

## Social Construction of Merantau in Minangkabau Society in Capital City of Indonesia, Jakarta

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**Abstract :** Merantau is one of the traditions that has been done by the Minangkabau tribe since the 15th century where it is based on socio-economic factors. In fact, that is not only limited to economic factors alone but more how to develop themselves through the experience to get the skills or education. The lack of jobs opportunity in the hometown causes the community, especially for young men to seek livelihoods in other areas. Unemployment impacts on the economy of the community that led to change in the pattern of employment from farmers to traders or new businesses in areas outside of their homeland. This is also worsened because many young people are not interested in becoming a farmer and working on the land in their village. In this context, merantau is considered to be an alternative to fulfilling livelihoods, and therefore this study examines how the merantau tradition constructed by the Minangkabau community, West Sumatera Province. The research method is done by literature review by collecting information related to the social construction of merantau tradition from various scientific publications. The results show how merantau becomes a solution of economic problems for Minangkabau society. Merantau which has now become an institutionalized tradition for the Minangkabau community where the culture of merantau occurred like a chain that can raise the people from the condition of poverty. When there are people who have successfully in merantau, they tend to bring other relatives who have not found a job to be able to trade with them. In the place of merantau, they will be disciplined to learn how to trade. Eventually, they will have new skills to trade and even make their own business. The tradition of bringing relatives to the rantau to be empowered is a unique side of merantau because it is influenced by the Matrilinear kinship system. The matrilineal kinship system in Minangkabau is the largest in the world where helping relatives are considered to be of the highest value. This system also places men as high positions where men should be encouraged to go abroad for financial success and to help their relatives in their hometown. The success of this tradition (to uplift and resolve the poverty and manpower issues) is demonstrated by the tradition of Minangkabau communities that have been successful in the area of Rantau that send money to their relatives in their homes (remittance). Merantau tradition can also be an alternative in reducing unemployment especially for young people where it is demonstrated by the culture of helping relatives to get work outside of their homeland.

**Keywords :** matrilineal kinship system, merantau, minangkabau community, reducing unemployment

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