

Balinese Patrilineal Society: A Moderation Model of Child Gender Preference through Cultural Characteristics (Case Studies in Kuku Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem)

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Abstract

This study addresses the issue of child gender preference, specifically examining perceptions that tend to prioritize sons over daughters. Kinship systems, such as patrilineal, matrilineal, and bilateral, are considered to influence these preferences, which not only affect fertility patterns in a region but also implicate to gender-based discrimination. Historically, women have experienced the loss of rights and social positions over centuries. The theory of family evolution, developed by 19th-century anthropologists, describes four stages of societal development, beginning with communal living which men and women bore children without formal bonds, gradually transitioning from matriarchy and patriarchy to a parental kinship structure that representing the fourth stage of cultural evolution.

This research examines attitudes toward the preference for sons within the evolving cultural context of Bali's patrilineal society, specifically focusing on the *nyentana* tradition. In Balinese customary marriage, *nyentana* refers to a practice in which the woman assumes the role of *purusa* (lineage bearer), while the man assumes the role of *pradhana* (the spouse who marries into the wife's family). The study, entitled "Balinese Patrilineal Society: A Moderation Model of Child Gender Preference through Cultural Characteristics (Case Studies in Kuku Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem)," formulates three main research questions: (1) Why does child gender preference occur within Balinese patrilineal communities? (2) How does child gender preference occur through Balinese patrilineal cultural characteristic factors? (3) What are the implications of gender preference for social-religious life, customary and cultural practices, and the psychosocial dynamics of Balinese patrilineal communities?. The study explores the influence of background and contextual factors on child gender preference, with parental gender roles and the value attributed to sons serving as mediating factors, conducted in Kuku Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem.

Employing a sequential mixed-methods approach, the study integrates quantitative analysis of 102 respondents using a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with qualitative insights obtained from in-depth interviews. Findings indicate that the perceived value placed on sons is the major underlying factor shaping gender preference. Empirical data reveal that nearly all respondents in Kuku Village, Marga District, expressed agreement with the *nyentana* practice (98.2%), with only 1.8% indicating disagreement. In contrast, respondents in Bungaya Village, Bebandem District, predominantly expressed disagreement or low approval of *nyentana* (78.3%, with 50% explicitly rejecting it). Only 13% agreed when the practice involved single-child families, and 8.7% agreed when practiced within Hindu families.

The study concludes that: (1) child gender preference is deeply rooted in biased interpretations of patrilineal ideology; (2) customary law and cultural practices contribute to reinforcing, though relatively, patrilineal beliefs; and (3) the persistence of patrilineal perspectives results in gender inequality and unilateral prioritization of specific interests. Based on these findings, the study recommends: (1) active engagement of all stakeholders in promoting gender equality, justice, and human rights for both men and women; (2) encouraging early adoption of gender-equitable attitudes within Bali's patrilineal cultural framework through stakeholder engagement; and (3) utilizing marriage ceremonies as opportunities for legal and customary socialization through collaboration between governmental and traditional institutions.

Keywords: patrilineal, moderation, preference, cultural characteristics, *nyentana*

I. INTRODUCTION

This study addresses the issue of child gender preference, specifically examining perceptions that tend to prioritize sons over daughters. Kinship systems, such as patrilineal, matrilineal, and bilateral, are considered to influence these preferences, which not only affect fertility patterns in a region but also implicate to gender-based discrimination (Wongboonsin & Ruffolo, 1995:43–62). Bachofen (1861), in Mutterrecht (Mother Right), revealed that women once held significant positions and rights that were subsequently lost for centuries, a finding that laid the groundwork for his inquiry into the evolution of family systems. In line with this, Koentjaraningrat (1967) described four stages of societal development proposed by classical 19th-century anthropologists, which indicate that early humans initially lived collectively without marital bonds, producing offspring freely. Over time, both matriarchal and patriarchal systems gradually disappeared, shifting toward parental kinship structures, which, a transformation regarded as part of the fourth stage in the evolution of human culture.

This study aims to examine community attitudes and perceptions regarding a preference for son within the cultural dynamics known as *nyentana*. The concept of *nyentana*, as explained by Windia (2015:37), refers to a Balinese customary marriage practice derived from the term *sentana*, meaning “offspring”. In this practice, women hold the status of *purusa* (the lineage bearer) under Balinese customary law, while men hold the status of *predana* (the spouse who marries into the wife's family). Entitled “Balinese Patrilineal Society: A Moderation Model of Child Gender Preference through Cultural Characteristic Factors (A Case Study in Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem),” this research focuses on the influence of cultural characteristic factors, including background and situational contexts, parental gender roles, and the perceived value of children to parents on patterns of child gender preference. This study is formulated into three main research questions: (1) Why does child gender preference occur within Balinese patrilineal communities? (2) How does child gender preference occur through Balinese patrilineal cultural characteristic factors? (3) What are the implications of gender preference for social-religious life,

customary and cultural practices, and the psychosocial dynamics of Balinese patrilineal communities?

