

# Jurnal 4

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**Phenomenology Study: Pregnancy Women Myth in Malay Community Dumai City, Indonesia**

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**Abstract.** This study aims to analyze the pregnant women myths in the Malay community of Dumai City, Indonesia. The qualitative research: Phenomenology Study. The total informants <sup>17</sup> are 11 participants (Pregnant women, shaman, midwife, and Primary Health Care Heads). Data collection through in-depth interviews and non-participant observation. Data analysis uses content analysis. The results showed that three things were during pregnancy, namely: cultural tradition in pregnant, food consumption, and activities. That even for pregnant women in “Lenggang Perut” (seven months pregnant ceremony). Use porcupines, scissors, and needles in the body to avoid the devil. Cannot consume sugar water from “Tebu” (a kind of sweet plant), pineapple, and “Tape” (food from cassava fermentation) because it will cause bleeding or abortion. Prohibited activities, bathing at night, sitting in front of the door, for early gestation may not leave their homes and still visit shamans. Until now, this myth is still practiced by pregnant women in the Malay community, although there is no empirical research that proves the real impact of the myth.

**Keywords.** Cultural rituals, Daily activities, Food consumption, Myth, Shamans

### **1. Introduction**

The development of myths in society is to regulate social relations between one community and another. General prohibitions and myths. When seen in depth has the social value of the city to respect each other. Myth during pregnancy in Indonesian society, there has been a change, but in others still maintain that culture. [1]. When there is a change, there is a destruction of traditional values, beliefs, roles, education, family, and others, which almost simultaneously influences social change in the community [2]. These new values and rituals replace old values and rituals. But in society, sometimes there is a compromise of unique traditions and rituals without losing the ancient traditions.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country in Asia that has 17,504 types of large and small islands [3]. Sumatra Island is one of the largest islands. Dumai is one of the cities on the island of Sumatra that still maintains its regional culture. It has a diversity of tribes and cultures but still has native culture, namely Malay culture. Although it borders Singapore and Malaysia, the people here still have strong customs about myths during pregnancy.

Honestly, until now, no one has explained about cultural practices during pregnancy in this area. Does the community still maintain the culture adopted so far, or has there been a change in cultural values? Therefore, this study aims to explore the culture in pregnant,

activities, and habits of pregnant women in this city. It also wants to obtain an explanation of the impact or benefits for pregnant women's health.

## 2. Method

This study used qualitative research with a phenomenology study [4]. The research process for three months (June-August, 2019). The selection of informants by purposive sampling technique, the choice of informants based on a predetermined consideration. The total of informants was 11 people, namely: seven pregnant women, one shaman, one midwife, and two Primary Health Care heads. In-depth interviews unstructured and non-participant observation did the data collection. Data analysis used to content analysis. The stages are transcript text, the meaning unit, coding, finally obtaining a theme.

## 3. Result And Discussion

### 3.1 Cultural rituals

Culture and religion are two things that influence each other. When the religion of Islam originating from Arabic, then spread widely to Indonesia. The largest Muslim country in the world is a country that consists of various ethnic, including Malays. The Malays are a tribe whose majority of the people are Muslim. Islam also does not forbid Muslims to be cultured according to their culture because that is a part of human life. One of the local traditions that are familiar to the Dumai City Malay community is "Lenggang Perut." It is a series of traditional Malay procession to express gratitude for her pregnancy. In Indonesian (Javanese culture), we called "Nujuh Bulan" is the same as seven months pregnant.

The "Lenggang Perut" procession in the Malay community in Dumai described as activities such as prayer to God. Equipment that must be prepared; Seven pieces of cloth (if possible, seven different colors from each other), One bushel of rice, coconut water, several strands of yam, resin, coconut oil or massage oil, candles, a box of "Kapur and "Daun Sirih."

Based on the informant's statement, it can look at the following quotation:

"My parents often told me about the "Nujuh Bulan" event. I used to have my first and second baby at the ceremony, and my gestation is still five months, maybe later I will make it again "(1<sup>st</sup> Informant, pregnant woman, 41 years old)

"Well ... this is my first baby, who is awaited by parents. We plan to do it next month, but we will do it at my parents' house because our house is small, it will not fit in when people come"(2<sup>nd</sup> informant, pregnant woman, 18 years old)

For the Malay ethnic in Dumai, this ritual is a form of gratitude to God for her pregnancy. The initiation ritual conveys a symbolic message that voices deeply cultural values and beliefs [5]. Aims to protect the mother and fetus from the devil [6].

### 3.2 Food Consumption

Pregnant women are a group of people who are vulnerable to health, especially nutrition. Therefore, pregnant women need good quality food, not excessive, and not deficient [7]. Foods consumed by pregnant women should not only follow their appetites but also need to look at the food requirements for health, nutrition, and balance [8] [9]. Foods that can be eaten and may not are always present in Malay people's. Proven eating habits are the most opposed to change among all practices [10]. All foods are different in each region. Based on the informant's statement, it can look at the following quotation:

"If my parents abstain from it was only one, I could not drink sugar water "Tebu," because she said that it would bleed" (3<sup>rd</sup> Informant, pregnant woman, 28 years old).

