo of the accompaniment becomes faster with stronger drum accents. These musical changes emphasize the quality of energy, volume of movement, and the masculine character that the dancers begin to display.

The music for the Gandrung Marsan Dance was composed by Sunardiyanto, a composer of traditional Banyuwangi music. According to Wanai (Interview, April 4, 2026), the quality of the Gandrung Marsan Dance's music earned it the Best Music award at the 2011 Nusantara Dance Parade at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII). This award demonstrates that the accompaniment serves not only to accompany the movements but also plays a crucial role in developing the artistic quality of the performance.

3.1.2.5 Spatial Patterns That Support Character

Spatial patterns are an element of dance presentation that regulate the movements of dancers and shape the visual composition of the performance. According to Soedarsono (1978), floor patterns are the lines formed by the movement of dancers in the performance space, both in solo and group dances. In addition to regulating the direction of movement, spatial patterns play a role in creating compositional balance, strengthening the audience's focus, and supporting the conveyance of the character and meaning of the performance.

Based on an interview with Subari Sofyan (June 30, 2026), the spatial patterns in the Gandrung Marsan Dance are a development of the floor patterns of the Banyuwangi Gandrung Dance while maintaining a simple form. This simplicity was chosen to keep the audience's attention focused on the quality of movement, expression, and character developed by the dancers, rather than on the complexity of formation movements. Observations indicate that the spatial patterns in the Gandrung Marsan Dance are arranged to follow the dramatic development of the performance.

The use of spatial patterns not only serves as an artistic composition but also supports the character development of the Gandrung Marsan Dance. The placement of the main character in specific positions, the use of levels, and the transitions between formations help emphasize the character changes portrayed by the dancers. When dancers display feminine movement qualities, the spatial patterns tend to create a balanced and centered composition. In contrast, in the sections featuring male movements, spatial shifts become more dynamic, supporting a bold, strong, and expansive impression.

3.1.3 Shaping Feminine Readability in the Gandrung Marsan Dance

This section analyzes how choreographic and visual elements construct feminine readability in the Gandrung Marsan Dance. The analysis is based on video observations of the performance, interviews with the choreographer and dancers, and the researcher's interpretation using the concepts of gender representation and performativity. Each finding is presented based on scene clips, including video time codes, allowing for a more traceable analysis process.

3.1.3.1 Jejeran Movement as a Feminine Code

Video timecode: 00:00 – 01:24

In the jejeran section, the dancer maintains an upright posture with both hands raised parallel to the ears while playing with a scarf using the *ngiwir* movement. Footsteps are performed at a moderate tempo, accompanied by gentle body swings. This movement demonstrates the qualities of light energy, flowing rhythm, and relatively narrow space, creating a graceful impression, reminiscent of the female Gandrung character. According to Subari Sofyan: "The jejeran movement still uses the basic movements of the female Gandrung. What is maintained is the softness and flexibility of the body" (Interview, June 30, 2026).

This opinion is reinforced by Wanai, who stated: "Even though the dancer is male, the audience must still see the female Gandrung

figure first" (Interview, June 30, 2026). Based on observations, the researcher observed that the jejeran movement not only serves as an opening to the performance but also serves as a visual code that immediately directs the audience to read the dancer's body as a female character. The flexibility of the wrists, the forward-facing head position, and the subtle use of force create a feminine image before the audience realizes the dancer's biological identity.

In Banyuwangi Gandrung culture, the jejeran movement is synonymous with the gentle, friendly, and graceful character of Gandrung women. Therefore, the use of this movement on the male dancer's body demonstrates that feminine identity is constructed through the repetition of cultural codes, not solely determined by the dancer's gender. When viewed through the perspective of Judith Butler (1990), the jejeran movement does not indicate a natural female identity, but rather demonstrates how femininity is produced through constantly practiced and repeated bodily actions. The repetition of hand positions, the gentle quality of force, wrist movements, and facial expressions make the male dancer's body read as female. Thus, femininity in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is the result of performative practice (stylized repetition of acts), not a consequence of the dancer's biological sex.

