



## Divorce in Balinese Customary Law and Women's Social Dynamics

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**Abstract.** *This study examines divorce in Balinese customary law as a social process involving gender power relations and women's experiences. In the patrilineal system, divorce is not only private, but is a collective mechanism involving the family, communities, and customary institutions. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with in-depth interview, observation, and documentation techniques of nine informants in Badung Regency. The results of the study show that divorce functions to maintain social stability while reproducing gender inequality. Women experience social dislocation, changes in position in the family, social stigma, and limited relationships with children. Nevertheless, women also show agency through adaptability in post-divorce life. The conclusion of this study confirms that divorce is an interaction between social structures, power relations, and individual experiences, where social stability is not always in line with gender justice.*

**Keywords :** *Divorce; Balinese Customary Law; Gender Relations; Women's Agency*

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**Abstrak :** *Penelitian ini mengkaji perceraian dalam hukum adat Bali sebagai proses sosial yang melibatkan relasi kuasa gender dan pengalaman perempuan. Dalam sistem patrilineal, perceraian tidak hanya bersifat privat, tetapi merupakan mekanisme kolektif yang melibatkan keluarga, masyarakat, dan lembaga adat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi terhadap sembilan informan di Kabupaten Badung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perceraian berfungsi menjaga stabilitas sosial sekaligus mereproduksi ketimpangan gender. Perempuan mengalami dislokasi sosial, perubahan posisi dalam keluarga, stigma sosial, serta keterbatasan relasi dengan anak. Namun demikian, perempuan juga menunjukkan agensi melalui kemampuan beradaptasi dalam kehidupan pasca perceraian. Kesimpulan penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa perceraian merupakan interaksi antara struktur sosial, relasi kuasa, dan pengalaman individu, di mana stabilitas sosial tidak selalu sejalan dengan keadilan gender.*

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**Kata Kunci:** *Perceraian; Hukum Adat Bali; Relasi Gender; Agensi Perempuan*

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### INTRODUCTION

Marriage in Balinese society is not only understood as a relationship between two individuals, but also as a social bond involving extended families and indigenous communities. The patrilineal kinship system embraced by the Balinese people places men as the successors of the lineage (purusa), while women after marriage tend to enter the husband's family (Adnyani, 2017; Khayati et al., 2024). The change in position is not only symbolic, but also has real social consequences in women's lives. Women no longer only play a role in the domestic sphere, but are also bound by social and customary obligations in the husband's family environment.

Domestic life in the Balinese indigenous people is basically expected to run harmoniously and sustainably. Strong traditional and cultural values are the foundation for maintaining family integrity. The reality on the ground shows that conflict in marriage remains inevitable. Differences of views, economic pressure, and communication problems often trigger tension in the household. When the conflict can no longer be resolved, divorce becomes a choice taken by married couples (Anggraeni et al., 2025; Novianti et al., 2025).

Divorce in the context of Balinese customary law is not only interpreted as the end of the relationship between husband and wife. Divorce is also closely related to broader social relationship changes. The status of individuals in the family and society is shifting. Kinship relationships that were previously established through marriage have changed, and can even be broken. Divorce proceedings often involve extended families as well as traditional village officials, so that the settlement takes into account not only the interests of the individual, but also the social balance within the community (Asifah & Alauddin, 2025; Manuputty et al., 2024).

The experience of divorce shows that there is a fairly clear difference between men and women. Men generally remain in the same family environment and customary structures. Women often have to face more significant changes. Divorced women can lose their position in the husband's family while also facing readjustment when they return to their home family (Nasirudin & Multazam, 2025). This condition does not always go easily because the social status has changed.

Social pressure is also part of the experience that cannot be ignored. Judgments from the surrounding environment often influence the way women live life after divorce. Social stigma can appear in many forms, both directly and indirectly. This situation shows that divorce is not only a personal issue, but also related to how society builds and maintains certain values in social life.

The relationship between women and children also shows complex dynamics. The patrilineal system that places children in the paternal lineage affects the position of women after divorce. The emotional closeness between mother and child can change due to limitations in the family structure (Clara & Wardani, 2020). This condition is often one of the aspects that women feel the most after divorce. The experience shows that customary structures not only regulate formal relationships, but also affect emotional relationships in the family.

The reality that occurs shows that there is a tension between traditional values that are upheld and the social experiences experienced by women. Customary values are often seen as a guideline in maintaining social order, but in practice not all individuals feel the same impact (Bimantoro, 2024). Women in some situations are in a more difficult position because they have to adjust to the changes that occur after divorce.

