

Four Inter-Ethnic Marriages of Two Chinese–Kaili Couples and Two Arab–Kaili Couples *Study Hybrid Identity*

Moh. Kurniadi Hendry Ekodiyanto¹, Muh. Abduh Dwi Putra¹, Moh. Fajar Agustian² and Rosmawati²

¹*Student in Postgraduate of Forensic Science, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia*

²*Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Tadulako University, Palu, Indonesia*

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Abstract: Marriage is the process of forming a new family and social relationship. In the past, the Kaili community was aware of endogamy marriage system, which does not allow to do marriage with ethnicity other than Kaili. But, with the development of era, ethnicities such as ethnic Chinese and Arabs have entered the Kaili ethnic or Kaili ethnic settlements. Ethnic societies have occurred, and today, there are many who make different ethnic marriages. The purpose of this study is to describe the differences in ethnic marriage problems where different ethnic marriages often occurred in the Kaili ethnic community. The research subjects were four different ethnic couples - the marriage of two Chinese-Kaili couples and two Arab-Kaili couples. This descriptive research was conducted by collecting the information through passive and active observation followed by the interview with the subject. Data analysis was conducted by grouping data from observations, interviews, and field notes and then interpreted. The results obtained from this study were from the four different ethnic couples. The majority have obstacles related to the blessing of parents and family, but thanks to the beliefs and efforts of each pair to convince parents and family, the marriage can be done. This happens due to of differences in culture and point of view on life. Therefore, in this case, marital adjustment is required. The greater the cultural differences, the greater the difference in communication both in language and in nonverbal cues. Thus, it can be concluded that communication is the main thing required in the matter of adjusting different ethnic marriages.

1 INTRODUCTION

Marriage is the process of forming a new family and social relationship. When a man and a woman marry, each of them brings their own cultural values, attitudes, beliefs, and styles of adaptation into their marriage (Haviland, 2017). Marital adjustment is the process which the married couple adjusts their behavior, personality, and even the way of life that has previously become the habit of self (Kessing, 1991). In marriage, it is also united two different cultures, different backgrounds, different tribes (Koentjaraningrat, 2002).

In the past, the Kaili community (which is tribe from Central Sulawesi) was aware of endogamy marriage system. A marriage that does not allow to marry with ethnicity other than Kaili. However, with the development of the era, ethnicities such as Chinese and Arabs have entered Kaili ethnic or Kaili

ethnic settlements. Ethnic societies have occurred, and today, there are many who make different in ethnic marriages.

In Chinese families, men are considered very valuable, as the successor of the family (Skinner in Afif, 2012). In Chinese society, families play a big role in preserving culture because family is the institution that supports upholding and preserving Chinese cultural practices. The Chinese, despite expressing liberal views on relations between ethnic and interfaith, do not like mixed marriages. When a member of a Chinese family marries someone from another ethnic or religious group, that person is considered "missing" from the family (Hefner, 2007).

Arab descendants have spread throughout all parts of Indonesia, and its existence continues to grow and develop in Indonesia. This is because of the strong tradition of retaining descent by means of a marriage like sekufu' (fellow Arabs) (Suroyyah,

2014). With the rapid development and the existence of modernization everywhere, the Arab community especially in Indonesia, are seemed not to collapse by the flow of modernity. Sekufu's marriage tradition is maintained in their own way.

Ethnic marriage is an inter-ethnic marriage. It is a process of unifying various ethnic groups biologically and forming a new generation with hybrid character traits. By looking at Chinese and Arabic ethnic phenomena and traditions that have been explained previously, then there must be some problems occurred when Kailis married the ethnicities that mentioned above. Hence, authors conducted this research to study and describe what problems occurred in inter-ethnic marriages, which are Chinese-Kaili couples and Arab-Kaili couples.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study was to describe different ethnic marriage problems where different ethnic marriages often occurred in the Kaili ethnic, a community in Palu, Central Sulawesi.

The research subjects were four inter-ethnic couples - the marriage of two Chinese-Kaili couples and two Arab-Kaili couples in Palu. This descriptive research was conducted by collecting the information through passive and active observation followed by interview with the subject.

Data collection was conducted in qualitative approach. Selecting the informants was conducted by purposive sampling, which is choosing certain people who can provide data or in-depth information. Data analysis method was conducted by editing data of observation result, interview, and field record, and then categorized the data according to problem formulation, interpreting data, and drew the conclusion.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Marriage is a very sacred bond, whether it is a physical bond or an inner bond and as a process of unification between two distinct individuals from different cultures, customs, values, traits and family. Practically, in the community, it is very rare for families to marry their children with different tribes because the strata in different tribes may be lower or higher. Thus, it becomes a personal insult to the family shall their descent married to a lower strata or social class. Therefore, the process of marriage

adjustment in an inter-ethnic marriage is presumably not easy and has many obstacles.

