

THE PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE OF SOUTH SULAWESI YOUTH TOWARDS THE IMPACTS OF *UANG PANAI*: A PILOT STUDY

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Abstract : *The focus of this study is to investigate the perception and attitude of South Sulawesi youth on the impacts of uang panai. For this pilot study, a self-administered survey questionnaire was distributed to 50 South Sulawesi youth. The respondents are South Sulawesi youth whose age is between 20-36 years old. Some of them have completed their tertiary studies while others are currently pursuing theirs. All data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. The results show that the correlation between South Sulawesi youth's perception and the impacts of uang panai and the correlation between the attitudes of South Sulawesi youth towards uang panai are both moderately significant. The findings confirm that uang panai is one of the core elements to legalize marriage and must be performed by couples who intend to get married in South Sulawesi. Uang panai is indeed a South Sulawesi identity and this study endorses previous studies on the same topic.*

Keywords - *Bride Wealth, Marriage, South Sulawesi, Uang Panai, Youth*

Introduction

The culture of bride wealth, known as *uang panai* in South Sulawesi (Miqat & Bakhtiar, 2017) has been implemented in many countries with some variations (Anderson, 2007). Bride wealth has become a compulsory requirement for getting marriage. In South Sulawesi, *uang panai* is money given by the man to the woman. As it is a cultural aspect of marriage, *uang panai* is only prepared when couple intends to get married. In fact, both man and woman who will get married have little say about their marriage. This includes determining the amount of *uang panai* which is under the jurisdiction of the family (Yudi & Rahayu, 2015).

In some countries, bride wealth or marriage payment can be described as the culture of sharing the wealth that helps the society to get a prosperous life (Jacoby & Mansuri, 2014). The numerous materials given as bride wealth vary. They may range from money, cattle, house to land. While for *uang panai* itself, it is defined as the money needed to purchase the necessities for a wedding party, thus the family which desires to have a luxurious or grand wedding reception will probably demand a huge amount of *uang panai* (Milawati, 2011; Lestari, 2015). However, there are some characteristics of the family which allow them to ask for a large amount of *uang panai*. For instance, it is common

within the South Sulawesi society that if the women are from an affluent family or high social stratification with high level of education, good occupation and others, they can ask for a huge *uang panai* (Azizah, 2017; Yansa et al., n.d.).

There are several studies which discuss *uang panai* at length. Andriani, Sirajuddin and Iba (2016) and Yu'Min Moniya (2017) analyzed the process of deciding how much money a man should bring to the woman he wants to marry. In South Sulawesi, the process is known as lobby. They reported that there are two ways to decide on the amount of *uang panai*. First, it is called traditional lobby and the second is grass root lobby. Traditional lobby means a discussion is had between the two families of the man and woman. The grass root lobby involves a third party; meaning that when both families could not come to an agreement on the amount of *uang panai*, a grass root lobbyist like the village leader will advise the woman's family to accept the money offered by the man's family. However, if the woman's family still disagrees with the suggestion, then marriage will not happen.

In their study, Yudi and Rahayu (2015) discussed the meaning of *uang panai*. It was reported that the amount of money given to the family of the woman was a sign of appreciation of the Bugis culture to the women in South Sulawesi. Thus, according to them, the perception on the practice of *uang panai* as a commodity that exchanges women with valuable materials was not right. Another study conducted by Syarifuddin and Damayanti (2015) criticized the practice of *uang panai* which is considered excessive and against the Islamic teaching known as *walimah syar'i*. They reported that *uang panai* is a kind of culture which burdens men since they were demanded to bring a lot of money to the women only to finance the wedding reception.

The understanding of *uang panai* is very limited in the academia. There is a need to conduct further investigation on the perception of society, particularly the youth, towards *uang panai* in the contemporary world. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the perception and the attitude of South Sulawesi youth on the impacts of *uang panai*.

Literature Review

1. The Impacts of Attitude towards *Uang Panai*

The culture of *uang panai* is known as part of the indigenous culture from South Sulawesi which should be conducted before getting marriage (Erlangga, Dewi, & Hidayat, 2016). As

it is originally from South Sulawesi, the sense of ownership of this culture is very obvious as proven by the research by Ashari (2016) and Agustar (2018). They found that among South Sulawesi societies which live in South Lampung and Indragirih Hilir, people are still applying *uang panai* when they are planning to get married and *uang panai* is still a requirement when the man intends to propose to the woman. Thus, *uang panai* can be categorized as an aspect of culture which is difficult to change.

Uang panai can be categorized as a very important element in marriage since it becomes a core requirement in legalizing the relationship between a man and a woman (Subhandi & Hasanuddin, 2017; Ardhani, 2017); without *uang panai*, people cannot get married (Ikbal, 2016).

2. The Impacts of Perception towards *Uang Panai*

It should be admitted that people have different perceptions in interpreting *uang panai*. Some in the society have negative perceptions while others perceive *uang panai* in a positive way.