A number of previous studies have discussed divorce in Balinese society, but the discussion still tends to focus on aspects of customary law and kinship structure. Adnyani outlined how Balinese customary law regulates marriage and divorce within the framework of the purusa system (Adnyani, 2016). Cahyani highlighted that Balinese's patrilineal customary legal structure places women in an unequal position, especially in inheritance rights and social status (Cahyani & Amelda, 2022). Mahastari gave an overview of the impact of divorce on women, especially in the social aspect (Mahastari, 2026).

These studies make an important contribution to understanding divorce in Balinese society. A more in-depth study space is still open, especially in looking at divorce from the perspective of women's social experience. The approach used in previous research has not fully described how women undergo social change after divorce and how they interpret their position in the family and society.

Although a number of studies have examined divorce in Balinese indigenous peoples, most of them still focus on normative aspects, such as customary law, kinship systems, and the role of customary institutions in maintaining social order. Such approaches tend to place divorce as part of a structural social mechanism, without delving deeply into how the experiences of individuals, particularly women, are shaped in those situations. Research highlighting the impact of divorce on

women is generally still descriptive, and has not fully linked these experiences to power relations and broader social dynamics.

Studies that integrate gender sociological perspectives with functional structural approaches in the context of Balinese traditional divorce are also limited. In fact, these two perspectives can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how social structures not only maintain stability, but also have the potential to reproduce inequality, especially in the relationship between men and women. These limitations show that divorce has not been widely studied as a space for interaction between social structures and women's subjective experiences.

This research is here to fill this gap by seeing divorce not only as a social event, but as a process that shows the relationship between social structures, power relations, and women's experiences. In contrast to previous research, this study specifically places women as subjects who experience, interpret, and respond to post-divorce social changes. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how women are not only in structured positions, but also have the ability to navigate the conditions at hand.

The novelty of this research lies in the effort to integrate structural, functional, and gender sociological perspectives in reading the phenomenon of divorce in indigenous Balinese peoples. This research shows that social mechanisms that function to maintain stability can actually go hand in hand with the reproduction of gender inequality. In addition, this study also highlights the forms of women's agency in dealing with social pressures, which have so far received less attention in the study of customary-based divorce.

This research specifically offers a different approach by placing divorce as a space of interaction between social structures and gender power relations. Unlike previous studies that tended to separate the analysis of customary law and social experience, this study integrates the two in one analytical framework. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how social structures not only govern individual lives, but also shape women's experiences concretely in everyday life. This research also confirms that women are not only objects in customary systems, but have the capacity as agents who actively respond to and navigate the social pressures faced. This affirmation is important because it shows that the experience of divorce is not passive, but dynamic and contextual.

This research not only makes an empirical contribution to women's post-divorce experience, but also offers a conceptual contribution in understanding divorce as a complex social phenomenon. The approach used shows that divorce is inseparable from the interaction between social structures, power relations, and individual experiences. Women in this study are not only positioned as affected parties, but also as subjects who have the ability to respond and navigate the social changes they face. The results of this study enrich the study of sociology, especially in understanding the dynamics of divorce in indigenous peoples. The analysis also showed that social structures are not always neutral, but can contribute to the reproduction of gender inequality. This understanding is important in looking at divorce more critically. This research opens up space to look at the phenomenon of divorce from a more comprehensive perspective. This study also provides the basis for future research that wants to develop similar analyses. The resulting contributions are not only descriptive, but also analytical. This research is expected to broaden the understanding of the relationship between social structures and women's experiences in the context of indigenous peoples.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach to understand more deeply the social dynamics of women in divorce in the indigenous peoples of Bali. This approach was chosen because it is considered the most suitable to explore the experiences, views, and meanings that are directly felt by women who have experienced divorce. Understanding social realities like this is not enough if seen only through numbers, but needs to be traced through the stories, experiences, and social interactions they live. The type of research used is qualitative descriptive. This research is directed to describe how divorce in Balinese customary law occurs in people's lives and how women undergo

social changes afterwards. The focus is not only on the divorce itself, but also on the accompanying experiences, such as changes in social relations and positions within the family and customary environment. The descriptive approach helps the researcher to compile a complete and systematic picture of the phenomenon being studied.

