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The Reinforcement of the ‘Dowry for Groom’ Tradition in Customary Marriages of West Sumatra’s Pariaman Society

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Abstract: In contrast to the customary *mahar* or dowry system in typical Indonesian marriages, West Sumatra's Minangkabau people in Pariaman practice a unique ‘dowry for groom’ tradition, in which the bride pays a dowry to the bridegroom based on his social status. Payment is adjusted according to the social status of the man and is a must for the marriage to take place. This paper aims to examine the persistence and strengthening of the ‘dowry for groom’ tradition in the Pariaman Muslim community in West Sumatra by focusing on three main issues, namely the practice of ‘dowry for groom’ in the Pariaman community; factors that make the ‘dowry for groom’ tradition survive among Pariaman Muslims in the midst of the swift currents of modernization and globalization; and the mechanism of social reproduction of the 'dowry for men' tradition in the Pariaman community. The study is an empirical legal research using sociological theory as an analytical tool. Data is collected through interviews, observation and literature studies. The findings reveal that the reinforcement of the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman society is supported by several fundamental factors, including the widespread practice and support from the community, religious and traditional leaders, the local government, and the younger generation. The '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. Further research could explore more extensive meanings related to the 'dowry for groom' tradition.

Keywords: Reinforcement of traditions, social reproduction, dowry for groom, marriages studies

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Abstrak: Tidak seperti tradisi mahar dalam perkawinan pada umumnya, tradisi 'mahar untuk laki-laki' pada masyarakat Pariaman berlangsung dengan dibayarkannya mahar atas laki-laki oleh pihak perempuan. Pembayaran disesuaikan dengan status sosial pihak laki-laki dan merupakan suatu keharusan agar pernikahan dapat dilangsungkan. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji keberthanan dan menguatnya tradisi 'mahar untuk laki-laki' di tengah komunitas Muslim Pariaman Sumatera Barat dengan fokus pada tiga permasalahan utama yaitu praktik 'mahar untuk laki-laki' di tengah masyarakat Pariaman; faktor yang membuat bertahannya tradisi 'mahar untuk laki-laki' di kalangan umat Islam Pariaman di tengah derasnya arus modernisasi dan globalisasi; dan mekanisme reproduksi sosial tradisi 'mahar untuk laki-laki' di masyarakat Pariaman. Kajian tersebut merupakan penelitian hukum empiris dengan menggunakan teori sosial sebagai alat analisis, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi dan studi literatur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menguatnya tradisi 'mahar untuk laki-laki' dalam masyarakat Pariaman dilandasi faktor-faktor fundamental, seperti dukungan penuh masyarakat lewat praktik-praktik yang terus meluas, dukungan tokoh agama dan adat, dukungan pemerintah, maupun penerimaan generasi muda. Tradisi 'mahar untuk laki-laki' Pariaman dinilai memiliki nilai-nilai yang mencerminkan kepribadian Muslim, seperti ketaatan menjalankan perintah agama dalam menikahkan anak perempuan, semangat saling membantu, melindungi lembaga ninik mamak, dan memperkokoh posisi perempuan sebagai "raja" yang sebenarnya di Minangkabau. Penelitian dengan tema yang sama tetap dapat dilanjutkan untuk menemukan makna yang lebih luas dari tema serupa.

Kata Kunci: Penguatan tradisi, reproduksi sosial, mahar untuk laki-laki, kajian perkawinan

Introduction

In Indonesian marriages, the customary dowry payment is typically paid by the groom to the bride; however, among the Minangkabau people in Pariaman, West Sumatra, the bride pays the dowry to the groom.¹ This 'dowry for groom' tradition is not only applicable to marriages between Pariamanese couples but is also extended to women from other regions who marry Pariamanese men. The amount of dowry paid is determined by the social status of the prospective groom, which is based on his noble title, education, and occupation. This practice is a defining aspect of the Pariaman community, distinguishing them from other

¹ Zike Martha, "Persepsi dan Makna Tradisi Perkawinan *Bajapuik* pada Masyarakat Sungai Garingging Kabupaten Padang Pariaman.," *Biokultur* 9, no. 1 (2020), p. 15–31.

communities.² Significantly, this tradition is not restricted to the traditional rural communities but also holds relevance in the urban communities, which tend to be more modern.

A considerable amount of literature has focused on the phenomenon of 'dowry for groom,' and the majority of studies can be categorized into three main themes. Firstly, research has explored the practice of dowry payments for grooms in different countries, such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.³ These studies have analyzed various facets of dowry, including its fluctuating rates, its impact on women's lives, and its connection to family conflicts. Secondly, research has investigated the practice of 'dowry for groom' among Pariamanese individuals residing both within and outside of Pariaman.⁴ These works have primarily focused on describing the tradition and the underlying meanings of dowry payments to grooms. Thirdly, studies have examined the plurality and social changes occurring in the 'dowry for groom' tradition.⁵ Generally, these studies report minimal alterations to such dowry payment system. Furthermore, there has been limited academic attention given to exploring the reinforcement of this tradition in the face of modernization and globalization.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the perpetuation and reinforcement of the 'dowry for groom' custom within the Pariaman Muslim community of West Sumatra, despite its supposed deviation from Islamic principles regarding dowry. Despite the rapid influx of modernization and globalization, this tradition has taken root and continues to persist among the Pariaman community. To explore this phenomenon, three inquiries were devised. Firstly, how is the 'dowry for

² BiNews. "Gali Nilai Kawin Bajapuik Antarkan Yenny jadi Doktor Ilmu Hukum," *Binews.id* (2020).

