FRESH FLOUR AS A SYMBOL OF HOPE TO PERPETUATE MARRIAGE: CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARRIAGE IN THE RIAU ISLANDS

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Abstract: This research examines the role of plain flour in religious, cultural, social, and marriage perspectives in the Riau Islands community. Plain flour is a practice that is closely related to wedding ceremonies in the Riau Islands region. This research method uses a qualitative approach with the data collected through literature related to Tepung Tawar in Religious, Cultural, Social, and Marital Perspectives in the Riau Islands Community. This research also uses a descriptive method, namely explaining. This research uses a historical and contextual approach. The analytical method used is content analysis, namely digging deeper into the importance of plain flour from a religious, cultural, social, and marriage perspective in the Riau Islands community by reviewing various literature. The research results show that plain flour has important meaning and function in the context of religion, culture, society, and marriage in the Riau Islands community. From a religious perspective, plain flour is used as a form of offering to the gods and goddesses and to cleanse negative energy that may exist in marital relationships. This practice is also considered an attempt to invoke blessings and good luck in marriage.

Keywords: Fresh Flour, Perspectives, Religious, Cultural, Social, Marriage

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang peran tepung terigu dalam perspektif agama, budaya, sosial, dan pernikahan pada masyarakat Kepulauan Riau. Tepung terigu merupakan salah satu adat yang erat kaitannya dengan upacara pernikahan di wilayah Kepulauan Riau. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan kualitatif dengan...

Kata kunci: Tepung Segar, Perspektif, Agama, Budaya, Sosial, Perkawinan

Introduction

Plain flour is a practice that is closely related to wedding traditions in the Riau Archipelago. In this tradition, plain flour is considered to have deep meaning and symbolism in relation to religious, cultural, social, and marriage perspectives.

From a religious perspective, where the religions adhered to by the people of the Riau Archipelago, such as Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity, play an important role in everyday life. Plain flour is a practice that involves religious aspects, where people believe that plain flour is a means to rid themselves of negative energy and get blessings in marriage.

Likewise, the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago also plays a significant role in the practice of plain flour. Plain flour becomes an integral part of the customs that are packaged through the wedding, which involves family, relatives and neighbors gathering to give plain flour to the bride and groom as a sign of approval, support and good wishes. This practice reflects the symbolism of cleanliness, chastity, and unity in the marriage relationship.

The social aspect also has a strong influence on the practice of plain flour in the Riau Archipelago community. This practice helps strengthen social ties between the bride's family and the surrounding community. Bargain flour events create collaborative moments where people work together, strengthening community bonds and solidarity.

Likewise, the wedding ceremony is one of the important events in the life of the people of the Riau Archipelago. Marriage is considered as one of the most sacred and sacred moments in a person's life. At a wedding, two individuals who love each other and have the intention of living together officially unite their bond. In the Riau Archipelago society, the wedding ceremony has deep significance in the

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context of religion, culture, social and family.\(^4\)

From a religious perspective, the wedding ceremony is considered a very important step in achieving a harmonious family life.\(^5\) The religions adhered to by the people of the Riau Archipelago, such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and traditional religions, provide instructions and guidance for the implementation of the wedding ceremony.\(^6\) This ceremony involves a series of rituals, prayers, and offerings to god or deities as a form of gratitude and requests for blessings.\(^7\)

Culture also plays an important role in the wedding ceremonies of the people of the Riau Archipelago. Each tribe or ethnicity in this region has its own distinctive wedding traditions and customs\(^8\). These customs include procedures, costumes, music, dance, and special foods used in wedding ceremonies.\(^9\) The wedding ceremony is not only an important moment for the married couple, but also an event that involves the whole family and community, strengthening social ties and togetherness.\(^10\)

Although this practice has been passed down from generation to generation, detailed understanding and research on plain flour and wedding traditions in the context of the people of the Riau Archipelago is still limited. Even though this tradition has been going on for many years\(^11\), currents of modernization and social change have influenced the implementation and interpretation of this practice.\(^12\) The contact of globalization, technological developments, and changes in social values are inevitable\(^13\), so that the meaning and understanding of plain flour and wedding ceremonies in the Riau Islands community experience an indirect shift.\(^14\)

Therefore, in-depth research on plain flour from the perspective of religion, culture, social and marriage in the Riau Archipelago community is very important to do. This research will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the significance and evolution of the practice of plain flour and its implications in terms of religion, culture, social and marriage in the context of the people of the Riau archipelago. In addition, this research can also help preserve and appreciate and revive the


\(^{9}\) Sonafist, Y., and Henny Yuningsih. “Islamic Law, the State, and Human Rights: The contestation of Interfaith Marriage discourse on social media in Indonesia.” *JURIS (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)* 22.2 (2023): 381-391.


