

## Inter Marriage Between Aceh and Alas Tribes in the City of Banda Aceh

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### Abstract

The high rate of migration in a region leads to a mixture of ethnicities within the region. This intermingling allows people from different cultural backgrounds to get to know each other. This interaction fosters comfort and mutual attraction. Many people who migrate then marry both immigrants and local residents. The purpose of this study is to understand the causes of inter ethnic marriages, the problems associated with inter ethnic marriages, and the impact of inter ethnic marriages. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach, collecting as much data and facts as possible regarding a topic to gain a comprehensive understanding. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data obtained is then analyzed by reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions. The findings indicate that inter ethnic marriages are caused by two factors: external factors due to the mixed environment with diverse ethnicities, and internal factors due to the attraction of compatible personalities. Problems faced by interethnic couples include parental approval, customs, mindsets, communication, and the environment. The impacts of interethnic marriages include cultural acculturation, children's intelligence, and environmental changes.

**Keywords:** *Inter Ethnic Marriage, Acehese, Alas Communities, Banda Aceh City, Cultural Acculturation.*

### INTRODUCTION

Aceh Province has eighteen (18) districts and five (5) cities, thirteen (13) tribes and thirteen (13) languages, which then makes Aceh one of the provinces that has a diversity of customs and culture. Banda Aceh City is the capital of Aceh Province which has nine (9) sub-districts and simultaneously holds the title of Municipality. Banda Aceh serves as the administrative center of the Aceh Provincial government. It also serves as a center for religious studies, economics, socio-cultural studies, education, and a fusion of ethnic cultures. This is what has led many people to choose Banda Aceh as their migration destination (Regional Profile, 2022).

One of the reasons Banda Aceh is a prime destination for people seeking migration is the region's rapid economic growth, leading to population movement, also known as *urbanization*. *Urbanization* refers to the increase in population in urban areas. According to Event S. Lee's population mobility theory, rural-to-urban migration is driven by two primary forces *centripetal* forces and *centrifugal* forces (Mujito, 2013).

From an economic perspective, the process of *urbanization* or migration can create greater productivity and efficiency in the allocation of national resources. Migration is seen as a process of changing residence to a better one in the hope of increasing income. Population migration occurs due to the limited availability of jobs for people in a given area. Meanwhile, in urban areas, a variety of job options are available that better suit their skills, including industry, tourism, transportation, and other supporting sectors, which are expected to create jobs for those who migrate.

Migration is a population dynamic generally influenced by the need to find a better livelihood. If people in their home region cannot find jobs that match their skills and find unsuitable locations for entrepreneurship, this can lead to migration. Limited job availability and intense competition often lead people to seek employment in urban areas (Akbar, 2018). Economic growth in urban areas is perceived to be better than in rural areas and the concentration of various economic activities in urban areas encourages people to migrate.

Banda Aceh, the economic center of Aceh Province, is a popular destination for those seeking migration. According to data from the Aceh Statistics Agency (BPS) (2021), the number of residents entering Banda Aceh in 2020 was 7,357, a significant decrease from the 9,204 residents who arrived in Banda Aceh in 2019 (Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Banda Aceh, 2022). This decline occurred because in 2020 the entire world was in a critical state of Covid-19, including Indonesia, which also felt the impact of Covid-19 and the issuance of a circular from the President to stay at home.

In a study conducted by Ikhsan, a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics, Syiah Kuala University in 2014. In the study he conducted on several respondents, choosing Banda Aceh City as a migration destination was because it was close to their area of origin, then the availability of employment opportunities in Banda Aceh City followed by good educational facilities which were the reasons for choosing Banda Aceh City as their destination city 2019 (Ikhsan, 2014).

Banda Aceh's economic growth is supported by various factors, one of the most dominant being the presence of several universities, such as Syiah Kuala University and UIN Ar-Raniry, which are the pride of the Acehnese people. Furthermore, the development of educational centers is increasingly intertwined with the increasing number of universities such as Abulyatama, Unmuha, STIES, UBBG, Polyclinics, and the presence of *dayah* (Islamic boarding schools), which are the lifeblood of religious knowledge in Aceh.

Furthermore, among the people who migrated to Banda Aceh City, driven by economic and educational factors, interactions occurred in their daily lives between fellow migrants and their new environment. The shared mindsets fostered by living abroad allowed them to understand the circumstances of their partners. As a result of their daily interactions, some developed feelings for one another, leading to marriages between migrants and others with local residents.

