

## The Overnight Stay Tradition Following Engagement in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, West Sumatra

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### Abstract

This study examines the post-engagement overnight stay tradition (*bamalam di rumah urang gadih*) that continues to be preserved by the community of Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra. This tradition forms an integral part of the Minangkabau matrilineal kinship system, which positions women as the central axis of social and cultural structures. In practice, the prospective groom stays overnight at the bride-to-be's family residence following the engagement ceremony. Although it holds significant symbolic meaning and social functions, certain aspects of the tradition have sparked debate, as they are perceived to be inconsistent with prevailing religious norms and moral values. The purpose of this research is to analyze the meaning, functions, and forms of adaptation of the tradition to ensure its alignment with customary principles while remaining consistent with Islamic legal provisions. The study adopts a qualitative approach with a field study design, employing participant observation, in-depth interviews with customary leaders, religious scholars, and community members, as well as an analysis of relevant Minangkabau literature. The findings reveal that the tradition serves three primary functions: (1) as a symbol of openness and social acceptance toward the prospective groom, (2) as an initial adaptation process for the groom-to-be to become acquainted with family norms and matrilineal customs, and (3) as a medium for assessing the character of the prospective groom. Over time, the community has implemented several adjustments, such as shortening the overnight stay duration, limiting direct interaction between the engaged couple, and replacing the practice with formal interfamily gatherings, thereby ensuring its conformity with religious values and contemporary social dynamics. This study asserts that the post-engagement overnight stay tradition is not merely a customary ritual but rather a dynamic form of social dialogue between generations, between customary law (*adat*) and Islamic law (*syariah*), and between local values and modernity. Accordingly, the community of Nagari Salareh Aia Utara demonstrates adaptive capacity in preserving its cultural heritage contextually, without compromising its identity as a religious customary society.

*[Penelitian ini mengkaji tradisi menginap pasca peminangan (bamalam di rumah urang gadih) yang masih dilestarikan oleh masyarakat Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Kecamatan Palembayan, Kabupaten Agam, Sumatera Barat. Tradisi ini merupakan bagian dari sistem kekerabatan*

*matrilineal Minangkabau yang menempatkan pihak perempuan sebagai pusat struktur sosial dan budaya. Dalam praktiknya, calon mempelai laki-laki menginap di rumah keluarga calon istri setelah prosesi peminangan. Meskipun memiliki makna simbolik dan fungsi sosial yang penting, tradisi ini memunculkan persoalan karena sebagian praktiknya dinilai kurang selaras dengan norma agama dan nilai kesusilaan yang berlaku. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis makna, fungsi, dan penyesuaian tradisi ini agar tetap sesuai dengan tuntunan adat sekaligus selaras dengan prinsip syariat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi lapangan, melalui observasi partisipatif dan wawancara mendalam terhadap tokoh adat, tokoh agama, dan anggota masyarakat, serta analisis terhadap berbagai literatur Minangkabau yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi ini memiliki tiga fungsi utama: (1) sebagai simbol keterbukaan dan penerimaan sosial terhadap calon menantu laki-laki, (2) sebagai ruang adaptasi awal calon mempelai laki-laki dengan norma keluarga dan adat matrilineal, serta (3) sebagai ajang penilaian karakter. Dalam praktiknya, masyarakat telah melakukan berbagai bentuk penyesuaian, seperti mempersingkat durasi menginap, membatasi interaksi calon pengantin, hingga mengadaptasi tradisi tersebut dengan pertemuan formal antarkeluarga, demi menyesuaikan dengan tuntutan nilai-nilai keagamaan dan perubahan zaman. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa tradisi menginap bukan sekadar ritual adat, tetapi juga bentuk dialog sosial yang dinamis antara generasi tua dan muda, antara adat dan syariat, serta antara nilai-nilai lokal dan modernitas. Dengan demikian, masyarakat Nagari Salareh Aia Utara menunjukkan kapasitas adaptif dalam merawat warisan budaya secara kontekstual, tanpa kehilangan akar identitasnya sebagai bagian dari masyarakat adat yang religius.]*

**Keywords:** Overnight Stay Tradition, Engagement, Minangkabau Customary Law, Customary Adaptation

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## INTRODUCTION

Marriage occupies a central position in every stratum of society, establishing a bond that unites husband and wife while also bringing together their families and the wider community. Although its fundamental purpose remains similar, each culture expresses the values and regulations of marriage in distinctive ways that reflect its identity and underlying social system (Agustar, 2022; Ambarwati & Mustika, 2018). This diversity underscores the importance of studying marriage within specific cultural contexts, as every society possesses unique interpretations and practices of the institution.

