

Gold Dowry in Acehnese Traditional Marriage
(Das Sein and Das Sollen in Pidie Community Practices)

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Abstract: Dowry in marriage is the right of a wife which is the obligation of the husband, in Acehnese customs the dowry is generally in the form of gold. Dowry known as *jeulamee* or *jeunamee* has a different value in each district/city in Aceh, some have a value of 1 (one) may equivalent to 3.3 grams, and some have a value of 1 mayam equivalent to 3 grams. The problem arises when the price of buying and selling gold increases, which makes some people postpone their marriage because gold is getting more expensive daily, plus the dowry that must be prepared ranges from 10-30 *mayam*. Related to this problem, how do das sein and das sollen Pidie society determine the amount of dowry, and how do the parties decide when the price of buying and selling gold increases. Qualitative research is the method used, focusing on field research as a primary source. The first finding in the practice of the Pidie community, das sein society should have married when they were financially and emotionally ready plus an understanding of religion related to the household to avoid unnecessary conflicts. However, Das Sollen found that some people postpone their marriage because of capital constraints, including the dowry which is not a small amount plus the reception or walimatul ursy which also requires large capital. The family in this problem has different views or opinions on how to deal with this problem, generally, both parties will take a middle path in the form of deliberation to achieve win-win solutions.

Keywords: dowry of gold, das sein, das sollen.

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Abstrak: Mahar dalam perkawinan merupakan hak seorang isteri yang merupakan kewajiban suami, dalam adat Aceh mahar umumnya berupa emas. Mahar dikenal dengan *jeulamee* atau *jeunamee* memiliki nilai yang berbeda di setiap kabupaten/kota di Aceh, ada yang nilai 1 mayam setara 3,3 gram ada juga 1 mayam setara 3 gram. Permasalahan timbul ketika harga jual-beli emas naik, di mana membuat sebagian kalangan menunda pernikahannya karena harga emas kian mahal dari hari ke hari, di tambah dengan mahar yang harus dipersiapkan berkisar antara 10-30 mayam. Terkait dengan permasalahan tersebut, bagaimana *das sein* dan *das sollen* masyarakat Pidie dalam menentukan jumlah mahar, serta bagaimana para pihak mengambil keputusan ketika harga jual-beli emas meningkat. Penelitian kualitatif merupakan metode yang digunakan, dengan berfokus pada *field research* sebagai sumber primer. Temuan pertama dalam praktiknya masyarakat Pidie, *das sein* masyarakat seyogyanya telah menikah ketika sudah siap secara finansial maupun emosional ditambah dengan pemahanan agama terkait dengan rumah tangga guna menghindari konflik yang tidak diperlukan. Kendati demikian, *das sollen* yang ditemukan terdapat sebagian masyarakat yang menunda pernikahannya karena terkendala modal, meliputi mahar yang jumlahnya tidaklah kecil ditambah dengan resepsi atau *walimatul ursy* yang juga butuh modal besar. Pihak keluarga dalam permasalahan ini memiliki pandangan atau pendapat yang berbeda bagaimana menyikapi permasalahan ini, umumnya kedua belah pihak akan mengambil jalan tengah berupa musyawarah untuk mencapai *win-win solutions*.

Kata kunci:

mahar emas, mayam, das sein, das sollen.

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INTRODUCTION

The gold dowry is a wife's right given by the husband, the dowry is given as an award with the aim of glorifying, honoring and making the future wife happy, at the same time it is also a form of love from the future husband.¹ The giving of dowry to the prospective wife has various types, depending on the local customs. There are some areas that are quite simple, but have clear benefits and uses, on the other hand there are also dowries in the form of something luxurious, if seen from a different perspective it is something excessive.

Gold dowry in the Acehnese context is gold, known as mayam, per mayam ranging from 3-3.3 grams depending on the district/city where the gold is traded. Generally, prospective husbands must prepare around 10-30 mayam of gold to marry Acehnese women, but there are some areas where the dowry is smaller or larger than the general dowry amount.

