



GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN THE MALO'OHAMAWA TRADITION IN GORONTALO

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore and analyze gender discrimination practices in the Malo'ohamawa tradition in Gorontalo. The research location is in Gorontalo Province covering all districts and cities. Primary data used in this study are the results of interviews with sources and informants, in contrast secondary data are the results of research, journals, and books related to this research topic. This research is important because there has been no comprehensive research on the Malo'ohamawa tradition. This study uses a qualitative method with a philosophical anthropological approach. There are three most important findings in the study, first, the Molo'ohamawa tradition provides an experience of anxiety for every woman who will have sex on the first night of marriage. Secondly, in practice, the Malo'ohamawa tradition requires women to prove that their bodies are still virgins or have never been touched by men other than their husbands. This must be proven by the discharge of blood from the vagina. Thirdly, women receive social sanctions in the form of domestic violence, bad stereotypes from their husbands, and their discharge if on the first night, they are known to be no longer virgins or their vaginas do not bleed.

Keywords: Gender discrimination; malo'ohamawa tradition; customary marriage

1. INTRODUCTION

In social activities, Gorontalo applies the principle of patriarchy. Patriarchy is a social system that places men as figures of authority in social groups. The position of men is higher than that of women in aspects of social, cultural and economic life. This is manifested in the mopo'ohama tradition in the culture of the Gorontalo people. Simply put, the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition is one of the customs that has taken root in the Gorontalo community. This tradition reflects local cultural values that are rich in meaning, especially in relation to the social and religious life of the community. However, behind the nobility of this tradition, there are a number of practices that have the potential to strengthen gender discrimination, as seen from the different roles and positions between men and women in their implementation.

This is in line with the view that traditional culture often reflects a patriarchal value system, where women tend to be positioned lower than men in the social structure.¹

In the context of Gorontalo, gender discrimination contained in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition can be seen from the proof of virginity on the first night proven by blood coming out of the vagina. On the one hand, only women are required to prove their purity, while men do not prove their virginity. In other words, the malo'ohama tradition practices gender discrimination. The conflict between traditional values and demands for gender equality opens up a wider discussion space regarding gender discrimination in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition and how Gorontalo society can navigate this change without ignoring their cultural heritage. This study was conducted to reveal the extent to which gender discrimination occurs in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition, as well as how society perceives gender equality in the context of local culture.

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the forms of gender discrimination found in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition in Gorontalo. This study also aims to understand how the role and position of women in the tradition are compared to men, and how patriarchal values in local culture influence the implementation of the tradition. In addition, this study will explore community perceptions of gender equality issues in the context of the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of gender equality discourse in traditional culture and become a foundation for efforts to reconstruct traditions that are more inclusive and fair for all genders.

The hypothetical argument of this study is that the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition in Gorontalo historically and structurally reflects gender discrimination that places women in a subordinate position compared to men. The tradition is thought to be built on patriarchal values that strengthen the role of men as the main authority holders, while women's roles are more limited to domestic tasks or rituals that are considered less significant in the social structure. Gender discrimination in this tradition may be seen from the unequal division of roles, limited access for women to important decision-making, and stereotypes that restrict women's freedom to participate fully in social life. This study hypothesizes that although the Gorontalo community continues to maintain this tradition, there is potential for resistance or adaptation from women's groups who are beginning to realize gender injustice in the socio-cultural context.

2. METHODS

This research is qualitative and aimed at uncovering phenomena and symptoms in depth. The approach used is a value philosophy approach with a phenomenological pattern. The data sources for this research include traditional leaders, cultural figures, hulango (community leaders), religious figures, and the general public. Data collection methods are in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis related to the malo'ohamawa tradition. The data analysis technique includes data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion

Specifically, this study was conducted in Gorontalo Province, covering five districts and one city. This location was chosen not only because this tradition is carried out by women

¹ Hairunisa Binti Karim and Titin Samsudin, 'Peran Perempuan Dalam Adat Istiadat Gorontalo', *As-Syams: Journal Hukum Islam*, 1.2 (2020), 96–120.

