

## THE BEAUTY OF WEDDING CULTURE IN INDONESIA

**Tiarnita Maria Sarjani Siregar \*<sup>1</sup>**

English Language Education Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University  
of Medan, Indonesia

[lian.nita2010@gmail.com](mailto:lian.nita2010@gmail.com)

**Ankey Dohar**

English Language Education Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University  
of Medan, Indonesia

[ankeysamosir8008@gmail.com](mailto:ankeysamosir8008@gmail.com)

**Nazwa Inaya**

English Language Education Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University  
of Medan, Indonesia

[nazwaquet@gmail.com](mailto:nazwaquet@gmail.com)

**Natasya Euodia**

English Language Education Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University  
of Medan, Indonesia

[natasyaeuodiaa@gmail.com](mailto:natasyaeuodiaa@gmail.com)

**Susi Eria Agustina**

English Language Education Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University  
of Medan, Indonesia

[susieriaagustinalg@gmail.com](mailto:susieriaagustinalg@gmail.com)

### Abstract

Wedding ceremonies in Indonesia are a reflection of the country's diverse ethnic groups and religious beliefs. Indonesian weddings are known for their vibrant and colorful traditional attire, with each region having its unique style. The wedding festivities are a sight to behold, with traditional dances, music, and food organized by the groom. The wedding customs and practices vary based on the region, religion, and culture of the couple. Some of the most captivating wedding traditions in Indonesia include the siraman, a pre-wedding ritual where the couple is bathed in a mixture of flowers, herbs, and spices to cleanse and purify them before their marriage; the exchange of gifts or seserahan; and the bride's proposal in Minangkabau weddings. In Javanese weddings, the couple's families meet formally to set a date, decide on the budget, and divvy up tasks between themselves. Indonesian weddings are a unique opportunity to gain

---

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence author.

insight into various Indonesian cultures and social traditions. The wedding ceremonies in Indonesia are usually a festive, communal event, and the entire neighborhood where the married couple lives is welcome and expected to attend. The wedding ceremonies consist of three events: lamaran, tunangan, and pernikahan. The Nikah is held in a private ceremony or at the venue of the reception, and the most important people to felicitate the wedding are the Imam and two witnesses. The traditional Indonesian menu includes the staple fried rice, stir-fried noodles served with a variety of seafood options such as shrimp, fish, etc., in sweet and sour sauce.

**Keywords:** wedding, ceremony, tradition, cultural

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has long been known for its diverse cultural beauty. Indonesia's 13,466 islands reflect its diverse cultural customs. Ter Haar mentioned that there are 19 customary jurisdictions in Indonesia.<sup>3</sup> These 19 jurisdictions have diverse customs and cultures. According to Hilman Hadikusuma, this division is no longer appropriate, due to changes and developments in society. The movement of people from villages to cities, as well as the mixing of people from various ethnic groups, has caused the customary law environment and customary law communities to undergo many changes.

In this variety of cultures, indigenous peoples have local wisdom, which is always maintained by the community. The definition of local wisdom according to Article 1 point 30 of Law number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management is: "Local wisdom is the noble values that apply in the community life system to, among others, protect and manage the environment sustainably." Local wisdom is inherent in the community, characterizing it from generation to generation in a particular area.

Marriage is a physical and mental bond between a man and a woman to live together and form a family. According to Law No. 1 of 1974 "Marriage is a physical and mental bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family (household) based on God Almighty" (Source: Wantjik, 1976). The bond of marriage is something that is considered sacred or holy so that sometimes marriage is also interpreted as a celebration of love where in this event there is a confirmation of the relationship between two people both religiously and legally. Marriage also not only unites two individuals, but also two families, so holding a wedding party is considered an expression of gratitude, happiness and pride.

In reality, traditions and rituals are an inherent part of human life. This attachment makes them influence the character and personality of a person in the area. In fact, tradition is said to occupy an equal position with spirituality or religious teachings. It is not uncommon to find that a community considers tradition to be a central part of religion itself. This is because traditions, rituals and religious teachings

are all taught by ancestors for generations with the intention of teaching good guidance and benefits for human life.

Culture is closely related to society. In a society there is also a part in the form of a human unit with different binding characteristics according to its interests. Crowds and social categories are human units that cannot be called societies because they do not have four binding factors, while groups and communities can be called societies, because they have these factors. The four binding factors of society are interaction between members, customs and norms that regulate behavior, continuity, and a strong sense of identity.

