

Kinship Systems and Terms among Medan-Based Arabic Community

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Abstract

The attention towards the Arabic minority living beyond Gulf countries is urgent. The major objectives of this study are to investigate the kinship systems and terms (KST) among the Medan-based Arabic community (MbAC). Anthropological perspectives of KST were adopted from Al-Haly (2010), Koentjaraningrat (2005) as well as from Braun (1988). This study employed qualitative approach and was conducted in Medan, Indonesia. Data were obtained from MbAC; the subjects of this study were randomly selected. Interviews were also utilized and they were recorded on audiotape. The results can be summarized as follows: kinship system is patrilineal and applies endogamy and exogamy in marriage system. The kinship terms cover the varieties of greetings such as abi, umi, jidd, jidda, ami, ameh, hale, halati, anta, ente, you yourselves, ana, ane, brother, ustaz (cleric), ustazah, navigator, muallimah, and hafid. The following names are also used for greetings: Sarifah, Taufik and others. Greetings in relation to rank are Habib, Said that commensurate with kin terms such as ash Darda, Umm Aisha, or with surnames like Assegaf, Bahadjaj. Habiby and habibaty are also parts of kin terms. The conclusion reached is that kinship system and terms are still used by MbAC.

Key Words: kinship, system, terms, Medan-based Arabic, community

1. Introduction

The influx of Arabs into Indonesia as noted by Zuhri (1981: 176) and Azra (2012: 6) was predicted in the 7th or 8th century AD. Reports from Tang Dynasty in the 7th century told there were settlements of Arab merchants in Barus, a place in western coast of Sumatra; however, Islam was thought of to first come to Perlak and then to Samudra Pasai kingdom. Their arrival created social contact with local people. Soon, some forms of cooperations such as brotherhood, trade, teaching-learning, and mixed marriages happened. This last aspect successfully bore the emergence of Arabic kinship systems and terms. Chony quoted Imron 2005: 27 as saying "kinship system is explained not only because of their marital bond or of their families, but of their blood relations". Chony argued that the key in marriage system was related to lineage or descent marriages. In case of kinship systems two terms are known such as reference and address (Koentjaraningrat, 2005: 129). Kinship terms refers to greetings, for example, parents call their sons with *waladi* 'oh my son', *ya ibnati* 'O my daughter', *qurrata a'yun* 'my dear', *bunayya* 'my kids'. Husbands call their wives with soft and stimulating words such as *habibati* 'my dear', *zaujati* 'my wife', *ummi Humaira* 'mother with rosy cheeks' and so on.

2. Review of Related Literature

A social system or social organization as Koentjaraningrat (2013: 165) argued is always related to kinship system, for instance, marriage, mutual help and courtesy among relatives and to kinship terms. Salim (1978: 138) wrote relatives are people who have affinities to someone by blood or marriage. Kinship is a matter of relation among relatives. Quran stresses the importance of relatives in An-Nisa': 36. A relative, a close relative or relatives in the Qur'an are termed as *zul Qurba* or *zawil Qurba*, and *ulul Qurba* or *ulil Qurba*.

Kinship must be maintained and will have to be maintained in the future because it joins the strong nexus of a broader relationship between men and his nation (Fahrudin, 1992: 598). Fox's (1967: 27) kinship becomes the central concept in anthropology. The concept of kinship can also be based on the classification of kinship typology referring to relatives (kin), rules of descent and rules of relative marriages (Mansur et al, 1988: 21). Ihromi's (1999: 85) argument revealed that in patrilineal descent the customs of the family is played by the father as the head who serves as an intermediary in the fulfillment of economic resources in his family. In addition, he functions as the highest court to discipline his children and speaks on behalf of his group. This is the main characteristic of Arabic model.

