



Affirmative Policy on Belis in Marriage Traditions at Family Institutions in the Abenaho District of Papua

Research Article

In the Social Sciences Doctoral Study Program

Submitted by :

Sem Kepno¹

NIM: 2024107017002

¹Postgraduate Social Sciences Doctoral Program Student, Cendrawasih University

Doctoral Study Program in Social Sciences Postgraduate Cendrawasih University

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ABSTRACT

Papua as a region that has cultural richness as an implication of its diverse society viewed from a socio-cultural background. This study focuses on one of Papua's socio-cultural traditions, namely belis in the traditional marriage tradition of the Abenaho community from a sociological perspective. This study applies a qualitative approach with a case study design focused on five villages in the Abenaho District area. The first finding indicates that the traditional practice of belis in the local indigenous community's wedding procession is still preserved until now, even though the area is experiencing social dynamics and development at the Yalimo Regency level. Belis has been proven to have functions, namely social functions, economic functions, and cultural functions and the formation of identity. However, the belis tradition does not last statically, but dynamically both in terms of social, economic, and cultural aspects. Socially, the belis tradition creates harmony but sometimes causes tension in interactions between families. Second, the affirmative policy on belis which is manifested in the Village Regulation, has been proven to create quite significant changes in both social, economic, and cultural aspects. The affirmative policy has also been proven to raise new hopes for indigenous people in the Abenaho District which has the potential to be more integrative. Affirmative action policies on dowry have made a significant contribution to the creation of more inclusive social integration.

Keywords: *Dowry, Marriage, Family Institution*

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Papuan people in the mountainous region The community is known to have a wealth of unique and meaningful traditions, one of which is reflected in the practice of giving belis by the man's family to the woman's family as part of the traditional procession in the wedding ceremony. This tradition not only represents a form of respect and social responsibility towards the bride's family, but also becomes a symbol of social ties that strengthen the relationship between two large families in the social structure of the local community. Therefore, it can be said that the belis tradition is a cultural wealth of the Papuan people who have local wisdom values that are continuously maintained as well as resilience or adaptation to social change and modernization in the Papuan mountain community. Due to its unique character, the belis phenomenon has attracted the attention of academics to be used as an object of study in the social sciences viewed from various perspectives.

Dowry or mahar, including in the practice of the Yali community, is an important element in marriage which is interpreted as a symbol of honor, responsibility, and commitment from the groom to the bride and her family (Kawin, 2020). The existence of a dowry not only functions as a material element, but also as a representation of the cultural and social identity of a community. As expressed by Rahmawati and Dafiq, the uniqueness of the dowry is a reflection of cultural developments that have taken place over time (Rahmawati, D., & Dafiq, 2021). Studies that focus on the cultural aspect of giving a dowry, there are various meanings contained in the dowry tradition in certain communities. From the perspective of the Yali community, belis as a form of dowry is interpreted as an expression of gratitude to parents who have raised and educated their daughters to adulthood (Selfisina Teteleptaa, Y., 2021). This practice illustrates that dowry is not only seen as a form of material gift, but also has a deep symbolic meaning as a form of appreciation and respect for the status and contribution of the woman's family in the structure and cultural values of society. Meanwhile, from a sociological perspective, according to Wigjodipoero, in marriage, social factors and customs play an important role in addition to religion and law (Wigjodipoero, 1983). In the context of the Yali community, dowry illustrates social relations and mutual respect between families, where belis is a symbol of membership and support between extended families (Nugroho, 2013). The increasing demands for dowry in the modern era pose complex challenges. The economic burden borne by men often causes delays in marriage (Mataradja, 2022). In this context, revitalizing regulations related to dowry is important with the aim of creating social justice and welfare, as well as preventing tensions that may arise due to excessive demands. Efforts to adapt traditions to the socio-economic conditions of society will provide an effective solution without eliminating existing cultural values.