This research was conducted on people who still apply Balinese customary law in their daily lives. The location was chosen *purposively* taking into account that customary practices, particularly those related to marriage and divorce, are still actively implemented. Choosing a location like this makes it easier for researchers to obtain data that is in accordance with the focus of the research. Thus, this research was conducted in Badung Regency, Bali, as a location that has social dynamics between tradition and modernity. The informants in this study were determined *purposively* by considering the suitability of the characteristics for the purpose of the study. The number of informants is not rigidly set from the beginning, but develops flexibly until it reaches a data saturation point, which is a condition when the information obtained has been repeated and no significant new data is found. In the research process, nine informants were obtained consisting of five main informants and four additional informants. The main informant is a woman who has experienced a divorce in the context of Balinese customary law, aged between 28-35 years, and has been divorced for at least one year. Meanwhile, additional informants consist of traditional leaders, community members, and family members who have an understanding of divorce practices in Balinese customs. The selection of the main informant is based on certain criteria, namely women who have experienced divorce in the patrilineal customary system, have direct experience of post-divorce social dynamics, and are able to express their experiences reflectively. This criterion is set so that the data obtained is relevant and able to describe the phenomenon in depth.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews are the main way to understand the experiences and views of informants directly. The interview process is carried out openly so that informants can tell their experiences more freely. Observations were carried out to see social conditions and interactions that occurred in the community. Documentation is used as a complement, especially to obtain information related to customary practices and other supporting data. The use of these techniques aims to make the data obtained richer and complementary.

Data analysis is carried out in stages since the data collection process took place. The data analysis in this study uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawback. (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024). This process takes place on a cyclical basis from data collection to the final stage of research, allowing researchers to continuously verify and deepen the meaning of the data obtained. The data obtained is then selected, grouped, and arranged in the form of a narrative. This process is carried out to find patterns, relationships, and meanings that emerge from the informant's experience. The analysis does not only stop at what the informant conveys, but also tries to understand the social context behind it.

The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation techniques. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation are compared with each other to see the consistency of information. This method is done so that the results of the research do not depend only on one source, so that it can provide a more reliable picture.

This study also pays attention to the ethical aspects of research, such as obtaining consent from informants before conducting interviews and maintaining the confidentiality of informant identities. The researcher ensured that the informant's participation was voluntary without coercion. In addition, the data obtained is used only for academic purposes. Researchers also try to maintain objectivity during the research process. This is important to maintain the integrity of the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of divorce in Balinese customary law not only represents the end of the marital relationship, but also shows how social structures work in regulating the life of individuals. Divorce is in a social system that involves power relations, customary norms, and broader collective

interests. The perspective of gender sociology views that divorce cannot be understood solely as a personal event, but as part of a social mechanism that contributes to reproducing the position and inequality of roles between men and women in society (Wahyudi et al., 2026).

The customary values and norms that govern divorce show how society maintains social order through social control mechanisms. This structure does not work neutrally, but rather has a tendency to maintain an established pattern of relationships. In the patrilineal kinship system, such arrangements not only regulate family relationships, but also reproduce gender inequality by placing women in a more vulnerable position in the event of divorce (Harahap, 2019).

The difference in experience between men and women in divorce shows a structural inequality. The patrilineal system not only regulates the lineage, but also shapes the distribution of power within the family and society. Men tend to remain in a stable social structure, while women have to deal with greater social dislocations. This condition shows that divorce becomes a space where gender inequality not only arises, but is also legitimized by existing social structures.

The results and discussions in this study are directed at three main interrelated aspects, namely divorce as a social process in the indigenous Balinese people, women's social position and experience in divorce, and changes in women's social relations after divorce.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### 1. Divorce in Balinese Customary Law as a Social Process

Divorce in the indigenous Balinese people takes place through a social process that is not simple and involves various parties in social life. Marriage relationships are not positioned as a purely private affair, but are closely related to extended families and indigenous communities. In practice, domestic conflicts do not necessarily lead to divorce, but through the stages of settlement first, especially within the scope of the nuclear family. This process shows that the decision to separate is not made spontaneously, but rather through considerations involving broader social relations. Divorce is part of social dynamics that are inseparable from the involvement of parties outside the married couple.

This experience can be seen in the story of one of the female informants, Ni Luh Sri (34 years old), who explained that the divorce process she experienced was quite long and involved the family from the beginning. He said, "At first we tried to solve it in the family first, the parents talked. It didn't just split up, but in the end it couldn't be maintained anymore." From this experience, it can be seen that efforts to maintain relationships are done first through communication and family involvement. The process not only shows the stages in divorce, but also illustrates how the family becomes an important part of the journey of domestic conflict.

