
Parental Blessing and Family Conflict: A Case Study of Silariang in Gowa Regency

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the differences in the decision-making process between male and female respondents in dealing with the silariang incident, as well as to analyze the factors influencing their decisions. In this research, two respondents, namely respondent HT (male) and respondent DK (female), were the main focus to understand the differences in thinking styles and decision-making processes. The research method employed was a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis, including in-depth interviews to explore the respondents' decision-making process. The results show that respondent HT adopts a perfect rational thinking model, making decisions quickly and logically, while respondent DK is more emotional, takes more time, and makes impulsive decisions. Despite these differences, both respondents ultimately made the same decision, which was to give their blessing to their child who was involved in silariang. This decision was considered the best option, taking into account the child's happiness and maintaining family harmony. This study also highlights the importance of self-reflection in parental decision-making and the impact of thinking styles and gender on the decision-making process. The implications of this research suggest that, in emotionally charged situations, a more rational and critical decision-making approach can help parents face challenges more thoughtfully

Keywords: *decision making, limited rational thinking model, perfect rational thinking model, silariang,*

1. Introduction

Marriage in Indonesia is strongly influenced by traditions and cultural customs of each ethnic group, including the Makassar ethnic group in South Sulawesi. According to Sudirman (2016), there are two main forms of marriage in Bugis-Makassar tradition: *assuro* (marriage through formal engagement) and *anyala* (marriage that occurs due to a violation of social norms). *Assuro* is the ideal form of marriage in Bugis-Makassar society, while *anyala* is a marriage that violates customs and has the potential to cause social conflict. One of the most common forms of *anyala* is *silariang*, which refers to eloping without parental consent (Ismawati, Basti, & Zainuddin, 2022).

In Makassar society, *silariang* is not only considered a violation of social norms but also an act that taints the family's honor, especially for the woman's side (Annisa, 2017). The concept of *siri'* (honor) plays a central role in Makassar culture, and a tarnished *siri'* due to *silariang* often leads to family conflicts and psychological distress for parents, such as shame, disappointment, and loss of social dignity (Achmad & Syam, 1986). The conflicts arising from *silariang* can even escalate into aggressive actions, as seen in Bantaeng, where the family of the male partner involved in *silariang* nearly had their house burned down (Detiknews.com, 2022).

Given the social and psychological impact of *silariang*, the decision-making process of parents in giving their blessing to their child's marriage becomes an important issue to study. Decision-making is a complex cognitive process involving the evaluation of alternatives, consideration of pros and cons, and choosing the most appropriate course of action (Baron, Byrne, & Branscombe, 2006). In *silariang* cases, parents face a significant dilemma between preserving family honor and accepting the reality of their child's marriage without prior approval.

Most previous studies have focused on the social and psychological consequences of *silariang* (Annisa, 2017; Sam et al., 2018), but few have examined how parents decide whether to give their blessing. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the cognitive and emotional factors influencing parental decision-making in *silariang* cases in Gowa Regency.

2. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. The sampling technique used in this research is snowball sampling. The respondents in this study are Makassar parents who have daughters involved in *silariang*. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, with a mobile phone voice recorder used as a documentation tool. The interview guidelines were designed and adjusted based on the information obtained after conducting interviews, covering details about the *silariang* incident, the respondents' emotional conditions, and the consequences and impact of the parents' decisions. During the interviews, the researcher conducted probing to gather more in-depth information. The collected data were analyzed using the thematic analysis method, where interview results were coded, categorized, and interpreted to identify patterns and themes related to the parental decision-making process in giving their blessing to their daughter's marriage

through silariang.

3. Results

The purpose of this study is to explore parents' understanding of the phenomenon of silariang committed by their children. This study involves two respondents who have personal experiences related to the silariang event. The findings of this study will provide a detailed account of parents' feelings and perceptions regarding the event, as well as the underlying reasons why their children chose to engage in silariang.

1) Respondent Description

a) Respondent HT

Respondent HT is a 49-year-old father who works as an Imam Rawatib in Bili-Bili, Gowa Regency. Currently, HT lives with his biological mother after his child engaged in silariang and he divorced his wife.

b) Respondent DK

Respondent DK is a 42-year-old housewife who occasionally works odd jobs. DK divorced her husband when their only child was in third grade. Currently, DK lives with her mother after her child engaged in silariang.

2) Assessment of Children Before Engaging in Silariang

Before the silariang event occurred, both respondents described their children as good and obedient. Their children were known to be quiet, not socially active, and showed no signs of engaging in silariang. However, additional assessments from the respondents are as follows:

a) Respondent HT assessed his child as:

Diligent in prayer, Frequently sharing stories with parents, Having friends considered delinquent, but still able to maintain self-control

b) Respondent DK assessed her child as:

A teenager deeply in love, Often hiding meetings with their lover, Experiencing behavioral changes due to their romantic relationship

3) Parental Reactions to the Silariang Event

The silariang event shocked the parents, causing various emotions such as disappointment, sadness, anger, and shame. Although there were previous suspicions that their children might engage in silariang, the reality was still surprising and disrupted family harmony. Some specific parental responses are as follows:

a) Respondent HT felt worried because he had no news from his child and longed for their presence. He viewed silariang as part of Makassar culture, functioning as a way for a man to take responsibility for his mistakes and as a means to marry despite lacking parental approval.

b) Respondent DK felt that her child had been cruel and hurt her deeply. She often expressed her frustration by complaining. She saw silariang as a shameful act in the eyes of society because it did not receive approval from both families. However, she

acknowledged that it was sometimes driven by urgent reasons, such as failed negotiations over *uang panai'* (bride price).