That is how it is, the phenomenon of the belis tradition in Papuan society, especially in highland Papua, is based on various studies. "Related to various dimensions of life, this practice includes economic, social, cultural aspects, and even has implications in the political realm." The tradition does not stand alone, but is closely intertwined with various aspects of community life, including economic, social, cultural dimensions, and in certain contexts, also influences local political dynamics. Sociologically, there has been a shift from belis which was previously more of a tradition that had a social integration function, but along with modernization it has changed into one of the causes of social disintegration. This means that the belis tradition which was previously a manifestation of strong social capital, but in further developments has become a factor that changes transactional social interactions. Social motives are increasingly being pushed aside by economic motives, thus causing conflict between families at a wedding moment.

In further developments, the tradition of belis socially became excessive. One of the increasingly phenomenal excesses is that it increasingly causes disharmony in social communication between families in socio-cultural life in the village. For example, the incident of tribal war triggered by the issue of dowry in several areas, as reported by *Cenderawasih Pos* (January, 2022) as follows:

A clash between two groups of residents from Nduga and Lanny Jaya Regencies occurred in Wouma Village, Wouma District, Jayawijaya Regency. This violent incident resulted in one resident, named Sibelu Gwijangge, dying from an arrow wound that hit his right back. In addition to the fatalities, the incident also resulted in at least four people being injured. In the clash that took place on Saturday afternoon local time, it was also reported that three houses and three honai were burned down. "It is suspected that the mutual attacks were triggered by the death of a resident from Nduga named Sibelu Gwijangge. From the chronology obtained by *Cenderawasih Pos*, at around 08.30 WIT, Sibelu initially received information from his friends that the problem between him and his wife's family, Yuli Kogoya, would be resolved peacefully. Yuli's family thought that Sibelu had not paid the dowry, but Sibelu believed otherwise.

Another excess is that the heavier the burden of the belis tradition, the more likely it is that marriage will be postponed, especially by men in the mountainous regions of Papua. Of course, based on this fact, the belis tradition is one of the causes of demographic change in Papuan society. For example, in the indigenous community in the Abenaho District, more and more men are postponing marriage because of the increasingly expensive burden of the belis tradition.

Based on various studies on the belis tradition, it then attracted the attention of the Wamena Regency government to carry out socio-cultural arrangements for the belis tradition. One of these policies is stated in Regional Regulation no.... concerning Village Policy. The Wamena government's policy aims to ensure that the belis tradition does not burden. On the one hand, there are demands from the community for more rational and adaptive changes to the development of the times, while on the other hand, the continuation of the belis tradition is maintained as part of cultural identity. Within this framework, efforts to revitalize regulations

regarding dowries become urgent, in order to realize the principle of social justice and increase collective welfare. The revitalization also functions as a preventive measure against potential social conflicts that can arise due to the practice of requesting belis that are considered excessive or disproportionate. "Efforts to adapt traditions to the socio-economic conditions of the community will provide an effective solution without eliminating existing cultural values.

However, after the affirmative policy on the tradition of belis, until the current development phase it still causes problems. The dynamics of conflict or differences in interpretation and meaning between the state and local indigenous communities related to the issue of belis or dowry in the cultural moment of marriage still continue to occur. In a marriage moment, tensions often occur between families because each refers to different regulations. Sometimes the woman's family still wants a belis that refers to customary regulations, while the man's family refers to government regulations stated in village policies. Thus, this study is directed to explore the practice of the belis tradition in the lives of indigenous people in Abenaho District through a sociological approach, in order to understand social dynamics, cultural values, and the implications they have for social structures and relations between communities." The objectives are to find out and analyze: how local residents interpret and give meaning to belis in the traditional marriage tradition in Abenaho District; how the Wamena Regency government applies a village policy model in an effort to resolve the problem of belis in the family marriage tradition in Abenaho District; and find out and analyze why the government created a village policy model in organizing the belis tradition in family marriage in Abenaho District.