Family involvement does not stop at the scope of the nuclear family, but also extends to the extended family. Divorce is seen as a collective issue that is considered collectively, not merely a personal decision between husband and wife. This was conveyed by I Made (52 years old) as a member of the community who stated, "In Bali, marriage is not just a matter of two people. The family will definitely intervene if there is a problem, especially if you want to get a divorce." The statement illustrates that in the life of the indigenous people of Bali, marital relations are in a wider social network, so that every conflict that arises has implications involving many parties.

Similar views also emerged from family members. Ni Ketut Sari (55 years old), who is the parent of the female informant, said that divorce was not an easy decision for the family to accept. He explained, "We as parents certainly don't want our children to get divorced. So when there is a problem, we try to hold it back and find a way to fix it." This statement shows that the family is not only the party that knows about the conflict, but is also actively involved in efforts to maintain the integrity of the household. This involvement shows the emotional connection and responsibility felt by the family towards the sustainability of their child's marriage.

In addition to the family, the involvement of traditional villages is also part of the divorce process, especially when conflicts cannot be resolved within the family scope. Traditional leaders or

village leaders have a role in providing considerations so that conflicts do not develop into a broader problem. Pak Wayan (60 years old) explained, "We usually don't decide right away, but rather provide a way so that the problem doesn't get bigger." This role suggests that the divorce process also intersects with social structures at the community level, where conflict resolution is not only carried out personally, but also through social mechanisms involving customary institutions.

Divorce in the Balinese indigenous people is also inseparable from factors that develop in social life, one of which is infidelity. This condition is not only seen as a problem in the relationship between husband and wife, but also a concern in the social environment. Komang (29 years old) revealed, "The hardest thing is not only the problems at home, but also the things people say. It feels like a topic of conversation in the environment." The same thing was conveyed by Pak Ketut (47 years old), "If there is an affair, it usually becomes a conversation. There is no official punishment, but socially the impact must be felt, especially in the indigenous environment which is still strong." Another experience was also conveyed by Ni Nyoman (30 years old) who stated, "It is not easy to get divorced, because there is a lot to think about, not only me and my husband, but also my family and the people around me." These experiences show that divorce is in a complex social situation, where the decisions taken are not only related to the individual, but also involve consideration of the broader social environment.

## 2. Women's Position and Social Experience in Balinese Traditional Divorce

Divorce in the indigenous Balinese people brings about changes that are not only related to the end of the marital relationship, but also have an impact on women's social position in daily life. Women who were previously part of their husband's family must face changes in the structure of life that they have lived. These changes do not only concern the aspect of housing, but also touch on social relations, roles in the family, and the way women place themselves in the social environment. Life after divorce shows a process of adjustment that is not simple and takes place gradually.

This experience was conveyed by Ni Luh Sri (34 years old) who explained that after the divorce he had to return to his family of origin and start his life again from scratch. She revealed, "After the divorce, I returned to my parents' house. It feels different, because I used to be with my husband's family, now I have to start again." These changes show that women have to adapt to the environment that has previously been abandoned. The return of women to their families of origin not only means changing residences, but also facing different situations than before, both in relationships with family members and in carrying out daily activities.

The changes experienced are not only related to physical conditions or housing, but also concern the position of women in the family. Ni Luh Sri (34 years old) also said that she felt that she was no longer in the same position as before marriage. This experience shows that there is a change in the way women are treated and in the way they interpret their existence in the family environment. Women have to readjust to different roles, which are not always the same as pre-marriage conditions.

A similar experience was conveyed by Ni Nyoman (30 years old) who explained that the adjustment process after divorce does not take place instantly. He stated that the change in roles and responsibilities made him have to adapt to the new conditions. This process is carried out gradually and is not always easy, because women have to adjust to various changes that occur in daily life. Life after divorce shows that there are dynamics that continue along with the adjustment process.

Different experiences arise in other informants with different family conditions. Ni Made (32 years old) said that even though he was accepted back by his family, there was still a feeling of incomplete discomfort in living his daily life. He revealed that there was a change in the way family members interacted with him, although it was not always conveyed directly. These changes can be felt in the form of attitudes, attention, and different ways of communicating than before. Change is also felt in the wider social environment. Komang (29 years old) revealed that after the divorce she felt a change in social interaction. She states: "Sometimes it is not just the circumstances at home,

but how others see us after a divorce." This experience shows that divorce not only impacts personal life, but also affects relationships with the surrounding environment. The way others view divorced women is part of the social experience they live.