\(^{14}\) Siregar, A. H., & Rosyad, “Peranan Agama Dalam Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Melayu.”
cultural heritage of noble value in the people of the Riau Archipelago.

Given the significance of the wedding ceremony in the Riau Archipelago community, it is important to understand the values, traditions, and religious guidelines associated with marriage. In-depth research and understanding of the significance of this wedding ceremony will assist in preserving the cultural heritage and values related to the institution of marriage in the Riau Islands community.\(^\text{15}\)

Therefore, this plain flour is very interesting and important to examine because of the Importance of Culture and Tradition, so by researching this tradition, it can help understand the cultural and historical values of the community. Likewise, being able to explain the viewpoints of different religions, and how these practices relate to religious rituals.\(^\text{16}\) As well as its role in the social life of the community, such as relationships between family members, relationships between individuals, and how social norms can influence these practices.\(^\text{17}\)

Several previous studies have discussed the tradition of plain flour, first; Rini Selvia and Asyrul Fikri, “Tepuk Tewar Tawar in Malay Wedding Customs,” Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research (2021). This research discusses the tap flour ceremony at weddings in Riau, while the researcher discusses the people of the Riau archipelago with religious, cultural and social views at weddings.\(^\text{18}\) Third; Doni Febri Hendra and Amelia Ariani, “Clap Fresh Flour as a Symbol of Malay Cultural Rituals in Karimun Regency,” Dance and Theater Review: Journal of Dance, Theater and Wayang 5, no. 1 (2022). This research discusses the tradition of plain flour patting only at weddings in one Karimun district, while the researcher discusses the plain flour tradition from the perspective of religion, culture, social and marriage in the wider context of the Riau archipelago community.\(^\text{20}\)

This research can open a window on interesting and diverse cultures and provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between religion, culture, society and marriage in the Riau Archipelago. This can be a valuable source of knowledge for scientists, policy makers, and society as a whole.

\section*{Methods}

This study uses a qualitative method by examining various unsalted flour literature


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in the Perspective of Religion, Culture, Social, and Marriage in the Riau Islands Community. The data in this study were collected through literature methods related to Unsalted Flour in the Perspective of Religion, Culture, Social, and Marriage in the Riau Islands Community. This type of research is included in the category of literature research. This research uses a historical and contextual approach. This research also uses a descriptive method, namely explaining in depth about Unsalted Flour in the Perspective of Religion, Culture, Social, and Marriage in the Riau Islands Community. The analysis method used is content analysis, which is to dig deeper into the importance of unsalted flour from the perspective of Religion, Culture, Social, and Marriage in the Riau Islands Community by reviewing various literatures.

Fresh Flour in the Perspective of Religion in the Riau Archipelago Society

The significance of religion in the life of the people of the Riau Archipelago

Religion has a very important role in the life of the people of the Riau Archipelago. Religion provides a foundation of morals, ethics, and spiritual values that form the basis of everyday life. The following is an explanation of the significance of religion in the life of the people of the Riau Archipelago:

1. Life Guide
Religion provides guidance and guidance for individuals and the people of the Riau Archipelago in living life. Religious teachings regulate moral, ethical, and behavioral aspects that are applied in various life situations, both in social, family, and work relationships.21

2. Cultural Identity
Religion is one of the main pillars in maintaining and developing the cultural identity of the people of the Riau Archipelago. Followed religions, such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, and traditional religions, have distinctive religious traditions and practices. These religious values influence the mindset, behavior, art, and customs in everyday life.22

3. Arrangement of Traditional Ceremonies
Religion has an important role in regulating traditional ceremonies in the people of the Riau Archipelago. Traditional ceremonies, such as weddings, circumcisions, welcoming births, and other religious celebrations, are carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the adhered religion. Religion provides a theological and spiritual foundation in carrying out these traditional ceremonies.23