This study applies a qualitative approach with a case study design as the main strategy to explore in depth and analyze the practice of belis in the context of marriage traditions in Abenaho District. This approach was chosen to obtain a holistic understanding of the meaning, social function, and dynamics surrounding the implementation of belis in the lives of local indigenous communities. As stated by K. Yin (2014, p. 11), case studies are best used to answer the types of questions "how" and "why", and when researchers want to explain contemporary phenomena, but cannot engineer the relevant behavior of the object or subject being studied (Yin, 2014). Data collection techniques used observation, interviews, and documentation. Informants consisted of residents of Abenaho District who had social attributes, ASN employees, women activists, NGO activists, politicians, academics, traditional leaders, traders and farmers who were residents of five villages in Abenaho District.

CHAPTER TWO THEORETICAL BASIS

This research will use several sociological theories in an effort to explain and analyze the findings of the research. As a consequence of the choice of method, namely qualitative research with a case study type, the position of theory is more as a partner to dialogue and discuss with the findings of the research. Some of these theories include theories about villages, culture, and policies in a society from a sociological perspective.

In sociological studies, villages are viewed as entities that are not only limited by geographical aspects and population, but also reflect distinctive social and cultural characteristics. Paul H. Landis classifies the definition of villages into three categories, depending on the focus of the analysis used. In the context of statistical analysis, a village is defined as an area inhabited by less than 2,500 people. Meanwhile, for the socio-psychological approach, a village is understood as a community where the population establishes close social relationships, is informal, and is characterized by a high intensity of interaction. "While for the purpose of economic analysis, a village is defined as an environment whose population depends on the agricultural sector whose mode of production is feudalism (Rahardjo, 2004: 30).

Following the definition, then for the context of Papua Mountains, the villages in Abenaho District meet the criteria of the three definitions of the village. Several villages in Papua Mountains have an average population of less than 2500 people, social interactions are still close, and the main livelihood is agriculture. Some villages are still primitive with their main livelihood being hunting or still showing their character as a hunting society.

Meanwhile, in the construction of the state, the village is understood as a legal entity consisting of a group of people who occupy a certain territory. Referring to Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, the village is understood as a legal community entity that has a territory with clear boundaries and is given the authority to organize government and regulate the interests of its citizens. This authority is based on community initiatives, original rights, and traditional rights that are recognized and protected within the framework of the government system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. In this case, the village, including traditional villages that may have different local names, plays a role as an autonomous and participatory government unit in managing resources and determining the direction of development based on local values."

In the context of village terminology in Indonesia, there is a diversity of names that reflect the richness of local culture, especially in areas outside Java. In Aceh Province, for example, the smallest legal area unit is known as *gampong* and *meunasah*. Meanwhile, in the Batak region, terms such as *kuta*, *uta*, or *huta* are used to refer to entities equivalent to villages. In Minangkabau, the term *nagari* is known; in Lampung, the terms *dusun* or *tiuh* are used; in Minahasa it is known as *wanua*; in Makassar it is known as *daerah-gaukang*; and among the Bugis people it is called *daerah-matowa* (Kartodirdjo, 1953). In the Papua region, in particular, the term used to refer to a legal area unit at the village level is *kampung*.

From a sociological perspective, villages are also understood as a form of society that has certain social characteristics. Rahardjo (2004) stated that village communities are generally characterized by: (1) the dominance of primary groups in their social structure; (2) the influence of geographical factors in the formation of social groups; (3) intimate social relationship patterns due to high levels of homogeneity; (4) low levels of social mobility; (5) the dominant function of the family as an economic unit; and (6) the high number of children in one family. If these indicators are applied to analyze village life in the Papua Mountains region, then most of these characteristics are still relevant and reflected in the social structure of the local community."

