

**EARLY MARRIAGE AND SEXUAL-REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH  
AMONG *MADURESE* WOMEN:  
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF AN INDONESIAN  
COMMUNITY**

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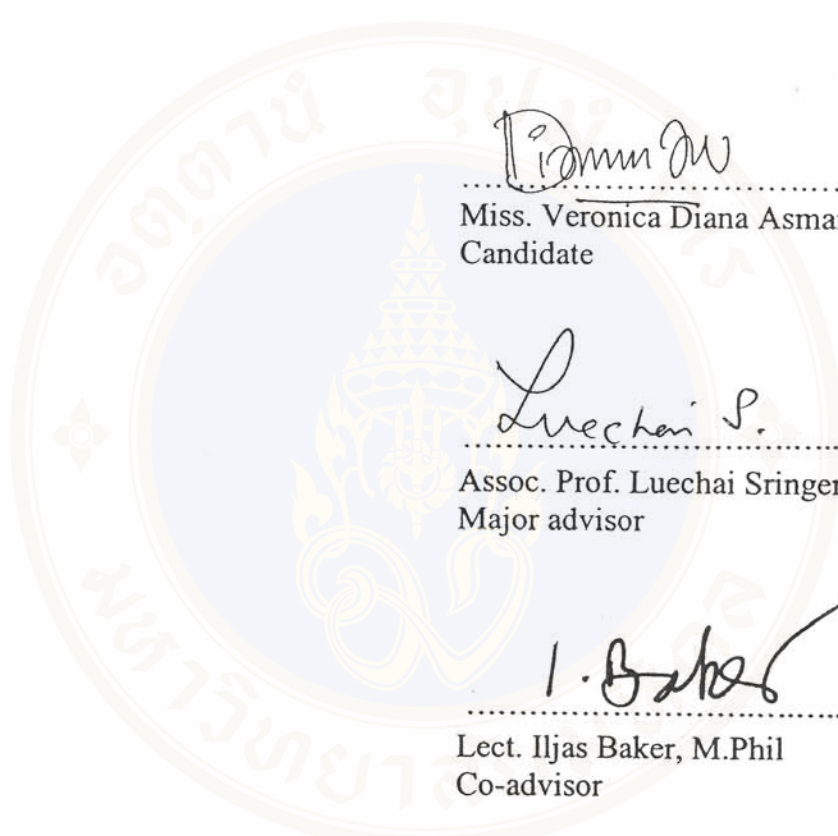
**VERONICA DIANA ASMARAWARDANI**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
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Thesis  
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was submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Mahidol University  
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on

March 12, 2010



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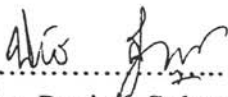
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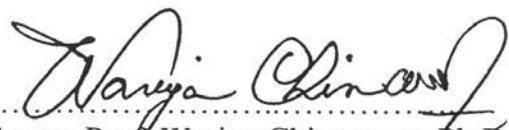
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COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

This research is an ethnographic study regarding the ethnic group practice of early marriage in one sub-village in East Java province, Indonesia. The ethnic group, *Madurese*, is one among two community groups that persist in conducting the practice. Law enforcement and health programs have been designed to overcome it. Yet, they resulted in the invisible practice of early marriage within the community.

Experience of the daily life, while conducting the research, led to a deeper understanding of the complexity of early marriage among *Madurese*. The researcher spent time doing field work in the community; the research was able to portray cases in early marriage. Taking three cases from different generations, the research explored women's experience regarding their decision in getting married at a young age: under 16 years old. Their experiences in life present a picture of their life from their own lens: how they thought about themselves, their marriage story, and sexual-reproductive life experiences.

Retrieving and blending women and community voices, we can see the prevalent trend in early marriage is constructed by the complexity of the cultural web of the *Madurese*. The prevailing practice is also constrained by their preference of preserving their way of living. The study also shows how the local government failed to recognize the complexity of the community in *Kebun Cengkeh* so that it is hard to stimulate change related to early marriage.

KEY WORDS: EARLY MARRIAGE / ETHNOGRAPHY / MADURESE /  
SEXUAL-REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

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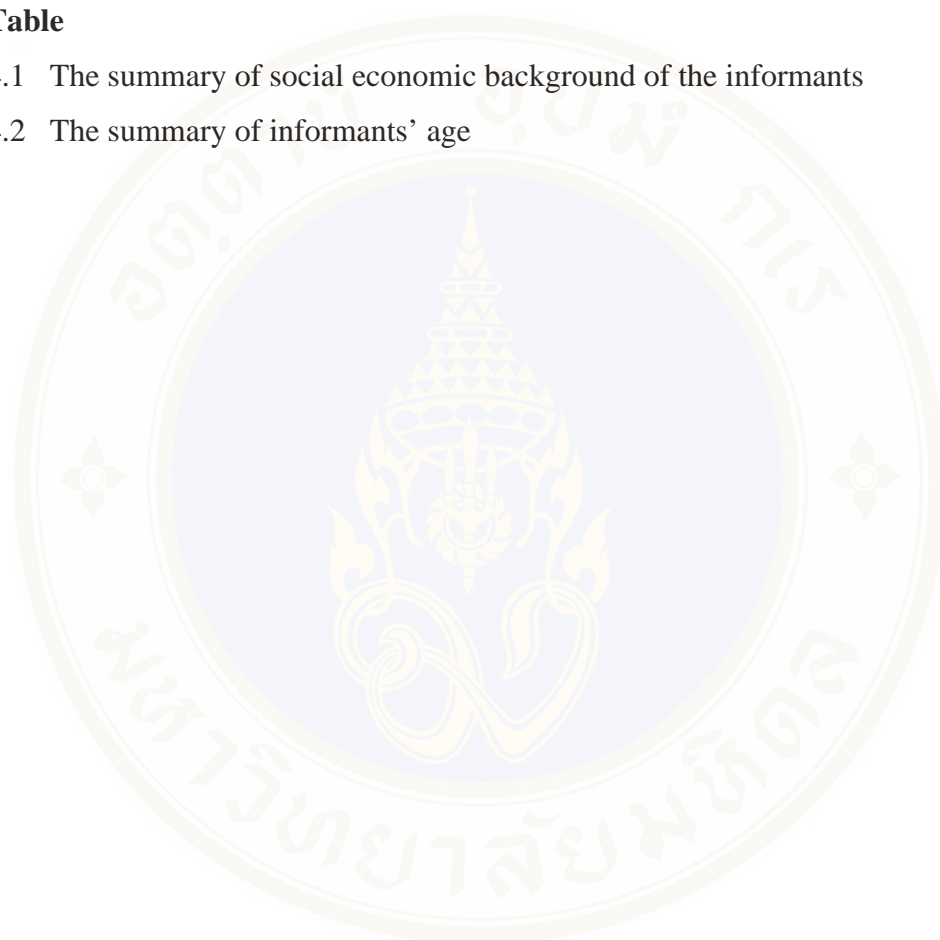
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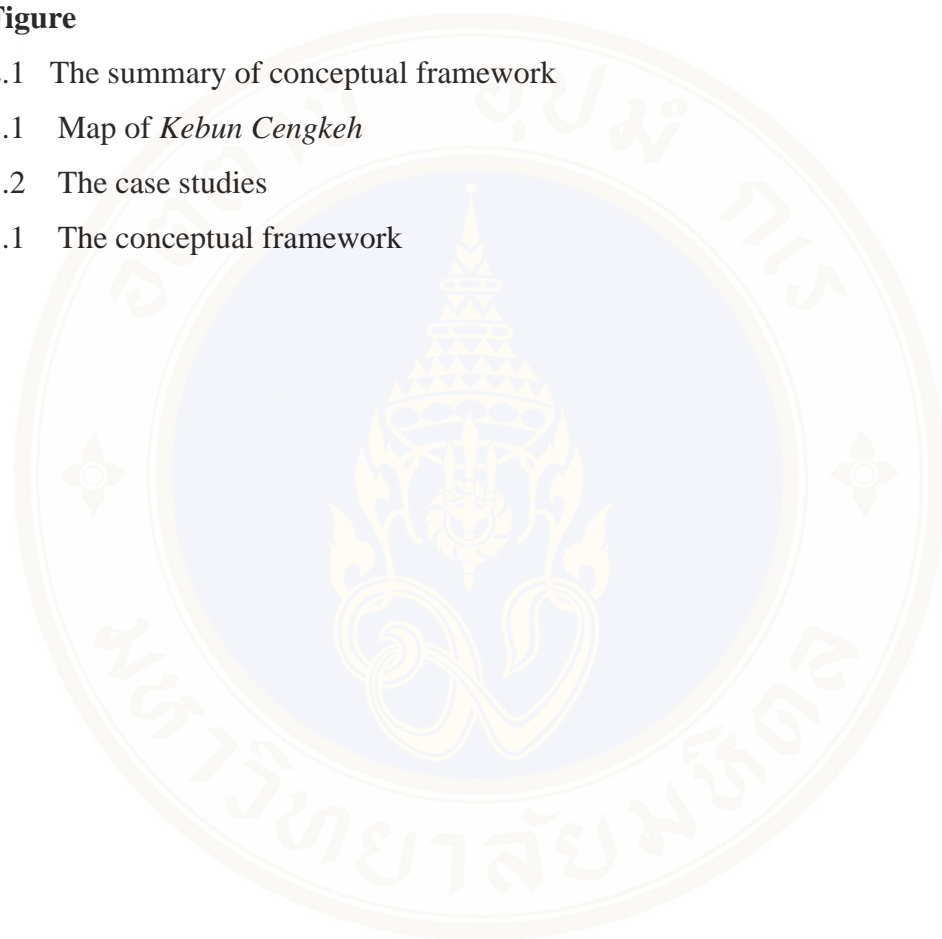
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the study

Early marriage has become the classical issue in the field of anthropology and psychology. Many researches were conducted through quantitative approach. Very few relied on qualitative approach. The existed researches mainly are based on the demography data. The age of marriage, early marriage and childbearing, law aspect of early marriage, and education relations with early marriage become the major topic of studies on early marriage. However, there is few scholar tried to explore deeper on the other side of early marriage practices. The lack of deeper picture on early marriage and the fact that the number of young girls in developing countries who engaged in early marriage is high (ICRW, Too young to wed, 2003), has made the issue interesting to be explored nowadays.

According to the data available, Indonesia has low prevalence of early marriage. Jones (Jones, 2001) revealed that the percentage was only 8% in the rural area; but World health Organization's fact sheet shows the different figure in the age of marriage. Based on Indonesia Demographic and Health Survey, there are 31% of women in rural area get marriage between 16 – 18 years old, and 11% get marriage before 16 (WHO, 2007). However, such a practice is common among certain groups of people in the region. Looking through ICRW report, the practicing of early marriage in Indonesia is only being recognized in South Kalimantan (2007). The data is contrast comparing to the cases in the field. In Jones analysis on Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, he quotes one researcher who conducted field work on *Madurese* in East Java shows that the practices among the *Madurese* is still common. Another previous research by East West center on early marriage, shows the reason on why early marriage still being practiced. It is believed that culture and education become the strong correlative factor in pending the early marriage practiced. The

study shows how tradition influence the age of marriage, as in rural area where the tradition still plays important role, the marriageable age is also low. The study states that the longer time girls stay at school the raising the marriage age will be.

The early marriage practices in Indonesia is only recognized in Borneo only, while the practices in Java is not recognized anymore (ICRW, How to End Child Marriage, 2007). The fact presents by ICRW is interesting because in East Java, the early marriage is practiced nowadays. At least only two prior studies mention on the percentage prevalence of engaging in early marriage in East Java. Jones recognized on his study that *Madurese* speaker has lowest age prevalence on their marriage. The age of marriage is 15 years old (Jones, 2001)

East Java is the second most populated province. *Madurese* is an ethnic minority living in eastern part of East Java. They live in the mountain in the western part of the municipality. According to survey in 2000 by Institute of Southeast Asian Study, number of *Madurese* population in East Java was estimated about 18,07% from 34,756,400 total population in East Java (Institute of Southeast Asian Study, 2003)

Early marriage is an obvious practicing among *Madurese* community up to nowadays. Even government has already set up the minimum marriage age: 16 years old for woman and 19 years old for man - Law no. 1/ 1974. Yet, the practices show different facts among this community. Unfortunately, there are no statistics data regarding the practices in Government Civil Registration Office available. The girls in the community are engaged in marriage at the age of 13 to 15. One of the community leader revealed that local government officer usually refuses to issue a marriage certificate to the girl who get married at the young age (*Syifaun Nisa*, 2008). As a result, many cases are not registered their marriage in government office.

The unregistered marriage is assumed leading the girls into vulnerable condition. As unregistered marriage mean lack of rights as wife and citizen. In Indonesia, the law is made to guarantee the woman's right as citizen, wife and mother (RI, 1974). The law gives protection to women if there is conflict within the marriage. The legal act can be taken to protect women if there is any violence against them. On the other hand, unregistered married women can not seek for protection in legal court if they have conflict in their marriage.

## 1.2. Rationale of the study

Early marriage is an old cultural practice in most developing countries in Asia. Even though the prevalence of early marriage seems to be decreased according to last demography research by Jones, yet it still remains in some parts of the country. The studies conducted in Indonesia show that early marriage cases frequently found in the rural area. Using substantial proportion sampling, 1999 survey in three different provinces in Indonesia, conducted by East West Center and Demography Institute of Indonesia University, shows that 8% of early marriage is found in rural area. However, the survey is not able to touch the community lives in particular area with strong practices of ethnic values, which actually contribute on early marriage patterns.

The studies by ICRW and UNICEF state that early marriage practices embedded into tradition, they believe that the tradition is harmful for the girls (ICRW, 1007) (UNICEF, 2005). Their studies present how early marriage practice brings sequence of impact on young women's life: inequalities, sickness, and poverty. ICRW reports show the vulnerability of the girl engaged in early marriage. The girl would be vulnerable on being the victim of violence from their spouse, which was related to unequal power relationship between couple. The study shows that the patterns of women who get domestic violence are those who married in early age (UNICEF, 2005). However, both of finding research are generated from demography surveys. There has not been any further study to explore early marriage as harmful tradition.

Looked on the gap of previous studies on early marriage, the research would explore on early marriage practices in *Madurese* community. According to cases reported to Community Based Organization in *Kebun Sari* Village, *Lunyu* sub district in Banyuwangi, girls are commonly engaged in marriage on the age of 13 to 15 years old (*Syifaun Nisa*, 2008). The practices pass through generations, but there have not any explanations toward the practices regarding on reasons and affects on the practices. No definite picture on the practices among the tribes, what and why they keep on the tradition in early marriage.

The research aims to understand the prevailing of the practice and cultural factors behind it through the experiences of women who married early. The research refers to Hildred Geertz's interpretation how the cultural systems in Indonesia plays role in daily life. She finds out how values and belief influence of marriage and family

in Java family. She describes how Javanese's values and beliefs have constructed the marriage practice in early age. The practice has influenced life of the young bride and the family in the community (Geertz, H., 1961). There are assumptions that early marriage has developed negative effect for women's life. It is assumed that the practice has lead to problem in reproductive - sexual health and social life. The issues of maternal mortality, infant death, reproductive tract infection, sexual transmitted disease, literacy, unsafe migration, trafficking, etc, become negative implications of early marriage (Maholtra, 1997) (Adhikari, 2007) (Shawky, 2001) (Meyers, et al., 2007) (Syifaun Nisa, 2008) (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008).

Retrieved the previous research, the research intends to understand the cultural background in early marriage such as ethnicity and the role of family. Furthermore, the research also try to explore and map out the affect of early marriage on the health of young wife and young mother, how the decision of getting married in early age affect their ill health picture, especially in reproductive and sexual health.

### **1.3. Objectives of the study**

The purpose of the study to gain a deep and holistic understanding on how and why early marriage practices still prevail in the *Madurese* community and how the practice affects to women's sexual and reproductive life.

### **1.4. Research Question**

#### **1.4.1. General question:**

Why early marriage practices still prevailing among *Madurese* community? What kind of factors contribute to the existence of the practices? How the practices affects to women's life, particularly in sexual and reproductive life?

#### **1.4.2. Specific questions:**

1. How is early marriage being practiced in the community? How different kind of people have been justified and explained? What are important cultural beliefs, values and norms related to it?

2. In which ways, that social, politic, economic as well as ecological context contribute to the prevailing of the practices?

3. How is the life of young women who get married in early age in the family context? In which ways, that the practice affects the women's daily life; especially in social and sexual - reproductive health?



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

I divide chapter two into three parts: the literature reviews, theoretical discussion and the conceptual framework. The first part retrieves the discussion on early marriage; the meaning of early marriage, which group of population is conducting early marriage, how have early marriage been theoretically explained, and early marriage and women's life. The second part is about the theoretical review that I use on the research. The last part describes the conceptual framework of research that I had been conducted. However, I have adjusted the last part along my research process.

#### **2. 1. What is early marriage?**

There are a lot of debates in defining what early marriage is. The definition of early marriage would ground from different points such as International Covenant, National law, Religious Law, or local norms. Every country and community has their own meaning on early marriage. The early studies shows the variant in defining early marriage in different context, however, most of the study has highlighted the definition of early marriage based on International Covenant or Colonial Law. The study conducted by International Center for Research on Women discussed the meaning of early marriage by referring to United Nation's definition of child. Adopted by countries across the world, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, defines the definition of the child as people under 18 years old (Mathur et al, 2003). Yet, every country adjusts it based on its own definition.

Blackburn and Bessel's paper on "Marriageable age: political debates on early marriage in twentieth-century Indonesia," (1997) define early marriage as child marriage. Their study shows that the debate on early marriage practices has been an old issue in Indonesia; since Dutch colonialism up to development era in Indonesia. The debate on appropriate age to get marriage for girls ends on the declaration of

Marriage Law No 1, year 1974. The definition of marital age for girl is 16 years old, while boy is 19 years old (Pemerintah RI, 1974). The age limit is based on the long debate group between nationalist and Moslem group. The age minimum being offers by nationalist is 18 years old, but the Moslem group rejects it. Their argument is that their law states that they have to marry their daughter as soon as she reaches their puberty by having the menstruation. They offered 15 years old for female and 16 years old for male. Later on, through the workshop holds by government, the compromised agreement on minimum age to get marriage is 16 years old for female and 19 years old for male. However, there is no clear argument why the law ends with numbers 16 and 19.

The definition on minimum age of marriage affects the research design. Legal definition usually ignores the popular concept of early marriage held by some population groups. Thus, the existence program intervention, which is based on the prior research, is culturally ineffective in dealing with early marriage. The previous research on early marriage is viewed from ethics point of view instead of the local people's realities. So, the debate on what is early marriage covers one side version instead of two. I find that the prior research neglects the complexity of culture and context of the practices.

## **2.2. Which group of population is conducting early marriage?**

There is assumption regarding which group of population conducting early marriage. The findings on causal determinant of early marriage show that group of population in developing country, who keeps on conducting early marriage, are group of people who are traditional, backward, and poor. However, there are not any further studies to explore the labeling of traditional, backward, and poor among this group.

The studies base their analysis on demographical data in developing country. The hypothesis is developed by analyzing the fertility statistic and drawing the correlation with others statistic data such as education, ethnic, religion, or others. In some context, such as Indonesia where the population is spreading up, it is hard to be able to get accurate data in demographic survey.

There are few studies using qualitative design in this research. The previous study which tries to answer which group of population conducts early

marriage by using mixed methods between quantitative approaches and secondary qualitative research. Using the mixed method, Jones, a demographer, points out on his study regarding which group who conduct early marriage in Indonesia came out with the conclusion that one of the ethnic groups who still practice early marriage is *Madurese* speakers<sup>1</sup> (Jones, 2001).

### **2.3. How have early marriage been theoretically explained?**

The early marriage has been explored through different point of views. Early marriage are widely understood as the result of larger structure such as culture, ecology, and economic. These structures generalize the causal factors in macro level.

#### **2.3.1. Early marriage as social and cultural practice**

The studies on early marriage have brought researcher to compare and contrast with studies of marriages. The earlier studies identified early marriage as one the ritual practices in passing the life. The practice of early marriage is considered as the part of social and cultural practices.

Anthropology has a long interest in marriage, family and kinship. They conducted research to understand the nature of the culture where marriage, family and kinship are the part of it. They highlight the relation on marriage, family and the kinship as the social organization in the community (Keesing, 1981).

The anthropologists believe that kinship is the important part to understand the culture. To understand the kinship, they have to explore the family as the smallest unit of the kinship. The family starts when marriage is entails in it (Keesing, 1981).

The previous studies on marriage start with definition of marriage, in which it is not applicable in general. Each community has their own understanding and patterns of marriage. The dimension of marriage varies among community because they perceive different meaning and function on marriage (Keesing, 1981) (Nanda, 1991). However, the definition is brought up by anthropologists. Gough defines marriage relates to the need of children legal status (Keesing, 1981). On the contrary,

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1 Madurese speakers refer to Madurese ethnic group who live across East Java province, include in islands and those who live in East hook of East Java.

the pattern that being found among *Tiwi* of North Australia can not fit with Gough's definition; as *Tiwi* has polygyny marriage rule (Nanda, 1991). Every community has their own definition and pattern of marriage, in order to form new family as the basic entity of kinship.

Marriage has function in the traditional community. First is to set up the new structure of family to guarantee legitimate offspring within marriage (Marc, J.S.1980). It gives space to have legitimate sexual expression and access. The research conducts by Malinowski come out with ideas that marriage is a society license for reproduction and child rearing. It is to guarantee the survival of the family and kinship (Levinson and Ember, 1999). The third function is to get labors to work on the field, and to maintain the wealth. The marriage can bring additional labor from son in law to bride's family. On the other hand, where woman moves to man's family, woman contributes to housework in man's family.

Focusing on the marriage as the process of maintaining family and kinship, early marriage occurs as the part of it. Through the long process of marriage ceremony, the early marriage becomes one of important stages in the community. Girls engage in betrothal since in the beginning of their life. They belong to certain men with whom they are betrothal. As soon as they reach their puberty by having their first menstruation, they get married. The desirable age to get marriage is not clear within community, as the treat marriage as the stages in life cycle. The bride in Javanese custom will be engaged as soon as she reach her menstruation; the sign of being adult (Geertz, 1961).

Looking to prior study on *Madurese*, Niehof describes the marriage among *Madurese* in the late 1970s – early 1980s. She points out that marriage has two significant level functions; first is the group level and individual level. *Madurese* considers marriage in group level to build alliance, and in individual level is to transit from childhood to adulthood. She explores more the role of family to decide when and with whom the daughter's marriage. She mentions the prevalence of early marriage, but she does not focus on the prevailing of early marriage among *Madurese* (Niehof, 1985). Her concerned in her research is to study women fertility, where she treated early marriage as the part of larger pattern related to fertility.

Due to former studies, I find out that there is no study being conducted in order to understand the phenomena of the early marriage prevailing. It seems that early marriage practices rely on the functions to sustaining the kinship, for the sake of reproduction, labor exchange and wealth maintaining. The development of human civilization has moved toward different dimension of life, but the study to understand the early marriage as social and cultural practices is needed. The phenomenon is out of question as it keeps on existing among community in Indonesia, even government has set up the law to limit the age of marriage.

Believing that early marriage is still being practiced because of the cultural context such as belief, values, norms and function of the marriage are major arguments in this discussion (Jones, 2001). The previous research emphasizes on patriarchy as beliefs and norms in the prevailing of early marriage.

The patriarchal embedded in beliefs, values, and norms within society. Passing through generation, they live as the core values within families (Carlson, 1979). The values and belief are being socialized through the existed social structure. The patriarchal values bring gender discrimination and unequal power relations between man and woman (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008) (Maholtra, 1997).