3.1.3.2 Ngiwir and Sagah Movements as Feminine Codes

Video timecode: 1:00 AM – 2:45 AM

The ngiwir movement is displayed through repeated shawl movements with flexible wrists. This movement is combined with right and left sagah movements, creating a slightly lowered body position with a sideways tilt. According to Subari Sofyan, "The hand and shawl movements must remain smooth because that's the hallmark of Gandrung."

(Interview, June 30, 2026). Observations show that the quality of the energy in this movement remains light with a steady tempo. The combination of ngiwir and sagah enhances the impression of both softness and elegance of the dancer's body.

According to the researcher, these two types of movement serve as visual cues that reinforce the representation of women because the Banyuwangi community has long recognized these movements as the identity of the female Gandrung Dance. The repetition of ngiwir and sagah movements throughout the performance demonstrates how the body continues to produce a feminine image through repetitive actions. From Butler's perspective, this repetition is a performative practice that makes female identity appear natural, when in fact it is a cultural construction manifested through the dancer's body. Thus, the male dancer's body is read as female through the repetition of movements that have acquired cultural meaning.

3.1.3.3 Kegol Movement, Eye Gaze, and Smile as Forming Feminine Character

Video timecode: 03:23 – 04:07

In this section, the dancers perform kegol movements combined with head movements (deleg), gentle gaze, and a sustained smile

throughout the performance. According to Wanai, "The smile must never disappear because it is the main characteristic of Gandrung" (Interview, June 30, 2026). Observations indicate that facial expressions play a crucial role in constructing a female character. Eye gaze is directed alternately at the audience, accompanied by a consistent smile, creating a friendly, graceful, and communicative impression. Researchers interpret these expressions as not merely complementary movements, but rather as part of a bodily performance that continuously constructs feminine identity throughout the performance.

Kegol movements, eye gaze, and smile not only reinforce artistic expression but also demonstrate that gender identity is formed through repeated bodily actions. Butler explains that gender identity is born from the repetition of actions performed consistently until they are accepted as normal by society. Therefore, the feminine character in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is the result of continuous bodily training throughout the performance.

3.1.3.4 Makeup and Costume as Visual Codes of Femininity

Video timecode: 00:00 – 07:30

In addition to movement, feminine interpretations are also created through makeup and costume. The dancers use feminine makeup, including eyebrow shaping, eyeshadow, false eyelashes, and red lipstick, creating a visual that is identical to the female Gandrung character. According to Subari Sofyan, "Female makeup is used so that the Gandrung character is immediately recognized by the audience."

(Interview, June 30, 2026). The costumes worn include an omprok (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), a kemben (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), an ilat-ilatan (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), a bokong (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), a selendang (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), and a jarik (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress) with Gajah Oling motifs, all of which refer to female Gandrung attire with some modifications. That helps the body convey a specific gender identity.

3.1.4 Disruption and Shift Toward Masculine Codes

After the previous section, the dancers' bodies constructed a feminine readability through movement, expression, makeup, and attire, this section demonstrates a gradual shift that shifts this readability toward masculine characteristics. This shift does not occur suddenly, but is constructed through changes in movement quality, use of space, facial expressions, and the emergence of visual attributes that emphasize a male identity. The following analysis is based on video observations of the performance, interviews with the choreographer and dancers, and the researcher's interpretations relating them to the cultural norms of Gandrung Banyuwangi.

3.1.4.1 Silatan Movement as the Beginning of a Shift to Masculine Codes

Video time code: 04:10 – 04:25

In this section, a variety of silat movements emerge that differ from the previous ones. The dancers open their legs wider, resembling a horse stance, their chests puffed out, their hands bent into strong fists,

and then move them alternately to the rhythm of the music. According to Subari Sofyan, "The silat movements depict the Gandrung troops practicing martial arts. The silat movements are designed to show the masculine side of the Marsan character, so the quality of the movements is stronger than that of the female Gandrung."

(Interview, June 30, 2026). This opinion is supported by Wanai, who explained that the silat movements are what differentiates the Gandrung Marsan Dance from the Gandrung Banyuwangi Dance because in this section, the male character begins to emerge more clearly.

Judith Butler's perspective helps explain that this change does not indicate a return to a primordial male identity, but rather demonstrates that masculinity is also the result of performative actions. The silat movements, strong body positions, and the use of powerful force are a series of actions learned and performed, resulting in a masculine reading of the dancer's body.