In some researches, it is reported that cultural aspects of marriage are considered as complicated including *uang panai* which contains many steps (Agustar, 2018). There are at least six steps to be followed like *mappese'-pese* (observing the woman), *madduta* (proposing to the woman), *mappattuada* (stipulating the wedding day), *mappaenre doi* (the delivering of *uang panai*), *mappaenre botting* (carrying the man to the woman's house to do *akad*) and *tudang botting* (wedding day). Furthermore, *uang panai* is categorized as the culture which places a huge burden onto men. This happens when the woman's family asks for materials like land. If the man's side cannot fulfil the demands of *uang panai*, e.g. in the form of land, the marriage will not be conducted unless the man looks for other means to fulfil the amount of *uang panai* (Agustar, 2018). If the man fails to do so, the marriage will not be conducted. Therefore, *uang panai* can be identified as the factor that may lead to the cancellation of the marriage (Santi, Khumas, & Kurniati, 2017). The consequence of this marriage cancellation is both man and woman will elope (*silariang*) as the alternative resort to becoming a married couple (Agustar, 2018; Aini, 2017).

In extreme cases, *uang panai* has been identified as causing the problem between the two sides. As studied by Aini (2017), a potential conflict which can happen in the practice of *uang panai* is when the woman's family demands for a high *uang panai* but the

man's family cannot or will not accept this request. The conflict may break the relations between the two families.

However, positive perception may arise among the society as indicated in the research by Ikbal (2016) that shows how *uang panai* is used to finance a wedding reception. From this finding, it can be said that *uang panai* can decrease the burden on the woman to have the reception. In addition, this culture is also categorized as an element to enhance the woman's and her family's status within the society. In this context, the woman's family and the woman herself will receive praise from the society for the high amount of *uang panai* she gets (Santi et al., 2017). Apart from that, *uang panai* can be signified as the seriousness of the man to the woman. This is because, men will work hard only to fulfil the demand for the amount of *uang panai*.

Methodology

This research was based on a quantitative research design. This study was done in two parts: a pilot study and the main study. A self-administered survey questionnaire was used in the pilot study. The sample for the pilot study was 50 South Sulawesi youth whose age ranged between 20-36 years old. Some have graduated while others are still pursuing their Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees. For the actual study, this research will recruit a sample size of 200 South Sulawesi youth using convenient sampling. This pilot study employed a structured questionnaire which utilized the Likert scale. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section asked for demographic information of the respondents whilst the second part consisted of items related to perception, attitude and impacts of *uang panai* among South Sulawesi youth. Respondents were given five options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.

The researchers visited several villages and universities in South Sulawesi to conduct the study. The pilot study was conducted to check the validity and the reliability of the instrument. After determining the reliability of scale was satisfactory, the actual study will be carried out soon. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Firstly, univariate analysis (percentage and mean) was employed to describe the demographic characteristics of the South Sulawesi youth as well as their attitude and perception towards the impacts of *uang panai*. Secondly, the bivariate analysis

(t-test and correlation) were used to determine gender differences and relations between attitude and perception of South Sulawesi youth on the impacts of *uang panai*.

The hypothesis for this study are as follow:

H1: The attitude of the South Sulawesi youth has moderate correlation on the impacts of *uang panai*.

H2: The perception of the South Sulawesi youth has moderate correlation on the impacts of *uang panai*.

Results

1. Part 1 (Pilot Study)

Part 1 of the study consists of the results of the pilot study to determine the reliability.

Table 1 : Alpha reliability of the instrument used or questionnaire (n=50)

Cronbach's Alpha	N	Number of Items
.847	50	43

Table 1 indicates that the alpha reliability of the questionnaire is found to be satisfactory to be used in the actual study after removing several variables.

2. Part 2 (Main Study)

Part 2 of the study comprises of the findings described below:

Table 2 : Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents based on age (n=50)

Age	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
20-25	40	80.0
26-30	5	10.0
31-35	4	8.0
36+	1	2.0

Table 2 shows that the majority of the respondents belonged to the age group ranging from 20-25, which was 80% of the total number. It also indicates that 10% were in the age group ranging from 26-30 while only 8% and 2% belong to the age groups of 31-35 and 36 above, respectively.

Table 3 : Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents based on qualification

Qualification	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Diploma	5	10.0
Bachelor	40	80.0
Master	5	10.0

Table 3 shows that 80% of the respondents are pursuing their undergraduate degree, followed by Diploma and Master's at 10% each.

Table 4 : Gender differences on the perception on uang panai among South Sulawesi youth

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	P
Perception	Male	12	2.4318	.28518	2.289	0.29
	Female	38	2.7201	.58740		

The perception among South Sulawesi youth by both genders are demonstrated in Table 4. Among the males, the mean is 2.4318 and standard deviation is .28518. Among the females, the mean is 2.7201 and the standard deviation is .58740. The value of t is 2.289 and the value of p is 0.29. The data show that there is no significant difference between the genders with regard to the perception of *uang panai*.