Formulating a moderation strategy for attitudes toward the perceived preference for sons requires a deep empirical understanding of the key factors associated with the cultural characteristics of patrilineal societies, particularly the customary practice known as *nyentana*. The discussion of the *nyentana* context in this research study will be limited to the endogamous space of Balinese indigenous society (inter- and inter-exogamy of kinship). Balinese traditional society generally adheres to a patrilineal kinship system. It is also known that a marriage system known as *nyentana* is practiced in some regions. This study will first conduct a quantitative analysis of son gender preference in the Balinese study area. Arnold and Kuo (1984:300) describe the interrelationships between factors and child gender preference, determined at both the individual and social levels. The large group of variables tested in this study demonstrates a complex interrelationship. Situational and background factors influence gender preference directly, and/or through two intervening variables: parental role and child values, either separately or jointly. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were used in this study, with slight modifications to the concept applied by Arnold and Kuo (1984:300), as shown in Figure 1.

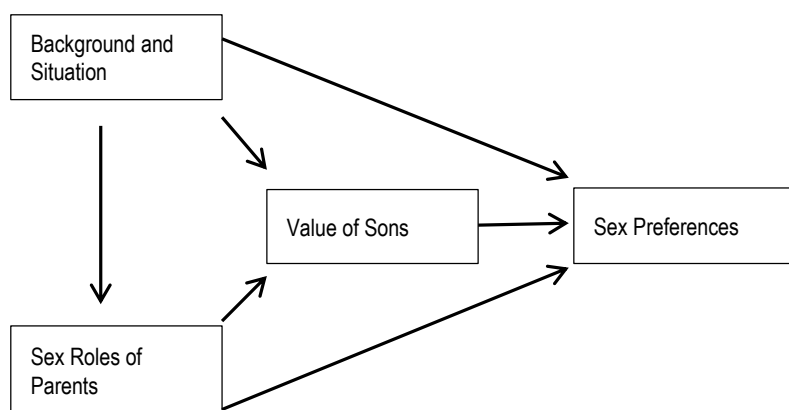


Figure 1. Correlations of Factors to Child Gender Preference

Consequently, this study initially examined the influence of familial background and situational factors on gender preference, considering parental gender roles and the perceived value of sons as mediating variables. The research was conducted in two regions representing patrilineal communities in Bali: Kuku Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem. This study employed a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory sequential design, involving 102 respondents. Quantitative data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), while qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews to enrich the findings and provide interpretive context.

Based on the focus of the research problem, ten quantitative research questions were formulated, relevant to patrilineal Balinese communities in the two study locations, as follows:

1. What is the significant direct relationship pattern between background and situational factors and parental gender roles?

2. What is the significant direct relationship pattern between background and situational factors and the perceived value of children to parents?
3. What is the significant direct relationship pattern between parental gender roles and the perceived value of children to parents?
4. What is the significant indirect relationship pattern between background and situational factors and the perceived value of children to parents through parental gender roles?
5. What is the significant direct relationship pattern between background and situational factors and the preference for sons?
6. What is the significant direct relationship pattern between parental gender roles and the preference for sons?
7. What is the significant direct relationship pattern between the perceived value of children to parents and the preference for sons?
8. What is the significant indirect relationship pattern between background and situational factors and the preference for sons through parental gender roles?
9. What is the significant indirect relationship pattern between background and situational factors and the preference for sons through the perceived value of children to parents?
10. What is the significant indirect relationship pattern between parental gender roles and the preference for sons through the perceived value of children to parents?

These questions were designed to unravel the complex mechanisms underlying the relationships among cultural factors, social structures, and perceptions of the value of male children within patrilineal kinship systems. Accordingly, the findings are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the social construction of gender preference in Bali.

The findings of this study are expected not only to address the core issues previously formulated but also to make a direct contribution to cultural practices within patrilineal customary communities in Bali. The practical benefits include: (1) offering alternative solutions to humanitarian issues by promoting a balanced valuation of men and women; and (2) reaffirming that patrilineal cultural traditions (in their social context) do not merely revisit classical or theological Hindu concerns, but also inspire both adherents and society at large to regard one another as creations of God, inherently worthy of dignity, respect, and fair treatment without discrimination.

Theoretically, this research is expected to: (1) identify relevant patrilineal cultural values that can be mainstreamed into gender equality discourses, thereby potentially contributing positive impacts on social justice; and (2) provide inspiration for the advancement of cultural studies as a means of uncovering the esoteric values or internal aspects that underlie community life, which, in turn, support sustainable socio-cultural transformation.

In line with these objectives, this studies examines three interrelated dimensions:

1. Socio-religious aspects, including assessments of personality and social roles, acceptance within kinship systems, and the level of permissive attitudes evolving within the local community.
2. Cultural and customary aspects, encompassing understandings of *sentana rajeg* (vertical relations within kinship structures), the implementation of *peras* and non-*peras* ceremonies, and the degree of adherence to prevailing customary norms.