The Minangkabau community in Indonesia serves as a prominent example, renowned for its distinctive and intricate customary system, particularly the consistent application of a matrilineal kinship structure that endures to the present day (Stark, 2013; Sulhati, 2020). Within Minangkabau society, customary law functions not only as a normative framework governing interpersonal relations but also as the principal foundation for managing family life, including matters of marriage (Hakam, 2021; Sopyan & Suryani, 2020).

In the Minangkabau worldview, marriage is understood as a social process that unites two extended families within a sacred structure bound by a preserved system of values

(Alhkarni & Yuriska, 2024). The role of marriage extends beyond reinforcing social structures; it also expands inter-clan kinship networks and strengthens social solidarity within the community.

One of the key stages in the Minangkabau marriage custom is the *peminangan* process, namely the formal proposal made by the groom's family to the bride's family (Mungawanah & Masriani, 2024; Ramanta & Samsuri, 2020). *Peminangan* serves as a preparatory step toward marriage as ordained by Allah Almighty prior to the marriage contract (*akad nikah*), with the aim of enabling both parties to become acquainted and to broaden their understanding of one another (Anggraeni & Meilinda, 2024; Farhanah, 2020). Within the collective and matrilineal social structure of the Minangkabau, *peminangan* is not merely a private matter between two individuals; rather, it is a social event that binds two extended families through customary and emotional ties.

*Peminangan* acts as the gateway to the entire marriage procession, which is rich in meaning and tradition within Minangkabau culture (Hanif, Yuliani, Rikarno, & Budiman, 2023). In Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra, this process does not end with the proposal stage but continues with the tradition of the groom-to-be staying overnight at the bride-to-be's family home. This practice, locally known as *bamalam di rumah urang gadib*, carries multiple layers of symbolic meaning. The social and cultural values embedded in it reflect the complexity of the local customary order. In the context of the matrilineal Minangkabau society, this tradition serves as an important medium to assess the prospective groom's ability to adapt to the values and way of life of the bride's family.

The changing times have brought distinct challenges to the continuity of this tradition. The rise of more literal interpretations of religious teachings, coupled with the spread of modern lifestyles, has led some members of the community to question the compatibility of the post-engagement overnight stay tradition with contemporary Islamic values. For certain groups, such overnight stays are considered vulnerable to potential impropriety if not strictly supervised. Younger generations tend to seek forms of interfamily communication that are more efficient and aligned with the practical values they uphold.

The Minangkabau community, particularly in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra, has sought to adjust the implementation of the tradition without eroding its core values. Minangkabau customary law has proven not to be a rigid structure resistant to change, but rather a value system with flexibility and adaptive capacity in responding to the evolving times.

Through his historical study on the relationship between Islam and Minangkabau customary law, Taufik Abdullah emphasizes that the integration of the two did not emerge from the dominance of one element over the other, but rather as the result of a long historical process filled with social negotiations. He asserts that "Islam did not come to destroy Minangkabau customs, but to immerse itself within them, purify them, and ultimately become united with them" (Ashadi, 2019). This perspective suggests that the post-engagement overnight stay tradition in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra, cannot simply be abolished in the name of piety. The tradition has undergone a lengthy process in which customary practices have been continually assessed and adjusted in accordance with the principles of *sharia*, while *sharia* in practice has been able to accommodate customary law as long as it does not contradict the fundamental values of religion.

The study of this tradition is relevant not only for the purpose of cultural documentation but also for understanding how Muslims living within a matrilineal system

construct a balance between customary values and religious teachings amid the dynamics of social change.

Several studies have examined engagement traditions in various regions. Research conducted by Khairuddin explored the *melalaken* engagement custom in Tanah Bara Village, Aceh, which involves the prospective groom taking the prospective bride out of her home to be handed over to the village head. This practice is carried out by approximately 25% of the local community. In Islamic law, *melalaken* is permissible if accompanied by a *mabram* or another woman as a chaperone; however, it becomes prohibited if undertaken without such accompaniment, as it may lead to acts of fornication (*zina*) (Khairuddin, 2020).

