

Minangkabau Matriliney and Gender Equality: Cultural Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals

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ABSTRACT

The Minangkabau ethnic group is still the largest matrilineal society in the world. Past research has mainly centralized on the concept of *merantau* (migration), on its adaptation after the enter of Islam, and on the gender role and position in Minangkabau society. This research aims to highlight the contribution of the Minangkabau matrilineal system to the local development of West Sumatra, specifically the gender equality goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and to what extent if it were present. This research employed qualitative method, and data were collected through literature study and interview with national and local NGOs working in the field of women and development. This research discovered that theoretically, the Minangkabau matrilineal values can and should stimulate the gender equality SDGs achievement in West Sumatra. However, in reality, gender inequality still exists in West Sumatra with several SGD targets having wider gaps compared to other patrilineal societies in Indonesia. This research argues that by not wholly implementing the matrilineal values, the West Sumatran Minangkabau people has indirectly restrained themselves from achieving gender equality in the region, specifically related to violence and discrimination against women, also active participation of women in the economy and politics.

ABSTRAK

Suku Minangkabau masih merupakan masyarakat matrilineal terbesar di dunia. Penelitian terdahulu berpusat pada konsep merantau, pada adaptasi nilai-nilainya setelah masuknya Islam, dan tentang peran dan posisi berdasarkan gender dalam masyarakat Minangkabau. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menilai kontribusi sistem matrilineal Minangkabau terhadap pembangunan daerah di Sumatera Barat, khususnya target kesetaraan gender dari Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (TPB/SDGs). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif, dan data dikumpulkan melalui studi literatur dan wawancara dengan LSM lokal dan nasional yang bergerak di bidang perempuan dan pembangunan. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa secara teoritis, nilai-nilai budaya matrilineal Minangkabau dapat berkontribusi pada pencapaian target kesetaraan gender di Sumatera Barat. Namun, ketimpangan gender masih terjadi dengan beberapa pencapaian target TPB yang bahkan lebih kecil jika dibandingkan dengan provinsi lain di Indonesia yang menganut sistem patrilineal. Penelitian ini berargumentasi bahwa dengan tidak sepenuhnya menerapkan nilai-nilai matrilineal, masyarakat Minangkabau secara tidak langsung telah menghambat ketercapaian kesetaraan gender di Sumatera Barat, terutama terkait kekerasan dan diskriminasi terhadap wanita serta partisipasi aktif wanita dalam perekonomian dan perpolitikan. pembenahan pertumbuhan ekonomi.

Introduction

Global development is a shared discourse cultivated by countries of the world to provide improvement on the most basic aspects of life. This implication was presented in a joint plan under the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), named as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs, which was signed by 189 UN member countries,¹ consisted of eight goals ranging from eradicating poverty to the fostering global partnerships.² Gender equality was incorporated as the third goal of the MDGs, focusing on gender equality in education, women employment and women's political participation.³ In its 2015 MDG Report, the United Nations stated that there has been an increase in all of these three indicators, but by no means have they been satisfactory.⁴ By the end of 2015, the results indicated that the MDGs progress has been globally uneven, specifically for the poorest and most vulnerable countries.^{5,6} Problems persist such as conflict which is still the most significant obstacle to human development, climate change and increase in environmental

degradation, extreme poverty and hunger; including perseverance of gender inequalities.⁷

On 25-27 September 2015, 193 UN member countries agreed to renew the global development program to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁸ with 17 pillars including the remaining goals that remained difficult to solve by the end of the MDGs period.⁹ Being one of the priorities, gender equality is included in the SDGs as its fifth pillar with the aim to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”¹⁰ The basic assumption which continues to maintain gender equality as a SDGs pillar is based on the consideration that it is an indispensable foundation in creating a world that is peaceful, prosperous and sustainable.¹¹ This is because targets within the gender equality pillar cannot be separated from the education, economy, health and political sectors.¹²

As one of the participating states of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Indonesia has also adopted SDGs into a national plan called *Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan* (TPB) which have classified the 17 SDG pillars into four large categories: the social development pillar, the economic development pillar, the environmental development pillar and the law and governance pillar. Gender equality remains the fifth goal of TPB, which is included in the social development pillar.

In 2019, the Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning, issued a report stating that although Indonesia has been able to guarantee universal access to

¹ Isharto, and T. R. Santoso. “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Dan Pengentasan Kemiskinan.” (*Social Work Jurnal* 6, no. 2, 2016), 159–67.

² UNDP. Millennium Development Goals. 2008 Retrieved 03 20, 2020, from [www.undp.org: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/indonesia/docs/MDG/Let%20Speak%20Out%20for%20MDGs%20-%20ID.pdf](https://www.undp.org/content/dam/indonesia/docs/MDG/Let%20Speak%20Out%20for%20MDGs%20-%20ID.pdf).

³ UNDP, 2008.

⁴ United Nations. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. 2015, Retrieved March 20, 2020, from [www.un.or.id: https://www.un.or.id/what-we-do/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs/19-sdg/95-goal-5-gender-equality](https://www.un.or.id/what-we-do/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs/19-sdg/95-goal-5-gender-equality).

⁵ Maya, Fehling., Brett D. Nelson, and Sridhar Venkatapuram. “Limitations of the Millennium Development Goals: A Literature Review.” *Global Public Health* 8, no. 10 (2013): 1109–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2013.845676>.

⁶ United Nations, 2015.

⁷ United Nations, 2015.

⁸ Isharto, & Santoso, T. R., 2006.

⁹ UNDP. Sustainable Development Goals. 2015, Retrieved March 20, 2020, from [www.id.undp.org: https://www.id.undp.org/content/indonesia/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html](https://www.id.undp.org/content/indonesia/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html).

¹⁰ United Nations. Sustainable Development Goal 5. Retrieved March 19, 2020 from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>.

¹¹ United Nations, 2020.