Another experience was conveyed by Ayu (30 years old) who felt social pressure in her daily life. He said: "There are things that are talked about, even if they are not directly to me. But it still feels good." This situation shows that social interaction does not always take place openly, but can be felt through changes in attitudes and behaviors from the surrounding environment. Women feel a difference in the way others interact, although it is not always expressed directly.

Some informants also revealed that changes in the social environment can be seen in the form of indirect conversations, maintaining distance, and differences in treatment in daily life. These changes do not always appear clearly, but can still be felt in the social interactions that take place. This condition affects women's comfort in interacting and in carrying out social activities in the community.

The relationship between women and children is also an important part of the experience after divorce. Komang (29 years old) said that, "The hardest thing is about the children, because they can't always be as close as they used to be." This experience shows that divorce also has an impact on personal relationships, especially in the closeness between mother and child. These changes in relationships are part of the experience that women must live after divorce.

The experiences conveyed by the informants show that life after divorce is colored by various forms of adjustment. Women undergo changes in the family environment, in social relationships, and in relationships with children. These changes do not occur immediately, but take place gradually in daily life and become part of the experience that continues to be lived after divorce.

### **3. Changes in Women's Social Relations After Divorce in Balinese Indigenous Peoples**

Divorce brings about changes that are not only felt in the family sphere, but also in women's social relations in the wider environment. These changes are not always noticeable directly, but rather appear slowly through daily interactions. Women began to feel differences in social closeness, how they interacted, and their involvement in people's lives. This situation makes women have to readjust to their position in the social environment.

This experience was conveyed by Ni Luh Sri (34 years old) who revealed that after the divorce she began to feel a distance in her social relationships. She stated: "After a divorce, it feels like there is a distance with some people. Not all, but there are those who have different ways of behaving." These changes are not always shown openly, but can be felt through the attitudes and ways others interact in daily life.

Changes in social relations also affect the way women behave in the social environment. Komang (29 years old) revealed that he became more cautious after the divorce. He feels the need to maintain attitudes and behaviors in interacting with others. This experience shows that women not only feel changes from the outside, but also adjust the way they carry themselves in social life. Adjustments also occur in the family environment, especially after the woman returns to the family of origin. Ni Nyoman (30 years old) said that she was no longer in the same position as before marriage. These changes are felt in the sharing of participation in the way of interacting with family members. This situation shows that changes in relationships do not only occur outside, but also within the family environment itself.

The views of family members also show a change in relationship dynamics. Ibu Ketut (55 years old) said that although the reception was still given, the atmosphere in the family did not fully return to the way it was before. He said, "We still accept, but the atmosphere is not the same as before. There are changes, especially regarding the role at home." This statement shows that the change in relationships in the family takes place slowly and is felt by all family members.

Changes in social relations are also seen in women's involvement in community activities. Some informants revealed that they became more limited in their interactions. Feelings of discomfort arise because there is concern about the judgment of the surrounding environment. This

situation makes women not always as free to participate in social activities as before. The experience was conveyed by Ayu (30 years old) who revealed that she felt hesitant to be involved in social activities. He stated that there were concerns about being the subject of conversation in the surrounding environment. This feeling makes her more cautious in interacting and choosing not to get too involved in activities together.

Changes in social relations are also recognized by members of the community. Pak Ketut (47 years old) said that there are differences in the way society treats divorced women. He explains, "Usually there is a change in the way people behave, unlike before, although it is not always obvious." These changes are not always manifested directly, but can be felt in everyday interactions. Some informants described that these changes appear in subtle forms, such as indirect conversation, maintaining distance, and reduced involvement in social interactions. Women remain in society, but feel a difference in the way they are treated. This situation affects the comfort of interacting and living a social life.

The relationship with the child is also an important part of the changes experienced after divorce. Komang (29 years old) said that, "The hardest thing is about the children, because they can't always be as close as they used to be." This change shows that divorce not only has an impact on social relationships in the community, but also on relationships that are more personal.

The experiences conveyed by the informants show that the change in social relations after divorce takes place gradually and is not always visible directly. Women undergo changes in family relationships, the social environment, and in relationships with children. These changes become part of daily life that continues to be lived after divorce.