Another study by Guntur examined a tradition in the community of Ngesong Hamlet, where the prospective groom spends the night at his future in-laws' house. This research employed a normative approach through the lens of *'urf*, categorized into *'urf shabih* (valid custom) and *'urf fasid* (invalid custom). The findings concluded that the tradition falls under *'urf fasid* and therefore should be immediately abandoned (Guntur, 2018).

Although engagement traditions have been studied in various regions, there remains a scarcity of research that specifically focuses on how local communities preserve and adapt engagement practices to ensure alignment with both social norms and religious principles.

This study aims to explore the meaning and dynamics of the post-engagement overnight stay tradition in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra. The focus of the research goes beyond mere description, encompassing an in-depth analysis of how the local community sustains this tradition while adapting it to prevailing social and religious norms. This research seeks to reveal the cultural essence underlying the practice of staying overnight after engagement, as well as the forms of adaptation undertaken to ensure its continued relevance in the face of changing times, while remaining consistent with customary values and religious teachings.

## METHOD

This research was conducted in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra, employing a qualitative approach with a field study design. Its primary aim is to understand the social meaning, customary values, and dynamics of change within the post-engagement overnight stay tradition practiced in the region. This approach enables the researcher to engage directly with the research subjects, thereby gaining an in-depth understanding of the tradition under study.

The analysis was carried out descriptively to provide a detailed account of the cultural elements underlying the tradition, while also examining the process of adaptation that has occurred alongside social changes. Through this method, the study seeks to present a comprehensive portrayal of the interaction between customary values and religious norms in sustaining the post-engagement overnight stay tradition in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara.

This study employs the approach of accommodating customary law and religion as applied by Taufik Abdullah. His historical examination of the relationship between Islam and Minangkabau customary law demonstrates that their integration was not the result of the dominance of one element over the other, but rather the outcome of a long historical process shaped by social negotiations. According to him, "Islam did not come to destroy Minangkabau customs, but to immerse itself within them, purify them, and ultimately become united with them" (Ashadi, 2019). This approach is relevant for understanding the continuity of the post-engagement overnight stay tradition, which has undergone ongoing adaptation—where customary practices are continuously assessed for their conformity with *sharia* principles, while *sharia* accommodates such customs as long as they do not conflict with the fundamental values of religion.

Data collection was carried out through direct observation and interviews. Observations took place during the post-engagement overnight stay process in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra. Interviews were conducted with informants selected through purposive sampling, including customary leaders, religious leaders, parents of the engaged couple, and community members with direct experience of performing or witnessing the tradition. The interviews were open-ended and semi-structured, enabling informants to share their views and experiences freely while remaining focused on the research objectives.

Documentary study was employed to complement the field data. This included an examination of Minangkabau customary literature, local cultural writings, and academic references related to engagement traditions within Minangkabau society. These sources enriched the theoretical and historical perspectives, providing a deeper understanding of the roots of the tradition as well as the shifts in values that have occurred over time.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Tradition of Staying Overnight After Engagement in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara**

The Minangkabau community continues to preserve various customary traditions as an integral part of its identity and cultural heritage. One such tradition that remains practiced today is found in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra. This custom, locally known as *bamalam di rumah urang gadih* (literally, “spending the night at the girl’s house”), refers to the practice whereby the prospective groom stays overnight at the home of the bride’s family following the formal engagement ceremony. The stay typically lasts between one and three nights. While this tradition is not a mandatory requirement under customary law, it is socially regarded as a gesture of politeness and openness, aimed at fostering stronger familial relations between both parties.

In most cases, the bride’s family prepares a designated sleeping area prior to the engagement ceremony. This arrangement usually includes a bed adorned with a mosquito net, gold-embroidered fabric, embroidered pillows, and brightly colored bed sheets, all placed in the central hall of the *rumah gadang* (traditional Minangkabau house), which serves as the focal point for extended family gatherings. The completeness and aesthetic arrangement of these items symbolize both grandeur and respect from the bride’s family toward the prospective groom, while also signifying their earnestness in welcoming the establishment of a new familial bond.

This tradition is not merely a ceremonial event but carries profound symbolic meaning and social ethics. The act of the prospective groom staying overnight is understood as a formal gesture of acceptance by the bride’s family toward their future son-in-law, while also marking the initial stage of social and cultural adaptation. Within the Minangkabau kinship system, which is matrilineal in nature, women occupy a central position in the customary structure. Lineage is traced through the mother, and the authority over customary affairs as well as the ownership of *harta pusaka tinggi* (ancestral property) rests in the hands of women. Consequently, women play a dominant role in family decision-making and in ensuring the continuity of customary law and traditions (Alam & Muhammad, 2024; Saputri, Amril, Gusti, & Nurjannah, 2024).