¹² United Nations, 2020.

sexual and reproductive health; and that women’s participation in decision making as well as women’s access to technology has been increasing through the years, this success has been slow and is still far from ideal.¹³ In addition, other targets were even farther from the set goal, namely eradication of violence against women and child marriage. While other targets were difficult to evaluate since the absence of data such as recognition of unpaid care and domestic work and the proportion of women owning land/agricultural land.

The SDGs Center of Padjajaran University presented a rather glum projection of the Indonesian gender equality success rate in three targets which are reproductive health as measured by the level of teenage birth rate (birth rate for teens aged 15 to 19 years old), women’s participation in the work force, and women’s political participation in parliament¹⁴.

Table 1. Projection of TPB Indicators on Gender Equality

Indicator	2019	SDGs 2030 Projection
Reproductive health: teenage birth	48 per 1000 people	43 per 1000 people
Women in the work force	53.38 %	55.55%
Women political participation in parliament	14.25 %	14.25%

Source: Menyongsong SDGs: Kesiapan Daerah-daerah di Indonesia, Alisjahbana et al., 2018

From the SDGs projection in Table 1, it can be concluded that gender equality in the SDGs context will be a very slow process in Indonesia. Overall teen pregnancy is

¹³ Minister of National Development Planning The Republic of Indonesia. “Voluntary National Review (VNR): Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality,” 2019.

¹⁴ Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Arief Anshory Yusuf, Zuzy Anna, Panji Fortuna Hadisoemarto, Ade Kadarisman, Nirwan Maulana, Wandira Larasati, Aisyah Amatul Ghina, Rahma, and Megananda. *Menyongsong SDGs: Kesiapan Daerah-Daerah Di Indonesia*. (Bandung: Unpad Press, 2018).

estimated to only decline by five births per 1000 people, women participation in the workforce is predicted to increase by only 2.17% and the number of women in parliament remains stagnant.

While progress towards gender equality in Indonesia fluctuates and is different for every province, it is interesting to focus on West Sumatra, specifically because of its matrilineal system. Another reason includes the imbalance between the productive age data and West Sumatra’s Gender Empowerment Measure (*Indeks Pemberdayaan Gender/IDG*). The population of productive men and women is almost equal: 1.79 million productive aged men (49.20%) compared to 1.85 million productive aged women or equivalent to 50.8%.¹⁵ However, this almost balanced condition is not leveled by a high IDG, which measures the participation of women and men in the economy and politics. West Sumatra’s GEM has fluctuated in the range of 60-65% during 2010-2015.¹⁶ Meanwhile in 2016, the GEM of West Sumatra province was at 64.06% and relatively remains the same in 2018.¹⁷ This figure is still very low when compared to the GEM figure on a national scale which reaches 72,10%.¹⁸

Further data from the Center for Development Goals Studies,¹⁹ described that although currently, the number of teenage birth in West Sumatera has almost achieved the SDG target, other indicators are still falling behind. The success related to women participation in the economy is only half way

¹⁵ Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak Republik Indonesia, and Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia. “Pembangunan Manusia Berbasis Gender.” (Jakarta, 2018).

¹⁶ Rita Diana. Analisis Ketimpangan Gender di Provinsi Sumatera Barat. (*Jurnal Kependudukan Indonesia* Vol. 13 No. 1 2018), 55-66.

¹⁷ Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak Republik Indonesia, & Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2018.

¹⁸ Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak Republik Indonesia, & Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2018.

¹⁹ Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana -et.al, 2018.

to the desired goal and the number of women representatives in parliament remains low. Table 2 suggests that similar to Indonesia's SDGs gender equality projection achievement, West Sumatra also was unavailable to estimate a more positive or faster development. Further projection related to these three indicators are as follows:

Table 2. Projection of TPB Indicators on Gender Equality in West Sumatra

Indicator	2019	SDGs2030 Projection
Reproductive health: teenage birth	47 Per 1000 people	42 per 1000 people
Women in the work force	55.94%	59.69%
Women political participation in parliament	7.70%	7.70%

Source: Menyongsong SDGs: Kesiapan Daerah-daerah di Indonesia, Alisjahbana et al., 2018

The context of women's roles in West Sumatra or Minangkabau culture is unique, following its matrilineal kinship pattern and its religious majority. Kinship itself is a pattern of genealogical ties²⁰ which then correlates straightly with the outcome of marriage based on blood ties to form social ties.²¹ The matrilineal system in Minangkabau culture is a kinship principle that draws lineage based on maternal descent.²² There are several characteristics of the matrilineal system which are practiced by the Minangkabau people which include possession of communal inheritance and property (high ancestral property/*harato pusako*) including land by women (mothers), led by Bundo Kanduang, the eldest male in the group serving as leader but still in

accordance with the directions, instructions and agreement of Bundo Kanduang. The inheritance of the customary title is also based on the mother's line of descent, the newly married couple will live in the wife's family (matrilocal)^{23,24} thus building a concept of men being the 'guest'. This concept along with the practice of property possession by the women, have created a culture of male migration (*merantau*).²⁵

The principles and characteristics described above should provide opportunities for women to have a potential and fair role in the context of political, economic, health and social spaces. Women have the capacity and are given the flexibility in powerful sectoral relations related to the relationships formed in the matrilineal system. However, with the initial conditions and data presented, this has not been clearly delineated and can even be assumed as an inverted medium from the initial contestation. From these assumptions, this research will focus on analyzing culture in local development by exploring the contribution of the Minangkabau matrilineal to the achievement of West Sumatra's SDGs/TPB specifically the gender equality goal.

Research Method

This research focused on descriptive analysis, using qualitative method. This type was chosen to simplify the process of interpreting empirical data to support the research.²⁶ The context explained in the research included an explanation of gender equality in the global context represented by

²⁰ R Keesing. Kin Group and Social Structure . (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. 1975).

²¹ David M Schneider. What is Kinship All About ? In R. Parkin, & L. Stone, Kinship and Family. (Malden: Blackwell. 2004), 257-274.