Tsa'alabi quoted al-Sahlani and al-Husseini(2010: 13) who argued there are seven units of Arabic social systems:

- (i) *al-sya'b* 'the public' (for example, Qathan, 'Adnan , and Khuzaimah).
- (ii) *al-qabīlah* 'the tribe'
- (iii) *al-faṣīlah* 'the group'
- (iv) *al-'asyīrah* 'the clan'
- (v) *al-zurriyyah* 'the offspring'
- (vi) *al-'atrah* 'the household'
- (vii) *al-'ā'ilah* 'the family'

Ma'luf (1986: 607) proposed *qabīlatun* meaning 'children from the same father'. Ali and Muhdlor (1996: 1433) translated *qabīlah orasyīrah* as 'tribes', 'tribal' or 'ethnic'. Ali (1981: 713) wrote *qabīlah* means the father's side. Some examples of *al-qabīlah* are Rabi'a, Iyad, Mudar, and Kinanah. Meanwhile, according to Koentjaraningrat (1989: 23), ethnicity is a social group or entity who has a life of human interaction system, system of norms that regulate the interaction, continuity and a sense of identity to unite all its members as well as having its own leadership system.

Hitti (2003: 39), Wafi (no year: 96), and Faruqi (2003: 45-47) divided *al-qabīlah* into three: Ba'idah, Aribah, and Musta'ribah Arabs. The first group, for example 'Ad and Thamud, was punished by God and they were extinct. The second were descended from Yasyjub bin Ya'rib bin Qahtan ibn' Abir ibn Salikh Arfakhsyad ibn Sam ibn Nuh ibn Qahtan, or also called Qahtaniyah. The descendants of Qahtaniyah were Ya'rub (living in Yemen), Hadramaut (settling in Hadramaut), 'Amman (dwelling in Amman city), and Jurhum us-Saniyah (residing in Hijaz). The third was descended from Ishmael who was also called *Adnaniyah*. Their nation came from 'Adnan, Nizar, and Ma'add. It was called by al-Musta'ribah because they were affiliated with Saudi al-'Aribah through marriage. The Qahtaniyah and 'Adnaniyah became the pioneers for the birth of the Arab nation.

The *al-fasilah* according to Asyqar (1985: 765) refers to kinship families while Ali and Muhdlor (1996: 1906) suggested "origin". About the *al-asyirah* Asyqar (1985: 243) interpreted it as 'relatives in one religion'. Ali and Muhdlor (1996: 932) argued that *az-zurriyyatu* means children, grandchildren, and descendants. Asyqar (1985: 279) proposed another meaning that this term had the connection to Pharaoh and his families. Al-Sahlani and al-Husaini (2010: 17) thought the *al-itrah* means the nuclear family while Ma'luf (1986: 486) indicated this term as the bloodline of a man and his descendants or relatives and so on. Sunarto (2002: 166) proposed another meaning as al-Baitu wa al-'ā'ilatu 'housekeeping'. Ali and Muhdlor (1996: 1255) pleaded that al-'ā'ilah consists of a mother, a father and children who are not married.

Al-Ahly cited al-Sahlany and al-Husseini(2010: 9-33) who suggested three categories of Arabic kinship as shown in the followings:

1) *al-`abwānuwawa al-waladu an nazlu* ‘father’s and mother’s parents and their children’

This category includes a) *al-`abu* ‘father’, b) *al-`umu* ‘mother’, c) *al-`ibnu* ‘son’, d) *al-`ibnatu* ‘daughter’, e) son’s grandson, f) son’s granddaughter, g) daughter’s grandson, and h) daughter’s granddaughter.

2) *al-`akhawatuwa `aulāduhumnazluwa, wawa al-`ajdādu an `Alu* ‘ego’s brother and sister’

Under this category there are some relatives comprising the followings: a) *al-`akhu* ‘ego’s brother’, b) *al-`ukhtu* ‘ego’s sister’, c) *ibn al-`akhu* ‘ego’s brother’s nephew’, d) *bintu al-`akhu* ‘ego’s brother’s niece’, e) *ibn al-`ukhtu* ‘ego’s sister’s nephew’, f) *bintu al-`ukhtu* ‘ego’s sister’s niece’, g) *al-`jiddu* ‘grandfather’, and h) *al-`jiddatu* ‘grandmother’.

