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## Proceedings Article

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R. Rostiana, Zamralita Zamralita, Erik Wijaya

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## Proceedings Article

# Phenomenology Study on Young Women of Batak Toba in Jakarta About Sinamot

Sonia Veronica<sup>1</sup>, Suzy S. Azeharie<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Communication, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author. Email: suzya@fikom.untar.ac.id

## ABSTRACT

The Toba Batak tribe is one of the Batak sub-tribes in Indonesia. This tribe has a marriage tradition that is still maintained by the community, namely sinamot. Sinamot is the legal binding dowry of a marriage. The woman's family usually determines the number of sinamot and then communicates to the male family in the marhata sinamot event. The purpose of the study was to find out the experiences of young Toba Batak women about sinamot. The theory used in this research is the theory of communication, culture, and phenomenology. These experiences are reviewed from a phenomenological perspective with qualitative descriptive research methods. This phenomenological research reveals the experiences of young Toba Batak women living in Jakarta about sinamot. Research data was obtained through in-depth interviews, observation and literature study. The results of the study revealed that the experiences of Toba Batak women in Jakarta about sinamot were obtained from the primary environment, namely through their parents, their participation in marhata sinamot events and association with people from other cultures. This experience strengthened their understanding of the changing meaning of sinamot, namely that sinamot as a traditional tradition must still be maintained but adapted to the abilities of the men. Suppose the man is unable to pay the sinamot. In that case, the marriage is still carried out by making the sinamot payment at a later date.

**Keywords:** Toba Batak Women, Sinamot, Phenomenological Studies

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The diversity of ethnic groups in Indonesia is unique because within one ethnic group there are still sub-tribes. One example is the Batak tribe which has sub-tribes Simalungun, Pakpak, Karo, Angkola, Mandailing and Toba [1]. The Batak tribe is known as one of the tribes that still holds its culture relatively close to this day. Marriage for the Batak people in general and the Toba Batak in particular is a new kinship system that not only binds a man and a woman but also binds the families of both parties. The kinship ties are known as dalihan na tolu, namely the three pillars in the Batak custom of having, namely somba marhula-hula, manat mardongan tubu/dongan sauntunga and elek marboru.

Marriage in the Batak tribe as a forum for the formation of kinship ties dalihan na tolu passed down from generation to generation from one generation to the next until today. Soekanto, Soerjono explained that this process is known as tradition [2]. As a tradition, it is a must that a Toba Batak marriage will be perfect if it is carried out both religiously, nationally and customary. Traditional marriages can only be carried out if the groom has submitted or paid a dowry called sinamot. Sinamot is a

dowry or legal binding honesty of marriage [3]. Sinamot is not only a dowry in marriage, but also a sign that the man is able and willing to fulfill the woman's request for sinamot. In other words, the sinamot payment is official proof of the male family fulfilling the dowry that has been mutually agreed upon, be it from a male or female family [4].

Sinamot implicitly shows that marriage in the Toba Batak community is a big event with a large cost [5]. It's not surprising that sinamot is a sign that if you want to get a woman or a life partner, you need money or expenses. Marriage for the Toba Batak tribe is not only a big ceremony but also a big responsibility on the shoulders of the children [5].

Febriyeni and Pasaribu, stated that the large number of sinamot requested by women's families, generally based on education level and position/position (women and family) currently raises new problems for the Toba Batak people. How not, the large number of sinamot makes some men object that they are not even able to fulfill the amount of sinamot. This problem creates a new opportunity for "unable" families to find and choose women or men from other tribes, just because of dowry or sinamot [6]. Simanjuntak in Tience Debora Valanetina and Wisjnu Martani, said that the Toba Batak people consider scholarship to be an honor that can raise a person's social level [7].

In line with the times, there was a shift in the meaning and function of this sinamot. The shift occurred due to changes in residence (overseas). Manik in his research stated that sinamot for the Toba Batak people would immigrate to the Surabaya area. He argued that the sinamot culture would be carried out in making sinamot a bond between clans. [5] Naibaho and Putri, stated that the Marhata Sinamot event for the Toba Batak tribe in Bandung was combined with the Martumpol (fiancee) day to streamline time due to busyness in the city [8].