²² Zainal Arifin. Politik Perkawinan : Dualitas Praktik Sosial Masyarakat Minangkabau. (Yogyakarta: Histokultura. 2018).

²³ Alexander Stark., "The Matrilineal System of the Minangkabau and Its Persistence Throughout History: A Structural Perspective." (*Southeast Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 13. 2013), 1–13.

²⁴ Zainal Arifin, 2018.

²⁵ Joke Schrijvers & Els Postel-Coster. "Minangkabau Women: Change in a Matrilineal Society." (*Archipel* 13, no.1. 1977), 79–103. <https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.1977.1328>.

²⁶ Affifudin, & Saebani, B. A. Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia. 2009).

the SDGs, then narrowed down to a discussion of the gender equality conditions in the scope of Indonesia and specifically West Sumatera (TPB).

This research was based on the assumption that there are values in the Minangkabau matrilineal system which provide opportunities for gender equality. It is this assumption that will further be analyzed, to conclude whether Minangkabau's matriliney system supported or hindered the achievement of TPB number five (gender equality) in the region.

This study used two data collection techniques, namely literature studies and field research. In using literature study, this research will gather data on Minangkabau matrilineal values, paving the framework between culture and regional development opportunity. Field research in this context is in-depth interview, using the structured interview method, with pre-determined questions.^{27,28} However additional questions were given during the interview when other questions arise from previous questions asked to the interviewee.

In-depth interviews were conducted with two main non-state actors whose focused on gender responsive policies, also women and minorities empowerment and development in West Sumatra, which are the non-governmental organization, *Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat/LP2M* (Institution of Community Study and Empowerment) and the community organization, *Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia/KPI* (Women's Council). LP2M was not only chosen because of its efforts in empowering West Sumatran women, but also because its principle of foundation was based on "*critical awareness of the various contradictions between the subordinate reality of women from cultural values and*

philosophies".²⁹ This institution recognized that discrimination against women remains in West Sumatra, despite its matrilineal system. To overcome this inequality, LP2M established programs by focusing on women economic empowerment, women participation and representation in politics, women sexual and reproductive health advocacy and disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. These program categories align with the targets of the SDG gender equality goal, thus providing data for this research related to these specific aspects and its relation to the Minangkabau culture. KPI was also considered as a significant source of information specifically for its mission in fighting for women's and minorities' justice and democracy, in terms of policies and social movement. These two sources will provide primary data on the reality of what matriliney means for women in West Sumatra and its actual contribution to gender equality.

Literature Review

The Dance between Culture, Development and Gender Equality

The hype of culture's role in human development emerged in the late 1990s,³⁰ as a result of various factors including the five main reasons which are "the failure of previous development paradigms; perceptions of globalization's threat to cultural diversity; activism around social difference (gender, ethnicity, anti-racism); the development success stories in East Asia; and the need for social cohesion".³¹ Failure of previous development framework was

²⁷ Christopher Lamont, *Research Methods in International Relations*. (London: SAGE, 2015).

²⁸ Christopher Lamont, *Research Methods in International Relations* (London: SAGE, 2015).

²⁹ Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat. "LP2M. "Tentang Kami". 2020. <http://lp2m.or.id/#maincontent>.

³⁰ Peter Worseley. "Culture and Development Theory." In *Culture and Global Change*, edited by Tim Allen and Tracy Skelton. (London: Routledge, 1999), 30-42.

³¹ Sarah Radcliffe, *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World*. 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2006).

specifically related to unsuccessful on-the-ground projects. The fear of a global culture erasing local values, neocolonialism by Western culture, and the ancestral cultures of East Asian countries which have contributed to their success has been the essential turning point for a culture-led development era.³² Although in the past, culture was not even considered as a factor by political economists,³³ it has now even received the title of “a driver and enabler of sustainable development”.³⁴ Silsila Asri reinforced this concept in an article titled “*Etika dalam Pembangunan Internasional*” which explained that culture has major contribution in the context of both local and international development.³⁵ Furthermore, Vandana Desai and Robert B. Potter described cultural ability to support and resolve oneself in the context of international development is an important component. Without adaptation and cultural support, international development will be difficult to achieve.³⁶

Gender equality is a significant part of global development that has not been achieved at a universal scale. Since culture plays a big role in human development, it then also impacts gender equality or inequality. In order to narrow the gender inequality gap, its underlying causes must be addressed such as women participation in the economy and politics, eliminating discrimination and violence against women,

gender policy mainstreaming and gender education. It can be argued that these underlying causes have direct relation to culture.

The relationship between gender equality and development is often linked to a region’s or a country’s economic development. Joshua Eastin and Aseem Prakash³⁷ argued that the life and status of women is influenced by economic growth which is based on differences in income between men and women. This relationship between economic growth and gender equality is curvilinear and is divided into three stages. The first stage describes the gender inequality gap narrowing because of economic growth or development due to an increase in women income. However, in the second stage, the gender inequality gap widened again as a result of social rejection to the new trend of gender equality caused by this economic growth. At the final stage, after improvement of women's education and technological abilities, the gender inequality has decreased. This in turn, also has a domino effect on other aspects.

A similar argument was conveyed by Seema Jayachandran who argued that a country’s development process gender equality, both in developed and developing countries, specifically, the growth of economic aspects.³⁸ Jayachandran argues that increasing women's participation in the economic sector is directly proportional to the increase in gender equality. However, further than what Eastin and Prakash have asserted, Jayachandra argues that cultural practices also have a major effect on gender equality, this is evident from cases where despite economic development, the level of gender equality has not increased. Influencing cultural factors include

³² Sarah Radcliffe, 2006.

³³ Pierluigi Sacco, Guido Ferilli, and Giorgio Tavano Blessi, “Understanding Culture-Led Local Development: A Critique of Alternative Theoretical Explanations,” *Urban Studies* 51, no. 13 (2014): 2806–21.

³⁴ Unesco. “Culture: A Driver and an Enabler of Sustainable Development Thematic Think Piece,” 2012.