The presence of the prospective groom in the bride’s family home serves as a symbolic indication that he will “enter” into the family’s customary system and integrate himself into its established matrilineal structure. This tradition is not simply a brief visit, but rather a declaration of commitment to assimilate into a social and kinship order led by women (Fakhyadi, Samsudin, Dasrianto, Danil, & Wahyudi, 2025; Firdaus, 2019; Shin, 2016).



Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, where this tradition is practiced, is a *nagari* (customary village) located in Palembang District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra Province. It covers an area of approximately 36.1 km<sup>2</sup>. In 2024, the population was recorded at 3,799 people, consisting of 1,950 men and 1,829 women (Katri Yasman, 2013). The people of Nagari Salareh Aia Utara are known for their strong commitment to preserving ancestral customs and traditions, despite the ongoing currents of modernization and shifting social values.

The application of a matrilineal kinship system is a defining characteristic of this community, wherein women hold a central position within the customary and familial structure (Alam & Muhammad, 2024; Laila, Putri, Mutyara, & Triana, 2025). In the Minangkabau customary perspective, marriage in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara does not merely unite two individuals but also binds two extended families in a sacred social process (Alhkarni & Yuriska, 2024; Gumelar Firmansyah, Mina Rabiatal Asiyah, Putri Nadila, & Putry Delsa Hasanah, 2023). One significant stage in this series of customary marriage rituals is *bamalam*, or the tradition of the prospective groom staying overnight at the bride's family home following the engagement.

One of the local customary leaders, H. Basri Dt. Labiah (58), explained that the tradition of staying overnight is not merely a visit or an overnight stay, but rather an integral part of *adat* signifying the acceptance of a man into the bride's household. During this period, the bride's family observes the prospective son-in-law's demeanor, politeness, and social interaction, which serve as the basis for their initial assessment of his character (Basri, 2024).

A similar perspective was shared by Niken (46), a housewife whose daughter's engagement took place the previous year. She recounted that when her daughter was engaged, the prospective groom stayed for two nights. This opportunity allowed the family to directly evaluate his interactions, including his respect for elders and ability to adapt to the family environment. According to her, the process not only enables the bride's family to assess the groom but also allows the groom to gain insight into the lifestyle and dynamics of the extended family (Niken, 2024).

From the groom's perspective, Fauzi (27), who had once experienced this tradition, admitted that he initially felt awkward. However, over time he felt warmly welcomed. He was invited to share meals, converse with relatives, and interact with neighbors, which gave him the impression that he had already become part of the family (Fauzi, 2024).

The interview results indicate that the overnight stay tradition serves several important functions. First, it acts as a social mechanism to strengthen mutual acquaintance between both families. In Minangkabau society, marriage is not merely the union of two individuals but also of two extended families. The overnight stay accelerates the process of mutual understanding and adaptation of family values, thereby minimizing the potential for social conflicts in the future.

Second, the tradition functions as an occasion for character assessment, whereby the bride's family can directly observe the prospective groom's behavior, including his communication skills, politeness, and ability to adapt to the family environment. This enables a more holistic evaluation compared to assessments based solely on formal meetings or brief interactions.

Third, the overnight stay carries symbolic meaning as a form of acceptance. By staying at the bride's family home, the prospective groom is indirectly recognized as part of the family, marking the transition from the status of an "outsider" to that of a "family member." Within the Minangkabau cultural framework, which emphasizes familial cohesion and deliberation (*musyawarah*), this tradition strengthens emotional and social bonds prior to the formal marriage stage (Asmaniar, 2018; Dewi, Montessori, Saputra, Farsalena, & Fatmariza, 2019).

Nevertheless, some informants noted that the practice of this tradition is now carried out with certain adjustments, particularly to uphold religious values. One example is the limitation of direct interaction between the prospective bride and groom, accompanied by close supervision by family members during the overnight stay. These adaptations reflect the local community's ability to preserve customary traditions in an adaptive manner while simultaneously respecting evolving religious norms.