3) *al-`akhwālu, wa al-`a`mamu* ‘ego’s uncle and aunt’

This last category consists of a) *al-`amu* ‘uncle or father’s younger or older brother’, b) *al-`ammatu* ‘aunt or mother’s younger or older sister’, c) *al-`khālu* ‘uncle or mothers younger or older brother’, d) *al-`khaālatu* ‘aunt or mother’s younger or older sister’, e) *ibn al-`amu* ‘cousin or son of father’s brother’, f) *bintu al-`amu* ‘nephew or daughter of fathers’ younger or older brother’, g) *ibn al-`amatu* ‘cousin or son of father’s younger or older sister’, h) *bintu al-`amatu* ‘nephew or daughter of father’s younger or older sister’, i) *ibn al-`khali* ‘cousin or son of mother’s younger or older brother’, j) *bintu al-`khali* ‘nephew or daughter of mother’s younger or older brother’, k) *ibn al-`khalati* ‘cousin or son of mother’s younger or older sister’, and l) *bintu al-`khalati* ‘cousin or son of brother/sister’s mother’ ‘nephew or daughter of mother’s younger or older sister’.

Kartomihardjo (1988: 238) argued address is a component of a language which is important because the greeting can be determined by a specific interaction. Although most speakers do not realize how important it is but instinctively each speaker will strive to communicate clearly. It becomes the designation that indicates an appreciation in any degree as well as a person's dignity in public life. Al-Khulli (1982: 5) mentioned that nouns of address is *al-Mukhatab*. Braun’s (1988: 9) eight proposals on nouns of address can be translated into Arabic as indicated below: 1) *Asma* for “proper names” which includes *al-ism mu`annas* and *muzakkar*. The first is addressed to female names such as Fatima, Zainab, etc and *muzakkar* to male names for example Ahmad, Tariq Afdol, etc. 2) *Mustalahatu al-nasab* for “kinship terms” which refers to father, mother, brother, uncle, sister, mosque, ami, ameh, etc. In Arabic, *mustalahatu al-nasab* is merely used to indicate relatives.

Pedigree kinship in the family is only addressed to father and mother. The following is the category of kinship terms.

1) Address to parents.

Address to parents are indicated by the use of *ummior ummu* 'mother' and *abi, abah or abun* 'father'. These two classifications are termed as *kunniyyah* ‘nickname’ meaning speaker does not want to use the middle name of the person to whom he/she is talking to, for example, *umm ad-Darda* ‘Darda’s mother’ or *Abu Abdillah* ‘Abdillah’s father’ (al-Khuli, 1982: 283).

2) Address to father’s side.

Some addresses to father’s side are *jidd* ‘grandfather’ and *jiddah* ‘grandmother’; the two addresses are derived from the words *jaddun* 'grandpa' and *jaddatun* 'grandma'. Other addresses include *ami* 'uncle' and *ameh* 'aunt'.

3) Address to maternal.

Addresses to maternal are marked by the use of *jaddun, jaddatun, hale* 'uncle' and *khalati* 'aunt'. The address is termed *akhwāl* in Arabic meaning ‘all members of mother’s relatives’.

4) Address to honour.

Address to honour in Arabic is named *al-ihiram sighatu ar laqab* which is indicated by the words Sayyid, Habib, Al-Amin, etc.

5) Address to degree and rank. This address is almost the same as address to honour. 6) Address to addressee.

7) Address to particular relationship.

8) Address to compassion, for example, *ya bunayya* 'oh my son', *humaira* 'oh rosy cheeks'.

9) Address to kinship which is united in the name, such as, *Abu Ali* 'Ali's father'.

3. Research Methods

This qualitative research was carried out through verbal utterances (Moleong, 1990: 29); therefore, it was also called descriptive in which the data was taken in the form of field notes, interviews, observations, questionnaires, personal documents and other important documents. The research location was Medan, a capital of North Sumatera Province. MbAC was spread in 17 districts and this research focused only on members of some Arabic communities, for instance, *An-Nady Al-Arabi*, *Al-Ichwan Al-Araby* concentrated in Sutrisno and Al-Falah streets. There were 3,318 people of MbAC (BPS Medan, 2013: 43). The sampling technique was random.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Kinship system of MbAC

The MbAC adopted two kinds of marriage systems. The first was endogamous marriage which happened among members of a group. This was carried out to keep the group's lineage, class or family status. The second, exogamy marriage, could occur beyond members of a group. In case of kinship systems the MbAC tend to receive patrilineal kinship which paid much attention to the male's lineage so the father's relatives were included within the limits of this kinship; in contrast, female relatives were put outside these limits. What is important is that MbAC remained to keep their kinship system and this condition was the same as what was suggested by Al-Haly (see al-Sahlany and al-Husseini, 2010: 9-33).

