

CUSTOMARY AUTHORITY IN THE *DEDUAIAN* TRADITION OF LAMPUNG SAIBATIN MARRIAGE FROM ISLAMIC LEGAL PERSPECTIVES



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Abstract

This research aims to examine the role of customary authority in the *Deduaian* tradition within the Lampung Saibatin marriage system in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, and to analyze its meaning from Islamic legal perspectives. The study employs a qualitative approach with field research design, using an interpretive – analytical orientation in which data are collected and interpreted directly from the research setting through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that the *Deduaian* tradition is structured through a sequence beginning with family agreement and permission from inner customary leaders, followed by systematic notification to the community, traditional leaders, religious figures, and government representatives through door – to – door communication, and continuing with a ritual bathing procession at Batanghari River involving female customary representatives from the Mena, Dukhi, Kanan, and Kikhi tribes who escort the bride – to – be in a closed ceremonial setting before she is dressed in traditional attire and paraded to the wedding house under customary supervision. The study concludes that the *Deduaian* tradition functions as a living customary practice (*'urf*) that is socially recognized and continuously practiced, operating within the boundaries of Islamic legal permissibility while reinforcing customary governance and social order. This research contributes to the preservation of the *deduaian* process through stories and traditional ceremonies among the people of Lampung. It also emphasizes the importance of safeguarding cultural heritage and promotes cross – cultural understanding at a global level.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran otoritas adat dalam tradisi *Deduaian* dalam sistem perkawinan Lampung Saibatin di Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, serta menganalisis maknanya dari perspektif hukum Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain penelitian lapangan, melalui orientasi interpretatif-analitis, di mana data dikumpulkan dan ditafsirkan langsung dari lokasi penelitian melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi *Deduaian* tersusun dalam suatu tahapan yang dimulai dari kesepakatan keluarga dan izin dari tokoh adat inti, dilanjutkan dengan pemberitahuan secara sistematis kepada masyarakat, tokoh adat, tokoh agama, dan pemerintah melalui komunikasi dari rumah ke rumah, kemudian dilanjutkan dengan prosesi ritual mandi di Batanghari yang melibatkan perwakilan adat perempuan dari suku Mena, Dukhi, Kanan, dan Kikhi yang mengantar calon pengantin perempuan dalam prosesi tertutup sebelum kemudian dirias dan diarak menuju rumah pesta dengan pengawasan adat. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa tradisi *Deduaian* berfungsi sebagai praktik hukum adat yang hidup (*'urf*) yang diakui secara sosial dan terus dipraktikkan, berada dalam batasan kebolehan hukum Islam sekaligus memperkuat tata kelola adat dan keteraturan sosial. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pelestarian proses *Deduaian* melalui cerita dan upacara tradisional di kalangan masyarakat Lampung. Penelitian ini juga menekankan pentingnya menjaga warisan budaya serta mendorong pemahaman lintas budaya di tingkat global.



INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a fundamental social institution that exists in every society and is deeply rooted in both religious and cultural life. In many communities (Gupte & Anitha, 2024), marriage is not only understood as a personal relationship between two individuals, but also as a social mechanism that regulates kinship (Bardon, 2020), inheritance, and community continuity (Walls, Woodford, & Levy, 2014). In Indonesia, the practice of marriage is strongly influenced by local customs that have been inherited across generations and continue to play an important role in shaping social behavior. One of the significant phenomena can be found in the Lampung Saibatin customary community in Bandar Lampung, where traditional rituals are still preserved and practiced before marriage. Among these traditions, the *deduaian* ceremony is considered an important pre-marital ritual that is believed to protect the prospective bride from harm and social risks such as elopement or abduction. Despite modernization and the strong presence of Islamic values in the community, this tradition continues to be maintained as part of cultural identity, making it an important social phenomenon that deserves academic attention.

Existing literature has extensively examined the relationship between Islam and local traditions, particularly within the context of marriage customs in Indonesia, with a general focus on cultural accommodation, symbolic interpretation of rituals, and the coexistence between Islamic teachings and customary (*adat*) practices (Madina, Ali, & Puspita, 2023). These studies remain largely descriptive and broad (Efrinaldi, Jayusman, Fatimah, Rimanto, & Yarmunida, 2023), offering limited engagement with structured normative or legal analysis of specific local practices (Gupte & Anitha, 2024), while often overlooking how rituals function within concrete socio-legal contexts and how they are interpreted through Islamic jurisprudential reasoning (Woźniak-Bobińska, 2018). Scholarly attention has predominantly centered on macro-level cultural practices (Amato, 2014), whereas micro-level ritual traditions remain insufficiently explored, including localized ceremonies such as the *deduaian* tradition, which has received minimal academic scrutiny despite its continued social relevance (Aji, Rambe, Yunus, & Feriera, 2021).