Based on observations, researchers see that the silat movements are the starting point for the disruption of the feminine reading previously constructed through gentle movements. The wide-spread leg position, strong power, and clenched fists create a firm and sturdy impression, causing the dancer's body to be perceived as masculine. In Banyuwangi Gandrung culture, soft, flowing movements are more often associated with female Gandrung characters. Conversely, movements that utilize great power, wide range of motion, and a strong body position are more closely associated with a masculine image. Therefore, silat movements become an early sign of a shift in gender codes in the performance.

3.1.4.2 Changes in Movement Volume and Foot Position

Video timecode: 04:10 – 07:00

In addition to the emergence of silat movements, changes are also evident in the quality of power and volume of movement. Movements that were previously performed with a narrow range of motion become broader and more expansive. Footsteps become wider with strong support, creating an impression of strength. According to Subari Sofyan, "The lanangan section is indeed made with greater space and volume of movement so that the audience can see the change in character the dancer is embodying." (Interview, June 30, 2026). Based on observations, researchers found that changes in movement volume caused the dancers' bodies to no longer maintain the graceful impression seen in the initial stages of the performance. The use of greater force and steady footwork conveyed a more assertive character.

3.1.4.3 Fists and Changes in Expression

Video timecode: 4:10 AM – 7:30 AM

Character changes are also evident through the use of fists and facial expressions. While in the beginning, the fingers were more open, reflecting the characteristics of a female Gandrung, in this section, the hands are more often clenched, reflecting the various movements of a male. Facial expressions also change. The previously dominant smile

begins to diminish and is replaced by a sharper gaze and a more assertive and serious facial expression. According to Wanai, "When entering the male part, the expression changes so that the audience sees that the character is not just a female Gandrung, and this expression demonstrates the manly nature of the Gandrung dancer." (Interview, June 30, 2026).

Based on observations, the researcher found that these changes in expression reinforce the masculine reading that begins to be established through movement. Thus, the changes in expression do not stand alone, but support the overall change in movement quality. The addition of the false mustache does not return the dancer's body to a fixed male identity, but rather presents a new layer of identity that coexists with the feminine attributes still worn. This situation demonstrates that gender identity in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is fluid and continuously negotiated through various visual signs displayed.

3.1.4.4 The Fake Mustache as a Marker of Masculine Identity

Video timecode: 05:40 – 07:30

One of the most powerful visual elements in constructing character shifts is the use of a fake mustache. This prop is a distinctive feature of the Gandrung Marsan Dance and a marker of the dancer's biological identity as a man. According to Subari Sofyan, "The mustache is used so that people remember that this character is Marsan, a Gandrung Lanang (male Gandrung)." (Interview, June 30, 2026). Based on observations, the appearance of the fake mustache changes the audience's interpretation of the dancer's body. Although still wearing female Gandrung makeup and attire, the presence of the mustache serves as a visual sign that reminds the dancer that the character being performed is a man playing the Gandrung character. According to the researcher, the fake mustache functions as a sign that disrupts the feminine reading that has been established since the beginning of the performance. Its presence presents two identities emerging simultaneously: the female character through makeup and attire, and the male identity through the symbol of the mustache.

3.1.4.5 Accessory Changes as an Affirmation of Character Shift

Video timecode: 05:40 – 07:30

In addition to changes in movement and expression, character shifts are also evident through the use of accessories throughout the performance. In certain sections, there are changes in the use of props or accessories, such as the use of a fake mustache and the unfurling of the left sarong, which adapt to the development of the dramatic plot. These changes reinforce the character's transition from the female Gandrung to Marsan's role as the male Gandrung. Based on observations, the accessory changes not only serve as visual variation but also serve as markers of the changing identity being constructed in the performance. The change or prominence of certain accessories, namely the fake mustache and the jarik, helps the audience understand that the character being portrayed has undergone a change. According to the researcher, these visual elements are crucial in constructing a masculine reading because they work

together with the quality of movement, expression, and use of space to produce a recognizable character change for the audience.