throughout Gorontalo, but also so that the data collected represents Gorontalo women in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition. The object of study in this study is the phenomenon of the Malo'ohama tradition carried out by the Gorontalo community. The Malo'ohama tradition was chosen because in practice, the Malo'ohama tradition is normalized by the community as a good practice. However, in reality, the practice of Malo'ohama secretly perpetuates gender discrimination against the bride on the first night of marriage. Because, after the first night, the next day, the cloth that is used as a base for the bed used by the bride and groom will be checked by traditional leaders. This aims to find out whether the bride's virginity was really obtained by the groom or not. Unfortunately, this proof is only carried out on the bride and not on the groom. This treatment gives rise to the problem of gender discrimination against the bride.

Primary data used are the results of interviews with informants including; Muhammad Shafwan Ali as a religious figure, Chairman of the Gorontalo Province Customary Institution, Customary Stakeholders (Utoliya) of North Gorontalo, Bone Bolango Customary Figures, Armin Ahmad and Nurutin Polamolo both as Hulango, and informants with the initials N, RST, ST, who are parties involved in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition. Secondary data used are books and journals that are relevant to the research topic as supporting data.²

Primary data collection through interviews in this study using the snowball sampling method, namely key informants appoint people who know the problem being studied to complete their information and people who are appointed and appoint others if the information is inadequate and so on until the information from the informant is as needed in answering the problems in the study. Key informants in this study were AD Khali as the head of the Gorontalo Province Customary Institution, Karim Laiya as the Secretary of the Gorontalo Province Customary Institution and Karmin Delatu as the Gorontalo City Customary Stakeholder. The use of this snowball technique was stopped if the data obtained was considered saturated.³

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Gender Discrimination

Gender is the difference between men and women that is socially and culturally constructed that relates to roles, behaviors, and traits that are considered appropriate for men and women that are interchangeable. According to Mansur Fakhri, gender is a trait that is inherent in men and women that is socially and culturally constructed. The term gender is distinguished from the term sex.⁴ Gender in all aspects of human life creates differences between women and men including the social creation of women's lower position than men. For example, women are known to be gentle, beautiful, emotional, or motherly. While men are considered strong, rational, manly, mighty. The characteristics of the nature itself are

² Sulistyawati, *Penelitian Kualitatif: Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Jurnal EQUILIBRIUM* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2023),

³ John W Cresswell, *Research Design: Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif Dan Mixed*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010).

⁴ Mansour Fakhri, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial (Edisi Klasik Perdikan)* (Yogyakarta: INSISTS, 2017), p. 8.

interchangeable traits. This means that there are men who are emotional, gentle, motherly, while there are also women who are strong, rational and mighty.⁵

Gender differences between men and women with the differentiation of roles and positions as the reality in today's world will not be a problem as long as it is fair. However, in reality, the differences in roles limit the movement of both of them, thus giving rise to injustice. A girl is assumed not to need higher education, not to need further education because in the end she only focuses on domestic work. This analogy illustrates how the infiltration of gender injustice or gender bias is applied by society. According to Fikih, gender bias is a system and structure that places both men and women as victims of the system. Furthermore, according to Fikih, gender bias can take the form of subordination, marginalization, stereotypes, violence against women, and double workloads. These forms of gender injustice are interrelated and influence each other, including the following forms of gender injustice.⁶

b. Molo'ohamawa Tradition

The *Malo'ohamawa* tradition has a long and complex history because it is related to social, cultural and religious norms. Several factors that can influence the birth of this tradition include the control of offspring in marriage, so that *Malo'ohamawa* must be carried out because it is related to fertility problems for women. Historically, the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition cannot be separated from the history of Islamization in Gorontalo. The process of Islamization did not eliminate customs but integrated them with Islamic teachings as stated in the four aspects of Gorontalo regional customs, namely welcoming guests, coronations, marriages, funerals and other traditional ceremonies.⁷