## RESEARCH DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of divorce in the indigenous peoples of Bali cannot be understood as a stand-alone event, but rather as part of a broader social dynamic. Divorce not only represents the end of the relationship between husband and wife, but it also reflects how social structures work in regulating the life of individuals. The results of the study show that the divorce process involves the family, communities, and customary institutions as social actors who have a role in determining the direction of decisions. This condition shows that individuals are not completely free to make decisions, because they must consider the prevailing norms and values. Divorce is a space of interaction between individual interests and collective interests. In this context, personal actions cannot be separated from the social structure that surrounds them. Social relationships are an important factor in shaping the divorce experience. The decision to separate has an impact not only on the couple, but also on the wider social network (Januari, 2023; Pratama, 2025). Thus, divorce can be understood as a complex social phenomenon.

The involvement of the family in the divorce process shows that the family has a central position in maintaining social balance. The family functions not only as a domestic unit, but also as a space for resolving conflicts. Conflict resolution efforts carried out before divorce show the existence of an internal social control mechanism. In Talcott Parsons' perspective, the family functions as an institution that maintains order through the internalization of social values and norms (Raffi et al., 2026). This function can be seen in how the family tries to maintain the integrity of the household. The mediation process carried out by the family shows that conflict does not directly lead to divorce. This confirms that the family has a role in directing individual actions. Family involvement also reflects a collective responsibility for the sustainability of marriage (Endria & Hasmira, 2026). Thus, the family becomes an important part of the dynamics of divorce.

Marriage in the indigenous Balinese community is not seen as a private relationship alone, but as part of a social system that involves many parties. The involvement of the extended family shows that conflicts in the household are seen as a common problem. This condition shows that social relations have a strong influence on the life of individuals. The decision to divorce is not only considered personally, but also collectively. Individuals must consider the social impact of the decisions taken (Oktaviani, 2025). This suggests that social structures limit the space of an

individual's movement. In this situation, divorce becomes part of a broader social dynamic. Social relations are a determining factor in the divorce process. Thus, divorce cannot be separated from its social context.

The involvement of customary institutions in divorce shows that social structures work systematically in managing conflicts. Indigenous leaders have a role in giving consideration and maintaining social balance (Akmal & Hos, 2026; Sukiman et al., 2025). This role suggests that conflicts are not resolved individually. In a functional structural perspective, social institutions have the function of maintaining system stability. Customary institutions are part of this mechanism. The existence of customary institutions shows that divorce is part of the social system (Clara & Wardani, 2020). The conflict resolution process involves applicable norms and rules. This shows that divorce is not just a personal issue. Thus, customary institutions have an important role in maintaining social order.

The social mechanisms at work in divorce are not always neutral. The results of the study show that women tend to be in a more vulnerable position than men. The existing social structure often maintains an unbalanced pattern of relationships. This condition shows that social stability is not always in line with social justice. Women face greater consequences after divorce. This can be seen from the changes in social position experienced by women. Women have to adjust to the new environment. This situation shows the existence of inequality in the social structure. These inequality are not always directly visible. But it can be felt in everyday experience (Wasi'ah & Mesra, 2025).

The perspective of gender sociology helps to understand these conditions more deeply. Gender is understood as a social construct that is formed through power relations. Judith Butler explains that gender is formed through social practices that are constantly repeated (Triana et al., 2026). In this context, women do not only face divorce as a personal event. Women also face social constructs that affect their position. This condition shows that women's experience is shaped by social structures. Women are positioned in a specific role. This affects the way they are treated in society. Thus, a gender perspective becomes important in understanding divorce.

Power relations are an important aspect in the dynamics of divorce. The results of the study show that women do not have complete control over the decisions taken. The decision is influenced by family, customary norms, and community judgment. This power relationship is not always directly visible. But it comes in the form of subtle social pressure. Women must consider various interests in making decisions. This situation shows that power works through social norms (Nurseha & Arafat, 2024). Power relations limit women's space of movement. Thus, women are in a position that is not completely free.

Women's subordination is seen in the post-divorce experience. Women experience significant changes in social position. In the patrilineal system, women lose their positions in the husband's family. Women must return to their families of origin. This condition shows the existence of inequality in the social structure (Rokhimah, 2014). Previous research has shown that women are in a weaker position. The results of this study reinforce these findings. Women face greater challenges after divorce. These changes are not only social. But it also affects the emotional state of women.

The change in the position of women shows a social dislocation. Women must rebuild their social identity. This condition is not always easy. Women have to adjust to the new environment. This situation shows that divorce brings complex changes. Women not only lose their marital relationships. But it also undergoes changes in social relations. This process takes place gradually. This shows that divorce is a continuous social process.

