

Merarik Culture in Connection with Early Marriage and Divorce on Community of Sasak Lombok Island in the Province of West Southeast Nusa Indonesia

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Abstract

Merarik Culture (elopement) is a unique culture that is contained in the Sasak ethnic communities on the island of Lombok. This marriage culture begins with the theft of a girl at night to serve as wives without going through the application process. According Sasak, apply or ask a girl to serve as the wife is regarded as abuse the dignity of women in the sense as to equalize women like a pullet that could be asked. So if a Sasak bachelor wants to gain a girl then he should be able to get the girl at night despite the risks. It can be said that the ability to get a girl is a symbol of virility or the superiority of men. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between *merarik* culture (elopement) with early marriage and divorce patterns of life in society of Sasak tribe. This research was conducted in Central Lombok West Nusa Tenggara. This research method used qualitative methods with an ethnographic approach. Data were collected through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The target is the community leaders / traditional leaders, midwives or health workers, parents whose children are newly married and the newlyweds. The research found that in this *merarik* culture can lead to early marriage and divorce patterns of life that can further trigger the emergence of various forms of maternal health risks. The conclusion that can be drawn from the results of this study are *merarik* culture can influence the occurrence of early marriage and high divorce rate.

Keywords: *merarik*, early marriage and divorce

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1. Introduction

West Southwest Nusa Indonesia consists of two large islands of Lombok and Sumbawa Island. Broad-third of the island of Lombok Sumbawa Island but two-thirds of the population of *West Southwest Nusa* is located on the island of Lombok. Thus the density of the island of Lombok is much higher than the island of Sumbawa.

West Southwest Nusa province consists of three major parts, namely Sasak tribe that inhabited the island of Lombok, while rates for Samawa and parts Mbojo inhabit the island of Sumbawa. Each tribe has its own language, customs and culture.

Sasak on Lombok island culture embraces *merarik* (elope) to start married life. Meanwhile, Samawa tribes and Mbojo culture embraces engagement.

Figures early marriage in *West Southwest Nusa* province reached 51%. Which occurred largely in Lombok island inhabited by Sasak tribe. According to the National Family Planning Coordinating Board West Nusa Tenggara, it is said that NTB (West Nusa Tenggara) is an area that emergency early marriage. Two of the most emergency zone is Central Lombok and East Lombok (Lombok Radar April 26, 2015).

BPS - NTB noted that throughout 2014, from about 2.3 million women in West Nusa Tenggara, or more than 50% of them were married under the age of 20 years. The figure further put this region as one of the provinces with the highest cases of early marriage. In fact, nearly two percent of married women in NTB recorded at levels between 10-14 years of age. They were supposed to sit still in elementary school, they are willing to come out of school in order to build a new household (Wismaningsih, 2015).

According to Ratnaningdyah (2012), in West Nusa Tenggara, the proportion of marriages under 15 years amounted to 6.28% which is highest in Central Lombok regency. In Central Lombok regency number of early marriages contributed the most to the drop out rate of students. Wismaningsih (2015) says mental unpreparedness among boys and girls who married earlier trigger many problems. Their emotional immaturity pairing early age tend to be more irritable with each other. It sparked one of the parties is committing acts of violence against their partners, so that in such young couples divorce cases is still going on.

According to Ratnaningdyah (2012) as the Head of the Religious Court of Central Lombok district said divorce cases in Central Lombok regency are crazy. In just four months commencing from January until the month of April 2016 there has been a divorce case as many as 350 cases. Worse yet divorce is dominated by women. As many as 60% of cases handled has been completed and 40% are still in treatment.

Furthermore, according to Fathurrahman (2016), he says that the main cause of divorce in Central Lombok regency is the age when they married is still very early, in addition to socio-economic factors. With a very early age, psychologically they are not yet ready to play a role as husband and wife.

Volatility in their emotions, causing them to easily perform domestic violence that could lead to the occurrence of family disintegration ended by divorce (Radar Lombok, May 13, 2016).