In carrying out the Malo'ohama Tridicipline, there are 6 (six) stages including; Carrying out physical and spiritual care, Tungguwalo, Modepita Maharu, Mopotuluwu, Modelo, and Mo po dumango Bulainditi.⁸ Each process has a different purpose and implementation time, the following is an explanation:

1) Carrying out physical and spiritual care

Three months before marriage or at least 40 days before the marriage ceremony, preparations related to physical and spiritual matters begin. The bride and groom are placed in a special room called *huwali lo wadaka*, meaning a make-up room. Before entering the *huwali lo wadaka*, they are bathed first with flower water or *taluhu yilonuwa* with the following instructions:

*The mountain is full of trees
I'll make you a potilahu
My mother is here to help me
To huwali molamahu*

Holy water that smells fragrant
Which is lifted with a porcelain jar

⁵ Moerti Hadiati Soeroso, *Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga Dalam Perspektif Yuridis-Viktimologis* (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2010), p. 15.

⁶ Fakhri.

⁷ Masni Ahama, Tokoh Adat Gorontalo Utara, wawancara: Senin 13 Februari 2023

⁸ D Rahim, I Ahmad, and N Ismail, 'Pergeseran Adat Modepita Dilonggato Dalam Proses Pernikahan Masyarakat Gorontalo', *JUDICATUM: Jurnal Dimensi ...*, 1.1 (2023), 22–30.

To wet the powder
In a holy and fragrant room

2) Waiting for you

Tungguwalo or steam bath uses many traditional spices in its implementation.⁹The purpose of this ritual is to remove dirt that sticks to the bride's body. which comes out with sweat, through the pores and gives off a fragrance with a distinctive aroma which has the property of improving blood circulation and lightening the body, especially for brides who are getting married.¹⁰There are two types of Twaiwalo method, the first is by boiling all the spices and leaves used in the Twaiwalo process. The ingredients are lemongrass or timbuale, castor leaves, kepok banana leaves, betel leaves, pandan leaves, dundo Awalahu or turmeric leaves, kaffir lime leaves, cardamom, cloves, masoi wood, bungale others mentioned in the Gorontalo language are bilo bohu, shoots , dumbaya, bohu, onumo leaves and humopoto or kencur.¹¹

The second method is to use a censer as a medium or in Gorontalo language it is called polutube. The ingredients used are coconut shell, dried langsung skin, cinnamon, dried spices and white sugar.¹²All the ingredients are burned until they produce smoke which is then used by the bride to smoke her body. The bride and groom sit on a bench and are covered with cloth with a censer underneath, this steam bath is done every Friday for three months before the wedding which has a function in addition to skin care also to keep the female organs tighter.¹³

The ingredients used for Tungguwalo are timbuale or lemongrass, pandan leaves. cardamom, cloves, kaffir lime, masoi wood, bungale or bangle, dundo alawahu or turmeric leaves. Others mentioned in the Gorontalo language such as bilo bohu, pucuk, dumbaya and bohu Humopoto and Onumo leaves are also used for steam baths which have the function of providing a fragrant and fresh aroma, can provide a warm and aromatic touch in the steam bath experience. The use of these spices is not only for the aspect of physical cleanliness, but also has symbolic and traditional values in bridal preparation. The Gorontalo people often associate these spices with fragrance, warmth and good luck in marriage. This practice reflects the cultural heritage and local wisdom that is upheld in the wedding tradition in Gorontalo.¹⁴

c. Modepito Mahar

The custom of modepita maharu is not missed because dowry is a mandatory thing in a marriage. In essence, it is the obligation of the man or prospective husband to give a dowry to the bride, either in the form of money or other objects, the amount of dowry is not determined, this depends on the ability of the man and the consent of the woman. The equipment of the tonelo (dowry) tradition consisting of 13 types of cultural objects are as follows: a) Tonggu, which is the opening word meaning the gift of custom to the woman's parents b) Kati, which is the measure of dignity c) Tonelo, which is Mahar or dowry d) Tutu lo polidulu, which is a living room decoration e) Buluwa lo Umoonu, which is fragrant fragrance f) Bunggalo, which is moving from the dressing room to the bridal room g) Luwalo, which is

⁹ OH, masyarakat. Wawancara: Hari Selasa 19 September 2023

¹⁰ Nurutin Polamolo, Hulango Kabila. Wawancara: Hari Kamis 16 November 2023.

