



## THE ROLE AND POSITION OF NUAULU WOMEN IN THEIR ANCIENT CULTURE ON SERAM ISLAND, CENTRAL MALUKU

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Article info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Corresponding Author:</b></p> <p>Lodewyk Nahuway  <a href="mailto:lodewyknahuway@gmail.com">lodewyknahuway@gmail.com</a>            Dr. University Djhar Wattiheluw            Maluku</p>	<p>Nuauulu men and women have had arrangements (customs) that have separated the roles and positions of women in Nuauulu society since ancient times. This study discusses the roles and positions of Nuauulu women in ancestral culture that have been maintained from generation to generation until now. This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data collection through in-depth interviews with informants and observations looking at the role and position of Nuauulu Women in the process of traditional ceremonies/rituals of the Nuauulu Tribe. The results of the study indicate that the role and position of Nuauulu Women in the traditions and traditional rituals of the Nuauulu Tribe cannot be separated from the beliefs of ancestors that have become guidelines and teachings passed down from generation to generation for the Nuauulu Tribe community. namely birth ceremonies, hair cutting ceremonies (<i>Tihti Kuau</i>), girl's adulthood ceremonies (<i>Pinamou</i>), boy's adulthood ceremonies (<i>Pahateri</i>), marriage ceremonies, and death ceremonies (<i>Autotu Nimoe</i>). which shows the role and position of Nuauulu Women in a custom that is regulated based on the procession of traditional rituals, namely the demands of women's customs are given the authority to carry them out and the demands of customs in the form of customary prohibitions or taboos for Women to follow them or in their activities. Meanwhile, for unmarried or still-schooled teenage/adult women, their roles and positions are more interested in the development of modernization, concentrating on their education, TV information, android phones (face book, WA, YouTube), and they still obey the norms and values of customs that have been taught by their parents, and traditional figures. Meanwhile, for married women, they still carry out all customary provisions with all customary ceremonial processions from birth to death (life cycle) and they are afraid of violating customary rules because of sanctions (ancestral sanctions). They do not want to go against customary provisions because they have a bad or bad impact on women, families and society.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Role and Position, Nuauulu Women, Culture Ancestors</i></p>
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## INTRODUCTION

The study of women emerged after the public awareness of the differences in views, status and roles of women compared to men from various aspects, and this has encouraged many activists to fight for change and eliminate these differences so that the differences between women and men are only due to biological differences. The struggle of the female race has existed since the 18th century with the emergence of feminist movements which later influenced scientists such as Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer and so on.

The status and position of women is largely due to the gap between the roles of men and women which are more based on biological and physiological aspects. There is a lot of discrimination against the female race in various social and cultural lives. According to Arjani (2003) that the dichotomy of the role has a place in patriarchal culture which is one of the reasons for the discriminatory and less favorable treatment for the female race.

The problem of inequality in the role and position of women with men in a society that still adheres to and holds fast to the cultural values of its ancestors still prioritizes the female race with all the limited opportunities compared to men to play an active role in development program activities, as well as in various other aspects of life in society, such as economics, social, culture, education, organizations and so on. So that the limitations of the female race are caused by the existence of various values and norms that limit the space for women to move compared to the space for men to move.

The Nuaulu tribe who live in Serambi Tengah Region, South Central Maluku Regency, in their social interactions, they greet each other without anyone greeting them. Public Nuaulu now no longer live nomadically, where the central government program through the Central Maluku Regency Government is to program resettlement through the Remote Community Development Program and the Remote Indigenous Community Program (KAT), so that the Nuaulu ethnic community has permanently inhabited settlements in South Central Seram Regency in the area of five (5) hamlets in Petuanan Negeri Sepa, Amahai District, namely the hamlets of Rohua, Bonara, Nualan, Latan, Simalouw, and one administrative district of Nua Nea.

Having the various advances achieved by women in various regions and sectors also influenced the position of Nuaulu women in their communities. Various studies have been conducted concerning various aspects of Nuaulu community life, including by Roy F. Ellen (1978) on Nuaulu and its environment, Abdul M. Tubaka (2017) on the Political Identity of Minority Groups (Study on Nuaulu Religious Survival Strategies), Johan Nina (2009) on Nuaulu Women in Simalouw Hamlet, Johan Tanamal (2013) on Children in Nuaulu Families and Communities, Simon Kukurele (2014) on Nuaulu Simalouw in Religious Plurality, Thomas Resusun (2012) on the Position of Nuaulu Women, Lodewyk Nahuway (2023), Autotu Nimoe Tradition of Funeral of the Deceased of the Nuaulu Tribe. However, the position of Nuaulu Women in traditional ceremonies is still not known for certain.

