

## Research Article

# Minangkabau Women in the Novel Mengurai Rindu by Nang Syamsuddin

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**Abstract.** This study aimed to examine the Minangkabau women in the novel Mengurai Rindu by Nang Syamsuddin. Minangkabau women are seen from the view of people in the Minangkabau culture. The results of the study suggested that Minangkabau women include parents. Minangkabau women are prominent in society, becoming leaders or elders in their environment, with professional and functional duties. The results of this study are in accordance with the matrilineal cultural system adopted by the Minangkabau community.

**Keywords:** women, real person, novel

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau as a tribe in Indonesia have customs that distinguish them from other tribes in Indonesia. Custom for the Minangkabau community is divided into four, namely (1) *adat* which is actually *adat*; (2) customs; (3) customary customs; (4) traditional customs. In traditional customs, there are laws and regulations that regulate all aspects of government life, society, and order. These laws are called the four laws, namely the *Nagari* Law, the *Nagari* Contents Law, the *Luhak* and Overseas Law, and the *Dua Puluh* Law. One of the four laws, name the Nagari Contents Act as a life teaching, which covers a view of life or philosophy, ethics, and morals supported by a strong motivation, so that it has its own national pride. This law emphasized the relationship between humans directly or indirectly. For example in the kinship system, marriage, inheritance, ethics, and morals along with their values Navis (1986) [1].

Ethical and moral issues and their values are related to personal human problems. This provides an assessment of how the human person really is. The assessment is determined based on three main scales, namely *samo* (coequal), *raso* (feel), and *malu* (shame). It is from this angle that their teachings categorize humans with the term "people who are actually people". People who are actually people are people who are complete as humans. They consist of groups (categories) with their respective conditions. That are as follows.

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1. I. .People are said to be people who are prominent in their society. They are as follows.
  2. A. .Parents, namely people who become leaders or elders in their environment and duties (professional or functional). They have the requirements (a) to be reasonable in order to find solutions to problems that arise; (b) able (sufficient) so that their life does not depend on others; (c) be generous in order to help others' troubles; (d) keep (alert) always be careful; (e) be patient so as not to be controlled by emotions; (f) fair so as not to be selective in dealing with others; (g) wise so as to always take appropriate action so that the risk is very small.
  3. B. .An intelligent person or scholar, namely a person who (a) has knowledge so that they can give instructions on what is right; (b) persistent so as not to be easily swayed in their position; (c) quiet so that he is not used by the wrong person; (d) *sokah* that his attitude always radiates optimism.
  4. C. .*Bagak* (brave) people have the requirements (a) to be clean so as not to cause fear and suspicion; (b) friendly so that people feel protected; (c) physically and mentally healthy so that they are not easily defeated; (d) calm so that they are not easily angered or enraged.
  5. D. .Rich people have the requirements (a) to be humble in their relationship so that life does not cause the envy of others; (b) be generous in order to help other's troubles; (c) frugal so as not to encourage others to live extravagantly; (d) have faith so as not to be tempted to use wealth so that it can harm others.
1. II. .A strong person is a person who is seen as capable of providing protection to others without worrying about the risks that will be borne by them because of their actions. There are also four things that characterize the strong person.
  2. A. .Strong in defending the truth, even though they will not face public opinion that will blame them.
  3. B. .Strong in doing good, even though they will get nothing in return.
  4. C. .Strong in resolving disputes that occur to completion even though they will face danger.
  5. D. .Strong to forgive people even though that person has harmed their life.
1. III. .People know, there are four judgments about what is said to be a person who knows it, namely:

2. People who know how to lead others and know how to lead themselves are commendable people.
3. People who know how to lead themselves, but don't know how to lead others, that's people who don't seek praise.
4. People who know how to lead others, but don't know how to lead themselves, are people who are hungry for praise.
5. People who do not know how to lead themselves, nor do they know how to lead others, that is a person who is not commendable [1]

