

## Research Article

# Integration of Patriarchal and Matriarchal Culture System in Indonesia; Study in North and West Sumatra

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**Abstract.**

Batak and Minangkabau are the two big tribes in Indonesia. It is not wrong to say that Bataks and Minangkabau are cultured. In theory, humans are cultured creatures. Culture is static, impermanent and flexible. This flexibility can be seen in the process of mixing between two or more cultures. When two cultures are at the same time and place, mixing culture becomes inevitable. Just like a melting pot or salad bowl in America. In the perspective of sociology anthropology is referred to by various terms such as acculturation, assimilation and integration. The phenomenon of cultural mixing occurs in two major tribes in Indonesia, namely Batak and Minangkabau cultures. These two cultural communities are printed on the island of Sumatra. Batak and Minangkabau people are known to be very strong in adhering to customs and culture. Both have very clear ethnic identities with very contrasting differences, including the Batak culture with a patriarchal kinship system and the Minangkabau culture which has a matriarchal kinship system. The meeting of these two major cultures through marital institutions resulted in the loss of some elements and cultural systems. The matriarchy system fades when it is in the midst of patriarchal culture and vice versa patriarchal culture experiences identity loss when it is in the midst of matriarchal culture. This is what the authors call cultural collapse. In fact, culture cannot survive when dealing with other cultures.

**Keywords:** Batak; Minagkabau; cultures; sociology; antropology; patriarchal; matriarchal

## 1. Introduction

Human are cultured beings. With culture, human survive in groups to build their civilization. Human live in the identity of their tribes while maintaining it, on the other hand they must also open themselves to other culture that enter their culture. The world and civilization will proceed slowly without a mixing of culture between two or more cultures. The mixing of cultures is the impact of globalization.[1] Mixing cultures is intercultural interaction that results in different cultures that occupy the same space at the same time[2]. The cultural mixing model are integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization[3]. In culture, this mixing can also be called the Melting Pot[4][5] and Salad Bowl[6] theory as a form of cultural assimilation and integration[7]. Some

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experts call it cultural fusion[8] or it can even turn into culture crashes. Whatever the terms and forms of mixing culture are, there is no one form of mixing that is inherently more important, central, or represents intercultural contact than others.

The process of cultural mixing generally starts from the adoption of local culture by newcomers while maintaining their minority culture identity so that it can function successfully in a dominant culture[9]. Mixing cultures is not easy for two cultures facing each other. Even eastern European countries such as Hungary or Poland expressed their unwillingness to welcome Syrian refugees fleeing the war on the grounds that their integration and assimilation into European culture would be very difficult. [10]Or like the merging of Russian and Mizrahi ethnic groups in Israel, China and America, [11] Morocco and Turkey[12] and including Indonesia.

In Indonesia there are around 250 tribes or ethnicities.[13] [14] Generally, all ethnic groups have their own different cultural systems. The culture of the tribes is manifested in three forms, namely ideas (ideas, values, norms), activities (human activities), and artifacts (objects created by human beings). In theory, there are seven cultural elements of each tribe, namely: 1) Language System. 2) Knowledge System. 3) Social System. 4) Living Equipment and Technology Systems. 5) Life Livelihood System. 6) Religious System. 7) Art.

Two of the big tribes in Indonesia are the Batak and the Minangkabau. Batak tribe lives in North Sumatra Province and the Minangkabau tribe lives in West Sumatra Province. Geographically, the position of the two provinces is side by side, so it has potential for migration and mixing of the Batak and Minangkabau ethnic cultures. Both tribes have a unique and contradictory culture, especially in the kinship system. Batak tribe has a patriarchal kinship system while Minangkabau tribe has a matriarchal kinship system. Patriarchal kinship system means lineage based on father/male so that all relatives of fathers are included within the boundaries of his kinship, while all relatives of the mother are outside that boundary. While matriarchal is interpreted as a lineage based on mother/woman. The top holder in the house is a grandmother who is a woman. The treasure sought is to enrich the tribe. Men are subject to mother's law.

The awesome of mixing of Batak and Minangkabau culture is occurred through marriage, especially the marriage of Batak men with Minangkabau women. The question is which kinship system is used in the "mixed" family; Batak or Minangkabau. This study will look at the mixing of Batak and Minangkabau cultures in marriage in two different provinces, namely North Sumatra and West Sumatra Provinces.

## 2. Methods

This research is a field research and using a cultural approach. Data collection was done by interview and observation. The respondents of this study were traditional and community leaders in North Sumatra and West Sumatra Provinces. The data obtained were analyzed with content analysis.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Results

Minangkabau people are known as nomads. Minangkabau culture overseas still survives, including in North Sumatra Province. Their ethnic identity is very strong. It is shown by implementation of various cultural activities such as “Tari Piring” (plate dance) that was performed at the wedding party, the Minangkabau language practiced in communication among fellow Minangkabau people, the “Rumah Gadang” (ethnic house)[15][16][17] that they built was no less than 10 “Rumah Gadang”, and the marriage was carried out in Minangkabau custom. The identity of the Minangkabau people in North Sumatra is easy to recognize, where they work a lot in the fields of convection, restaurants, satay traders, and barbershop. In marriage aspect, they still maintain the original culture of Minangkabau in many traditions such as Malam Bainai, manjampuk Marapulai, Manjalang.

