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An Analysis on the Role and Values of Dowry

The Motives Behind Traditional Marriage of Sikka Krowe Ethnic

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Abstract

Dowries often becomes an issue and may all up different perspectives in various cultures.However, it is important to understand that a dowry should be a symbol of consent and not a tool to create tension or reinforce inequality. This research aims to determine the perspective of University of Muhammadiyah Maumere students regarding the role and value of dowry among Sikka Krowe ethnic group. This research focuses on how the students view the role and value of the dowry in maintaining the social traditions and the religious values . This research employs qualitative research design. To find out overall perceptions, interviews was conducted. The informants were students of University of Muhammadiyah Maumere. The results of this research claimed that students' perspective about the role and value of dowry vary. Most respondents considered dowry to have a significant role in shaping their identity and moral values. However, there are differences in the way they implement dowry values in everyday life. Some students emphasized the importance of maintaining dowry traditions and values in all aspects of life, while others felt that some dowry values were becoming less relevant. The suggestion from this research is that it is necessary to integrate the role and values of dowry into the higher education curriculum to strengthen its understanding and implementation and that higher education must pay special attention to training in interpersonal skills and professional ethics based on dowry values. It is important to prepare students not only in terms of technical knowledge and skills, but also in terms of attitudes and behavior that reflect dowry values in their interactions with society.

Keywords: *Dowry, Education, Perspective, Traditional Marriage*

Introduction

In a broad sense, dowry is interpreted as a substitute for the sacrifices made by the woman's parents who have raised their child. According to Ridwan [1], dowry is a gift given by a prospective husband to a prospective wife as one of the conditions for carrying out a marriage. Furthermore, he said that giving a dowry occurs at the will of the future wife, but the dowry can be in the form of money, objects or services which incidentally depends on the parties as agreed between the two parties. According to the other experts, Puspitorini [2], dowry is carried out by giving items as gifts from the groom to the bride, of which the whole activities are often called as bridewealth. Based on the definition above, the writer defines dowry is a gift from the groom to the woman's family to respect the dignity of the woman.

The role and values of dowry varies from one place to another place or even from one clan to another clan in on tribe. Numerous research studies have investigated it across the island in Indonesia. The research conducted by Irfani [3] about the local traditions and culture of the Sundanese people in

terms of marriage found out that dowry in Sundanese society is given to women in the form of livestocks such as sheep, cows, and buffalo to be slaughtered and served as a feast. Another research was conducted by Busyro [4] about West Sumatra's Minangkabau people in Pariaman practice a unique 'dowry for groom' tradition and found out that 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman reflects the values of Muslim identity, such as adherence to religious teachings by finding husbands for daughters and maintaining a spirit of mutual aid, while also protecting the Minangkabau institution of ninik mamak (elders) and strengthening women's position as the true "monarchs" in Minangkabau society.

Meanwhile, there have been some researches about role and values of dowry in Flores island. The first research was conducted by Theresia [5] about dowry imposed by the people of Flores, especially Nagekeo Regency and found out that dowry in Nagakeo is given to women in the form of livestocks such as buffalo, cows, horses, goats, and chickens.. Apart from that, they also use gold, moke (wine) and betel nut. The study also found out the role and value of dowry as: firstly as a symbol of respects and rights in the family; secondly as a symbol of tradition; and lastly as a symbol of burden on the family which comprised of three parts, the first part is as a symbol of reward; second part as the concept of appreciation above is linked to the existence of rights; and third part as tradition.

Another research was conducted by Manuk [6] found out that dowry in Sikka is given to women in the form of betel nuts, banana, money, and moke (wine). The study also found out the role and value of dowry in traditional weddings in Sikka as: firstly as noble value of traditional marriage in the Sikka community which comprised of five parts, the first part as the expressing respect and appreciation for the human person; second part as a sign of respect for a woman's family; third part as a strengthening social relations; fourth part as a symbol of sacrifice and maturation of love and the fifth part as a customary norms.

Those aforementioned previous papers clearly showed some number of researches studied about the significant role and values of dowry to keep the pure of Sikka local values. Nonetheless, the results somehow were only used married man and woman as participants. The researcher strongly believe that it is highly significant and very important in manifesting the importance of dowry. This research aims to study students' the perspectives of the students in University of Muhammadiyah Maumere toward the role and value of dowry in SIkka-Krowe traditional marriage.

Material and Methods

This study employs a qualitative research approach, which aims to understand and explain the meaning of a phenomenon within its natural context [7]. The population of this study consists of all students at Muhammadiyah University of Maumere, with a sample of 30 respondents selected using the purposive sampling method. The sampling process was based on specific criteria, namely that participants must be students of Muhammadiyah University of Maumere and of Sikka-Krowe ethnic origin. Thus, the final sample consisted of 30 respondents who met these criteria.

The data collection technique utilized in this study was interviews. An interview is a structured interaction between two individuals to exchange information and ideas through a question-and-answer format, facilitating a deeper understanding of a particular topic. The collected data were then analyzed

using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which comprises four main components: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification.

Results and Discussions

As stated earlier, the purpose of this research is to find out the perspective of students of University of Muhammadiyah Maumere on the role and value of dowry in Sikka-Krowe ethnic traditional marriage. With that, the researcher found there are four roles in dowry and two values in dowry taken as a whole from the interview results.

