

Sundrang and the Authority of the Bride's Family in Bugis-Makassar Marriage in Masalembu: A Customary-Law and Fiqh al-Munakahat Analysis

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: 2026-08-26 Revised: 2026-09-05 Accepted: 2026-10-07 Keywords: Bugis-Makassar customary law, marriage guardianship, marriage prestasi, Sundrang, wali adhal	Sundrang, a customary prestation given by the groom's side to the bride's family before the marriage contract, remains an important expression of respect and family identity among the Bugis-Makassar community in Masalembu. This study examines the authority of the bride's family in determining Sundrang and the limits of that authority when the prestation becomes connected to the guardian's consent. Using a qualitative, normative-sociological case-study approach, the study draws on interviews with twelve purposively selected informants in Masalima Village, Masalembu. The findings show that Sundrang is distinct from mahr and is determined through family deliberation, but a socially circulating benchmark of approximately IDR 20–30 million increasingly influences expectations. Under Bugis-Makassar customary law, the bride's family has a legitimate role in determining Sundrang insofar as the practice serves the customary purposes associated with Pangadareng and Siri'. That authority becomes difficult to justify when Sundrang functions primarily as a prestige measure, causes substantial economic pressure, postpones or prevents a marriage, or is used as an indirect means of refusal. From the perspective of fiqh al-munakahat, Sundrang is not a requirement for the validity of marriage. Accordingly, a guardian's withholding of consent solely because Sundrang has not been fulfilled, absent another recognised Islamic ground for refusal, may substantively fall within the concept of wali adhal; any formal transfer of guardianship to a wali hakim remains subject to the procedure prescribed by Indonesian law. The study concludes that the continuity of Sundrang depends on maintaining its customary function without turning it into an independent condition for marriage or guardian consent.

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A. Introduction

Indonesia is widely characterised by ethnic and customary diversity that shapes marriage practices in different regions. Among the Bugis-Makassar, marriage is understood not merely as the union of two individuals but as a social event involving the honour and standing of the extended

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family. One expression of this understanding is *Sundrang*, a customary gift given by the groom's side to the bride's family before the marriage contract as a sign of respect and seriousness. Its social meaning is closely connected with the dignity of the bride's family, while its amount is often associated with social standing and the Bugis-Makassar value of *Siri'*, understood here as family honour and self-respect. This is the point at which the bride's family acquires a particularly strong position: the family commonly determines the amount of *Sundrang* and, in some cases, its decision affects whether the proposed marriage can proceed (Mariani 2014, 3; Tang 2017, 548–49; Rijal 2024, 28; Nadiyah 2021, 18).

In Masalembu Subdistrict, Sumenep Regency, the practice was brought and maintained by the Bugis-Makassar diaspora and has also become familiar to parts of the local population. As a social norm without a formal statutory basis, its continuing practice does not always correspond with its original purpose of expressing honour and strengthening relations between families. Although negotiation remains possible, bargaining power over the amount generally remains stronger on the bride's side, and some accounts describe high amounts being used as an indirect way of discouraging a proposal. More importantly for Islamic family law, the field material contains a case in which the guardian's consent to the marriage was withheld until the groom's side fulfilled the agreed *Sundrang*. Because *Sundrang* is not a requirement for the validity of an Islamic marriage, this practice raises a more specific question: whether customary authority over *Sundrang* remains within the limits of the guardianship recognised by Islamic law (Pemerintah Kabupaten Sumenep n.d.; Juliana and Anshori 2017, 6; Kadir, Nonci, and Halim 2021, 4).

Previous studies of *Sundrang* and comparable Bugis-Makassar marriage prestations have generally focused on their socio-cultural meaning, the factors determining the amount, or the economic obstacles they can create. Rijal (2024) found that *Sundrang* in Masalembu is related to wedding expenditure and the social position of the bride's family. Rohmalia (2023) discussed the possibility that a customary demand may become an *'urf fasid* when an excessive amount produces harm, while Sari (2025) examined economic disparity as an obstacle to parental approval without specifically connecting the issue to the institution of guardianship. Other studies of *wali adhal* similarly address customary or economic reasons for refusal, but do not place *Sundrang* itself at the centre of the analysis. These studies provide an important foundation, but they leave the authority of the bride's family, and particularly its limits when linked to guardian consent, insufficiently examined (Rijal 2024, xvi; Rohmalia 2023, 81; Sari 2025, 57).