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/post2015/pdf/Think_Piece_Culture.pdf.

³⁵ Silsila Asri, “*Etika dalam pembangunan Internasional*”.(Andalas Journal of International Studies Vol. 6 No. 1. 2017), 40-53.

³⁶ Vandana Desai & Robert B Potter. “*Doing Development Research*”. (Development and Change 38(3). 2007), 560-561.

³⁷ Joshua Eastin & A Prakash. "Economic Development and Gender Equality: Is There a Gender Kuznets Curve?". (World Politics, Vol: 65, 2013), 156-186.

³⁸ Seema Jayachandran. The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries.(*Annual Review of Economics* Vo.7, 2015), 63-88.

patrilocality, prioritization of sons over daughters, *adat mahar*, patrilineal heredity system, the function of men in religious rituals and norms of protecting the dignity and purity of women and girls. Jayachandra identifies these cultural factors, that lead to a tendency to choose men over women, as the origin of the birth of gender inequality.

The Minangkabau Matrilineal System

Advocating for women's rights tends to use an approach that is very oriented towards Western feminism. Meanwhile, a philosophical understanding of women's rights will be viewed contextually in several regional or state conditions. This shift in understanding needs to be considered in the movement to promote women's rights. Minangkabau culture, where its people are mostly located in the West Sumatra province of Indonesia, has its own characteristics which differs from the majority of cultural traits of the world, even compared to other Indonesian societies.

The matrilineal values of the Minangkabau culture emphasize and prioritize the existence of Minangkabau women. This can be seen through its practices such as family lineage based on the mother, leadership in the Minangkabau government system known as *Bundo Kanduang*, property ownership and economic resources by the women, as well as women participation in customary decision making along with other men. This depicts a culture which incorporates feminist values in its daily implementation³⁹.

The concept of leadership in Minangkabau culture cannot be separated from women. In this case, the term *Bundo Kanduang* which generally means Minangkabau women and specifically means women elders of Minangkabau clans, are

involved in customary leadership⁴⁰. Each Minangkabau clan has their own *Bundo Kanduang*, but their duties and functions are the same. Their opinions become one of the clan's considerations and can even determine customary decisions.

When other cultures in Indonesia place men as owners of economic resources and recipients of family inheritance, West Sumatra, especially the Minangkabau people, follow a different path. Based on their values, Minangkabau people assign every economic resource owned by the family to the women. The inheritance are also controlled by women or elders (*Bundo Kanduang*)⁴¹. When a divorce occurs, women will remain at home because according to Minangkabau culture, after a divorce, all of the family wealth, including ownership of residence, is given to the women.

These Minangkabau characteristics, in relation to how it positions women in its society has given a unique perspective compared to patrilineality which is the dominant culture of the world's many societies. There have been studies on the roles of women and men in this specific society, its persistence or change throughout history, its distinctive attributes and its current system. However, research related to Minangkabau, in terms of local development and gender equality are limited.

Result

A. Minangkabau Matrilineal Values Which Narrow the Gender Inequality Gap; Theoretically

In terms of the Minangkabau society, the matrilineal descent system should

³⁹ Iva Ariani. Nilai Filosofis Budaya Matrilineal Minangkabau: Relevansinya bagi Penegakan Hak-hak Perempuan di Indonesia. (Yogyakarta, 2012).

⁴⁰ Sismarni. "Perubahan Peranan Bundo Kanduang dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Minangkabau Modern". *Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Gender*, Vol. 1, No.1. 2011), 95-110.

⁴¹ Zainal Arifin. "Bundo Kanduang: (Hanya) Pmimpin di Rumah (Gadang)". (*Indonesian Journal of Social and Cultural Anthrpology*, Vol. 34, No.2. 2013), 124-133.

automatically boost West Sumatra in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal number five. Theoretically, the Minangkabau matriliney values in general already benefits women's position in the society. Idroes Hakimi stated that Minangkabau women are advantageous, specifically because of the matriliney line of descent, women own and manage property (including family residence) and familial economic resources, and women can participate and have rights to vote in deliberations (*musyawarah*).⁴² This section will further explain these values, to demonstrate how Minangkabau matriliney core values are in line with gender equality principles.

The Minangkabau values which were familiarized by Datuk Katumanggunan dan Datuk Perpatih Nan Sabatang in the highland of West Sumatra,⁴³ introduced a unique culture that was not common even until today. Not only did the family lineage system follow a female (mother) line descent, it labels husbands (*urang sumando*) as guests and women as the true beholder of the family house and inheritance.^{44,45} At a very young age (7-8 years old), boys are encouraged to sleep at small mosques known as *surau* and once they are married, they will live with their wife and her family.^{46,47} These husbands are not responsible for their own children, whereas it is the brother of the wife, either the older or younger brother, who will take care of the children, morally and financially (uncle/ *mamak*).⁴⁸

Further privilege of the Indonesian Minangkabau Women is the inheritance that falls under their responsibility and care. The Minangkabau culture recognizes two types of inheritance: *harato pusako/harato tinggi*/high ancestral property and *harato pancaharian/harato randah*/low ancestral property.⁴⁹ *Harato pusako* describes inheritance owned by a Minangkabau clan such as land, field/ rice field, family house (in the past known as *rumah gadang*/ traditional Minangkabau houses).⁵⁰ It is inheritance within this context that are owned by the women of the family, who is also responsible for the division of this inheritance, whereas the oldest male of the clan, *tungganai/ mamak kapalo warih*, only manages or even develops and expands the clan's inheritance, but not in any sense is he allowed to use it.⁵¹ *Harato pancaharian* or acquired property becomes individual possession of the Minangkabau men and can be inherited to his children or in any way according to his will.⁵² The principle of land inheritance, other than that communal property is owned by the women, but also depends on the financial condition of the clan: 1. Mothers will inherit land equally to their married daughters, 2. Independent property share is also given to widowed women, 3. Minangkabau men may own a share of the land but only for a limited time because of urgent need. This type of land cannot be inherited to his children and will have to be returned to the women of the family (his sisters), 4. Migrated Minangkabau people are entitled to property share, but at a lower amount than them who

⁴² Erianjoni. "Pergeseran Citra Wanita Minangkabau: Dari Konsepsi Ideal-Tradisional Ke Realitas" (Kafa'ah Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Gender 1, no. 1 2011), 225-234.