Changes in social relations are an important part of women's experience after divorce in the indigenous peoples of Bali. Women began to feel a distance in social interactions that previously felt close and familiar. This distance is not always shown openly, but appears through changes in attitudes in daily life. This change can be seen in the way others communicate and in the intensity of the interaction that is decreasing. This condition shows that divorce not only has an impact on personal life, but also affects the position of women in the social environment. The public's assessment of the status of divorced women is a factor that influences this dynamic. Women feel a

difference in social treatment that was not previously experienced (Rahmalia & Sary, 2018). This situation shows that social control works through the perceptions and judgments that develop in society. Women must adjust to these conditions in order to continue to live a social life. Social relationships are a very decisive aspect in the divorce experience.

Changes in social relations also affect the way women behave in daily life. Women become more careful in interacting with others in their social environment. This caution arises in response to the change in attitudes felt from the surrounding environment. Women begin to consider actions and words so as not to cause negative judgment. This situation shows that women not only face pressure from outside, but also make adjustments from within. This process illustrates a change in the way women interpret social interaction. Women no longer interact as freely as before. Social interaction becomes more limited and controlled. This condition shows that the experience of divorce affects women's social behavior. Changes in social relations have a direct impact on the way women live their daily lives.

Women's agency is an important concept in understanding how women respond to these changes. Women are not completely in a passive position in the face of social pressure. Women have the ability to adapt to the conditions they face (Putri & Montessori, 2021). This agency is seen in the way women manage increasingly limited social interactions. Women also set boundaries in relation to the surrounding environment. The decision to keep your distance or limit interactions becomes part of the survival strategy. This condition shows that women still have room to act within limitations. Agency does not always appear in the form of open resistance to social structures. Agency can be the ability to survive and adapt in unfavorable situations. Women remain active actors in managing their lives.

The relationship between women and children is also an important part of the post-divorce experience. Women experience changes in closeness to children after divorce occurs. The patrilineal system that prevails in the indigenous Balinese people affects these conditions. Women do not always have the same access to children as they did before divorce (Mahastari, 2026). This condition shows that divorce not only has an impact on social relationships, but also personal relationships. This change becomes a quite heavy emotional experience for women. Women have to adjust to conditions that are not fully expected. Relationships with children become more limited in some situations. This shows that social structures have an influence on family relationships. Divorce has a complex impact on women's lives.

The social structure in the indigenous Balinese people seeks to maintain stability through various existing mechanisms. The functional structural perspective explains that each part of society has a specific function (Adibah, 2017). The function aims to maintain balance in the social system. In the context of divorce, social mechanisms work to manage the conflicts that occur. The involvement of families and customary institutions shows that there are efforts to maintain stability. This stability does not always have the same impact on all parties. Women are often in a position where they have to adjust to the existing structure. This condition shows that the social structure is not always neutral. Social stability can be achieved by inequality in social relations. A critical understanding of social structures is important in looking at this condition.

The perspective of gender sociology provides an understanding that social structures are not free from power relations. Social structures can reinforce existing inequalities in society. Women are often in a more vulnerable position in the structure (Wahyudi et al., 2026). This condition can be seen in women's experiences after divorce. Women face greater social pressure than men. This shows that gender inequality is still ongoing in social life. Power relations are a factor that affects these conditions. Women must adapt to the prevailing norms. Women's experience is shaped by existing social structures. Gender perspectives are important in understanding this phenomenon.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration between functional structural perspectives and gender sociology. This study does not only see divorce as an ordinary social phenomenon. Divorce is understood as a space of interaction between social structures and gender power relations. This approach provides a more comprehensive point of view. Previous research has tended

to look at divorce descriptively. This research provides a more in-depth analysis of women's experiences. The integration of these two perspectives is an important contribution to the study of sociology. This research shows that social stability does not always mean justice. This condition shows the complexity in the social structure. The value of the novelty of this research lies in the analytical approach used.

Another novelty lies in the focus on women's post-divorce experiences. This research does not only describe the divorce process. This research also reveals the social impact experienced by women in daily life. Women's experiences are the center of analysis in this study. This provides a different perspective from previous research. Previous research has focused more on legal or customary aspects. This study looks at social aspects in more depth. Women's experiences show complex dynamics. This condition makes a new contribution to gender studies. This research enriches the literature on divorce in indigenous peoples.

This research also shows that there is ambiguity in the social structure. Structures that function to maintain stability also strengthen inequality. This condition shows that social structures are not always fair. Social stability can be achieved by the existence of an imbalance. Women are the ones who feel the impact the most. This shows the need for a critical analysis of social structures. This research opens up space to see the other side of social stability. This condition has rarely been discussed in previous studies. This perspective provides a new understanding of social dynamics. This research makes a conceptual contribution to the study of sociology.