Jones analyses previous qualitative research in order to elaborate his research to define early marriage determinant. He points out how religion has strong affect among *Madurese* speakers in decide in what age the girls are sufficient to get married (Jones, 2001).

Gender discrimination occurs because in patriarchal society, the value of man is higher than woman. Woman has no equal power with man. Woman's value is in her price as object. She is considered unable to make decision. So, her male's family member makes decision for her, including in marriage (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008) (Choe et al, 2001). It causes woman lack of opportunity in education. The argument that let woman stays at school longer can make them delay the marriage (Jones and Gubhaju, 2008). The limited option of woman in education and work is also shaped by gender discrimination (Maholtra, 1997).

Old studies on marriages, highlight another values regarding culture factors as one of early marriage determinant; to control sexual desire (Ember, 1977) (Keesing, 1981). Marriage is used to limit the sexual desire expression among sexes

within community. Restriction is built on marriage to control and reduced sexual competition. So that rules and ceremonies become the pattern on marriage. It includes, who, whom, when, how to get marriage.

Stand on the points of previous research, I find that Jones has raised interesting point. He states on his writing that even Indonesia's government has set up law in regulating the minimum age of marriage, the *Madurese* speaker remains on practicing the early marriage. He assumed that *Madurese's* belief in Islam guides them to keep the practices (Jones, 2001). Similar with Jones, other prior research views culture as the force structure and views human without agency. I think that culture as human product serves the need of human being. The act in marrying daughter in early age is not simply because they follow the culture as the guidance of life. They keep the practice because they have used in it. I believe that there is more than just following the cultural pattern, there is underlying beliefs, values, and norms in the practicing. The underlying reasons remain in their deep surface practices.

### **2.3.2. Early marriage as ecological practice**

Another thing is that the ecology situation of their living environment. The ecological situation has constructed the way the live. Somehow, marriage as one of survival mechanism has functions in adapting the situation. In some part of the province in Indonesia, the difficulty of nature would lead to early marriage (Choe et al, 2001). The prior researches look more how resident determine the tendency of engaged in early marriage. The early marriage practice common occurs in rural area compared to urban area (Elm, 1997) (Meyer, et al., 2007) (Choe et al, 2001) (Savitridina, 1997).

The assumption that ecology has significant affect on the cause of early marriage seems to simplify the complexity of the problem. It is not just merely because it is rural or urban, it embeds other factors such economy and culture. Deepen study in particular context should be done in order to get the conclusion on the cause of early marriage.

### **2.3.3. Early marriage as economic practice**

Poverty is the causal factor from economic factors. Research in Bangladesh shows that poverty becomes the major reason why early marriage is prevailed (Rashid,

2007). Parents tend to marriage their daughters in early age to ease the economic burden in the family. However, instead of free the daughters from poverty, they set their daughter in the vicious cycle of poverty. Early marriage refers to the guarantee of security, effort of fighting poverty, and to avoidance of the dowry payments (Rashid, 2007). Economy reason is also become the reason in Indonesia, for arranging marriage for daughters. The spouse comes from richer family, and usually much older than the daughters<sup>2</sup>. The similar reasons present in putting socioeconomic as the factors that influence early marriage practices in other culture (Carlson, 1979) (Elm, 1979).

A research by Maholtra adds that unemployment also have influenced on early marriage practice (1997). The limited choices of woman in work field, raises the issue of economic need that lead to the early marriage practices.

A classical study on marriage shows how marriage brings economic benefits for family and community (Ember, 1977). The classical study describes how the marriage functions in dividing labor's roles in the family. The role divides man and woman into domestic and public economics' sphere; man in public and women in domestic. The discourse of man as breadwinner and woman as the additional earner becomes issue in marriage as well as social lives. The values underlying the division construct the function of marriage nowadays.

In this point, I agree that economy have influence in prevailing of early marriage. However, I do not stand in the same line with previous research which economy becomes a single reason without connected with others factors. Causal factors of early marriage are complex. The interconnecting factors such as economy is closely related with cultural

#### **2.4. Early marriage and women's life**

Considered marriage as the rites of life, marriage have brought girls' life into next passage as adult. The privilege of becoming adult is by having right and obligation (Nanda, 1991) (Niehof, 1985). Either right or obligation has implication to

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2 The child marriage case between a 12 years old girl with 43 years old man in Central Java (<http://properti.kompas.com/read/xml/2008/11/10/08250914/syekh.puji.titipkan.istri.ke.mertua.,2008>)

young women life. They have rights to be sexually active and bear children, while in the same time they also have new roles and obligation as adults.

The life of married women is different, but the consequences are assumed to be the same for those who get married in early age. They have to bare the right to enjoy the sexual life as well as the right to have children. They must face the new role in the family and social life (Nanda, 1991). The next sub discussions separate into two sections; young women's life in sexual and reproductive health, and the social life of young married women.

Unfortunately, the prior studies stand on the point where they consider the early marriage has negative consequences to life of young women. The assumptions of the studies start by reading on the demographical statistics. They compare the prevalence among variables then connect it with the problem such as reproductive – sexual health problem, domestic violence, literacy, trafficking, and unsafe migration (Maholtra, 1997) (Adhikari, 2007) (Shawky, 2001) (Meyers, et al., 2007) (*Syifaun Nisa*, 2008) (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008). On the contrary, the numbers of the studies which are based on the field work are quite rare. If there are some, the studies are not focused on early marriage life, they studies only see it as the part of family and kinship system (Geertz, 1961) (Nanda, 1991) (Niehof, 1985)

#### **2.4.1. Women's sexual-reproductive health and early marriage**

The sexual and reproductive health of women who married early is the most desirable discussion among researchers. The recent studies on early marriage refer the early marriage with negative consequences to the health of young women. There are no studies figuring out the positive consequences of early marriage to young women sexual and reproductive health.

The previous researchers consider early marriage as single cause of reproductive health problem. Early marriage has doubled risk to experiencing chronic illness, miscarriage, and infant death. According to the prior research, the common chronic illness which occurs among women who marriage early such as hypertension, obstetrics related vesicovaginal fistula<sup>3</sup>, and anemia<sup>4</sup>( Adhikari, 2007) (Meyers, et al.,

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<sup>3</sup> Vesicovaginal fistula is in which the woman's vagina is connected to the urinary bladder. This causes leakage of urine from the vagina and results in frequent vaginal and bladder infections. Fistulas may

2007). The immature body of girl engaged in early marriage causes the fetal loss and abnormal deliveries (Adhikari, 2000). They engaged on early sexual intimacy which can caused health problem caused by early initial sexual intercourse (Shawky, 2001). One of the gynecologist in Indonesia states that sexual intercourse before age 20 can cause cervical cancer for woman<sup>5</sup>. He says that immature cervical cell can raise the possibility to get cancer.

Health is one of the major discussions in early marriage consequence. However, the research in finding out the relation between the health problem and early marriage is rarely articulated from women's point of view. The prior researches seem to simplify the causes of health problem among women who engage in early marriage. The complexity of health problem requires more than just one condition such as nutrition, access to health, and availability to health. Instead of exploring women's experiences, the prior researches study early marriage by reviewing the phenomenon through secondary data, which is taken out from the context of the data.

I see the importance to understand the experience of woman who engages in early marriage, so that I can explore the health consequences from emic view. It is important because the women do not relate the sexual reproductive ill health experience with early marriage, especially in sexual and reproductive health. They might relate and understand the sexual and reproductive health experience with their beliefs in their culture. It is required willingness to understand the people beliefs, values, and norms in the practices, and how it embeds into interaction in the community.

The second consequence is violence. The studies by different international organization such as UNICEF, ICRW have shown the violence as the consequence of early marriage (UNICEF, 2005) (ICRW, 2007) (Silva-de-Awis, 2007). The result of the conclusion based on the assumption that unequal power relation can lead to domestic violence. Younger brides are vulnerable as they do not access to resources and become the dependant to their older husbands. The younger age causes women are not able to

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also develop between the vagina and the large intestine (an enterovaginal fistula) so that feces leaks from the vagina. <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/urachal+fistula>

4 Anemia is a condition in which the blood is deficient in red blood cells, in hemoglobin, or in total volume (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/plusdictionary.html>)

5 <http://www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/hukum/2009/01/28/brk,20090128-157301,id.html> , accessed 31 May, 2009 at 19.28

negotiate sexual matter. They are lack awareness of rights and opportunities recourse, and lack of supportive environment (Clark, Bruce, and Dude. 2006).

Some numbers of studies on early marriage have been reported how early marriage leads to unwanted sex (Martrur et al, 2003) (Santya et al, 2007) (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008). The unsafe sex refers to unwanted sex or sex with coercion. The unequal relation between young brides and older grooms, have exposed women into violence vulnerability (ibid).

On study by Silva-de-Awis, she mentions how finally women who engage in early marriage go to vicious cycle of violence in bigger cluster. Imbalance power relation put women in the vulnerable position. Lack of skill and access to resources, they are forced to migrate and work as the means to run from domestic violence and poverty. They are trapped into illegal migration and trafficking (Silva-de-Awis, 2008).

The violence in patriarchal society widely spread toward women. It is not necessary because they get married in early age but also because the imbalance power between man and woman. Thus, the further exploration to understand the relations between husband and wife is needed. I think that generalization can not be applied in addressing the early marriage. The context of the study should be the part of the analysis.

In Indonesian context where population control dominates the policy making in reproductive health issue, early marriage is prohibited by government. The practices will lead to higher fertility rate and population boom later on, the approach in the policy in reproductive and sexual health still based on the population control rather than right approach.

#### **2.4.2. Early marriage and the social life of young married women**

Silva-de-Alwis mentions on her research that early marriage is associated with inaccessibility to education which resulted on unemployment (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008). She states how the early marriage limits women opportunity to get proper education to be able to compete in labor market. The situation forces women to live in poverty.

Silva-de-Alwis hypothesizes, that early marriage has put women into social consequences such as divorce, early widowhood, and neglected condition (Silva-de-Alwis, 2008). However, she does not elaborate further to explain how the negative social consequences occurs and from whom perspective. Similar with other researcher

on early marriage, Silva-de-Alwis relies fully on secondary hand data which is based on national statistic only.

## 2.5. Conceptualization

Looking through previous studies on early marriage, mainly they are understood as undesired practices instead of early marriage as a cultural practice. The understanding is the result of the stand point of the researcher as the outsider. The affect of point of view is clearly reflected in the findings such as definition, the pattern, and the impact of early marriage. In the theoretical review part, I convey two sub titles; first is the general introduction on the school of interpretive. The second part is the theoretical stand point of the research.

The fact that there are few studies on early marriage conducted to view the subject of early marriage experience, encourage me to do it. I think that understanding the early marriage from subject point of view is important to understand the root of practices. Due to the purpose of the research to understand the underlying factors in the prevailing of early marriage and women's life experience related to their sexual and reproductive health; I use interpretivism as the theoretical stand point in the research.

### 2.5.1. Interpretivism at glance

Referred to the objective of the study, I find that anthropology field is fit with the need of the research. Retrieving the tradition to understand culture, I end on the idea of fieldwork by Boas. His movement against scientific method has presented new thing to see culture as the progressive accumulation of scientific and culture (Ulin, 1984).

Originated from old French word *interpreter* and Latin word *interpretari*, the word interpret means explain, translate<sup>6</sup>. As its semantic meaning, interpretivism generates the understanding of the phenomenon through meaning of ideas and thought that embedded into practices and or action.

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6 Oxford Advance Learner Dictionary 7<sup>th</sup> edition

Interpretivism as a concept has raised many debates. The interpretivism is based their understanding on ideas that reality as social construction. It means that what is real depend on what is the context of phenomenon being occurred and how the community construct it (Creswell, 2007)

Rooted in relativism, interpretivism is context dependent, situated, and culturally constructed (Sidky, 2003). On another word is that the meaning embeds on the context of the study, it is attached on the local situation. The meaning of the action is real on certain situation. According to interpretivism meaning is being constructed on those of beholders.

I choose interpretivism as the lens to articulate the ethnic group practice which is considered minor in national context. Refers to Creswell that interpretivism is able to represent marginalized groups – gender, race, class, religion, sexuality, ethnic, geography, etc (Creswell, 2007). The nature of intrepretivism gives space to diversity. In interpretivism, emic point of view is the main data resources.

Local meaning deals with complex accounts told by many different voices. The interpretivism believes that there is always underlying meanings on human action. It reflects in modes of communication through symbols such as language and ritual. The multi layers of meaning are affectd by social, political, economy, ecological, cultural and other contextual characteristics. The perspective emphasizes on meaningful social action which attached to the context of the action (Neuman, 2006).

### **2.5.2 Interpretive anthropology**

In the development of interpretivism, interpretive anthropology is one of contemporary approach that develops in America. Interpretive anthropology has re-theorized the concept of culture (Ortner, S.B., 1999). Set by Geertz, he develops through ontological and epistemology point of view.

In the ontological dimension, Geertz defines culture as he writes in his book, “The interpretation of cultures”:

The concept of culture I espouse, ... Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be those

webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (I)

He states that culture is web of meaning, in which human being has his spun. His analogy of web of meaning refers to system of meaning: culture (Nanda, 1991). He states that the system of meaning is created by human; which he says “*has his spun.*” It is clear describes in this analogy that culture is not given but created by human. The culture becomes the living context of human’s life.

In interpretive anthropology, culture is the shared pattern. The meaning that is belongs in social domains, which people interact in social domains (Nanda, 1991). Geertz says that his task as anthropologist is to understand the meaning which is seen in the action, which is express through what is said and human behavior (Geertz, 1973).

In epistemology, he states how to get into the understanding part. The way to understand the reality is by doing ethnography. Geertz remarks what he means with ethnography on his essay “The interpretation of cultures”:

... doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies<sup>7</sup>, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures, that define enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is: an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, “thick description.” (II) (Geertz, 1973)

He elaborates further in the following part of essay by the necessity of presenting thick description, as ethnography is thick description. Geertz points out complexity of the culture in the following part of his essays;

... what ethnographer is in fact faced with – ... - is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render. (II) (Geertz, 1973)

So, he pursues the necessity of doing the field work in order to understand the complexity of culture. He states that doing field work is “by interviewing informants,

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<sup>7</sup> Genealogies are the study of family history, including the study of the ancestors of a particular person. The Oxford Advance Learner’s Dictionary 7<sup>th</sup> edition

observing rituals, eliciting kin terms, tracing property lines, censusing households ... writing his journal.” He explains that the field work is an intensive data collection. He emphasizes the important of ethnography is not just in reading the culture but also to transcript the formed behavior in community (Geertz, 1973).

Further, Goodall shared the three important points that should be done in conducting the work by using interpretive ethnography. The first one is closed related to what Geertz had said; the researcher shall build close and intimate relationship by becoming the part of the community. The second one is while conducting the work, the doer shall make the work personal, interactive and self reflexive. The last but not the least is on how the doer shall present the work that is by narrated and involve as the actor in the research process (Goodall, 2003)

As a whole, I find out that interpretive is fit in with my objectives. What the beholders think and act can help me understand the underlying values, beliefs, and norms in early marriage. It equips me with the broader lens to the actual context of the phenomenon. As I planned before, I had conducted the field work for about three and a half months.

### **2.5.3. Conceptual framework**

Understanding practices on certain culture is not an easy thing to do. It is required ability and sensitivity and appropriate approach in conducting the research. Preferred ethnography as the approach in conducting the research; the nature of the research follow the goal of the approach; that is to understand the phenomenon in the field. The research explore the early marriage prevailing through women experiences among *Madurese* community in Banyuwangi and how it affect women experience in their sexual and reproductive life.

Following Geertz's “thick description,” the research explored the web of *Madurese* culture in order to understand the early marriage practicing in the community. Rely on the culture as the human product and has multi layers of the dimension, the research would exploring what is say to understand what is said through oral text of the subject. The following conceptual frame work had elaborated the thick description as one of the concept in cultural interpretation as the approach in anthropology field.

The focus of the research is early marriage as a cultural practice. So, I explore the information on beliefs, values, and norms that construct or affect early marriage. The beliefs, values, and norms are explored through the meaning, patterns, and ceremony related to early marriage. Realizing that culture is not simple entity, I am aware toward the interconnection among elements within community; such as politics, history, social economy and ecology.

The dimension of politic and history are close related and hard to define. It is because the politic shaped the history of human kind. In the context of the study, however, I only highlight the small part of history that influenced the community life and political atmosphere in local context. Still, it is too complex to portray how the complexity of the webs within this community is interconnected.

I assume that social economy elements also reciprocal interaction with culture. The influence between culture and social economy element can not be divined clearly as two different. Arrow with line shows two way directions between culture and social economy. Understanding the phenomenon as cultural practice, I can not make clear separation which one influences another. The social economy also has indirect affect toward women's life, since the affect will process through the cultural process.

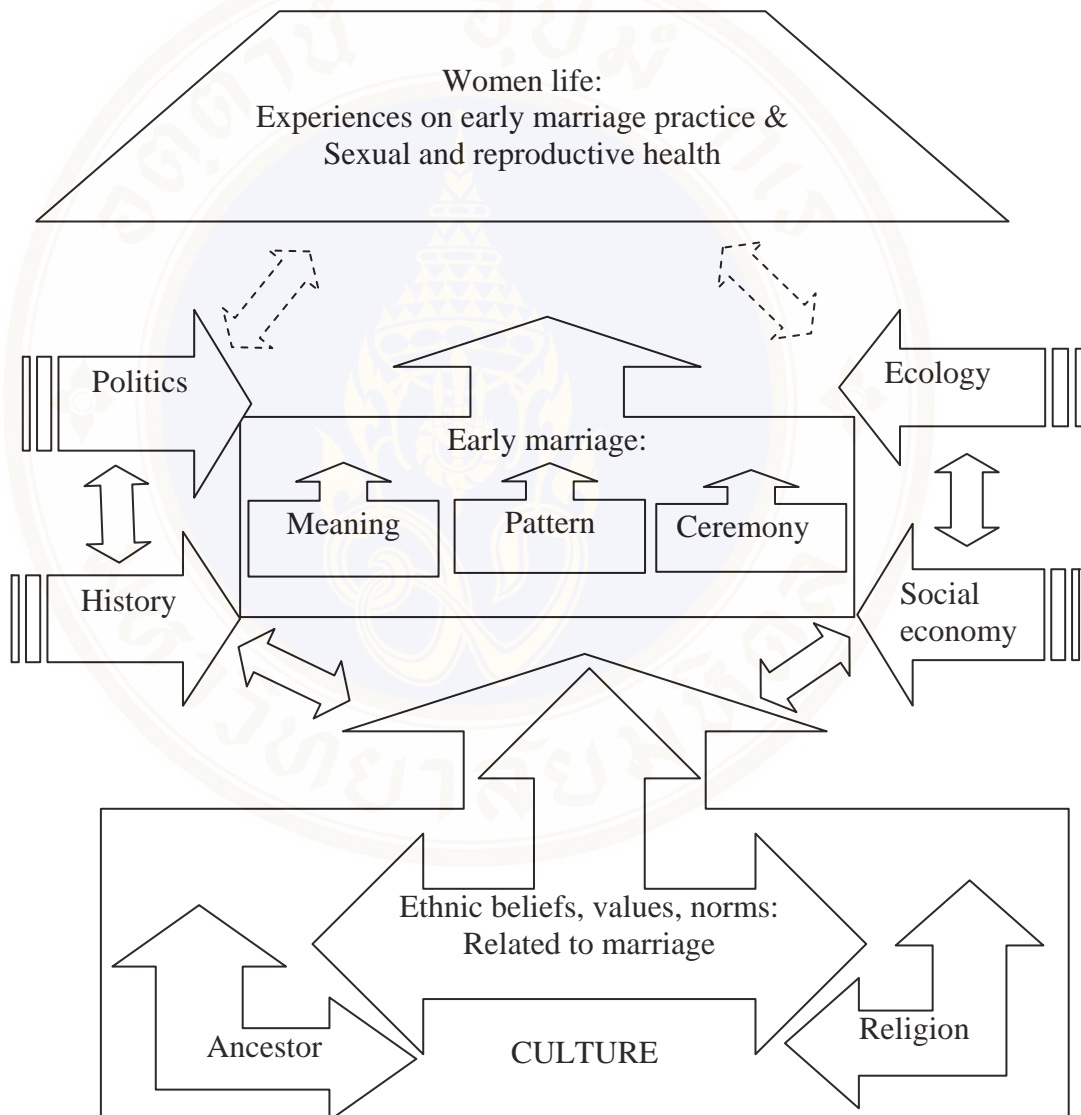
The ecological part has similar interaction with social economy. It is two way interactions between culture and ecology. The indirect influence occurs between ecology with women's life. I assumes that the existing environment affect to community way of life.

The research explore the practice of early marriage through what is said by the doer and interpret it as the text by putting it in the context of the research: *Madurese* community. The research starts the viewing the early marriage among community by exploring the experience of women who get married in early age. The research maps out the pattern of marriage in general to be able to explore the early marriage pattern in the community. In this stage, the discussion is about characteristic of those who engage on early marriage, marriage pattern, ceremony, and community marriage organization. The last layer is rooted on cultural elements of early marriage it self. It explores norms, values, and belief among *Madurese* community. The exploration of early marriage couples life is about motivation in making choices,

family picture, experience on life and sexual and reproductive health, and viewing the idea of early marriage.

The chart below is the summary of conceptual framework:

**Figure 1. The summary of conceptual framework**



## **CHAPTER III**

### **THE FIELD WORK**

Presenting the fieldwork in ethnography style is not an easy task to do for a new researcher like me. Yet, I choose to present it from the first person point of view in order to be able to compose the smoothing flow of the experiences in the field work. I divide the chapter into five main parts based on the chronological sequences of the field work. The first one is the stages where I have to deal with opening the access to conduct the field work. The second part is the section in which I start to enter the community and get the general picture of the community in micro context and the practice of early marriage. The third part is the reconstruction of research design. The following part is the building trust process and the last is the description of the research site and target group.

Describing how the opening access to conduct the field work is important to present because it give the picture of the community in social, politic, and cultural context of the research site. The first part is about the journey in reaching the research site and the dealing stages with bureaucracy in the sub district.

The second part, walking in the midst, contributes to the context of the community in the chosen research site. The opening exploration leads me to understand more on the complexity of the reality in the field. I also took steps of adjustment to deal with situation. The unavailability of the information of demography and culture of ethnic target group had led me to the search of understanding the significant of each two cultures: *Osing* and *Madurese*.

The reconstruction of the research design explains the process of the research design's transformation. The adjustment of the design is purely influence by several facts which occurred in the field. The reconstruction process needs to be described as well since it influences the whole process of data collections process. The first fact that occurred is the difficulty in finding the base camp and how it gives several notes on my field work that covers the values and norms in ethnic group. The second is the changing law enforcement atmosphere in village level, which influences

the research process in finding the targeted cases within community. The third is the ethnic value regarding numbers and literacy.

The building trust section presents the process where I built up my “I” identity within community. The last part provides slightly description on the research site and the targeted informants.

### **3.1. Opening the access to conduct the field work**

#### **3.1.1. Reaching the research site**

It was early of August when I reached the last district in the eastern part of East Java. The train seemed quite late when I stopped in *Karang Asem* station, but I felt released after eight hours stacked inside the train. As usual, the station would full of people for awhile then stayed empty again as soon as the passenger leaved the station. I looked for motor bike to take me to *Lunyu* sub district. After bargaining the price, I took one of the bikers with 15,000 IDR, which was equal to 1,5 USD. I felt that the weather was too cold. I put on the head of my jumper to reduce the cold. The motor bike ran in slow speed as the road was hilly.