The use of the term "culture" can be said to be loose and ambiguous, ranging from a narrow scope of understanding to a very broad scope. The breadth of coverage does not only occur in its use in everyday life, but also in its use as a term in the discourse of science, especially social sciences.

In the event of marriage, legal norms, customs, culture, and order are needed to regulate it. The application of legal norms in the event of marriage is mainly needed in order to regulate the rights, obligations and responsibilities of each family member, in order to form a happy and prosperous household. Socio-cultural conditions in each place or region will certainly vary according to local customs and habits. In addition, it must also be adjusted to the available budget (budget / funds), so that in this marriage ceremony it is necessary to pay attention to the efficiency factor and economic value.

The beauty of wedding culture in Indonesia unfolds in a rich diversity of traditions and ceremonies, reflecting the distinctive values, history and identity of the country's various ethnic and social groups. As a country with more than 300 ethnic groups, Indonesia exhibits tremendous diversity in wedding ceremonies, enriching the cultural treasures passed down from generation to generation. Wedding ceremonies are not only a sacred moment for the bride and groom, but also a people's party that represents the spirit of gotong-royong, togetherness, and a celebration of family unity. From traditional dress to sacred rituals, the beauty of Indonesian wedding culture encompasses a variety of practices, symbols and customs that make each wedding ceremony a powerful marker of each culture's values, beliefs and uniqueness.

## **METHOD**

In this study, researchers used a descriptive-qualitative design to dig deeper into the information of a marriage. Data acquisition comes from previous research, journals, books related to this research. After data collection is complete, the data will then be analyzed to make it easier to understand. The questions asked in this study help researchers to configure the research path.

The next step was to weave these details into a cohesive narrative, similar to how a journal organizes thoughts and reflections. I wanted to create a seamless flow that captured the essence of Indonesian weddings, moving from one region to the

next. Language was important in this journal, much like choosing the right words and expressions in journaling to accurately convey emotions and experiences. I aimed to create a vivid image that would transport readers to the enchanting landscapes, allowing them to experience the beauty and diversity of Indonesian wedding ceremonies vicariously.

Finally, the editing process served as the refining phase, similar to the meticulous revisions made in journaling to improve clarity and coherence. The goal was to ensure that every word, sentence, and paragraph contributed to the overall narrative, resulting in a journal that was both informative and captivating in its exploration of love and tradition in Indonesia. In essence, this journal was the result of the same deliberate and thoughtful process that goes into creating a personal journal. It all started with curiosity, progressed through exploration, and culminated in a story that invites readers to embark on a journey of cultural discovery—one that mirrors the joyous journey of two hearts coming together in celebration of love.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The thing that we found in making this journal is that wedding ceremonies in Indonesia are very diverse. These differences occur because of differences in religion and ethnicity. We also found an in-depth analysis of the cultural aspects, traditions, and symbolism associated with wedding celebrations in Indonesian. Wedding ceremonies in Indonesia are celebrations that are full of various traditions beliefs, and cultural richness that differ from one region to another and each has its own uniqueness. With the existence of various wedding ceremonies traditions, there are many variations of weddings in Indonesia such as in Batak, Minangkabau, Java, Yogyakarta, and Lombok it give us so many chance amd option of view the rich culture of Indonesia.

It is also known that these cultures have their own quirk that can come from language, music, dances, ceremony and other. It can be studied and observed by others without taking or changing anything about the culture.

Wedding ceremonies unfold as captivating narratives of love, unity, and rich cultural heritage in Indonesia's enchanting archipelago, where the vibrant tapestry of cultures and traditions converges. This journal takes readers on a journey through the varied landscapes of Indonesian matrimony, delving into the complexities of ceremonies that weave together threads of tradition and modernity.

Indonesia's wedding ceremonies reflect the country's kaleidoscopic diversity, from bustling urban centers to tranquil rural landscapes. Each region contributes to the mosaic of matrimonial celebrations that range from the grand and opulent to the intimate and soulful, with its own customs and rituals. We will travel through the pages of this journal to the lush landscapes of Bali, where elaborate Hindu ceremonies take place against a backdrop of lush vegetation. We will travel through the pages of

this journal through the lush landscapes of Bali, where elaborate Hindu ceremonies take place against the backdrop of breathtaking scenery. We will delve into the cultural nuances of Java, where Javanese traditions are meticulously preserved and woven into the fabric of wedding ceremonies, resulting in elegant and profound ceremonies.