The research gap therefore lies in the intersection between customary authority and guardianship. Existing *Sundrang* research explains the meaning and determinants of the prestation and identifies its potential economic consequences, while *wali-adhal* research examines the limits of a guardian's refusal. The present study brings the two questions together and treats the bride's family's

authority in determining Sundrang as the principal object of analysis. It also asks whether the practice observed in the Bugis-Makassar diaspora of Masalembu remains consistent with the customary framework from which it derives. The analysis is conducted sequentially: the empirical practice is first examined, then assessed through Bugis-Makassar customary law, and finally assessed through *fiqh al-munakahat*. The distinction is important because recognition of a practice as customary does not automatically establish its validity under Islamic family law.

Accordingly, this article analyses three matters: (1) the implementation of Sundrang in Bugis-Makassar marriages in Masalembu and the social dynamics accompanying it; (2) the legitimacy and limits of the bride's family's authority in determining Sundrang under Bugis-Makassar customary law; and (3) the legitimacy and limits of that authority from the perspective of *fiqh al-munakahat*. The study does not begin from the assumption that Sundrang is invalid because it is not prescribed as a religious requirement. Instead, it identifies the narrower normative boundary at which a customary prestation is transformed into a condition governing the exercise of the guardian's consent.

B. Methods

B.1. Design and Approach

The study uses a qualitative method with a normative-sociological approach and a case-study strategy. The normative approach is used to examine Bugis-Makassar customary norms, particularly *Pangadareng* and *Siri'*, together with *fiqh al-munakahat* concerning the position of the *wali*, *kafa'ah*, and consent. The sociological approach is used to understand how those norms are practised and interpreted in the everyday reality of the Bugis-Makassar community in Masalembu. This design allows the study to distinguish the description of what families actually do from the subsequent normative assessment of whether that conduct remains consistent with the purposes of the custom and the limits recognised by Islamic family law (Abdussamad 2021, 43, 90).

The analysis follows the same sequence as the research objectives. First, the study establishes how Sundrang is understood, determined, and experienced in marriage negotiations. Second, those findings are assessed within the customary framework of *Pangadareng* and *Siri'*. Third, the authority is examined through *fiqh al-munakahat*, especially the guardian's duty to act for the prospective bride's welfare, the relevance of *kafa'ah*, and the legal consequences of an unjustified refusal. This structure prevents the normative conclusion from being imposed on the empirical findings in advance.

B.2. Site and Period

Fieldwork was conducted in Masalima Village, Masalembu Subdistrict, Sumenep Regency, East Java Province, from July 2025 to July 2026. Masalima was selected because Sundrang is practised there within the Bugis-Makassar community and is also familiar to neighbouring families.

B.3. Informants

Twelve informants were selected purposively to cover every position from which the authority in question is exercised, observed, or borne. Sampling sought role coverage rather than statistical

representativeness: each stage of the process — proposal, negotiation of the amount, granting or withholding of consent — is represented by at least one participant on each side. Table 1 sets out the composition of the sample. Informants are referred to by code in the analytical discussion. The fieldwork table records the informants' names and roles for transparency of the research process.

Table 1. Composition of the Informant Sample (n = 12)

Code	Informant	Role	Position in the Transaction	Interview Mode	Date
I-01	Samsul Rijal	Customary leader (tokoh adat)	Normative authority	In person	19 March 2026
I-02	Halima	Customary elder (sesepuh adat)	Observer, customary experience	In person	19 March 2026
I-03	Wasiq Abd Rozzaq	Religious leader (tokoh agama)	Normative authority	In person	23 June 2026
I-04	Moh. Yusuf	Guardian, bride's side	Grants or withholds consent	Online	24 June 2026
I-05	Fifih Luthfianah	Guardian, bride's side	Grants or withholds consent	Online	7 April 2026
I-06	Firdausiah Salsabilah	Guardian, groom's side	Bears the obligation	Online	5 May 2026
I-07	Nadiratussyaqila	Bride	Subject of the guardianship	Online	30 July 2026
I-08	Abdali Tuyyab	Groom	Bears the obligation	In person	19 March 2026
I-09	Rahmat Rahim	Community member	Observer	In person	20 March 2026
I-10	Moh. Samsir Risalah	Groom	Bears the obligation	Online	30 July 2026
I-11	Nadia Silmi	Bride	Subject of the guardianship	Online	30 July 2026
I-12	Muh. Fawaid Fannany	Groom	Bears the obligation	Online	30 July 2026

B.4. Instruments and Data Collection

Primary data were generated through semi-structured interviews conducted in person and online, supplemented by non-participant observation and documentary collection (Moleong 2017). The interview guide comprised four fixed domains: the meaning attributed to Sundrang and its distinction from mahr; the procedure by which the amount is fixed; outcomes where the amount was not met; and the basis on which consent was granted or withheld with follow-up probes left to the interviewer. Interviews ran between 35 and 70 minutes and were conducted in Indonesian and in the local variety of Bugis.