4.2 Kinship terms of MbAC

In case of kinship terms or *mustalahatu al-nasab* (see Table 1) in Arabic the MbAC gave Arabic names properly to their children either by using *al-ism muzakkar* for males (Taufiq, Yasin, etc.) or *al-ism mu'annas* for females (Rukayah, Nabila, etc.). Moreover, the MbAC remained to use widely the address to parents (like *ummi*, *abi*), to grandparents (*jaddun*, *jaddatun*), to maternal (*hale*, *khalati*), and to hearer (*akhun*, *ukhtun*). *Kunniyah* which was related to names taken from nature was also found, for example, Galib bin Saad bin Abdullah, or Berek Rhozi bin Mubarak bin Saad. Family names from *Saada* group which showed higher class was existing; consider for example Said Abd al-Mahdaly, Ja'far al-top, Amik Muhammad Alatas, or Rizaldi Mavi al- Ethiopia. Family names from *Caim* group like Salim Sungkar, Yaser Abdul Aziz and from *Mashaayikh* group like Mubarak Abdullah Zein Zubaidi were available.

The MbAC trusted themselves to adopt a lot of surnames, for instance, an-Nahdy al-Araby and al-Ichwan al-Araby is as follows, Abdat, Abdul Aziz al-Amri, al-Attas, al-Amudi, al-Idrus, al-Kaf, al-Habsy, al-Makawi, al-Masri, al-Agraby, al-Yahya, an-Nahary, Assegaf, Assewet, al-Baswan, al- Baya, Ba'Ayes, Bafa'i, al-Qadri al-Mahdali, al-Mahdani, al-Masiri, al-Munawar, al-Haddad, al-Agrabi, al-Nahari, Asseweth, al-Bayya, al-Baswan, al-Ba-Ayes Ba'fai, Bahemud, Badres, Balatif, Baodan, Banaem, Bajened, Bafadhal, Badegel, Ba'asyir, Balaskaf, Baziad, Ba'abad, Bafarai, Banaim, Babel, Billeil, Ba-Duff, Baqoban, Ba'asy, Ba'awab, Bawazir, Bahadjaj, Ba'tebe, Babel Chair, Basalamah, Baziad, Gozi, Hydra, Hamdeh, Jamalleil, Jabri, Madi, Masri, Mazraq, Mutahar, O'basabeh, Nabhan, Swedan, Sa'ad, Samin, Sahab, Syamlan, Sharif, Sungkar, Ya'fei, Ya'gub, Yamani, Zailani, and Zubaidi.

The uses of pronouns like *ente*, *ana* were still easily found in the Arabic community. Names combination namely Abu Ali (Saudi) 'the father of Abu', Abu Bakr Zubaidi, Abu Bakr al-Amry were also in trends. Names from *Kunniyah* were also combined by some people, for example, the names Abu Bakr, Umm Salamah, Abu Dardak, Nurul Umi and so forth. Consider Tabel 2 in Appendice to see the MbAC's varieties of names. The address of *Sayyid* and *Sheikh* to old respected man and *Lady* to old honourable woman was not forgotten. Those who had the same ages were accustomed to using *banat* and *walad* while teachers could call their students *tulab*.

5. Conclusion

Patrilineal lineage is adopted in daily life and matrimony is dominantly used as the kinship system (*mustalahatu al-nasab*) by MbAC. Marriages are based on endogamy (inter-tribe) and exogamy (inter-ethnic). Kinship terms are mainly used for relatives. In case of reference (*ma'na dalaly*) the kinship terms include some varieties, such as, *abi*, *umi*, *ukhti*, *jidda*, *ami*, *ameh*, *hale halati*, *ana*, *antum*, and *ente*, and in case of addressee (*al-mukhatab*) as buy to mention buya, bi to call abi, ukh to call ukhti, and so on. With reference to address some names like name, surname, rank are operational. Other terms are oriented to the name of Sudan and this name refers to cousins, nephews, siblings, etc.