4. Unity and Social Solidarity
Religion is the glue in building social unity and solidarity in the people of the Riau Archipelago. Religious activities, such as congregational prayers, collective worship, and social activities based on religion, serve as a forum for strengthening relationships between individuals and fostering a spirit of mutual cooperation in society.24

5. Healing and Comfort
Religion provides spiritual support and comfort in the face of hardship, suffering, and death. Belief in the existence of a greater power, such as God or spiritual power, provides hope and inner peace for individuals in facing life's challenges.25

The meaning and function of plain flour in the context of religion

Plain flour has an important meaning and function in the context of religion in various religious traditions. The meaning and

21 Siregar, A. H., & Rosyad, “Peranan Agama Dalam Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Melayu.”
22 Tjandrasasmita, “Perkembangan Agama Buddha Di Kepulauan Riau.”
function of plain flour in a religious context include:

1. of Cleansing and Purification

Plain flour is often used as a symbol of cleansing and purity in religious contexts. In many religious traditions, plain flour is used in ceremonies to cleanse sins, guilt, or negative energy that may be attached to the individuals or objects involved in the ritual. Plain flour is thought to cleanse and purify the soul and prepare individuals for a deeper religious experience.26

2. Welcome Spiritual Guests

In some religious traditions, plain flour is used to greet spiritual guests, such as ancestral spirits or other spiritual entities. Plain flour is placed as an offering or as a sign of respect to the entity, signifying friendliness and attachment between the spiritual world and the human world.27

3. Symbol of Balance and Reconciliation

Plain flour can also be a symbol of balance and reconciliation in a religious context. In some traditions, plain flour is used to unify and bring balance between the various elements or forces present. Through the use of plain flour, it is hoped that there will be reconciliation between positive and negative forces, or between humans and the spiritual world.28

4. Honor and Offering

Plain flour can also be used as a form of respect and offering to a deity, god, or spiritual entity that is revered in certain religions. Plain flour is placed as a sign of respect and appreciation for the blessings and gifts received, as well as an expression of gratitude and loyalty to a higher power.29

The relationship between plain flour and wedding ceremonies from a religious perspective

Plain flour has a close relationship with wedding ceremonies from a religious perspective in many cultures and religious traditions. The following is an explanation of the relationship between plain flour and wedding ceremonies from a religious perspective:

1. Symbol of Cleansing and Chastity

In religious contexts, plain flour is used in wedding ceremonies as a symbol of cleansing and purity. Through the procession of fresh flour, it is believed that the bride and groom and family members involved in the wedding ceremony are cleansed of any sins or negative energy that may exist. Plain flour is a symbol of spiritual preparation and purity before starting a new married life.30

2. Requests for Blessings and Blessings

At wedding ceremonies, plain flour is also used as a means to seek blessings and blessings from gods, gods, or spiritual entities respected in certain religions. Plain flour is put as an offering and a sign of respect to a higher power, as an effort to ask for blessings and blessings on the marriage bond that will be formed.31

3. Symbol of Unity and Balance

Plain flour can also symbolize unity and balance in a wedding ceremony. In some traditions, plain flour is used to unite the wedding couple through the symbolic unification of the two individuals into one

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unified whole. In addition, plain flour also reflects the balance between personal life and life together in marriage, as well as the balance between the positive and negative forces that exist in the relationship.  

4. Binder of Cultural Traditions

The use of plain flour in wedding ceremonies also serves as a binder of cultural traditions passed down from generation to generation. Plain flour is part of the cultural heritage which is upheld and its authenticity is maintained in wedding ceremonies. By involving plain flour, the wedding ceremony becomes a means to maintain and respect religious and cultural traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation.

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Wedding customs in the Riau Archipelago community

Wedding customs in the Riau Archipelago community reflect a rich culture and distinctive traditions. The following is an explanation of the wedding customs in the Riau Islands community:

1. Wedding Preparation Customs

Before the wedding takes place, there are a series of preparations that must be made. This includes setting dates according to either the Javanese or Islamic calendars, the giving of dowry (dowry) from the man to the woman, as well as meetings between the two families to discuss wedding preparations.

2. Tawar Tawar Ceremony

An important part of the wedding customs in the people of the Riau Archipelago is the plain flour ceremony. In this ceremony, the bride and groom are cleaned with plain flour as a symbol of cleansing and purity before entering married life. This ceremony also involves family and traditional elders who give advice and pray to the wedding couple.