Marital adjustment is a process of adaptation between the married couples such as making communication adjustments, adjustment of living together, adjustments with the partner's family, and any adjustments that aim to avoid conflicts within the household.

The results obtained from this study were from the four different married couples. The majority have obstacles related to the blessing of parents and family about their marriage. In the first Chinese-Kaili couple, the woman's father initially did not approve their marriage because he thought the age of the couple was considered too young to marry. Whereas there is no law in Indonesia that regulates the age limit of a person to marry. While, the second Chinese-Kaili couple, one who did not approve their marriage was from the woman's family, not her parents. However, since they came from the same Church, so, the woman's family saw and judged that their spiritual attitudes were good. That was the reason why the marriage was finally approved. As Hefner (2007) has pointed out that Chinese considers religious issue in determining one to be married. Therefore, the second Chinese-Kaili couple, the family finally blessed because they saw the religious similarity of the couple.

Then a different thing happened to the first Arab-Kaili couple, where they did not experience the disagreement from both families considering that they have known and close each other for a long time. While in the second Arab-Kaili couple, there was a conflict between the two families because they came from two different ethnics. It cannot be denied because the Arab tradition is known to hold the rule that the marriage of the descendant of children must be with fellow Arabs. Even the man's family had a desire to matchmaking him, the determination and desire of the couple lies in the assurance to the families that their marriage will run smoothly and well due to the good faith of both.

The same thing can be seen in the previous research by Ali (2011). He stated that there is a prohibition for a sharifah (woman in Arabs sayyid) in the case of marriage to non-sayyids by reason of maintaining a descendant who has been attached to a sharifah. Arab descendants assume that marriage that occurs with sharifah with non-sayyids will destroy the attributes of their descent. Whereas for sayyid men who are married to non-sharifah women have no influence on their descent because men carry lineage or patriarchal traditions.

In another previous study by Rizkiati (2012), it is mentioned in the results of her research that endogamy marriage is maintained because of the background of culture that is held firmly by Arab descendants. The strong desire to maintain her identity as an Arab descendant by limiting the selection of partners in marriage. The efforts to purify blood descent, trust, and security of the property are maintained. In addition to marriages carried out on the basis of emotional or mutual love, the parents also have an important role in the selection process of mate, namely by conducting a matchmaking system. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the second Arab-Kaili couple, the man's family had intended to arrange his marriage with the candidate whom chosen for him.

From the facts mentioned above, in different ethnic marriages, the problem tends to come from before the marriage. Thus, pre-marital adjustment is required. This pre-marital adjustment apart from the couple's determination in convincing parents and family also concerns the role of the couple's family. Judging from the processes of the four couples above, it appears that their family can solve the problems that arise well. Thus, a good settlement can make harmony in the family. A good marital adjustment is characterized by the ability of family members to understand the different views between their family members. A good adjustment will be achieved in this way compared to if one member of the family has to give up or dissent is silenced.

Another main problem in communication between different ethnic marriage is the adjustment of communication patterns that require mutual understanding between one another due to cultural differences. If there is no mutual understanding between different ethnic groups when these two types of culture are united, then miscommunication often arises. This difficulty could lead to more communication errors, more sentence errors, more likely misunderstandings, and more misperceptions. If this is applied to the world of marriage (household), the more cultural differences between the two partners, the harder it is to adapt to a marriage. In addition, the more differences between the two extended families, the difficulty of adapting would increase because basically a large family (tribal family) is very influential on individuals. This indicates that problems in marriage would be more complex, especially if communication is unhealthy. For this reason, mutual understanding of each other's culture is absolutely necessary to minimize this problem. Though it cannot be denied that mutual understanding of a

partner's culture does not guarantee freedom from misunderstanding (arising out of feeling offended) for culturally different partner.

Every couple who has been married would very much hope to be formed and increased a psychological well-being, but, it is very difficult to achieve if the marriage comes from two different cultures. In terms of dimensions, couples married to different cultural backgrounds would find it difficult to make full acceptance of their spouses and extended family because the person has a very different principle from others.

Parental treatment of children born to different ethnic marriages is also necessary, especially to introduce every element of behavior from the two different cultures, such as cultural background, communication and so on which can be embedded in children to become the reference of the cultural recognition both parents. Both parents must understand how to educate children, to make both parents' cultures well-known by the children.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Marital adjustment is not an absolute state but a continuous process. Adjustment of inter-ethnic marriage is a process of bringing the differences that exist between couples with different ethnic backgrounds in the form of culture, life view, adjustment to life or new things, and adjustments to communication. Thus, happiness and hope in marriage can be fulfilled. The greater the cultural differences, the greater the challenge in communication both in language and in nonverbal cues. Thus, it can be concluded that communication becomes the main thing required in the matter of adjusting different ethnic marriages.

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