The gold dowry is usually determined by the family (guardian) of the prospective wife,² However, there is also a dowry that is determined jointly by the families of both parties.³ The size of the dowry that has been determined indirectly also takes into account the social conditions of both parties, because if the amount exceeds the ability of one party, then the solution is to hold a family discussion to find a solution, if no solution is found, it is possible that the party will withdraw (cancel) the marriage.

¹ Harijah Damis, "Kajian Mahar Dalam Perspektif Fikih Dan Undang-Undang," *Jurnal Yudisial* 9, no. 1 (2016).

² Interview with Fatimah Syamaun, Community Leader of West Yemen, Mutiara District, Pidie Regency, November 28, 2020

³ Interview with Muhammad, Community Leader of Cot Kuthang, Mutiara Timur District, Pidie Regency, November 28, 2020.

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This problem is studied with the aim of providing a general picture of how the dowry in Acehese traditional marriages, regardless of the various debates that arise regarding the size of the dowry in each district/city. Regardless of the problems that arise, here are some literature reviews related to the dowry in a marriage.

Azmi Abubakar in his writing, *Mahar as Wasa'il Maqasid alTabi'ah*,⁴ said that dowry is not part of the harmony or conditions for the validity of a marriage, but is an obligatory gift from the husband to the wife. As found in the Al-Quran and Hadith. In fact, giving a dowry does not burden either party and gives glory to the wife. Indirectly, the dowry provides benefits to both parties which are in line with *maqashid al-syari'ah*, besides the dowry it is also a means of achieving *Sakinah, Mawaddah and Rahmah* in their marriage, in other words giving the dowry is not only aimed at glorifying one party (the woman), but at the same time it also raises the status of both parties involved, husband and wife as well as the extended family of both parties.

Azmi Abubakar, Tarmizi M. Jakfar and Jabbar Sabil in their journal, "Mahar Practice In Pidie Community Marriage, Analysis Of *Maqāṣid AlSyarī'ah*" convey in Pidie society generally young people who want to get married often postpone it, because of the high dowry that must be prepared before marrying a Pidie woman. The factor that causes the high dowry usually goes back to the social status of the prospective wife's family.⁵ Determining the amount of dowry that must be prepared usually involves the families of both

⁴ Azmi Abubakar, "Mahar Sebagai Wasa'il Maqasid Al-Tabi'ah," *ADHKI: Journal of Islamic Family Law* 2, no. 2 (2020): 107–27, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37876/adhki.v2i2.50>.

⁵ Zulhamdi Zulhamdi, "Pembaharuan Hukum Islam Di Indonesia Dan Tokoh-Tokohnya," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 19, no. 2 (December 28, 2019): 239, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v19i2.4414>.

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parties of the prospective bride, which aims to get a mutual agreement, then proceed to the engagement or proposal stage, in this process the prospective bride brings some gold mayam as proof of their seriousness in terms of the relationship or in other words as a down payment from the amount of dowry that has been agreed upon by both extended families.⁶

In the author's opinion, the dowry that must be prepared when wanting to marry a girl from Aceh, especially from Pidie Regency, someone must have prepared mentally first, because usually girls who come from Pidie Regency have a high dowry. Especially if we look at the social status of her family who is well-known among the community as someone who has influence in community life.

Burhanuddin A. Gani and Ainun Hayati in their journal, "Limiting the Amount of Dowry Through the Decision of the East Kleut Customary Deliberation", said that there are several factors behind the dowry restrictions, including religion, economy, social, and culture. This dowry restriction is related to the minimum limit that must be given to the prospective wife by the prospective husband. The customary law that grows in this community is highly respected, where in the custom it has been agreed that the dowry in a marriage is only 2 mayam, if the dowry given exceeds that amount then it is considered a gift from the husband to his wife. The customs in the East Kluet community have provided limits regarding the amount of dowry that must be prepared by the prospective husband, according to the author this custom can be an alternative for the Acehese people who want to marry with a relatively low dowry. However, for people who already have a general idea regarding the

⁶ Azmi Abubakar, Tarmizi M Jakfar, and Jabbar Sabil, "Mahar Practice in Pidie Community Marriage, Analysis of Maqāsid Al-Syarī 'Ah," *Ahkamul Usrah: Jurnal S2 Hukum Keluarga Dan Peradilan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2021): 47–64.