Previous studies have provided valuable insights into the interaction between Islam and customary practices, particularly in highlighting how Islamic principles are adapted within local cultures. Some researchers have examined the integration of *adat* and Islamic values in marriage ceremonies, while others have explored the symbolic and social functions of traditional rituals in maintaining community cohesion (Hayati, Khitam, Erfan, & Amini, 2024). Nevertheless, these studies generally treat customary traditions in a broad and generalized manner, without providing an in-depth evaluation of specific rituals such as the *deduaian* tradition in Lampung Saibatin society. Moreover, the normative assessment of whether such practices align with or deviate from Islamic legal principles remains limited. Therefore, there is a need to reposition the focus of analysis toward a more specific and context-based examination that combines cultural anthropology and Islamic legal evaluation.

This study seeks to examine how the *deduaian* tradition in the Lampung Saibatin customary marriage system is practiced in Bandar Lampung and how it can be understood from the perspective of Islamic law. The main argument of this research is that local marriage traditions may contain both cultural wisdom and potential normative tensions when viewed through Islamic legal principles, particularly in relation to ritual practices, gender roles, and belief systems embedded within them. Therefore, the central question of this study is how the *deduaian* tradition can be positioned within Islamic legal discourse, whether it is compatible with Islamic teachings, and what underlying values it reflects in the context of Muslim customary society. This study aims to provide a balanced analytical contribution that bridges cultural preservation and Islamic normative evaluation.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative field research design to examine the role of customary authority in the *Deduaian* tradition within the Lampung Saibatin marriage system in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, and its interpretation from Islamic legal perspectives. The research adopts an interpretive – analytical approach to understand how customary authority operates as a normative and social mechanism in regulating pre – marital rituals within a framework of legal pluralism between Islamic law and customary governance. The study was conducted in Keteguhan Village, Teluk Betung Barat District, where the *Deduaian* tradition is still actively practiced and preserved as part of local cultural identity. This approach enables an in – depth exploration of lived customary practices and their interaction with Islamic legal reasoning in real social contexts.

The participants of this study consisted of six key informants, including customary leaders, community elders, and individuals directly involved in the *Deduaian* practice. They were selected using purposive sampling based on their knowledge, authority, and experiential involvement in customary marriage practices. Data were collected through participant observation, semi – structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted during the ritual to capture its procedural and social dynamics, while interviews explored both customary meanings and Islamic legal interpretations. Documentation included written records, photographs, and community materials. Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by systematic coding and thematic interpretation. To ensure research rigor, triangulation and member checking were applied to enhance validity and trustworthiness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The *Deduaian* Tradition Practices in Lampung Saibatin Traditional Marriages

The *deduaian* tradition is manifested as a structured pre – marital ritual within the Lampung Saibatin customary marriage system. The practice takes the form of a ceremonial bathing process for the prospective bride conducted at a culturally significant location resembling a river. The ritual is organized by female customary leaders from several tribal groups who supervise and control the entire process (Saiin, Umar, Badarussyamsi, Hajazi, & Yusuf, 2023). The implementation includes preparation of ceremonial items escort of the bride by female attendants private bathing in a closed space and post – ritual dressing in traditional Lampung attire. Male participation is excluded during the ritual reflecting gender segregation in customary practice. After completion the bride is escorted in a ceremonial procession back to her residence (Takvam Kindt, 2022). This structured sequence demonstrates that the *deduaian* tradition functions as an institutionalized customary mechanism regulating pre – marital transition within the community. The practice is not only symbolic but also socially binding in regulating marriage procedures. It reinforces customary authority as the main regulator of marital rituals.

The continuity of the *deduaian* tradition is influenced by cultural inheritance institutional authority and social acceptance within the community. The tradition is transmitted across generations as a hereditary cultural obligation. Customary leaders play a central role in organizing supervising and legitimizing the ritual. Their authority ensures that the practice remains recognized and consistently implemented in marriage ceremonies. Tribal groups contribute through assigned roles that support the ritual

process. Community members accept the tradition as a normative requirement before marriage which strengthens its sustainability (Puyu, Umar, Hanis, Arifin, & Abili, 2023). Historical experiences related to marriage risks such as elopement and bride abduction reinforce adherence to the practice. These experiences shape collective belief in the necessity of protective rituals. The combination of cultural transmission and social trust maintains the continuity of the *deduaian* tradition as a stable customary system.