Wismaningsih (2016) says that the number of early marriages on the island of Lombok is higher when compared to on the island of Sumbawa. Figures Lombok early marriage in the East (41, 56%), Central Lombok (40.80%), Lombok Barat (38.37%), North Lombok (36.57%) and in Mataram (26.32%). While details of the numbers of early marriage on the Sumbawa island is Sumbawa Besar (23.60%), Dompu (30.07%), Bima (22.86%), Sumbawa Barat (28.23%) and the City of Bima (23.49%) (Radar Lombok, April 12 2016). Besides, according to Syafruddin (2013) says that the number of divorces in the community of Sasak tribe on the island of Lombok is also much higher when compared with the tribe and the tribe Mbojo Samawa in the island of Sumbawa.

The big difference in the numbers of early marriage and divorce rates occurred among both islands inspire researchers whether socio-cultural factors between the two islands can contribute to this discrepancy. These factors that inspired the researchers to explore whether *merarik* culture in the Sasak ethnic communities on the island of Lombok can act as the social dimension of culture on the high rate of early marriage and divorce rates in tribal communities Sasak on Lombok Island.

We already understand that early marriage is a risk factor for maternal mortality rate. Which according to the results of the meeting entitled "Women Deliver" which is initiated by the Global Partnership to End Child Married in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2013, said that the maternal mortality under the age of 20 years five-fold when compared to women who are at the age above 20 years.

It is the factor that may play a role so that the maternal mortality rate in *West Southwest Nusa*(NTB) is still difficult lowered even though the local government has been implementing health programs to overcome it. In 2012, the maternal mortality rate (MMR) in NTB reached 370 / 100,000 live births This figure is much higher than the Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey in 2012 that is equal to 359 / 100,000 live births. AKI in NTB is also much higher than the target of the MDG's at 102 / 100,000 live births in 2015 (Wismaningsih, 2015, & Ratningdiyah. (2012).

2. Materials and Methods

This research is qualitative. Informants in this study consisted of the typical group, namely people who understand the ins and outs of Sasak culture, especially the *merarik* culture that traditional leaders and religious figures. But the research subjects are pregnant women, women who have divorced and parents whose children still have not been doing *merarik*.

Determination of informants determined snow ball which starts from the first informant a figure that is considered credible, then the next informant is determined based on the information from the first and so on to determine the next informant. If in the process of collecting data is no longer considered a variation of information (information already saturated), then the process of data collection is stopped.

Data collected included primary data and secondary data. Secondary data will be collected by literature review or documentation. Primary data will be collected by focus Group Discussion (FGD), in addition to strengthening the legitimacy information will be followed by in-depth interviews, observation and participant observation (triangulation). In-depth interview is a major technique in exploring the information in this study. The tools that will be used is a sound recording device used to record the conversation during the interview or during the FGD takes place. The instruments used in the collection of information are the researcher who assisted with interview guides and guidelines FGD.

Data and information collected, analyzed continuously from beginning to end execution of the study. The trick transcript result data verbatim from recorded interviews, the results of focus group discussions, side notes, field notes on the results of observations conducted prior to clarify filtering based on the characteristics and type, then do a summary in the category, which explains social phenomena that emerge from the ground realities.

3. Research Result

3.1 Reason of Merarik Cultural Preservation

The main reason why people keep the Sasak *merarik* tradition are:

First: The symbol of virility (superiority) men, *merarik* provide an opportunity to the youth, to be married, to show manhood. The nature of the male figure is a symbol of the husband who is responsible in any condition to the survival of his family. As the results of focus group said:

..... *"The man who did merarik has established himself as a formidable. This is because the perpetrators merarik, as stipulated in Sasak, must be done at night are to face any risk. If the courage to face risks as it meant a man had been considered established enough to protect themselves and their families from all sorts of dangers".*

Second: The prestige of women in their families. *Merarik* Culture in community of Sasak tribe is believed to be one way to uphold the dignity of women. On the basis of this belief, a girl who was rushed no way be considered as a breach of contract (violation of rules) by the family of man over woman's family. A girl who was rushed was considered to have certain privileges, thus attracting the hearts of men. Consequently the woman's family feels insulted, if the marriage is not done by her maiden *merarik*. As the result of FGD, an indigenous leader said that:

.... *"The women in view Sasak very valuable. Therefore should not be requested or proposed. When*

asked as to equalize women like asking a chick. Therefore, to obtain necessary struggle. Pejuanglah only men are eligible to marry a woman”.

From the excerpt above shows that women are more likely to marry by *merarik* (elopement) of the proposed.