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standardization of dowries in customary marriages in several areas in Aceh, they tend to rethink the amount of the dowry, because if there is an area that has a relatively low dowry standard, for example below 5 mayam. the man must prepare forfeited money to complete the contents of the room they will occupy after legally becoming husband and wife.⁷

Kholid Saifulloh in his writing Application of the Principle of "Al-'Adah Muhakkamah" in the Case of Determining the Amount and Type of Dowry, said al-'adah muhakkamah can be used as a guide in making decisions regarding the amount and type of dowry. Firstly, if it does not conflict with the Sharia arguments. If there are differences between the two, then what takes precedence is Sharia law, not Adah. Second, it is more often abandoned than carried out by the community, so that such customs cannot be used as a legal basis. Third, there is no difference between pronouncement and implementation of the custom. Fourth, there is a contract that is in accordance with the 'adat. In other words, when determining the amount of dowry, we may use local customary law as long as it does not conflict with these four requirements. However, in the context of Musamma's dowry, these requirements cannot be applied because the pronouncement used is Mutlaq pronouncement.⁸

Roswita Sitompul, Alesyanti, Nurul Hakim pada tulisannya yang berjudul, Marriage Mahar to Minimize the Low Rate of Marriage in Aceh Pidie, Indonesia”, said that the dowry value in Pidie district is the second highest after Sulawesi, where the dowry used must be in the form of gold known as mayam,

⁷ Burhanuddin A Gani and Ainun Hayati Ainun Hayati, “Pembatasan Jumlah Mahar Melalui Keputusan Musyawarah Adat Kluet Timur,” *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 1, no. 1 (2017): 174–204, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v1i1.1575>.

⁸ Kholid Saifulloh, “Aplikasi Kaidah" Al-'Adah Muhakkamah" Dalam Kasus Penetapan Jumlah Mahar,” *Al-MAJALIS: Jurnal Dirasat Islamiyah* 8, no. 1 (2020): 57–85, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37397/almajaalis.v8i1.153>.

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if converted into grams per one mayam it ranges from 3.33 grams. "The value of the dowry in Aceh Pidie occupies the second value after Sulawesi. One mayam is equivalent to 3.3 grams of gold. A man should provide 20 to 30 mayam gold, to be married can be continued. In other places in Indonesia, the dowry is much cheaper compared to Aceh Pidie." The value of the dowry that must be prepared when marrying a woman from Aceh, especially Pidie, ranges from 20-30 mayam gold, per one mayam is equivalent to 3.33 grams, in contrast to other areas where the dowry tends to be lower compared to Aceh Pidie.⁹

METHOD

This research is a field research or field study, this field research uses a qualitative method that is interpretative. The research data is an interpretation.¹⁰ The data collection process is generally carried out through observation, interviews, coupled with document studies from previous research, the data is then analyzed using a descriptive-inductive approach, or prioritizing the process rather than the results, the focus of the study lies on the research object, as well as mutual agreement with the informants.¹¹

This study focuses on community practices that have existed since ancient times, regardless of whether the practice has become customary law or is merely a practice. The data in this study comes from local community

⁹ Roswita Sitompul, Alesyanti Alesyanti, and Nurul Hakim, "Marriage Mahar to Minimize the Low Rate of Marriage in Aceh Pidie, Indonesia," *Italian Sociological Review* 8, no. 3 (2018): 487, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.13136/isr.v8i3.246>.

¹⁰ Sugiono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif Dan R & D* (Bandung: Penerbit Alfabeta, 2013).