According to Alo Liliweri, the change is due to the openness of each culture to the positive values of other cultures causing changes to the way of thinking, feeling and acting towards the culture of each party [9]

It is interesting to see how young Toba Batak women in Jakarta experience sinamot. Because these young women live overseas and in cultural pluralism. This phenomenon about sinamot is the reason for the writer's interest to research about sinamot through phenomenological studies. Brouwer in O. Hasbiansyah et al., revealed that a phenomenologist will be very happy if there is a problem or symptom (phenomenon). Paying attention to matter is a prelude to the promise of all scientific activities [10] (3) Phenomenology emphasizes interpretation to gain an understanding of the existential structure of a phenomenon and then the phenomenon appears as itself [11]

This study describes how the experiences of young Toba Batak women in Jakarta about sinamot? Therefore, the title of this research is "A Phenomenological Study of Young Toba Batak Women in Jakarta About Sinamot"

## **2. THEORETICAL BASIS**

### **2.1. Intercultural Communication**

#### **2.1.1. Communication**

Humans cannot be said to interact socially if they do not communicate in a way or through the exchange of information, ideas, ideas, intentions and emotions expressed in symbols with other people [9].

Richard West and Lynn H. Turner in Mochamad Rizak, said communication is a symbol to give and interpret meaning in their part of the region [12].

In the context of sinamot as the customs of the Batak people in general and the Toba Batak in particular, it cannot be separated from communication. The whole process of marhata sinamot is a communication process in the form of a series of negotiations between the male and female families. Therefore this communication theory is important in this research penelitian

#### **2.1.2. Culture**

Samovar, Porter & McDaniel in Suzy Azeharie et al., explain a main characteristic of culture is the learning given from legends, tales and myths. [13]. Meanwhile, William Haviland stated that the process of passing on culture from one generation to the next is called enculturation [13].

Giring et al., explained that culture is the most concrete manifestation of human response (interaction) to the surrounding environment and the changes that occur. [14]. Furthermore, Giring et.al, revealed that culture is simply understood as a "way of thinking" or "way of mind" of humans. This way of thinking forms conclusions on various phenomena and problems faced by humans. [14].

Sinamot as a marriage tradition in the Toba Batak community has been going on for a long time and is a hereditary legacy to this day. The process of transmitting the sinamot tradition from one generation to the next is a cultural process called enculturation.

#### **2.1.3. Intercultural Communication**

Charley H. Dood in Alo Liliweri et al., (7) reveals that intercultural communication includes communication involving communication participants who represent personal, interpersonal or group representatives with an emphasis on differences in cultural backgrounds that affect the communication behavior of participants. 6) and recipients of messages with different cultural backgrounds [15]

Andrea L. Rich and Dennis M. Ogawa in Alo Liliweri et al., suggest (7) that intercultural communication is communication between people of different cultures, for example between ethnic groups, ethnicities, races and social classes [15]. (13) Culture influences communication and in turn, communication determines, creates and maintains cultural reality. In other words, culture and communication are like two sides of a coin that are inseparable and influence each other [16].

Edward T. Hall in Alo Liliweriet, (11) states that it is very important to study cognitive theory and its implications for the communication climate because from there one can know the thoughts, words and actions of an object. Because a person (11) individual will contain his experiences, views, opinions, ideas or ideas about objects, about a world reality [15].

### **2.2. Toba Batak Tribe Culture**

(12) The Batak tribe adheres to a patrilineal kinship system, namely the lineage of the husband. According to Bayral Hamidi Harahap and Hotman M. Siahaan in Adison Adrian Sihombing et al., (2) the Toba Batak people are familiar with the symbol of the number three and the thick trinity coloring their daily life. Numbers have their own meaning, are rich and contain mystical-religious elements [18]. (2) The number three has a very special meaning for the Toba Batak people. This number affects the life and way of thinking of the Toba Batak people. This can be seen in the

understanding of cosmology and his philosophy of life [18]. It is not surprising that the marriage of the Batak Toba tribe will be perfect if there are elements of religion, nation and customs.