¹¹ Wawancara Nurutin Polamolo sebagai Hulango tanggal 16 November 2023

¹² Wawancara Nurutin Polamolo, 2023

¹³ Wawancara OH masyarakat Hari Selasa tanggal 19 September 2023

¹⁴ Armin Ahmad, Hulango Suwawa. Wawancara: Hari Jum'at 24 November 2023

leaving the dressing room. h) Hei lo Alanguluwa, which is the release of responsibility from the father and mother. i) Dudelo, which is a request for permission to bring the bride. j) Tilolo, sincere acceptance of Ikhlās from the groom's family k) Wulu lo O'ato, namely cleansing the nature of the mazmumah l) Wu'adu ta a'to, removing underwear m) Pate lo tohe. means turning off the lights.¹⁵

d. Mopotuluhu

Mopotuluhu putting the bride to bed, also known as the lo uhui custom, which is the night custom. Mopotuluhu must be at the bride's house, this is to respect the woman and respect her family, ensure the safety and comfort of the bride and strengthen family ties, in addition this custom has a symbol indicating the transition from single life to married life by giving the bride to adapt to her new environment. The first stage consists of the bungalow (opening the door) at this stage is the first post that must be passed by the groom, when stepping foot to open the door of the room, Lambango pihito (stepping into the room) pate lo tohe (turning off the lights) dehu lo kulambu (closing with a mosquito net) wu'adu ta'ato (opening underwear) heloheputo (removing the pillow) Waupo tutu (holding the breast), Dilo (kissing), woopo (hugging).¹⁶

e. Modelo

After it is found that the bride is still a virgin, it means that the bride has been accepted into the husband's family, then a procession is carried out where the bride and groom go to the groom's house called modelo or unduh mantu. The modelo procession cannot be carried out if the husband and wife have not had sex, because the relationship between husband and wife is considered an important part of marriage. Furthermore, in the modelo event, the bride and groom are flanked by mothers towards the vehicle that has been prepared. Upon arriving home, the bride is greeted with a foot-watering procession and the pinning of a ring by her mother-in-law with the words otolaamu tilaamu woli yamamu, odunggamu tilaamu woli yamamu meaning you leave your mother and father, you also meet your mother and father. Contains a symbolic meaning about responsibility and respect in a new family bond, because when someone gets married they will leave direct responsibility to their biological parents. But on the other hand, they will find their father and mother-in-law who must be respected and considered as substitutes for their biological parents in their new family.¹⁷

The bride and groom enter the house and sit on the dais while saying "Alhamdulillah wala tilamu wau liyamamu lohama olemu piyo-piyohu" which means "Alhamdulillah your mother and father-in-law received you well." The bride and groom are treated to cakes and drinks as a form of respect and are continued with offerings to the guests from the bride's side. The procession of peeling bananas by hulango to be circled around the bride's lips, the bananas that are circled are not to be eaten by the bride, they are only circled.¹⁸

f. Mopodumango Bulainditi

The final session of the Gorontalo traditional wedding tradition is mo po dumango bulainditi, a tradition in which the bride and groom become guests of honor when someone

¹⁵ Tim Pengurus Kerja Sama Pemda Kabupaten Gorontalo Forum Pengkajian Islam Al-Kautsar Gorontalo Tokoh Adat U Duluwo Limolo pohala'a Gorontalo dan Tim Akademisi Gorontalo Hasil Seminar Adat Gorontalo, Tata Upacara Adat Gorontalo, Puhutu Aadati Lo Hulondalo, 2008, h. 168