Along the street, the villagers started their activity. I saw women stopped the daily need seller in the street side. It was a common view in East Java. The seller used motor bike and put a big basket made of bamboo in the back part to carry vegetables, meats, fish, fruits and any other ingredients for daily cooking. It was because the market in the village was not opened daily. Usually the market would open at least once every five Javanese day or once a week or event once a month. The market in sub district level would open daily, but it was too far to reach every day. After about 45 minutes, I reached the first base camp in *Lunyu* village, the capital village of *Lunyu* sub district. The road was quite empty as everyone had already gone to the field rice. There were only students passed by to go to school. In the base camp, a friend of mine already woke up and waited for me.

#### **3.1.2. Entering the formal entrances**

Doing the research in Indonesia, I could not just escape from working with bureaucracy, whether I liked it or not I had to deal with it. On that first day, I decided

to work on the permit first. Bringing the letter of recommendation from provincial level, I went to *Bakesbang Linmas- Badan Kesatuan Kebangsaan dan Perlindungan Masyarakat*<sup>8</sup> in Banyuwangi district. It took couple of days to work on the permit. They were quiet helpful in serving me as student who studied outside the country. However the obstacle started to occur when I worked on sub district level. The secretary of sub district would not dare enough to process my permit until I met the sub district head. It took longer days for me to work on this level. The first day, my gatekeeper made appointment with the secretary. The second day I met him, he said that he was not in the capacity to make decision about my process. Spoken in formal *Bahasa Indonesia*, he suggested me to meet the head of sub district on the following day. I leaved the letter of recommendation and summary of my proposal to him and promised to follow the system in the following day. Well, it was not too shocking for me as in my country every thing would cost time. However, I thought on another strategy to make it faster that was by asking one of community leader in sub district to company next time. This strategy was used to smooth the permit process since I had to work on further process; at least two more steps.

I returned to sub district office on the following day, but this time I went with one of woman community leader in the sub district. Still, I had to wait for her event I had appointment. In Indonesia having appointment was not made any point, as the appointment was just about what day you would meet the person. Yet, if the person was too busy on that day, you had to return on another day. It was a common habit among the bureaucracy as well. Still, I decided to wait anyway. After few hours, the head of the sub district received me on her room. The secretary entered the room and handed out my letter, she read it for awhile. She was quite formal person. However she accepted my intention to do the research in one of the village in her working area. She stated her message clearly to me that I should not publish any inappropriate information, if I found any, during the data collection. I told her that my purpose was to understand the community and the phenomenon not to judge the situation, so she did not need to worry about it. She asked me to leave the report in sub district and village level in national language after I finished my research. I told her

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<sup>8</sup> The government institution which control and monitor national security in the community. It produces license or permit to do the research, rally, or any other activity

that I would love to do it. Waiting for another hour for her staff to finish the letter to go to the village, I just sat outside among others' guest who would like to meet her as well. At least, I made it.

Finally, working the permit in the village level, it took couple days to be able to meet the chief of the village. It was because the fasting month was approaching and there were a lot of work to be done before the fasting month and the Holy day for Moslem. It was cloudy day, I drove Mb. Min<sup>9</sup> with her motorbike to meet *Pak Kades* – Mr. *Kepala Desa* - the chief of the village. Sam, the gatekeeper who also worked in the village office, met us on the way. He asked us to wait him in the office. Yet, when we reached the office, Sam had already been there. He talked for awhile with *Pak Kades*. He took us to *Pak Kades*' office then leaved us with him. Shaking our hands, *Pak Kades* allowed us to sit on the sofa. He addressed Mb. Min then asked about our purpose to come. Mb Min introduced me to him. As far as I knew, Mb. Min was one of *Pak Kades* relatives, so my coming with Mb. Min gave benefit to me somehow. Then, Mb. Min gave me a chance to explain by my self to him. I started to explain my purpose to conduct the research in his working area. I took the opportunity to discuss about which area that could be the focus of the research site. He came out with three different sub-village; *Sumber Banyu*, *Kebun Cengkeh* and *Salaksari*. These options based on the cases of early marriage and ethnicity. After further discussion, we ended with two sub-villages; *Kebun Cengkeh* and *Salaksari*. Initially, I would explore the two sub-villages in order to assess the possibility in conducting the research within 3 months. In principal, the chief of the village supported and welcomed me to conduct the research in his village. Finished with this step, I had to go further into the last step that was visiting the sub village's head in *Kebun Cengkeh* and *Salaksari*.

## **3.2. Walking in the mist**

### **3.2.1. The opening exploration**

It was raining and misty, Sam drove me with his old motorbike. In slow motion, the motorbike climbed the hilly road to reach the sub village. The engine sounded burr, it seemed that it could not bear our weight. Passed the half distance to

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<sup>9</sup> Mb Min is one of woman community leader in sub district level

*Kebun Cengkeh*, the road turned from asphalt pavement into wet dirt road. We almost fell several times because the road was slippery. Still, we kept on moving. Reached Pak *Kerawat*'s house (*Kerawat* is the local title to address the position of the head of sub village), Sam addressed him. He was a man in the end of 40s. He smiled and allowed us to sit in the sofa in the back part of the living room.

Sam introduced me to him and I explained my purpose to him. However, I started to explore on the community map instead of talking directly about early marriage. He explained on ethnicity of the population. He said that most of the population was *Madurese*. When I tried to talk about marriage age in the sub village, he looked reluctant to discuss about it. He kept on saying that since the last 8 years, that was since he had become *Kerawat* in *Kebun Cengkeh*, the age of marriage was increasing. He said that people got married above 18; it was including the girls in the sub village. He strongly stated that early marriage and under hand marriage was not existed in his sub village, especially during his leadership. Aware of his defensive attitude toward the issue, I was thinking of other issue to enter the sub village; through maternal and child health. This entry would allow me to explore on the aspect of marriage as well. Still, I had to figure out how to build strategy to be able to touch the issue within community during the field work. At least, the door was opened. He offered me his house as the base camp. I expressed my gratitude by accepting the offer and promised to go back next week.

Later on, I tried to explore why *Pak Kerawat* seemed to be reluctant to discuss on early marriage with different sources. Through discussion with gate keeper, I found out that he married her daughter before she reached 18 years old. People said his daughter got pregnant before marriage. Another factor was the fact that he married his daughter in earlier age would cause him loosing face as the leader of the community.

Moved on to the other sub village; *Salaksari*, I got less information through *Kerawat* in the sub village. He was hardly able to define the community social and cultural background. He could not describe the community custom in marriage practice. When I discussed further related to the ethnicity and custom, he said that there was nothing different among the ethnic group in the community.

Standing in this point, I felt like lost. It seemed that I walked in the mist without any direction to reach. Ended in no where, I started to reflect my research design event in this very early stage. I discussed with my gate keeper as soon as we mapped out the fact that we had no information at all related to the *Osing* community in the village. Then searching for what I thought as the origin custom of *Osing* led me to visit other village in different sub district, which was known as one of the pure *Osing* village: Kemiren.

### 3.2.2. The search of *Osing*

The following day, I went to *Kemiren* with Supri, my other friend. I had no idea where to start except I used to read one board that belongs to one of *Osing* community foundation in one corner of the village. Expecting the board and the foundation was still existed, we drove the motorbike there. It took about 45 minutes by motorbike in such a high speed. We had to get down from *Lunyu* sub district to next sub district below *Lunyu*. The weather was clear but the temperature was quite cool for me. The road was good and smooth until we reached *Glagah*, the capital village of *Glagah* sub district. We had to turn left into smaller road. The road was still better but started to be broken in some parts. Reaching *Kemiren*, I told Supri to look for *Desa Wisata Osing – Osing* village tourist destination; it was a kind of cottages in *Kemiren*. I remembered that I used to see a foundation board near the cottage. Unfortunately, we could not find any board along the street. Then, I decided to ask the information in the cottage. My assumption was the cottage would have information regarding *Osing*, as the sold the ethnic custom for tourism. However, I ended up in disappointment as the officer knew nothing. They suggested me to visit the village office. Got the direction, Supri and I decided to come to the village office event though I did not bring any letter with me.

The village office was not far, it was only about 5 minutes by motor bike. Yet, it was Friday<sup>10</sup> and the clock showed the time about 10 a.m. The office looked very empty. There were about three officers in one office room and another officer in other room. A man addressed us as soon as we entered the hall. He was about 50s, he

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<sup>10</sup> On Friday, male Moslem conducts communal praying in the central mosque in the village. So, the office usually will have shorter working hour on Friday; up to 11.30 AM

asked who we were what our purpose were. I explained that I was student who was looking for information regarding marriage in *Osing* custom. I told him that I wanted to meet the chief of the village if it was possible. He asked me to wait in the room while he went to another room. After few minutes, he told me that I could meet the chief, still he asked me to wait because the chief still had a guest.

Fifteen minutes passed, finally the chief guest leaved the room. I came out from my waiting room and entered another room. Supri followed me. The man was about late 40s, I thought, he wore glass and brown uniform. He addressed me and asked me to sit down in the sofa. He asked me about my identity and my purpose. I explained the same thing that I had been explained to previous officer. I told him that I did not bring any letter at this moment, but I promised to deliver one for him. He said it would be much better if I could leave a letter in the office. However, I asked apology to him that the letter was in English as I studied abroad. He said that he did not mind with that. He explained that the purpose of the letter was to register the visitor in his village. He told me that his village had produced a lot of scholars. Many students came to write their final paper, thesis or event dissertation about *Osing* culture. Unfortunately, there was not any single report being left behind after the research, no documents remained about *Osing* and *Kemiren*. When I asked him what kind of research had been conducted, he explained that the previous researches were about the dances and ritual such as *Seblang* and *Gandrung*. Listened to his story, then I decided to explain my purpose coming to his village. Actually, my visit was to explore the nature of *Osing* custom related to marriage. Yet, my research site was not in *Kemiren* but in *Kebun Sari* because my study focused on *Madurese* and *Osing*. My preliminary research showed that the two ethnic groups were found to live in the same village: *Kebun Sari*. Besides, I would focus more on sexual and reproductive health of marriage with early age cases. He said that statistically, the number of early marriage in *Kemiren* was almost none recently. It was because culturally, the *Osing* required such a complex marriage ritual. *Osing* kept their tradition very strict. The marriage phases were long and complex. He allowed me to do my intention immediately. He told me that I could talk with *Pak Modin*; which was his father, about the issue. I thanked him and leaved to meet *Pak Modin* at that moment. I was lucky that *Pak Modin* was willing to be interviewed on that day. I explored the general information

regarding marriage, age of marriage and the ceremony. He was pretty exciting in explaining the stuff to me. He said that in *Osing* culture, they had two main actor in marriage ceremony; *Modin* and *Dukun*. *Modin* would play role in Islamic and legal tradition while *Dukun* played the role on the ethnic ritual. I was very lucky because he had two roles in turn during the marriage in the community. The interviewed gave me more idea on the *Osing* and marriage custom. I asked him whether there would be any marriage being conducted within this month. Lucky me that there was one ceremony would be held within this week. I asked his permit to join the ceremony and he allowed me to do so. What was crossed in my head was the ritual would help me to understand better the complexity of the marriage custom among *Osing*, so it would help me to compare and rethought about my research design.

In entering *Osing* community in *Kemiren*, I was only able to involve short period of time: by involved in marriage ceremony and in-depth interview with *Modin* (the community leader who lead marriage ceremony and any other activity which related with marriage and death within community). I attended the marriage ceremony since in the legal office: *Kantor Urusan Agama* – Religion Affair Office, where the Moslem registered their marriage. I also came to the traditional ceremony in the community. I was able to collect valuable information related to the ceremony symbols and meaning. Unfortunately, I had to drop *Osing* as the targeted group due to lack of capability and time in doing the field work.

### 3.2.3 Other entrance to enter

In the same time, I started the exploration in targeted research site in *Kebun Cengkeh*. Even though I stacked with *Pak Kerawat*, I kept on moving and tried another entry point to be able to explore the community map. My next targets were *Modin* dan Midwife. On this step, I conducted the informal conversation in order to get surface picture about the community and early marriage practice. This approached delivered the rich information in bigger description. On the other hand, the information being collected either through informal and in-depth interview had shown lack of details and understanding on the practice. The case being presented to me was untraceable and the information provided was shown that the practice was undone

presently. Rethought on strategy, I came to the conclusion that the structural approach was not effective in this issue.

Looking for more effective approach, I seek other potential resource related to marriage. After long discussion with the gate keeper, I found out other entries: *dukun bayi* - traditional birth attendants and *kader kesehatan* - health volunteers. So, the gate keeper helped me to identify potential persons. The potential persons were Warsi, *dukun bayi* in Kutha<sup>11</sup> and Parti, *kader kesehatan* in *Kebun Cengkeh*.

The choice of *dukun bayi* based on the recommendation of gate keeper and the midwife because according to the midwife, Warsi was the most experience *dukun bayi* and being registered in sub district's Health Community Center. She was also involved in regular meeting and being trained to assist health care provider in baby delivery. She was also had close working relation with midwife compared to others. Conducted interview with her, event that was our first meeting, was so lively. She was an open mind person and willing to share her life story since she was young and how she became *dukun bayi*. Crossing to her experience as *dukun bayi*, she narrated some examples of her work as *dukun bayi*. Her information led me to clearer idea of my field. She said that she used to help some of young mother in delivering the babies. I decided to use the information to trace down the potential informants.

The preference of Parti as one of the entry point was because she was a senior health volunteer in *Kebun Cengkeh*. She had well education background compared to other *kader kesehatan*, so it would be helpful for me to get picture of community. She managed *Pos Pelayanan Terpadu – Posyandu* (Integrated Post Service) for mothers, infants, and elderly in *Kebun Cengkeh* with other three health volunteers. She had provided me with a general picture of women's and infant's health picture in the beginning of the interaction, but later on she was willing to share her experiences regarding the issue of early marriage and women health in *Kebun Cengkeh*.

Now, I started to see the light in my field work. The information that I got during my exploration in *Kemiren* brought me to the decision to focus only in one

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<sup>11</sup> Kutha is the capital sub-village where the central office in the village is being build. In Banyuwangi, most of the capital sub-village is named Kutha

ethnic group that was *Madurese*. The findings had shown that two ethnic group were not shared same values in marriage and life. How the community being managed and what kind of tradition they held were completely different. However it would be interesting also to explore how these two ethnic groups lived together and share similar practices. Yet, I would not able to conduct it in very short period of time. I thought, it would be the next step to understand the phenomenon of early marriage within these two ethnic groups.

### **3.3. The theory versus the practice: the reconstruction of research design**

Following the principle of ethnography, I stayed in the sub village for three months and an half to conduct participant observation. Unfortunately, the need of community volunteer was in the village and sub district level had mobilized me into larger area; *Lunyu* as the capital of the sub district, *Kutha* as the capital of *Kebun Sari* village and *Kebun Cengkeh* as chosen sub village. The final location of researcher's base camps were in *Lunyu* and *Kebun Cengkeh*. The result of the staying location influenced the research data richness.

#### **3.3.1. A house to stay**

Facing with problem in my entrance session had made me aware to the reality that I might find during my staying in the community. It was the second week of August when I arrived in *Karang Asem* station for the second time. My younger sister's sickness had delayed my arrival in the research site.

It was chilly as my first arrival; still I looked for motor bike to take me to *Lunyu* base camp as before. I decided to stop for awhile to adjust my self with the weather which was different from my city of origin. Bargained with one of the drivers, I ended with the same price. I put my bigger backpack between the driver and my self, while I brought the smaller one on my back.

Reaching the first base camp, I called my gatekeeper Sam. Waiting for his reply for quite long, then I was aware that he might be up in the hill: in his parent's house or somewhere else in the field. As I knew that there was not any mobile phone

signal up there. So, I decided to make other plan by visiting community leader in *Lunyu* and tried to contact him again in the afternoon. I reread my design again and prepared the tools to conduct the in-depth interviews with community leaders in *Lunyu*.

Late afternoon, I received reply from Sam, my gatekeeper that he was in his parent's house. He said that *Pak Kerawat* in *Kebun Cengkeh* could not receive me to stay in his house during the field work. I was surprised. As in our first meeting, he did not show any rejection impression to my purpose or my self. Then I replied him back because I could not call him due to the limited phone signal in that area. He said that he would explain when he met me. He said that he could not meet me now because he was sick. Driven by such great curiosity, I decided to look for other friend to take me to Sam's parent.

It took about 30 minutes to reach Sam's parent in *Sumber Banyu, Kebun Sari*, a friend drove me carefully through the bad road. Sam greeted us when we arrived. He told me that he did not meet *Pak Kerawat* by him self actually. His wife met him when he came to his house in *Kutha*. *Pak Kerawat* said that he could not accept me in his house because he did not have bathroom and his wife could not cook as well. The reason was unreasonable to me, as we all knew that he had bathroom, even a private one inside his house, and cooking was not an issue for me, as I told him before. Yet, I could not say anything about it if he changed his mind.

Sam comforted me by saying that he had tried to manage my stay in the sub-village. He had discussed with *Pak Hadi*, one of the community leader in *Kebun Cengkeh*. He was *Mbak Parti*'s husband, the health volunteer and they were willing to accept me in their house during the field work.

He said that he discussed about *Pak Kerawat*'s reason, but their conclusion was shocking. The actual reason was *Bu Kerawat* was *copar* with me (*copar* was *Madurese* language which meant jealous). This time, I could not hold my self, so I laughed about it. However, this time I could understand the reason as feeling was a relative's issue, so sometime it did not need any logical reason. Sam said that *Pak Kerawat* had history of having an affair. Then, I put note in this issue as well so I would not be set up in unnecessary event such as jealous wife. Even though it was a small thing in my world but it was a big thing among *Madurese*, as husband or wife

issue could cause *carok* (*carok* was the part of *Madurese*'s custom across Indonesia to defend their pride). It could take generations to finish the issue by killing each other using their traditional weapon: *clurit*.

Realizing how crucial the issue was, I confirmed with Sam, the gatekeeper and other community leader about the effect of the incident. I was lucky that I could breathe freely as I was coming in formal way and I would stay in other community leader who had more influence than *Pak Kerawat* and his wife. *Pak Hadi*, the host, was one of important person in the plantation. In fact, *Pak Hadi* had more influence to the community compared with *Pak Kerawat*. It was also applied in *Bu Kerawat*'s case. *Parti*, *Pak Hadi*'s wife, had more power within community than her.

As the night approaching in slowing beat, my friend and I decided to go back to base camp in *Lunyu*. Sam said he would contact me as soon as he finished managing my stay. It was dark and brisk; I hold my jumper to cover my head and sat in the motor bike. The street was empty and quite. It was almost nine when we reached base camp. What a day to pass, I should sit and rethink about the design again.

The postponed staying within community influenced my movement somehow. As I needed more time to reach the targeted community. Even though, I worked on other part of the research, still I felt that the process to get to know the community was slower down. Yet, I had no choice left. This situation was getting worse when I had to face several conditions in the field.

### **3.3.2. The wind of change in law enforcement**

The chief of *Kebun Sari* village stated that since the last couple years, he had emphasized to his staff and the community leader that he would never give any recommendation regarding under age marriage. He said that the higher government hierarchy would blame the village office if there were early marriage cases. In order to work on the government plot on law enforcement, the chief of the village implemented the law strictly.

The changing condition had crucial impact on how people became more indiscreet about their real age. This condition influenced the identification of the informants, especially on the third generation who got married in early age. People tended to hide their real age because they had made their age higher in order to get

married. This situation also contributed into difficulty in conducting the focus group discussion because it was hard for people nowadays to admit their first age in married.

### **3.3.3. “*Omor berempa engko’ ... tak oneng engko’ ...*,” – “How old I was ... I do not know how old I am”**

It was a common utterance in the sub village if I asked about how old she or he was. It was not just among old generations but also among youngsters. They never remember events in their life related to age. They never memorize or event took note on the years when they were born. It was happened up to nowadays, it took time for them to remember how old their children were. Then the process would be ended by looking for the same generation who were born in the closer time.

The fact that the community was mostly illiterate, either in term of writing and counting and socially not aware of the age, made me hard to identify the real age of targeted informants. It was not important to recognize their owned age or any important date which was related to their life cycle. Although in this community, life cycle was an important part but they associated it with events rather than numbers.

## **3.4. The building trust process**

Finding my self lived in *Kebun Cengkeh* was relieving, finally I had a house to stay. I was able to observe daily life of the community and early marriage family as close as possible. However, my observation only covered the surface pattern. I just built up the interaction in outer line of family boundary as it was hard for me to stay in the couple’s house as they had limited room and space for additional member like me.

### **3.4.1. The “I” identity**

I stayed in one of the biggest house in the sub village. The house belonged to *Mbak Parti*, health volunteer. Yet, I had to stay alone in the house because she and her family preferred to stay in their official house in the plantation. The house was nicer compared to others. It gave me both benefit and lost. The benefit was that I had more space for my self, respect from community as I lived in one of their community

leader's house, and also comfortable place to stay. Unfortunately, it also gave me harder work to build trust with the targeted community as they considered me as person from higher status. Thus, it brought me longer time to cope with trust building session.

I spent more than two months to build the relation with the community. The discrepancy of my identity and my mobility had contributed in this session. The first month, I got almost nothing within this community except the passive observation about their activity. Still, I did not want to waste my time so I used the first month to deepen my knowledge on general picture regarding the ethnic group, early marriage practice and women's sexual and reproductive health. I approached more on community leaders and officers to get more information on it.

However, I got help from my pregnancy. My pregnancy gave me new presentation as an ordinary woman as the rest of the villager. They shared and helped me coping with my pregnancy. They were pity me because I was far away from my husband and family. My pregnancy had great contribution in trust building session with the main key informants.

#### **3.4.2. “Bisa be'en ngocak Medure?” – “Can you speak Madurese?”**

It was the question that people rose when they met me for the first time. My answer would be “*tak bise ...*” – “I can't ...” then they would ask me whether I could understand them if they spoke *Madurese*. My answer would be yes. Then they would ask me again, how I could not speak the language but I could understand what they were talking about. The following explanation would make them understood. I told them that I used to work in Madura island for about seven months. I learnt the language, but I had forgotten since I never used it for almost seven years.

My limitation in using the language contributed to the interview process, as most of my main informants' mother tongue was *Madurese*. So, it was easy for them to share and express themselves in *Madurese*. However, my ability to understand their language saved me as I would respond to their story event by using phrases in *Madurese* or full sentence in low level of *Javanese* or *Bahasa Indonesia*. They felt comfortable to be able to speak on their own language. For me, sometime I faced difficulty in understanding some local term which was influenced by *Osing*. Yet, I could cope with it by simply asking for clarification on the meaning of the words.

### 3.5. *Kebun Cengkeh* - the clove plantation

Sited in the most remote area of the village, people lived in the sub village were had fixed living rime; working and home, as it was far and difficult to reach other part of the village, *Kebun Sari*. They rarely involved in community activity event within sub village. Hills and valley became the topography characteristic of the sub-village. Event the population in *Kebun Cengkeh* was the most populated one, still the population density become the issue. The housing was arranged in small group and spreading up between coffee and cloves plantation and even the forest.



**Figure: 2. Map of *Kebun Cengkeh***

The weather changing had affected the community calendar in research site. The community activity pattern had no fixed pattern. Uncertainty of the season had influenced the harvest time of coffee and cloves in the plantation. The changing had produced unfixed community activity clock. During August to November, the season seemed to be drier than before. It brought impact to the existence of the coffee beans and cloves flowers to be taken.