The role and Position of adult Nuaulu women is influenced by patriarchal culture, where women (teenagers, adults, parents) are faced with prohibitions or taboos. For example, women are prohibited from approaching or entering the Baileo house (traditional meeting house) they are prohibited because there is a belief that if women enter the Baileo it will bring disaster to their environment, so women who menstruate and give birth must be isolated or placed in a special house (posune), and women should not be involved directly in traditional meetings, let alone provide suggestions and opinions.

Based on the author's observations, this study is very interesting, considering that the Nuauulu community on Seram Island is not an isolated community, the distance from the Central Maluku Regency City is approximately 12-15 km. The development of information and communication technology has been very advanced, television and satellite dishes, android cellphones and so on, forms and technologies of transportation such as motorbikes and cars have become an inseparable part of the Nuauulu community

The position and status of Nuauulu women in their society from the past to the present has not experienced any significant changes, no matter how smart Nuauulu women are when they get married, their jobs are only giving birth, cooking, cleaning the house, helping in the garden. While in Nuauulu customs, Nuauulu Women are prohibited from participating in their Traditional House (Baileu) which is considered to bring bad luck to Nuauulu men and women and brings bad luck to the entire Nuauulu community. Nuauulu women are only seen as playing an important role in the reproduction and continuation of the descendants of the Nuauulu community, but on the other hand Nuauulu women are prohibited from interfering in certain customary matters.

The reality of Nuauulu Women in ancestral culture objectively the author realizes that the lives of Nuauulu Women are currently in a transitional period of awareness that the role and position of Nuauulu Women are limited to things that are specifically regulated by customs, even so the way of thinking of Nuauulu Women is increasingly complex with the development of this era. In this research, the author will examine and analyze it in several main issues that are the focus of this study, namely: 1) How does the Nuauulu community view the Good Woman? 2) What is the role and position of Nuauulu women in traditional ceremonies? and 3) What is the sociological interpretation of Nuauulu women?

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to provide an accurate picture of a particular condition, symptom, or group, or to determine the frequency or distribution of a symptom or the existence of a certain frequency relationship between a symptom and other symptoms in society. (Tan in (Silalahi, 2012) The focus of the research is on the Nuauulu Tribe community in Nua Nea Village, Amahai District, Central Maluku Regency. The research informants are the Nuauulu tribe community consisting of the king, the Soa tribal chief, the Saniri tribal chief and Nuauulu women. Data analysis using qualitative data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials, so that it is easy to understand, and the findings can be informed to others. (Bogdan in Sugiyono, 2010). Data processing and data analysis activities are carried out in three stages. namely: data reduction, data presentation and conclusion.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The relationship between men and women began to develop after the birth of the hunting civilization, where the hunting process was a process of eliminating women with their roles, although there were women, but they were not considered to have participated in hunting activities. Likewise, with Nuauulu women, they were not involved in hunting activities by Nuauulu men. The position between men and women is not the same for the Nuauulu people, men have a higher position than women. So, in this study it was found that

Nuaulu women have a low status or Nuaulu people view women as lower than men. This is reflected in the patriarchal culture that has quite influenced the customs of the Nuaulu tribe which has been passed down (teachings) from their ancestors.

For Nuaulu men and women from the past there have been regulations (customs) that have separated the roles and positions of women in Nuaulu community life. Ancestral teachings like this show that Nuaulu women may not become leaders in society, women may not become kings, women may not lead an event or Nuaulu traditional tradition, women may not become heads of Soa, women may not become heads of Saniri, women may not guard traditional houses and so on. All forms of prohibitions for Nuaulu women clearly show the differences in roles and positions between Nuaulu women and men.

The existence of Nuaulu women in their position and role in society so that Nuaulu society views the status and role of Nuaulu women as a reality that cannot be separated from the past. This means that what has been inherited by the ancestors in the past becomes a guideline for action to continue to be followed by the Nuaulu generation in the present, including how they uphold women in their society today.