4) Parents' Perspectives on Silariang

For both respondents, silariang was an embarrassing act for the family. However, they understood that silariang was committed due to deep-rooted reasons, such as disputes over *uang panai'*, social influences, or lack of parental approval. Their assessment of silariang is as follows: The primary cause of silariang, according to both respondents, was romantic relationships hindered by traditional customs or financial constraints (*uang panai'*). Other reasons mentioned include:

a) Respondent HT believed that his child was influenced by bad social circles and had engaged in premarital relations.

b) Respondent DK stated that her child engaged in silariang due to a failed marriage proposal and the inability to convince the parents to approve the relationship.

5) Parental Decisions

Despite their disappointment and heartbreak, both respondents eventually decided to grant their children permission to continue their marriages after silariang. They recognized that although their children's actions violated social and cultural norms, they were driven by a need to uphold their dignity and overcome existing limitations.

6) Decision-Making Process

The silariang event changed the way parents viewed their children. It prompted self-reflection and an evaluation of their relationship with their children. The decision-making process occurred after the respondents experienced a personal crisis caused by their children's actions. Their decision to give their blessing was made after deep contemplation of their personal emotions and their hope for their children's happiness, despite the unconventional path taken.

a) Respondent HT (male) was more rational, calm, and critical in considering all possible alternatives. He took into account various external and internal factors, such as family input and prayers. He avoided making impulsive decisions and carefully evaluated his options before reaching a final decision.

b) Respondent DK (female) was more emotionally driven and reacted spontaneously at first. She initially decided to sever ties with her child but later reconsidered after receiving input from family members and religious figures. Her decision-making process involved more emotions and took longer to reach a resolution, though she ultimately chose to give her blessing.

This analysis highlights gender-based differences in decision-making styles. Male respondents (HT) tended to be more rational and systematic, while female respondents (DK) relied more on emotions and took longer to process their decisions. This study supports the understanding that gender influences decision-making, with men prioritizing logic and rationality, while women consider emotional factors and the complexity of the

situation more deeply.

4. Discussion

This study reveals that gender differences play a significant role in decision-making in the context of silariang events in Makassar. Respondent HT, a male, demonstrated a more rational, critical, and swift approach in making decisions, although he went through several stages of deep alternative considerations. In contrast, respondent DK, a female, involved more feelings and emotions in the decision-making process and required more time to reach a well-thought-out decision. These findings reflect the differences in how men and women make complex decisions, where men tend to be more logical and quick, whereas women are more emotional and take more time to process information and consider various factors.

This study also contributes to the development of decision-making literature by integrating Janis and Mann's (1977) theory of decision-making stages with social and cultural contexts, which have been less frequently explored in previous research. By linking respondent HT's rational and well-considered decision-making with the perfect rational decision-making model, and respondent DK's impulsive and emotionally driven decisions with the concepts of satisficing and heuristics, this study highlights the importance of external and internal factors, such as cultural values, religion, and gender roles, in the decision-making process.

Compared to other studies, such as the research conducted by Pratama and Chaniago (2017), which states that men are more rational and quicker in decision-making, this study adds an important dimension to understanding how Makassar's cultural context influences individual decisions. On the other hand, this study also reinforces that, although traditional decision-making theories focus on rationality, social and emotional factors still play a crucial role, especially in situations involving social honor and family conflicts.

The implications of this study are extensive, both theoretically, practically, and in terms of policy. Theoretically, this study enriches the understanding of decision-making by considering the influence of culture and gender. Practically, the findings are valuable for family counselors, mediators, or other practitioners working with individuals facing family or social conflicts, as they must consider gender differences and cultural contexts. Meanwhile, in the policy aspect, this study can provide insights for policymakers in designing programs that are sensitive to gender differences and cultural norms, making them more effective in helping individuals or families address their issues in a more constructive way that supports social well-being.

Overall, this study confirms that decision-making in silariang events is influenced by factors far more complex than just rationality or emotion. Cultural, gender, and social factors significantly shape how individuals process information and make decisions in high-pressure situations. This research provides an essential contribution to the development of decision-making theories that are more sensitive to social and cultural contexts and can serve as a reference for more effective practical interventions in specific cultural settings.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that there are significant differences in the decision-making process between respondent HT and respondent DK, influenced by thinking styles and gender factors. a) Respondent HT's thinking style tends to be more rational, logical, and quick in decision-making. This thinking style reflects the perfect rational decision-making model, in which respondent HT goes through various stages of careful, critical, and in-depth alternative considerations before making a decision. b) In contrast, respondent DK's thinking style is more emotional and requires a longer time for decision-making. Respondent DK makes decisions impulsively, considering fewer alternatives, thereby fitting into the bounded rationality model. The decision initially made by respondent DK was hasty and less mature, but it later changed after a process of self-reflection.

Despite the differences in thinking styles and decision-making processes, both respondents ultimately chose to give their blessing to their children who engaged in silariang. This decision was considered the best choice for both parties, both for the respondents as parents and for their children as the ones who engaged in silariang. In the decision-making process, both respondents reflected on themselves as parents, evaluated their parenting styles, daily lives, and their children's behavior. The study also found that respondent DK, who initially made an impulsive decision, eventually changed her choice after deeper reflection.

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