⁴³ Chairul Anwar. *Hukum Adat Indonesia, Meninjau Hukum Adat Minangkabau*. (Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta, 1997).

⁴⁴ Joke Schrijvers & Els Postel-Coster, 1977.

⁴⁵ Alexander Stark, 2013.

⁴⁶ Joke Schrijvers & Els Postel-Coster, 1977.

⁴⁷ Wendi Ahmad Wahyudi. "Perempuan Minangkabau Dari Konsepsi Ideal-Tradisional, Modernisasi, Sampai Kehilangan Identitas," 2015. <https://doi.org/10.31227/osf.io/j2ead>.

⁴⁸ Sri Meiyenti & Syahrizal. "Perubahan Istilah

Kekerabatan Dan Hubungannya Dengan Sistem Kekerabatan Pada Masyarakat Minangkabau." (*Jurnal Antropologi: Isu-Isu Sosial Budaya* 16, no. 1 2014), 57. <https://doi.org/10.25077/jantro.v16i1.13>.

⁴⁹ Alexander Stark, 2013.

⁵⁰ Iva Ariani, 2012.

⁵¹ Iva Ariani. 2012.

⁵² Alexander Stark, 2013.

remains.⁵³ It can clearly be seen that even these principles advantage the women.

It is because of these values and practices of the Minangkabau culture that *merantau* (migration) became a way of life for many unmarried West Sumatran men. Although today migration is not only exclusive to Minangkabau men, but they are still the majority of the population who leaves their family in search of a better economic life. However, it has been argued that financial gains was not only the reason behind the pattern of *merantau*, other research has associated this way of life with the feeling of ambiguity or uncertainty because of men's position in the Minangkabau culture. Furthermore, a number of scholars have explicitly argued that Minangkabau men are at a disadvantage specifically because of the basic values of the Minangkabau matrilineal system.^{54,55}

The decision-making process in Minangkabau society, known as *musyawarah mufakaik* is considered as democratic. *Musyawarah* is understood as the process of discussion before agreeing to a consensus (*mufakat*), therefore not using the voting system. Deliberative consensus can be interpreted as making joint decisions in overcoming a common problem.⁵⁶ By following these values and practices, the Minangkabau people have been prominent for being a society of *nan sakato*.⁵⁷ This means that people are of the same mind and opinion. This has been its characteristic since

prehistoric times, thus becoming an inseparable trait of the Minangkabau culture.⁵⁸ Minangkabau women is also a part of this democratic decision-making process. *Bundo Kanduang*, the oldest women in clan, also known as one of the leaders, becomes a part of *musyawarah* with other male leaders (*mamak-mamak*) in order to achieve a *consensus* on a specific issue.^{59,60} This describes that women possess power and access to the decision making process in Minangkabau culture.

These values have described the clear status of women in Minangkabau culture. It has been argued that because of this, women are at a higher position than men in the Minangkabau society.⁶¹ Logically, gender equality should not become a problem from the Minangkabau people. However, this paper argues that this is not the whole reality faced by Minangkabau women. It is only a theoretical explanation of what an ideal Minangkabau matriliney should be.

B. Minangkabau Cultural Values Contribution in TPB/SDGs Gender Equality

The Sustainable Development Goals has been adopted by Indonesia under the name *Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan* (TPB). In the process of its adoption, several indicators have been added to meet Indonesia's need, which are indicators of target 5.2 (violence against women), target 5.3 (harmful practices) and target 5.6 (sexual and reproductive health).⁶² SDG targets has

⁵³ R. J Chadwick. "Matrilineal Inheritance and Migration in a Minangkabau Community." (In *Indonesia*, 51, 1995), 47-81.

⁵⁴ Armini Arbain. "Laki-laki Minangkabau Terpinggirkan: Antara Realitas dan Imaginasi" dalam *Adat, Islam dan Gender: Pergulatan dalam Merumuskan Identitas Diri* (ed. Zaiyardam Zubir). (Padang: Lembaga Penelitian Universitas Andalas. 2010).

⁵⁵ Iva Ariani. 2012.

⁵⁶ Eny Christyawaty & Nenggih Susilowati, "*Jejak Budaya Musyawarah, Bentuk Demokrasi Masyarakat Minangkabau*." (Berkala Arkeologi Sangkhakala 13, no. 26. 2010): 188-203.

⁵⁷ Eny Christyawaty & Nenggih Susilowati, 2010.

⁵⁸ Eny Christyawaty & Nenggih Susilowati, 2010.

⁵⁹ Siti Fatimah. "*GENDER DALAM KOMUNITAS MASYARAKAT MINANGKABAU; TEORI, PRAKTEK Dan RUANG LINGKUP KAJIAN*." (Kafa'ah: Journal of Gender Studies 2, no. 1. 2012), 11. <https://doi.org/10.15548/jk.v2i1.53>.

⁶⁰ Wendi Ahmad Wahyudi, 2015.

⁶¹ Sri Meiyenti & Syahrizal, 2014.

⁶² Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional. METADATA INDIKATOR TUJUAN PEMBANGUNAN BERKELANJUTAN (TPB)/ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

been incorporated to Indonesia's *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional* (Medium Term Development Plan) with a high commitment to implement "SDGs both at the national and subnational levels, even to the community or society".⁶³ By adding these indicators, Indonesia has determined its current condition related to gender equality, thus identifying particular problems required to be resolved in this country.