One way to find out how “people are actually people”, especially women in Minangkabau society, can be done by analyzing novels. Women in Minangkabau society are called *bundo kanduang* or *mande sako*. This title is an absolute belonging to women as well as the highest hierarchy in the ethnic structure of adherents of the matrilineal system, kinship or lineage prevailing in Minangkabau [2]. Matrilineal is an arrangement of kinship based on the mother's line according to KBBI (1989), a community custom that regulates the line of descent from the mother's side [3]. Children born to their mothers who come from Minangkabau, follow their mother's tribe. One of the novels that tells about Minangkabau women is the novel *Mengurai Rindu* by Nang Syamsuddin. To find out the Minangkabau women in the novel, the character Lela was analyzed. Lela is the main character in the novel *Mengurai Rindu*. Lela's character is analyzed to find out which category of “real person”, she belongs to, whether a prominent person, a strong person, or a knowing person. Thus, it will be known how the Minangkabau women in the novel *Mengurai Rindu* by Nang Syamsuddin indirectly describe the cultural values of today's Minangkabau society. This is in accordance with what Aimifrina said that there are many interesting things in the life of the Minangkabau people. The picture of the Minangkabau people who uphold customs in their daily lives [4]. *Mengurai Rindu* is a very good novel to understand the condition of “Keminangkabauan”.

The novel *Mengurai Rindu* is the third novel written by Nang Syamsuddin. Nang Syamsuddin's other novels are *Lagu Rindu dari Kampus Sleatan* and *Penaru Kampus*. Nang Syamsuddin is also active in writing the book *Bina Drama*, several short stories, novels, and articles about women published in several newspapers in West Sumatra. Nang Syamsuddin is the pen name of Dra. Syahlinar Udin. Dra. Syahlinar Udin is a retired FBSS Ballet lecturer, Padang State University (back cover of the novel).

Based on the description above, this study discusses Minangkabau women in the novel *Mengurai Rindu* by Nang Syamsuddin seen from people who are actually people

based Minangkabau customs. Thus, this study aims to describe Minangkabau women in the novel *Mengurai Rindu* by Nang Syamsuddin.

Research on the novel *Mengurai Rindu* by Nang Syamsuddin has been carried out by Aimifrina (2017). Aimifrina (2017) analyzes the novel *Mengurai Rindu* seen from internal conflicts using Stanton's theory. Aimifrina concludes that the internal conflicts in the novel are sadness, disappointment, and sympathy [5].

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

Based on the design methodology, this research includes document research (content analysis). Content analysis means that this research tries to analyze the document to find out the content and meaning contained in the document [6]. Types of documents include written essays, textbooks, and newspapers.

Sources of data in this study are in the form of written data. The written data is the novel *Mengurai Rindu*. The novel *Mengurai Rindu* was written by Nang Syamsuddin. This novel was published by Rahima Intermedia Publishing, Yogyakarta in 2012 and is the first print. The novel *Mengurai Rindu* consists of 243 pages. On the cover page of the novel *Mengurai Rindu*, a novel set with a Minang background is written.

## 3. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The woman analyzed in the novel *Mengurai Rindu* is Lela. Lela is a female character in the main character in the novel *Mengurai Rindu*. She is a teacher who teaches at a high school in the city of Padang. The high school has teachers and students from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Lela is seen from people who are actually people, including people who are prominent, strong people, and knowing people.

### 1. A. .Prominent People

Prominent people are said to be the leading people in their society. People say there are four, namely adults, smart people or scholars, *bagak* people (brave), and rich people. Lela as a Minangkabau woman when viewed from prominent people is said to be as follows.