³ Gaurav Chiplunkar and Jeffrey Weaver, "Marriage Markets and the Rise of Dowry in India," *SSRN Electronic Journal* (2021), p. 1–73; Prakash Chand Jain et al., "Marriage Markets and the Rise of Dowry in India," *SSRN Electronic Journal* 3, no. 1 (2020): 16–36; Muhammad Fauzan Ni'ami, "Studi Peraturan Mahar di Pakistan: Telaah Argumentasi Dan Tujuan Pembentukan," *Mahkamah: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 6, no. 2 (2021), p. 264–276.

⁴ Susi Delmiati, "Proses Pembayaran Uang Japuik dan Uang Ilang dalam Sistem Perkawinan di Nagari Manggopoh Kabupaten Agam," *IJOCE: Indonesia Journal of Civic Education* 1, no. 9 (2020): 22–27; Hafizah, "Tradisi Uang Japuik dan Uang Ilang dalam Sistem Perkawinan di Nagari Tandikek Kecamatan Patamuan Kabupaten Padang Pariaman," *Jurnal Kepemimpinan dan Pengurusan Sekolah* 2, no. 1 (2017): 17–26; Martha, "Persepsi dan Makna Tradisi Perkawinan Bajapuik"; Siti Morizana and Etmi Hardi, "Tradisi Bajapuik dan Uang Hilang Sistem Perkawinan di Kenagarian Kuranji (1970-2010)," *Kronologi* 3, no. 1 (2021): 243–51; S. Tanjung et al. "The Tradition of Manjapuik Marapulai in Minangkabau Culture". *KnE Social Sciences* 3, no. 4 (2018), p. 878–890.

⁵ Restia Gustiana, "Pluralitas Hukum Perwakinan Adat Pariaman," *Morality: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 7, no. 1 (2021): 22–51; Maihasni et al., "Bentuk-Bentuk Perubahan Pertukaran Dalam Perkawinan Bajapuik," *Sodality: Jurnal Transdisiplin Sosiologi, Komunikasi, Dan Ekologi Manusia* 04, no. 02 (2010), p. 169–92.

groom' practice carried out in Pariaman society? Secondly, what are the factors that account for the endurance of the 'dowry for groom' tradition among Pariaman Muslims amidst the rapid currents of modernization and globalization? Thirdly, what are the social reproduction mechanisms responsible for the perpetuation of the 'dowry for groom' practice in Pariaman society? These inquiries guide the discussion to elucidate the reinforcement of the 'dowry for groom' custom in Pariaman's Islamic community.

This article is based on the argument that the practice of dowry payment, which is typically the responsibility of men in Islam, takes on a different form in matrilineal societies like Pariaman. In Pariaman's marriage traditions, women are required to provide dowries to men in order to proceed with the marriage. Notwithstanding its location within the traditional Minangkabau region in West Sumatra, which is known for its adherence to Islamic traditions and boasts a plethora of *ulema* (Islamic scholars), Pariaman has not complied with Islamic guidelines regarding dowry. It might have been expected that the advancement of education, accompanied by modernization and globalization, would have led to changes in this practice, bringing it more in line with general Islamic teachings. However, the opposite is true; the practice has only been reinforced, even in Pariaman's more contemporary urban areas. This can be attributed to the strong support of a closely-knit community social structure and the involvement of the *ninik mamak* (elders) social institution, as well as the endorsement of local government and religious leaders.

The present investigation takes place in Pariaman, West Sumatra, the only Muslim region in Indonesia where women are required to offer a dowry to their future husbands. The study is an empirical legal research using sociological theory as an analytical tool.⁶ Data is collected through interviews, observation and literature studies. Three stages of data collection were undertaken. First, a desk review of relevant articles and news stories was conducted to create interview questions for the participants. Second, the researchers observed the customary practice of paying dowry for the groom, which is widespread in Pariaman, and documented the various stages involved in the dowry payment process, including the deliberations conducted between the *mamak* (mother's brothers) of both parties about the amount of dowry, the woman's proposal and submission of the dowry, the marriage contract, and the wedding festivities. Third, in-depth interviews were conducted, either face-to-face or through WhatsApp, to gather additional data as needed.

This research involved four categories of informants, namely customary leaders, religious leaders, academics, and the younger generation. The rationale

⁶ Soerjono Soekanto, *Ringkasan Metodologi Penelitian Hukum Empiris*, (Jakarta: Ind-Hill-Co, 1990).

for selecting these informants is explained in the following table.

Table 1: Types of informants

No.	Category	Significance
1	Customary leaders	Crucial in elucidating the significance of the practice of 'dowry for groom' in customary marriages in Pariaman, West Sumatra, and explicating the philosophical meanings underlying this tradition
2	Religious leaders	Hold a significant position in explaining the role of religion in dealing with traditions that do not fully conform to the teachings of Islam
3	Academics	Capable of explaining the relevance of traditional customs that persist despite modernization and globalization, which are expected to alter existing social conditions
4	Youths	Expected to offer valuable perspectives regarding the contemporary mindset of Pariaman's youth in response to the long-standing tradition of 'dowry for groom'

The collected data were subjected to a qualitative analysis utilizing the Spradley model,⁷ The collected data were subjected to a qualitative analysis utilizing the Spradley model, which encompasses four analytical methods. Firstly, domain analysis was performed to provide a general understanding of the practice of dowry in Pariaman. Secondly, taxonomy analysis was conducted to focus on the different components involved in the dowry payment process. Thirdly, componential analysis was utilized to examine the potential contrasts that may exist between domains, thus enabling the analysis of the emergence of the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman. Finally, theme analysis was carried out to investigate the interrelationships between domains and provide a comprehensive understanding of the practice of the 'dowry for groom' tradition.

Social Reproduction

Backer and Cairns identify two distinct historical traditions of social reproduction theory. The *first* focuses on the unequal educational relations resulting from capitalist inequality, while the *second*, rooted in feminism, emphasizes the role of women's unpaid labor in the reproduction of capitalism.⁸

⁷ James P. Spradley, *Metode Etnografi* (Translated by Misbah) (Yogyakarta: Tiarawacana, 1997).