The most interesting on Minangkabau marriage in North Sumatra is the marriage of Minangkabau women with Batak men. In this case, there was mixing of two cultures that have contrasting and opposite kinship systems, namely matriarchal and patriarchal. In matriarchal kinship system the party applying was the female family while in the patriarchal kinship system the party applying was male. In some cases, Minangkabau culture experienced many adjustments especially when dealing with Batak culture in marriage, namely women are no longer in the position of the party applying as the original Minangkabau culture, but as the party being proposed. This is a complicated and problematic situation for Minangkabau women. On the one hand she wants to maintain the identity of her tribe; matriarchal system, but on the other hand she is dealing with Batak man who also want to maintain his tribe’s identity; patriarchal system. For most of the Minangkabau people in North Sumatra, this is a form of application of the Minangkabau philosophy of life, which is *dima bumi dipijak, disinan langik dijunjuang*

(where the earth is trampled there the sky is held up). They name it the cultural flexibility of the Minangkabau.

The other forms of cultural mixing is cultural identities or so-called "clan". In accordance with the Minangkabau matriarchal culture, offspring are drawn based on the maternal or female lineage. Thus their children have the same tribe as their mother. For example, her mother has a Caniago clan so all her children wear the Caniago clan. However, this customary provision does not apply to the case of Minangkabau women's marriages with Batak men, where mother's clan is not used in the family and is not a determinant of identity in the family. In this case, the lineage is drawn based on father/man. For example, Minangkabau women with "Caniago" clan married a Batak man with the clan "Harahap". Their children were given the clan in accordance with the father's clan; Harahap, not the mother's clan; Caniago. In this situation, the Batak culture is dominant over the Minangkabau culture.

The amazing of mixing Batak and Minangkabau cultures in North Sumatra is the marriage of Minangkabau man with Batak woman. In this case, there was mixing of two people who were not considered in determining the family's identity. Batak woman and Minangkabau man do not bring their tribal and family identities into marriage so their children do not have tribal identities. Their children are not identified as Batak nor are they Minangkabau.

### 3.2. Discussion

In anthropology perspective, the fusion of two elements of culture is a natural phenomenon that can occur in all ethnic groups. This not only happened in Indonesia but it happened to Western, Eastern and European nations when they were visited by immigrants. The presence of immigrants will have an impact on the mixing of migrant cultures with local cultures.[18][19] Mixing Batak and Minangkabau cultures is a heterogeneous process and has a level of depth and a large volume of acculturation, assimilation and integration.

If these processes are referred to as natural processes, the authors call it the "collapse" of cultural hegemony. Cultural collapse is not only caused by the destruction of culture, but it can occur due to the mixing of cultures in the form of domination. On the one hand, local culture still retains its cultural identity, on the other hand tribes migrants must adapt to local culture in order to be able to survive and be well received.

If the mixing of Batak and Minangkabau cultures occurs in North Sumatra, then the same event also occurs in West Sumatra. The Batak people adhere to a patriarchal

kinship system where descendants are drawn based on father/male lineage. The Batak people in West Sumatra try to maintain the identity of Batak culture. This can be seen from various traditional ritual ceremonial activities such as welcoming child birth, death,[20] Batak language[21] and marriage[22]. In marriage, Batak people in West Sumatra follow the customary rules by carrying out marriages according to the steps: mengaresek, manyapai boru, pabagas boru and manyattan boru.

Mixing Batak and Minangkabau cultures that occur in West Sumatra, especially in marriage produces a unique form and pattern; Batak man marriages with Minangkabau woman. According to Batak custom and culture that adheres to a patriarchal kinship system, Batak man in marriage is acting as those who apply for women. In some cases this provision does not apply, in which Batak men are precisely the parties proposed by the Minangkabau women. The woman came to the man who had agreed to get married and expressed the intention of marrying Minangkabau daughter to Batak man. In this context, the husband enters the wife's family kinship.

This fact shows that the Minangkabau culture dominated the Batak culture in West Sumatra. The consequence of the marriage above is that the ethnic identity used in the family is the identity of the mother, not the father's clan. Thus, their children are given a mother's tribe or clan. For example, if the father owns the Harahap clan and Caniago's mother, then their children are given the Caniago clan or tribe, not Harahap.

## 4. Conclusions

Indonesia has two famous tribes; Batak and Minangkabau. Both have unique traditions and costumes. Both have very clear ethnic identities with very contrasting differences, including Batak culture with a patriarchal kinship system and the Minangkabau culture which has a matriarchal kinship system. When both meet on the same time and place, mixing culture becomes inevitable. Just like a melting pot or salad bowl. The meeting of these two major cultures through marital institutions resulted in the loss of some elements and cultural systems. The matriarchy system fades when it is in patriarchal culture and vice versa patriarchal culture experiences identity loss when it is in the midst of matriarchal culture. This is what the authors call cultural collapse.

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