There is no human community in the world that is completely isolated and free from external influences, so it is impossible for a society to remain static without experiencing social transformation. Even in the simplest traditional communities, the process of modernization has touched various aspects of life, encouraging continuous social change. Empirically, social dynamics in society occur constantly, both in gradual and progressive patterns and in fluctuating and unpredictable forms. In the discipline of sociology, the phenomenon of social change is an object of study that receives serious attention, giving rise to various theories and analytical approaches. One of the basic assumptions that has developed is the view that social change occurs linearly, an argument rooted in the positivistic paradigm in sociology. This view sees the development of society as a gradual and sequential process, as reflected in the transition from a hunting and gathering society to an agrarian society, then developing into an industrial society, continuing to an information society, and finally entering the era of digital society as seen in the contemporary context. "Kingsley Davis and Selo Soemardjan define social change as changes that involve social structures and social institutions. In sociology, there is a known change that is intended (*planned change*) or planned change, and unintended change (*unplanned change*). The concept of development is identical to intentional or planned change, namely aiming to change an unwanted state towards a desired state (Rahardjo, 2004: 191).

Several theories of social change can be used to explain and analyze the development of the Papuan Mountains society which continues to experience a process of modernization in various aspects of life. Likewise, several theories of social change are very relevant to explain the phenomenon of changes in the most basic social institutions, namely the family, with all its dynamics as a

consequence of social change. Therefore, it also has relevance in efforts to explain the process of changing marriage customs related to the issue of belis in Papuan society, especially in the Abenaho District.

"Essentialists view culture as a system of values and norms that are final, stable, fixed, and independent of external influences. In this framework of thought, the behavior of individuals or groups is believed to be directly determined by the cultural system they adhere to. Therefore, to change cultural behavior, according to them, what must be done is to change the entire set of values and norms that form the basis of that behavior. One statement that is often associated with the cultural essentialist view is: 'don't blame the culture, but blame the individual.' This means that if there is a deviation in society, then what is considered problematic is human behavior, not the prevailing system of values and norms. In this perspective, cultural values and norms are seen as established and cannot be changed; so that when a deviation occurs, it is considered a failure of the individual to adapt to the existing order (Wahyono, 2025).

Ignas Kleden (1998) shows that this essentialist perspective also has a strong influence in the discourse of the social sciences. One of the main ideas that is often put forward is that a person's identity is completely formed by the culture that surrounds them. For example, someone is called Javanese because they are in a Javanese cultural environment; likewise someone becomes Minangkabau because they are raised in Minang culture. In fact, according to this view, if a Javanese child lives and is raised in a Japanese family from childhood, then he will have a cultural identity as a Japanese person. However, the essentialist perspective tends to ignore the historical and social processes in the formation of culture. They do not ask critical questions about how culture is formed, how the history and dynamics of society—such as Java, Minang, or Mentawai—have shaped their cultural patterns, and how the flow of modernity has presented challenges and driven transformations in the structure of that culture."

Several previous studies have been conducted on issues surrounding the issue of belis in Papua. "Research conducted by Tateleptaa and colleagues (2021) through the lens of postcolonial feminism revealed that violence against women is closely related to the practice of the dowry tradition. This tradition, in its social interpretation, tends to place men in a more dominant position than women, thus strengthening the patriarchal social system. Meanwhile, Loppies (2019) conducted a study on the marriage customs of the Biak community in Yendidori Village, focusing on community perceptions of giving dowries. His findings showed that most people still carry out the customary procession well, but there are a number of critical views that express objections to this practice, especially when women set a dowry value that is considered too high, thus burdening men economically.

In another study, Indah, BSF and colleagues (2022) examined the practice of dowry giving in Sosiri Village, Jayapura, and found that the local community still preserves the tradition of paying dowries in the form of beads and stone axes (tomako). Initially, the beads were imported from Kalimantan, but over time and changes in locality, the community began to obtain the beads from the forests in their own area. Likewise, stone axes, which were previously made manually by carving stones from rivers, are now produced using modern tools such as chisels. A study conducted by Mipitapo, Yohanes Yansen, and his team (2021) on the Kamoro indigenous community in Timika, Papua, confirmed that in their customary marriage system, elements of ritual and myth play a central role in regulating the procedures and values that accompany the marriage event.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The majority of the Abenaho District community comes from the *Yali tribe*, which is known as a mountain community with a distinctive culture and tradition (World Encyclopedia, 2010) and is still strong, with the main livelihood being farming with a traditional agricultural system. Their staple foods include sweet potatoes, taro, cassava, bananas, red fruit and sago (Syahyuti et al., 2016). In 2020, the population of the Abenaho District reached 33,963 people (Statistics & Papua, 2024). From the number of villages in the Abenaho district, five villages were taken as research sites for dowries or belis, namely: Yambaikma Village, Helaksili Village; Huralma Village; Yukdonggo Village; and Dosumo Village. The number of residents of each village is shown in the table below.