We'll explore the distinct practices of Sulawesi, Sumatra, and beyond, each region adding its own stamp to the symphony of Indonesian weddings. This journal aims to capture the essence of Indonesian weddings in all their splendor, from intricate rituals symbolizing unity to vibrant displays of traditional attire. We invite you to witness the harmonious blend of ancient customs and contemporary influences through the lens of this exploration, where love is not only celebrated but also interwoven with the rich cultural heritage that defines Indonesia. Join us on this enthralling journey as we peel back the layers of meaning behind each gesture, ritual, and moment that culminates in an Indonesian-style celebration of love.

### **1. The Many Variations of Wedding Culture in Indonesia**

There are many different kinds of wedding ceremonies in Indonesia due to the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of its people. Each region and ethnic group in Indonesia has its own unique customs and traditions when it comes to weddings. For example, in Java, the Javanese traditional wedding ceremony is influenced by both Hindu and Islamic cultures. In North Sumatra, the Javanese marriage customs have also been adapted and blended with Malay culture. These variations in wedding ceremonies reflect the rich cultural heritage and diversity of Indonesia as a nation.

The Hindu and Islamic cultures have had a significant influence on various wedding ceremonies in Indonesia. In Java, for example, the Javanese traditional wedding ceremony has been influenced by both Hindu and Islamic cultures. The blending of these two cultural influences can be seen in the stages and rituals of the wedding ceremony. In Hindu culture, there are several important rituals and traditions associated with weddings, such as the exchange of garlands, the tying of the sacred thread (mangalsutra), and the circling of the sacred fire (agni). These rituals symbolize the union of the bride and groom and the blessings of the gods.

Islamic culture, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of religious customs and practices in weddings. Islamic weddings in Indonesia often include the recitation of Quranic verses, the signing of the marriage contract (nikah), and the giving of a dowry (mahar) from the groom to the bride. The influence of Hindu and Islamic cultures can be seen in the incorporation of these rituals and traditions into Indonesian wedding ceremonies. For example, in Javanese weddings, there is often a combination of Hindu and Islamic rituals, such as the exchange of garlands and the recitation of Quranic verses. This blending of cultural elements reflects the

syncretic nature of Indonesian society, where different cultural and religious traditions coexist and influence one another.

Based on that information, we can understand that there are several types of wedding ceremonies in Indonesia, and the specific practices can vary based on the region, religion, and culture of the couple. Here are some of the most common types of wedding ceremonies in Indonesia:

- a. **Islamic Weddings:** The majority of Indonesians are Muslims, and Islamic weddings are typically marked by a solemn and religious ceremony. The Nikah is held in a private ceremony or at the venue of the reception, and the most important people to felicitate the wedding are the Imam and two witnesses.
- b. **Christian Weddings:** Christian weddings in Indonesia are similar to those in Western countries, with the ceremony typically held in a church and officiated by a priest or pastor.
- c. **Hindu Weddings:** Hindu weddings in Indonesia are typically elaborate affairs that involve many rituals and ceremonies. The wedding ceremony is usually held in a temple and officiated by a Hindu priest.
- d. **Buddhist Weddings:** Buddhist weddings in Indonesia are typically simple affairs that involve a blessing from a Buddhist monk or nun.
- e. **Traditional Weddings:** In many regions of Indonesia, traditional customs are incorporated into the wedding ceremony and reception. These can include the bride and groom wearing traditional clothing, exchanging gifts, and performing cultural dances. It's also customary for the couple to give gifts to their guests, known as "Seserahan." The bride usually prepares a "Dowry" for the groom and his family, while the groom prepares a "Mahar" for the bride.

Indonesian weddings are a unique opportunity to gain insight into various Indonesian cultures and social traditions. The wedding ceremonies in Indonesia are usually a festive, communal event, and the entire neighborhood where the married couple lives is welcome and expected to attend.

Indonesia is also known as a country with a rich culture and diversity, and this is reflected in the various wedding traditions and rituals. Here are some of the unique wedding traditions and rituals in Indonesia:

- a. **Pingitan Tradition from Java:** This tradition involves the bride being secluded for several days before the wedding. During this time, she is not allowed to leave the house or see anyone except her female relatives.
- b. **Abduction Tradition from Sasak Tribe in Lombok:** This tradition involves the groom abducting the bride from her family before the wedding. In the

past, this tradition was also known as elopement by couples who get married in secret behind their family.