3.2 Social Impact of Merarik Culture

Social and cultural impact of *merarik* according to the results of this study are as follows:

a. Early-age marriage

Early marriage pointed out as a risk factor for maternal mortality. Therefore, the Governor of *West Southwest Nusa*(NTB) has launched a movement maturing age of marriage. However, the movement never succeeded. This is in accordance with the opinion of a public figure who says:

..... "We may not be able to control the age of marriage of our children, because we can not predict when our children will be taken / stolen property in connection with *merarik* culture which has been embraced by the people Sasak tr

In addition, the rise of early marriage may affect the search for aid delivery (health care seeking behavior), pregnant women ages still Young, difficult decisions on where to look for aid delivery if a health worker or healer. Most of them obedient to the decision-in-law / husband whose mindset is still traditional, so many of them delivered in the TBA. This, according to interviews with a nursing mother said:

..... I got married when I was 14 years of age, it was only the second grade MTs, now that I am 19 years old and had given birth three times, the last 7 months old. All three gave birth in the kampong quack here at the instigation of the mother-in-law ".

Thus a young mother with relatively low education is still very dependent on the judgments / decisions of parents in terms of search aid delivery (health care-seeking behavior). Fact of high rates of early marriage is recognized also by the village officials like the head of the hamlet. Depth interviews with one of the village head said:

..... At present, the wedding in the community carried out by officers from the local KUA. When the person who will be married are not old enough or get married while still in school then the officer of KUA would not come. With so forced them lawfully series. So later when the couple had enough age appropriate new Marriage Act they trial to obtain the marriage certificate ".

A humanist in Central Lombok and is one of the staff of Central Lombok District Health Office said that:

..... "Early marriage among school children are difficult to overcome despite having made a deal to give sanctions or penalties for those who run school-age children. Big penalties vary in each school there are 1 million, there were 2 million, and there is also up to 3.5 million depending on the agreement of each school committee. The existence of such fines can not prevent early marriage in school children.

From the recognition of one of the parents (parents) that his son married while still in school at an SMA III Praya Central Lombok district said:

..... "I am very disappointed for both my children were married at grade three and grade two in SMAN III Praya, I regret very much because both of my children were still getting ringking I from elementary through high school. I really wish they could be educated to degree. Moreover, both can be a member Paskibraka in Central Lombok regency. I was struggling with his mother at any price because they want to see them become highly educated people. But what happens turns out the two of them were taken while still in school. I was disappointed, even during the week I was a retreat in the Great Mosque Praya to cool down. I am almost crazy great. Were it not for our indigenous (merarik) maybe I'll go to the police so that they are in prison ".

From the excerpts of the interview above shows that the merarik culture make difficult for parents to control their children of the marriage age. Inevitably he was forced along with his extended family to accept this reality despite the sidelines of a sense of disappointment, because it is already in accordance with the customary (mearik culture) which the existence is recognized by the Sasak community on Lombok Island.

b. Divorce

Syafruddin (2013) says that the most impressed of Sasak ethnic communities from the perspective of an outsider (out of cider) is the fragility of the institution of family ties they have. Many of them were married at an early stage without preparation. Generally they do not have a job and still ride in an old folks home. Their dominance in-law makes brides are able to adapt when entering new family. Here is the catastrophe began. Women newlyweds could not tolerate the treatment-law and her husband that ended in divorce.

The truth of the statement delivered by the Syafruddin besides supported by the data issued by the Chairman of the Religious Central Lombok District, also supported by some of the interviews. One of them is the result of interviews with (Emy) who had experienced divorce as follows:

..... I got married at the age of 17 years at that time in grade 3 SMK Darul Ponpes Habibi. Paok Tawah Baok Bunut Village. Once I got married I ride the same laws. Murtua woman I have never treated me as a son in law as it is. He always scowls seems to disagree with me as a daughter. I do not feel eat- drink daily look at his expression. I am especially distressed I was pregnant. Each of my behavior as if nothing pleasing in his eyes. I can not bear to stay there. As soon as my son was born, and after only 3 months old I ran away and asked for a divorce.