### **Customary and Social Values**

The tradition of staying overnight following engagement in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara is not merely a symbolic activity; it is imbued with deep customary and social values that are integral to the Minangkabau cultural system. These values form the foundation for the preservation of the tradition and explain why the practice continues despite the dynamics of social change. Several key values are embedded in this tradition:

First, social acceptance. The prospective groom's overnight stay at the bride's family home serves as a symbolic indication that the bride's family has openly accepted him as their future son-in-law. Within the Minangkabau social structure, this acceptance is not merely consent for the prospective husband, but also recognition that he is worthy of becoming part of the extended family. H. Basri Dt. Labiah (58) emphasized:

“When the young man stays overnight, it means he is recognized; he has become an ‘urang rumah’ [member of the household]. It is not just sleeping, but he has entered our social environment” (Basri, 2024).

This statement demonstrates that social recognition in Minangkabau customary practice is enacted not only through words or formal ceremonies but also through symbolic actions. The tradition represents the values of openness and respect for familial processes.

Second, cultural adaptation. The overnight stay functions as an initial adaptation process for the prospective groom to the cultural practices of the bride's family. During his stay, he is introduced to household etiquette, domestic rules, communication norms, and the everyday habits of the bride's family. This is particularly significant within the Minangkabau matrilineal system, where the husband typically resides within or near the wife's household. Ibu Nurlela (45), a housewife actively involved in customary activities, explained:

“While the young man stays with us, we invite him to participate in communal work and sit together in the *rumah gadang*. This is how he gets to know our home, and we also observe whether he fits with our way of life” (Nurlela, 2024).

The interviews indicate that the overnight stay is perceived as a process of cultural learning rather than merely an introductory visit. The practice reflects the informal mechanisms by which the Minangkabau build mutual understanding between two families well before the formal marriage ceremony, while emphasizing the importance of harmony and adaptability in social relationships.

Third, family relational harmony. This tradition serves as an initial medium for fostering harmony between the two extended families that will be united through marriage. In Minangkabau society, marriage does not only bind two individuals but also their respective clans and communities. Therefore, intensive pre-marriage interaction is essential (Harahap, 2023; Krismono, Lutfi, & Karimuddin, 2024). H. Basri Dt. Labiah noted:

“With the young man staying overnight, we can sit together, share meals, and talk about future plans. This helps to create a relaxed and flexible family relationship” (Basri, 2024).

The value of harmony extends beyond interpersonal relations to structural aspects. The presence of the prospective son-in-law within the family environment strengthens social networks, facilitates communication, and reduces potential conflicts between families. Thus, the overnight stay functions as an instrument for maintaining social harmony within Minangkabau society.

### Contemporary Dynamics

Over time, the overnight stay tradition following engagement in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara has undergone significant shifts in practice. The local community does not reject the custom outright but collectively responds to changes in social values, religious understanding, and generational transformation in an adaptive manner. For the Minangkabau, *adat* and religion are inseparable; they are mutually reinforcing. This principle guides behavior, speech, and conduct according to established norms. This phenomenon reflects the contemporary application of the adage “*adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*” within a complex modern context (Febrian Ilham & Son Ashari, 2024).

One tangible manifestation of this change is the duration and intensity of the overnight stay. Traditionally, the prospective groom could stay for two to three nights; today, the period is often shortened to one night, or even replaced entirely by a formal family meeting without an overnight stay. According to Ustadz Arya (42), a local religious leader, such adjustments are crucial for maintaining religious values:

“We cannot reject *adat*, but we also cannot ignore the Sharia. If the prospective groom stays overnight without supervision, it could lead to slander. That is why more families now adjust the practice, for example, by placing the groom in a room distant from the bride and ensuring that parents accompany him” (Arya, 2024).

This statement illustrates that the community has begun to reinterpret customary practices according to stricter religious moral standards. The overnight stay is still considered important, but it now requires restrictions on interaction and full parental supervision. Ibu Nur ‘Aisyah (51), a housewife, confirmed:

“Our extended family still observes the overnight stay tradition, but not like before. The groom may stay overnight, but we supervise. Our daughter remains in a separate room. This is our responsibility to protect the family’s honor” (‘Aisyah, 2024).

These accounts highlight the reaffirmation of prudence in implementing the *bamalam* tradition. The practice continues with reinforced family oversight, such as room separation and direct parental supervision. This does not imply that previous practices were norm-free; rather, it reflects adaptation to heightened moral sensitivities.

Beyond religious considerations, there is a generational shift in perspective. Riko (30), a young man who did not undergo the overnight stay, opted for a more functional approach: “I did not stay overnight, but we arranged a formal family meeting. For me, what matters is the connection and mutual familiarity. The format can be adapted, as long as the intention and purpose are preserved” (Riko, 2024).