**2.2.1. Sinamot in the Toba Batak Tribe Marriage**

The kinship system of the Batak tribe is carried out in a patrilineal manner. The Toba and Batak tribes generally know what is called a clan, because the clan is one of the identities of the Batak people which is the main joint in the kinship system [17]. (2) In daily life both with God, ancestors, close family, neighbors, relatives and fellows have been arranged in such a way in the philosophy of dalihan na tolu [18]

Marriage in every society is considered sacred because it must be respected and upheld. The same thing happened to the Toba Batak people. (4) exogamous marriages are prohibited because they are considered one clan (one brother) [19]. The ideal marriage for the Toba Batak people is a marriage between a man and the daughter of his mother's brother or boru ni bonena (pariban). Generally, parents in the Toba Batak community always recommend this pariban marriage, but if this suggestion does not work, the parents generally succumb for the happiness of their children [5].

(1) The stages or processes carried out in these two types of ceremonies are basically the same, only distinguished by who is the host of the traditional marriage ceremony. In the sale sale, the marriage is carried out at the residence of the woman, the gold or sinamot is paid by the man in a larger amount for this kind of ceremony. While the selling bet is a marriage that is carried out at the residence of the man, usually less sinamot than selling sale [5]. (3) Marhata Sinamot is one of a series of wedding events that becomes a cultural identity [8].

Sinamot is a dowry or legal binding honesty of marriage because sinamot is a sign that (18) the male family officially comes to the female family to discuss the wishes of their child and also officially the male family fulfills the dowry (money substitute for mother's milk) that has been paid. mutually agreed upon, be it from a male or female family. [4]

Vergouwen in Manik argues that (6) in the marhata sinamot event, the male family and the female family meet at a predetermined place with the topic of discussion on determining the dowry which will be met by the male family in marriage [5].

This kinship bond is known (12) under the pretext of na tolu. Dalihan na tolu is a Toba Batak traditional kinship system in which there are three pillars that support a marriage. Vergouwen in Manik Simanjuntak et al. stated that (6) in the marhata sinamot event the male family and female family meet at a predetermined place with the topic of discussion determining the dowry which will be met by the male family in marriage [5].

(1) Sinamot is the basis that must be fulfilled and cannot be eliminated in a series of traditional Batak Toba marriages. So this can hinder a marriage, just because the number of

sinamot is not as desired. As a result, families are selective in choosing a mate for their children. Being selective here does not mean that sinamot for these families is unimportant, but indicates that there has been a change in the function and purpose of sinamot. That the main reason is for the happiness of his children.[5].

**2.3. Phenomenological Studies**

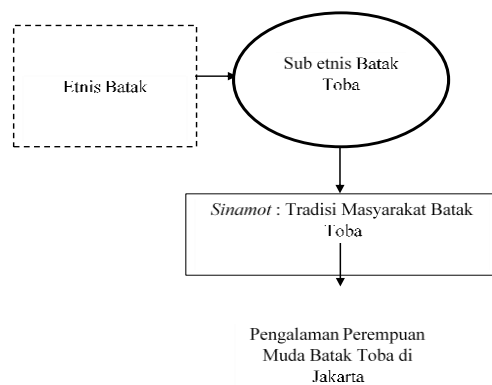
(3) Phenomenology emphasizes interpretation or judgment to gain an understanding of the existential structure of a phenomenon and then the phenomenon appears as itself (appears or presents itself). Phenomenology as a method has four characteristics, namely descriptive, reduction, essence and intentionality [46]. Creswell in Engkus Kuswarno et al., describes phenomenology as a method (19) trying to explain the meaning of life for a number of people about a concept or phenomenon, including in their self-concept or view of life [20].

Approach (5) phenomenology according to the researcher's opinion is able to reveal and study and understand the phenomenon of sinamot according to the context of the sources of this research. Thus, the phenomenological study in this study helps researchers in understanding the point of view, paradigms and beliefs directly from the relevant sources as subjects who experience how sinamot in Batak Toba marriages directly. In other words, a phenomenological study in the context of this research will be conducted on the sinamot experience of young Toba Batak women in Jakarta. In addition, the author is a Toba Batak woman who has witnessed, witnessed firsthand the process of sinamot running.