A. Role of dowry

Based on the results obtained by researchers about the role of dowry in ethnic sikka krowe marriage, namely: maintaining tradition and cultural identity, strengthening family, Respect for women's families, and Love struggle. Further discussion will be presented below:

1. Maintaining tradition and cultural identity

Dowry is a way to strengthen and maintain cultural identity in the midst of strong globalization. This tradition brings unique cultural richness and should be preserved. This was also said by several informants, including as mentioned below:

> Dowry as an important element in maintaining tradition and cultural identity. we value belis as a way to honor ancestors and maintain the continuity of customs so that they do not become extinct and must be maintained (Y. P.N.).
>
> Belis is what our ancestors left us, so the way to honor it is to protect and preserve it so that it does not become extinct (G.F. G).

This is also reinforced in previous research. It is mentioned that "belis" creates an obligation that must be fulfilled because it is the result of a customary agreement that must be fulfilled "belis" is the result of a customary agreement that must be fulfilled and that has become a customary tradition [8].

2. Strengthening family

Dowry as a cultural tradition helps strengthen family ties. Through this practice, families demonstrate their commitment to maintaining and preserving the customs and cultural values passed down by their ancestors. This was also said by several informants, including as mentioned below:

> When a couple is married, the relationship between the families of the woman and man will be united even though they are from different tribes. This makes the dowry very important because it strengthens the bond between families (S. H.).
>
> When married, the families of these couples will indirectly unite and establish a binding family relationship (A. H. D.).

This is also reinforced in previous research. It is mentioned that dowry is a link between the two families of men and women that continues from one descendant to another [6].

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3. Respect for women's families

The dowry is a form of recognition and appreciation of the woman's parents who have raised and educated their daughter. It recognizes that raising a child requires great effort, dedication and sacrifice on the part of the parents. In addition to the parents, Mahar also recognizes the role of women themselves in the family and society. It is a form of respect for their role in maintaining the honor of the family and their contribution to everyday life. This was also said by several informants, including as mentioned below:

> The dowry is a form of appreciation to the woman's family for raising her child who will then live a life together until the end of life (M. M.).
>
> It is fitting that this dowry is given as a form of appreciation to the woman's parents and family who have raised her child (Y. Y.).

This is also reinforced in previous research. It is mentioned that dowry is a form of respect for parents for nurturing and raising their children who are then 'taken' by others and with the dowry, the girl does not deify herself before the man but appreciates him [6].

4. Love struggle

The dowry shows that the man is serious in his intention to marry the woman. The process of giving the dowry reflects a deep commitment and willingness to face challenges in order to gain the approval of the woman's family. By giving a dowry, the man and his family show their high regard for the woman and her family. This confirms that love is not just about feelings but also about concrete actions and social recognition. This was also said by several informants, including as mentioned below:

> To reach the stage of marriage requires such a hard struggle because this is how our love and loyalty will be tested (A. A. M.).
>
> When you want to get married, it's not an easy thing to say because it takes tremendous sacrifice to achieve it (F. N. I.).

This is also reinforced in previous research. It is mentioned that dowry as a symbol of sacrificial love, in traditional language can be expressed with the phrase “megu nulu, gu ngawun depo” (love first, goods follow later). This means that the value of humanity is prioritized even though material goods are also valuable [6].

B. Value of dowry

Based on the results obtained by researchers about the value of dowry in ethnic sikka krowe marriage, namely: Economic burden for young couples and adjustment to the conditions of the times. Further discussion will be presented below:

1. Economic

The amount of dowry demanded can be very high, often beyond the financial means of the young couple. This can cause great economic pressure on the man and his family, who must provide the funds or assets to meet the dowry demands. The size of the dowry is often influenced by the woman's social status, education and family background. The higher the status or education of the

woman, the greater the expected value of the belis. This can be an additional burden for young couples who may not yet be financially established. This was also said by several informants, including as mentioned below:

> Nowadays many young couples choose to avoid traditional weddings involving dowry and prefer simpler or modern weddings, this is due to the increasingly high demand for the price of dowry (L K).
>
> For now, traditional marriage using dowry is very burdensome for us because the value of the belis price is very high which makes young people avoid by getting pregnant (U. D. S.).

This is also reinforced in previous research. It is said that high price of the dowry demanded by the woman's family raises fears in the hearts of young people about their ability to fulfil the dowry based on experiences that have occurred in previous generations [9].

2. Dynamic

The value of the dowry needs to take into account inflation and the changing cost of living. As the cost of living increases, a dowry value that was once considered reasonable may now be too small or too large. Therefore, it is important to update the dowry value to keep it relevant to current economic conditions. This was also said by several informants, including as mentioned below:

> In today's world, there needs to be a review of dowries because the market prices for items such as bananas, horses, pigs and sarongs are very expensive (S. B.).
>
> With the high dowry and cases caused by dowry, it is necessary to review it so that it can have a good impact on couples who want to get married and still maintain traditional values in it (M. R. S.).

This is also reinforced in previous research. It is said nowadays animals are so limited that dowries are nominalized with money and some animals so that in nominal money the amount becomes so large [10].

Conclusion

This research explores University of Muhammadiyah Maumere students' views on the role and value of dowry in traditional Sikka-Krowe ethnic marriages. Some important points of this research. The role of dowry: maintaining tradition and cultural identity, strengthening family ties, respect for the woman's family, and love struggle. The value of dowry: economic (burden for young couples) and dynamic. The research on needs analysis has yielded noteworthy findings concerning the creation of instructional materials for speaking. This needs to be modified to meet the demands of students' future workplaces. Understanding the needs of students in terms of speaking learning development is crucial for teachers, as it allows them to create speaking materials that are specifically designed to meet their needs and provide an assessment of the speaking course lectures.

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