Table 5 : Gender differences on the attitude towards uang panai among South Sulawesi youth

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	P
Attitude	Male	12	3.0458	.32154	2.019	.826
	Female	38	2.8184	.39343		

Table 5 presents the attitude of both genders towards *uang panai*. The mean is 3.0458 and the standard deviation is .32154 among male respondents. As for the female respondents, the mean is 2.8184 and the standard deviation is 3.9343. The value of *t* is 2.019 and the value of *p* is 826. The data show that there is no significant difference between the genders in relation to their attitude towards *uang panai*.

Table 6 : Correlation between perception and attitude of South Sulawesi youth towards the impacts of *uang panai*

Variables	Mean	SD	Impact	Attitude	Perception
Impact	3.185	0.455	1		
Attitude	2.873	0.387	r=.515 p=.000	1	
Perception	2.651	0.542	r=.570 p=.000	r=.387 p=.003	1

Figure 1: Bivariate correlation on impacts of *uang panai*

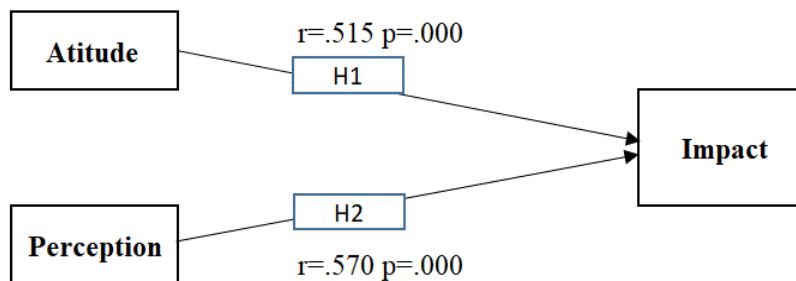


Table 6 and Figure 1 show that the correlation between attitude and impacts of *uang panai* among South Sulawesi youth is moderately significant with $r=.515$ ($p=.000$). Meanwhile the correlation between perception and impacts of *uang panai* is also moderately significant with $r=.570$ ($p=.000$).

Dicussion

The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between the perception and attitude of South Sulawesi youth on the impacts of *uang panai*. The results of this study

show that H1 is supported with moderate significance between the attitude of South Sulawesi youth and the impacts of *uang panai*. H2 is also supported with moderate significance between the perception of South Sulawesi youth and the impacts of *uang panai*. These findings are supported by the studies of Mustafa (2011) and Subhandi Hasanuddin (2017) that demonstrate how *uang panai* should be presented before getting married as it is considered an identity to the South Sulawesi community. The absence of *uang panai* in marriage is considered a violation of the norms. In other words, maintaining the practice of *uang panai* is pertinent to the sustainability of the community. Similar view is also reported among African youth, German communities and people in other countries which perceive marriage payment as part of their marriage culture (Mwamwenda & Monyooe, 1997; Anderson, 2007). Indeed, *uang panai* is the most important element in any marriage because without it, marriage cannot be performed (Elvira, 2014). In Zimbabwe for instance, the society allows the implementation of instalment payment for marriage purposes and this has been accepted as a culture (Lee et al., 2011). In short, marriage payment becomes the core requirement in marriage because of its important value.

It should be noted that in some societies there is a negative view of *uang panai* because it may lead to the cancellation of marriage, elopement and others (Adiningsih, 2016; Annisa, 2017). The reason for this problem is due to the high amount of *uang panai* demanded by the woman's family. The reason for asking high *uang panai* is because of the symbolic meaning attached to *uang panai*. It is believed that *uang panai* in particular and bride wealth in general are not only symbols to proposing to a woman, but they indicate the social status of the family (Hikmah & Ibsik, 2015; Mwamwenda & Monyooe, 1997). It should be noted that the higher the amount of *uang panai*, the higher the social status of the family. Thus, *uang panai* is seen as a practice which is full of materialism (Santi et al., 2017). Unlike in the past, *uang panai* is signified as a symbol of respect or appreciation of a man towards a woman (Kesuma & Nurlala, 2015) but with the influence of materialism (Santi et al., 2017), people's perceptions are changing. In fact, the negative view does not only happen in South Sulawesi, but as Dekker and Hoogeveen (2002) have reported, this culture is like purchasing women, thus after marriage men can do anything to the women as they are owned by them (Gray, 1960; Fuseini, 2013; Muller, 1978).

It is important to give awareness to society about the substantial value of the culture of *uang panai*. In the past, *uang panai* was only used to appreciate women and also to show

men's seriousness after the trauma experienced by women during the colonisation by the Dutch (Aini, 2017). The Dutch then were free to marry any woman they liked but after they were bored with the wives, they will leave them and marry other women. But in the present time, this substantial value has changed due to the influence of materialism in the society. Although some societies see *uang panai* in a negative way, their perception does not significantly influence the impact of *uang panai*. This is proven by the existence of *uang panai* still in the marriage culture.

Conclusion

Both hypotheses in this study are supported with moderately significant relationships among all variables. Thus, the importance of *uang panai* in legitimizing marriage is emphasized in this study. Although negative perception and attitude exist among South Sulawesi youth about *uang panai*, the existence and importance of *uang panai* in marriage remains intact. Interestingly, many youth from South Sulawesi claim they will maintain the *uang panai* practice even though they live in other places.

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