**2.4. Framework**

Starting from the research background and literature review of this research, the framework of this research is as shown below:

Gambar 2.1. Kerangka Pemikiran



Sumber: Kajian Pustaka

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS

(9) The research approach used by the author is a phenomenological approach with a qualitative descriptive method. The research subjects are young women who come from the Toba Batak tribe living in Jakarta, totaling 3 resource persons ranging in age from 20 - 25 years and 3 justifiers (raja parhata).

The object of research is sinamot. (8) Thus, data about sinamot, whether in the form of words spoken orally, gestures or behavior carried out by reliable subjects, in this case research subjects who are concerned with writing variables. Secondary data is data obtained from photographic graphic documents, video recordings, and others that can enrich primary data [21].

The method of data collection is obtained by in-depth interview, observation and documentation techniques.

Analysis technique (3) data begins by examining all available data from various sources, namely from the field, documents and informants. After reading, studying, and studying, the next step is to carry out data reduction which is done by making abstractions

The technique of checking the validity of the relevant data in this paper is (9) the triangulation technique. Triangulation is defined as checking data from various sources in various ways, and at various times [22]. The triangulator referred to in this paper is a traditional Batak Toba (king parhata) in Jakarta.

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study, namely the first introduction and understanding of sinamot for Toba Batak women in Jakarta places the role of parents (family) in the process of inheriting customs to their children as a process of social interaction as the basis of communication [9]. In the cultural context, the role of parents is known as enculturation [13]. In addition to the role of parents, the direct experience of the speakers (participation in the Marhata Sinamot event) is also the basis for the introduction and understanding of Sinamot.

Second, through participation in the Marhata Sinamot event, Toba Batak women also learn about the meaning of the kinship system in their family [17]. In the marhata sinamot event, young Toba Batak women also learn and think about sinamot for themselves and determine their future husbands. They learned from the failure of the sinamot agreement and the complexity of the sinamot bargaining.

Third, Toba Batak women in Jakarta seem to be choosing a life partner from another ethnicity and culture because of the high sinamot. The informants in this study said that if the sinamot agreement had been determined and it turned out to be burdensome for the men, they would choose to marry the church and the government after that they would only hold a traditional Batak Toba marriage ceremony. [5]. Fourth, the hope of Toba Batak women in Jakarta about sinamot is that sinamot should not burden men. In the

sinamot agreement, the daughter's purpose and happiness is above all else.

Based on the findings above, it is clear that there has been a change in the meaning and function of sinamot for young women (17) Batak Toba in Jakarta. That as Toba Batak people, the sinamot tradition is maintained but the goal is for the happiness of children (girls) to marry their loved ones.

According to Mr. Soni Ganda Putra, "actually the Toba Batak people who live in Jakarta or wherever they live will always learn about paradaton (Batak customs), why? Because, the philosophy of life is dahlia na tolu. Meanwhile, Mr. Ebenezer Siregar said why in Jakarta there was a failure and the complexity of the Sinamot bargaining position? Because the Toba Batak people in Jakarta are more concerned with the happiness of their daughters.

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results and analysis of research data, it can be concluded that the introduction and understanding of young Toba Batak women in Jakarta about sinamot begins through the primary group, namely through both parents and nuclear family. Through this experience they learned about sinamot as a tradition in the marriage of the Toba Batak people. The family is the first and foremost medium for socializing tradition.

Through this participation, young Toba Batak women know how to determine the amount of sinamot for Toba Batak women through the marhata sinamot event. It seems that this experience has shaped their understanding of sinamot, namely sinamot must be adapted to the abilities of the men. The complicated experience and failure of the Marhata Sinamot event in determining sinamot apart from being a socialization process about Toba Batak customs, seems to have made Toba Batak women choose to find life partners from other ethnicities and cultures to avoid sinamot customs. They also have the understanding to prefer their partner until they are willing to postpone the traditional Batak Toba wedding ceremony and marry in the church and register it with the government first. Batak Toba marriages are only carried out when the men have agreed to sinamot's request.

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