⁸ David I. Backer and Kate Cairns, "Social Reproduction Theory Revisited," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 42, no. 7 (2021), p. 1–18.

In the feminist context, social reproduction encompasses structures, practices, and activities that sustain daily life through intergenerational regeneration and is closely linked to capitalist relations.⁹ This concept acknowledges the relevance of social reproduction in the market and state, where it is accumulated, regulated, and fought for, yielding diverse outcomes depending on the social context.¹⁰ This interpretation is based on Marx's notion of reproduction, which refers to both the social and biological reproduction of labor and creates a dichotomy between production and reproduction work that oversimplifies the reality of women's work.¹¹

As per the previously formulated concept, social reproduction pertains to the sustenance and regeneration of life.¹² In essence, this concept encompasses social production and reproduction, which historically emphasizes the functionalist facets of capitalist society.¹³ Hence, social reproduction serves as a concept that highlights the creation of human workers as an economic commodity whose labor is traded. Its purpose is to perpetuate these patterns of labor production. Within family gender relations, social reproduction pertains to the reproductive activities that include the upkeep, nurturing, and continuation of resources carried out in conjunction with unpaid domestic responsibilities. These duties are typically fulfilled by women who are designated as human domestic workers or homemakers.¹⁴ Women are deemed ideal if they fulfill their domestic roles, particularly in families that belong to the lower middle economy. Consequently, social reproduction is a gender construction of work activities that are integrated with a specific gender.

‘Dowry for Groom’

In the context of marriage, dowry is a demonstration of earnestness, preparedness, and affection through the proffering of money, goods, or services,

⁹ Alessandra Mezzadri, “Social Reproduction and Pandemic Neoliberalism: Planetary Crises and the Reorganisation of Life, Work and Death,” *Organization* 29, no. 3 (2022): 379–400.

¹⁰ Shirin M. Rai, Catherine Hoskyns, and Dania Thomas., “Depletion: The Cost of Social Reproduction,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 16, no. 1 (2014), p. 86–105.

¹¹ Jamie Winders and Barbara Ellen Smith, “Social Reproduction and Capitalist Production: A Genealogy of Dominant Imaginaries,” *Progress in Human Geography* (2019).

¹² Manuela Zechner and Bue Rübner Hansen, “Building Power in a Crisis of Social Reproduction,” *ROAR Magazine*, 2015, p. 1–11.

¹³ Lorena Lombardozzi and Frederick Harry Pitts, “Social Form, Social Reproduction and Social Policy: Basic Income, Basic Services, Basic Infrastructure,” *Capital and Class*, 2020.

¹⁴ Darmin Tuwu, “Peran Pekerja Perempuan dalam Memenuhi Ekonomi Keluarga: Dari Peran Domestik Menuju Sektor Publik,” *Al-Izzah: Jurnal Hasil-Hasil Penelitian* 13, no. 1 (2018), p. 63–76.

typically from the prospective groom to the bride.¹⁵ In many cultures, while dowry is considered an essential component of marriage, it must align with religious teachings.¹⁶ The act of giving dowry should not be viewed as a practice of buying and selling, which grants the husband special privileges over his wife, but rather as a husband's obligation and the wife's absolute right to receive appreciation. However, some cultures also practice the custom of women giving dowries to men.¹⁷ The dowry carries diverse meanings and intentions depending on the cultural context. In the Pariaman community, the tradition of providing dowry to the groom is regarded as a form of respect for the groom.¹⁸ In other cultures, giving a dowry to a man is seen as a means of achieving a higher social status, and the amount of dowry given depends on the groom's social standing, position, and value.

In several countries, including South Asian nations like Bangladesh and India, it is not uncommon to give a dowry to the groom in marriage.¹⁹ Scholars such as Basu and Kumar note that this practice of "buying" a husband through a dowry has become increasingly prevalent, with the value of the groom often dependent on factors such as education and occupation.²⁰ Ademiluka further suggests that dowry serves as a legitimizing mechanism for roles and structures within the institution of marriage.²¹ Not limited to South Asia, the practice of giving dowry to men is also observed in Bali, Indonesia. In Bali, the practice of *nyentana* involves giving a dowry to the groom so that he and his descendants can become successors of the wife's family clan, as prescribed in certain Balinese customs.²² According to this tradition, the woman often initiates the proposal and invites the man to live with her family, making the dowry not only given to the

¹⁵ Abd. Kafi, "Mahar Pernikahan dalam Pandangan Hukum dan Pendidikan Islam," *Paramurobi: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 1 (2020), p. 55–62.

¹⁶ Muhammad Iqbal and Sudirman L, "Mahar dan Uang Panaik Perkawinan Pada Tradisi Masyarakat dalam Pandangan Hukum Islam (Studi Kasus di Kelurahan Limpomajang Kecamatan Marioriawa Kabupaten Soppeng)," *Inspiratif Pendidikan* 9, no. 2 (2020), p. 128–148.

¹⁷ Rossella Calvi and Ajinkya Keskar, "Dowries, resource allocation, and poverty." *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 192, (2021), p. 268–303.

¹⁸ Martha, "Persepsi dan Makna Tradisi Perkawinan *Bajapuik*."

¹⁹ Shyamal Chowdhury, Debdulal Mallick, and Prabal Roy Chowdhury, "Natural Shocks and Marriage Markets: Fluctuations in Mehr and Dowry in Muslim Marriages," *European Economic Review* (2020).

²⁰ Alaka Malwade Basu and Sneha Kumar, "Bride Price, Dowry, and Young Men with Time to Kill: A Commentary on Men's Marriage Postponement in India," *Population Studies* 0, no. 0 (June 2022), p. 1–20.

²¹ Solomon O. Ademiluka, "Bride Price and Christian Marriage in Nigeria," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (2021).