3. Psychological aspects, addressing the clarity of inheritance lines, the status of household heads in both customary and administrative contexts, and community perceptions of family leadership structures within a patrilineal framework.

Thus, this study is expected not only to enrich the academic discourse on Bali's patrilineal culture but also to serve as a reference for developing more just, inclusive, and contextually grounded social practices in alignment with both local values and universal humanitarian principles

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research design is based on the Sequential Explanatory Design as outlined by Creswell (2015: 83), and subsequently adapted (modified) to suit the specific needs of this study. The modified Sequential Explanatory Design is illustrated in Figure 2.

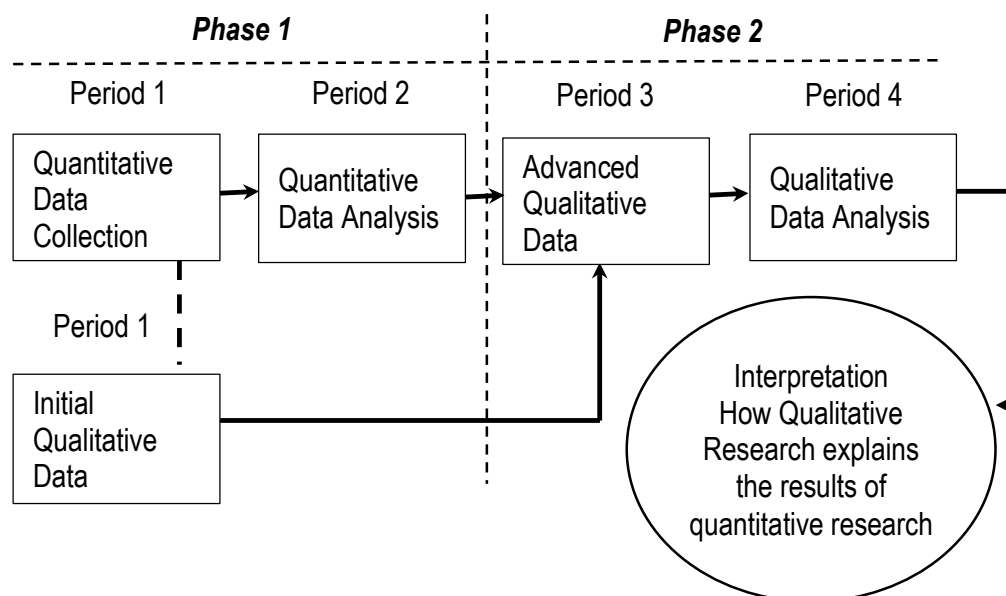


Figure 2. Modified Sequential Explanatory Design

The quantitative design in this case study employed a household survey approach, using families as the sampling units. The unit of analysis focused on members of the Balinese Hindu community within the study area who were 19 years of age or older and had current or previous marital status. The determination of the minimum sample size considered various factors, including the type of error, confidence interval, standard deviation, variance, and other relevant parameters (Swarjana, 2016: 12). The examination of child gender preferences utilized categorical data with proportion-based calculations as the basis for mean analysis (Lincoln, 2006: 1). Through a series of design stages and the application of probability sampling techniques, lists of households were obtained as the primary units of observation for this study.

This study explores the influence of background and situational conditions on child gender preferences, positioning parental gender roles and the perceived value of sons as mediating variables. It was conducted in Kuku Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem. A mixed-methods design employing an explanatory sequential model was employed, involving 102 respondents whose data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and supported by qualitative findings obtained through in-depth interviews. The analytical method, SEM, as explained by Raykov and Marcoulides in Abuzar Asra et al. (2017:122), is a statistical technique that provides a comprehensive framework for measuring and testing theoretical models. The data analysis process utilized AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structure) software, integrated into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) SEM-AMOS version 2023.

Subsequently, the quantitative findings that revealed significant patterns were explored through a phenomenological analysis. Referring to Husserl's perspective (1931 [1913]:85), this stage guided the study toward understanding consciousness through an intuitive approach rather than relying solely on empirical experience (Bryan S. Turner, 2012:363). This foundation was then employed in conducting an in-depth analysis of child gender preference from a primary feminist theoretical perspective, complemented by the eclectic integration of other relevant theories.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Quantitative Analysis

The findings regarding community responses to the *nyentana* cultural practice in the two research sites revealed significantly contrasting tendencies. Based on the collected data, nearly all respondents in Kuku Village, Marga-Tabanan, expressed approval of the practice, with a percentage reaching 98.2%. Among them, 75% were non-Hindu respondents and 23.2% were Hindu respondents, while only 1.8% expressed disapproval. These findings indicate that in Kuku Village, the *nyentana* practice has been widely accepted as part of the social order and can be carried out without generating significant resistance.

Conversely, in Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem, the majority of respondents exhibited objection or reluctance toward the *nyentana* practice. As many as 78.3% expressed disagreement or disapproval, consisting of 28.3% who stated partial disagreement and 50% who explicitly disapproved. The remaining respondents expressed conditional acceptance: 13% agreed if the practice occurred within a nuclear family, and 8.7% agreed if it was conducted within a Hindu households.