The implications of the *deduaian* tradition are reflected in the strengthening of customary authority and social cohesion within the community. The ritual reinforces the role of female customary leaders as central actors in marriage ceremonies. It institutionalizes gender specific responsibilities by assigning exclusive ritual authority to women. The practice fosters collective participation among tribal groups which enhances social solidarity (Rasidin, Witro, Busni, Nurjaman, & Afan, 2024). Marriage is positioned as a communal institution governed by customary norms rather than a private agreement (Busyro, Burhanuddin, Muassomah, Saka, & Wafa, 2023). The involvement of customary leaders strengthens hierarchical organization within village social structure. The tradition contributes to cultural identity preservation amid modernization. It also regulates social behavior before marriage through customary rules. This demonstrates that the *deduaian* tradition functions as a transformative mechanism that integrates cultural continuity with social governance.

Islamic Legal Review of the *Deduaian* Tradition Practices in Lampung Saibatin Traditional Marriages

The *deduaian* tradition in Islamic legal perspective represents a customary practice that intersects with normative religious interpretation. The ritual involves a pre – marital bathing ceremony for the prospective bride which is considered by the community as a protective act before marriage. The practice includes gender segregation private ceremonial space and involvement of female customary leaders. These elements reflect local cultural values related to modesty protection and social order. The ritual does not affect the legal validity of marriage but functions as a preparatory customary practice. Islamic legal analysis places such practices within the scope of customary recognition as long as they do not contradict religious principles (Idrus, Nurdin, Qayyum, Halim, & Amir, 2023). The *deduaian* tradition therefore exists between cultural expression and legal religious interpretation. It becomes a relevant subject for evaluation within Islamic jurisprudential discourse. This positioning shows its significance in understanding living customary law in Muslim society.

The continuity of the *deduaian* tradition is influenced by cultural legitimacy social necessity and perceived moral benefits. The community views the ritual as a preventive mechanism to avoid harm before marriage. Historical experiences of social risks strengthen belief in the importance of the practice (Bahardur, Andayani, Suwandi, & Wardani, 2022). Customary leaders play a role in legitimizing the ritual within religiously oriented social values. Intergenerational transmission ensures continuity of the tradition. Community participation strengthens acceptance and sustainability of the practice (Said, Hukmiah, Nur, Wahyuni, & Akbar, 2024). The absence of formal religious rejection at the local level contributes to its endurance. The ritual is perceived as aligned with moral and social values (Kasselstrand, 2018). These factors demonstrate the interaction between cultural belief and religious understanding in shaping its persistence.

The implications of the *deduaian* tradition in Islamic legal discourse highlight the dynamic relationship between customary law and Islamic principles. The ritual raises questions regarding limits of cultural acceptance in Islamic jurisprudence (Brett, Hopkins – Doyle, Robnett, Watson, & Tenenbaum, 2023). It also shows how local traditions function as mechanisms of social regulation (Chiritoiu & Tesăr, 2020). Islamic legal theory allows evaluation through concepts of customary recognition and public interest (Iman, Tedi Kholiludin, Muhammad Lutfi Hakim, & Ubbadul Adzkiya', 2024). The practice reflects adaptability of Islamic law toward cultural diversity (Zhunussova,

2022). However careful assessment is required to ensure alignment with foundational principles. The *deduaian* tradition becomes a case of negotiation between law and culture. It demonstrates that Islamic legal understanding evolves through interaction with social reality. This shows the relevance of contextual interpretation in Islamic legal studies.

Social Structure Cultural Dynamics Deduaian Tradition in Lampung Saibatin Marriage System

The *deduaian* tradition in Lampung Saibatin customary marriage is a structured ritual system that integrates cultural, social, and institutional dimensions. The practice is manifested through a ceremonial bathing process for the prospective bride that is conducted in a designated location under the supervision of female customary leaders. The ritual follows a fixed sequence including preparation, escort (Dikuraisyin, Sumarkan, Fatwa, & Masadah, 2024), private bathing (Ravetllat Ballestř & Sanabria Moudelle, 2019), dressing in traditional attire (Susilawati, Amir, Ikbal, Nur, & Maddusila, 2023), and ceremonial procession. Male participation is excluded (Wang, 2020), while female customary leaders hold central authority in managing the process (Polit, 2018). The tradition is embedded within a customary governance system that regulates marriage procedures. Its continuity is supported by hereditary transmission (Sopyan & Nidzami, 2018), institutional authority, and community acceptance (Fauzi, Hakim, Long, & Yasin, 2024). Overall, *deduaian* functions as a customary institution that organizes pre-marital transition and reinforces social order within the community.

The persistence of the *deduaian* tradition is influenced by cultural inheritance, social experience, and institutional legitimacy. The community maintains the practice as a hereditary obligation that forms part of collective identity. Historical experiences related to marriage risks such as elopement and bride abduction have shaped the emergence of protective rituals (Homolka & Pryba, 2024). Customary leaders play a key role in legitimizing and supervising the ritual (Rijiju & Gogoi, 2024), ensuring compliance and continuity (Gumede & Mathonsi, 2019). Social trust in customary authority strengthens acceptance of the practice among community members (Bertrand-Dansereau & Clark, 2016). Tribal organization also contributes to the structured implementation of the ritual. These factors indicate that the tradition emerges as a social response to perceived insecurity and is sustained through collective memory and cultural norms (Rajafi & Susanti, 2023).