²² IWWW Udytama, "Status Laki-Laki dan Pewarisan dalam Perkawinan *Nyentana*," *Jurnal Advokasi* 5, no. 1 (2015), p. 73–88.

woman but also to the man.

Customary Marriage

Marriage is not only a union between a man and a woman, but it also reflects the cultural values and norms of a particular society.²³ According to Carter, marriage is a contract between individuals based on the customary rules of the community.²⁴ In line with this, Brasher argues that customary marriage is a significant event that not only forms a bond between a man and a woman, but also creates a bond with the cultures of both families and their communities.²⁵ Therefore, customary marriage is a cultural expression that is established, organized, and implemented according to the values and norms of a particular culture.²⁶ As quoted by Naz et al., a marriage can be considered customary if it adheres to the traditional customs, which vary from region to region, including differences in ceremony, form, purpose, and legal regulations.²⁷

Customary marriages in Indonesia exhibit diverse forms and processions, with variations found in bridal clothing, wedding decorations, and marriage procedures, among others.²⁸ Generally, these procedures are governed by local customs and incorporate certain symbols that are interpreted according to regional rules. Different types of customary marriages are observed, including those that involve a proposal (*meminang* or *melamar*), those where the bride is taken away (*bawa lari*), elopements (*kawin lari*), and devoted marriages that aim to fulfill needs and perpetuate the family lineage.²⁹ Romania is another country where customary marriages persist, with each region featuring its unique forms and processes, including variations in the music used during the ceremonies.³⁰ Thus,

²³ Jojanneke van der Toorn et al., “In Defense of Tradition: Religiosity, Conservatism, and Opposition to Same-Sex Marriage in North America,” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 43, no. 10 (2017), p.1455–1468.

²⁴ Julia Carter, “Traditional Inequalities and Inequalities of Tradition: Gender, Weddings, and Whiteness,” *Sociological Research Online* 27, no. 1 (2022), p. 60–76.

²⁵ Melanie Sereny Brasher, “Filial Norms, Altruism, and Reciprocity: Financial Support to Older Parents in China,” *Journal of Population Ageing* 15, no. 1 (March 2022), p. 259–77.

²⁶ Jelena Korolova et al., “Transformations of Old Believer Wedding Rites in Latvia: The Case of Latgale,” *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* 15, no. 2 (2021), p. 159–78.

²⁷ Arab Naz et al., “Traditional Wedding System and Marriage by Elopement among Kalasha Tribe of District Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan,” *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (2015), p. 59–69.

²⁸ Iwan Pranoto, Stepanus Adi Pratiswa, and Nala Nandana Undiana, “Motif Burung Enggang Gading Pada Pakaian Adat Dayak Kanayatn Kalimantan Barat,” *Gorga : Jurnal Seni Rupa* 9, no. 2 (2020), p. 226–231.

²⁹ Tutiariani Nasution et al., “The Tradition of Markobar in Mangalap Boru ‘Picking a Bride’ as Advice for the Women Mental Health in Mandailing Wedding Ceremony,” *Gaceta Sanitaria* 35, no. S2 (2021), p. 5561–5563.

³⁰ Gabriela Boangiu, “The Symbolic Representations of the Young Family in the Region of Oltenia,” *Revista de Etnografie Si Folclor*, 2019.

customary marriage takes on distinct forms and processes across different regions.

The Reinforcement of the ‘Dowry for Groom’ Tradition in Pariaman

1. ‘Dowry for Groom’ in Practice

The tradition of 'dowry for groom' in the Pariaman community is regarded as a crucial practice that must be preserved. The amount of dowry paid is not predetermined, but rather determined by the mutual agreement of both families and is influenced by the social status of the prospective groom. The observation of 'dowry for groom' practice in Pariaman led to the collection of several interview excerpts which are presented in the table below, providing valuable insights into this custom.

Table 2: Statements Regarding ‘Dowry for Groom’ Practice

No	Informant	Statement
1	ISL (54)	<p>a. “After marriage, a man lives with his wife's family. A man's family cannot take his son to his wife's house until his wife's family has picked him up. If the picking up is not done, the marriage will not take place.”</p> <p>b. "For the woman's family, the picking up also indicates that the husband and his family are honorable people, that [the man] deserves to be their son-in-law and a "junjung" (supporting pillar) for their daughter. In other words, this provision is usually termed "the legume [vine] seeks the pole, the pole does not go looking for the legume [vine]."</p>
2	ADW (52)	“The handing back of the dowry to the woman is sometimes only in words and a [mere] regulation, but in reality, it is rarely fully implemented as such.”
3	DFA (50)	“This 'dowry for groom' can be as much as 100 gold (250 grams) if the man is a soldier or a police officer. As for ordinary man, the amount is not too much, only 5–10 million [rupiahs].”
4	SAZ (48)	"When I got married, I was picked up with or given a dowry of Rp50 million, because I was a scholar. This 'dowry for groom' system is actually not what outsiders [tend to] comprehend. The assumption that Pariaman men are "bought" is not justified. This is because the dowry will be returned to the woman the first time her family comes to visit the man's family after the marriage."

Table 2 shows that the 'dowry for groom' tradition in the Pariaman community reveals three crucial elements. Firstly, the groom is prohibited from visiting the bride's house until he is picked up by the bride's family with the agreed-upon dowry. Secondly, there is a regulation requiring the return of the dowry to the bride when her family visits the groom's house after the wedding ceremony. Thirdly, the amount of dowry paid by the bride is determined based on the social status, education, and occupation of the groom.