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Appendices

Table 1: Structure of Arabic Kinship (modified from Al-Haly in Al-Sahlany and Al-Husseini, 2010: 9-33)

No	Anthropological terms	Kinship terms	Transliteration	Meaning
1.	ب	أب	/ʔabun/	Father
2.	م	أم	/ʔummun/	Mother
3.	بن	ابن	/ʔibnun/	Son
4.	بت	ابنت	/ʔibnatun/	Daughter
5.	ج	جد	/jaddun/	Grandfather
6.	جدة	جدة	/jaddatun/	Grandmother
7.	خ	أخ	/ʔakhun/	Brother
8.	بن خ	ابن أخ	/ʔibnu ʔakhun/	Son of ego's brother
9.	بت خ	بنت أخ	/bintu ʔakhun/	Daughter of ego's brother
10.	خت	أخت	/ʔukhtun/	Sister
11.	بن خت	ابن أخت	/ʔibnu ʔukhtun/	Son of ego's sister
12.	بت خت	بنت أخت	/bintu ʔukhtun/	Daughter of ego's sister
13.	ع	عم	/ʔammun/	Uncle (brother of ego's father)
14.	بن ع	ابن عم	/ʔibnu ʔammun/	Uncle's son
15.	بت ع	بنت عم	/bintu ʔammun/	Uncle's daughter
16.	عة	عمة	/ʔammatun/	Aunt (sister of ego's father)
17.	بن عة	ابن عمة	/ʔibnu ʔammatun/	Aunt's son
18.	بت عة	بنت عمة	/bintu ʔammatu	Aunt's daughter
19.	خا	خال	/khālun/	Uncle (brother of ego's mother)
20.	بن خا	ابن خال	/ʔibnukhālun/	Uncle's son
21.	بت خا	بنت خال	/bintukhālun/	Uncle's daughter
22.	خة	خالدة	/khālatun/	Aunt (sister of ego's mother)
23.	بن خة	ابن خالة	/ʔibnukhālatun/	Aunt's son
24.	بت خة	بنت خالة	/bintukhālatun/	Aunt's daughter
25.	بن و بن	ابن و الابن	/ʔibnuwa al-ʔibni/	Grandson of ego's son
26.	بت و بن	بنت الابن	/bintuwa al-ʔibni/	Granddaughter of ego's son
27.	بن و بت	ابن و الابنة	/ʔibnuwa al-ʔibnati/	Grandson of ego's daughter
28.	بت و بت	بنت و الابنة	/bintuwa al-ʔibnati/	Granddaughter of ego's daughter

Table 2. Varieties of MbAC's Terms of Address (Modified from Koentjaraningrat, 2005: 129)

Anthropological Terms	Meaning in Indonesian	Terms of Reference		Terms of Address
		Fushah	ʔAmmyyah	
F	Ayah, Bapak	Abun, Walidy	Abuya, buya, baba, dady, papa	Buy, abuy, ba, dad
M	Ibu, mama	ʔumi, walidaty	Yuma, mama, abuma, bibiti, tita	Yum, mama
MOB, MYB	Kakak/adik laki-laki dari ibu	Khaly	Khaly	khal
MOZ, MYZ	Kakak / adik perempuan dari ibu	khalaty	khalty	Khal
FOB, FYB	Kakak / adik laki-laki dari ayah	Ammy,	Ame	Am
FOZ, FYZ	Kakak / adik perempuan dari ayah	Ammaty	Amty, Ameh	Am
E	Saya, aku	Ana	Ani	-
H	Suami	jauzy	Khuya, akhuya, bang, habiby	
W	Istri	jauzaty	Dek, habibty	
OB	Abang	Akhy	Akhuya, khuya	Khuy, akhuy
OZ	Kakak	Ukhty	Khuity, akhuity	Ukh,
GM	Nenek	Jaddaty	Ummu syekh, Yuma syekh, yahika	
GF	Kakek	Jidd	Abu Syekh, buya syekh, yahik	
Son	Anak laki-laki	Ibni,	Yaba, yabuy, ibny or using father's nickname	
Daughter	Anak perempuan	Ibnaty, binti	Ibnaty, banat, yuba, Yuma, or using daughter's nickname	

Note:

F = Father; E = Ego; M = Mother; H = Husband; MOB = Mother Old Brother; W = Wife; MYB = Mother Youth Brother; OB = Old Brother; MOZ = Mother Old Zister; GF = Grand Father; MYZ = Mother Youth Zister; GM = Grand Mother; FOB = Father Old Brother; OZ = Old Zister; FYB = Father Youth Brother; OB = Old Brother; FOZ = Father Old Zister; FYZ = Father Youth Zister