Most of population in the sub-village was also depended on animal farm by raising goats and cows. They did it by sharing the outcome with the investor who was owner of the goats and cows. Most of the investor came from other areas. This pattern of living got along well with their work as daily labor in the plantation. Both plantation and the labor took benefit from animal farming. The labor sold the animal

waste to the plantation to fertilize the coffee and cloves. As turn, the labor could grow the grass and bushes for animal supply. Thus, either becoming daily labor or the breeder had taken most of the community time in their daily life. However, the animal farm did not contribute to the community cash flow. They considers it as live stock or saving.

Both of the women and men worked either in cloves or coffee plantation. They were paid based on the result of the work. However, during this period of time, they earned quite little comparing to other season. The average salary would be around 200,000 every two weeks or equal to 200 USD. This situation merely caused by the fact that it was not the harvest season yet, and the changing weather and the old age of cloves and coffee trees contributed to the situation. However, couples of informants told me that they could earn up to 500,000 IDR or equal to 500 USD every two weeks if they had harvest season.

During the research being conducted was the changing season or in Indonesia language was called *Musim Pancaroba*. It was the changing season time from dry season to rainy season. However, the weather was not friendly at all. It would be rain for three to five days or there would be dry for the whole week that caused water scarcity in the research site. The water supply in the research site depended on the spring which located up to the hill in other sub village area. The water management was handled by the community. The fee was 3,000 IDR a month to get and use the water from public bath. The community built public bath in every groups of houses in the community. The public bath was used for bathing, washing and collecting clean water for cooking and drinking. It was rarely that the household owned their own bathroom. At least, there were only two houses that own their own bathroom, because they were considered rich enough in the community; the chief of sub village and my host.

Expected to see the population composition based on ethnicity in the sub village, I found out that there was not any demographic data related to subject of interest. However, the majority of population was inhabited by *Madurese*. The indication of the major ethnicity in the sub village was identified by the community spoken language; *Madurese*. The language was used as daily language communication across the sub village.

The community religion in the sub village was Islam. There were about 8 *langger* (small mosque within community, they used it for praying and teaching Al-Qur'an for children in the community). The children were sent to learn Al-Qur'an since the early age. They could learn for free until the children finished the elementary school. Another religious activity in the sub village was held every Thursday evening. The group activity was held only for male, and they moved from one member of community's house to other. The religious activity for women was held once a month. Yet, not all of community member in the sub village involved in these two activities.

Another community activity in the sub village for women was *Posyandu*. *Posyandu* was an acronym for *Pos Pelayanan Terpadu* or Integrated Service Post. It was initiated by Health Service Office and was the smallest unit of group health activity in the community. The program served the need of maternal, children, and elderly health monitoring and service. The midwife would become the service provider in the post. However, the organizer of the activity was *kader kesehatan* or health volunteer within sub village. Most of the participants were women in all ages, especially those who were pregnant and had children under five years old. This group activity was useful entry point for me to familiar my self with the community and met women who would be my potential informants.

### **3.5.1. *Posyandu*: the front door of women's house**

It was the second week of August when I came to visit the activity in *Posyandu* in *Kebun Cengkeh*. *Posyandu* in *Kebun Cengkeh* was held every second Monday each month. Supri, the gate keeper took me by motor bike to *Pak Kerawat's* house. When we arrived, we saw another motor bike had been parked there. I assumed it was *Bu Bidan's*. The house was full of women and children. The women came in pairs or alone. Most of them came on foot. The children were about 0 – 5 years old. We entered the house from the front door as the side door was used to hang the weight scale. *Bu Kerawat* addressed us. *Mbak Parti* looked very busy wrote the weight scales on the book. *Bu Bidan* wrote on the pink book to record mother's and child's health. Supri recognized one of *kader kesehatan* there. She addressed him using *Madurese*. Later on Supri explained that she was his uncle's wife. Then, we immersed on the activity. However, we did nothing, just observed the activity. Many young faces

appeared with their children. I tried to remember their faces. Their youth covered with the simplicity of their appearances as rural women who lived in the plantation. The children looked fat in general, but they had red hair. I noticed that the midwife explained few things if the woman asked her about certain thing. But, most of the time, I heard her explaining and reminding the women about immunization for next month. *Bu Kerawat* served us with the green beans in the bowl. I felt unease as I knew that it was for the children. Any how, I could not say no in the name of being polite. I waited for about 45 minutes until no one came again. Then, I started to introduce myself to *Bu Bidan* and health volunteers, event this was my second time to meet *Bu Bidan*. I explained my purpose to learn and get to know how the women in the community coped with their health issue in the marriage frame. I was aware that *Pak Kerawat* rejected the existence of early marriage in the community, so I decided to talk about it in broader scoop. The first experience with *Pak Kerawat* taught me to be more aware and tactical to making steps into my research.

Even though I had led the conversation into general issue of women and child health picture, it seemed that *Bu Bidan* was aware about my interest on women who get married in early age. She started to share that the practice was quite common within community. On the other hand, *Mbak Parti*, one of *kader kesehatan*, opposed *Bu Bidan* description. She said that such practice was not existed anymore. Despite of leading the debate further, I decided to stop the conversation by saying that my interest would be about maternal and child health. I proposed to have appointment with *Bu Bidan*, *Mbak Parti* or other *kader kesehatan* to visit them personally. They welcome me. Before I leaved, a man came and talked with *Bu Bidan* to come to his house. I heard that the man said about his wife who fell from the tree. He asked her to visit his wife because she could not go to the toilet for some days after leaving the hospital. Then, she went in hurry with him. Stayed for another minutes, I talked with *Mbak Parti* about my plan. She said that she was willing to help me somehow. Then, I leaved the house to continue my today's plan.

### **3.5.2. Reaching the women: identifying the informants**

The temperature was killing. I reached my base camp in the sub village in the late afternoon on the third week of August. Event the sun was still high, I felt quite

chill. I thought it was because my city was hotter. I did not do anything today, except cleaned my room and explored the house. It was the most beautiful house in the road, big and strong. I chose to sleep in the front bedroom which belonged to the son. It was warmer there.

The base camp located in the main road of the sub village. However, the road was not in the middle of the sub village. The fact was that the road connected the sub village with the plantation and other sub villages in *Kebun Sari*. This was the widest road in the sub village. Yet, it was made of dirt which meant that it would be slippery during the rain. Some said that government would build the road within this month, but they did not know exactly when.

Feeling relieved as I finally stayed in the sub village, I started to make plan to explore the community. Being within community brought me hope to be able to observe the community better and also identify the potential informants easier. I would start by the neighborhood while seek further information from *Mbak Parti*, one of my door to enter women's life in *Kebun Cengkeh*.

Starting by exploring the neighborhood, I stepped outside the base camp and interact with houses surround it. It was a little bit hard to start as I felt not confidence about my self. When I was inside the house I tried to recall my memory in *Madurese's* language, I failed. I remembered none of the word. It mixed with too much word from different language in my head. I was stacked. I realized my mistake. I should spend time to recall the ability before I started the field work. Yet, it was too late for me, the only choice left was trying to recall it during the field work by interact as much as possible with the community.

The first interaction was with the children around. They were easily being attracted. Through these children, I reached the next link; the young woman in the next door. She was about 17 years old in my estimation. At first, I thought that she was a daughter of the neighbor. Later on I learned that she was the daughter in law. My interaction with Putri had given me better understanding about the community and women's life. She was a talkative person. She spent almost the whole morning doing housework only. She said that her husband and parent in law did not allow her to work. She told me that they treated her on special way because of her sickness. I found that later on, she became one of the resourceful persons for my research.

The second important interaction was with *Mbak Parti*, one of the health volunteers in the sub village and my host. It took several time interactions with her to gain her trust. Finally, she helped me a lot. She shared her knowledge about the community. She helped me to identify the potential informants within community. She escorted me to enter the community which seemed to be closed and inclusive. She became one of important key resources to get community picture through her experience as woman, health volunteer and one of community leader in the sub village.

I collected various resources, including the raw data of health survey by *Bu Bidan*. I was able to identify 26 households that I assumed have experience in marriage in early age. I got the assumptions by counting the gap age between mother and children, or between grandmothers with grandchildren. I came with raw data: 5 household from first or oldest generation (more or equal to 45 years old), then 17 households from middle generation (age between 25 to 44 years old), and 4 households from last generation (below and equal to 24 year old). Yet, the discussion with health volunteer made me hesitate to utilize the data as she said that they only estimated the age of the informants because they did not know their age.

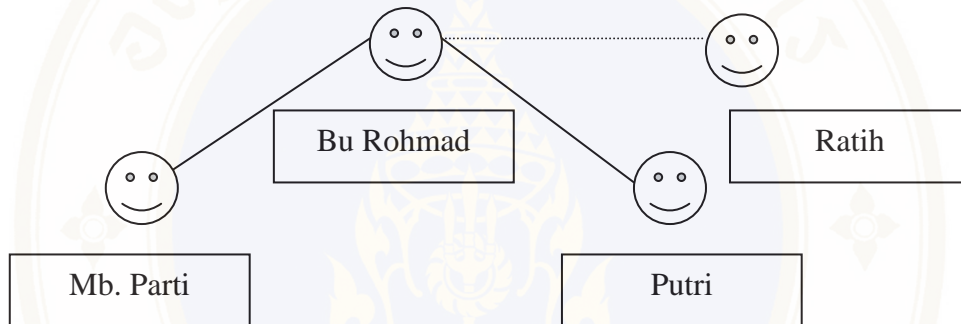
### **3.5.3. The case study: reaching the second layer**

Reaching second layer of the informants was not an easy work. The first layer; women who got married in early age should affirm their willingness to involve in the research. It took another half to a month to entry the second layer. I worked exhaustedly in my last two week to work on my case study. Three women with their different complement resources composed the holistic story of women experience in early marriage and their small part of sexual and reproductive health life.

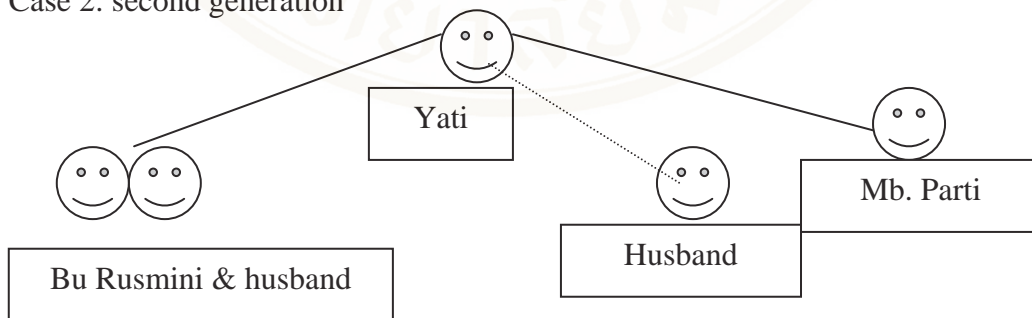
The choice of other member of family as informants mapped out for several interactions with the main informant: the woman. The difference in choosing the second layer purely based on the first pattern that being developed from interaction with the first informants. Each case contributed to portray different picture of experience even though all of them had common pattern as describing by two other women from the same ethnic group in in-depth interview and other resourced from observation and informal interview.

Thus, the case study presented the bread and the deep part of the study. I spent most of the time to compose the mosaic of women experiences and their sharing part of life with the rest of the family members such as husband or parent and community as well. However, I found that the data was not made to compare from case by case. It is more to present the experience of women life who engaged in early marriage. To summarizing each informants' that involve in the case study, I present it into the chart below:

Case 1: first generation



Case 2: second generation



Case 3: third generation

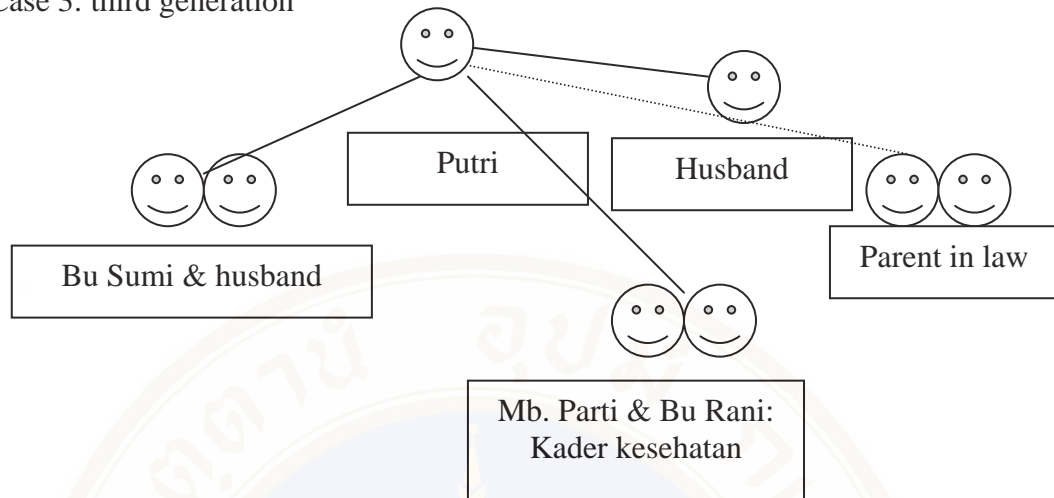


Figure: 3. The case studies

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **OPENING MY EYES, EARS, AND MIND: BEING ONE OF THE WOMEN IN *KEBUN CENGKEH***

Catching by using all senses and composing what I got from field work was required hard long work for an Asian woman like me. It is not my custom to be able to write in narrative way, event I got my bachelor degree in English Literature. It is not writing a fiction. It is writing part of complex reality that I found in the field work as the part of my thesis research. The word choosing, the translation, the expression were supposed to be composed into fact presentation. Yet, as the consequence of choosing ethnography as research methodology, I could not avoid this task. Producing several drafts, write and rewrite, read and reread were the part of this effort.

Thus, I come out with presenting chapter four by using first and third person point of view exchangeable. The purpose is for giving the better picture of reality that I was able to portray. I hope that by writing up in such a way can make the writing readable without loosing the objectives of the research.

Chapter four divides into three main parts; first is the picture of *Kebun Cengkeh* community in general to give broader context of the study. The second part is the story of women's life through three different generations. Each part will have different prologue in the beginning of the part to give the story line for each part. The third part is the epilogue part.

#### **4.1. The flowing air in *Kebun Cengkeh***

*Kebun Cengkeh*, literary, means clove plantation. Event though the name is fiction, I choose the principal of naming it based on the community way of naming the place. They named a place after what was commonly found in those areas, for example, they named the sub village *Kebun Cengkeh* because they could find many *cengkeh* trees or cloves trees in the area. They named a place *Salakan* - Snake fruit

area because there are a lot of *Salak* – snake fruit trees in the area. The simplicity of naming place seemed to reflect the picture of community life at glance. Yet, I think it is too simple for me to jump into such premature impression.

I divided part one into four major headings. The first one is talking about the evolving of marriage law enforcement in the village, second is the life of *Kebun Cengkeh* community, then the practice of early marriage among the community, and the last part is the portrait of women health issue and early marriage.

#### **4.1.1. The state intervention on marriage life in *Kebun Sari***

It was Sunday at noon when I arrived in *Pak Modin's* house. He was in the bathroom, so Sam and I should wait for awhile. His house was a nice house. It had good sanitation and design. He had fish pool in the back of his house and he built the goat and cow barn with certain distance from the main house to prevent smell and pollution on the pool. After few minutes, he invited us to sit in the living room in the main house. Sam started by introduce me to him, then I continued by explaining my purpose. When he agreed to be interviewed then I asked his permit to record the interview.

I opened the interview by asking him how long he had been *Modin* in the village. He said that he had been the officer since 1975. He gained the position by election. I explored the present situation regarding early marriage practice within the community. He said that such a practice was not existed anymore. He said that *Pak Kades* was strict in enforcing the Marriage Law. He explained to me that legal marriage procedure was long and complicated nowadays. First the couple should present them selves in the village office. No one could represent them. They had to bring letter of recommendation from *Rukun Tetangga*<sup>12</sup>, *Rukun Warga*<sup>13</sup> and *dusun* or sub village. The chief of the village would meet them personally and check any legal letter such as birth certificate or school certificate to prove the couple's age. If the couple could not provide it, *Pak Kades* rejects to give them further recommendation to process the marriage into *KUA*. During my interview with *Pak Kades*, he shared the same process with *Pak Modin*. *Pak Kades* told me one case, which was happened

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<sup>12</sup> Rukun Tetangga is a group of several households in which each area headed by a volunteer chief.

<sup>13</sup> Rukun Warga is a group of several RT in which area headed by a volunteer chief.

recently. It was about less than a year ago, a couple proposed to get married. The couple had not shown themselves to the village office, so he asked the parent to take them. When the parent took the couple, *Pak Kades* was shocked. He said,

*“Lha yang perempuan masih kecil .... kethok banget ... dan yang laki sudah tua, umur duapuluhan. Yang perempuan belum lulus Sekolah Dasar. Masih kelas 5. Tapi ngakunya umurnya sudah 16<sup>14</sup>. Ya saya suruh tunjukkan akta lahir. Tapi gak punya. Akhirnya saya suruh minta surat dari sekolah. Kalau sekolah ngijinkan, saya mau kasih surat pengantar. Tapi kalau sekolah nggak mau kasih, ya saya nggak berani.”*

*“(When I saw them) the bride looked very little ... it was pretty obvious ... and the man was about twenties. The girl had not finished her elementary school yet. She was still in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Yet, they claimed that the girl was 16 years old. I asked them to show her birth certificate but she did not have it. So, I asked them to get the letter of recommendation from the school. I told them if the school granted them with recommendation letter, then I would. However the school did not dare to do it, neither did I.”*

When I asked him what had happened with them after his rejection, he said that he heard that the girl’s parent kept on marrying them in religious way.

Both *Pak Modin* and *Pak Kades* said that the government started to enforce the law in the last two years. It was even harder in 2009 (when the field work was being conducted). However, the reason was not clear except they said that it is the instruction from the central office in district<sup>15</sup>. *Pak Modin* shared his history line based on his memory regarding the Marriage Law enforcement in *Kebun Sari*. He stated that as long as he could remember, the law enforcement started to be implementing strictly in 2000s. He was instructed by previous chief of village and KUA that the minimum age of marriage should be achieved by both the bride and the groom. He mentioned

<sup>14</sup> The law of marriage was set up in 1974; it was clearly stated that the minimum age of marriage was 16 for woman and 19 for man

<sup>15</sup> After decentralization, sub district office play important role in development policy.

that during 1970s, he found many people just get married legally without any consideration regarding age. In 1974, after the Law being pronounced, he assumed that the practice still occurred up to 1980s. Confidently, he said that after 1980s – 2000s, the case was decreased and banished now. Regardless, that there was not any numbers that he could present or any statistic that supporting his statement, he kept on saying that there was not any early marriage case nowadays. On the other hand, what *Pak Modin* said was contrast with *Pak Kades'* story.

The similar opinion was also shared by *Kerawat* in *Kebun Cengkeh*. He strictly ordered his people that he would not tolerate any under age marriage or under hand marriage in his sub village. He admitted that he had socialized the issue with the community leaders as well. On the contrary, I tried to confirm with other community leaders, such as *Ketua Rukun Tetangga* – Chief of neighborhood, *kader kesehatan*, or local *Kyai*, in the sub villages said there was not any socialization regarding Marriage Law and age of marriage. None of the community leaders knew that there was Law on Marriage that will limit the age of the bride and groom. My interview with different key informants in community ended up with information that none of stakeholders that relate to marriage institution gave them instruction or information that there is Law of Marriage in Indonesia.

#### **4.1.2. *Kebun Cengkeh* community**

After living for few weeks within community in *Kebun Cengkeh*, I started to have better understanding about the community's life. It was early in the morning, when the people in the neighborhood started the day. The sky was still dark, and the chilly air infiltrated my warm blanket in my bedroom. I heard people talking outside, they started to go to the hill to work. Both man and woman leaved their houses around 5.30 AM and go back home at 6.00 PM. They worked in plantation until half of the day then collected bushes for their animals.

It is not an easy way to live as villager in small sub-village like *Kebun Cengkeh*. They have to survive with limited resource and skill that they have. The scarcity of the living support has shaped their life into closed community. They are resistance toward the change which has been come along with the development. The community preserves their old pattern of way of life. Even though the development

program such as the new road building, free education and free basic health care were brought to their sub village, the community preferred to keep their decision regarding education, economy, and health in the same old pattern. For example, they do not develop the way they raised the goats to get better income. In education, they kept the preference to send their children to study *pesantren*<sup>16</sup> after finishing elementary school. *Mbak Parti*, one of *kader kesehatan* shared her impression about the community in her neighborhood,

*“Ning kene ki angel yen arep diajak berubah ... susah ke kandanane ... opo maneh yen soal kesehatan karo pendidikan ... Iha contohne ki adikku dhewe. Wong bapake ke lulus SPP, anake ki ora malah didorong ben sekolah, malah dijarné we mondok ... Padahal yen soal biaya ke, aku karo Mas Hadi ke nyanggupi (ngewanggi) ...”*

*“In here, it was not easy to motivate people to change ... it is hard to tell them ... especially in health and education ... for example, just like my own younger brother, he graduated from vocational high school (equal to high school), but his son does not want to continue his study. He lets his son to study in pondok (refers to pesantren) ... if it is about the financial problem, Mas Hadi (her husband) and I were willing to support (him) ...”*

She explained it to me without a pause. It seemed that she really annoyed about the issue. She said that her younger brother and his wife never give any guide to their children. After the son did not want to continue his study, then their daughter also took similar decision. So, both of them study in *pesantren*.

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<sup>16</sup> Pesantren is traditional Islam boarding school. The school is a whole day school which emphasize on teaching Islam. Traditional pesantren has two type; the first one is the only focus on Islam teaching both on the book of Al-Qu’ran and Islam law. The second type provides formal education within the school activity. Yet, most of Madurese prefers to send their children in the first type as the knowledge in Islam is more important in their social life. This type of school usually is free. Parent only provide their children daily need and give the Kyai any form of gift that they can afford, not necessarily in the form of money.

Interested to their resistance toward change, I searched for further answer by retrieving history of the ethnic group. I found from previous study that the resistance is constructed through their history as ethnic group and migrant worker from other island. On study by Saxebøl, he mentioned that Madurese is inclusive. They build their trust into inner circle among them. They are not loyal to central government or local bureaucracy (Saxebøl, 2002). According to Saxebøl on his dissertation on “The Madurese ulama as patrons,” he described how *Madurese* tied their loyalty with local *Kyai*. It is not just among *Madurese* in *Madura* island, as every *Madurese* keeps on maintain their identity as *Madurese* outside the island. In *Kebun Cengkeh* itself, the *Madurese* community also develops inclusive culture that is hard to be intervened by others, especially non *Madurese*. I experienced it by my self; I found difficulty to enter their community because I was not *Madurese*.

#### 4.1.2.1. The Family of *Kebun Cengkeh*

Consist of 264 households, *Kebun Cengkeh*'s population are spreading up along the hill. The characteristic of the family in the sub village is varying depended on the economical ability of the family. As far as I could see, there were two different kinds of families within the community; the first one was a family, which is composed by different generations. They live on the same house like Putri and *Bu Rohmad*. Putri lived with her parent in law and brother in law, while *Bu Rohmad* with her daughter and grandson. Another bigger family was Yun, where she lived with her own parent in one house. Another kind of family just shared their living space within their inner structure; husband, wife, and children such as Rusmini and her husband or Yati and her husband. These are two common family patterns in *Kebun Cengkeh*.

*Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh* develops their own family structure and value. As soon as a couple gets married, the main responsible will be on their own marriage. Yet, there is difference between man and woman. As for man, automatically, is responsible to his wife and children, while for woman, she bears more than one responsibility: to her own family, her parent, and her parent in law. Putri shared her story about her duty as daughter, daughter in law and a wife, it was happened when her mother suddenly sick,

*”... kemarin saja, aku harus bantu nyuci, masak, dan ambil air. Soalnya adikku masih terlalu kecil untuk bisa nggrewangi emak. Eh, habis itu tadi malam aku masih masak disini sampai jam sebelas malam. Weh, kesel tenan wis ... sampai disini gak ada nasi, jadi ya aku masak sekalian buat bekal suamiku kerja paginya.”*

*” ... yesterday, I had to help washing cloth, cooking and taking water (for my parent). I did it because my younger sister was too small to help my mother. (When I went home here) I had to cook until 11 PM. I was very exhausted ... but (I have no choice) since there was not any rice, so I had to do it. Besides my husband need to bring the rice to work in the morning,”*

she ended her story by taking a deep breath. It is common among this community that woman's activity clock is tight. They have multi burden in the family such as taking care the children, working in the plantation, and working on the animal farm as well. However, the men also carry the burden to earn money and work on the farm. Except that they do not take care of the household.

The role within family is clearly defined, where man become the head of the family and woman is responsible to manage the household. However, the role's divine is not necessarily related with power within family. The domain division in social interaction has put man in public space like any other ethic group in Indonesia, but among *Madurese* woman has more autonomy (Niehof, 1985). *Madurese* women have space in making decision and control over the family wealth and family income. Putri, Diah, Yun, Yati, shared their story that their husband gave them authority to manage the money for the family. Even though, male consider having more space in public speaking and religious matter, but women have space in negotiating and making decision in family life (Niehof, 1985). This fact had led me to choose to understand the phenomena by standing in the interpretive instead of critical approach.

#### 4.1.2.2. The religious life

It was fasting month when I started to live in the community. The whole atmosphere was suddenly changed, especially in the day time up to late afternoon. It seemed that people worked harder and had more tied schedule. They started the day earlier to have *sahur*<sup>17</sup> before *Imsyak* time<sup>18</sup> occurred. They would wake up around 3 – 4 AM. They would continue with praying around 5 AM. Then, they continued to work in the routine rime as in ordinary days. After breaking the fasting in the late afternoon, around 5.30 PM, they prayed *Maghrib*<sup>19</sup>. Later on, they would join a communal praying *Tarawih*,<sup>20</sup> in nearby mosque. They would end the daily activity clock at 8 PM. I used to go back from the village capital around this hour, all the doors were closed, the road was empty and the light in every house had been turned off.

I could observe clearly the religious life practice during my stay in the field. Children spend their afternoon time by learning Al-Qu’ran in their neighborhood. The community introduces their children with religious life since they are in the early age. *Langger*<sup>21</sup> becomes the part of the building in the community that represents their identity as Moslem. Yet, it is only used as the school to learn Al-Qu’ran in early age. Teaching by local *Kyai* with limited skill and knowledge in the Holy book and Islam law, the children spend at least 6 days a week from 5.30 to 6.30 PM in *langger*. As soon as, their children finish their elementary school, they will stop to learn Al-Qu’ran in *langger*. Mostly, they will send their children, especially boys<sup>22</sup>, to study in traditional *pesantren*<sup>23</sup> in other sub district instead of formal school. For *Madurese*, ability to read Al-Qu’ran has more prestigious meaning instead of ability to read and write *Bahasa Indonesia*, the national language.

<sup>17</sup> Sahur is earlier breakfast to start the fasting in during the day time.

<sup>18</sup> Imsyak is a time where people should stop to eat, it is few minutes before the dawn pray for the Moslem come.

<sup>19</sup> Maghrib is the praying after the sunset

<sup>20</sup> Tarawih conducts during the fasting month, people usually prefer to do it in group in the mosque as it gives them more blessing

<sup>21</sup> Langger is a small praying place for Moslem. It is easily found within Madurese community. The place is used to teach Al-Qur’an for children and to pray around the neighborhood. Each langger is owned or managed by local Kyai.

<sup>22</sup> As religion is one the male domain’s in Madurese. The parent will consider as a plus if a man has studied in pesantren even for very short period of time (Niehof, 1985)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid 1

However the nuance of Islam life will be barely felt only in certain period of Holy Islam day. The celebration of Haj Holy day<sup>24</sup> is the biggest most flourished being celebrated by *Madurese*. This fact is quite different if compared to any other Moslem from any other ethnic group. Yet, they still consider fasting months and *Idul Fitri*<sup>25</sup> important and holy too.

Their daily life as a Moslem is reflected through their praying practice. Yet, it is not done by most of the people daily. They will be strictly implemented it during the fasting month or after *Haj*. The community activity of religious meeting to recite Al-Qu'ran is also held among this community, for male group is one a week every Thursday evening, while for the female is one a month. I used to attend male religious activity in my host house. Young and old men came after *Isyak*<sup>26</sup>, they started the meeting by reciting Al-Qur'an and ended it with having dinner which was prepared by the host. Finished with the activity, they would simply go home. Their activity is held regularly from one member's house to another.

#### **4.1.3. The practice of early marriage within *Kebun Cengkeh* community**

The marriage is the part of the tradition in passing the life cycle as *Madurese*. It is believed as one of the achievement in life, either for parent or for the couple. However, the early marriage is only referred to woman instead of man. The pattern on younger bride has been founded by previous researcher on *Madurese* (Jones, 2001) (Niehof, 1985). It is because the man has more responsible in this community. It is like any other ethnic group in Southeast Asia, where man is born to be a leader and bear the responsibility as the bread winner in the family, so does in *Madurese*. Another influence among *Madurese* that drive the pattern is Islam teaching where man plays role as Imam or leader for his family.

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<sup>24</sup> The Haj Holy day is to commemorate the scarification of the Ismael, the prophet, by his father Abram. The day is celebrated by going to Mecca to fulfill the 6<sup>th</sup> *Rukun Islam*

<sup>25</sup> *Idul Fitri* is the day of victory after one month fasting. In this day, Moslem will become clean and innocent after the salvation to repay their sin by fasting.

<sup>26</sup> *Isyak* is the evening praying

### 4.1.3.1. The picture of early marriage

#### 4.1.3.1.1. Walking into the steps of marriage in *Madurese* custom in *Kebun Cengkeh*

Gathering information from different sources, I had to check and cross check with different kind of informants. Started from *Kades*, *Kerawat*, midwife, *kader kesehatan*, community leaders, *dukun bayi*, local *Kyai*, and women as my main key informants, I was able to sum up the marriage process in *Kebun Cengkeh* community.

Based on the community information on marriage shared pattern, *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh* had developed their pattern regarding marriage. There are stages in building up the relationship up to marriage. The first stage is the finding match, then the proposal, betrothal, and marriage itself. I referred the study among *Madurese* in *Madura* island, there are significant different in passing marriage as life passage<sup>27</sup>. In original island, the *Madurese* passes the marriage ritual in more complex way comparing those who migrates to Java (Niehof, 1985).

In *Kebun Cengkeh*, *Madurese* do not take much ceremony in their marriage rites except they put the emphasized on religious legality instead of ritual. However, the practice varies among individual which determined mostly on economical reason. The long sequel of marriage traditional ceremony cost a lot for their life as daily labor. The preference of taking legalization in religious way drives most of the decision in getting married. The preference is made because it is costless and to prevent them from making sin. They only need to prepare simple foods and small amount of money for the religious leader to marry them. Unfortunately, I did not have a chance to witness any marital ceremony during the field work.

The stages is described into different stages of relationship quality and slowly transformed in within generations.

#### **The hunting of *perawan*: Finding the match**

The match refers to whom someone to get married. Among *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh*, the match is different if compared to *Madurese* in *Madura*

<sup>27</sup> *Madurese* in *Madura* islands have 6 stages in marriage: (1) The male's family will choose the match, (2) The male's family choose the intermediary or middle man to ask about the proposed match, (3) The answer will be given after few days by asking the mediator to visit again on other days, (4) The formal confirmation day, (5) Betrothal, (6) The wedding

island. Even in this part, they had been developed different custom among them selves. In *Madura* island, *Kyai* and family has important role in deciding to whom someone get married better. In study by Niehof, she mentioned how male's family chooses the match either by themselves or by asking the advice from *Kyai* (Niehof, 1985).

In *Kebun Cengkeh*, choosing the match principally is conducted by male. Man will come to the sub village to look for match. Yet, the pattern has been changing across generations. The first and second generation shared the same pattern. During their days, men sought women to be married by visiting their sub village and looked for the information. Diah, one of the respondent from second generation, shared her experience how she met her husband,

*“Disini, sering ada laki-laki datang dan cari istri mbak. Tak tahu kenapa mbak, disini sering kayak gitu.”*

*“In here, men come looking for wives frequently. I do not know why, but it is a common practice in here,”*

She said that her husband just came and talked with people in her neighborhood that he looked for “*perawan*” – virgin to be married. When people said that she was one of the “*perawan*”, her husband directly proposed her to her mother. The similar experience is also happened to another respondent from similar generation where she met her husband near her house. She said that her husband was told by his friend that there was “*perawan*” in *Kebun Cengkeh*, her name was Yati. So, her husband came and sat in *langger*<sup>28</sup> searched for her.

*“Sera namana Yati? Gitu mbak (bapaknya Adi<sup>29</sup>) nyariin saya. Nanya ama orang-orang e langger,”*

<sup>28</sup> Langger is a small praying place for Moslem. It is easily found within Madurese community. The place is used to teach Al Qur'an for children and to pray around the neighborhood. Each langger is own or managed by local *Kyai*.

<sup>29</sup> Bapaknya Adi – Adi's father, the phrase refers to Yati husband. In Madurese' culture, parent, both mother and father, will loose their real name as soon as they have their first child, regardless gender.

*“Which one named Yati? That was how my husband, Adi’s father<sup>30</sup>, looked for me. He asked people in langger about me,”*

she explained to me the story how she met her husband, she was about 13 years old at that time. She said that in the sub village, it was a common thing for a man just came and looked for a single woman to be married. The man, who is hunting for a wife, will come to their sub village as soon as he hears that there is a single girl in the sub village.

The older generation shared the same experience as the middle generation. Bu’ Rohmad, the 70 years old widower told me that, her husband used to come to see her at her village, he simply proposed her to her parent. She was about 9 years old at that time. Other two women, from same generations, also shared their experience how they met their match. Rusmini, Yati’s mother, said that she was forced to get married with a man who came to propose her to her parent. At that time, she already had relationship with her present husband. Yet, her parent did not agree with her choice. She had no choice but married her first husband. Sumi, Putri’s mother, said that she met her husband just when her husband came to proposed her to her parent. She said that she never met him before.

Bu’ Rohmad said the match matter was different if compared to today generation. Putri said that she knew her husband before she got married with her. She met him in the market in the plantation. After sometime, they had date and the husband proposed her with his parent to her parent. Yun another young woman told me that she had love relationship with her husband before she got married. Both of them started to know opposite sex since they were in the elementary school. Putri said that she was dating with her senior when she was at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. She explained that it was common among her friends to “*pacaran*,<sup>31</sup>” event she was just about 11 years old. She said that she started to date because one her close friend encouraged her.

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<sup>30</sup> Her husband now, as in Madurese culture, parents is addressed by their first child’s name, either male or female.

<sup>31</sup> Pacaran is having special relationship as boy friend and girl friend, it is like dating but the form of dating only involve the close relationship between boy and girl without physical intimacy. Among this community, they usually just meet in school or go out and meet in the market or any public place but in group.

Compared with Niehof's finding, the common age pattern is higher (Niehof, 1985). The age of the girl is ranged between 9 to 15 years old. Thus, the pattern also changes through generation in *Kebun Cengkeh*: for the first generation, she was chosen by man in the age of 9. The second and third generations were in the similar range of age, when they started to be engaged: 13 – 15. On the contrary, the man age remained constant across generation: 4 – 5 years older than the woman.

### **When the belief drives: The proposal**

The proposal of the marriage is the event where the groom proposes the bride. In this level, man also plays the major role. The man will simply come with his parent or family to the woman's house and propose to be engaged with their daughter. Among the *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh*, the event is only involved a small number of family instead of the whole village. It is only among the nuclear family as well. After the man and the parent come, the woman's family simply replies in the same moment.

From three study case studies and two in depth interviews, none of the women are involved during this stage. It is also happened in the last generation, in which they chose their own match. They did not involve in deciding when the proposal date being held. They knew on the day the men came and proposed them.

The experience shared by Putri described her proposal moment where she was not the part of the plan,

*“Waktu itu saya lagi nyiapin baju mau pergi kerja ama kakak saya di Randu Agung. Trus kok ada suara oran. Ya udah saya nanya dari dalam mbak, sera?lha kok terus aja bilang assalamualakum mbak. Padahal kan sudah saya jawab. Jengkel saya mbak, terus saya keluar. Lha ternyata bapaknya Kak. Bede napa [pa-]man?saya kan manggil bapaknya Kak paman. Sumpah kaget saya mba! Ada apa kok Kak datang sama bapaknya. ... tak da napa, bede bapak ibuna sera? Gitu tanyanya. Ya sudah saya suruh masuk, terus saya cari*

*bapak ibu saya. ... Ibu saya nyuruh saya beli gula ke warung, dirumah sana, warungnya jauh mbak. ... Jadi saya enggak tahu ada apa mereka datang. Habis beli gula, saya buatin minum gitu. Nah, pas malam saya nglajuntin siap-siap, ibu saya bilang kalau saya enggak perlu pergi cari kerja ke Randu Agung, karena udah bakalan. Kaget saya mbak. Trus ibu saya bilang kalau Kak ama bapaknya itu datang untuk minta saya. Jadi karena sudah ada yang minta, makanya saya enggak perlu pergi cari kerja.”*

*“At that time, I was preparing my clothes since I was going to look for a job with my older sister in Randu Agung (other sub district). Then, I heard a man’s voice outside the house. Then, I asked who it was. He did not reply but kept on addressing, so I came out with anger. I was shocked, it was Kak’s father. I was thinking why he came with Kak. Then, I asked him why he came to my house. He said nothing special. He just asked about my parent. So, I asked them to come in then I looked for my parent. ... Then, my mother sent me to buy sugar in the nearby shop, which was quite far from my house. ... So, I did not know what their purpose was for coming to my house. Arrived home, I served the drink. In the evening, I continued to prepare my things to leave to Randu Agung. Suddenly, my mother told me that I did not need to look for a job because I had been “bakalan,” – betrothal, I was really shocked. Then, my mother told me that Kak and his father came to propose me to be Kak’s wife. She said that because someone had asked me so I did not need to work.”*

Putri said how sad she was because she did not really love Kak. Yet, he had proposed her and her parent had accepted it. She had no other choice except received the reality. She said that she was in love with other man better than with Kak, she was about 13 years old at that time. Putri said that among them, it is forbidden to reject the first man proposal to a daughter. Now, Putri lived with the decision they had made. The belief among *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh* that they are not supposed to reject the first man’s

proposal to their daughter, are passed through generations. The same story also shares either by first generation and middle generation that the rejection can bring unluckiness to their daughter. Then, it will lead to the family ashamed because they can not find the match for their daughter. *Bu Rohmad* shared how their parent received her husband's proposal without knowing the man before. She said that her late husband was older than her. For her parent, the most important thing was that he had worked already. She said that her husband was a daily labor in the plantation. At that moment, she did not know what happened since she was quite little (about 9 years old). She just knew that she had married with that man. Besides, she said that she had nothing else to do. So marriage is the best thing that she can do.

For middle generations, either Yati or Diah had different situation compared to present and first generation. Although Yati's experience was similar with others, she admitted in other interview that she felt fine to get married in young age: 14. She said that her age was old enough according their community. Diah shared the similar opinion regarding her age in married. She said that when her husband came to propose her, she had her consideration as the oldest daughter from poor widow. She was about 15 years old when she was married. She thought that she did not event had land for a house, and her mother was old and poor. She had siblings to think about. So, she saw marriage as her opportunity to get better life. Event her husband was a widower with one child, she considered it as plus point that he was mature. Then, she told her mother that the proposal was a good change for the whole family.

### **The catalyst to enter marriage: “*Bakalan*” - the betrothal**

In this period, the girls have been proposed to get married by the men. Among *Madurese*, the betrothal will not be held too long from the proposal and the next stage, the marriage. The betrothal vary in terms of time after the proposal and before the marriage, however the common pattern will take about less and equal to a year. The common pattern is that there always be an incident that triggers the betrothal.

The trigger in accelerating the betrothal is usually the intensity of the couple to present themselves in public. However, the experiences being shared by the informants are different. Yati told me that the trigger for her to get married soon was when her husband stayed at her house,

*“Lha abis itu bakalan dapat tiga bulan, (bapaknya Adi)<sup>32</sup> enggak pulang. ... jadi orang tua takut itu mbak ... makanya dikawinkan sudah saya. Ya maseh nik kinik itu dah. Ndak ngerti apa-apa saya ...”*

*“After three months of the proposal and betrothal, Adi’s father did not go home. He stayed in my house. So, my parent was afraid so they married us. I was still small. I had not known anything at time.”*

The similar experience also shared by other woman, she explained how her parent received her husband’s proposal and she was engaged with her husband as soon as the incident that trigger the betrothal happened,

*“Waktu itu, Kak kan main kerumah mbak. Terus hujan deres banget. Akhirnya dia nggak bisa pulang. Ya ginep sudah dia dirumah sana. Nah, orang tua saya takut diomongin tetangga. Gitu akhirnya si Kak datang nglamar saya,”*

*“It was rainy heavily when Kak came to my house. So, he could not go home and stay over night. My parent was afraid that the neighbor would start to gossip them. So, Kak came to propose me shortly,”*

Putri described what had caused her parent except the proposal. Nevertheless, she did not know about the proposal plan. She said that her husband was simply come with his parent to her house.

During the betrothal, women are not allowed to involve in a relationship with other men. The forbidden norm will measure and limit women

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid 3

mobility as well. Within community, the engaged women shall not present in public sphere with other men. Event, they can not be seen riding motorbike with other male except their relatives. People will talk and judge them as untrustworthy women.

The family knot between the couple is also stronger in this point. Either parent from both sides will consider themselves as family. The intensity of the relationship between families is improving especially in social activity sphere. The family will look after the couple and make sure that they walk in blessing way to avoid family embarrassment by not having pre marital sex or any other affair with other man.

### **The marriage: the “legal” status**

The marriage arrangements vary according to social and economic status of the couple’s family. However, the *Madurese* in *Kebun Sari* does not have specific ethnic ritual except for *akad nikah* – religious married and the party. Compared with *Osing* or *Javanese*, the *Madurese* in *Kebun Sari* does not put emphasized on the ceremony. They pay more attention on the legality of their marriage on the religious point of view. Even though in Indonesia, the religious and legal part are designed in one package, still the *Madurese* prefers to propose the religious way first instead of legal one if there are certain condition such as age issue in married and financial problem.

*Akad nikah* is only involved *Kyai* or religious leader and *wali*<sup>33</sup> as the parent’s representative from the groom. As the pattern of the marriage within community is between older man and younger woman, the man can represent him self in his marriage. On the other hand, the younger woman shall be represented by *wali* as the guardian. *Wali* can be her father, her male relative from her father side, or any man who is pointed as the representative from the family.

In early marriage case, although it was forbidden by law, *Modin* said that people would play in a tricky way. He told me that people arranged religious ceremony, like what they called *slametan*<sup>34</sup> and invited *Kyai* to come to lead the praying without mentioning what kind of *slametan* they had. As soon as *Kyai*

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<sup>33</sup> Wali means representative due to the absent of the groom’s father

<sup>34</sup> Slametan is community gathering to express their gratitude to God by having food festive and praying

arrived, they explained their purpose to marry their children. Leaving without option, *Kyai* would conduct the religious wedding ceremony, as he would not stand for adultery if he did not bless them. Unfortunately, the *Kyai* involved in this kind of ceremony was invited from other sub district or area. The same information was supported by local young *Kyai* who worked as government's field community educator in Religious Affairs Office. He said that getting married in religious way is more acceptable by community, so for those who get difficulty in getting legalization from the government preferred to conduct religious marriage first while waiting for the legalization process.

#### **4.1.3.1.2. Women who marriage in early age**

##### **The social economic background**

*Bu' Rohmad, Yati, Diah, and Putri* came from labor class in the community. Their parent worked as daily labor in the plantation. Three of them experienced working in early age to help their parent after they stopped from school. They stopped their education and worked as daily labor to harvest the cloves and coffee.

*Bu' Rohmad* said that she was only studying up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in the elementary school. She gave up the education because there was not light (light referred to electricity) at time, so it was hard for children to study after school. Besides, the school was far. It was not safe for girls to go to school. So, giving up the study and helping her parent became her life. Being born in the same generation, the mothers of two other main informants shared the same experiences that they did not even go to school to get the proper education. *Sumi* told me that she did not have any opportunity to attend any formal school, because she was born in poor family and her house was isolated in the middle of the plantation. *Rusmini* shared the similar story with the other two.

The changing of education background is seen in the second generation where they finished their elementary school. Both of respondents in the age of 26 and 32 said that they were finished their elementary school before getting married. The last generation, *Putri* and *Yun* were also able to graduate from their elementary school. The informants' social economic background, include education can be summarized from the table below:

**Table: 1. The summary of social economic background of the informants**

Informants	Informants social economic background			
	Parent's work	Her previous work	Education	Her present work
<i>Bu' Rohmad</i>	Daily labor	Daily labor	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	House wife & Cow breeder
Yati	Daily labor	Daily labor	Finish elementary school	Daily labor & Goat breeder
Putri	Daily labor	None	Finish elementary school	House wife
Diah	Daily labor	Daily labor	Finish elementary school	House wife
Yun	Daily labor and dairy seller	None	Finished elementary school	House wife

### Age pattern

Three cases and two in depth interviews show that the pattern being occurred in term of age are the groom's age is older than the bride. The pattern can be seen from the table below:

**Table: 2. The summary of informants' age**

Informants	Informants' age		Husband's age	
	When got married	Present	When got married	Present
<i>Bu' Rohmad</i>	9	70	Unknown (older)	Passed away
Yati	14	32	18	36
Putri	14	18	25	29
Diah	15	26	20	31
Yun	13	17	23	27

Two from five informants, the two husbands of them had been married for the second time. Putri's husband and Diah's husband married for the second time with the informants. Putri's husband divorced with his first wife while Diah's husband was remarried because his wife died during baby delivery.

#### **4.1.3. Portrait of woman's health and early marriage in *Kebun Cengkeh***

Talking about early marriage, the closest issue is health. It is also because most of the implication of early marriage will be related to sexual and reproductive health problem. The infant and maternal deaths are believed to be the impact of early marriage by government and scholars. Leading by such assumption, I started to explore the map of women health which related to maternal care as the entry point. I did carry away with main streaming in understanding the sexual and reproductive health in the narrow point. I found that it was hard to bring out the concept of sexual and reproductive health into the field. I was aware about the issue, but my first impression in exploring the issue stacked in the reality in the field that talking about women health was talking about maternal health only. Considered my study objective, that is to understand what was going on within community, I preferred to adjust into the situation by putting down my huge idea of sexual and reproductive health and altering my self with the condition

#### **4.1.3.1. *Bidan Desa*: The lowest branch of health care system**

*Bidan* or Midwife is the lowest health care provider that works and lives in the community. So, I thought that she was the right person to be questioned about the issue of women's health. Settled up within community, *Bu Bidan* has been familiar with issue of maternal and child health in the village.