Secondary materials comprise the Qur'an, hadith collections, classical and contemporary fiqh works, the Compilation of Islamic Law, and scholarly literature on Bugis-Makassar customary law and Islamic marriage law.

B.5. Analysis

Analysis proceeded inductively in three stages: data reduction, data display, and the drawing and verification of conclusions (Sugiyono 2017). Transcripts were coded openly in the first cycle, producing descriptive codes at the level of individual statements; these were then grouped into the

three thematic blocks listed in Section B.1. The interview material was coded thematically and compared across the different positions represented in the sample. The normative assessment was then applied to the descriptive findings so that the customary and juristic analysis remained distinguishable from the empirical account.

B.6. Trustworthiness and Ethics

Source triangulation compared accounts across informants occupying different positions, while technique triangulation compared interview material with observation and documents. The analysis also compared accounts collected at different points during the fieldwork period (Moleong 2017). Participation was voluntary and informed. Because the study reports on withheld consent and cancelled marriages within a small island community, informants are identified by code rather than by name, and identifying details of individual marriages are omitted where they are not required by the analysis.

C. Results and Discussion

C.1. Meaning and Determination of Sundrang

Across the interviews relevant to this issue, Sundrang was distinguished from mahr. Mahr was described as a religious obligation belonging to the bride, whereas Sundrang was described as a customary gift directed to the bride's family. The customary leader explained that Sundrang is essentially an expression of appreciation, respect, and seriousness from the groom's side rather than a religious obligation. The amount is generally discussed during the proposal stage through deliberation between the families, alongside the mahr and other wedding arrangements. Its form may be cash, gold, or a combination of both. Reported amounts varied considerably, including cases in the range of IDR 20–30 million, cases reaching higher amounts together with gold, and families that deliberately waived Sundrang in order not to burden the prospective husband. This variation supports the conclusion that Sundrang is an unwritten and contextual custom rather than a uniformly fixed tariff.

The fact that Sundrang is negotiated rather than governed by a written tariff does not mean that the negotiations are socially neutral. The field accounts show that the bride's family normally exercises the stronger influence over the final amount. The amount can be discussed and adjusted, but the family on the bride's side remains the principal actor in determining the figure. The distinction from mahr is therefore essential: the customary authority concerns a family prestation, while mahr remains a separate religious right of the bride.

Table 2. Reported Sundrang Amounts and Forms (n = 12 Informants)

Band	Amount	Form	Basis Given by Informants	Codes
Waived	Nil	—	Family decision not to burden the prospective son-in-law	I-05, I-11
Emerging benchmark	IDR 20–30 million	Cash	Reported as a commonly followed reference point	I-06
Higher reported amount	IDR 100 million	Cash with gold	Amount reported in a specific family case	I-09

Band	Amount	Form	Basis Given by Informants	Codes
Gold-based form	8 gold pieces, 8 g each	Gold	Gold used as the customary prestation in a reported family case	I-02

The reported variation should be understood as part of the flexible character of an unwritten custom. Some families adapt the amount to their circumstances, while others follow a social reference point that has developed through comparison with previous marriages. The coexistence of waived Sundrang and relatively high amounts within the same community shows that there is no single mandatory amount. At the same time, the absence of a formal ceiling leaves considerable room for social expectations to influence the exercise of family authority.

C.2. Social Dynamics Accompanying Implementation

Alongside that contextual pattern, informants reported a set of recurring outcomes where the amount was not met. Table 3 summarises them.