- c. Sinamot in Batak Culture: This tradition involves the groom's family visiting the bride's family to ask for her hand in marriage. The groom's family brings gifts and negotiates the terms of the marriage.
- d. Nyantri from Yogyakarta's Sultanate: This tradition involves the groom living in his bride's residence for a few days before the wedding. This is due to the arranged marriage in ancient times, where the groom and bride did not know each other.
- e. Maresek, Maminang, and Batimbang Tando in Minangkabau Culture: This tradition involves several stages of customs, including family meetings, proposing and exchanging signs, asking for permission, and bringing various items.
- f. Sungkeman: This tradition involves the couple seeking blessings from their parents and family elders.

Indonesian weddings are typically a festive, communal event, and the entire neighborhood where the married couple lives is welcome and expected to attend. The wedding ceremonies and customs can vary based on the region, religion, and culture of the couple.

## **2. Indonesian People's View Towards Cultural and Modern Wedding**

Indonesian people have diverse views towards cultural and modern weddings. Cultural weddings are viewed as an important way to preserve heritage and traditions, honor ancestors, and bring the community together. On the other hand, modern weddings are viewed as a way to express individuality and creativity, break free from traditional customs, and incorporate new and exciting elements into the wedding ceremony. Many Indonesian people prefer to have a hybrid wedding that incorporates both cultural and modern elements, which allows them to honor their heritage while embracing new trends. Indonesian weddings are typically a festive, communal event, and the entire neighborhood where the married couple lives is welcome and expected to attend. The specific practices can vary based on the region, religion, and culture of the couple. The internet and social media have also influenced Indonesian weddings, with couples using them to plan their weddings and find inspiration for new trends.

Indonesian people have a diverse view towards cultural and modern weddings. While some people prefer to stick to traditional customs and practices, others prefer to incorporate modern elements into their wedding ceremonies. Here are some of the views of Indonesian people towards cultural and modern weddings:

- a. Cultural Weddings: Many Indonesian people view cultural weddings as an important way to preserve their heritage and traditions. They believe that cultural weddings are a way to honor their ancestors and pass on their customs to future generations. Cultural weddings are also seen as a way to bring the community together and celebrate their shared identity.
- b. Modern Weddings: Some Indonesian people view modern weddings as a way to express their individuality and creativity. They believe that modern weddings allow them to break free from traditional customs and create a unique and memorable experience. Modern weddings are also seen as a way to incorporate new and exciting elements into the wedding ceremony, such as new technology, music, and fashion.
- c. Hybrid Weddings: Many Indonesian people prefer to have a hybrid wedding that incorporates both cultural and modern elements. They believe that this approach allows them to honor their heritage while also embracing new and exciting trends. Hybrid weddings are also seen as a way to create a unique and personalized experience that reflects the couple's individuality and values.

Overall, Indonesian people have a diverse view towards cultural and modern weddings, and the specific practices can vary based on the region, religion, and culture of the couple. However, weddings in Indonesia are typically a festive, communal event, and the entire neighborhood where the married couple lives is welcome and expected to attend.

Indonesian people have diverse views towards modern wedding trends. Some people prefer to stick to traditional customs and practices, while others prefer to incorporate modern elements into their wedding ceremonies. Cultural weddings are viewed as an important way to preserve heritage and traditions, honor ancestors, and bring the community together. On the other hand, modern weddings are viewed as a way to express individuality and creativity, break free from traditional customs, and incorporate new and exciting elements into the wedding ceremony. Many Indonesian people prefer to have a hybrid wedding that incorporates both cultural and modern elements, which allows them to honor their heritage while embracing new trends. The internet and social media have also influenced Indonesian weddings, with couples using them to plan their weddings and find inspiration for new trends. However, having a large-sized wedding is still considered a staple culture in Indonesia, and intimate weddings might be a difficult concept to grasp for those who are used to Indonesian massive styled weddings. Nonetheless, millennials are more drawn to small-sized weddings that are more intimate than the usual Indonesian styled wedding culture.