This divergent pattern of responses suggests the influence of social, cultural, and religious factors shaping community attitudes in each region. Factors such as kinship structures, customary values, and perceptions of gender roles within the family are likely to contribute to varying levels of acceptance of the *nyentana* cultural practice.

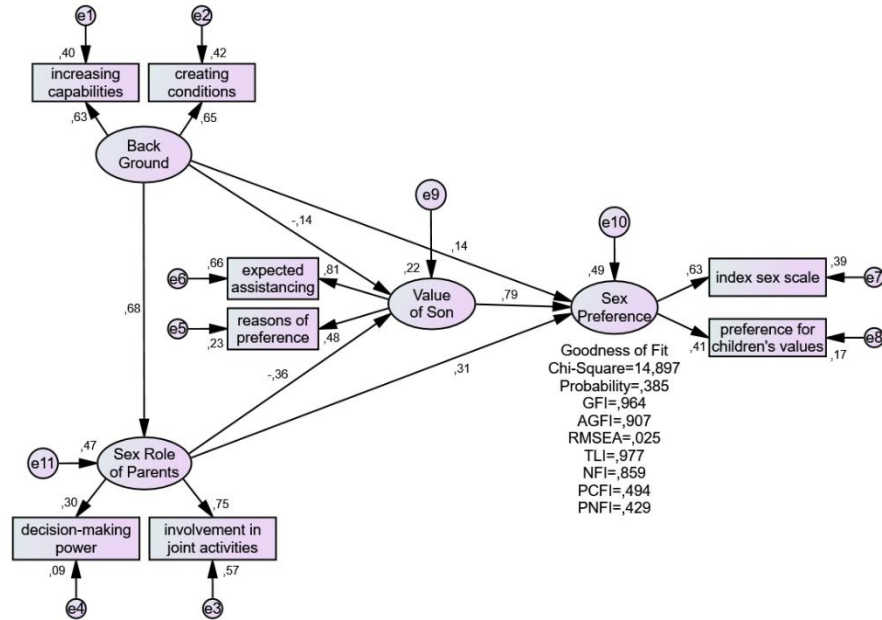


Figure 3. Structural Model of Factors Influencing Child Gender Preference

The structural model design shown in Figure 3 was developed based on the theoretical framework previously outlined in Figure 1, integrating a set of indicators that had undergone validity and reliability testing. All qualifying indicator were subsequently analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM was selected due to its capability to examine complex causal relationships between exogenous and endogenous constructs, particularly in situations where conventional statistical approaches are insufficient to comprehensively explain inter-variable relationships.

Through the SEM model, it is possible to identify in detail how the measured indicators contribute to latent variables, including both direct effects and indirect effects, which collectively construct the network of relationships among variables in this study. For ease of interpretation, each variable in the model was assigned a specific label: the Background and Situational variable was labeled Background; the Parental Gender Role variable was labeled Sex Role of Parents; the Value of Children to Parents variable was labeled Value of Son; and the Child Gender Preference variable was labeled Sex Preference. This labeling was designed to make the model systematically interpretable and to facilitate both theoretical and practical cross-variable analysis.

Before conducting an in-depth analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this study first underwent several fundamental evaluation stages. These stages included assessments of sample size adequacy, test for normality and linearity assumptions, identification of potential outliers, evaluations of the

goodness-of-fit criteria, and test for the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

Through SEM modeling, a range of critical information was generated regarding causal relationships among variables, including the influence of each indicator on its corresponding latent variable, as well as the mapping of both direct and indirect effects. All indicators demonstrated a positive contribution to their respective variables. The direct effects describe the immediate relationships between independent and dependent variables, while the indirect effects explain the influence of exogenous variables on dependent variables through mediating (or intervening) variables serving as causal bridges.

The hypothesis testing, designed to address the research problems in the quantitative phase through SEM analysis of the Balinese patrilineal community in the study area, yielded several key findings. First, there is a significant positive direct relationship between background and situational variables and parental gender roles. Second, a negative but non-significant direct relationship was found between background and situational variables and the value of children to parents. Third, a similarly negative and non-significant direct relationship was observed between parental gender roles and the value of children to parents. Fourth, the analysis indicated a positive but non-significant direct relationship between background and situational variables and son preference. Fifth, a similar pattern—a positive yet non-significant direct relationship—was also found between parental gender roles and son preference. Sixth, a significant positive direct relationship was found between the value of children to parents and son preference. Seventh, a non-significant indirect relationship was identified between background and situational variables and child gender preference through parental gender roles. Eighth, a similarly non-significant indirect relationship was observed between background and situational variables and child gender preference through the value of children to parents. Ninth, the analysis revealed a non-significant indirect relationship between parental gender roles and child gender preference through the value of children to parents. Tenth, a non-significant indirect relationship was also found between background and situational variables and the value of children to parents through parental gender roles.