Data 1

*Thank you Angku and Etek for paying attention to me.* But about partners, let me decide for myself. Besides, I'm not too old by my standards. In my school there are still

some people who are not married. I was really offended by my *mamak's* words. But my respect forbade me to answer it out loud. Again I kept quiet. (p. 18) [7]

Excerpt from data 1 above, which is *Thank you Angku and Etek for paying attention to me...* I am really offended by my *mamak's* words. This sentence explains that Lela is a *bagak* (brave) person. Lela tried to be calm so as not to get angry easily or be enraged when asked by *Angku Datuk* about her partner. Even though she was really offended by the words of *Angku Datuk*. Lela continues to speak politely with her *mamak* and *etek*.

#### Data 2

"I want to know. Mrs. Susi spoke to me representing herself or the ethnicity that Mrs. Susi mentioned earlier?" My voice started to get a little louder. Because actually I was trying to hold back my annoyance. Indeed, Mrs. Susi is famous at school as a gossip. So far I don't really like her. That's why we rarely talk (p. 47).[7]

The data 2 excerpt above, *I tried to hold back my annoyance and I didn't really like her* explaining that Lela was an adult. From the existing parental requirements, Lela is a vigilant and wise adult. This can be seen from the attitude of Lela who is on guard so that she is always careful in dealing with Mrs. Susi, who is known as the source of gossip at school, so Lela prefers to rarely talk to Mrs. Susi. In addition, Lela is also wise to always take the right action so the risk is very small.

#### Data 3

*I also tried to remember the social style of my school community*, there was nothing out of the ordinary. Everyone got along normally. *There was not hostility, no harassment, regarding ethnicity or religion*. If there is a feeling of displeasure between the teachers, it is only a personal matter. Like some of use, teachers, do not like Mrs. Susi because of her habit of gossiping. (pp. 48-49).[7]

Data 3 above *I also try to remember the social style of my school community...there is no hostility no harassment regarding ethnicity or religion*, explaining that Lela is a smart person. The requirement of a smart person that Lela has is knowledgeable. Knowledgeable because Lela can give clues as to what is right, that is, even though her school has different ethnicities and religions, they are not enemies. Everything went smoothly and peacefully.

#### Data 4

*Why did you choose him, Lela?* "What's wrong if it's him, Angku?" "What's are you saying, Lela? There's a lot of things wrong. First, why did you choose a mixed man. Why not from the many Tanjung or Piliang tribes in out village!. "He has a tribe, *angku*. I told

you earlier, his ethnicity is Malay. Isn't it the same as the other tribes like the one *Angku* mentioned earlier? If I choose a male from the Koto tribe, the same as ours, maybe I'm wrong,' I answered a little boldly (p.69).[7]

Data 4 above, namely Why did you choose him, Lela?" "What's wrong if its him, *Angku*?" "What's are you saying, Lela? There's a lot of things wrong. This sentence explains that *Angku Datuk* does not liek Gunawan because of his differences in cultural and religious backgrounds. From this quote, Lela is a smart person. The requirements for a smart person that Lela has been knowledgeable and *sokah*. Knowledgeable so that Lela can give clues as to what is right, namely Gunawan is Muslim and is of Malay ethnicity, not as alleged bu *Angku Datuk*. In addition, Lela is also *sokah* who always radiates optimism that Gunawan, the man of her choice, is her soulmate.

Data 5

*I was stunned thinking about meeting Mrs. Rima earlier.* Unknowingly, my relationship with Gunawan had disturbed my calm at school. What's was the matter, that the two teachers, who were originally not familiar with me, suddenly became very interested in my relationship Gunawan? (p. 72). [7]

Excerpt from data 5, namely *I was stunned thinking about meeting Mrs. Rima earlier... What's was the matter, that the two teachers, who were originally not familiar with me, suddenly became very interested in my relationship Gunawan?* Explains that Lela is an adult. The condition for Lela's adulthood is to be vigilant and wise. Cautious because Lela is always careful, while it is wise that Lela can always take the right action so that the risk is very small when dealing with Mrs. Rima and the atmosphere at school.