3.1.5 Gender Negotiation Within the Dancer's Body

Research findings indicate that gender negotiation in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is not simply displayed through character shifts between female and male, but is manifested through the existence of two interacting gender codes within a single dancer's body. The male dancer's body is never fully read as either female or male. In the early stages of the performance, the dancer's body is predominantly read as a female Gandrung body. This reading is created through the use of feminine makeup, omprok (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), kemben (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), ilat-ilatan (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), bokongan (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), and jarik (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), which create a feminine silhouette. This impression is reinforced by the various movements of jejeran, ngiwir (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), sagah (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress), and kegol (a traditional Indonesian traditional dress). These movements are performed with a soft quality, small steps, flexible hand swings, subtle gazes, and friendly smiles. The overall visual and movement code directs the audience to accept the dancer's body as a representation of a female Gandrung figure, even though the dancer is biologically male.

This phenomenon demonstrates that no one gender identity is more authentic than another. From Judith Butler's perspective (1990), both femininity and masculinity are the result of repeated, stylized bodily actions that appear natural. Therefore, the body of the Gandrung Marsan dancer is not shifting from a female to a male identity, but rather demonstrating that both identities are equally social and cultural constructs that can be produced through bodily practices.

3.1.6 Synthesis of Findings and Limitations

This research shows that the practice of gender performativity in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is built through a series of bodily actions that are carried out consciously, rehearsed and repeated during the performance. Based on an analysis of body gestures, movement techniques, expressions, make-up, clothing, use of props, and changes in movement quality, it was found that gender identity in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is not determined by the dancer's biological sex, but is produced through performative practices which can be read by the audience as signs of femininity or masculinity.

Entering the silatan section, there is a change in the quality of movement which presents masculine codes. These changes can be seen through a greater volume of movement, a more open leg position, the use of stronger force, clenching of the fists, changes in facial expressions to become more assertive, and the appearance of fake mustache properties at the end of the performance. The presence of these various elements does not erase the feminine codes that have been established previously, because the make-up, clothing and ugliness are maintained until the end of the show. In this way, femininity and masculinity do not replace each other, but are negotiated simultaneously within one dancer's body.

These findings show that the Gandrung Marsan Dance does not just present two different characters, but shows how gender identity is formed through a process that continues throughout the performance. The dancer's body can be read differently as the scene changes. At the beginning of the performance the body is predominantly read as a woman's body, while in the silatan and ending parts a new reading appears as a man's body without eliminating all the female attributes that are still worn. This shift shows that gender identity is dynamic and depends on the visual signs and movements that are being displayed.

3.2 Discussion

The research results show that in the early part of the performance, the male dancers' bodies are predominantly represented as female Gandrung figures through the use of feminine makeup, omprok (comprok), Gandrung attire, jejeran (jeran), ngiwir (comprok), sagah (comprok), kegol (kegol) movements, gentle facial expressions, eye contact, and smiles. All of these elements create a feminine readability because they represent visual and choreographic codes that are culturally associated with female Gandrung characters.

Furthermore, in the middle to the end of the performance, a shift in representation occurs through the emergence of silat (martial arts) movements, changes in the quality of power, greater volume of movement, more open foot positions, clenched fists, changes in facial expressions, the use of fake mustaches, and the unfurling of jarik (clothes). These elements present masculine codes without eliminating the feminine attributes that the dancers still wear. Based on Judith Butler's gender performativity perspective, gender identity in the Gandrung Marsan Dance is not fixed or determined by the dancer's biological sex, but rather is produced through the stylized repetition of bodily actions. Femininity is constructed through consistent practice and repetition of movement, expression, makeup, and costume, making it appear natural. As the quality of movement, expression, and visual attributes change, the audience's gender reading shifts toward masculine characteristics. Thus, gender identity in the performance is dynamic, contextual, and continuously negotiated throughout the performance.

4. CONCLUSION

This section contains the conclusions of the results of the research conducted. In order for this template to be applied in an orderly manner, the author can download the template and save the file on a personal computer by changing the file name, then overlay the text in this template with the author's article, preferably gradually, without removing the subtitles, without changing the formatting.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Poppy Fara Dila: Conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data collection, formal analysis, writing original draft, visualization, and manuscript preparation. Setyo Yanuartuti: Supervision, conceptual guidance, validation, review and editing, and final approval of the

manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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