Table 3. Reported Social Consequences Associated with Sundrang

Outcome	Description
Postponement	Marriage deferred while the groom accumulates funds; one reported engagement continued for two to three years
Cancellation	Proposal abandoned because agreement on Sundrang was not reached
Financial pressure	Groom's side experiences substantial pressure while working or otherwise trying to fulfil the agreed amount
Ratchet effect	A previously accepted amount is used as a reference for a subsequent marriage in the family
Indirect refusal	A high amount is reportedly used to discourage a proposal without an explicit refusal

A particularly visible development is the emergence of a perceived 'going rate' of approximately IDR 20–30 million. Informants described this figure as a collective reference that increasingly influences family expectations. This represents a shift from an amount calibrated to the circumstances of the individual families toward a socially circulating benchmark. Muhlisah and Arifin (2023) similarly found that customary marriage prestations in Gowa are influenced by education, occupation, economic capacity, lineage, and social status. In Masalembu, the benchmark can therefore reinforce rather than reduce the pressure associated with social standing (Interview I-06; Muhlisah and Arifin 2023, 72).

Figure 1 sets out the relationship between these two orientations and the normative assessments that follow in Sections C.3 and C.4 (Rijal 2024, xvi).

Within Bugis-Makassar customary law, marriage (mappabotting) is understood as an event that joins extended families rather than only two individuals. The family's role in determining Sundrang is consequently connected with its role in representing and protecting the dignity of the bride. The Pangadareng framework and the value of Siri' provide the customary basis for understanding why the bride's family is given substantial authority in negotiations. The relevant

question is not whether the family has any authority at all, but whether the authority is exercised consistently with the purpose that gives it legitimacy (Pelras 2006, 170, 178; Rahmatiar et al. 2021, 99).

The field findings show that negotiation may be open in form while the final decision remains concentrated on the bride's side. The bride interviewed reported that she was not involved in determining the amount attached to her marriage. This internal dimension is important because the family exercises its authority as a representative of the bride. If the amount subsequently becomes the reason that a marriage desired by the bride cannot proceed, the representational function of the family requires further normative scrutiny.

The customary leader (I-01) directly associated the amount of Sundrang with Siri', explaining that a higher amount may be interpreted as a greater expression of respect and family standing. The practice does not, however, provide a written ceiling by which every family can objectively measure a reasonable amount. The absence of a formal ceiling is compatible with the flexible character of customary law, but it does not establish that every amount is equally legitimate. Reasonableness remains connected to the social purpose of the custom and the circumstances of the families involved (Pelras 2006, 178).

The limits of that authority become clearer when its consequences are considered. The interviews report postponement, cancellation, financial pressure, and deterioration of relations between families in cases where Sundrang became difficult to fulfil or agree upon. These consequences indicate a movement away from Sundrang as a means of strengthening family relations toward a practice capable of obstructing the relationship it is supposed to accompany. The interviews do not document a distinct restorative mediation process for these disputes; the reported cases were resolved mainly through payment, withdrawal, or the cooling of relations.

C.4. The Basis on Which Guardians Granted or Withheld Consent

The field data also show that guardians do not respond uniformly. Guardian I-04 stated that he withheld his consent to his daughter's marriage until the groom's side fulfilled the agreed Sundrang. He explained the decision as adherence to custom rather than as a judgment about the groom's religion, character, or capacity to perform the religious obligations of marriage. By contrast, I-05, who did not impose Sundrang on her daughter, explicitly reasoned that a marriage should not fail merely because a customary demand has not been fulfilled. The contrast demonstrates that customary practice itself does not mechanically determine the conduct of every guardian (Interviews I-05, I-08; Rosdalina 2017, 18).

The position of the religious leader (I-03) reinforces this distinction. He separated mahr, which is a religious obligation belonging to the bride, from Sundrang, which derives from custom and is directed to the family. He also considered a Sundrang amount imposed without regard to the circumstances of the groom's side to be excessive and unsupported by Islamic law. This statement

does not eliminate the customary value of Sundrang; rather, it identifies a limit on the consequences that may legitimately be attached to it (Interview I-03).

These findings make the normative issue more precise. The problem is not that Sundrang exists or that the bride's family participates in determining it. The problem arises when fulfilment of the customary prestation becomes the decisive basis for granting or withholding the guardian's consent. The distinction between the customary prestation and the religious requirements of marriage must therefore be maintained throughout the legal analysis.

The field material also contains a reported case in which a high Sundrang amount was used as an indirect means of discouraging a proposal. Such a practice should not be generalised beyond the cases reported, but it is analytically important because the economic negotiation becomes a substitute for an explicit statement of refusal. The issue therefore reaches beyond the amount itself and concerns transparency and consent in the process leading toward marriage.