¹⁶ Nurutin Polamolo, Hulango di Kabila Bone Bolango Wawancara: Hari Jum'at 24 November 2023

¹⁷ Lisdawati Muda Dosen IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo, Wawancara: Kamis 7 Desember 2023

¹⁸ Muhammad Uwaka, Tokoh Adat Batuda'a Wawancara: Hari Jum'at 17 November 2023

gets married. Guest brides wear special clothes that reflect their honor, at the wedding they are present to provide support and congratulations to the married couple, while showing their presence by dressing like a bride and groom. The guest bride tradition is often also a way to inform

People who could not attend that they have married. By wearing special clothes and attending the ceremony, they provide information to the community or family who could not attend in person. This is a way to share the joy of their marriage with those closest to them even though they cannot attend the ceremony.¹⁹

After being a guest bride and groom and going through all the traditional wedding ceremonies, the bride and groom usually have more freedom to move around and spend time together without the constraints of wedding protocol. They can enjoy moments with family and friends without the pressure of a formal ceremony. This is often a more relaxed and festive time after the formal stages of the wedding are over.

g. Customary Marriage

Looking deeper into marriage in customary law in general, it does not only mean a "civil contract", but also a "customary contract" and at the same time a "kinship and neighborly contract". So the occurrence of a marriage bond does not merely have consequences for civil relations, such as the rights and obligations of husband and wife, joint property, the position of children, the rights and obligations of parents, but also concerns customary relations of inheritance, family, kinship, and neighborliness as well as concerning traditional and religious ceremonies. Marriage in customary contracts is a marriage that has legal consequences for the customary law applicable in the community concerned. These legal consequences have existed before the marriage took place, for example with the existence of a proposal relationship which is a "rasan sanak" (relationship between children, bachelors and maidens) and rasan tuha (relationship between the parents of the prospective husband and wife).²⁰

According to customary law, there are 3 (three) types of marriage systems, endogamy, exogamy and Eleutherogamy. 1) Endogamy, in this system people are only allowed to marry someone from their own family tribe. This marriage system is rare in Indonesia. According to Van Vollenhoven, there is only one region that practically recognizes this endogamy system, namely the Toraja region.²¹ 2) Exogamy, In this system, people are required to marry other tribes. Marrying within one's own tribe is prohibited. This system can be found in the areas of Gayi, Alas, Tapanuli, Minangkabau, South Sumatra, Buru and Seram.²² 3) Eleutherogamy, The Eleutherogamy system is different from the two systems above, which have prohibitions and requirements. Eleutherogamy does not recognize these prohibitions and requirements. The prohibitions contained in this system are those related to family ties concerning lineage (descent) such as marrying a mother, grandmother, biological child, grandchild, also with a biological sibling, sibling of a father or mother. Or the prohibition of marriage with musyarah (in-law) such as marrying a stepmother, mother-in-law, stepchild.²³

¹⁹ Yunus Bala, Pemangku Adat Bone Bolango, wawancara: Hari Jum'at tanggal 19 Januari 2024

²⁰ Hilman Hadikusuma, *Hukum Perkawinan Adat* (Bandung, 1983), p. 22.

²¹ Soerjono Soekanto, *Intisari Hukum Keluarga* (Bandung: Citra Aditiya Bakti, 1992), p. 132.

²² Soekanto.

²³ Soekanto, pp. 132–33.