In connection with the early age factor, hence the reason they divorced his wife sometimes does not make sense. A husband divorces his wife addendum. He pledged addendum to his family that if he so go to Sumbawa Island to look for work then he will divorce his wife by three divorces. The husband turned out to have so went looking for work to the island of Sumbawa. Eventually his family immediately drove wife who divorced earlier to his parents' house. The results of the interview as follows:

..... "I was married at age 15 while still a class II MTs. Once I was 7 months pregnant, I divorced without me know my fault. Suddenly one day I forgot the date, several men near the family my husband said, let me among you go home because you've been divorced three by the husband. I was stunned, what wrong I get here, and why my husband never said so directly to me? They answered later I love to know the answer. I feel sad and cry why my husband really have the heart like this when I was 7 months pregnant. At that time, I actually started to feel happy because my in-laws had started to accept me as a son. Once home my parents then the person who drove me was telling that I have been divorced three through addendum. "

The main cause of divorce in Central Lombok regency is age when they married is still very early, in addition to socio-economic factors. With a very early age that, psychologically they are not yet ready to play a role as husband and wife. Volatility in their emotions, causing them to easily perform domestic violence, such as hitting or mistreat his wife. (Radar Lombok, May 13, 2016).

4. Discussion

4.1. Merarik and Early Marriage

Based on the results of this study, researchers found that *merarik culture* is actually not advocate early marriage. Formerly, the Sasak people rarely marry early, although since ancient Sasak culture embraces merarik. This happens because the former Sasak people still adhere to the signs used as guidelines to regulate patterns of life and behavior of the Sasak people, which according to one traditional leaders Sasak signs are summarized norms and values upheld by society Sasak tribe. But because of the changing times in today's global era, norms and noble values are rarely ignored again

and have been displaced by the changing times. With advances in information technology today, people can see events that can arouse sexual desire.

Nugraha (2015) said that at the age of 13-15 years for males and 12-14 years for women, physical changes and emotions. They entered a period called puberty. At this time they became interested in the opposite sex. Pleasures of love and sex is offered by the information media (magazines, movies, telenovelas, internet) led to their sexual fantasy flourish. This condition often makes them want to get married.

Merarik culture that does not require the consent of parents of the bride make difficult parents to control their children's wedding age, so *merarik culture* this could increase the chances of early marriage

Based on the description above can be described linkages between *merarik culture* with advances in technology weapons in the era of globalization is the rise of early marriage on society Sasak:

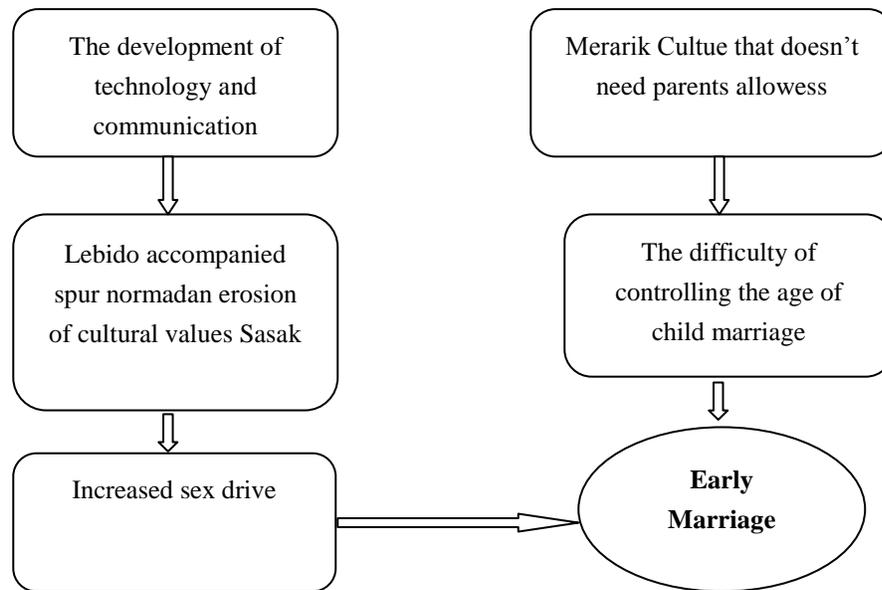


Figure 1. Synergy Between *Merarik* Cultures and the rise of Technological Progress Against Early Marriage

From the figure it can be seen that although customs, *merarik culture* does not recommend or not to legalize marriage, but because at this merarik culture, a child does not need to ask his parents' consent, so parents are difficult to control his marriage age. Thus it can be said that the *merarik culture* is one of the social and cultural factors that can increase the chances of early marriage.