Figure 1: 'Dowry for groom' elements

Figure 2: The conferral of the 'dowry for groom'

Figures 1 and 2 provide visual representation of various aspects of the 'dowry for groom' tradition and the procedure for its payment by the bride. Figure 1 depicts a transparent dowry placed on a plate along with other items such as a knife, kris dagger, and staff. The meager amount of money handed over implies that the groom has a lower social status. In contrast, Figure 2 shows a larger and more elegantly packaged dowry, which is still transparent. This image suggests that the groom has a higher social standing. Nonetheless, both images demonstrate that every marriage in Pariaman necessitates the transfer of a dowry to the groom through a transparent mechanism that can be witnessed by many during the exchange ceremony.

2. 'Dowry for Groom' Reinforced: Evidence

The perpetuation of the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman's marriage culture is not without its underlying factors. While the community's strong support for the tradition is a common normative justification, this study's field data reveal additional reinforcing factors. The following interview excerpts substantiate this claim.

Table 3: Evidence of Reinforcement of ‘Dowry for Groom’ Tradition

No.	Reinforcement	Aspect	Impact
1	Widespread practice ³¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Occurs at all levels of society b. Produces positive outcomes for Pariaman society c. Increasing the strength of the family ties between the two parties d. Encourages a sense of collaborative effort and mutual assistance 	Constantly observed
2	Legitimization from religious leaders ³²	'Dowry for groom' does not contradict Islam.	It does not need to be in conflict with religion.
3	Legitimization from local government ³³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is part of the Pariaman community's identity that must be preserved and maintained. b. It helps preserve the <i>ninik mamak</i> institution. c. It can serve as a tourism attraction. 	Pariaman has its own prestige.
4	Support from the younger generation (ICL, 27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is a source of pride for the people of Pariaman to possess a unique tradition that sets them apart from other communities. b. The dowry can be prepared jointly by both the groom and the bride. 	This strengthens the authenticity of the tradition as it is not met with resistance from the younger members of the community.

Table 2 presents evidence that the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman society is reinforced by four indicators: its prevalence throughout the region, endorsement by religious leaders, recognition by the government, and acceptance by the younger generation. Moreover, this custom is not limited to marriages

³¹ BiNews, “Gali Nilai Kawin Bajapuik.”; SAZ (48 y.o.); ICL (27 y.o.)

³² Joko Nugroho. “Penjelasan Kemenag Pariaman Terkait Tradisi Pernikahan ‘Bajapuik.’” *Antara News Sumbar*, November 21, 2018.

³³ Ajo Pleno. “Kawin Bajapuik di Pariaman.” *Padang Today*, 2019.

between Pariamanese individuals, but also extends to women from other regions who marry Pariamanese men. An interviewee named DFA, who is 50 years old, commented on this matter:

“This tradition is so strong that there is no room for abandoning it. If the dowry is not paid, the marriage will not take place. To my knowledge there is no marriage in Pariaman that does not carry out this tradition. Modernization and globalization have not affected its existence. In fact, it seems to have been reconciled with Islam for a long time.”³⁴

The aforementioned quote is an effective illustration of how the 'dowry for groom' tradition is a crucial prerequisite in Pariaman's matrimonial custom. The tradition is firmly ingrained in the social fabric of Pariaman, thereby enabling its reinforcement. Additionally, the tradition is regarded as being congruous with Islamic teachings, rather than conflicting with them. Furthermore, despite the advancements in science and technology and the increasing exposure to diverse cultures, the people of Pariaman persist in maintaining the traditional practice, as attested by 48-year-old informant SAZ in the following statement:

“The significance of this tradition does not allow for any dispensation that would allow people to circumvent it; it must be strictly followed. To maintain the custom, it is common for the groom's family to assist the bride's family in fulfilling the customary dowry demands. There are also instances where the couple would save together to prepare for the dowry long before the wedding. Such an arrangement is frequent among the current generation of young individuals who have known each other for an extended period before tying the knot.”³⁵

In Pariaman, the practice of 'dowry for groom' is firmly established and widely accepted, with no opposition to its payment. In some cases, the bride and groom collaborate to secure the dowry. It is essential that the community is informed of the amount paid to the groom during the dowry exchange. The customary practice of matchmaking in Pariaman has undergone a transformation with the younger generation taking the initiative to find compatible partners on their own, thereby reducing the traditional role of the *mamak* in this regard. As a result, young couples often save together to prepare the dowry long before their wedding day. Thus, the absence of any provision for avoiding the payment of 'dowry for groom' in Pariaman marriages is evident.

³⁴ Interview with DFA, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

³⁵ Interview with SAZ, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

3. Social Reproduction Mechanism of 'Dowry for Groom' Practice

The perpetuation of the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman can be attributed to two factors, the first being its historical aspect, which is still veiled in obscurity. One 48-year-old informant identified as SAZ expressed the following statement:

“The 'dowry for groom' was started by a king in Pariaman who had a disabled daughter, so no one wanted to marry her. To find a husband for his daughter, the king was willing to pay whatever the male family asked for. This history has spread by word of mouth until now and there is no certainty whether this was the case or not.”³⁶

Another informant, 52-year-old ADW, added:

“There is no definite history to this 'dowry for groom'. I've found it to be like that for a long time, not even the old-timers I asked gave me any definitive data regarding the origin of the 'dowry for groom'.”³⁷

The aforementioned statements suggest that the origins of the practice of offering dowry to grooms cannot be substantiated by conclusive evidence. This ambiguity can be attributed to the longstanding existence of this custom in Pariaman, which has obscured its provenance. Nevertheless, a narrative emerged in connection with a historical figure in the region who faced challenges in securing a suitable match for his daughter due to her disability.