¹¹ Muslim Muslim, "Varian-Varian Paradigma, Pendekatan, Metode, Dan Jenis Penelitian Dalam Ilmu Komunikasi," *Media Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Wahana* 1, no. 10 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.33751/wahana.v1i10.654>. p.281

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leaders, generally the data is obtained through interviews, either directly or indirectly, such as via chat or telecommunications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Acehnese people in their lives cannot be separated from gold, starting from the era of the Aceh kingdom to the struggle to build and maintain Indonesian independence through the donation of gold from the Acehnese people. In social life, gold is used in various aspects of life including fulfilling the needs of life, traditional ceremonies, dowries, jewelry, as savings and investments. In historical literature, Aceh is not only rich in historical background, customs and culture. However, Aceh is a country rich in abundant natural resources. Gold is one example of the natural wealth possessed by Aceh, as expressed by the Dutch historian PA Tiele in the 19th century, saying that only two countries in Asia have a lot of gold content, both are Japan and Aceh. He even gave the name Goud Berg or Gold Mountain to Mount Seulawah.¹²

The gold used in traditional Acehnese marriages is a tradition that still survives today, the gold is known as jeunamee or marriage dowry. A man must prepare a dowry of at least one or two mayam of gold, but in practice the amount of dowry that a prospective husband must give is determined based on the social status of the woman's family. Usually the dowry ranges from 10 to 30 mayam of gold. If there is a dowry that is higher than the standard, it is indirectly a way for the family to reject the man who wants to propose to their daughter, without lowering the status of the party who is proposing. However,

¹² Agung Suryo Setyantoro, *Emas Dagaya Hidup Masyarakat Aceh Dari Masa Ke Masa* (Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan, 2012). p.23

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there are cases where the party agrees to the family's request for a high dowry.¹³ Because he has the ability to fulfill the request.

The issue of dowry in Acehese customs is a discussion that never ends or is always interesting to review again, because every time the price of buying and selling gold increases, some choose to postpone getting married because it is related to the capital that must be prepared, besides basically the dowry is the wife's right obtained from the husband when married. The size of the dowry is a family agreement or based on applicable customs, in certain contexts customs will be prioritized as long as they do not violate the applicable sharia or law.

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Field facts related to das sein and das sollen are that some people choose to postpone getting married, even though physically or according to other people's assessments they are worthy of building a household. The majority postpone because they are not financially ready, as is commonly known Pidie is an area with the highest dowry in Aceh. Marrying a Pidie woman requires at least a dowry of around 10-30 mayam of gold, where in the last few months gold has experienced an increase in its buying and selling price, compared to several years ago, although in the last few weeks the price has gradually decreased, even though gold has touched Rp4,350,000.- per

¹³ Agung Suryo Setyantoro, *Emas Dan Gaya Hidup Masyarakat Aceh Dari Masa Ke Masa*, ed. Rusdi Sufi (Banda Aceh: Balai Pelestarian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 2012), hlm. 17.

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mayam,¹⁴ The price has increased significantly since 2021, when it was Rp. 2,780,000 by mayam..¹⁵

Unlike those who postpone marriage due to financial constraints or other obstacles, marriage should be able to continue even though the economic status is less supportive. Basically, when these obstacles are discussed in a family forum, there is always a solution to the problem, apart from chipping in to help cover the shortfall. Basically, marriage in Acehese customs is not only two people who have legal consequences after marriage, but also the family and the surrounding community, this happens because of the high social spirit of the community. If the dowry required is insufficient, usually the family will help each other and vice versa.¹⁶

Marriage according to Acehese customs in the past was not only a private matter for the two families who had interests, but also a shared matter between the villages or villages of origin of the two prospective brides and grooms. The Keuchik or village head at that time had the authority to prohibit young men from his village from marrying girls from outside because it would reduce the population of his village. However, he allowed young men from outside the area to marry girls from his village because the population would increase through marriage with the village girls.¹⁷

The use of gold as a dowry in Acehese marriages is a custom that has been known by the majority of people from all walks of life, starting from

¹⁴ Sara Masroni, "Turun Lagi, Harga Emas Di Banda Aceh Hari Ini per Mayam," 2024. <https://aceh.tribunnews.com/2024/11/14/turun-lagi-harga-emas-di-banda-aceh-hari-ini-per-mayam-kamis-14-november-2024>.

¹⁵ Mawaddatul Husna, "Harga Emas Turun, Masyarakat Banyak Yang Jual," (Aceh: SerambiNews.Com, 2021). <https://aceh.tribunnews.com/2021/03/04/harga-emas-turunmasyarakat-banyak-yang-jual>. akses 28 Februari 2022

¹⁶ Interview with Imran, L300 Driver, on October 24, 2024 in Bireun.