Overall, these findings illustrate the complexity of inter-variable relationships shaping the social construction of child value and gender preference within Balinese patrilineal society, while also indicating that only a small proportion of these relationships are statistically significant.

3.2 Mixed-Methods Analysis of Patrilineal Society

The relationship patterns identified through SEM modeling, as illustrated in Figure 3, were constructed from empirical data aligned with the theoretical framework and have been statistically confirmed as a model meeting the required fit criteria. Nevertheless, the analysis of the hypothesis testing results revealed that several inter-variable relationships exhibited non-significant negative effects.

To obtain a more representative picture, a simulation of the SEM model most consistent with the empirical data was conducted, enabling a reflection of the social realities of Balinese society within the study area. The results of this simulation produced a new structural relationship pattern, visualized in Figure 4, providing deeper insight into the dynamics of inter-variable relationships within the socio-cultural context of the patrilineal community under investigation.

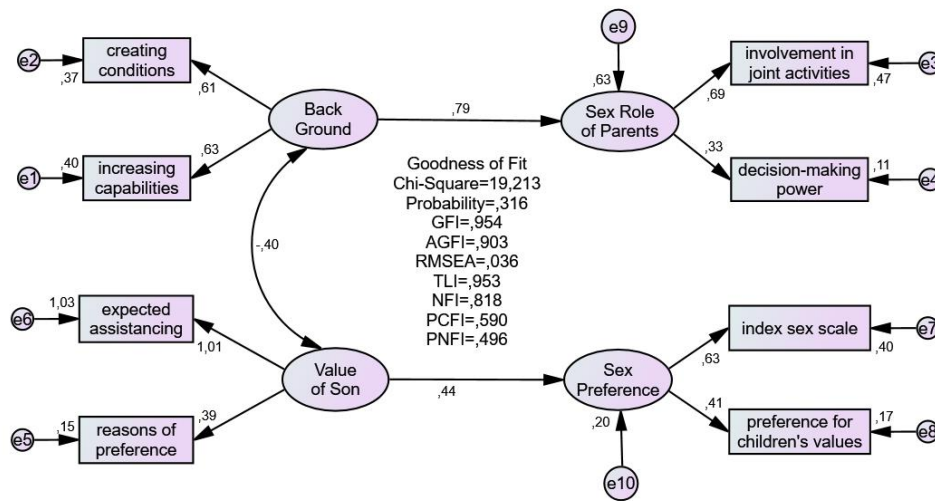


Figure 4. Structural Model of Cultural Characteristic Factors of Balinese Patrilineal Society

A comprehensive analysis of the relationship patterns, the effects among variables, and the associated indicators in the validated (fit) SEM model, as presented in Figure 4, was carried out by integrating qualitative justifications derived from in-depth interviews with key informants, along with references to policy documents, prevailing regulations, and established social norms. The main findings of this analysis can be summarized as follows.

1. The Background variable is significantly influenced by two primary indicators: capacity enhancement and condition creation. Capacity enhancement is shaped by four key aspects: survival perceptions, health sustainability, education and knowledge, and a reasonable standard of living. Meanwhile, condition creation encompasses five aspects: political or community participation, environmental sustainability, security assurance, rights protection, and gender equality. The empirical model demonstrates that both indicators, along with their underlying aspects, play a critical role in shaping the Background variable.
2. The Value of Children variable is significantly constructed by two main indicators: reasons for preference and types of expected support. The reasons for preference comprise five aspects: carrying on the family name, financial

support, emotional support (companionship), assistance in old age, and support in household or marital life. Meanwhile, the types of expected support consist of four aspects: contribution of income, assistance in emergency situations, household help, and care in old age. The empirical modeling confirms that these indicators play a significant role in constructing the Value of Children variable.

3. The Parental Gender Role variable is significantly influenced by two primary indicators: participation in joint activities and decision-making power. Participation in joint activities is formed through two aspects, namely work-related activities and social-community activities. Meanwhile, decision-making power is reflected in the aspect of dominance in household decision-making. The empirical model demonstrates that these indicators and their underlying aspects contribute significantly to shaping the parental gender role as a role model.
4. The Child Gender Preference variable is significantly determined by two main indicators: the sex index scale and the child value preference. The sex index scale applies Coombs' IS-scale, while the child value preference indicator is measured through perceptions of dominant contribution, lineage continuation, and choice of perception in scenarios where a family has only one child. The empirical model confirms that these indicators play a crucial role in constructing the child gender preference variable.

Findings also revealed the following patterns:

1. Background has a significant influence on the Parental Gender Role variable. This reflects the social reality in which an individual's perceptions are strongly shaped by the customs and socio-cultural environment in which they live, including their economic strata and social status.
2. Child Value has a significant effect on the Child Gender Preference variable. Community understanding of patrilineal culture is generally straightforward, perceiving lineage continuation as occurring through the male line. Consequently, sons are automatically assigned a more dominant position than daughters.
3. The Background and Child Value variables do not influence each other and are categorized as exogenous factors in the final model. This finding provides empirical evidence that in Balinese patrilineal society, the value of sons is regarded as important and dominant regardless of differences in family background, whether in economic or social terms.