Table 1 Village Names and Population

No.	Village	Resident		Amount
		Man	Women	
1	Yambaikma	76	85	161
2	Hurualma	88	91	171
3	Humalma	69	93	162
4	Come on, come on	87	94	181
5	Helaxyl	75	97	170
	Total			845

In the process of discussing the issue of customary dowry and the establishment of village regulations, it was attended by more than half of the population of the five villages. The composition of the presence and representation of the community consisted of traditional elders, married men, traditional youth and also women from the five villages. This discussion was also attended by all village officials and church administrators from the five villages. The center of the discussion took place at the Abenaho District Office.

The tradition of giving a dowry in the Yali tribe is an integral part of the cultural system that regulates behavior in the institution of marriage. In the context of modernization, this practice is still maintained, but it is not free from challenges that arise in various aspects of life, especially in the Yali tribe's residential areas, including in the five villages that were the focus of observation. One crucial issue that emerged was the economic pressure due to the high value of the dowry that must be fulfilled by the male party. This condition not only has an impact on the economic stability of the family, but also causes social tension and concerns about the sustainability of the tradition itself. This problem was expressed directly by traditional leaders—in this case represented by one of the informants—who stated that the high dowry demands often become a serious obstacle for prospective grooms and their families in carrying out the marriage process according to tradition. " *We have a son, if we want to get married, the parents and the mother and father's family start to get dizzy. The woman's family demands whatever they like and all sorts of things: the number of pigs must be so many, beads, noken and many other items. The family doesn't have pigs, we have to buy pigs and need money, there is no money. It's hard for us to find food, there is no source of money. Not to mention other things that also all use money. Where are we going to get money, sometimes we are in debt and can't pay the debt, so it must be regulated so that the dowry is not too high and applies equally to everyone.* "

High dowry demands often make marriages, both customary and religious, unable to be formalized or postponed until the dowry payment is complete. The impact is that husband and wife live for years without being blessed and have an impact on family administration and children. One informant, Mabel, explained: "We women sometimes think, what's the point of a dowry, the important thing is that we can love each other, we live well, are blessed in church so that the family is healthy, the children are also healthy and good. Because the dowry is expensive, sometimes the children take the shortcut of getting pregnant first, having children first and then arranging it later. Problems sometimes arise, namely when pregnant, cannot pay the dowry, the man leaves and often causes conflict between families."

Another impact of the high dowry in the Yali tribe is that many boys who are of marriageable age are not ready or do not dare to take the risk of getting married because they are afraid of not being able to pay the dowry. This fear makes those who marry late the subject of ridicule as unsaleable or afraid to get married. In addition, it also has an impact on many women who have difficulty finding a life partner and are stigmatized as spinsters or unsaleable, as expressed by one informant, Sambon, as follows:

"If the marriage is not regulated, people may not get married or people only live together and then there is no blessing from the church. Nowadays, young people and families who do not have pigs, property and money, do not try to take other people's children or get pregnant with other people's children. We can have a big headache and the family will also have trouble. People now if they do not have pigs and other things, they count using money and hundreds of millions, then in this village where are we going to get money?"

Sambon further explained that the agreement on the amount or size of the dowry is often the reason for conflict. The woman sometimes demands excessively beyond the woman's ability so that there is bargaining with various arguments. In the bargaining process, there is often offense that triggers anger and conflict. Mr. Yosa Sambon said that in the matter of belis there is bargaining between the man and the woman about what the dowry is and how much. In this bargaining, some speak loudly and loudly, some talk about other people's personal matters or other people's problems, some demand with threats. All of this makes the other party offended or feel unacceptable, angry and starts arguing, threatening and arguing until fighting between families.