According to UNDP's 2019 Human Development Index Report, Indonesia's Gender Development Index (GDI) is categorized as group 3, being in the middle between closest to gender parity (group 1) and furthest to gender parity (group 5)⁶⁴ In terms of ASEAN Member countries, this places Indonesia on the same group as Lao PDR, above Timor-Leste and Cambodia, but below the majority of other ASEAN Member countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei Darussalam and Thailand.⁶⁵ In 2018, Indonesia ranked number 103 out of 162 countries on its Gender Inequality Index, generating unsatisfactory results in women to men participation in the labor market, holding parliamentary seats and secondary education ratios.⁶⁶ Other problems were related to women health specifically maternal death and adolescent birth rate.⁶⁷

INDONESIA. (Jakarta: Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, 2017).

⁶³ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional. "Kolaborasi Dalam Mencapai Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (TPB/SDGs) Di Indonesia," 2018. <http://sdgs.bappenas.go.id/kolaborasi-dalam-mencapai-tujuan-pembangunan-berkelanjutan-tpbsdgs-di-indonesia/>.

⁶⁴ UNDP. "Briefing Note for Countries on the 2019 Human Development Report: Indonesia." *Human Development Report 2019: Inequalities in Human Development in the 21st Century*, 2019. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/NZL.pdf.

⁶⁵ UNDP. "Gender Development Index." *Human Development Reports*, 2019. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GDI>.

⁶⁶ UNDP, 2019a.

⁶⁷ UNDP, 2019a.

Data derived from Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics Gender Inequality Index Measurement 2018 Report, West Sumatra is categorized as a quadrant II province related to the Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII) in Indonesia. This means that West Sumatra's HDI is higher than the national rate, but the GII is lower than that of Indonesia's GII. Similar to its HDI, West Sumatra's GDI is also higher than Indonesia's national rank. Both of West Sumatra's relations between the HDI and GII, and GDI and GII, are actually ideal conditions, where human and gender development is at a desired level, with gender quality slowly advancing to meet HDI and GDI's achievement.⁶⁸ These measurements provide a general picture on West Sumatra's condition regarding gender equality and inequality development.

Target 5.1 of TPB emphasizes on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women with indicator focusing on the number of responsive policies which supports women empowerment.⁶⁹ West Sumatra has already planned, issued and implemented various policies related to gender equality and women empowerment such as incorporating women empowerment policies in its regional revenue and expenditure budget 2012-2016,⁷⁰ the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the West Sumatra Provincial Government and the Regional Office of the Directorate of Treasury of the Province of West Sumatra regarding the Synergy of Quality Improvement and the Scope of Gender

⁶⁸ Badan Pusat Statistik. "Perhitungan Indeks Ketimpangan Gender 2018 (Kajian Lanjutan 2)." (Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019).

⁶⁹ United Nations, 2020.

⁷⁰ Herita Dewi. "TINJAUAN KEBIJAKAN PENGANGGARAN RESPONSIF GENDER PADA STRUKTUR APBD PROVINSI SUMATERA BARAT." (Provinsi Sumatera Barat, 2016). <https://sumbarprov.go.id/home/news/9044-tinjauan-kebijakan-penganggaran-responsif-gender-pada-struktur-apbd-provinsi-sumatera-barat.html>.

Mainstreaming Implementation year 2020,⁷¹ West Sumatra's gender mainstreaming regional action plan of 2015⁷² and the capital city's (Padang) gender mainstreaming regional action plans for the year 2020.⁷³

Considering the policies and plans issued and created to encourage and sustain gender equality in West Sumatra, then this province has been able to achieve target 5.1 of TPB gender equality goal. However, based on a study conducted by Herita Dewi on the review of gender responsive policy budgeting in West Sumatra's regional revenue and expenditure budget 2012-2016, the number of gender responsive policies and to what extent it were implemented were at a minimum in terms of budget and programs.⁷⁴ According to Dewi, this was largely caused by a bias decision making process due to limited women representations and incorrect understanding of gender equality embedded by social construction.⁷⁵

The second target of TPB is the elimination of all forms of violence against women. According to the annual report of violence against women and girls by the Indonesian Commission on Violence against Women and Girls, cases of violence towards women and girls in Indonesia have rapidly increased; reaching a rise of 79% in 2020, compared to data in 2012. Although West Sumatra does not dominantly contribute to this, the number of violence towards women cases in this province is still categorized as

high (171 cases in 2020)⁷⁶ Similar to Indonesia, the number of cases in West Sumatra has been increasing. This was confirmed by the Head of Office of Women's Empowerment & Child Protection.⁷⁷ A rise in the number of cases can mean an actual increase in violence or the victim's boost of courage to report their cases. However, similar to cases of violence against women in other countries, this number can legitimately be higher, because of the victim's reluctance to speak up due to shame and fear.⁷⁸

As in other collective societies where the family's pride is considered as extremely important, the Minangkabau culture also follows this concept. In this type of society, although victims are a member of the family, shame can be felt by the family as a whole. Cases such as violence against women that are publicized, can tarnish the family name. In Minangkabau, women are often connected to purity and vulnerability, also motherly roles and supporter of the family. They become an important face of the family, thus burdening them with roles to uphold their family name. Different to the ideal position of women in Minangkabau as has described earlier, the position of women within this society is in reality within the shadows of Minangkabau men: "In terms of independence and freedom, Minangkabau women are never free or have the freedom to make their own choices".⁷⁹ This means that in this sense, this culture is similar to other patriarchal societies. It can be argued that because of this, the number of violence

⁷¹ ANTARA Sumbar. "Sumbar Pertama Di Indonesia Penandatanganan Nota Kesepakatan Dengan Kanwil Ditjen Perbendaharaan," 2020. <https://sumbar.antaranews.com/berita/382670/sumbar-pertama-di-indonesia-penandatanganan-nota-kesepakatan-dengan-kanwil-ditjen-perbendaharaan>.

⁷² Pemerintah Provinsi Sumatera Barat. Peraturan Gubernur Sumatera Barat Nomor 25 Tahun 2015 tentang Rencana Aksi Daerah Pengarusutamaan Gender Provinsi Sumatera Barat Tahun 2015 (2015).