### **Nuaulu People's Views of Nuaulu Women**

The view of the Nuaulu people towards Nuaulu women cannot be separated from the beliefs of their ancestors who have been role models and teachings passed down from generation to generation in the lives of the Nuaulu people, so that Nuaulu women in their role and position in society are traditionally prohibited or taboo in social relations, even Nuaulu women are not allowed to occupy important positions in state government and the customs of the Nuaulu ethnic group. Likewise with the division of tasks in relationships between men and women in the family and society.

As a result of the author's interview with the King of Nua Nea, Mr. S. Matoke, he said that: *We, the Nuaulu people, from the past until now, women have had different roles and positions from men. We got this teaching from our ancestors, where Nuaulu women cannot be leaders in the state, Nuaulu women cannot be kings, Nuaulu women cannot guard traditional houses, Nuaulu women cannot be heads of saniri, Nuaulu women cannot be heads of soa, and so on. That is how in making decisions, Nuaulu women are not allowed to give advice and opinions. For example, meetings in the baileu or traditional houses of each soa, where women are not allowed to participate. However, for a number of traditional ceremonies to bathe girls after giving birth (Ritiki) and bathe women after menstruation (Pinamou) and the ceremony to shave the hair of babies (Tihti Kuau) where women are allowed to attend these traditional events. Nuaulu women are always prohibited because women menstruate every month so they must be isolated in a special place, they are not allowed to socialize with men and they are not allowed to go out freely in the community, because it can cause bad impacts (disasters or accidents) for their people.* (Interview) with King Nua Nea).

The results of the interview with the King of Nua Nea have the meaning that for the Nuaulu community, women are lower in status than men because their ancestors have regulated it that way, so that the teachings passed down from generation to generation from their ancestors until now still place women on the weaker side, who are not allowed to be involved in various traditional ceremonies (other than traditional ceremonies in which women are part of a traditional process). They are not allowed to whisper their opinions, and so on.

Likewise, an excerpt from an interview with a traditional figure, Mr. N. Pia, said that: *The teachings of our ancestors (tete-nene) in Nuaulu customs and culture have regulated that men are higher in status than women. Women are not allowed to be leaders. If we are wrong in regulating it, then we have violated the customs of our ancestors, and this could be a sin or disaster for all of us.* (Interview with traditional figures).

The results of the interview above provide meaning that the teachings or knowledge conveyed by the ancestors from generation to generation are always reminded and conveyed to generation to generation that women have a role and position that is far different from men in Nuaulu customs and culture. Women should not be leaders and can be a disaster if placed incorrectly.

The author also interviewed a housewife, namely Mrs. T. Sounawe, she said that: *We as women are always different from men in everything, especially in Nuaulu traditional events, women are placed in a weak or low position when compared to men in custom. Women should not be more than men. For example, meetings in the Baileu (customary house), women should not be involved. When women pinamou or give birth must stay in the posune. This is already part of the customs of the Nuaulu people, and this teaching has been passed down from our ancestors. If we violate it, then we can get danger or disaster.* (Interview) with Housewife)

The interview means that women in Nuaulu customs are considered weak or low, therefore they should not be leaders in their country. Everything has been regulated in the customs of the ancestors of the Nuaulu people and is enforced from generation to generation through socialization to their children. And women always follow what has been taught according to customary rules. The results of the author's interviews with traditional figures and housewives show that there is recognition from men and women about the position of men being higher than women according to the teachings or knowledge of the ancestors who have regulated the lives of the Nuaulu people from the past until now. So that men's views of women in the perspective of Nuaulu customs are higher. In addition, there is a belief that if this is violated, it will bring disaster or calamity, not only for women but also for men and even the people.

Nuaulu Women Today Have experienced changes towards developing their identity and empowering their resources with the demands of knowledge in formal educational institutions to higher education. However, with their knowledge and education which are already good enough they can contribute more to their society with a good culture that places Nuaulu Women in a more advanced position in a good culture too. Highly educated Nuaulu Women only help with a number of government affairs in small amounts but cannot be involved in decision making for the national interest. The views of the Nuaulu community towards Nuaulu Women in the land of Nua Nea regarding the position of Women in Nuaulu customs and culture, where these views violate the rules and norms that have been maintained and preserved from generation to generation regarding the role and position of Nuaulu Women, will cause accidents or disasters for their community. And these views become the values that they have and must obey them so that they become guidelines for the Nuaulu community in general.