3. Pangku Tangan adat

The lap of the hands custom is a moment where the bride and groom hold each other's hands as a sign of agreement and commitment to start married life together. Usually, the adat of the hands is carried out in the presence of traditional elders or religious figures who give important prayers and advice to the wedding couple.

4. Customary Akad Nikah

Customary akad nikah is the essence of marriage in the Riau Archipelago community. This ceremony involves the giving of consent granted (consent) from the groom and acceptance of consent granted by the bride. The custom of the marriage contract also includes the signing of the marriage certificate and witnessed by family, relatives and invited guests.

5. Traditional Wedding Reception

After the ceremony, a traditional wedding reception is carried out which is usually attended by family, relatives and invited guests. This reception is an event to celebrate the happiness of the bridal couple with food,

dance, music and various other entertainment. Apart from that, this event is also an opportunity for the bride and groom's family to show the rich culture and customs typical of the Riau Islands. The role of plain flour in the wedding ceremony

Plain flour plays an important role in wedding ceremonies in various cultures and traditions. The following is an explanation of the role of plain flour in the wedding ceremony:

1. Symbol of Cleansing and Chastity

Plain flour is used as a symbol of cleansing and purity in wedding ceremonies. Through the procession of plain flour, the wedding couple and the families involved in the ceremony are cleansed of sins, mistakes or negative energies that may be attached to them. Plain flour symbolizes spiritual preparation and purity before entering into a new married life.

2. Connecting with the Spiritual World

The use of plain flour in the wedding ceremony also serves to connect the couple with the spiritual world. Unsalted flour is placed as an offering or a sign of respect to a spiritual entity or god who is respected in a particular religion. This reflects the recognition of a higher power involved in the marriage bond.

3. Uniting the Bride and Groom

Plain flour can be a symbol of unification and oneness between the wedding couple. In some traditions, plain flour is used to unite couples through the symbolic union of two individuals into a unified whole. Through the plain flour procession, the couple expresses their commitment to live together as husband and wife.

4. Seeking Blessings and Blessings

The freshwater flour ceremony also involves seeking blessings and blessings from a respected god or spiritual entity. Plain flour is placed as a sign of respect and appreciation for a higher power, as well as a request for blessing for the marriage to be held. These blessings and blessings are expected to protect and strengthen the bond of the wedding couple. The symbolism of plain flour in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago

Plain flour has a rich symbolism in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago. The following is an explanation of the symbolism of plain flour in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago:

1. Cleansing and Purification

Plain flour symbolizes cleansing and purity in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago. In wedding ceremonies and other rituals, plain flour is used to cleanse the couple and the involved family members of any sins, negative energies, or faults that may be present. Plain flour is a symbol of spiritual preparation and purity before starting a new phase in life.

2. Unity and Harmony

Plain flour also symbolizes unity and harmony in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago. In wedding ceremonies, plain flour is used to unite the bridal couple, reflecting the union of two different individuals into one unified whole. This reflects the importance of harmony and balance in the marriage relationship.

3. Protection and Blessing

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40 Joseph, “The Significance Of Rice And Rice Flour In Hindu Rituals.”
41 Balakrishnan, “The Symbolism And Significance Of Vibhuti And Kumkum In Hinduism.”
42 Ali, “Significance Of Tepung Tawar In Malay Traditional Ceremonies.”
43 Lim, “Tepung Tawar: A Symbol Of Purification In Malay Culture.”
44 Abdullah, “Adat Istimadat Pernikahan Melayu Batam.”
Plain flour is also considered a symbol of protection and blessing in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago. Plain flour is placed as an offering to a respected spiritual entity or deity, as a request for blessing and blessing for the marriage to be held. The existence of this plain flour is expected to protect the bride and groom from all forms of harm and bring good luck and blessings to their married life.45

4. Cultural Heritage and Local Identity

The use of plain flour in the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago is also part of the cultural heritage and local identity which is upheld. Plain flour is an important element in traditional ceremonies and religious rituals, strengthens ties with ancestral traditions, and maintains the authenticity of local culture in the midst of modernization.46

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The practice of plain flour as a liaison between the bride's family and the surrounding community

In the culture of the people of the Riau Archipelago, the practice of plain flour does not only involve the bride's family, but also becomes a link between the bride's family and the surrounding community. The following is an explanation of this:

1. Community Solidarity

The freshwater flour ceremony involves the participation of the local community, such as neighbors, relatives and friends, who are there to provide support and attend the event. The involvement of the local community in the flour ceremony reflects solidarity and togetherness in the community, where they provide support and take part in celebrating important moments in the lives of the wedding couple.47

2. Building a Social Network

The practice of plain flour is also an opportunity to expand and strengthen the social network of the bride's family and the surrounding community. Through community participation in the white flour ceremony, the relationship between the bride's family and the surrounding community can be strengthened. This can open doors for collaboration, help, and support in the future lives of the couple and their families.48

3. Joint Celebration

The fresh flour ceremony also functions as a joint celebration event between the bride and groom's family and the surrounding community. In addition to cleansing processions and rituals, this event is usually followed by food, dancing, music and other entertainment. This creates an emotional bond and togetherness between the bride and groom's family and the surrounding community, strengthening social ties and mutual understanding between them.49

4. Maintenance of Cultural Traditions

By involving the local community in the fresh flour ceremony, this practice also functions as an effort to maintain cultural traditions. Involving the community in traditional ceremonies helps ensure the continuity and continuity of local culture, strengthening a sense of identity and pride in the existing cultural heritage.50

47 Abdullah, “Adat Istdiadat Pernikahan Melayu Batam.”
48 Rahmat, “Bentuk Kebudayaan Pernikahan Melayu Di Kepulauan Riau.”
50 Yulianto, H., & Zulkifli, “(2021). Adat Resepsi Pernikahan Melayu Batam. , 17(1),.”
The contribution of plain flour to togetherness and social solidarity in the context of marriage

Plain flour has a significant contribution to togetherness and social solidarity in the context of marriage in society. The following is an explanation of the contribution of plain flour in strengthening togetherness and social solidarity:

1. Strengthening Family Bonds

The practice of plain flour in wedding ceremonies involves the participation of family members and closest relatives. Through the procession of fresh flour, family bonds are strengthened, because family members are actively involved in providing support and involving themselves in the preparation and implementation of the wedding ceremony. This creates a strong emotional bond between family members, strengthening the sense of brotherhood and social solidarity.51

2. Building Inter-Family Relations

Plain flour also serves as a tool to build closer and closer inter-family relationships. In the wedding ceremony, the bride's family asks for blessings and blessings from older families or respected relatives. This creates opportunities to strengthen social ties between the families, broaden social networks, and create deeper bonds between families involved.52

3. Strengthens Community Solidarity

Plain flour also plays a role in strengthening community solidarity around marriage. The local community, including neighbours, relatives and close friends, often participates in the plain flour procession as a sign of their support and presence. This participation reflects a sense of solidarity and togetherness in the community, as well as strengthening social relations between the bride's family and the surrounding community.53

4. Building Harmony and Cooperation

Through the practice of plain flour, the couple and the families involved learn to work together, communicate, and coordinate well.54 The process of preparing and carrying out the white flour ceremony encourages cooperation and harmony between all parties involved. This strengthens mutual respect, tolerance and understanding between them, and helps create a harmonious marriage environment.55

Conclusion

Plain flour is a practice that has meaning and significance in the perspective of religion, culture, social, and marriage in the people of the Riau Archipelago. So from the religious aspect it is considered as a form of religious ritual performed to cleanse negative energy and ask for blessings from God. Likewise, the cultural aspect that reflects the richness of local culture and ancestral heritage that is highly respected by the community. From the social aspect Through participation in the plain flour procession, the surrounding community provides their support and presence, creating a sense of togetherness and familiarity among all parties involved. From the wedding aspect, plain flour is a symbol of physical and spiritual preparation involving the bridal couple, family and community. This signifies the seriousness and sanctity of the marriage that will take place.

51 Abdullah, “Adat Istiadat Pernikahan Melayu Batam.”
52 Rahmat, “Bentuk Kebudayaan Pernikahan Melayu Di Kepulauan Riau.”
54 Tampubolon, R., & Manik, “Adat Akad Nikah Dalam Pernikahan Masyarakat Melayu Kepulauan Riau.”
55 Yulianto, H., & Zulkifli, “(2021). Adat Resepsi Pernikahan Melayu Batam. , 17(1),.”
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