One informant, Yustina Yare, commented: "It's the same now and then, meaning who gets married and from which family. Boys from well-off families or not, and girls from well-off families or not. They judge each other and then each demands a high dowry to say that they are a well-off family or a family that is better than the others. It's like people get married to gain fame or wealth or property, even though after getting it, it all runs out and only makes it difficult because of the effort to pay off debts again."

The number of pigs raised is not as many as before. Likewise, various other items such as beads that are usually used as dowries are also increasingly rare. Thus, people tend to turn to money and start to abandon traditional methods. Agus Alua explained: "Nowadays, almost everyone pays dowries using money. It is easier for people to collect money and give money in exchange for dowries of pigs, beads, and others than to look for pigs and those items. Over time, the original tradition of customary belis will disappear, people will no longer use it and it means that the marriage culture may also no longer exist, all that remains is paying for the daughter. This can be fatal culturally. For that reason, the issue of dowries needs to be regulated together according to custom, religion and also government so that it is good for everyone."

In the marriage tradition of the people in the Abenaho District, belis has several functions. For the Yali tribe, it functions as a bond between two families who are married.

Through in-depth discussions and deliberations, the people of the five villages conveyed several functions of dowries in their culture, namely:

- **Social function:** From a social function perspective, the institution of marriage in Yalimo society is not merely interpreted as the union of two individuals, but also as an important process in forming and strengthening bonds between two wider kinship groups. The tradition of giving belis by the groom's family to the bride's family has a symbolic meaning as a form of respect, recognition, and appreciation for the position and social contribution of women. Through this mechanism, a reciprocal relationship is built that supports the creation of harmony and social stability in the community, as well as strengthening solidarity between the extended families involved in the marriage event."
- **Economic Function:** Belis often consists of valuables such as pigs, money, or other traditional items. This provides economic benefits to the woman's family, because they receive compensation for the loss of a family member who will move to the husband's family. In addition, *belis* can also be used to meet family needs or as business capital.
- **Cultural and Identity Function:** Belis, or traditional dowry, plays an important role in the culture and identity of the people of Abenaho District. *Belis* serves as a symbol of respect for women and their families, strengthens kinship ties, and reflects social and economic status. In addition, Belis also plays a role in maintaining the cultural values and identity of the local community.

➤ *Government Affirmative Action Policy*

Because the marriage customs of the people in Abenaho District have undergone significant changes as an effect of evolutionary social change, and on the other hand have also caused various problems such as inter-family conflicts and the increasing economic burden on the male family, the Yalimo Regency government has issued an affirmative policy. The policy is stated in the Yalimo Regent Regulation Number 8 of 2016.

Realizing the various problems in the matter of dowry but also the importance of dowry for the Yalimo tribe, this dowry needs to be regulated together in order to create justice and comfort and peace for all parties. All communities, both indigenous communities, religious leaders, and village governments facilitated by the Yalimo District and Regency governments agreed to create rules for giving dowry that apply to all.

In the regulation of dowry, various violations of the law are also regulated, including adultery, sexual harassment and/or rape of young girls, widows and even other people's wives.

Table 2 Dowry for Marriage

No.	Types of Gambling	Dowry	
		Pig	Goods
1.	Marrying outside the church/district organization	10 tails	5 shovels, 5 machetes, 5 axes, 5 pots, 5 cauldrons, 5 blankets, and money according to ability.
2.	Kawain comes from outside the church/district organization	10 tails	
3.	Marriage between villages within the same organization	10 tails	
4.	The man and woman have separated and remarried	5 tails	

In order for a regulation to have a deterrent effect and be binding for the common interest, there needs to be an appropriate punishment for violations of the regulation. Therefore, in the context of stabilization and integration of family institutions related to the issue of belis, it was agreed that there would be a fine, as shown in the following table:

Table 3 Fines for Adultery / Rape

No.	Case Types	Dowry	
		Pig	Money
1.	Forced intercourse with a married person	5 tails	50,000,000
2.	Having relations with a married woman on the basis of mutual agreement or will	3 tails (male) – Pay to female 2 tails (female - pay to male)	25,000,000 25,000,000
3.	Forced intercourse with an unmarried woman	5 tails	50,000,000
4.	Having sex with an unmarried/virgin woman on the basis of agreement or mutual consent	3 tails – male 1 female	-
5.	Hold a woman's breasts	1 tail	5,000,000
6.	Hugs and kisses	1 tail	2,500,000
7.	Eye code	customized	customized
8.	Virgin girl forced	5 tails	50,000,000

All agreements made above are used as the standard for payment of dowry or customary fines as regulated in the respective village regulations and ratified through Yalimo Regent Regulation Number 8 of 2016.

➤ *Affirmative Policy Expectations in Village Regulations*

The impact of the revitalization of the Yali customary dowry rules studied in five villages in the Abenaho District can be categorized into three important aspects: social, economic, and cultural. Regarding these three aspects, it turns out that the Yali indigenous people have views and at the same time hopes for the affirmative policy of the Village Regulation, namely to strengthen the integration of the Yali indigenous people both in terms of social, economic, and cultural aspects. Hopes in the aspect of social development, there is a growing hope that the revitalization of the Yali customary dowry regulations has the potential to strengthen social ties between families who are married. The dowry, as a symbol of respect for the bride's family, serves to create social balance and strengthen community cohesion. However, the high demands for the dowry that were previously burdensome can cause tension between men and women, which often leads to conflict. For example, when the woman demands an excessive dowry, this creates a tense bargaining atmosphere, including the potential for physical conflict between families who feel threatened by their dignity, said Mr. Yosa Sambon (Kepno, 2023). Calvin Kepno also expressed his hope that "with fairer and more transparent regulations, it is hoped that this conflict can be minimized, so that social ties are maintained and increased community stability can be achieved" (Kepno, 2023).

Meanwhile, the hope in the economic aspect, the revitalization of the dowry rules seeks to ease the financial burden borne by the men. For example, by reducing the number and size of the dowry required, prospective grooms can avoid debt that creates stress and economic uncertainty. Belis which is often requested in the form of valuables such as pigs, beads, and now cash, creates unbalanced economic pressure if not managed wisely. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Mama Setina Mabel who stated that high demands for dowries often result in postponement of marriage (Kepno, 2023). With the new regulations, it is hoped that belis will be more affordable, allowing more people to get married and creating jobs and economic support for families after marriage, commented Agus Alua (Kepno, 2023).

From an economic perspective, the revitalization of the dowry regulation seeks to ease the financial burden borne by the groom. For example, by reducing the amount and size of the dowry required, the prospective groom can avoid debt that creates stress and economic uncertainty. The dowry, which is often requested in the form of valuables such as pigs, beads, and now cash, creates unbalanced economic pressure if not managed wisely. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Septina Mabel, who stated that high demands for dowries often result in postponement of marriage (Kepno, 2023).

The hope for affirmative policies on belis from a cultural aspect is that the revitalization of dowry rules provides space to maintain and adapt ancestral traditions while facing the development of the times. The dynamics of the use of changing forms of dowry, from traditional items such as pigs and beads to cash, shows a change in people's perspectives on cultural values. While some community members are concerned that the use of money can erode the original meaning of the belis tradition that reflects Yali cultural identity, Topilus Kepno views this adaptation as a pragmatic step to meet the needs of a modern society (Kepno, 2023). For Mr. Dek Yare, the implementation of regulations governing dowries can be a solution to continue to respect tradition while providing legitimacy for new forms of dowries that are more practical and acceptable to all parties (Kepno, 2023).