### **The Role and Position of Nuaulu Women in Traditions and Customary Rituals**

The existence of Women and Men in contrast are two entities that both exist in society even though they have different roles based on the understanding and customs of society towards women in various social roles.

This contextual study provides a comprehensive picture of Nuaulu Women in the context of the Nuaulu community's views on Women along with their roles and positions in the values and culture of the Nuaulu ethnic group. Various contextual customs and cultures of Nuaulu that involve or involve women do not mean that there is a dominant role played by Nuaulu women in the context of these customs but are instead used as objects for carrying out these rituals.

The Role and Position of Nuaulu Women in traditions and customary rituals, both birth ceremonies, hair cutting ceremonies (*tihti kuau*), adulthood ceremonies for girls (*pinamou*) for boys (*pakakeri*), marriage ceremonies, and death ceremonies (*autotu nimoe*). All of these traditional ritual processes show the position and role of women which are regulated according to their respective traditional processes, there are women who are allowed to be directly involved and play an important role in the traditional process, but there are also positions and roles of Nuaulu women who are prohibited and who are not allowed to play an active role in their traditional rituals.

As stated by King Nua Nea, that *the involvement of Nuaulu women in traditional ceremonial activities, where women who are allowed to be directly involved and play an active role is during birth ceremonies, toddler hair cutting ceremonies, and adulthood ceremonies for girls. While women's tribes who are not allowed to be directly involved are marriage ceremonies, adulthood ceremonies for boys, and death ceremonies.* (Interview with King Nua Nea).

The explanation of the King of Nua Nea indirectly sees the difference in the role and position of women and men in the traditional ceremonial process of the Nuaulu tribe. For example, the role of women in birth ceremonies, they dominate the ceremony, help the birth process (mother), prepare all the needs of the mother giving birth during the process of living in the posune house, the process of bathing the mother giving birth and her baby. In all these processes, the active role is played by the female race, the male race who is married or the brother of the wife/husband, has the task of preparing the posune house, and other equipment that is only done by men, and in this male role process, they must not interact directly with the mother giving birth, let alone meet face to face closely, this is taboo for the male race and can bring disaster.

The same thing also happened when the author discussed with one of the Nuaulu community leaders, who was also the first civil servant from the Nuaulu tribe and had a structural position as Head of Village in one of the Sub-districts in Amahai Regency, namely Hollo Village, where he said that: *Various Nuaulu traditional ceremonies in which there are roles and positions of women and men in the traditional ceremony procession, namely the existence of taboos or taboos for women or men to be in the traditional procession. Women are not allowed to be in the procession of the male adulthood ceremony (pakakeri), marriage and death ceremonies. Likewise with men in birth ceremonies, girl adulthood ceremonies (pinamou), men are not allowed to interact directly or meet face to face first with the girl who is being pinamou or the mother who is giving birth. All of these taboos can be obstacles, disasters, or accidents for all of us, and the cultural customs of the*

*Nuaulu tribe have been regulated by the ancestors (aunts and ancestors) which have been passed down until now.* (Interview with the Head of Hollo Village in the Nua Nea area).

The interview was given the meaning that the Nuaulu traditional procession has been socialized from generation to generation according to the teachings of the ancestors, there are prohibitions that must be obeyed and upheld by the community. So that the role and position of women and men in traditional ceremonies are very sacred in carrying out the traditional ceremony procession, and the division of tasks for women and men is closely monitored and adjusted to the role and position in their traditional ceremonies.

The existence of women and men universally are two equal entities that exist in society, although they have different roles and positions in providing understanding and habits of carrying them out in various social roles.

### **Sociological Interpretation of Nuaulu Women**

This study provides a comprehensive picture of How Nuaulu Women view themselves in the Nuaulu community, and how the role and position of Nuaulu Women are in the customs and rituals of Nuaulu. Sociological research studies show How the role and position of Nuaulu Women are very weak and limited in their space for movement in social roles according to custom and have been regulated and maintained in the teachings of the ancestors (ancestral tetene). Therefore, the teachings and prohibitions in a custom become a reference to be followed from generation to generation in carrying out every traditional ritual of the Nuaulu community in the land of Nua Nea. In addition, the views of the Nuaulu community on the role and position of Nuaulu women and men are clearly and firmly stated in the standard customary structure since ancient times (ancestors) until now it is still maintained and preserved from generation to generation.