Indonesian people really value their culture and traditions, to that Indonesian people often incorporate traditional elements into modern weddings in various ways. Here are some of the ways:

- a. **Traditional Clothing:** One of the most common ways to incorporate traditional elements into modern weddings is by wearing traditional clothing. The bride and groom can wear traditional attire that reflects their cultural heritage.
- b. **Cultural Dances:** Another way to incorporate traditional elements into modern weddings is by performing cultural dances. The couple can perform a traditional dance or hire dancers to perform for their guests.
- c. **Traditional Food:** Food is an essential part of Indonesian weddings, and traditional dishes are typically served to guests. The menu can include traditional Indonesian cuisine, as well as modern dishes and desserts.
- d. **Traditional Customs:** In many regions of Indonesia, traditional customs are incorporated into the wedding ceremony and reception. These can include the bride and groom exchanging gifts, performing cultural dances, and giving gifts to their guests, known as “Seserahan.” The bride usually prepares a “Dowry” for the groom and his family, while the groom prepares a “Mahar” for the bride.
- e. **Hybrid Weddings:** Many Indonesian people prefer to have a hybrid wedding that incorporates both cultural and modern elements. They believe that this approach allows them to honor their heritage while also embracing new and exciting trends.

Overall, Indonesian people have diverse views towards cultural and modern weddings, and the specific practices can vary based on the region, religion, and culture of the couple. However, weddings in Indonesia are typically a festive, communal event, and the entire neighborhood where the married couple lives is welcome and expected to attend.

## **CONCLUSION**

The journal article provides a comprehensive exploration of the rich and diverse wedding culture in Indonesia, shedding light on the myriad ethnic groups and religious beliefs that contribute to the tapestry of Indonesian weddings. It delves into the various types of wedding ceremonies, drawing attention to the profound influence of Hindu and Islamic cultures, and elucidating the unique traditions and rituals that characterize Indonesian weddings. Moreover, the article delves into the multifaceted perspectives of Indonesian people towards cultural and modern weddings, offering insights into the evolving landscape of wedding trends in the country, particularly in the context of the internet and social media.

Furthermore, the journal meticulously examines the spectrum of wedding ceremonies in Indonesia, encompassing modern, traditional, and hybrid weddings. It intricately dissects the fusion of traditional elements with contemporary wedding practices, while also scrutinizing the impact of the internet and social media on shaping wedding trends. The article also provides a glimpse into the journaling process, elucidating the rigorous research, observation, and narrative development that underpinned the creation of this work.

The findings and discussion section of the journal underscores the remarkable diversity of wedding ceremonies in Indonesia, underscoring the cultural richness that distinguishes different regions. It emphasizes the significance of understanding and appreciating the unique cultural traditions associated with Indonesian weddings, thereby fostering a deeper respect for the diverse views and practices that characterize wedding ceremonies in the country.

In essence, the journal serves as a compelling testament to the cultural vibrancy and dynamism of Indonesian wedding traditions, offering a nuanced and multifaceted portrayal of the myriad influences and practices that converge to shape the institution of marriage in Indonesia. Through its meticulous research and insightful analysis, the article not only celebrates the beauty of Indonesian wedding culture but also advocates for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultural tapestry that defines wedding ceremonies in Indonesia.

## REFERENCES

- Al. Andang L. Binawan, 2014, "Jalan Terjal Ekokrasi", Jurnal Hukum Lingkungan Indonesia, Volume 01 Issue 01, penerbit Indonesian Center for Environmental Law (ICEL), Jakarta Selatan.
- Hilman Hadikusuma, 1998, Ensiklopedia Hukum Adat dan Adat Budaya Indonesia, Alumni, Bandung.
- Perkawinan, 2012. Upacara Perkawinan Adat Yogyakarta. Jakarta : PT. Dian Digital Media.
- Setyaningsih, E. (2015). Tarub dan Perlengkapannya Sarat dengan Makna dan Filosofi. *Teknobuga*, 2(1), 69–75.
- Bratawijaya, Thomas Wiyasa, 2006, Upacara Perkawinan Adat Jawa, Jakarta, Pustaka Sinar Harapan.
- Darman, R. A. (2019). Makna Simbolik Trikotomi Dalam Kalindaqdaq Kajian Semiotika Peirce. Skripsi, Fakultas Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar.
- Dwiyanti, W. (2020). Islam dan Budaya Lokal dalam Adat Pernikahan Bugis di Desa Lompu Kecamatan Cina Kabupaten Bone (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar).
- Hasida, H. (2018). Analisis Semiotika Pada Simbol Upacara Nyorong Dalam Perkawinan Adat Samawa (Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Mataram).

Hoseani, R., & Yohana, F. M. (2020). "Analisis Sistem Tanda di Pusat Perbelanjaan berdasarkan Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce". *Human Narratives*, 2(1), 39-49.