Based on empirical findings obtained from quantitative data analysis, enriched with in-depth qualitative interview insights, and examined through an integrative approach that combines deductive and inductive reasoning within the established theoretical framework, the researcher formulated several key points as follows:

1. The empirical testing of the theoretical model regarding child gender preference within the Balinese patrilineal cultural context revealed an interrelationship between various socio-cultural characteristics and the community's tendency in determining child gender preference.
2. The perception of the significance of having sons demonstrated consistency across different social background conditions as well as among parents who serve as role models.

3. The high valuation placed on sons exerts a decisive influence on child gender preference, particularly the tendency to prioritize sons over daughters.
4. Although the value attributed to sons has a direct impact on child gender preference, family background factors and parental attitudes as role models were found to exert a negative influence on the reinforcement of the value of sons.
5. A positive correlation exists between family background and family circumstances, as well as parental gender roles, and child gender preference. This finding indicates that there remains potential for moderating or balancing gender preferences through the development of more inclusive family backgrounds and parental attitudes that embody more equitable gender roles.
6. From a religious perspective, there are no normative barriers preventing families with daughters from continuing the lineage within the patrilineal system, thereby, in principle, opening up the possibility for value transformation within this social structure.

The elaboration of these findings aligns with Hindu literary perspectives, including *Manawa Dharma Śāstra*, *Wrhaspati Tattwa*, and *Tattwa Jñāna*. *Manawa Dharma Śāstra*, as part of the *Weda Smerti* and one of the authoritative sources of Hindu law with an essential role in the Hindu social life (Pudja & Rai Sudharta, 2023: ii), affirms that under certain conditions, women may attain equal status and roles with men, including being recognized as *sentana rajeg* (lineage successors). Meanwhile, *Wrhaspati Tattwa*, a philosophical text representing the Śaiva doctrine in the Indonesian archipelago developed during the Hindu golden age in Java (9th–15th century) (Djapa, 2013: iii), along with *Tattwa Jñāna*, one of the *lontar* manuscripts on *Brahma Widya* (Sukayasa, 2023: iii), provides deeper insights into the nature of human existence. Both *tattwa* texts emphasize the principle that all living beings are composed of the fundamental elements *purusa* and *pradhāna*. In the human context, these elements do not imply any essential difference between men and women. Accordingly, in both *tattwa*, *purusa* is understood as *Sang Hyang Ātma* (the sacred and eternal soul), while *pradhāna* refers to the physical body that serves as the vessel of the *ātma* within each individual.

A study of social structures from the perspective of Hindu sociology, particularly in the context of Balinese customary society, according to Pudja (1963: 16), require not only references to scriptures or religious literature but also analysis of observations by external scholars. Furthermore, understanding such social systems requires attention to non-written sources, including local customary (*Desa Dharma*), familial traditions (*Kula Dharma*), and practices carried out by community leaders that are widely accepted within the local community. Collectively, these customs, as explained by Pudja, are referred to as *acara*.

Furthermore, Pudja (1963: 27) emphasizes that the characteristics of Balinese (Hindu) society are inherently idealistic and sacramental, while materialistic tendencies tend to be disregarded. Social relations within Hindu sociology are grounded in metaphysical reasoning and, due to their universal nature, the entire arrangement of societal order is governed by religious legal principles. Thus, the relational structure encompasses not only interactions among individuals but also between humans and their ancestors, as well as humans and God.

Based on the findings of this study, the social conditions of the community are interpreted through respondents' perceptions regarding their backgrounds and circumstances. The results indicate that the people of Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, exhibit relatively better expectations in terms of capacity building and the creation of supportive conditions compared to those in Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem. Nevertheless, in general, respondents from both villages hold fairly positive expectations regarding their social backgrounds and prevailing conditions, although, in Bungaya Village, certain aspects of condition creation are perceived as less than optimal. The indicators used to assess the creation of these conditions include participation in organizational activities, environmental awareness, assurance of security, protection of individual rights, and gender equality in social life.

The *Manawa Dharma Śāstra*, as compiled systematically by Bhagawan Bhrigu, one of the Sapta Maha Rsi and followers of Manu, serves as a dharma guide to be internalized and practiced as living customs within the community (Pudja & Rai Sudharta, 2003:3–5). Based on this understanding, the researcher refers to the substantive content of the *Manawa Dharma Śāstra* that is closely related to the framework of patrilineal culture. This reference is necessary as a step toward moderating its application within certain family conditions in Hindu society, particularly those who are blessed only with daughters. The *Manawa Dharma Śāstra*, as translated by Pudja and Rai Sudharta (2003: 560), in Book IX, verse 127, states as follows:

*“Aputro ’nena widhina sutam kurwita putikam,
yadpatyam bhawedasyam tanmama syat swadakaram”*

Translation:

“He who has no sons may appoint his daughter accordingly, through the prescribed ceremony of designating a daughter, declaring to her husband: ‘The son born of her shall perform my funeral rites.’

