

Marriage System in Arabian Culture

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Abstract - Marriage makes the married couple change the basic functions of the family that a family is a unit of engagement which is also a unit of residence which is marked by the presence of economic cooperation, has the function to proliferate, as a place to socialize or to educate children and help protect the weak, especially care for elderly people. In other words, the selection of a suitable candidate is aimed to form a marriage, where the marriage will have an influence on the husband or the wife and also to the families of both parties. The selection of a suitable candidate for a marriage in a society is not all the same, in certain societies there are those who give absolute freedom for the women to choose the suitable candidate themselves, but there are also those who give certain requirements, which means that they do not give the freedom for the women to choose their own suitable candidate for a marriage and they have to choose a man who come from the same social class as them. Such a form of marriage is called endogamy and endogamy marriage will be bound together in a certain group or association in which its limit is decided strictly. Regulations about endogamy are formed by certain society to arrange a marriage in such a way so that they form goals achievement for the society itself. The selection of a suitable candidate by the parents for the daughter has the sole purpose in which for the sake of the family's interest. Of course the family's reputation and the wealth of both families will be at stake in every marriage because a marriage is an important step in bringing a family to a higher social class, for example, a woman who comes from a rich family but also from a low caste gets a man of a higher caste, then the woman will gain a high status based on the caste that is carried by the man as a married couple.

Keywords: Daughter; Family; Marriage; Parents

I. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of ways to continue the family's lineage; however, it has various consequences involving the family itself including husband and wife. Basically, the process in mate selection before a marriage will depend on the system followed by the family. The system itself is different among families. Ideally, the selection process for men is based on their own personal preference in choosing their future bride. Similarly for women they can be married by any men whom they have a relationship with. In certain societies, however, the mate selection and marriage issues are related to a certain religion, custom, rules and culture.

The preservation of old norms and customs is by maintaining cultural and traditional values by developing a dynamic, flexible and selective actualization and adjusting with ever changing and developing situation and condition (Widjaya, 1976). Culture and traditional values can be developed in social life. In addition, old norms and customary laws are maintained as long as they do not

destroy and be in conflict with the existing culture. Likewise, the Arabic ethnic still maintain their custom especially in mate selection. Family plays role in the selection of a mate for daughters; therefore, women in the family have no right to choose their own couple.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Research methods used was qualitative research to describe the feeling, attitude and things experienced by women whom their marriage is arranged by their families and parents and to uncover the role of family in mate selection for daughters among Arabic ethnic, family perception toward their daughters and family reaction toward daughter who married with non-Arabic man. The analysis unit was individual and group.

III. RESEARCH RESULT

A marriage is a general habit in a family. Every custom acknowledges a marriage as an institution and determines various rigid and complex rules to unite a woman and man appropriately. In general, a culture determines types of gift exchange as an important preliminary activity and certain rules, actions, words or ceremonies to announce to the public to have their awareness and acceptance that a man and a woman will be married and started a family.

As the aforementioned, a marriage is a way to form a new family. It is not only a place to build relationships between husband and wife, but also a series of relationship connection between social networks of their members; therefore, the involvement of parents and family is very important, especially within Arabic ethnic who follows the inter-family marriage system. In the mate selection process, family from future groom and bride will be related. Their family network will be joined through a marriage. Marriage is aimed to tighten the relationship among the families, especially for individuals who will start a family life as husband and wife. Every marriage has its purposes and benefits for both parties or for other aspects related to the marriage, such as economy, bride-price, properties which is the important part of the marriage agreement. Thus, all mate selection systems refer to homogenous marriage as a result of bargaining.

A woman from rich family will have relationships with other rich families and due to her properties she will have higher bargaining power in the marriage market (Goode, 1980). Rich families will consider the woman as a good future wife for their son. Likewise, a woman from high status and position or has power will have high bargaining position. A marriage between man and woman with comparable position from economy or environment sectors is known as homogamy. It is a provision prevailed in most societies, including the advanced one. It is due to

the support from various endogamy rules that expel some exogamy rules.

Endogamy means to marry in the same religion, caste or group. Endogamy marriage is conducted since the future bride and groom felt congeniality. The marriage is generally conducted among the same relatives. On the contrary, exogamy is a marriage conducted by a man and woman from certain outside group. All society has both laws and it is prevailed for groups with different appraisal on the marriage law prevailed in each society. A marriage is a permanent relationship between man and woman and it is considered legal by society based on the prevailing marriage rules. A marriage is aimed to form a family and give legality status for the children who will be born. A marriage is not only to create relationship between man and woman who get married, but also it involves relationship among relatives from each spouse.

Although the basis of a marriage for a couple is an intercourse; however, the relationship has also involved emotional relationship and passion, and political and social relationship (Widjaya, 1976). A marriage made a married couple to change the basic function of a family as a unit of involvement and a living place indicated by economic cooperation into a socialization place or a place to educate children and help and protect the weak, or the elder. In other words, the selection of a mate is aimed to form a marriage where it will have influence on husband or wife and all relatives from both sides.