The second factor pertains to the customary beliefs that undergird the practice of 'dowry for groom.' The persistence of this custom can be attributed to its entrenched roots in society, bolstered by the reinforcement of other established norms. In conjunction with this notion, 48-year-old SAZ expressed:

“Among Pariamanese, there is actually no problem with this 'dowry for groom.' This is because the dowry payment is usually gathered through the contributions of the father's and mother's extended family. And in cases where there is no money available, it is permissible to sell the inherited land. [This practice is] in accordance with the Minangkabau proverb ‘*gadih gadang alun balaki*’ (a grown woman without a husband [is incomplete]).”³⁸

Another respondent, 50-year-old DFA, stated:

“*Aleh jalang* is a visit by the bride's family to the residence of the groom's family. There, the dowry is handed back in other forms, such as gold bracelets, gold necklaces, clothes, et cetera, sometimes more than what was previously

³⁶ Interview with SAZ, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

³⁷ Interview with ADW, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

³⁸ Interview with SAZ, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

given, so no one is disadvantaged in this tradition.”³⁹

Additionally, 52-year-old ADW expressed:

“The role of *ninik mamak* is still very important in Pariaman. 'Dowry for groom' is closely related to the existence of *ninik mamak*. If this tradition is eliminated, it will undermine the institution of *ninik mamak*, while *ninik mamak* is a structural group that ensures the establishment of traditions in all Minangkabau customary areas, including Pariaman.”⁴⁰

Based on the aforementioned quotes, it becomes evident that the custom of 'dowry for groom' is fortified by a cluster of complementary norms such as mutual assistance (*gotong royong*), the practice of returning dowry, and the institution of *ninik mamak*. The communal ethic of *gotong-royong* is exemplified in the coordinated efforts of both the paternal (*bako*) and maternal families to meet the dowry requirements of the groom. This pattern of collective action is not limited to a single marriage but recurs in subsequent marital arrangements across their extended kin network. Hence, the collective involvement of family members eases the burden of dowry payment. The tradition of returning dowry further bolsters the custom. The dowry that the bride provides to the groom is restored to her after marriage, although not necessarily in the form of money that was given but instead through valuable items such as jewelry and clothing that the bride requires.

The *ninik mamak* institution is the most prominent customary institution within West Sumatra's Minangkabau society, and is absent from other regions. The authority to make customary decisions is vested in the hands of these elders. Their pivotal role in the community is evident in the requirement that they be involved in all aspects of the marriage process within the Minangkabau community. This is due to the fact that the *ninik mamak* are regarded as the tribe's envoys or “prime ministers.” When it comes to proposing marriage, selecting the groom, transferring the dowry, organizing the wedding ceremony, and even during *menjalang* or making the post-wedding visit to the groom's family, people are expected to approach the bride's *ninik mamak*, rather than the bride's parents. This serves to underscore the pivotal significance of the *ninik mamak* institution within Minangkabau culture.

³⁹ Interview with DFA, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

⁴⁰ Interview with DFA, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.

The Reinforcement and Social Reproduction in Marriage Customs in Pariaman

In the context of Minangkabau culture, bringing the husband-to-be to the woman's family home symbolizes the worthiness of the groom and his family as a supporting pillar (*junjung*) for the daughter. This practice is known as "*kacang yang mencari junjung, bukan junjung yang mencari kacang*" (the legume [vine] seeks the pole, the pole does not go looking for the legume [vine]). This tradition contrasts with patrilineal societies where the wife is brought to the man's house and the husband's family picks up the wife-to-be. The pick-up ceremony serves as an honorable act for the man's family, as their son will reside with his wife's family.⁴¹ It also influences the community's perception of the man's family. Notably, the individuals who partake in the pick-up ceremony are family figures, such as the *mamak* (mother's brothers) and the *bako* (father's family), to indicate that the woman marrying comes from a decent lineage.

The custom of fetching the groom in the context of 'dowry for groom' and marriages in Pariaman is motivated by two reasons. Firstly, it is linked to the status of men within the prevailing matrilineal system in Minangkabau. In this system, women are considered the true owners of the heirloom property and are thus referred to as "*rajo ushalli*" or true monarchs, whereas men are not entitled to inheritance from their family's heirlooms and are seen as commoners.⁴² Therefore, it is not appropriate for a man to propose to a woman who incidentally is a "king" while they are just ordinary people. Therefore, it is deemed inappropriate for a man to propose to a woman who is considered a "monarch" while he is seen as a commoner. Some scholars, such as Joel S. Kahn and Hadler Jeffrey, criticize this matrilineal system as being incompatible with Islamic teachings followed by the Minangkabau people.⁴³ However, others, including Stark, refute this assumption by arguing that property in Minangkabau is divided into two categories: high heirloom property and low heirloom property. The inheritance rules for high heirlooms follow the matrilineal lineage, whereas for low heirlooms, such as earned assets, the inheritance follows the patrilineal rules prescribed by Islamic

⁴¹ Morizana and Hardi, "Tradisi *Bajapuik* dan Uang Hilang."

⁴² Abdul Mutolib et al., "Gender Inequality and The Oppression of Women Within Minangkabau Matrilineal Society: A Case Study of The Management of Ulayat Forest Land in Nagari Bonjol, Dharmasraya District, West Sumatra Province, Indonesia," *Asian Women* 32, no. 3 (2016), p. 23–49.

⁴³ Adri Wanto, "Sharia, Two Sides of the Same Coin: The Contradictions between Sharia and Adat (Case Studies of Minangkabau's Matrilineal and Land Tenure System)," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 25, no. 1 (2017), p. 1–40.

teachings.⁴⁴

The secondary cause pertains to the status of women as "monarchs" within their community.⁴⁵ As a monarch, it is essential to guarantee that the potential spouse is a fitting and deserving individual. Consequently, the *mamak*, who serves as the "prime minister" of the "small kingdom," endeavors to seek out a partner for his "monarch". In keeping with the position of women in Minangkabau, the *mamak* must ensure that the individual he selects as a potential partner is capable of serving as a protector for his niece while simultaneously safeguarding the inheritance along with his wife in the future. Once a suitable candidate has been identified, a pick-up ceremony is conducted to honor the "monarch's future husband". Despite potential divergences from the *khitbah* (proposal) process in Islam, this procedure is vital for preserving the women's integrity as true monarchs, possessors of lineage, and heirs.