In the context of traditional marriage in Gorontalo, the marriage system applied is the *eleutherogamy* system. This system allows the Gorontalo people to marry partners from various tribes and cultures, as long as there is no blood relationship or close family ties with the couple. This reflects the openness of Gorontalo culture to differences, while maintaining the basic principles of marriage, namely the prohibition of marriage between close relatives, which aims to maintain genetic health and social harmony.

a. The Bride's Experience of Anxiety on the First Night

The implications of *Malo'ohamawa* for women, especially (N), are that they receive treatment that marginalizes women, on the other hand, N is considered not a virgin on her first wedding night because it is not proven by the bride's blood.²⁴ The experience experienced by (N) was also experienced by (ST). In an interview with the researcher, ST revealed that, on the first night, feelings of worry, panic, and anxiety always enveloped him.²⁵ The case experienced by (ST) highlights the great pressure that is often encountered by women in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition and links honor and virginity with virgin blood on the first night of marriage. In other words, the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition that has been practiced by the Gorontalo community indirectly puts psychological pressure on every Gorontalo woman. This is because a woman's purity is measured through intercourse on the first night, ensuring whether or not there is virgin blood coming out of the vagina.

b. The Requirement for Women to Prove Virginity

The view that links virginity with the hymen is considered an outdated stereotype, where the integrity of the hymen is used as a marker of virginity for unmarried women. Stereotypes about virginity that are deeply rooted in Indonesian society often sideline this feminine character.²⁶ The narrative of virginity continues to be produced with normalization that becomes its own reality. Based on research by Sitorus and Gungun El-Guyani, there are four medical factors related to the tearing of the hymen. First, a hymen that is too fragile can tear due to activities such as sports, horse riding, martial arts, cycling, splits, and so on. Second, a hymen that is too elastic causes no bleeding during first-time sexual intercourse. In fact, there are hymens that have just torn or experience bleeding during childbirth. Third, little blood comes out when the tear occurs so it is not visible. Fourth, there are women who do not have a hymen.²⁷

Field data revealed that the Gorontalo community still practices proving a woman's virginity after the first night as per the rules in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition. In a researcher interview with (RST), he explained that (RST) found his wife bleeding on her wedding night, meaning that according to expectations, his wife was still a virgin. The incident experienced by (RST) illustrates a more traditional and patriarchal understanding of virginity where the presence of virgin blood in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition is considered the only valid indicator.²⁸

²⁴ N, Limboto. Wawancara: Hari Sabtu 25 November 2023

²⁵ RS, Talaga Jaya. Wawancara, Hari Jum'at 1 Desember 2023

²⁶ Nurul Ayu Andari, Hanifah Az Zahra dan Fransiscus Xaverius Sri Sadewo, "Reperesentasi Keperawanan Perempuan dalam Konten Video Tik Tok@blood Indonesia," *Al-Hikmah Media Dakwah Komunikasi Sosial dan Kebudayaan* 12 no.2 (2021): h 142

²⁷ Nisrina Mahdiyah dan Martinus Legowo, "Wacana Keperawanan: Analisis Diskursus Media Instagram Akun Inezkristanti dan channel youtube clarin Hayes." Universitas Negeri Surabaya, nisrina.18008@mhs.unesa.ac.id

²⁸ RST, Talaga Jaya. Wawancara, Hari Jum'at 1 Desember 2023

In the researcher's interview with Maimun regarding virginity blood, she explained that blood is not always necessary if both parties, both men and women, can enjoy intercourse. The absence of blood can be caused by stimulation that causes vaginal secretions. These secretions are produced by various glands around the vagina and cervix, which are a normal part of the vagina's function to maintain moisture, PH balance, and clean and protect the area from infection and irritation. Vaginal secretions vary between individuals and can change depending on the menstrual cycle, hormone levels, or certain health conditions.²⁹

c. Social Sanctions Received by Women in Proving Virginity

Highlighting the negative impact of stigma on virginity in society that can trigger violence against women. As experienced by (N), it was found that (N) experienced physical violence from her husband and also harsh words and curses that she always got as well as pressure from her in-laws because she was considered not to meet the expectations of virginity in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition that has been set by Gorontalo culture.³⁰ Although the customs in the Gorontalo tradition give a high position and honor to a woman, both from the position of women as wives, women as mothers, women as children and women as individuals and women as educators. However, in reality, this position is not as taught by Islam, so that other issues related to customs, other cultural orders in society have a significant influence on women, such as in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition.