The views of the Nuaulu community on the position of women are that they do not have the same rights and obligations in the customary structure in the state government system, for several basic reasons that influence the role and position of Nuaulu women, namely that women must follow a special way in the pinamou customary process. The symbolism attached to women who menstruate, they must be isolated in the pagar betis house for several days until their menstruation is over, only then can they carry out activities as usual in society.

The process of Nuaulu ceremonies or customs in the form of birth ceremonies and girls' adulthood ceremonies (pinamou) places the position, role and status of Nuaulu women more specifically, meaning that women in the ritual ceremony play an important role and are treated specially by men. Likewise, men are prohibited from approaching or carrying out activities around women who are participating in the ceremony.

The categorization of the Nuaulu community's views on women sociologically shows a grouping based on the customary structure and social roles in Nuaulu society, namely:

1. For the Kings (*Yaonate Aiya*) and the Soa Chiefs (Amari) all are male and strongly adhere to the customs of the Nuaulu ethnic group and become agents of socialization of Nuaulu customary values from generation to generation. Likewise, the absence of involvement of Nuaulu women in decision-making in various social fields is already a taboo for Nuaulu women which has been stated in the ancestral heritage.
2. For adolescent and adult women who are not married or who are already married and still in school, where they are more interested in the development of modernization

today, they concentrate more on education, enjoy information broadcasts via TV, android cellphones (face book, WA, Youtube) than they think about or take care of customs, but they still obey various norms and customary values that have been taught by their parents and traditional figures to them. They do not want to violate customary rules so that they do not get into trouble in their life journey.

3. For women who are married, they continue to carry out all customary provisions with all customary ceremonial processes from birth to death that have occurred are an inseparable part of the customary life of the Nuaulu community. Nuaulu women are very afraid of violating customary rules because of the customary law sanctions from their ancestors. They do not want to oppose customary provisions that can bring disaster or disaster to family life. The development of Nuaulu children is now large, namely they have attended school from early childhood education, basic education to higher education, and the hope of parents (Nuaulu women) is that there will be change and innovation for their generation to advance and be able to contribute to public spaces.
4. There is a division of tasks between Nuaulu women and men, women manage garden produce, mix forest and river products, make weaving, and sell garden produce to the market, while men hunt, process forest products, open new gardens.

## **CONCLUSION**

The role and position of Nuaulu women in the eyes of their community cannot be separated from the ancestral beliefs that have become guidelines and teachings passed down from generation to generation for the Nuaulu community, so that Nuaulu women in their position and status in society according to custom do not have prohibitions or taboos in social relations, even women are not allowed to occupy important positions in the government of the country and the customs of the Nuaulu tribe, such as women are not allowed to become kings, women are not allowed to become soa chiefs, women are not allowed to become saniri chiefs. Likewise, the division of tasks in the relationship between men and women in the family and community. Such as farming (farming), mixing forest and river products, hunting, processing forest products, weaving, and so on.

The role and position of Nuaulu women in the customs and rituals of the Nuaulu community in the form of birth ceremonies, hair cutting ceremonies (tihti kuau), girls' adulthood ceremonies (pinamou), boys' adulthood ceremonies (pakakeri), marriage ceremonies and death ceremonies (autotu nimoe). The status, position and role of women in each traditional ceremony are determined based on the traditional ritual procession, where women may be directly involved and play an important role in the traditional process, but there are also women who may not play an active role or are even prohibited from their traditional rituals.

The Nuaulu community's view of women sociologically shows a grouping based on the customary structure and social role in Nuaulu society, where the King (Yaonate Aiya) and the Soa Chief (Amari) are male races who also hold control and are agents of socialization of the Nuaulu Tribe's customary values from generation to generation. For teenage/adult women who are not yet married or still in school, they are more interested in modernization development, concentrating on education, information via TV, Android

phones (Facebook, WA, Youtube), but they still obey various norms and customary values that have been taught by their parents and traditional figures.

Meanwhile, for women who are already married, they still carry out all customary provisions with all their customary ceremonial processions from birth to death (life cycle) and they are afraid of violating customary rules because of ancestral sanctions (punishments). They do not want to oppose customary rules because it will bring disaster or calamity to the lives of women, families and communities.

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