In all traditional Minangkabau areas, including Pariaman, the process of selecting a groom-to-be is in practice. Pariaman is a customary region comprising Padang Pariaman Regency, Pariaman City, parts of Padang City, and parts of Agam Regency. The practice of groom pick-ups in Pariaman necessitates the provision of pick-up money (*uang jemput*), which is a strict tradition. If the pick-up money is absent, the wedding cannot take place. This custom has contributed to the perception that grooms in Pariaman are "purchased." The amount of pick-up money is determined by the man's social status, education, and occupation, and is commensurate with his level of prestige.⁴⁶ This cultural reality conflicts with Islamic doctrine, which specifies that the man must pay the dowry to the woman he intends to marry, not the reverse.

In the context of matrimonial customs, a parallel can be drawn between the dowry system in India and a similar practice found in other South Asian countries. Specifically, the burden of paying the dowry is placed on the woman.⁴⁷ This practice that may have originated from the caste system in India. This societal structure determined the amount of the dowry required to be paid by the woman's family. Ni'ami elaborates on this topic in her scholarly article discussing marriage

⁴⁴ Alexander Stark, "The Matrilineal System of the Minangkabau and Its Persistence Throughout History: A Structural Perspective," *Southeast Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 13, no. January 2013 (2013), p. 1–13.

⁴⁵ Dedi Arsa, "Perempuan Memberontak: Perlawanan Perempuan Minangkabau Terhadap Kolonialisme Belanda Di Sumatera Barat 1908-1942," *Kafa'ah: Journal of Gender Studies* 7, no. 1 (2017), p. 42–56.

⁴⁶ Delmiati, "Proses Pembayaran Uang Japuk dan Uang Ilang"

⁴⁷ Prakash Chand Jain, "A Legal Study of Dowry Cases in India," *Social Science Journal for Advanced Research* 2, no. 2 (2022), p. 1–5; Chiplunkar and Weaver, "Marriage Markets and the Rise of Dowry in India."

customs in Pakistan and Bangladesh, both of which have a Muslim majority.⁴⁸ This similarity can be attributed to the fact that these three countries were once part of a single administrative region, India, and as a result, customs that are prevalent in India have been inherited by their neighboring countries, and are practiced by both Hindu and Muslim communities. Despite the political partition that occurred resulting in the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh, the entrenched traditions of dowry payment continue to exert pressure when dealing with Islamic law, particularly in relation to the payment of dowries.⁴⁹

In Pariaman society, the official caste system that exists in India is not present. However, there is a concept of nobility, which typically determines the amount of invitation money given during weddings. According to Hafizah, male nobility titles in Pariaman are Sidi, Bagindo, and Sutan, and these titles are currently determined not just by aristocratic standing, but also by wealth, education, and occupation.⁵⁰ Martha argues that a man's decent work is a result of the upbringing provided by his parents, and thus dowry is seen as a form of compensation and appreciation for the groom's parents. Furthermore, when a man is selected as a husband, he is expected to leave his parents' house and fulfill his religious and traditional obligation to provide for his wife and children in the future. This responsibility may negate or decrease the income he has previously shared with his parents.⁵¹ Therefore, the preservation of the tradition of 'dowry for groom' in Pariaman serves as a form of social reproduction, as described by Zechner and Hansen.⁵² Through this practice, Pariaman society calculates the services and costs associated with raising children, as Lombardozi and Pitts suggest, thus indirectly fulfilling the functional aspects of capitalist society.⁵³

Regarding men who lack higher education or decent employment, they are still able to be picked-up as husbands, but with a reduced dowry amount. Typically, the dowry amount ranges from 1 million to 10 million rupiahs,⁵⁴ which is presented to honor the groom and his family. Additionally, for the bride's family, the picking up of a groom is a way to signal to the community that the chosen man is an upstanding member of his society. However, a couple of issues arise with

⁴⁸ Ni'ami, "Studi Peraturan Mahar di Pakistan: Telaah Argumentasi dan Tujuan Pembentukan."

⁴⁹ Muhammad Atho Mudzhar, "Hukum Keluarga Di Pakistan (Antara Islamisasi dan Tekanan Adat)," *Al-Adalah* 12, no. 1 (2014), p. 11–24.

⁵⁰ Hafizah, "Tradisi Uang Japuik dan Uang Ilang."

⁵¹ Martha, "Persepsi dan Makna Tradisi Perkawinan *Bajapuik*."

⁵² Manuela Zechner and Bue Rübner Hansen, "Building Power in a Crisis of Social Reproduction," *ROAR Magazine*, 2015, p. 1–11.

⁵³ Lorena Lombardozi and Frederick Harry Pitts, "Social Form, Social Reproduction and Social Policy: Basic Income, Basic Services, Basic Infrastructure," *Capital and Class*, 2020.

⁵⁴ Martha, "Persepsi dan Makna Tradisi Perkawinan *Bajapuik*"

this practice of providing pick-up money. Firstly, the male family's desired pick-up fee amount may not always align with the female family's willingness to pay, creating discord in the marriage negotiations. Additionally, those from outside Pariaman may perceive this custom as a form of "purchasing a husband," potentially complicating the process of finding a suitable partner. Secondly, there is a discrepancy between the regulation of pick-up money and its actual practice in the field.⁵⁵ According to Maihasni et al., two forms of payment are typically made during a marriage: pick-up money (*uang jemput*) and missing money (*uang hilang*). Although pick-up money may be a significant amount, it is ultimately returned to the daughter-in-law in the form of various items, including rings, clothing, household furniture, and other valuable goods.⁵⁶

Regarding *uang hilang*, it appears that the belief that Pariaman grooms are "bought" is justified in this form. However, Calvi and Keskar's rebuttal appears to be valid. In this process, there is no "buying and selling of men." Both the fetch money and the missing money are only provided as a courtesy to both parties.⁵⁷ According to Tanjung et al., the man feels honored as a guest who will be staying in his wife's home, and the wife feels flattered that her husband is of honorable descent and is a member of her extended family (*urang sumando*).⁵⁸

This longstanding tradition of 'dowry for groom' in Pariaman has no definitive origin, but has persisted in the community's marriage customs. Despite high levels of education and modernization, the tradition continues to gain popularity and has received official support from the local government and the local office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The Deputy Mayor of Pariaman views the dowry as a defining feature of the community and intends to preserve it⁵⁹ Additionally, the Head of the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pariaman City sees it as consistent with Islamic teachings and not up for debate.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, its specificity to the Pariaman community renders it unlikely to become incorporated into national family law, as its acceptance is not universally agreed upon.