⁷³ Peraturan Wali Kota Padang Nomor 12 Tahun 2020 Tentang Rencana Aksi Daerah Pengarusutamaan Gender Kota Padang Tahun 2020. (2020).

⁷⁴ Herita Dewi, 2016.

⁷⁵ Herita Dewi, 2016.

⁷⁶ Komnas Perempuan. Lembar Fakta dan Temuan Kunci: Catatan Tahunan Komnas Perempuan Tahun 2019. (Jakarta: Komnas Perempuan. 2020).

⁷⁷ Perdana Putra. "Kekerasan Pada Perempuan Dan Anak Di Sumbar Meningkat, 2020 Ada 15 Kasus." 2020.

<https://regional.kompas.com/read/2020/03/06/11290681/kekerasan-pada-perempuan-dan-anak-di-sumbar-meningkat-2020-ada-15-kasus?page=all>.

⁷⁸ Padang kita. "Perempuan Korban Kekerasan Di Sumbar Takut Melapor." Padangkita, 2017. <https://padangkita.com/perempuan-korban-kekerasan-di-sumbar-takut-melapor/>.

⁷⁹ Wendi Ahmad Wahyudi, 2015.

against women and girls cases are still high in West Sumatra.

Target 5.3 highlights the elimination of all harmful practices against women and girls including child marriage and forced early marriage, also female genital mutilation. Indicators specified to this target are age of married women before the age of 15 and 18, teenage birth rate (15-19 years old), gross enrollment rate of senior high school students and the number of women and girls who have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM). Data collected for this target has presented positive results except for FGM.

Indonesia's National Family Planning Coordination Agency stated that West Sumatra's Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR) has decreased from 26 women per 1.000 people (2012) to 18 women in 2019.^{80,81} The Center Bureau of Statistics have reported child marriages in West Sumatra is lower than that of Indonesia's child marriage ratio which is 6% compared to 10.82%.⁸² The median of women's age in their first marriage in West Sumatra is 23.5, higher than Indonesia's median of 21.8.⁸³ In 2019, the total number of women aged between 20-24 years old, who were married before the age of 18 accounts to 5.96% of the province's total women population.⁸⁴ West Sumatra's gross enrollment rate of women (84%) is

higher than that of men, and is also higher than the national rate (80.68%)⁸⁵ on the contrary of the progress made by the other indicators, the number of FGM of girls are still a concern in West Sumatra, where 70% of girls undergo FGM type IV in 2013.⁸⁶

Since the enter of Islam into West Sumatra, it has been a dominant religion in the region. The Minangkabau people had managed to incorporate the religion to its daily life, without losing its core values,⁸⁷ which was expressed in the Minangkabau people's philosophy of "*adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah*". This common philosophy describes how cultural customs must be based on the Islamic law, which itself is based on the Koran and Sunnah. Understanding this, it can be argued that these values contributed to the progress of indicators related to child marriage and ASFR. It is also considered one of the reasons behind the high FGM number in West Sumatra. FGM is known as "*khitan*" in Indonesia and is considered as religious practice that is encouraged.⁸⁸ Regarding the high level of women enrollment in higher education, this can also be attributed to customary values where education has not been a gendered issue in this society. Starting from Datuk Sutan Maharadja who first encouraged women education in Minangkabau, Zubaidah Ratna Djuita and Rohana Kudus,⁸⁹ also Saadah Alim who instigated the first feminist movements, then Rahmah el Yunusijjah who introduced modern education for women, West Sumatra has had a long history of women education.⁹⁰

⁸⁰ Puspita, Ratna. "BKKBN: Usia Perkawinan Di Sumbar Di Atas Rata-Rata Nasional.". 2019. <https://republika.co.id/berita/pwg0ck428/bkkbn-usia-perkawinan-di-sumbar-di-atas-ratarata-nasional>.

⁸¹ Ratna Puspita, "BKKBN: Usia Perkawinan Di Sumbar Di Atas Rata-Rata Nasional," *Republika.co.id*, 2019,

<https://republika.co.id/berita/pwg0ck428/bkkbn-usia-perkawinan-di-sumbar-di-atas-ratarata-nasional>.

⁸² Ade Nasihudin Al Ansori, "Data Badan Pusat Statistik: Angka Pernikahan Dini Di Kalimantan Selatan Tertinggi Di Indonesia," *Liputan Enam*, 2020, <https://www.liputan6.com/health/read/4351605/data-badan-pusat-statistik-angka-pernikahan-dini-di-kalimantan-selatan-tertinggi-di-indonesia>.

⁸³ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, 2017.

⁸⁴ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, 2017.

⁸⁵ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, 2017.

⁸⁶ Hardisman. "Kontroversi Khitan Perempuan: Bagaimana Seharusnya Petugas Kesehatan Bersikap ?". 2019. <https://sumbar.antaraneews.com/berita/243962/kontroversi-khitan-perempuan-bagaimana-seharusnya-petugas-kesehatan-bersikap->.

⁸⁷ Alexander Stark, 2013.

⁸⁸ Hardisman, 2019.

⁸⁹ Wendi Ahmad Wahyudi, 2015.

⁹⁰ Joke Schrijvers & Els Postel-Coster, 1977.