Data 6

My heart went back and forth wanting to talk to the two teachers. *In the end I decided I should talk while I had the chance, while no one else is.* I'm the only one concerned with those two teachers (p. 73). [7]

Data 6 above, i.e. Finally I decided I should talk while I had the chance, while no one else is. This quote describes that Lela is included as an adult. The condition for Lela's adulthood is to be vigilant and wise. Cautious because Lela is always careful. While it is wise that Lela can always take the right action so that the risk is very small when dealing with Mrs. Rima and the atmosphere at school.

Data 7

*A feeling of displeasure arises in me responding to Angku Datuk's proposal.* I feel that he doesn't to want to know my feelings. But, of course i will not end my relationship with Gunawan. Then, now how should I solve this problem? "That's it Des. *I don't care*

*whether Angku Datuk or disagree with my choice. The important thing is that my brothers and sisters agree.” (p. 85).[7]*

Data 7 above, namely *A feeling of displeasure arises in me responding to Angku Datuk’s proposal... don’t care whether Angku Datuk agree or disagree with my choice. The important thing is that my brothers and sisters agree.”* This quote explains Lela’s thoughts and feelings, namely that Lela is not happy that *Angku Datuk* does not want to accept Gunawan as her future husband. Meanwhile, Lela persists with her choice. From this description, Lela is a smart person. Lela’s requirement for a smart person is to be persistent and determined. Be persistent so that Lela will not easily be swayed on her stance that Gunawan is her future husband and fight for it. *Sokah* is so that Lela’s attitude always radiates optimism, what she wants will be achieved.

#### Data 8

*I was very disappointed when I visited Angku Datuk’s house. He was not at home, the only thing waiting for us was his wife. She said Angko Datuk was going to Bukittinggi, he had some business. I think the answer is just an excuse. Angku Datuk deliberately did not want to meet me because he did not like my choice, when I got married and even baralek he did not come (p.125). [7]*

Data 8 above, namely *I was very disappointed when I visited Angku Datuk’s house* explained that Lela is an adult. Lela’s adult requirement is patience. Lela was patient when visiting *Angku Dautk’s* house. Lela’s intention to make up with *Angku Datuk* did not materialize. It turned out that *Angku Datuk* was deliberately avoiding her because he did not approve of Lela’s chosen husband.

#### Data 9

*I looked at Angku Datuk wanting to know his reaction. But he didn’t even glance at me. I felt completely belittled. I wanted to get out of the meeting room immediately. I didn’t.* I remembered my husband’s message before this meeting was held. My husband advised me to be patient no matter what I will face (p. 175). [7]

Excerpt of data 9 above, namely *I looked at Angku Datuk wanting to know his reaction. But he didn’t even glance at me. I felt completely belittled. I wanted to get out of the meeting room immediately. I didn’t.* This quote describes the state of mind and feelings of Lela who was disappointed to see *Angku Datuk’s* reaction that belittled her. Even though Lela’s goal was to attend the meeting so that their dispute could be resolved. Everything that Lela thought was translated into an action that initially wanted to leave the, but didn’t do it because she remembered her husband’s message. From this description, Lela is included as an adult. Lela’s adult requirement is patience. Lela is patient with *Angku Datuk’s* behaviour which often hurts her.

## Data 10

In my opinion, what is wrong with accepting the proposal of a customary institution. For me, whatever title is used, I will not question. The most important thing in my opinion is the ability of the title bearer to carry out his function. Its useless, If the title he holds is very grand, but the person is not able to nurture his nephew's children (p. 183). [7]

The quote from data 10 above is, *In my opinion, what is wrong with accepting the proposal of a customary institution*. This quote explains that Lela is a smart person. The requirement for a smart person that Lela has is knowledgeable. This means that Lela can give instructions on what is right, namely receiving the title that is our right and preferably the one who holds the title is able to accept the mandate. Thus, Lela did not agree with *Angku Sutan's* opinion.