It was late September, when I started to interview her formally. She was a woman in middle age. Her house was in *Kutha* sub village, the center of *Kebun Sari* village. As *Bidan Desa* – Village midwife, she is responsible for maternal and child health care in village level. She sets up one *Pondok Persalinan Desa (Polindes)* – Village Delivery Clinic. It provides 24 hours service for baby delivering and maternal and child health care. She also supports *Pos Pelayanan Terpadu (Posyandu)* – Integrated Service Post in every sub village. *Posyandu* held once a month in every sub village to monitor maternal, child, and elderly health in sub village.

She had been *Bidan Desa* in *Kebun Sari* for about 11 years. This fact made me happy because I presumed that she should have comprehensive picture on community health. She said that her duty as *Bidan Desa*, actually, was not only responsible to maternal, child, and elderly care, but also primary health care in the village. However, in providing primary health care, she had to follow of *Bidan Praktek Swasta* scheme – Private Midwife Practice. It is meant that there is not support from government budget, then people should pay. While for *Polindes*, there was not any subsidy as well. The fact of health system made me stop for a while to realize the situation, but I decided to open my self wider than before so I would be able to see clearly, listen more, and understand more.

#### **4.1.3.2. “Kematian ibu? Disini nggak ada ...” – “Maternal death (case)? No, we don't have (any cases on maternal death) ...”**

*Bu Bidan* answered my question regarding the incident of maternal death in the village, *Kebun Sari*, when I started to explore women's health portrait. I decided to focus on maternal and infant health care. Event though, the focus was simplified, still it was difficult to get the whole picture. It was because my presumptions and expectation were totally wrong about many things such as health system, health program, and human resource; they were not fitting with the reality.

Such a long way to go on for me, my bias as researcher who worked on human rights issue kept on interrupting my process in conducting cultural study.

According to *Bu Bidan*, the case of infant and maternal death is note existed within sub village of *Kebun Cengkeh*.

*“Biar mereka itu kawinnya masih muda, mereka ketat soal diet saat hamil. Pantangan dan anjuran selama masa kehamilan menyebabkan bayi lahir dalam kondisi kurang berat badan. Baru setelah lahir mereka langsung didulang pake pisang biar cepet gedhe,”*

*“Even though they were marriage in young age, they are pretty strict in pregnancy diet. It caused the baby is born in the low weight. As soon as the baby is born, they will feed it with smashed banana. So, they baby gains weight soon,”*

*bu Bidan* explained the community custom regarding the early marriage and the risk on maternal and infant death. She said there is not case which related to the age of marriage with maternal and infant death.

However, she admitted that the practice of early marriage is a common practice in the research site. She said that it was difficulty to recognize the practice of early marriage because people did not know their exact age. It was hard for *Bidan* and *kader kesehatan* to record people’s age. They considered themselves lucky if there was person who was born with same year with others. So, they could estimate someone’s age.

She shared some cases related to indication of sexual transmitted diseases or reproductive tract infection. She said that all that she could do as midwife sent them to get further test in *Puskesmas* in the sub district. One of the cases that she met was a pregnant woman, who was suffered from white discharge with bad smell and high quantity of the discharge. She suspected that the women had abnormal discharge, so she referred her to *Puskesmas*. Yet, the woman preferred not to

seek further help. In this case, *Bidan* said that she could not do anything else, as she did not want to force people.

Concerning the early marriage, she did not pay further attention on it. Her priority was maternal and infant health. She did not pay attention on the age of mother since she did not perceived it as one of causal risk in maternal and infant death in her working area. The indicator that led her to pay more attention to maternal and infant health is the frequency of pregnancy and mal nutrition. As she mentioned before that even young mothers exist, it was hard to be proven as most of them admitted that they were in the marriageable age: 18 above. Another thing that contributed to the zero case of maternal death was their food diet practice during pregnancy.

Nevertheless, she said that the mal nutrition cases were frequently found. She said that most of the babies were born in low weight. The *Madurese* start to feed their babies in the first day. Mothers or grandmothers give mashed banana for the babies. After four months, they introduce mashed steam rice. So, within few weeks, the babies gain more weight. Although the practice is obvious, there is not data available on it. The mal nutrition usually detected after the children reached one year old. Still, the indication can not be gain completely as the physical presentation reaches the measurement as healthy child (weight and height). In order to determine the mal nutrition requires further observation such as body mass index.

Explored in community level, I had a chance to get the other side of health care service picture from my informants that marriage in early age. Diah shared her experience when she accidentally got pregnant after her first child. She said that it just few months after she delivered the baby when she felt that her tummy was growing. She was very afraid that she might suffer for any disease, as she was breastfeeding the baby. So, she decided to see the midwife during *Posyandu*. Being examined in simple way, she was suggested to go to the hospital to take further examination. She said that *Bu Bidan* worried that she might get tumor. The information made her shocked. She said she was terrified. Instead of going to get further medical examination, she decided to seek for *dukun bayi*'s opinion.

“ ... engko' takok e bu bidan ngocak engko' bede tumorna ... e engko' tanya sama buk Mis<sup>35</sup> ... napa bener ta engko' bede tumorna ... buk Mis ngocak, tumor napa? Be'en nika ngandut tak iye ... wis ampat bulen ... ”

“ ... I was afraid because the midwife told me that I might get tumor ... then, I decided to meet Bu Mis instead, and asked her whether I got tumor or not ... Buk Mis asked me back, what tumor? (She said to me) You are pregnant ... it has been four months old ... ”

she told me how she went to see *dukun bayi* to seek for second opinion. The *dukun bayi* told her that she was pregnant for about four months. Since then, she decided not to go to *Posyandu* to check her pregnancy. She was freaked out by midwife information. Yet, after she delivered the baby, she started to visit *Posyandu* for her children health monitoring.

Another experience shared by Yun. She was about 17 years old when the field work was conducted. She told me how she got her second daughter. Actually, she took the contraceptive pills, but she only took it before she had sex with her husband. So, when her husband went to work outside the island, she stopped taking the pills. When her husband came home without notify her, she did not take the pill and the second daughter was born later on. She said that she decided to take the pills by her self, and she did not know how to use it. The seller did not inform her and there was not any education program through *Posyandu* regarding the contraception.

#### **4.2. “Sik nik kini’ ... ruwa yo ...” – “I was very little (at that time) ...”:**

##### **My life, the story of women experiences who get marriage in early age**

Looking deeper into women’s life in Indonesia is not an easy thing to do. An unarticulated characteristic become the major obstacle in conducting the interview with them. Silent, laugh, re-question, body sign are the part of expression that need

<sup>35</sup> Buk Mis is is one of dukun bayi in Kebun Cengkeh sub village.

deeper exploration to be understood. In this section, I will share my case studies in understanding the early marriage in *Kebun Cengkeh* community through women's experiences.

I present three different women's stories, who had married before 16, with three different dimensions in term of the subject of the story: generation and the variety in subject of complement interviewee in each case. Each case narrates by describing the figure of the main key informant, her daily life, family, then her story related their early marriage experience and their sexual and reproductive health sequel, and the last part is their view about early marriage in present stage. However, I realize that my cases will not able to represent the whole community picture as I am only able to conduct three case studies from at least 26 households that I assumed practice early marriage. Nonetheless, I dare to say that the setting of interview was taken in setting, which was as natural as possible. That is why it took longer time to gain the respondent's trust and willingness to share their experience.

*“Ndisik peteng yo nduk, gak onok lampu ... gak onok sekolah,” –  
“There was not dark at that time, child<sup>36</sup>, no light ... no school,”*

*Bu*<sup>37</sup> Rohmad described her time when we started the conversation. I was sitting in her kitchen in one quiet noon. She wore batik cloth from cheap quality and white *kotang*<sup>38</sup>, which the color started to fade. She tied up her head with *kerudung*<sup>39</sup> most of the time. She sat next to me in the bamboo bench that we called it *dipan*. She offered me lunch with rice and fried dried fish, *ranti*<sup>40</sup>, white onion, and chili, her grandson's favorite menu. Yet, I rejected this time. I said that I was full and just finished lunch in *Mbak Parti*'s house.

Rohmad is her first son's name, since among *Kebun Cengkeh* community, a parent either mother or father will address by their first child name, regardless gender of their first child. She was a mother of seven living children. Her husband had

<sup>36</sup> Nduk is an shorten utterance from genduk, it is Javanese word that means girl, the word is used to address younger woman than the speaker. Mostly, people choose the word to express their closeness with the person being addressed

<sup>37</sup> Bu' is shorten utterance from Ibu. It is taken from Bahasa Indonesia that means mother or Mrs. However, the local dialect change the pronunciation into Ibu' or Bu'

<sup>38</sup> Kotang is traditional bra that still used by old generation

<sup>39</sup> Kerudung is head scraft

<sup>40</sup> Kind of sour tomato

been passed away many years ago. She lived with her last daughter and her 9 years old son. Her life is supported by Ratih, her daughter. Yet, she also breeds the cow and goats.

Her house is located in the main road of the sub village that connects the village with the plantation. The main house is made of bricks, but the kitchen is made of bamboo. The main floor is made of cements and sand, while the kitchen is made of dirt. Chicken are freely go back and forth entering the house and kitchen. Actually, I was not comfortable with the chicken as I was little bit afraid of it. Yet, I always prefer the kitchen as the place to conduct interview with most of my informants because kitchen is woman domain. Kitchen contributes to a natural and friendly atmosphere between me and my female interviewee.

Similar with any other women's in *Kebun Cengkeh*, she cooks by using woods that being taken from plantation. She used to show me the skin of pine tree that help her to save the wood while cooking. She said that people just bring the skin tree that being peeled because they have to taken the liquid from it. After that they dry it under the sun, they use it to maintain the fire in traditional stove. I never know before that the pine tree skin can be used to maintain the fire, even though I know that the liquid is produced as the fuel.

As a Moslem, she conducts "*Sholat lima waktu*" – five times praying regularly. It is also done by her daughter, Ratih and her grandson. She projects an ordinary life of *Madurese* in *Kebun Cangkeh* in general. She sends her grandson to study Al-Qu'ran in *langger* near her house. In the surface, it seems that she adjusts and guides her life in Islam value and teaching like any other people in the sub village. However, it is too early to give interpretation or impression during my stay in the field. Yet, she learnt her knowledge in Islam value through *langger* during her childhood. Ability to recite Al-Qu'ran is a must among *Madurese* because it is an indicator that a person is well educated and having a good attitude.

She said that she was only studying for about three years in elementary school because there was no light and no school nearby at time. She said that she had to walk to sub district capital to study. So, giving up the study was a good decision for her, as she could help parent to work in plantation. She stopped for awhile, and took

*pénang*<sup>41</sup> and mixed it with other ingredient and chewed it. She continued by answering my question on how old when she got married for the first time,

*“Aku isih enom yo nduk, sik nik kini’,”*

*“I was young, girl, still very little,”*

She used the word “*nik kini*” to emphasize that she was pretty little as a child. The word has more meaning just as little in term if age but also physically. When we tried to retrieve her age, we ended up with estimation that she was about 9 years old when she got married. The option for her was only working to help her parent and get married. Besides, marriage was common practice within the community, which any girl should pass.

She also mentioned that her parent received the proposal because they believed that it was forbidden to reject man’s proposal for the first time. She reacted right away when I asked her whether she knew the man that proposed her at time or no,

*“Gak ngerti aku nduk ... mara-mara teko nang wong tuwoku. Mosok mbiyen koyok saiki ... yo wis moro ono uwong teko ngono,”*

*“I did not know (him), girl, ... He just came to my parent. During my age was not like today. A man just suddenly came (to propose) ...”*

She said that she just followed what her parent told her. She simply got married than moved out with her husband. She said that her mother did not prepare them with any information. Yet, she told me that other older women such as aunties and neighbors were the information resources regarding marriage life.

She also added the information that she did not get her period at that time. She said that it was few years after her marriage she started to get her period. She had no option because she did not really understand when her husband proposed her to her parent. She just followed what the parent had decided to her.

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<sup>41</sup> Kind of palm fruit that being chew with other ingredient. It is a custom of older generation that being kept to maintain the teeth strength

She shared her experience that the consummation was occurred as soon as the marriage being conducted. However, she did not touch much upon this part as it was not topic to be discussed for older generation. The norm of discussing sexuality is strict in older generation compared with another two generations.

She said that after her two periods, she was pregnant. She said that it was after many years of her marriage. However, she could not recall exactly the year or age. She said that her first son had grandchildren already. After the first child, she had other seven children and one of them died in the age of 8 months. She told me that her child was died because of *sawan*<sup>42</sup>. She said that it was raining heavily at that time. Her child was suddenly crying the whole night, the body turned to be blue. She was not able to seek any help as she did not have any idea. The following morning, the baby was founded to be dead. It is quite contrast, that she believes in spirit could cause her baby sickness and death. It is against Islam teaching. Yet, it is the picture of her religious as well.

She did not know any contraceptive devices along her age. She said that she only used traditional herbs to maintain her sexual and reproductive health since her pregnancy up to post natal care. So, 14 months after she delivered her first baby, she had her second pregnancy. She admitted that she only followed what others women did.

She said that she did not take any contraceptive pills except using traditional herbs to help her to control her pregnancy later on. According to her experience, which she learnt and shared with other women, the pregnancy could be control by drinking lime and mixing it with “*enjet*” – lime stone powder, and drink it after the period time. During the pregnancy, she said that woman should obey the diet rule so she would not find any difficulty in baby delivery. She said that it was forbidden for woman to eat shrimp, egg plant, banana flower, and egg. Those foods could cause different kind of problem during baby delivery. She also introduced me that coffee was the best beverage to be taken during pregnancy because it made the

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<sup>42</sup> Possessed by ghost spirit, this belief is hold by most of the ethnic group in East Java that a child might died because of he or she is possessed by the spirit. In this case, the parent will seek help from another kind of “*dukon*.” The baby will be cured by using praying, wearing sacred thing, or consumed certain kind of food or beverage, which is uncommon such as water with flowers.

baby owns bright skin. So, every time I visited her, she always offered me a cup of hot black coffee because I was pregnant. She said that it would make my baby skin bright.

Concerning her last daughter, she said that she also married her daughter in early age; she was about 14 to 15 years old. Yet, she said that her daughter Ratih finished her elementary school. Now, she works in the plantation in better position as she can read and write. She said that she never know how much her daughter being paid by the plantation. She just knows that Ratih's job is taking note on trees in the plantation.

She said that what had happened to her daughter was little bit different with her experience regarding married. She said that Ratih was married in sufficient age, besides, she had finished her elementary school. So, when a man, who her daughter knew before, came to propose her. She gave permission to get married. Moreover, her other 5 daughters were also get married in early age but she could not remember exactly how old they were. She said that except her first son and her last daughter, they did not go to school at all.

Colleting picture of Ratih, *Bu Rohmad's* daughter, was not as smooth as any other respondent. Her marriage was failed, and she was in unclear status. *Bu Rohmad* asked me not to talk the issue about it with her daughter as it was sensitive issue for her. At first, it was not clear for me, what she meant with sensitive. Later on I found out from different resource that Ratih was suspected to have an affair with other man. This fact is again against Islam teaching: by conducting adultery. She just said that her son in law was "*coparan*" – easily jealous with her wife. On the other hand, other resources mentioned that it was true that she had an affair with other man. This incident led Ratih for having ill experience regarding her sexual organ part.

One of the health volunteer said that Ratih used to suffer a sickness regarding her sexual and reproductive organ. She used to have pain on her womb. The health volunteer took her to the midwife. Later on, the pain caused was found out. She said that from Ratih vagina was exceed kind of "*kulit cangkang telur yang busuk*" – rotten eggshell skin. The gossip being spread up was that her husband put it before the intercourse to prevent his wife for having affair. Unfortunately, I would not be able to interview her by my self, as it was considered sensitive issue by her mother, my main respondent.

*“(Saya) tamat SD. (tapi) Endak (mondok). (Saya) ndak mondok ... Saya ikut kerja, ikut ibu’ ... kerja molong cengkeh tu ...”- “I finished elementary school. Yet, I did not continue my study in Pondok ( refers to pesantren) ... I followed my mother working ... picked up the cloves ...”*

Yati, 31 years old, started her story in our first interview, while she opened the cookies jar in the table in front of me. It was a week after the Holy day of Moslem, *Idul Fitri*. The weather was a little bit cold for me, but inside the house is quite warm. *Mbak Parti, kader kesehatan*, accompanied me to start my first interview with Yati. Yet, it was not my first interaction with her.

She was not tall and skinny, physically. Her skin was light as *Madurese*, she had long thin hair that she always tied with a rubber. She wore blue light t-shirt and a midi pants. We sat in the middle part of her house, which had a set of table and sofa. A 21” television was set up in the cupboard in the middle of the room. The house was quite large with three small bedrooms, one living room, one middle room, and one other room that connect kitchen and the main house. As any other houses in sub village, the kitchen was built by using bamboo as the wall, while the main house was made of bricks. Her house had a terrace in front with goat’s barn opposite of her terrace. There were about 3 – 4 goats in it. Her husband works as *blantik*<sup>43</sup>. Her husband used to offer me to buy one of the goats and let him take care of it. When I asked him, how much it cost, he explained that it was about 900,000 IDR (equal to 90 USD) for teenage male one. He said because it came from the special breed; *Etawa*<sup>44</sup>.

She works in the plantation to pick up coffee beans. Her income is never been fixed, as she gets pay based on how many kilos she can get every session. During the research being conducted, the season was a bad one. In one of my visit to her, she told me that she spent the whole afternoon in the coffee plantation picking up the ready ones, but she only got 7,500 IDR (not even a dollar or 75 cents). Yet, she had no choice because she could not reject the order to work in the sake of keeping her work in the plantation as daily labor. On the other hands, harvest season can make her happy because she can earn up to 500,000 IDR per two weeks. In harvest season, she works from morning to noon everyday.

<sup>43</sup> A person, who collects and buys animal, such as sheep, goat, or cow, from breeders then sell them.

<sup>44</sup> It is kind of goat breed that originally come from India

Living just with her husband, she sends her two children to study in one of *pesantren* in other sub district. Her little girl is about 13 years old now, and she just finished her elementary school. She said that her little girl does not want to continue her study in formal school. She prefers to study in *pesantren* because it is free and she is not interesting to study further. Her first son is also studying in *pesantren*. He also rejects to study further. He prefers to continue his study in *pesantren* which has formal school. She told me that her son wants to be a teacher one day.

Talking about her little girl, remind her how she was in the same age with her little girl. She said that on her daughter age she had been involved in a relationship with a man,

*“Sik nik kinik wis pacaran<sup>45</sup> ... sik umur berempa ... sik omor telubelas ... hehehe ... sak Leni ruwa yo?”*

*“I was small when I started to “date” ... how old I was ... I was still 13... hehehe ... as old as Leni (my daughter) I was, right?”*

She said that she was a little when she started to have love relation. She was about thirteen years old when she had relationship with her husband. Then she was engaged for three months before she got married in the age of fourteen.

Her relationship started when her husband was informed by his friend that there was “*perawan*<sup>46</sup>” in her sub village. Her husband was curios, so he decided to come and see her. She said that she was about going to take a bath and passed *langger*. Her husband sat there and observed her. She did not know how and why her husband finally came after her. She said that at time her husband had love relationship with other woman.

She said that on her 13, she had not gotten her period yet. She said that she had her period just a month before her marriage. Nothing was special during her first time

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<sup>45</sup> Pacaran means dating. Yet, in this context dating has different from compared to present’s world. During this period of time, a couple just pronounces that they are boy friend and girl friend. They have special relation ship that involve feeling of love and care, but they do not have physical relationship such as kissing and having sex.

<sup>46</sup> Perawan, textually, refers to virgin. Yet, in this context, the word refers to female teenager, whom already enters the adulthood.

period, except her mother prepared traditional gift to her *Guru Ngaji*, Al Qur'an teacher. The gift was made of rice and one egg in the small pottery<sup>47</sup>. *Guru Ngaji* would send his pray then. She said that it just the tradition among *Madurese* in her community.

After her married, the consummation was started on the day she got married. She shared that her mother did not tell her anything about what would happen and what should she do. She was told by aunties or neighbor regarding how to act and what she should do after the marriage. She looked pretty shy when she answered my question regarding the issue of sexual knowledge and the consummation.

After marriage, she took contraceptive pill. She felt that she was too little to have a child. So she followed what her female friends and relatives' suggestion. However, she stopped after a year because she said that the pills caused her "mabok" – nausea. She also got information that the pills could make her incapable for having a baby later on.

As a result, she got pregnant in the age of fifteen. She was not expecting her self to get pregnant. So, it was quite hard for her as she could not eat rice at home at all. So, she ate in her mother's house or neighbor. She delivered her baby at home. *Dukun bayi* helped her during the labor. She said that the baby delivery process was easy, so did the umbilical cord. However, she faced difficulty in releasing "ore [ng]" from her womb. It was kind of "tipak orat-orat" - the blood and womb's tissue. It took three hours for her to push it down. *Dukun bayi* tried hard to push it out by massage her tummy. She said that it was caused by her own mistake. She did not know that she had to wear kind of belt, made of cloth, under her breast when she delivered the baby<sup>48</sup>.

She took traditional herbs after delivery the baby. *Dukun bayi* gave her *abu tomang*, *asem* – wood ashes, tamarind and mixed them into water and drunk. On her first labor she used alcohol for her vagina, but on her second labor she used traditional method: to ease the pain on her vagina by wrapping up *abu tomang*, *garam*, and *asem* – wood ashes, salt, and tamarind into the clean cloth. She said it was sore, but it was *Madurese* tradition, and it was believed that could cure the wound in the vagina and recovered it as before.

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<sup>47</sup> In *Madurese* culture, the egg symbolize the women's egg which is put on the rice that symbolized the fertility

<sup>48</sup> She believed that the action would prevent any inner organ to move into upper part of her body

Her second pregnancy was also not being expected. She said that she was taking contraceptive at that time; she took injection with once every three months dosage. She had taken the injection twice. The midwife said that everything was fine. Yet, she felt something wrong, her tummy grew. She started feel something move inside. So, she decided to check it to *dukun bayi* instead of midwife. *Dukun bayi* said that she was pregnant for four months. She was not sure whether it was caused by the uncertain date of taking the shoot or because of other thing. When she visited the midwife for the first time, the midwife asked her the period date. Yet, she could not remember it. Then the midwife just gave her the injection. Feeling ashamed because it was only two years after her first delivery, she decided not checking her second pregnancy to the midwife. She also delivered her second baby by *dukun bayi*'s help. For her, it was the part of the tradition to deliver the baby by using *dukun bayi*'s service.

Women in *Kebun Cengkeh* just check their pregnancy to midwife but prefer to use *dukun bayi* service because it was more comfortable and cheap. *Dukun bayi* will provide complete and longer service. She will bath the baby up to 40 days and provide care for mother as well. She massages both baby and mother and make traditional herbs for the mother. She cleans the baby and the mother wound by using traditional ingredient to make sure there is not any further infection. These luxurious service will not be provided if the use midwife's service. Besides, *dukun bayi* provides home service and midwife does not.

According to *Madurese* beliefs, pregnant woman shall not eat certain food and shall take certain beverage as well. It was forbidden for pregnant woman to eat shrimp because can make the baby was hard to be born, as the shrimp was believed to walk backward. She was also not supposed to eat banana flower because when the baby born, he or she will be quite big but later on he or she will grow smaller. Another banned food is egg plant because it can make the baby covers by skin before being born. She shall not store dirty cloths and dishes in the water container, but she has to wash them at once. This action can cause the difficulty in the labor process because the mother always postpones her work. The similar action that being forbid is when a mother sweeps the floor she has to finish it immediately. She shall not hold the garbage.