DISCUSSION

C.5. From a Calibrated Gesture to a Collective Benchmark

The field findings support the earlier observations of Rijal (2024) concerning Masalembu: Sundrang is influenced by wedding needs and the social position of the bride's family. They also correspond with Muhlisah and Arifin (2023), who identified social and economic characteristics as factors in determining Bugis marriage prestations. The Masalembu material adds a further dimension: the amount is increasingly shaped by comparison between families, producing a perceived collective benchmark of IDR 20–30 million. This benchmark does not replace family deliberation, but it can influence what families consider acceptable before a particular negotiation even begins.

This shift matters because it changes the social function of the prestation. When the amount is calibrated to the circumstances of the two families, Sundrang can operate as an adaptive expression of respect. When the amount is increasingly treated as a marker of status, the same custom may generate pressure to match or exceed previous amounts. Studies of related Bugis-Makassar prestations likewise identify the movement of marriage payments toward social prestige. The present case therefore suggests that the central change is functional: the problem is not the persistence of Sundrang, but the possibility that prestige becomes more important than the circumstances of the marriage.

The coexistence of waived Sundrang and the IDR 20–30 million benchmark is particularly important. It shows that the community has not reached a uniform rule and that families retain room to interpret the custom differently. Kadir, Nonci, and Halim (2021) and related studies indicate that high customary marriage payments can generate social comparison and economic pressure. In Masalembu, the benchmark appears to operate through comparison rather than through a formal calculation method. This explains why the amount can rise even though no written rule requires it.

C.6. Customary Legitimacy and a Dormant Restorative Mechanism

Under the Pangadareng framework, the bride's family can be understood as exercising a representative role in protecting the woman's dignity and the family's honour. On that basis, the authority to determine Sundrang has a customary rationale. Yet customary legitimacy should be assessed not only from the existence of the authority but also from the purpose for which it is exercised. If the authority protects dignity while remaining responsive to the circumstances of the families, it remains consistent with the protective function attributed to the custom. If it becomes an instrument of status display or a means of obstructing a marriage, its consistency with that purpose becomes doubtful.

The reported postponements, cancellations, and deterioration of family relations illustrate this limit. Marriage is ordinarily a process through which families establish a relationship, so a practice that repeatedly produces the opposite result requires internal customary reflection. The absence of a reported restorative mechanism is also noteworthy. When disagreement over Sundrang disrupts social relations, customary deliberation could serve to restore equilibrium, but the cases reported here were resolved mainly through payment, withdrawal, or the cooling of relations.

The bride's exclusion from determining the amount creates a second difficulty. The family may legitimately represent the bride within a customary structure, but representation should remain connected to the interest being represented. When the bride wants the marriage to proceed while the amount determined by her family becomes the obstacle, the family must distinguish between protecting dignity and imposing a condition that effectively defeats the marriage. This does not remove the family's customary role; it identifies the point at which that role requires restraint and renewed deliberation.

C.7. Consent Withheld on Grounds the Shari'a Does Not Recognise

Fiqh al-munakahat recognises the importance of the wali in marriage. The Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools generally regard the guardian as an essential element of the marriage, supported by the prophetic tradition concerning guardianship. Nevertheless, the guardian's authority is not a private power to be exercised for any reason. It is connected with consideration of the woman's welfare, including the assessment of kafa'ah and the prospective husband's ability to fulfil recognised marital responsibilities. The inability or unwillingness to satisfy a customary prestation does not appear in the sources used in this study as an independent ground of kafa'ah (Abu Dawud 2009, 229; Az-Zuhaili 1989, 174–75, 223).

The statement of I-04 is therefore central to the analysis. The guardian did not explain his refusal by reference to the prospective husband's religion, character, or other recognised considerations of suitability. He explicitly identified compliance with Sundrang as the reason for withholding consent. The case thus illustrates the displacement of a juristically recognised consideration by a customary demand (Interview I-04).

The two premises must nevertheless be kept conceptually distinct. Sundrang is a customary prestation and is not itself a pillar or formal condition of a valid marriage. Guardian consent, within the majority position adopted in this study, has a different legal status. If a family turns payment of Sundrang into a condition for the guardian's consent, the custom does not thereby acquire the status of a religious requirement. In the Shafi'i-oriented formulation cited in the source article, an invalid condition does not necessarily invalidate the marriage itself; the condition may fall away while the marriage remains valid. The stronger and safer conclusion is therefore that the customary condition has no independent religious force merely because the community treats it as obligatory (Az-Zuhaili 1989, 68–69).