## Data 11

*I was very offended to hear the words of Angku Datuk who brought up my husband's status again*. I wanted to fight him with equally scathing words. But I remember my promise to my husband especially to myself. This conversation must have a good or bad outcome. Therefore, I just forgot about Angku Datuk's words that hurt my hear a lot (p. 204). [7]

Data 11 above *I was very offended to hear the words of Angku Datuk who brought up my husband's status again* explains that Lela is an adult who has patience and wise conditions. Lela was patient so that her emotions would not be controlled when she heard the words of *Angku Datuk* who brought up the status of her husband who had a different cultural and religious background than her. Lela tried to be patient, so that her desire to fight against *Angku Datuk* was not fulfilled. Wise because Lela can always take the right action so the risk is very small by not fighting *Angku Datuk* and remember her husband's message.

## Data 12

After a long time I didn't hear about the Rumah Gadang, *I kept my promise* not to return home as long as *Angku Datuk* did not want to accept my husband's presence in his heart. *Angku Datuk* also kept his promise too. He never told me (p. 209). [7]

Data 12 quoted above, namely *I kept my promise*. This quote explains that Lela is an adult. The requirement for Lela's adulthood is to be vigilant, namely to always be careful. With this condition, Lela tries to be careful by keeping her promise not to return home as long as *Angku Datuk* does not want to accept her husband's presence in his heart.

## Data 13



I'm getting more and more worried about the burden of *Angku Datuk* that I haven't realized yet. *After all, I feel responsible for rebuilding the Rumah Gadang again because I got the mandate*, my brother said. Finally I called my brother Des, asking him to come to Padang (p. 236). [7]

Data 13 above *After all, I feel responsible for rebuilding the Rumah Gadang again because I got the mandate* explains that Lela is a smart person. Lela has a *sokah* condition that exists in a smart person, namely her attitude that exudes optimism. Lela is optimistic that she will be able to carry out the mandate that *Angku Datuk* has given her. The mandate is to build the *Rumah Gadang* of their people who has collapsed.

### 1. B. .Strong Person

A strong person is a person who is seen as being able to provide protection to others without worrying about the risks that will be borne by them because of their actions. There are four types of strong people, namely strong in defending the truth, strong in doing good, strong in resolving disputes that occur and strong in forgiving people even though that person has harmed their life. Lela is a strong person with the following analysis.

#### Data 1

I'm undecided. Whether to go home or not. I remember *Angku Datuk's* promise and the promise that we would never see each other. *But now he is dead. I don't have the heart. Moreover, the teacher of the Qur'an in the mosque often says that if a person had died, those who are still alive must eliminate all forms of hostility, must eliminate all bitter grudges* (p. 222). [7]

Data 1 above, that is, *But now he is dead. I don't have the heart. Moreover, the teacher of the Qur'an in the mosque often says that if a person had died, those who are still alive must eliminate all forms of hostility, must eliminate all bitter grudges*. This quote explains that Lela is a strong person. Lela's strong person is a strong person who forgives people even though that person has harmed her life. Lela apologized to *Angku Datuk* though *Angku Datuk* did not want to accept her husband's presence in their clan. *Angku Datuk* also did not want to greet Lela until the end of his life. Even though *Angku Datuk* treated Lela like that, Lela still forgave *Angku Datuk*.

### 1. C. .Knowing People

Knowing people are people who are seen as capable of leading themselves and others. People know there are three, namely people who are commendable, people

who do not seek praise, and people who are thirsty for praise. Lela is a knower with the following analysis.

Data 1

*"Mrs. Rima and Mrs. Susi are the same. What else do you want to tell me? I think that Mrs. Rima and Mrs. Susi's confrontation was over when the two mothers did not attend my wedding invitation. I appreciate that. It seems that my guess was wrong. I want to know now, what do you want from me?"* (p. 134). [7]

Data 1 above, namely *"Mrs. Rima and Mrs. Susi are the same. What else do you want to tell me?... I want to know now, what do you want from me?"* The quote explains that Lela is a person who knows how to lead others and knows how to lead herself, that's a commendable person. Lela was able to lead herself by asking the two teachers directly what the problem was, and was able to deal with them.