Book IX, verse 128, further states:

*“Anena tu widhanena pura cakre ’tha putrikah,
witrdhyartham swawamcasya swayam daksah prajapatih*

Translation:

“According to this rule, Daksha himself, the Lord of all created beings, once appointed all his daughters to be given the status of sons, with the intention of multiplying his lineage.”

The internalization and practice of verse 127 (Book IX) of the *Manawa Dharma Śāstra*, reinforced by verse 128, were formally formulated by the Bali Supreme Council of Customary Villages (*Majelis Utama Desa Pakraman*, MUDP) through a decree—Decree of the Third Grand Assembly of MUDP Bali Number 01/KEP/PSM-3 MDP BALI/X/2010, dated 15 October 2010. This decision provides clarity in regulating balance and fairness between sons and daughters within the patrilineal kinship system adhered to by Balinese Hindus (Windia, 2015: 254).

Within the structure of Balinese customary society, individuals are believed to be inseparable from the various dharmas inherent in every life stage and social role. These *dharma* values shape each individual's perspective, including preferences for patrilineal cultural system. The manifestation of child gender preference in cultural and customary context is reflected in the differentiated roles

of men and women, particularly in their capacity as parents serving as role models within families.

Based on the findings regarding perceptions of gender roles, respondents in Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem, demonstrated relatively similar and generally positive expectations concerning parental gender roles. Nevertheless, in Bungaya Village, the decision-making indicator revealed that some respondents tended to delegate major family decisions predominantly to the *swami* (husband), indicating a persistent tendency toward male dominance in the decision-making process.

Nevertheless, overall, the research data indicated that in both Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, and Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem, community perceptions of gender role expectations have progressed toward greater equality and reflect a growing awareness of the importance of the active involvement of both parents in various aspects of family life.

The customary regulations in effect in Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, are codified in the *Awig-awig* of Desa Pakraman Kukuh (September 2, 2014: reg. no. 189/III/HK & HAM, Palet 1). Article 38, clause (2) stipulates:

“Marriage may be conducted through: (a) *Melantaran pepadikan*; (b) *Melantaran ngorod* or *ngrangkat*; (c) *Melantaran nyentana* or *nyentana nyeburun*.”

Furthermore, Palet 3, Article 41, clause (1) explicitly states:

“*Sentana rajeg* refers to a female descendant who is formally established as *purusa* (male heir).”

The implementation of customary regulations through the *awig-awig* in Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, represents the collective aspirations of the traditional community. These regulations play a vital role in accommodating evolving socio-cultural dynamics while providing a strong foundation for the continuity of the patrilineal social structure. The *awig-awig* not only preserve traditional values but also govern the interaction between cultural aspects and religious developments, thereby serving as a practical expression of moderation. In contrast, the customary regulations in Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem, according to I Putu Agus Purnawan, who serves as *De Penyarikan Desa* (village secretary), still rely on the *awig-awig* inherited from previous generations, without a precise record of its date of origin. In practice, customary and cultural structures, particularly those concerning marriage ceremonies, are predominantly carried out based on orally transmitted traditions that have yet to be codified into written regulations. This highlights a distinction in the degree of legal codification between the two villages, reflecting the diversity of approaches taken by Balinese communities in preserving their customary values amid the pressures of social change.

Social psychology is a branch of knowledge aimed at understanding and explaining the processes through which individuals' thoughts, emotions, and behaviors are shaped and altered by the presence of others, whether directly, through perceptions and imagination, or as a consequence of social demands and role expectations. Within the context of social life, it scientifically examines the reciprocal dynamics between individual behavior and the behavior of others, which mutually influence one another (Adnan Achiruddin Saleh, 2020: 3).

When viewed within the framework of Balinese society, the dynamics of social psychology are closely interwoven with the *asrama* system, a concept that

historically regulates the stages of human life (Pudja, 1963: 28). This system, known as *Catur Asrama*, divides human life into four main phases: (i) *Brahmacharya asrama*, the stage dedicated to learning and studying under a teacher; (ii) *Grihastha asrama*, the period of establishing a household and fulfilling social responsibilities; (iii) *Vanaprastha asrama*, the phase of gradually reducing worldly attachments and transitioning into a semi-hermitic way of life; and (iv) *Samnyasa asrama*, the stage of complete spiritual renunciation focused on the pursuit of ultimate meaning and liberation.

Moreover, the interaction between individuals and society within Bali's socio-cultural context cannot be separated from the concept of *varna* or *varnasrama-vyavastha*. Although frequently mentioned alongside *asrama*, *varna* in fact refers to a fundamentally distinct concept (Pudja, 1963: 34). It regulates social classification based on functional roles within society, traditionally divided into four principal groups: *Brahmana* (the priestly and scholarly class), *Ksatriya* (the leadership and protective class), *Vaisya* (the merchant and economic class), and *Sudra* (the service class that sustains societal continuity). The integration of the *asrama* and *varna* systems culturally shapes the patterns of social relations in Bali, wherein the social psychology of its people is rooted not only in interpersonal interaction but is also profoundly influenced by enduring structures of values, norms, and social roles passed down through generations.