Overall, divorce in the indigenous Balinese community is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. Divorce involves various aspects of social life. Women face changes in social relationships, family, and personal lives. Social structures and individual experiences interact with each other in shaping social reality. Power relations and subordination are an important part of the experience. Women also show agency in dealing with existing conditions. Divorce is not just a personal event. Divorce is a reflection of the social structure at work. Understanding this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach. This research makes an important contribution to the study of sociology.

## **CONCLUSION**

Divorce in the indigenous Balinese community cannot be understood as an individual event, but rather as part of a social dynamic that involves various elements in people's lives. The divorce process takes place through long stages involving families, communities, and customary institutions as part of a social mechanism that works collectively. The decision to separate is not entirely in a private space, as individuals remain in a network of social relations that influence every choice made. Strong customary values and norms help shape the way people understand and respond to divorce. Domestic conflicts do not necessarily lead to divorce, but through a settlement process that involves collective consideration. This condition shows that divorce is part of the social mechanism in maintaining order. The relationship between the individual and the social structure becomes very visible in this process. Divorce not only reflects personal conflicts, but also reflects the way the social system works. Thus, divorce can be understood as a complex and structured social phenomenon.

The position of women in divorce shows that there is an inequality that cannot be separated from the prevailing social structure. Women not only experience the end of marital relationships, but also face significant changes in social positions in the family and society. After divorce, women must return to their families of origin and undergo a process of adjustment that is not simple. These changes touch various aspects of life, ranging from roles in the family to social relationships lived. Women do not always return to the same position as before marriage. The patrilineal system has a strong influence in shaping these experiences. Women are in situations that demand social and emotional adaptation. Status changes also affect the way women are treated in social settings. This condition shows an unbalanced distribution of roles and powers. Thus, divorce shows the position of women who are more vulnerable in the social structure.

Women's experiences after divorce show dynamics that take place gradually in daily life. Women not only face changes in family structure, but also have to adjust to new social conditions. This adjustment process is not always easy and often takes time. Women must adapt to the environment that has previously been abandoned. Relationships with family members have changed quite noticeably. Women are also adjusting to different roles than before. These changes are not only social, but also touch the emotional aspect. This experience shows that divorce is an ongoing process. Life after divorce is a space for continuous adaptation. Thus, women's experiences are key in understanding the dynamics of divorce.

Changes in social relations are one of the main impacts felt by women after divorce. Women began to feel a distance in social interaction with the surrounding environment. These changes are not always visible directly, but are present through changes in attitudes and patterns of daily interactions. Social judgments of divorced women also affect their position in society. Women feel a difference in social treatment that was not previously experienced. This condition makes women more careful in interacting. Social relations that previously felt close have changed. Changes also occur in relationships with children, especially in the context of patrilineal systems that limit such closeness. The emotional relationship between mother and child is not easy to adjust. Thus, divorce has a complex impact on women's social and personal relationships.

The social structure in the indigenous Balinese people shows a dual role in the divorce process. The structure functions to maintain stability through the involvement of families and customary institutions in conflict resolution. This mechanism helps control conflicts so that they do not develop into a broader problem. But at the same time, the structure also contributes to maintaining gender inequality. Women are often in a position to adjust to unfavorable conditions. Social stability that is maintained does not always go hand in hand with social justice. This condition shows that the social structure is not neutral. However, women are not completely passive in dealing with these situations. Women show agency through the ability to adapt and navigate social pressures. Thus, the relationship between structure, power, and agency is key in understanding women's experiences in divorce.

This study shows that divorce in Balinese indigenous peoples is a complex, multidimensional, and inseparable phenomenon from the interaction between social structures, power relations, and individual experiences. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of structural, functional, and gender sociology perspectives in understanding divorce as a reproductive space as well as negotiating gender inequality. This research not only describes divorce as a social mechanism, but also as a space in which women actively experience and respond to social change. These findings make an important contribution to enriching sociological studies, especially in the context of indigenous peoples. Practically, this research can be considered for communities and customary institutions in reviewing existing social mechanisms to be more sensitive to gender justice. This research also opens up space for more in-depth follow-up studies. The resulting understanding shows that social stability is not always synonymous with social justice. The relationship between structure, power, and agency is the main key in reading this phenomenon. Thus, divorce is not only a social event, but also a reflection of the way society works in shaping and responding to inequality.

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