Sultoni argues that the impact of modernization on society can be detrimental, and thus preserving local wisdom is essential to mitigate negative consequences. In the realm of social theory, the idea of modernization suggests that individuals should discard old traditions in order to keep up with changing

⁵⁵ Armaini, Riena, "Budaya 'Beli' Laki-Laki di Ranah Minang - Kompasiana.com." *KOMPASIANA*, June 25, 2015.

⁵⁶ Maihasni et al., "Bentuk-Bentuk Perubahan Pertukaran Dalam Perkawinan Bajapuik."

⁵⁷ Calvi and Keskar, "Dowries, Resource Allocation, and Poverty."

⁵⁸ S Tanjung, "Revitalization of Pasambahan Manjapuik Marapulai as Part of Maintaining Efforts of Minangkabau Culture," *Journal of Oral Traditions* 1, no. 1 (2019), p. 9–16.

⁵⁹ Ajo Pleno, "Kawin Bajapuik di Pariaman."

⁶⁰ Nugroho, "Penjelasan Kemenag Pariaman Terkait Tradisi Pernikahan 'Bajapuik.'"

times, as failure to do so may lead to being left behind in various aspects.⁶¹ However, Setyantoro challenges this notion, asserting that modernization can also eradicate traditional values that hold significant importance, particularly when it results in a negative way of life, leading to the loss of positive values inherent in such traditions.⁶² Prasajo advocates that the Minangkabau people can preserve their identity by practicing Islam appropriately and upholding its traditions.⁶³

However, modernization has actually impacted the marriage tradition in Pariaman. Ferianty notes that the marriage process has been simplified and shortened as a result of modernization. She also highlights that there are several philosophical values embedded in this traditional process, including the preservation of the authority of the *ninik mamak* institution in Minangkabau society, particularly in Pariaman.⁶⁴ Munir views the *ninik mamak* institution through the lens of Levi-Strauss structuralism philosophy that underpins the implementation of adat in Minangkabau. He argues that everything is interconnected and if something does not work properly, it will disrupt Minangkabau customs.⁶⁵ In terms of marriage, the *mamak* (the mother's brother) is responsible for finding a match for his niece. He feels ashamed if his nieces are found unsuitable for marriage. Therefore, after deliberating with the father (*urang sumando*), he took the initiative to go to the male family to ask to marry his niece. This is the institution of *ninik mamak*, which is very important in structuralist theory. If this is changed, there will be chaos in Minangkabau customs.

Conclusion

For a long time, there has been a common assumption that the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman, West Sumatra, is akin to the practice of "buying" a man to become a woman's husband, which would be in direct opposition to Islamic law. However, in reality, the custom practiced by the people of Pariaman in their marriage practices through the dowry given by the woman to the man actually embodies values that reflect the character of a Muslim. This tradition integrates several Islamic teachings, such as first and foremost fulfilling the religious duty

⁶¹ Agus Sultoni, "Islam Kejawan in Action: Melestarikan Kearifan Budaya Lokal Sebagai Upaya Alternatif Menangkal Radikalisme Agama Dan Pengaruh Modernisasi," *Momentun Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 8, no. 1 (2019), p. 13–26.

⁶² Agung Suryo Setyantoro, "Moodernisasi Di Tengah Tradisi Kraton: (Pasoekan Poeteri J.P.O. (1934-1942)," *Patrawidya* 22, no. 2 (2021), p. 139–58.

⁶³ Zainuddin Hudi Prasajo, "Caged in on the Outside: Moral Subjectivity, Selfhood, and Islam in Minangkabau Indonesia By Gregory M. Simon," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 1 (2016), p. 106–8.

⁶⁴ BiNews, "Gali Nilai Kawin Bajapuik."

⁶⁵ Misnal Munir, "Sistem Kekerabatan dalam Kebudayaan Minangkabau: Perspektif Aliran Filsafat Strukturalisme Jean Claude Levi-Strauss," *Jurnal Filsafat* 25, no. 1 (2015), p. 1–31.

of marrying off a daughter; second, promoting a communal support system in building a new family; third, preserving the crucial institution of *ninik mamak*, which plays a significant role in preserving Minangkabau traditions; and fourth, cementing the important position of women as the true "monarchs" in Minangkabau society. This paper reinforces previous research on the 'dowry for groom' tradition in Pariaman, particularly concerning the underlying factors that sustain the practice amidst modernization. Moreover, it identifies other values inherent in the tradition, including Islamic values that were once believed to be in opposition to the practice. However, this paper is limited by its informants, which only involve the perspectives of academics, customary leaders, religious leaders, the local government, and the younger generation. The viewpoint of the community members who act as the practitioners of the dowry practice (the prospective brides and grooms) has not been thoroughly examined, hence further research is needed to obtain a more comprehensive understanding. Likewise, further research on the same topic is open to other academics with the goal of obtaining a wider range of data.

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Interviews

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- Interview with ADW, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.
- Interview with DFA, in Pariaman, West Sumatera, 2022.