I asked her how her mother prepared her to face life as young bride and wife. She just laughed and said,

*“ya ndak bisa. Bodoh (saya) masih ...”*

*“Well, I could not do anything. I am still stupid ...”*

she continued by saying that after her marriage she lived with her parent for sometime. However, her mother never told her what to do and how to cope with the marriage. She gained her knowledge from other women such as aunties, neighbor or friend. Her mother and her father told me the same thing. Rusmini, the mother said that she never told her daughter what to do, except the ceremony regarding the menstruation. She knew when her daughter got her period for the first time from her friend. Daughter and mother did not discussed woman's stuff such as menstruation, sex, or marriage. Both, Rusmini and her husband said that the explanation of menstruation and puberty is the duty of *Guru Ngaji* in the community. They shared their knowledge that *Guru Ngaji* had a big responsibility to teach their children religion and Islam law. However, they did not know what *Guru Ngaji* had taught them exactly. They never talk about it with their children. They said that their duty as the parent was raising them by fulfilling the physical need such as food, school and providing care.

It was raining outside when I conducted the interview with Rusmini and her husband. She was cooking for dinner, so I stayed in the kitchen while talking with her. She boiled vegetable and fried fish. The kitchen's wall was made of bamboo, like the rest of the house. The floor was humid as it was dirt floor. I sat in the one wood chair near the table where she put the ready food. There were two wooden chairs and one table in the kitchen. The wood looked very old. There was bamboo *dipan* in the left side of the chair. The stove, made of bricks and cement, was on fire as she cooked some food. As any other family in the sub village, she cooked by using tree trunks.

When I asked her how old she was when she got married, she said that she was quiet old at time. She did not remember exactly how old she was. Then, I asked her husband instead. He said she was about 18 years old. It was surprising for me. She said that she never went to school. I was trying to think hard that there should be

something wrong with my question. Then, I tried another way of questioning her after we talked about something else. I asked her how old she was when she got married for the first time. She said that she was quiet little at that time, but she was not sure how old she was. She said that her present husband was a second husband. She was divorced with her first husband. She said because she did not love her. This is quiet interesting for me as she belongs to the first generation.

Compared with *Bu Rohmad*, she has different path of life and view regarding marriage. She and her present husband used to love each other before they got married with different person for the first time. Unfortunately her parent did not agree. So she had to get married with her parent's choice. When I asked her why her parent did not agree, she did not know and she never asked them. She stayed on the first marriage for certain period of time and she did not remember how long. Yet, she got divorced later on without any child. While her present husband also got married with other woman. He had one son from his first marriage. He told me that he got divorce later on because his present wife kept on sticking around him. He did not explain what did he meant with sticking around, his eyes seemed to refer that Rusmini tried to catch him back. Then, they got married.

Their experience in forced marriage made them come out with idea of letting their children chosen their own match. I asked them about Yati, their daughter. They said that they asked her whether she wanted to accept the man proposal or not at that time. They said they did not want their children have the same experience like them. They said that as parent what they can do just let their children choose what ever the children think is the best for them. When I raised the issue if the decision that the children choose is getting married in early age, they said it was fine for them as long as the decision can make the children happy. They said that the same support will be given to their grand daughter if she wants to get married in early age with any man that she loves. Yati also shared the same opinion with hear parent. She said that if the daughter prefers to marry in early age, she has no objection on it.

*“hehehe temanku tuh mbak wis podho pacaran<sup>49</sup> mulai kelas 5 ... aku melu-melu we ... pingin tahu saja rasanya. Trus saya ya dijodoh-jodohin sama anak kelas enam. Sama temannya pacarnya teman saya itu ... ya terus surat-suratan gitu ...” –“hehehe my friends had been pacaran since in the 5th grade. I just followed them ... I wanted to know how the feeling (of pacaran) was ... then, i was matched (by my friend) with a friend of my friend’s boy friend ... then, we just sent letters each other ...”*

Putri, 17 years old, shared her story when she had her first relationship with opposite sex. Being born as the present generation, she is different compared to two previous generation. Event though she has been married, she presents her self in her age: teenager. T-shirt, midi skirt, long gold earring, and cell phone become the part of her physical apperance.

Her story with opposite sex was colorful. Before she married, she used to have “love relationship<sup>50</sup>” with her husband’s younger brother, then with her husband’s friend, and later on her husband. She said that she never been dreamed that she would marry her husband, as she did not really enjoy her relationship with him. Yet, the man who came to propose her was Kak, her husband. So, she learned on loving him later on.

*“Aku rabi ke isih enom. Aku menikah umur 14 tahun. Enom ke mbak?”*

*“I was married in young age. I got married in the age of 14. still young, right older sister?”*

She suddenly started her story after couple of months we knew each other. She said it with reddish face. She kept on laughing when she continued her story. She admitted how young she was when she got married. It was a year after she engaged with her husband.

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<sup>49</sup> ibid 9

<sup>50</sup> Love relationship in this community refers to status only, they couple do not engage in any physical bond as in contemporary world nowadays. They mainly only remain in status that she become some one special to other man. The meeting point will be conduct in public place such as school and market.

Believed that a girl should not reject the first proposal led her to enter new passage of life. The episode was started when Kak stayed over night at her house. It supposed be just an ordinary visit, but it was raining heavily. So, it was impossible for Kak to go home. Even though Putri's parent was also at home at that time, it could bring gossip among the neighbor. Later on, the parent brought the issue to Kak. It did not take long time until the next incident came after Putri's life.

The proposal was also coming without any prior notification or discussion between her and Kak. It was just suddenly happened. She was preparing her self to go to her older sister district to work in the shop. Her older sister had founded a place for her to work, but it was never happened because Kak proposed her. He came, exactly a day before she leaved her parent's house. She expressed her feeling that she was sorry to get married that soon. It made her had no chance to experience other thing such as living away from her parent and work.

Her decision to get married in early age had limited her life in the present day.

*“Gak enak mbak. Getun gak iso nang endi endi ... saya kurang pengalaman gitu. Nggak pernah kerja. Dirumah aja.”*

*“It is not convenient. I am sorry (for getting married in early age) as I can not go anywhere ... I have no experience at all. I have never been working. (I) just stay at home.”*

She expressed her feeling how sad she was for not having a chance to gain any experiences: such as going to another town and work. She continued by saying that she felt sad because she has to depend to her husband. Her sickness had spent her husband's goats. She was sad because she could not help him to pay her medication.

She shared her story how she started to be sick. She got cyst in her womb, that was what medical doctor and midwife told her. She had passed through clinical examination before she gave up and preferred to use alternative one. When we retrieved her history related to reproductive and sexual matter, she started by her first menstruation. Her first menstruation was when she was about thirteen years old. It was during her last year in elementary school. As long as she could remember, she never

felt any pain during the period. She said that she started to feel the pain during the menstruation after she got married.

Her first consummation was two weeks after her wedding day. It was because she got her period<sup>51</sup> on the wedding day. The following week was because she felt shy, so she kept on postponing the intercourse. However, her husband's patient had melted her heart. After two weeks, the consummation happened.

Regarding her pain, she could not remember exactly when she started to feel the pain. She said that before she was thought she might be pregnant. She assumed it because she did not get her regular menstruation for about two or three months. Unfortunately, she got it at last. She did not check it to health care provider. She thought that she was fine as the blood flowed as if she got her period. She had the experience of assuming that she was pregnant then lost it twice. Yet, she did not link it with her womb cyst problem.

She went to cure her cyst to hospital once, *Mbak Parti*, one of *kader kesehatan*, took her to district hospital. *Kader kesehatan* helped her get free medication by using *Kartu Keluarga Miskin (kartu GAKIN)* – Poor Family Card – it is an insurance card for poor people that published by government. She had walked through long examination to find out her sickness. She told me sadly that event it was free, her husband had spent a lot of money to take care of her. He had to sell his saving goat. Besides, it took long time to examine her sickness. So, finally her family decided to go home. She felt ashamed to her husband for spending a lot of money.

Eager to be healthy, she and her husband looked for other alternative to cure her. They ended up with using alternative medication in *Madura* islands, in one of her husband relatives' district, *Sumenep* – it was about 6 - 8 hours from the East Java provincial capital, *Surabaya*. The treatment was through two methods; first was by surgery and second is by taking "*jemo*" – traditional herbs.

The alternative healer was called "*dukon*." The "*dukon*" was a man. She described her "*surgery*<sup>52</sup>" process in which she was still conscious. She said that she was accompanied by her husband and the "*dukon*" only. He did not give any pain killer. He just spelled the praying then he rubbed her tummy then cut it by using kind

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<sup>51</sup> In Islam, it is forbidden to have intercourse during the period time, it is considered haram

<sup>52</sup> I put the word surgery between quotation because it is not surgery which is conducted by medical professional provider, but by healer.

of knife, she shouted then she did not remember anything. After sometimes, she woke up. She said that it was not hurt. Her husband told her that the “*dukon*” pressed up kind of yellowish thing from her tummy. He did not sew her tummy back, just rubbed it again. The amazing thing, she said was there was no scar left. Then, she had to drink “*jemo*” from the “*dukon*” to maintain her health. The medication helped her a lot. She never felt the pain. Still, she had to see the “*dukon*” again to continue her treatment.

The cost of her treatment is less expensive compared with treatment in the hospital. However, the cost that she had to spend is also too much for her, as she needs at least 400,000 IDR for living and transportation cost. Her first visit took a month and cost 400,000 IDR for living and transportation and 750,000 IDR for the treatment. Clearly, she stated that this medication is suitable for her.

She said that she really want to be healed, so she followed anyone advices. She narrated her wish,

*”Tapi sekarang aku pingin banget sembuh, jadi ”jemo” sembarang tak minum. Pernah disuruh minum air degan (kelapa muda) yang masih muda banget dicampur sama kunyit, tiap hari wis mbak disuruh minum ya ta minum. Pernah lagi disuruh minum daunnya asem, ditambah kunyit, dan asem jawa ... ya tak minum kabeh mbak. Saking pingine aku sembuh. Aku kasihan sama suamiku. Orang laki kan pasti gimana gitu kalau nggak punya anak,”*

*”I really want to get well, so I drunk any jemo. Someone used to tell me to drink young coconut water with turmeric, I drunk it everyday. Other person told me to take tamarind leaves, and the Javanese tamarind ... I also obeyed it. I am eager to be healthy. I feel sorry for my husband. As a man, I am sure that he wants to have a child,”*

Her eyes were filling up with tears. She continued by saying that her husband was a good man. Event though he did not demand anything to her, she felt that she had to be healthy than she could have a child,

*”Sebenarnya sih dia bilang enggak apa-apa wong memang saya sakit. Tapi sayanya sing piye gitu lho mbak. Saya tahu dia pingin punya anak dan saya juga pingin punya anak.”*

*”My husband said that it is fine for us (if we do not have a child), because I am sick. Yet, I am the one who felt ... you know how. Beside, I also want to have a child.”*

Her sickness and her childless condition did not make her husband leave her. When I asked Kak both about her wife sickness and their childless, he said that they had to face it. He admitted he wanted a child, but it seemed that God had not given them a chance to have one. So, the only thing that they could do just keep on seeking cure, trying and praying.

Putri shared how her husband cared about her. He took care of her every time she was sick. He would even shed his tears when she suffered the abdominal pain during her menstruation time. He also always tried to fulfill any wish that she had. Sometime, she required something which was not necessary during the scarcity of cash, but her husband kept on giving it to her. She asked to buy glasses, which she did not need, after Kak received his two weeks payment. Although, the lack of money, Kak gave the whole payment to her and let her bought whatever she liked. She spent few thousands to buy onions to cook for another two weeks. I remembered she used to tell me that for them, the most important thing to have inside the kitchen was two things: rice with corn and ingredient such onion. With these two things in their kitchen, they can survive.

Looking back to her family, Putri was the third child from 4 children. Her mother Sumi, about 45 years old, had been married such in a young age as well. Her marriage was different compared to her three daughters. She was *dicolong*<sup>53</sup> - kidnapped by his future husband. While three of her daughters passed betrothal period. She said that after few years working, as she went to school until 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, a man kidnapped her. She said, it was Sunday evening when the man, her husband now, kidnapped her. The next day, she was taken to *Modin* to be married. As soon as she

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<sup>53</sup> Dicolong means being kidnapped. Originally, it is Osing culture not Madurese.

was missing from home, a messenger was sent to her parent's house. She did not remember how old she was. All that she can remember was that she got her period 4 times before she married.

A consummation was started as soon as she got married. She had no idea about marriages even she did not know what to say during *akad nikah*. Pak Modin only asked her to recite *Syhadat*<sup>54</sup>. The knowledge as wife and mother was gained through others women's. The similar situation happened to their daughters. She never taught them anything before they got married. She only told her daughters during her first menstruation. She taught them the importance of taking *jemo* after the menstruation. She said that after the last day, woman should drink it to refresh themselves and clean the womb. The *jemo* is made of *jeruk pecel* – lime and *ragi tape* – fragmented powder. The lime is squeezed and the powder is stir on it.

Her three daughters; Siti, Narsih, and Putri were married in the age of 14, 15, and 14. All of their husbands were about twenties. However, she said that she never look for a match for any of her daughter. The last daughter, Putri, was suddenly being proposed by Kak and his parent. Siti studied until 5th grade, and Narsih did not go to school. Narsih was studying Al-Qu'ran only. Each of them found the man by themselves. Narsih's case was similar with Yati, the second case, and Diah, respondent in in-dept interview, in which a man came to see him. Then, he proposed her to her parent.

The pattern of second generation in Sumi's families is a common pattern in *Kebun Sari*. However, each of them differs in matching cases. Siti and Putri met the men before, but Narsih did not.

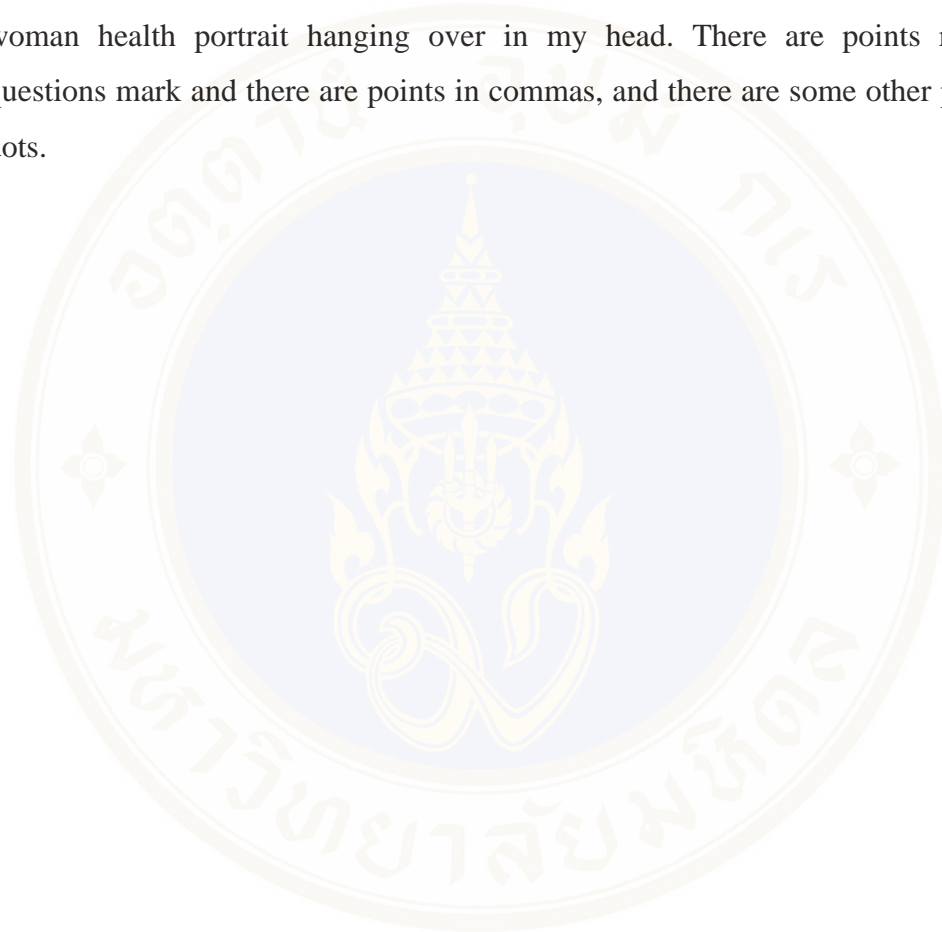
Regarding Sumi's last daughter, Lilik, she said that she hoped she would not get married after she finished her elementary school (she was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade). She wished that she could continue her study then found a job before getting married. Yet, she got difficulty in funding her. It was because her husband was sick. She became the breadwinner in the family after three older daughters got married.

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<sup>54</sup> Syhadat is the two Holy sentences that usually recite in special occasion among Moslem, such as when someone converted his or religion to be Moslem and marriage.

### 4.3. The epilogue

What such a complex picture in small community of *Kebun Cengkeh*! I did not expect my self to face such complex picture in the community when I was going to start the field work. The interconnected factors create the persistence practice of early marriage. The visible and invisible lines connect early marriage practice, culture, and woman health portrait hanging over in my head. There are points remained in questions mark and there are points in commas, and there are some other points in the dots.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Chapter five is divided into two parts; discussion and conclusion. The discussion part presents the debate on the methodology, theoretical framework, and the findings. In each part will be embedded with strength and limitation of it. The conclusion draws based on the discussion.

#### **5.1. Discussion**

Writing this part is challenged because I have to be able to conduct the holistic analysis on my research. I compose the discussion part into five sections; the first part is the discussion on the methodology, the second part is on theoretical framework, then the third is about the finding, research implication and the last one is the research limitation.

##### **5.1.1. Methodology: The reflexive cycle**

Retrieved pervious studies, I tried to find the best methodology in conducting my research on the prevailing of early marriage. After long discussion and searching, I made up my mind to use ethnographic approach.

Referred to my research aim to understand the complexity of the cultural practice, I found out that ethnography, ideally, gave space to capture broader and complex situation of reality. I believe that the complexity of reality can be well captured by the approach. The thick description of reality on the prevailing practice of early marriage requires ability to explore the interconnected spun.

My decision in using ethnography is the best choice as its nature, for being flexible. It contributes in adjusting my research design during the field work. The changing of the political atmosphere of law evolvement has created different condition in the community. The changing has caused difficulty in identifying informants and

mapping out the community. Ethnography allows changing to adapt with field condition. Being there in the field has made me able to recognize the community dynamic.

Ethnography is a sharp tool to explore and map out factors that influence the cultural practice, as it accommodates people voice and choice. The diversity of the community well portray by the methodology. To be as close as possible with subject of study contributes to the information variety to compose the picture's puzzle on *Madurese's* culture.

Participant observation, as the main tool in conducting the ethnography, contributes to the deepest description on cultural complexity. Becoming the part of the community bring me to be the part of the community so that the interaction took setting in the natural way. The setting in conducting the study is able to portray the daily life which is rich and meaningful.

The approach contributes to accommodate the diversity within community. The difference ideas of early marriage by different sources are enriched the description on early marriage. Each idea regarding the issue completes the puzzles of the cultural webs.

However, in gaining the trust to be the insider takes effort and time. The requirement of the methodology to be the part of the community need researcher's hard working to adapt and adjust with local condition. Good interpersonal skill will help in gaining the trust from the community faster. The trust will contribute to achieve the study setting in natural way. This basic stage requires vary of duration depends on the researcher capacity, community characteristic, and the nature of the research.

Another important issue is the language. Language constructs the reality of the speaker: language presents the reality. Understanding language gives benefit in understanding the context of the study. The word choice which is used by the informants contains meaning and context of the situation that being expressed by the informants. Of course, the problem can be overcome by using translator but somehow it influences the work on interpreting the meaning which is crucial in cultural study. The using of translator leads to the missing context in word's using. As I believe that the words embeds complex reality and meanings on them.

### **5.1.2. Theoretical framework: Choosing where to stand**

Theoretical framework is a must in conducting the academic research because the framework helps the researcher to make sense of the reality. The framework influence the way of viewing and understanding the reality, and of course, in interpreting and analyzing the findings in data processing and result presentation. It is not easy to choose the theory in understanding phenomenon. My experience in conducting program intervention by using women right approach influence me a lot in the very beginning of the work. Yet, based on my reflection on my own work, I found that right approach is not able to catch diversity point to understand the complexity. The tendency to be critical into phenomenon has contributed to end on the problem identification instead of solution toward the problem. The nature of critical approach leads the debate to dialectical dialogue instead of capturing the complexity of interconnected factors.

Learning from my experience and retrieving pervious study, I decided to use interpretive anthropology as my lens. The theory provides broader and deeper magnifying glass in view the cultural complexity. Early marriage is a complex phenomenon in contemporary society. The necessity to understand the practice is it becomes the prevailing practice in the community and portrays the complexity of the issue.

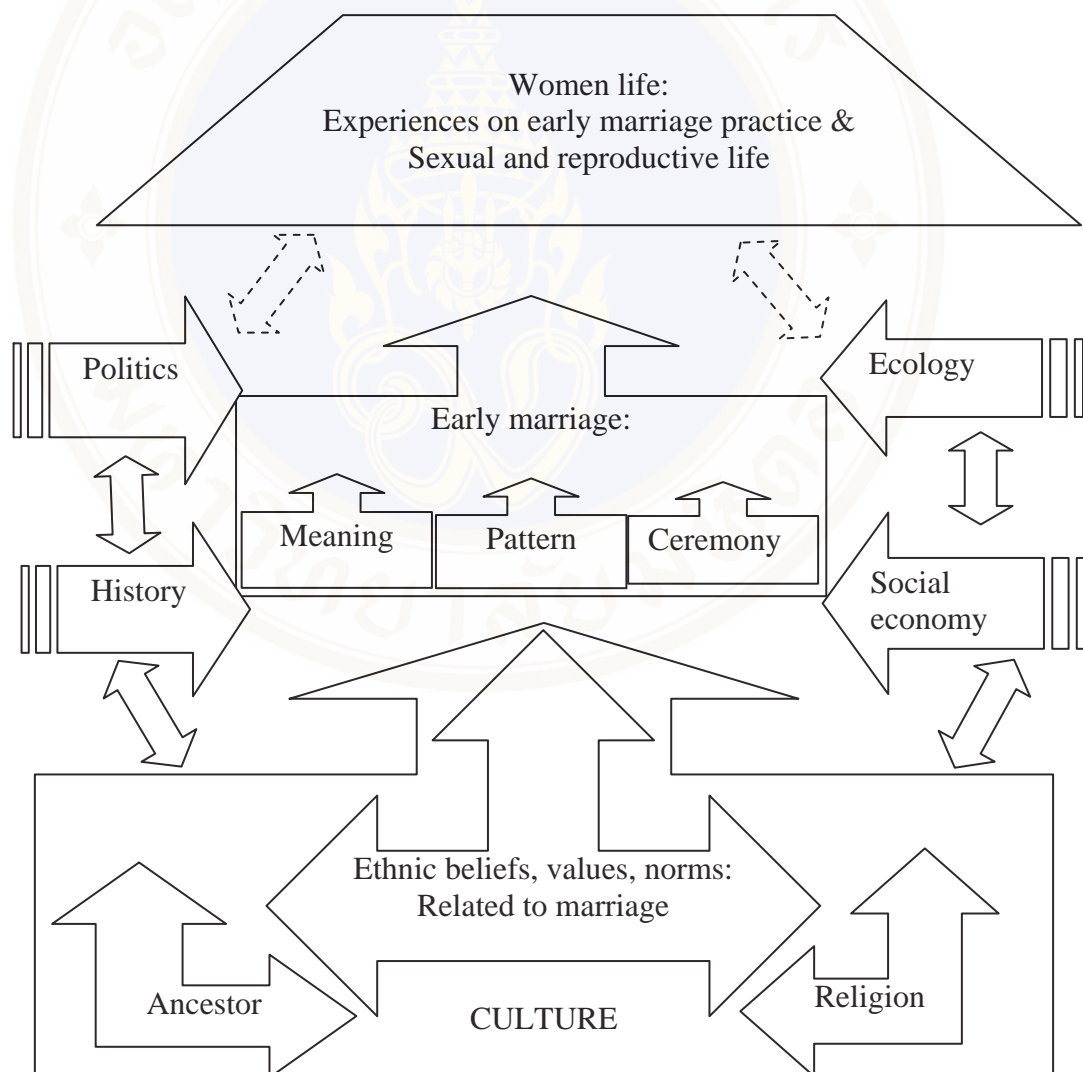
However, the theory is better applied in exploring and understanding the phenomenon instead to provide the recommendation or generate the program intervention in massive level. The interpretive lens play significant role in identifying the community's point of view and knowledge to be able to communicate the problem within the community.