Data 2

I immediately left the two teachers. Entered the class because had rung. But before I left the two people I still had time to hear the two people talking. *"Stubborn," they said. Then I heard their laughter mocking me* (pp. 135-136). [7]

Data quote 2 above is *"Stubborn," they said. Then I heard their laughter mocking me.* This quote explains the reaction of Mrs. Rima and Mrs. Susi who gave the assessment that Lela was a stubborn person. This is because Lela did not want to obey the wishes of the two teachers who forbade Lela to have contact with Gunawan. Thus Lela is a person who knows how to lead herself, but doesn't know how to lead others, that's a person who doesn't seek praise.

Data 3

In the end, when I returned home, I never stayed overnight again. Moreover, *Angku Datuk* did not make up with me. *I am bashful towards the villagers* (p. 142). [7]

The quote from data 3 above, which is *I am bashful towards the villagers*, will explain that Lela is a person who knows how to lead herself, but doesn't know how to lead others. Thus, Lela is a person who does not seek praise. Lela shies away from the villagers because she did not make up with *Angku Datuk*, her *mamak*. So the villagers don't know about it, every time Lela comes home she never stays (the night) again. Lela tried to accept this fact.

Data 4

*Am I holding a grudge? I don't think so. If that's what makes them happy, what else should I do? Of course I should gladly accept. I promised not to think about their attitude again* (p. 158). [7]

Data 4 above is *Am I holding a grudge? Of course I should gladly accept. I promised not to think about their attitude again.* This quote explains that Lela is a person who doesn't seek praise, that is, a person who knows how to lead herself, but doesn't know how to lead others. This is because Lela can lead herself without a grudge and accept all the treatment of her friends at school with pleasure and promise not to think about their attitude again. Lela can accept all that sincerely and she does not demand that her friends change and make up with her.

Data 5

*All the plans that I have made have not gone smoothly. Almost all of Angku Datuk's nieces and Angku Sutan's nephews give floating answers.* Both for the matter of building a house, as well as for the problem of the chief. Their answer is always the same, we agree but the conditions do not allow it (pp. 239-240). [7]

Data 5 above *All the plans that I have made have not gone smoothly. Almost all of Angku Datuk's nieces and Angku Sutan's nephews give floating answers.* Explains that Lela is a person who knows how to lead herself, but doesn't know how to lead other, that's a person who doesn't seek praise. Lela was able to lead herself by making plans for the construction of a *Rumah Gadang* and gathering all the nieces and nephews of *Angku Datuk*. Hoping everything will go smoothly. However, all of Lela's plans were in vain. Because Lela was unable to lead her brothers and sisters to be willing to provide assistance for the construction of the *Rumah Gadang*. Lela is only able to lead herself, but is not able to lead her sibling.

## 4. CONCLUSION

From the results of the analysis of Minangkabau women seen from the people who are actually people in Minangkabau culture in the novel *Mengurai Rindu* by Nang Syamsuddin, it can be concluded as follows. (1) Women in Minangkabau culture which people say are adults (seven data), smart people (five data), *bagak* or brave people (one data), and rich people (zero data); (2) Women in Minangkabau culture who are strong people only have one data. Strong people here means to forgive people even though that person has harmed their lives; (3) Minangkabau women in Minangkabau culture for knowing people, namely praiseworthy people (one data), people who do not seek praise in their lives (three data), people who are thirsty for praise (one data) and people who are unqualified for praise (zero data); (4) of the three people who are actually people in Minangkabau culture, the dominant is people who are adults. Thus, Minangkabau women as adults play a role in community life in Minangkabau as leaders

or elders in their environment and duties (professional and functional). Parents will set an example for their children about Minangkabau customs and culture. The parents must be knowledgeable, capable, generous, caring, patient, fair, and wise.

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