The implications of the *deduaian* tradition are reflected in the strengthening of customary authority and the restructuring of social relations. The ritual reinforces the position of female customary leaders as central actors in marriage governance (Inayatillah, Mohd Nor, Asy'ari, & Faisal, 2022). It institutionalizes gender-specific roles by assigning exclusive ritual authority to women and limiting male involvement (Chryssogelos, 2024). The practice also fosters collective participation among tribal groups (Naimah, Rokhman, Hali, Maarif, & Sirojuddin, 2024), thereby strengthening social cohesion and communal solidarity. Marriage is repositioned from a private relationship into a public institution governed by customary norms (Avita, Idris, & Oktalita, 2022). The ritual further regulates social behavior before marriage through structured rules of participation and ceremony (Al-Krenawi & Jackson, 2014). It also contributes to the preservation of cultural identity in the context of social change (Akhtar, 2018). These findings demonstrate that the tradition produces transformative effects within social and cultural systems.

Compared with previous studies on Islamic and customary marriage practices (Huda, Purnomo, Mun'im, Aminuddin, & Santoso, 2024), this research provides a more detailed and localized analysis of ritual structure and social function (Zulkifli, Zikri, Artiningsih, Zainuddin, & Helim, 2024). Prior studies generally focus on broad themes such as cultural accommodation between Islam and adat or symbolic meanings of marriage rituals (Jafar, Asmara, Faizin, Octavianne, & Kisworo, 2024). However, they rarely examine micro-level practices with detailed procedural organization and

gendered authority structures (Bazarkulova & Compton, 2021). This study shows that *deduaian* is not only symbolic but also a regulated institutional mechanism that governs social behavior (Horii, 2020). Unlike earlier research that emphasizes harmony between Islam and culture, this study highlights the disciplinary and regulatory dimensions of customary rituals (Nedoluzhko & Agadjanian, 2015). It also demonstrates that local traditions require deeper ethnographic and legal analysis to capture their complexity within real social contexts.

The recommendation of this study is the need for further research development which, although focused on a local context, still has global relevance and impact in understanding the relationship between customary law and religion that functions in a harmonious manner. Conceptually, future research should integrate Islamic legal theory and anthropological approaches to strengthen the understanding of customary ritual practices in Muslim societies within a global context. Methodologically, comparative studies across different ethnic groups and countries are required to examine variations in marriage practices and their legal meanings from a broader perspective. From a policy perspective, local governments and customary institutions are expected to encourage constructive dialogue between cultural preservation and Islamic legal values in order to maintain balance within global social dynamics. In addition, further research should examine gender roles in customary rituals in greater depth to provide a more comprehensive understanding of social structure. These steps are important to strengthen global academic discourse and to demonstrate that customary practices and religion can coexist in harmony and mutually reinforcing relations.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the *Deduaian* tradition operates not only as a ceremonial element of pre-marital culture but also as a structured mechanism of customary governance that actively produces and maintains social order within the Lampung Saibatin marriage system. The significance of this tradition lies in its capacity to institutionalize authority, regulate collective participation, and shape socially accepted norms regarding marriage preparation. Rather than functioning as a symbolic ritual alone, *Deduaian* reflects a form of living social regulation in which customary leaders exercise recognized authority over communal processes. This indicates that marriage within the community is embedded in a broader socio-legal system where cultural values, authority structures, and social responsibilities are continuously negotiated and reinforced. From the perspective of Islamic legal reasoning, the tradition exemplifies the concept of *'urf* as a living custom that operates within the boundaries of normative acceptability, demonstrating a dynamic interaction between religious principles and local socio-cultural realities.

This research contributes to broader scholarly discussions on legal pluralism in Muslim societies, particularly the interaction between Islamic law and customary authority in shaping social life. The *Deduaian* tradition provides an illustrative case of how local communities construct legitimacy through culturally embedded institutions while maintaining compatibility with Islamic ethical frameworks. This study enriches interdisciplinary scholarship by bridging Islamic jurisprudence, legal anthropology, and socio-legal studies, showing that customary practices function as active sources of normative order rather than residual cultural expressions. It further highlights the importance of understanding law in its lived context, where religious and customary systems coexist and mutually influence one another. However, future research is encouraged to expand comparative perspectives across different regions and cultural settings in order to deepen theoretical generalization and strengthen global discourse on living law and customary governance systems.

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