"Food that should not be eating, namely "Tape" and pineapple should not be" (4<sup>th</sup> Informant, Pregnant Woman, 29 years old).

"Usually my mother tells me to drink coconut water often so that the baby is born with clean skin" (5<sup>th</sup> Informant, Pregnant Woman, 21 years old)

Socialization given by parents is more often received by pregnant women than provided by midwives. Parents in the Malay community very care with pregnant women because many things that parents socialize to pregnant women. Especially about food that should not be consumption concern from parents. Pregnant women silent and respects her parents. Foods that are not allowed to eat by this culture cause confusion in pregnant women, thus limiting the diversity of the food they consume. Some other areas in Indonesia and other countries also still apply food restrictions for pregnant women such as: not allowed to eat shellfish, crabs, grapes [11], mutton, sea fish [12], snails, ripe bananas, okra, peanuts, wheat, potatoes, ginger and mango [13]. Although there is no scientific study that proves that these foods are not suitable for pregnant women to consume, they are still believed and still obeyed by pregnant women.

### 3.3 Pregnant Women Activities<sup>4</sup>

Pregnancy myths related to changes in anatomy and physiology of pregnant women. Pregnancy myths were about foods that are prohibited and recommended for pregnant women. Myth relating to behavior or psychic pregnant women is an opinion or assumption in a culture in Malay society. They still think that myth has been valid in the past even though the truth is not necessarily real. [14]. Many pregnant women who believe in the myth of pregnancy and carry it out. But they do not know the consequences of myths and only do so that they are not too bad. Based on the informant's statement, it can look at the following quotation:

"Malay community many rules, porcupine thorns used on bodies, scissors, needle, do not kill animals" (6<sup>th</sup> Informant, Pregnant Women, 34 years old)

"What is prohibited by parents may not take a night bath, may not sit in front of the door (4<sup>th</sup> Informant, pregnant woman, 29 years old).

"Wow, how gestation? Do you want to know? huh ?, I'm afraid because I have been pregnant, but the pregnancy was gone, so I can't say it" (7<sup>th</sup> Informant, Pregnant Woman, 42 years old)

Several studies in other regions also still apply the same thing. The husband also applies a prohibition on getting pregnant not to kill animals [16] [17]. Magical power involves a process that expresses relationships; magical power activates the relationship between one another. In this process, symbols have an essential role. In a cultural context, objects and behaviors can be symbols of magical power [18].

### 3.4. Visit traditional medicine (Shaman)

The Malay community still uses the services of traditional birth attendants as an alternative to check for pregnancy. At least only for body massage. Informants believe that shamans are considered more attentive and patient in serving patients. The choice to visit a shaman with the services provided and the trust of the community itself. Based on the informant's statement, it can look at the following quotation:



"But I have had massage several times to the shaman, my body aches. Maybe the stomach is down" (7<sup>th</sup> Informant, Pregnant Woman, 42 years old)

"There are nine shamans, and we are collaborating, the community is still going to a shaman, but, we must advise checking with health professional because shaman do not have the training, already old" ( 8<sup>th</sup> Informant, Midwife)

"We cannot forbid Malay community going to a shaman, but we still monitor it" (9<sup>th</sup> Informant, 1<sup>st</sup> Primary Health Care Head)

"There are still many shamans in the oil palm company, and we always invite them to attend the Village Community meetings. But, just go back, people might feel comfortable if they go to the shaman" (10<sup>th</sup> Informant, 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary Health Care Head).

"I refuse, but sometimes there are still stubborn people; there are still. Mom, they can't run out soon; it's hard to reject them" (11<sup>th</sup> Informant, Shaman).

Belief in the shaman depends on the character of the individual. Who is trusted will show consistent, honest, trustworthy behavior, taking into account the interests of those who believe.[18] [19]. Supporting, sharing, and working together. In line with this theory, from the results of this study, the attitudes exhibited by traditional birth attendants such as giving more attention, patience, friendliness, and mutual trust are factors that make them go to shamans. Summary of the results study look at down below (Table 1)

**Tabel 1.** Pregnancy Women Myth in Malay Community

<b>Cultural rituals</b>	<b>Food Consumption</b>	<b>Pregnant Women Activities</b>
1. The Seven Months Pregnancy ceremony as a form of gratitude to God	1. Drinking sugar cane water causes bleeding	1. Do not bathe at night
2. Use porcupine spines and needles to avoid disturbing from the devil	2. Pineapple causes abortion	2. Prohibition of sitting in front of the door because it will reduce the fortune
3. Prohibition of killing animals to prevent baby born with a congenital disability	3. Consumption of "Tape" (name of the food) cause abortion	3. Early pregnancy may not leave the house
	4. Drink coconut water so that children are born with clean skin	4. Visit the shaman for a massage or pregnant check.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the study explain that pregnant women still perform cultural rituals, prohibited activities, and maintained their habits. Namely: the cultural traditions of pregnancy, the prohibition of food consumption, and the prohibition of pregnant women's daily activities. We recommend that health professionals carry out routine pregnancy health promotion. Increase knowledge of pregnant women and families through home visits, a collaboration between health professionals, local community leaders, and religious leaders to open the Malay community mindset.

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