4.2 Merarik and Divorce

From the foregoing description mentioned that merarik is one of the social and cultural factors early marriage. Early marriage creates a condition in which both sides of both husband and wife are in a very unstable condition because they are not ready to face physical and psychological vagaries of married life.

In addition to low socioeconomic status, especially on her husband, making her husband could not bear the responsibility to provide maintenance to his wife and children. Husbands difficult to get a decent job because they do not have sufficient competence, because on average they get married at an early age. As a result, many of those who go abroad as migrant workers to leave his wife and children. This is where it starts to social problems such as infidelity can lead to divorce.

As described by Fathurrahman (2016) that divorce cases in Central Lombok regency are crazy. In just four months commencing from January until the month of April 2016 there has been a divorce case as many as 350 cases. The number of divorce cases through the court formally true religion is the culmination of an iceberg. However, the real number of divorces actually happening in the community is much higher, because divorce by the Sasak people generally are done illegally. (Syafurudin, 2013).

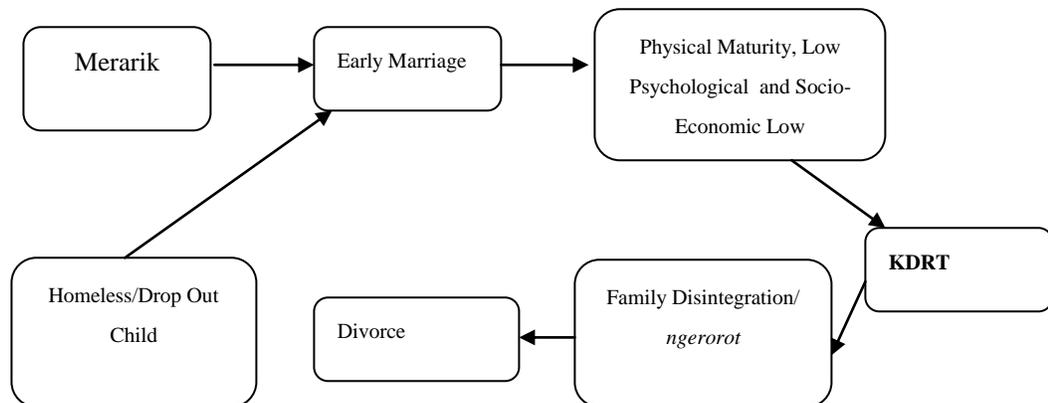


Figure 2: The Relationship Between *Merarik* And Divorce

Ratnaningdyah (2012), said that the divorce rate in NTB is high caused by the high to the number of early marriages. Children who marry early are likely to have emotionally unstable so easy to commit

domestic violence (domestic violence). Trends in domestic violence cases in this area continues to increase from year to year, for example, in 2005 recorded 779 cases, in 2006 recorded 1,182 cases and in 2008 as many as 3,938 cases. But like an iceberg figures are only about 10% of the reality on the ground.

What is said by the Ratnaningdyah, was in line with the results of research by Nasrullah, M., Rubeena, Z & Muhammad, Z.Z (2014) in Pakistan which says that couples who marry early (<18 years) tend to have controlling behavior. This sort of behavior is generally followed by emotional violence that subsequently prone to domestic violence. Learn as follows:

..... "*Child marriage practice in Pakistan is Significantly associated with controlling behaviors and spousal violence by husbands Compared with adult marriage, even after controlling for social vulnerabilities (women's economic status, education, ethnicity, and place of residence) "*.

So the results of the study stated that women who marry early often experienced physical, social and mental severe. This could lead to the disintegration of families that could lead to a divorce.

5. Conclusion

Based on the description above can be concluded that:

1. *Merarik* culture (elopement) on Sasak in Lombok Island can play a role as one of the social and cultural factors the high rate of early marriage.
2. The rise of early marriage may be the cause of the high incidence of divorce. Thus it can be said that the *merarik culture* (elopement) can act as a social and cultural factors the high rates of early marriage and the life patterns of marriage and divorce in the community of Sasak tribe in the Lombok Island, especially in Central Lombok *West Southwest Nusaprovince*.

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