The study of human relationships cannot be separated from the realities of life and the philosophical frameworks embedded within a belief system. In line with the thoughts of Pudja (1963: 19) in *Sociology of Hindu Dharma*, discussions grounded in both sociological and religious perspectives are based on socio-religious foundations that regulate the relationships between individuals, as well as between individuals and society. Pudja further emphasizes that the very nature of humans as social beings serves as the basis for forming networks of relationships that involve both individuals and groups within communal life.

Sociologically, these relationships encompass multiple levels of interaction, including those between individuals, between individuals and families, between individuals and society, as well as among families and between families and the broader community. The social sciences generally examine these interwoven relationships not only through a psychological lens but also by considering instinctive aspects inherent in human nature. The psychological dimension encompasses general principles that shape patterns of social interaction, while instinct refers to innate characteristics inherited and influencing social engagement from birth.

Within the focus of this study, the analysis is directed toward human interaction within the framework of social psychology, situated in the context of patrilineal kinship systems in Balinese customary communities. As emphasized by Allport (1954) in Adnan Achiruddin Saleh (2020: 2), social psychology is a branch of science that seeks to understand and explain how an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the presence of others, whether real, imagined, or shaped by the demands of particular social roles. Similarly, Myers (2002) in Adnan Achiruddin Saleh (2020: 3) defines social psychology as a branch of psychology that comprehensively examines the nature and causes of individual behavior within its social environment.

More broadly, social psychology may be understood as the scientific study of the mechanisms by which individual behavior is formed through processes of

mutual influence within social environments. In other words, social psychology examines not only how individuals are influenced by social forces, but also how they actively shape their own social environments. This process involves complex interactions across the dimensions of cognition (*cipta*), emotion (*rasa*), and motivation or volition (*karsa*), collectively shaping patterns of human social behavior within dynamic societies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis employing a mixed-methods approach, combining the testing of a theoretical model against quantitative data with qualitative findings through both deductive and inductive reasoning, this study identifies several core findings that lead to the following conclusions. First, child gender preference is primarily shaped by biased interpretations of the patrilineal system, particularly regarding lineage, which tends to prioritize males as successors. Second, variations in customary and cultural practices across regions result in relative understandings of patrilineal ideology, adapting to the local belief frameworks and values held by each community. Third, the implications of this relative understanding of patrilineal ideology lead to gender inequality and practices that tend to favor one party's interests over another, thereby creating imbalances in social and family relations.

The conclusions of this study are formulated based on both theoretical and empirical findings obtained through comprehensive analysis. The theoretical findings of the research are outlined as follows:

1. The empirical testing of the theoretical model concerning child gender preference within the context of Balinese patrilineal culture revealed a significant correlation between various socio-cultural characteristics and such preferences. This finding supports the view of Arnold and Kuo (1984: 300) regarding the role of socio-cultural factors in shaping gender preference.
2. Perceptions of the importance of sons appear to be relatively similar across different social backgrounds, including among parents serving as family role models.
3. The high social value attached to the presence of sons exerts a strong and determining influence on the tendency toward gender preference.
4. The perceived value of sons contributes to the preference for male children, although family background and parental attitudes as role models may exert a negative influence on the formation of such values.
5. Positive relationships were identified between background and social conditions as well as parental gender roles with child gender preference, indicating the existence of intervention (moderation) opportunities through these factors to mitigate gender-based preferences.
6. From a religious perspective, no doctrinal or normative barriers were identified preventing families with daughters from continuing lineage within a patrilineal system, thereby opening opportunities for recontextualizing customary values to achieve greater gender equity.

The empirical findings obtained through quantitative analysis and in-depth interviews within the context of the social construction of patrilineal society in the modern era can be summarized as follows:

1. Community responses toward the *nyentana* practice demonstrated stark contrast between the two research sites. Nearly all respondents in Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, expressed agreement with the *nyentana* practice (98.2%), while only 1.8% expressed partial disagreement.
2. Conversely, respondents in Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem, were predominantly among those who disagreed or partially disagreed with the *nyentana* practice, reaching 78.3%, while the remaining respondents who agreed came from single-child Hindu families.
3. Efforts to moderate child gender preference were more evident in Kukuh Village, Marga-Tabanan, compared to Bungaya Village, Bebandem-Karangasem.
4. The patrilineal system continues to exist and evolve in accordance with the customary social norms prevailing in each region, forming part of the nation's cultural heritage and reflecting the diversity of Balinese cultural traditions.
5. Moderation efforts that can be undertaken by both governmental and customary institutions, include strengthening socialization regarding decisions, regulations, and values derived from the Vedic scriptures relevant to Balinese Hindu customary and religious contexts, ensuring that such information reaches.
6. Through the moderation of patrilineal ideology, it is expected that covert violations of human rights, particularly women's rights, within family and community life adhering to patrilineal systems will no longer occur.

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