➤ *Discussion*

Considering various findings related to belis, it turns out that belis in the marriage of the Yalimo community's traditional families continues to change. Viewed from the perspective of the theory of social change, it shows that the factor of modernization along with development has an influence on changes in the procedures for belis in marriage. These changes include three aspects, namely social, economic, and cultural. Following the arguments of the theory of social change, these facts indicate that changes in the meaning of belis in these three aspects follow linear and evolutionary changes. Following the arguments of the theory of evolutionary social change (Davis, Soemardjan, Rahardjo, 2004), what happened with the case of belis in Yalimo was a planned social change.

Meanwhile, seen from the perspective of rural sociology, what is happening in the dynamics of the Yalimo community still shows an effort to maintain marriage customs based on village characteristics, or called *kampung*. The continued preservation of the belis custom in marriage by the village community indicates that the village or *kampung* is in accordance with the state's construction. Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages emphasizes that villages, including traditional villages known by various local nomenclatures, are legal community entities that have certain territorial boundaries and are given the authority to organize government and manage public interests independently. This authority is exercised based on local initiatives, recognition of original rights, and respect for traditional rights inherent in the local community. Within the framework of the government system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the existence of villages is not only seen as administrative units, but also as a representation of the sovereignty of local communities that are constitutionally recognized.

Meanwhile, the facts show that the Yalimo community in carrying out the practice of belis in marriage, apparently still shows an effort to preserve and at the same time is open to change. The findings of this study seen from a socio-cultural perspective show the existence of cultural essentialism and cultural constructivism. Continuous efforts of several values in the tradition of belis marriage are actions that reflect cultural essentialism, because values are considered fixed and need to be preserved. As stated by Kleden (1996) that cultural essentialism assumes that values and norms are fixed and standard. However, at the same time, the custom of giving belis in marriage in the Yalimo community has also changed to adjust to the process of modernization. This fact is in accordance with the assumption of cultural constructivism, that every norm and value can change. Therefore, because of its character that follows both cultural concepts, the government's affirmative policy towards belis in marriage customs in Yalimo can be accepted by the community.

When confirmed with several previous studies, the findings of this study are in accordance with the findings of previous studies, but there are also some that are not. The existence of a burden on the man's family and also causing social tension is in accordance with the study of Lopoies (2021). However, the findings of this study that the tradition of belis in marriage did not cause violence, especially after the affirmative policy. This finding is different from the study of Tateleptaa et al. (2021) that the belis tradition in Papua is an arena for the operation of patriarchal ideology that triggers conflict. This indicates that affirmative policies in the form of Village Regulations that are inspired by preserving the belis tradition while also lightening the burden on families have been able to reduce the potential for conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Based on the data description and analysis as described previously, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, that the practice of the belis tradition in the marriage moments of indigenous families in Abenaho District still continues today along with the dynamics of development in Yalimo Regency. Belis has been proven to have functions, "The belis tradition in society does not only have one dimension, but contains various functions, including social functions as a glue for relations between kinship groups, economic functions related to the distribution of resources, and cultural functions in preserving traditional values and forming collective identities. However, the practice of belis is not a static system. It continues to undergo transformation along with social dynamics, changes in economic structure, and the development of community culture. Thus, belis can be understood as a cultural practice that is flexible and adaptive to changes in the times, while reflecting the negotiation process between tradition and modernity.

Socially, the belis tradition creates harmony but sometimes causes tension in interactions between families. Economically, the belis tradition that follows the old system of rules and norms adds to the burden on the man's family. Meanwhile, culturally, the belis tradition is preserved through the mechanism of cultural essentialism, and at the same time experiences changes following the mechanism of cultural constructivism.

Second, the affirmative policy on belis which is manifested in the Village Regulation, has been proven to create quite significant changes in both social, economic, and cultural aspects. The affirmative policy has also been proven to raise new hopes for indigenous people in the Abenaho District who have the potential to be more integrative. The affirmative policy on belis has made quite a significant contribution to the creation of more inclusive social integration. The more indigenous people in the Abenaho District open themselves to the process of modernization through social change mechanisms, the more possibilities there are for changes in belis that can be accepted by the Papuan people.

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