### **5.1.3. Findings: Reading and understanding the cultural webs**

Sum up the findings, read and understand them are not an easy task. Early marriage is common practice among *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh*. The common pattern is not in the sense of numbers or figure but it is acceptable and prevailed among them. I am aware that my term using invites comments and questions that I may not able to define and clarify. Although the study does not have overall picture, but I am confidence to say that, based on the field work, the pattern has shown how

the prevailing of early marriage still existed among *Madurese* nowadays. The spun is not as simple as the assumption being develop by the government that it is only poverty, or education, or the low enforcement of the law that contribute to the persistence of the practice. It needs courage and willingness to understand the practice further into the interconnected element on the *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh*.

Looking back to the objective of the study; to gain a deep and holistic understanding on how and why early marriage practices still prevail in the *Madurese* community and how the practice affects to women’s sexual and reproductive life, I prefer to start the discussion through the conceptual framework of my research.



**Figure: 4. The Conceptual framework**

### 5.1.3.1. “It is forbidden to reject the first proposal from a man”:

#### The interconnected spans of belief, values and religion on early marriage practice

The discussion on the interconnected spans of belief, values, and religion is not simple and easy. The role of religion which is assumed to dominate in this stage is not proven. The greatest driver is *Madurese* belief on the forbidden in rejecting the proposal. The implication of getting consequence after the rejection can bring ashamed to the family if they can not get a man for their daughter. The pride of the family for preparing and sending the daughter to set up family own her own is the symbol of successful achievement as parent. The informants shared the similar idea on the belief of prohibit to reject the first proposal of the man to their daughter. The idea supported by *kader kesehatan* and community leader that it has been passed through generations. Staying single for woman in *Madurese* culture is considering inappropriate. It shows the family lack of ability to get the send their daughter to enter the world of adulthood.

Retrieving the relation between Islam teaching that parent shall marry their daughter as soon as she achieves puberty (marked by having menstruation) is not applicable. It is because *Madurese* does not use the puberty as the indicator in receiving the proposal. Looking back into the findings, the menstruation is perceived as entering the stages as become adult without consequently get along with marriage or receiving the proposal. While receiving the proposal seemed to be more about believing in the consequence that once the parent rejects the proposal, their daughter never get any match for the rest of their life. No one knows exactly how this belief lives strongly through generations among *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh*, but it is existed since their ancestry time. However, the teaching of marriage based on Islam was not a reason for *Madurese* to keep the early marriage practicing. People live in *Kebun Cengkeh* maintain the ritual of Islam as the part of their life. On the other hand, they also keep on living with belief and ritual that left behind by previous religious in their history; Hinduism. As any other ethnic groups in Indonesia, religious life is hard to be pure, the practice or even the teaching is syncretism. The melting pot between beliefs drives the community life.

However, Islam plays significant role in adjusting the couple behavior after the proposal being conducted. The values of Islam in controlling

behavior contribute to the acceleration of marriage. The community avoids their children to have sex before marriage, even though the practice of sex before marriage is hardly found among the community. Still, it is not a single independent factor. It is not merely about the sin that the community wants to avoid but also the gossiping regarding the sex before marriage. Value on pride also contributes to this stage, but which one goes after the other is not clear. It seemed that the border line does not exist.

#### **5.1.3.2. The Politic and history contributions to the existence of early marriage**

Marriage Law was published on 1974. The importance of setting up the law was risen up before the Indonesia gained her independent. The issue of women rights had been brought since colonialism occupied Indonesia. However such a long journey to achieve until the law existed. However, the law was not directly implemented by government and citizen. There are quite few numbers of people realize the existence of Marriage Law, including community in *Kebun Cengkeh*. The prevailing of early marriage practice shows that the community does not realize the existence of the law.

How people perceive law is never been truly studied. They only know in the level when they have a chance to interact with it. Based on field work, I am confidence to interpret that people in the community considering marriage as natural part of human life cycle. They enter and pass it as the routine part. They never related that marriage has been institutionalized by government, which means it has implication as citizen. They consider it as structural process in order to get further identity as citizen by having marriage certificate and birth certificate for their children later on. Yet, the necessity of having either marriage or birth certificate is not significant. They live in the constant rime where changing does not influence their life. They maintain the same custom in life.

Another issue why the law seemed never exists among *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh* because it is not directly related to their life. Law is not specific aspect that influences community life. If they have to face it, in early marriage case, they still have another way around to deal it: by marked up the age.

Among *Madurese* in *Kebun Cengkeh* seemed to put religious law in higher position compared to state law. They prefer to conduct legal marriage in the religious way instead of in the eye of law. However, I do not dare to present any further findings and discussion on this issue because I need to conduct further and deeper study on how they perceive state and religion law and how they consider each of them in making decision and the implication toward their life.

#### **5.1.3.3. Ecology and social economic: The preserving the way of living and early marriage**

Ecology fact in which the community lived has contributed to the overall picture of social economic portrait of the community. The topography of the sub-village formed the pattern of living which is static from generation to generation. Considering as the routine part of life, the monotonous rime of living contributed into the tendency to keep the harmonious tone in their life. Related to the historical part of *Madurese* migration as labor in the plantation created the dependency on the standard of living among them. The best achievement in living would be working in the plantation as the labor. The pattern has produced the limited choice in patter of live, including early marriage.

#### **5.1.3.4. Women's health portrait: The link with early marriage**

Early marriage and women health always be linked to count the harmful impact of early marriage. The assumption behind is that the age of women engaged is under age, while the men is higher. The early consummation for girls is assumed that early marriage have contributed to vary sexual and reproductive health problem. One popular thing is maternal death. The early marriage perceived by decision maker as the contributor in high maternal death rate. In this point, I could say that health considers for having one dimension side. That single behavior can lead to the harmful or damage practice toward women's life. The complexity of health as one reality is not recognized. The multi faces of health are simplified into one single surface in understanding and analyzing health problem. Health, women health, contains of many factors that create complicated web in seeing the problem that occurred in the surface. In *Kebun Cengkeh* for example, the midwife saw that the

maternal death is none cases because she is aware to the health management in taking food during the pregnancy among *Madurese's* women. Yet, it made the local health provider and government were not aware that the absent of the numbers not necessary equal to the absent of early marriage cases.

I identified from the research, that the knowledge of the midwife in understanding health behavior is also being simplified by her. She stated that the *Madurese* was hard to convince to access health care service and they are backward because they have low education. The mainstream assumption that education is growing in the same row as better attitude in health dominate local government and health care provider thought. They do not see that the community maintain and choose the old pattern in health care; unless it is severe then they start to access modern service, because they have their own reason. They keep on choosing *dukun bayi* because it is convenient, familiar, affordable and accessible. The community is not passive service receiver. They access and evaluate their choices in health. *Madurese* women in *Kebun Cengkeh* consider sexual and reproductive health matter as private matter that should be shared among their own community have created pattern in maintain their health by using local knowledge and institution.

#### **5.1.4. Research Implications**

If I talk about research implication, I am able to say that the research does not have impact in massive level such as practical recommendation for program intervention. However, I dare to say that there are two significant implications from my research: in term of methodology and knowledge.

First is that the research methodology contributes to the study on persistence practice among ethnic group, health and women in Indonesia. It gives another view in understanding the picture of persistence practice such as early marriage and exploring the factors that supported the prevailing behavior in certain ethnic groups. The research methodology is quiet old one but it is needed in Indonesia context as we are diverse in ethnicity and religions. I hope that this research will open the scholars' choice in preferring the methodology in conducting research on women and health in Indonesia. in order to get better understanding in mapping out the complexity of the problem.

The second implication is it enriches the study on early marriage among *Madurese* and women health in term, of knowledge. There is a few numbers of studies about this ethnic group related to their prevailing in conducting early marriage and the women's health picture. The research finding can not be used for giving any recommendation but it can be used as the base to design further study in understanding the complexity of the problem in the future.

#### **5.1.5. The limitation of the study**

The limitation of the study is that the study is only being conducted for very short period of time, which is meant that the overall picture can not be generalized. The complexity of the phenomenon is able to be portrayed in by taking cases across generation within one sub village. Event though the study can not represent the overall picture of *Madurese* in early marriage and women's experience in sexual and reproductive health, the case has present how complex the prevailing practice of early marriage actually. The study gives an over view that the prevailing practice is simply by the sake of following religion teaching or being low educated. The factors that influence can not be separated clearly as it knotting each other. The study is also not touched the life history part to be able to retrieve the implication of early marriage toward women's life.

## **5.2. Conclusions**

In this part I would like to points out two important points in my previous research. The first thing would be on the aims of my study whether the picture that I got is able to achieve it or not. The second is about how I am able to understand the prevailing of early marriage within community.

### **5.2.1. Completing the puzzles of early marriage prevailing among *Madurese* women**

Early marriage as the persistence practice assumed to be easy to understand if I view it from critical approach. However it becomes complicated when I explore the phenomenon by using interpretive anthropology approach. The broader

spaces that accommodate the diversity of the informants in sharing their experience and knowledge have given me the interconnected factors in complex web.

The conclusion that can be driven from the research first is that the factors that contribute to the prevailing of early marriage are from their culture which is constructed by history of *Madurese* community including religion. The second conclusion is that prevailing of the practice is also constrained by their preference of preserving their way of living. The third one is that the local government failed to recognize the complexity of the community in *Kebun Cengkeh* so that it is hard to stimulate the changing related to early marriage.

### **5.2.2. “Reducing the bare bone:” way of understanding the early marriage**

Reducing the bare bone means simplifying. In this part I would like to draw interesting conclusion from the study. I observed that the approach being develop in seeing early marriage is by make it simple. The assumption that government develop is that people keep on conducting the early marriage because they do not know. So, the way in solving the problem, government set up Marriage Law socialization, but only by introducing some part of the law only. The government only states that it is forbidden to get marriage under age. How marriage being institutionalized and what is the implication to their life is never been explained.

Another thing is that government only recognizes their own hierarchical structure without considering other community structure such as local leadership and the role of local institution such as *langger*. They do not see that community is complex and has more than one interconnected web within community to control and harmonize their life. For example, how religion institution is considered more important among *Madurese* is not recognized by government. The interview with local government highlights how they perceived the community as backward and stubborn and hard to change. The community prefers to hold their old tradition and custom even the development plan has touched upon the community. Yet, how the factors being intertwined are not recognized.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **OBSERVATION GUIDELINES**

#### **1. Community**

##### 1.1. Community institution

- 1) What kind of community institutions are existed in the community (religious/cultural/social/education/economy/health/politic/others)?
- 2) What are the functions of each community institution?
- 3) How is the interaction among community institutions?

##### 1.2. Government structures

- 1) What kind government's structures exist in community? What is the function of the government's role within community? How it coordinates with higher authority and with community institutions?
- 2) Who is person in charge? What is the authority of person in charge? How person in charge becoming the local authority (being assigned/ being elected/ inherit)?

##### 1.3. Community ceremonies

- 1) What kinds of social cultural events being arrange in the community? Who involve in the events? What are the functions of the ritual and the events? How the ritual being conducted?
- 2) How is the organization of ceremonies (formalized/not formalized)? Why and why not?

#### **2. Family**

##### 2.1. The structure of the family

- 1) How is the family structure [nuclear/extended]?
- 2) Who are the members of the family?
- 3) What does each member of family do?

## 2.2. Interactions among family's members

- 1) How is the relation within family's members?
- 2) What is the role of each member? How is the family being manage?

## 2.3. Interaction between family member's and community

- 1) How is the relation between the family's and other members of the community?

## 3. Women as key informants

### 3.1. Informants' daily life

- ❖ At home
  - How is the informant's interaction with husband?
  - How is the informant's interaction with parents and parents in law?
  - How is the informant's interaction with children?
- ❖ At work
  - What kind of work the informant do?
  - How is the informant on work?
  - How the informant interacts with the informant's coworkers?
- ❖ At social cultural sphere
  - How the informant involves in social and cultural activity?

### 3.2. Informants' reproductive and sexual ill health life

- ❖ How is the informant's health seeking behaviors? Where the informant goes to get health care (health center/private nurse/traditional healer/drug store/herbal medicine/others)?

## APPENDIX B

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

#### 1. Key informant: women who marriage in early age

##### 1.1. History of self

- 1) What is the informant's name?
- 2) When is the informant born? [Or] How old is the informant? [Or] What date is the informant born?
- 3) What is the informant's husband name?
- 4) When is the informant born? [Or] How old is the informant? [Or] What date is the informant born?
- 5) What is the informant's job?
- 6) How long was the informant's studying in school?

##### 1.2. Early marriage experience

- 1) How long has the informant got marriage?
- 2) When was the informant getting married for the first time? How old is the informant when the informant married for the first time? How old was the husband's age?
- 3) Who decided for the informant to get marriage at that time? **Why?**
- 4) Why the informant was willing to get married at that time?
- 5) How was the process? Who involved in the process? Did the informant have any particular ceremony? What kind of ceremony? Why?
- 6) What the informant think about the informant's marriage? Was it too early for the informant? Why and why not? What is the meaning of married for the informant?
- 7) How the informant thinks about early marriage? Why?

### 1.3. Reproductive and sexual health experience

- 1) How old when the informant get the first menstruation? How the informant understands it? Who assisted the informant during that period? What the person told informant about it?
- 2) When the informant got married? What did the informant's parent told the informant related to sexual or reproductive issues such as having first sex, sex life, contraceptive, pregnancy, child birth, miscarriage, abortion, reproductive and sexual infection or disease, man's organs, etc? If not parent did to the informant, who did it? Why and why not?
- 3) When did the informant get pregnant for the first time? How was it?
- 4) Did the informant use any contraceptive after the first child? What kind of contraceptive did the informant use? Why and why not? How about now?
- 5) Has the informant ever experienced any unusual condition related to sexual and reproductive health along the informant's life? What the informant think about it? What is the cause? How the informant copes with it? Who involve with the informant on this issue?
- 6) How about the informant husband, has the informant's husband experienced any unusual condition related to sexual and reproductive health? How the informant's husband copes with it? Who involve with the issue? How the informant feel about it?
- 7) How the informant feels and thinks about the informant's relationship with the informant's husband? Please, the informant describes!

## **2. Husband**

### 2.1. History of self

- 1) What is the informant's name?
- 2) When is the informant born? [Or] How old is the informant? [Or] What date is the informant born?
- 3) What is the informant's wife name?
- 4) When is the informant born? [Or] How old is the informant? [Or] What date is the informant born?

- 5) What is the informant's job?
- 6) How long was the informant's studying in school?

## 2.2. Early marriage experience

- 1) When the informant got married? What did the informant's parent told the informant related to sexual or reproductive issues such as having first sex, sex life, contraceptive, pregnancy, child birth, miscarriage, abortion, reproductive and sexual infection or disease, female's organs, etc? If not parent did to the informant, who did it? Why and why not?
- 2) When did the informant's wife get pregnant for the first time? How was it?
- 3) Did the informant know whether the wife used any contraceptive after the first child? What kind of contraceptive did the informant's wife use? Why and why not? How about now? How about the informant? Does the informant use any contraceptive? Why and why not?
- 4) Has the informant ever experienced any unusual condition related to sexual and reproductive health along the informant's life? What the informant think about it? What is the cause? How the informant copes with it? Who involve with the informant on this issue?
- 5) How about the informant wife, has the informant's husband experienced any unusual condition related to sexual and reproductive health? How the informant's wife copes with it? Who involve with the issue? How the informants feel about it?
- 6) How the informant feels and thinks about the information relationship with the informant's wife? Please, the informant describes!

## 3. Parent/parent in law/ relatives

### 3.1 History of self

- 1) Let the informant tell about him/her self! [What is the name of the informant? - What does the informant do for living? How many children does the informant have?]

- 2) What is the informant relationship with “the main key informant” - woman? – [if not parent] How long has he/she known “the main key informant”? How?

### 3.2. *Early marriage*

- 1) How long has the informant been married? How old the informant’s first age when the informant got married? How about the informant’s wife/husband?
- 2) How the informant gives meanings to marriage? What are they? When is the appropriate time to get marriage? How marriage being practice? Why?
- 3) When the informant’s daughter got married? Who make decision in marriage arrangement? How the informant’s daughter got married? Why? How the informant compares the informant’s marriage life to now? What and why?

## 4. Other key informants

### 4.1. Chief of the village/ chief of the sub village/ teacher/ community leader/ religious leader/ CBOs/others

#### 4.1.1. *History of self*

- 1) What is the informant’s name?
- 2) What is the informant’s position in the community? [or] What does the informant’s do? How does the informant get the position [inherit, election, duty assigned]?
- 3) How long the informant has been stayed in the community? How does the informant describe the community?

#### 4.1.2. *The early marriage*

- 1) What does the informant ideas on marriage? When is the suitable age to get married? Why?
- 2) How is the marriage being arranged in the community? Who involve in the arrangement? What kind of arrangement is it? When of every stages taken place in the arrangement?

- 3) What does the informant think about early marriage? How are the cases of early marriage in the community? Why?

#### 4.1.3. The life of early marriage

- 1) What does the informant think about the effect of marriage in early age, either for male and female? Is it negative or positive affect? How does the informant define negative and positive effect? Is there any significant difference affect for male and female? What kind of affect is that? How it can affect them? Why?
- 2) Considering the effect of early marriage, either positive or negative, what the informant think about the life of women who get married in early age? Is the condition acceptable for informant or no? Why and why not?

## 4.2. Health provider and *dukun bayi*

### 4.2.1 History of self

- 1) What is the informant's name?
- 2) How long the informant has been stayed in the community? How does the informant describe the community?

### 4.2.2. The early marriage and the effect

- 1) What is the informant's position in the community? How does the informant get the position [inherit/chosen/duty assigned]?
- 2) What kind of service that the informant provides to the informant's client/customer? How the informant performs the service? What does the informant need to be able to deliver the service?
- 3) Who is the informant's client/customer? Please, describe them in general [sex/age/marital status/social status/economy status/religion/ethnic group]!
- 4) What is the common service being accessed by client/customer? Why? How?
- 5) How are the cases on sexual and reproductive health? What kind of cases that the informant handled most of time? Why?
- 6) What does the informant ideas on marriage? When is the suitable age to get married? Why?

- 7) How is the marriage being arranged in the community? Who involve in the arrangement? What kind of arrangement is it? When of every stages taken place in the arrangement?
- 8) What does the informant think about early marriage? Does the informant agree or not agree? Why?
- 9) Does the informant think early marriage keep on prevailing in the community? Why or why not?
- 10) What does the informant think about the effect of marriage in early age, either for male and female? Is it negative or positive affects? How does the informant define negative and positive effect? Is there any significant difference affect for male and female? What kind of affect is that? How it can affect them? Why?
- 11) Considering the effect of early marriage, either positive or negative, what the informant think about the life of women who get married in early age? Is the condition acceptable for informant or no? Why and why not?

## **APPENDIX C**

### **CASE STUDY GUIDELINES**

#### **1. Participant observation:**

1) The structure of the family:

- What kind of family is the observed family is [nuclear/extended/or what]?
- Who is the leader? How the family defines the leader of the family? Who are the members of the family? What is the role of each member? How the family decides the member's role in the family?

2) Interactions among family's members:

- How the family communicates among the members? What language is used to communicate within family?
- What are the values, beliefs, norm related to marriage and family being held and maintain? How? By whom?

3) Health life

- Sexual and reproductive health events of the woman as the key informant
- Woman and family health seeking

4) Social life

- The present job of woman
- Social activity of woman

#### **2. In-depth interview guidelines**

##### **2.1. Key informant 1 : woman who marriage early**

###### **2.1.1. *History of self***

4.1.1. What is the informant's name?

4.1.2. When is the informant born? [Or] How old is the informant? [Or] What date is the informant born?

4.1.3. What is the informant's husband name?

4.1.4. When is the informant born? [Or] How old is the informant? [Or] What date is the informant born?

4.1.5. What is the informant's job?

4.1.6. How long was the informant's studying in school?

2.1.2. Early marriage experience

- 1) How long has the informant got marriage?
- 2) When was the informant getting married for the first time? How old is the informant when the informant married for the first time? How old was the husband's age?
- 3) Who decided for the informant to get marriage at that time? How come?
- 4) Why the informant was willing to get married at that time?
- 5) How was the process? Who involved in the process? Did the informant have any particular ceremony? What kind of ceremony? Why?
- 6) What the informant think about the informant's marriage? Was it too early for the informant? Why and why not? What is the meaning of married for the informant?
- 7) How the informant thinks about early marriage? Why?

2.1.3. Reproductive and sexual health experience

- 1) How old when the informant get the first menstruation? How the informant understands it? Who assisted the informant during that period? What the person told informant about it?
- 2) When the informant got married? What did the informant's parent told related to sexual or reproductive issues such as having first sex, sex life, contraceptive, pregnancy, reproductive and sexual infection or disease, menopause, man's organs, etc? If not parent did to the informant, who did it? Why and why not?
- 3) When did the informant get pregnant for the first time? How was it?
- 4) Did the informant use any contraceptive after the first child? What kind of contraceptive did the informant use? Why and why not? How about now?
- 5) Has the informant ever experienced any unusual condition related to sexual and reproductive health along the informant's life? What the informant think about it? What is the cause? How the informant copes with it? Who involve with the informant on this issue?

- 6) How about the informant husband, has the informant's husband experienced any unusual condition related to sexual and reproductive health? How the informant's husband copes with it? Who involve with the issue? How the informant feels about it?
- 7) How the informant feels and thinks about the informant's relationship with the informant's husband? Please, the informant describes!

#### 2.1.4. Family

- 1) What is the family means to the informant? Why?
- 2) Who is the leader? How the family defines the leader of the family? Who are the members of the family? What is the role of each member? How the family decides the member's role in the family?
- 3) How the family communicates among the members? What language is used to communicate within family?
- 4) What are the values, beliefs, norm related to marriage and family being held and maintain? How? By whom?

#### 2.1.5. Sexual and reproductive health life

- 1) How the family maintains the health? Where the family accessed the health service if the family has problem with health? Why? How?

#### 2.1.6. Social life

- 1) How the informant's describe the informant's life and family through the period of time after the informant marriage?
- 2) What is the informant's impression toward the informant's life now? Why? How come?

**2.2. Key informant 2: husband** – follow the in-depth interview guideline

**2.3. Key informant 3: parent/in law/relative** – follow the in-depth interview guideline

## BIOGRAPHY



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