Migrating people certainly don't come from just one region. High migration rates in a region lead to a mix of ethnicities within the region. This mix allows people to get to know each other from different cultural backgrounds. Many people who migrate choose to settle in their destinations, and many even choose to marry and build new lives there. Migrating people naturally engage in social interactions with both locals and other migrants. This interaction fosters mutual understanding and understanding, and some even find new relatives, new families, and even life partners. Interethnic marriage is a union between couples with different cultural backgrounds and customs. The intermingling of various ethnic groups in a region does not preclude the possibility of interethnic marriage. Interethnic marriages occur due to social interactions and relationships within the community and also due to mutual attraction.

Kuta Alam is a sub-district in Banda Aceh City which consists of eleven (11) villages. When conducting initial observations that researchers conducted on several villages in Kuta Alam, researchers chose Lamdingin village as a research location because seventy percent (70%) of

the Lamdingin community are immigrants while local residents are only around thirty percent (30%), and based on the information that researchers obtained, the tribes domiciled in Lamdingin village do not only come from tribes in Aceh province, there are also those who come from outside Aceh, some of them even come from abroad (Observation, 2022). Of the many ethnic groups in Lamdingin village, researchers were interested in studying intermarriage between the Acehnese and Alas ethnic groups. The researchers chose these ethnic groups because they have vastly different cultures, including language, customs, traditions, and even social patterns. This multitude of intermediaries will ultimately create problems for couples marrying between different ethnic groups.

Previous research on interethnic marriages has mostly focused on the interaction or communication between couples, and much of this research has focused on acculturation in interethnic marriages. The connection between this study and previous research lies in its focus. Here, the researcher examines the challenges and problems faced by interethnic couples and the positive impacts of interethnic marriages.

## **METHODS**

The method used in this study is a qualitative approach, collecting as much data and facts as possible about a matter to gain a comprehensive understanding. Qualitative methods are data collection methods by going directly to the field. Qualitative research involves important efforts, namely asking questions, collecting data, verifying data and interpreting the meaning of the context of the problem being studied (Nugrahi, 2014). Descriptive qualitative is used in this research method as a fact-finding method by collecting data in the field on inter marriage couples between the Acehnese and Alas tribes in Gampong Lamdingin.

Researchers conducted research identifying data sources closely related to the research object as primary sources. To support primary data, secondary sources are needed to support and develop primary data. The primary data was collected through interviews with the subjects, primarily married couples from the Acehnese and Alas ethnic groups. The researcher also conducted observations to verify the data obtained from the interviews. The interview process conducted by the researcher with the respondents was structured, with the use of prepared interview instruments (Manan, 2015, 2021). Observations of the observation process and the person being observed serve as information providers. Observations present data in the form of behavior (Ratna, 2010). In this study, the researcher used non-participatory observation, where the researcher was not directly involved in group activities, in other words, the researcher did not participate in the activities being observed. The data obtained will be collected and documented in the form of documents as supporting data.

The research location is in Banda Aceh City, specifically Kuta Alam District. The main reason the researcher chose this location is Banda Aceh City was chosen as the research location because it is the capital of Aceh Province, which is the administrative center of the Aceh Province government. The focus of the study was Gampong Lamdingin, but to expand the sample, the researchers added several couples of Acehnese and Alas ethnic groups residing in Kampong Keuramat.

Data analysis is a series of reviews, systematic groupings, interpretations, and verifications of data to ensure that phenomena have social, academic, and scientific value (Sugiyono, 2013). Data analysis involves three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction involves summarizing, selecting the important points, and focusing the research findings on married couples of the Acehnese and Alas ethnic groups according to the researcher's needs. Data presentation is the activity of arranging data in an organized and systematic manner according to interview guidelines and documents found in accordance with

the research focus. After the data is collected and sufficient, the next step is to draw temporary conclusions. Once the data is completely complete, final conclusions are drawn.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Overview of Research Object

#### 1. Village Profile

Geographically, Gampong Lamdingin is included in the Lam Kuta residential area, Kuta Alam District, Banda Aceh City with a total area of 150.5 Ha, in the west it borders Gampong Lampulo, in the east it borders Gampong Lambaro Skep, in the north it borders Gampong Deyah Raya, and in the south it borders Gampong Mulia (Village Medium-Term Development Plan 2021-2027). Lamdingin Village is led by Mr. Zakky as thr vllage head in Lamdingin Village it is spread into five hamlets including Tgk Dihaji Hamlet led by Mr. Edi Saputra, Lamkruet Hamlet led by Mr. Muzakir, Lampohpak Hamlet led by Mr. Janwar, Gano Hamlet led by Mr. Fauzan Nazradisyah, and Tgk Diblang Hamlet led by Mr. Razali.The population of Gampong Lamdingin Based on the latest data from the Gampong census, it was recorded as 3,411 people, 1048 families, consisting of 1733 men and 1678 women (Village Medium-Term Development Plan 2021-2027).