¹⁷ Moehammad Hoesin, "Adat Atjeh" (Aceh: (Dinas Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Atjeh), 1970).

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teenagers to the elderly. The dowry in a marriage itself is the result of an agreement between the two families of the prospective groom and bride, in terms of determining the amount of the dowry in the customs of the Pidie district community, the families of the two prospective brides have their respective roles. In general, the amount of the dowry is usually determined by the woman's family only, usually consisting of the woman's nuclear family: Father, Mother and Siblings.¹⁸ In certain conditions, sometimes the dowry is the result of a mutual agreement after a meeting between the two extended families when visiting the prospective bride's residence, with the aim of a marriage proposal.¹⁹ Both types of determining the number are commonly found during wedding ceremonies in the Pidie community.²⁰

The Role of the Family in Determining the Amount of the Dowry

The role of the family in determining the dowry is inseparable from several determining factors such as the family's social strata and education are two important points that are the benchmark for the size of the dowry in the marriage. Generally, in Pidie society, the determination of the amount of dowry is still based on the decision and agreement of the woman's family. Although the one who will establish and build a family is her child, in reality the dowry is not the wife's right after the *ijab qabul*, but it is also capital to hold her *walimatulul ursy* later.

¹⁸ Interview with Fatimah Syamaun, Community Leader, West Yemen, Mutiara, Pidie, Aceh, November 29, 2020.

¹⁹ Interview with Muhammad, Community Leader, Beureunuen, Mutiara, Pidie, Aceh, November 28, 2020.

²⁰ Interview with Fajri, Head of the Kembang Tanjong District Study Center, Pidie Regency, January 4, 2022.

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The family that has a role and is involved during the dowry determination process is the core family of both parties, at least the father and mother, or represented by the guardian if both parents are unable to attend due to health factors or because of the long distance. In general, the process of determining the dowry in Acehese society consists of three types. First, it is determined by the woman's family without any negotiation between the two families. Second, it is determined based on a mutual agreement of the two families during a family meeting or through a third party representative. Third, based on the ability of the prospective groom. The practice in the field that the author found after conducting interviews was that the majority of people used the first method based on the decision of the woman's family.

According to Mukhtar Daud, the party involved or having a large share in determining the amount of the dowry is the woman's family without any connection to the man's family. If the amount of the dowry is a mutual agreement, in reality the agreement is taken based on the mediation of a third party (*seulangke*).²¹ who represents or acts as a liaison between the two parties, as well as the party who negotiates with the woman's family. This statement was made based on his experience as a village official who often takes part in the proposal process, regardless of his role as a guest or host.²² Happiness in this case emphasizes that the decision of the amount of dowry is determined by the family of the woman, especially the father and mother who have more rights than other family members. In the context of the first child who is

²¹ *Seulangke is a third party who is an envoy from the family*

²² Wawancara dengan Mukhtar Daud, Tokoh Masyarakat Teupin Raya Kecamatan Glumpang Tiga, Kabupaten Pidie, 1 November 2021.

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married, the amount of dowry requested by the family is based on the amount of dowry from the mother before.²³

CONCLUSION

Das Sein and Das Sollen are one way we assess how the facts occur in the field or the practice of the Community related to certain problems. In this context, the marriage of the Acehnese Community, especially Pidie district. The community chooses to postpone their marriage due to limited capital, it is common knowledge because Pidie is one of the areas with a high dowry. In fact, the marriage does not need to be postponed because if discussed with the family there must be a solution.

The dowry is usually determined or set by the woman's family, although there is also a dowry that is determined jointly by the families of both parties, but it is rarely found even though it is familiar among the community. Apart from the two types that are commonly known to the community, there is also a dowry whose size depends on how much is given by the prospective husband. Determining the amount of this type of dowry is very rare, because the family has certain criteria before giving such authority.

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²³ Abya Bahagia, Head of the Study Center and Grand Imam of the Baitul A'la Lilmujahidin Beureunuen Mosque, Mutiara District, Pidie Regency, November 8, 2021.

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