There is a general prohibition in selecting a mate, which is *sumbang* marriage. *Sumbang* marriage is an absolute prohibition to have sexual relationship within direct family. The prohibition is in the form of customary and cultural provision prevailed in the society known as exogamy, which is an obligation to marry between certain firm determined relationships. The origin of and the preservation of prohibition of *sumbang* marriage is still an unsolved issue. An assumption that exogamy is aimed to avoid close relative marriage that could cause genetic defect is ruled out. The prohibition has existed since million years before people know about the effect of a marriage on congenital abnormalities.

Warnick (1987) stated that the important thing in exogamy marriage is that the marriage guarantees social stability. Competition in love among men or among brothers could bring chaos in the *sumbang* family and blood shed or it could hamper cooperation that could be used to develop the culture.

The prohibition of *sumbang* marriage has encouraged people to build relationship with others in order to be able to find their mate. Basically, human is a gunner without power to control; therefore, if there is no prohibition on *sumbang* marriage, human might able to kill each other and destroy themselves.

The selection of a mate for marriage is different in every society. Some societies might give full freedom to women to choose their own mate. Some might give straight provision means that women have no right to choose their own mate and they have to choose their mate within the same group, which is known as endogamy marriage and it is a common type of marriage among Arabic descent society. An endogamy marriage will be bound in a group where limitations are determined firmly.

The rule on endogamy is formed by a certain society to arrange a marriage in such way that it can achieve the society's goal. Selection of mate by parents for their daughter is conducted with certain aim such as for the family interest. In addition, the family's image and wealth will be at risk in a marriage since marriage is an important step to raise the social status of a family. For example, if a woman from a wealthy family with low caste married a man with higher caste the woman will have higher status based on the caste of her husband.

IV. FAMILY AND MATE SELECTION FOR DAUGHTER IN ARABIC DESCENT FAMILY

Marriage ritual is a general custom in a family. Every culture admits that marriage is an institution and determines some rigid and complicated rules to unite a woman and a man appropriately. In general, a culture determines a type of gift exchange as an important preliminary activity. Certain procedures, actions, words or ceremonies are established to make the public aware of and accept the reality that a man and a woman are planning on living together and starting a family. The point is that a marriage is an arena to form a new family where it is not only an institution for the relationship between husband and wife, but also as a series of relationship bond among social networks of its members. Therefore, parents and family involvement is very important, especially in Arabic descent society following inter family marriage system. The marriage system is based on kinship or at least from the same tribe since they are bound to their group and culture (in group feeling), which is the manifestation of kinships and value systems where parents (especially the father) has the power to choose mates for his children. The obedience of the children has been inculcating since their childhood and it is not merely related to marriage. It particularly happens to a daughter, whom considered as a gold mine by the parents. As an illustration, a daughter should be accompanied by other women when she travels or goes outside. Allowing a daughter to be accompanied by a man, even though their relatives, is considered taboo or unfavorable.

Arabic people still consider marriage system as a good value and they maintain it up until now. The marriage between Arabic people is inter-family, marriage, particularly from the uncle's line, for example a woman who is married to a son of her uncle within a relationship of cousin. This type of marriage is expected by the Arab descent and it is called "marriage preference". However, type of marriage often occur among the Arab descent is endogamy marriage, which is a marriage in its collectivity as Arab descent. The prominent kinship system is patrilineal in nature.

The lineage principle followed by Arabic ethnic is bilateral or parental principles considering the kinship relationship from a father's or a mother's side. Someone can be a member of kinship from a mother's or father's side, thus the kinship relationship will be wider due to the marriages.

Membership in a kinship system can be divided into two groups. First, close relatives or known as insider. The insider is formed due to cognation. This kinship group is the determinant and the members are hand in hand in controlling the family's dignity and have strong solidarity.

Second, distant relatives are every individual who involved in the family due to the marriage relationship. Members of families included in insider are: a. Siblings; b. Biological parents; c. Biological grandparents; d. Biological parents of grandparents; e. Biological children; f. Biological grandchildren; g. Children of biological grandchildren; h. Biological great-grand children; I. Biological grandchild niece/nephew; j. Children of biological grandchild niece/nephew; k. Biological great-grand children from siblings. If someone does not belong to one of those members, but he/she has a relationship based on a marriage to one of the members, he/she belongs to distant relatives.

V. CONCLUSION

Arabic ethnic still maintains their custom in mate selection, particularly. The family has an important role in mate selection for daughters; therefore, a daughter has no right to choose her own mate. The role of family in selecting mates for the daughter in Arabic Ethnic is very important since they follows inter-family marriage system and based on heredity. A marriage expected by Arabic people is an inter-family, marriage particularly from uncle lines. For example, a woman married to the son's uncle who is in a cousin relationship (misanan). This type of marriage is called "marriage preferences". A daughter has no chance to determine her own mate; she has to choose her mate from the same group. A marriage system of Arab descent is based on kinship system or at least in the same tribe since they are bound in their group and culture (in group feeling).

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