Another social sanction that appears in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition is the existence of symbolic violence, which according to Bourdieu there is a dominant class and a dominated class. The dominant class is male and the dominated class is female. Bourdieu as a French sociologist views symbolic violence as a form of domination that is internalized in society. In the context of the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition which requires women to bleed as a sign of honor and purity. Symbolic violence is internalized and considered part of a tradition or social norm that is not realized that it is a form of violence because it occurs very subtly and cannot be recognized and can only be reduced by replacing it with a term that seems lighter and more positive.³¹

Norms maintained in this context the practice of the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition can be understood as a reinforcement of power and social control carried out by groups or communities that have dominant cultural and social capital. The requirement to bleed can be a symbol that shows the existence of hierarchy and control over women's bodies in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition. Bourdieu emphasized that the practice in the tradition will strengthen and maintain the existing social structure, and pressure individuals to meet the norms set by society. The emphasis on the importance of maintaining honor by exploiting women's bodies in this form can be seen as an effort to maintain the existing power structure, in which women are considered objects that must be regulated and controlled by men and society at large. Symbolic violence related to the first night of the bride represents the cultural dominance that subordinates women and sets strict limits on women's sexual expression and autonomy.

The awareness proposed by Beauvoir sees how the right strategy in order to advance women's lives is first women must work, by working women can have the opportunity to

²⁹ Maimun, Dokter Spesialis Kandungan. Wawancara: Sabtu 3 Februari 2024

³⁰ N, Limboto wawancara: Hari Sabtu 25 November 2023

³¹ Ita Musarrofa, "Mekanisme Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan Dalam Rumah Tangga Perspektif Teori Kekerasan Simbolik Pierre Bourdieu, h. 461

develop themselves in the sense of feeling themselves as subjects, second women must continue to learn to become intellectuals, intellectual activities bring women to freedom, provide provisions to face a patriarchal society, which tends to belittle women's abilities. Beauvoir also supports women to write to combat the harassment of oppression against women through the pen. Third women can be actors to carry out social transformation in the fields of education, economy, politics. Transformation also often requires time and ongoing effort, but has the potential to bring positive and inclusive change in society.³²Likewise in the case of N and DB, they must dare to change the decline that befell them, including glorifying themselves and social transformation in the fields of education, economics, politics, culture and social norms through their roles in the family, community and media, they can become agents of change for gender equality, women's rights and rejection of norms that hinder women's freedom and welfare.

The *Malo'ohamawa* tradition reflects gender inequality, where women tend to be placed in subordinate positions compared to men in various aspects of social and ritual life. The practices in this tradition emphasize the role of men as leaders or main decision makers, while women are more involved in symbolic or domestic roles.

This study makes an important contribution to the study of gender and local traditions, particularly in the context of Gorontalo society. By exploring the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition and the gender inequalities contained within it, this study highlights how cultural norms and customs can reinforce patriarchal structures in the social life of the community. This study also fills a gap in the study of the dynamics of gender roles in local Indonesian traditions, providing insight into forms of gender-based discrimination that are often hidden in cultural practices. In addition, this study can be a foundation for social movements that seek to advocate for gender equality by showing that local traditions and cultures need to be evaluated and adjusted to be more inclusive of women, without ignoring the cultural aspects themselves.

The limitations of this study are related to the data sources which are mostly qualitative and rely on interviews and participant observation. This limitation can affect the objectivity of the analysis because the interpretation of the data may be influenced by subjective bias from both the researcher and the respondents. In addition, this study only focuses on certain areas and communities in Gorontalo, so the generalization of the research results to other areas with different cultures and traditions may be less appropriate. Other factors such as time constraints and access to written or oral traditional sources also limit in-depth analysis of gender dynamics in the *Malo'ohamawa* tradition.

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³² Yogie Pranowo, Identitas Perempuan Dalam Budaya Patriarki Sebuah Kajian Tentang Feminisme Eksistensialisme Nawal Elsa 'adawi Dalam Novel Perempuan di Titik Nol, h.66

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