This statement reflects a paradigm shift in which younger generations emphasize the essence of the practice rather than its traditional form. The values of togetherness and family acquaintance are maintained but can be expressed in more practical and socially appropriate formats.

Nevertheless, the tradition continues to serve as a medium for cultural education and social evaluation. Ibu Nurlela (45) emphasized:

“While the young man stays with us, we invite him to participate in communal work and sit together in the *rumah gadang*. This is how he gets to know our home, and we also observe whether he fits with our way of life” (Nurlela, 2024).



The *bamalam* process is not merely about social acceptance of the prospective son-in-law; it is also a means for the bride's family to assess his social suitability and capacity to adapt to the Minangkabau matrilineal environment. This underscores the function of *adat* as a social selection system grounded in familial values and harmony.

These field findings align with literature by Taufik Abdullah, cited by Ashadi, regarding the relationship between *adat* and Islam in Minangkabau. Abdullah stated:

"Islam did not come to destroy Minangkabau customs, but to engage with them, purify them, and ultimately integrate within them" (Ashadi, 2019).

This process demonstrates that Minangkabau society does not separate *adat* and religion; rather, it integrates them into daily life (Asniah, 2023; Aziz, Dzofir, & Widodo, 2020). The shifts in the overnight stay tradition do not reflect a conflict between *adat* and religion but represent a renewal of values. *Adat* is not abandoned; it is reorganized to align with more explicit Islamic principles. The principle of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* remains consistent, whereby customary values are preserved while being adjusted to comply with religious norms.

Field analysis indicates that the overnight stay tradition is undergoing reinterpretation rather than erosion. Its cultural essence is maintained, with adjustments to technical, procedural, and methodological aspects. The people of Nagari Salareh Aia demonstrate their cultural capacity through thoughtful adaptation rather than rigid conservatism.

Moreover, this phenomenon illustrates that culture cannot be sustained through defensiveness but through open dialogue between customary values, religious principles, and contemporary needs. The overnight stay is no longer merely a symbol of acceptance; it represents a meeting point between generations, between the matrilineal social structure and patriarchal religious interpretations, and between the physical space of the *rumah gadang* and digital environments. This contemporary dynamic affirms that *adat* is not a frozen relic but a living heritage, continuously reinterpreted. The tradition persists because it is contextualized reflectively and wisely by the community.

## CONCLUSION

The tradition of staying overnight following engagement (*bamalam di rumah urang gadib*) in Nagari Salareh Aia Utara, Palembayan District, Agam Regency, represents a Minangkabau customary ritual rich in cultural significance. Socially, the practice functions as a symbol of acceptance by the bride's family toward the prospective son-in-law and serves as a means for the groom to adapt to the matrilineal kinship system. This process is not only an opportunity for character assessment but also plays a crucial role in introducing the values and norms of the bride's family.

In a broader context, the tradition reflects the principle of "*adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*", whereby the community integrates customary values with Islamic norms, such as through strict supervision during the overnight stay to prevent violations of religious law. Nevertheless, the practice has not remained static. Modernization and more literal interpretations of religious teachings have influenced its implementation, for instance, by shortening the duration of the overnight stay or replacing it with formal family gatherings. While younger generations value the essence of the tradition, they often prefer more practical approaches. This phenomenon illustrates the flexibility of Minangkabau *adat* in responding to social change without losing its cultural identity.

Academically, this study provides important insights into the integration of *adat* and religion within a matrilineal society and serves as a reference for similar research in other traditional communities. However, several limitations must be acknowledged. A primary limitation lies in the narrow geographic scope, as the study focuses exclusively on Nagari

Salareh Aia Utara as a single research site. Consequently, the findings and analysis are contextual and cannot be generalized broadly across the entire Minangkabau region or other matrilineal communities in Indonesia. Each *nagari* exhibits distinct social dynamics, unique customary practices, and varying levels of interaction with religious norms and modernization, so the meaning and practice of traditions such as *bamalam di rumah urang gadib* can differ significantly across locations.

Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the geographic scope through comparative studies in other *nagari* within Minangkabau or even among different ethnic communities that follow similar kinship systems. Such an approach would enable a more comprehensive understanding of the variations and general patterns in how local communities preserve, adapt, or reconstruct engagement traditions amid social and religious change.

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### **Interview**

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