The issue of wali adhal must then be considered on the facts. A guardian who refuses solely because Sundrang has not been fulfilled may substantively fall within the concept of 'adhal when the prospective husband is suitable and no other recognised Islamic reason justifies the refusal. Qur'an 2:232 is relevant to the prohibition against preventing a woman from marrying when the parties have reached a lawful agreement. In Indonesian law, however, the formal determination of wali adhal and the resulting use of a wali hakim require the procedure established by the applicable law. Article 23 of the Compilation of Islamic Law provides that a wali hakim may act where the wali nasab is adhal, but paragraph (2) requires a determination by the Religious Court (Az-Zuhaili 1989, 202–4; Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2018, 14–15; Sari 2025, 57).

Compared with studies of other forms of guardian refusal, the Masalembu case is distinctive because the disputed condition is a customary marriage prestation. Nisa, Disemadi, and Purwanti (2020) examined a customary directional taboo as a reason for wali adhal, while Sari (2025) examined economic disparity as an obstacle to parental approval. The present case combines the two dimensions: an economic demand embedded in a customary system is used as the practical basis for withholding consent. The novelty therefore lies not merely in documenting Sundrang, but in identifying the point at which customary authority intersects with the legal limits of guardianship.

The case also develops Sari's observation concerning economic disparity. In the present study, the problem is not simply that the groom lacks money. Rather, the amount demanded by the bride's family can itself become the mechanism through which the guardian decides whether to give consent. This shifts the analytical focus from economic hardship alone to the use of family authority to impose a customary threshold for marriage.

The resolution of the case further demonstrates the gap between social practice and legal literacy. The reported impasse ended when the groom's side succeeded in fulfilling the Sundrang, not through a formal determination that the guardian was adhal. The case therefore should not be presented as a judicially established wali-adhal case. It is better understood as conduct that, on the reported facts and subject to the other requirements of suitability, may substantively satisfy the

concept of 'adhl, while formal legal consequences would require the procedure prescribed by Indonesian law.

Finally, the reported use of a deliberately high amount as an indirect refusal shows how Sundrang can affect consent before the formal marriage contract. If a family sets an amount primarily to ensure that a proposal fails, the negotiation no longer functions only as a discussion of customary assistance or respect. It becomes an indirect communicative device for refusal. Because the present study is based on reported cases rather than a prevalence survey, this finding should be treated as an important pattern for further research rather than a universal description of Sundrang in Masalembu (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2019; Syarifuddin 2006, 61–63; Interview I-05).

C.8. Limitations

Three limitations should be noted. First, the study involves twelve informants in one village, so the findings describe the cases and meanings encountered in the research site and should not be generalised statistically to all Bugis-Makassar communities. Second, the IDR 20–30 million figure is a reported social benchmark rather than a calculated average based on transaction records. Third, the classification of a guardian as formally wali adhal in Indonesian positive law is ultimately determined through the competent Religious Court. The article therefore distinguishes its juristic assessment of the reported conduct from a formal judicial determination.

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that Sundrang remains an important expression of Bugis-Makassar identity and family respect in Masalembu, but its implementation shows a shift from a contextual practice toward a socially circulating nominal benchmark. The reported IDR 20–30 million range functions as a reference point in some families, while other families waive Sundrang altogether. The practice therefore remains flexible, but social comparison increasingly affects the amount and can create economic pressure on the groom's side.

From the perspective of Bugis-Makassar customary law, the bride's family has a legitimate role in determining Sundrang because that authority is connected with Pangadareng and Siri' and with the family's role in protecting the bride's dignity. The authority is not unlimited, however. Its customary legitimacy becomes difficult to sustain when the amount is transformed into a status competition, causes a marriage to be postponed or abandoned, damages family relations, or disregards the interest of the bride whom the family represents. The preservation of Sundrang therefore requires a return to deliberation and contextual adjustment rather than the imposition of an inflexible social benchmark.

From the perspective of fiqh al-munakahat, the guardian's authority must operate within the framework of *nazhar li al-maslahah* and recognised considerations of suitability. Sundrang itself is not a formal requirement of marriage, so its customary status does not give it independent religious force.

Where a guardian withholds consent solely because Sundrang has not been fulfilled, and the prospective husband is otherwise suitable and no recognised Islamic reason for refusal exists, the conduct may substantively constitute wali adhal; in Indonesian positive law, however, the transfer to a wali hakim requires the determination prescribed by the Religious Court. The fundamental problem in the Masalembu cases is therefore not the existence of Sundrang, but the transformation of a customary expression of respect into a condition governing the guardian's consent.

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