There has not been any data available for target 5.4 in Indonesia.⁹¹ This target is related to the recognition and appreciation of unpaid labor such as parenting and housekeeping; and shared household responsibilities. Without specific data, it can be concluded that there is still a high proportion of Minangkabau women who are not recognized for their unpaid work and the division of household responsibilities are leaning heavily towards women's obligation. This can be related to the unbalanced proportion between the high rate of Minangkabau productive women compared to the number of women's income contribution to the family which is only 37.48%.⁹² This can be connected to the notion that women are the center of a Minangkabau family; who stays in the family house, and since very young have been "trained to become mothers and housekeepers, to be able to cook and sow".⁹³

Active participation of women and equal opportunity in the economy and politics is fifth target of gender equality goal (5.5). This is the largest problem faced by West Sumatra, evident from its low GEM⁹⁴ and high GII.⁹⁵ While GEM measures societies empowerment progress based on gender, GII assesses gender disparity in society. Both measurements' indicators are political and economic participation. In 2018, women only held 10.77% of West Sumatra's parliament,⁹⁶ and only one in three members of West Sumatra's Regional Representative

Council of 2014-2019 were women.⁹⁷ The actual process of decision making in the Minangkabau culture is indicated as an indirect influence towards this reality. The role of women in decision making in the Minangkabau community is very minimal. Decision-making is determined by *ninik mamak* and *adat* (cultural) leaders, while women (*Bundo kanduang*) have limited involvement in decision making, notably as opinion contributor.⁹⁸ Even related to this role, it can only be enforced once she holds a *Bundo Kanduang* title:

Perempuan Minangkabau baru memperoleh kemerdekaan dalam menentukan pilihan dan pendapatnya bisa jadi pertimbangan setelah perempuan Minangkabau mencapai kedudukan sebagai Bundo Kanduang. Jadi selama masih belum mencapai kedudukannya sebagai Bundo Kanduang, perempuan Minangkabau akan terus hidup di bawah pengaruh dan tekanan laki-laki yang menyandang sebutan mamak. [Minangkabau women only had independence to determine their choices and opinions could after reaching the position of Bundo Kanduang. So as long as they have not yet reached their position as Bundo Kanduang, Minangkabau women will continue to live under the influence and pressure of men who bear the title mamak].⁹⁹

Furthermore, Ramadhaniati and Herida¹⁰⁰ explained that *musyawarah mufakaik* in Minangkabau, which becomes the basic of its government, acquires unique skills, that are mainly gained through the process of *maota di lapau* which refers to a process of interaction at local small shops. This practice are traditionally and still only done by men, thus further eliminating women's opportunities. *Bundo Kanduang* has been

⁹¹ Badan Pusat Statistik, 2016.

⁹² Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak Republik Indonesia, and Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2018.

⁹³ Joke Schrijvers & Els Postel-Coster, 1977: 83.

⁹⁴ Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak Republik Indonesia, and Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2018.

⁹⁵ Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019.

⁹⁶ Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak Republik Indonesia, and Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2018.

⁹⁷ Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, 2017.

⁹⁸ Zainal Arifin & Maulid Hariri Gani. "Relasi Dua Kepentingan : Budaya Politik Masyarakat Minangkabau". (*Harmonia* Vol. 8, no.3 2007), 16-23

⁹⁹ Wendi Ahmad Wahyudi, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Ramadhaniati and Tanty Herida. Interviewed by Putiviola Elian Nasir. Structured interview. Padang, November 10, 2020.

institutionalized in West Sumatra, however, its existence is now viewed only as a puppet of a patriarchal government, who only assigns it to manage domestic issues, neglecting its core aim to encourage women participation in the public sphere and to advance gender equality.¹⁰¹

TPB target 5.a indicates reforms to give equal rights for women related to economic resources such as inheritance and natural resources.¹⁰² Specific indicators for this target measure the proportion of population having agricultural land rights and the proportion of women who have access to these rights, also national regulation that ensures equal rights to land possession. Although the custom of inheritance following the mother line of descent is still practiced until today in the Minangkabau society, there have been changes that disadvantaged women, thus obstructing the achievement of target 5.4. Studies have discovered cases where women do not have full power over communal property, unlike during the traditional era. Quisumbing and Otsuka¹⁰³ stated that the Minangkabau land inheritance has shifted from communal to individualized possessions, where men are also given a share of the family's property. There have also been cases where men sold communal land for their own interest, thus violating the one of the culture's core trait.¹⁰⁴ These findings were supported by Ramadhaniati and Herida¹⁰⁵ who confirmed that women are

not currently in a powerful position as they were because even if they own high cultural inheritance, decisions are in the hands of the men. Ownership of the family's economic resources should be able to place women as an important part in the public sphere because of their power and strength, however, this is not the case for many Minangkabau women.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Minangkabau matrilineal values have been able to contribute positively to factors supporting gender equality, thus having an beneficial impact for TPB achievement, specifically goal number five. This is most prominent in targets related to policies and the majority of harmful practices against women and girls. At the very basic, this indicates that gender equality awareness in West Sumatra is existent. However, although core cultural values such as matrilineal kinship following the mother line of descent, women's role in *musyawarah mufakaik*, and high cultural inheritance given to women of the family are considered sources of power, dignity and strength for the women of Minangkabau to advance themselves; another principal value which is hiding behind the title of 'matrilineal', have overshadowed this ideal concept. The answer is simple: in Minangkabau like in many other cultures, men are dominant. This has negatively affected this region's performance in reaching TPB gender equality targets regarding eliminating FGM, recognition and appreciation of women's unpaid work and shared housework, active participation of women in the economy and politics, and equal rights to own land. This research further supports the concept of how culture, development and gender equality compliment and shape each other, in the context of Sustainable Development Goals.

¹⁰¹ Siti Fatimah, 2012.

¹⁰² United Nations, 2020.

¹⁰³ Agnes R. Quisumbing and Keijiro Otsuka, "Land Inheritance and Schooling in Matrilineal Societies: Evidence from Sumatra," *World Development* 29, no. 12 (2001): 2093–2110.

¹⁰⁴ Abdul Mutolib, Yonariza, Mahdi, and Hanung Ismono. "Gender Inequality and the Oppression of Women within Minangkabau Matrilineal Society: A Case Study of the Management of Ulayat Forest Land in Nagari Bonjol, Dharmasraya District, West Sumatra Province, Indonesia." (*Asian Women* 32, no. 3 (2016), 23–49. <https://doi.org/10.14431/aw.2016.09.32.3.23>.

¹⁰⁵ Ramadhaniati and Herida, 2020.

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