Table 1.1  
Total population

Year	Total population	Number of families	Number of Men	Number of Women
2021	3201	1009	1619	1582
2022	2022	980	1380	1651
2023	3,411	1048	1733	1678

In general, almost 100% of the residents of Gampong Lamdingin are Muslim. Being a migration destination, Gampong Lamdingin has become a melting pot of various ethnicities. Many factors contribute to this village's popularity, including its strategic location for seeking economic income.

#### 2. General Description of Research Respondents

Based on the research, researchers successfully identified seven respondents who were interviewed regarding inter ethnic marriages. These respondents consisted of married couples who had inter ethnic marriages, particularly those from the Acehnese and Alas ethnic groups. The following table lists the identities and descriptions of the respondents interviewed by the researchers:

Table 1.2  
Respondent profile

Couple Name	Status	Work	Length of Marriage	Ethnic Origin
Ferdinand Delina Desky	Husband Wife	Self-employed ASM	16 years	Acehnese people Alas Tribe
Sanusi Rasuma	Husband Wife	civil servant Housewife	21 years	Acehnese people Alas Tribe
Arjuna Hariati Sekedang	Husband Wife	Self-employed PPPK	26 Years	Acehnese people Alas Tribe

Source: Processed data 2023

## **B. The Causes of Inter Ethnic Marriage in Kuta Alam**

Data obtained by researchers in the field indicates many factors contributing to inter ethnic marriages in Kuta Alam. According to information gathered at the Lamdingin village office, 70% of the population are immigrants (Observation, 2022). Many people migrate to Lamdingin for several reasons, one of which is economic. The high number of immigrants in a region creates a diverse mix of people from different ethnicities, creating diversity within it. In a region with diverse ethnicities, people continuously interact socially and create new kinship ties. As a result of this social interaction, some people are often attracted to each other and choose to marry within their own ethnicity.

Based on the results of the research conducted, several factors contribute to inter ethnic marriages in Kuta Alam. The data obtained by the researchers identified two factors: external and internal.

### **1. External Factors**

External factors are factors that originate from outside or from the environment, both from the family environment and the community environment. One of the external factors causing inter ethnic marriages is because people migrate in the hope of getting a better life. Banda Aceh City is the center of Aceh province, becoming a center of development, development, economic growth, and also a center of education in Aceh Province. Economic and educational factors are external factors that someone migrates. This is in line with research conducted by Ikhsan, as many as 32 percent or 14 respondents said they chose Banda Aceh City as their migration destination because of the wider availability of job opportunities, and as many as 18.3 percent or 11 respondents said educational facilities in Banda Aceh City are better than their hometowns (Ikhsan, 2023). It's not just education that is the reason someone migrates, the desire to improve economic conditions is also a key factor and the most common reason for people to migrate.

### **2. Internal Factors**

The second factor is internal factors, which originate from within. Based on the data researchers obtained, inter ethnic marriages are caused by personality and wealth. It cannot be denied that financial stability is one of the factors that must be considered before marriage. In Islam, marriage is permissible, but it becomes obligatory only if a person is deemed capable and ready to marry. Having an ideal partner is everyone's desire, of course, everyone's ideal standards vary. Most women choose to marry men who are already established in their fields of work to be their husbands, women feel that by marrying a man who is already established in his job, women feel that their lives will be more secure, although the standards of stability for each person vary, but certainly every woman chooses a husband who is able to provide for his wife and children according to their needs.

Based on the research results, it was discovered that external factors that lead someone to marry someone from another ethnic group occur due to environmental circumstances that cause them to meet and engage in social interaction with someone from another ethnic group. This interaction allows them to get to know each other and begin to understand each other. Meanwhile, internal factors this happens because of the attraction to each other from within the heart which is the reason they marry their partners even though they are from different tribes.

## **C. How are the Problems of Inter Ethnic Marriage**

In every household there must be its own problems as well as inter ethnic couples. From the results of research that researchers obtained during the field, couples who marry between ethnic groups have problems to face, the problems faced are as follows:

### **1. Parental Blessing**

Getting blessing is the first thing to be able to get married, a boy can get married without involving parents or without parental blessing, but with regard to women, for a girl, she cannot marry alone and must use her father's marriage guardian. For those who marry between tribes, not getting blessings from their parents because their partners come from different cultural backgrounds is a problem faced by inter-tribal couples.

## 2. Mindset

If someone has a different cultural and social background, they will naturally have a different mindset. It's not uncommon for these differing mindsets to lead to marital disputes. Another problem faced by couples who marry between different ethnicities is having different mindsets.

## 3. Customs and traditions

Adjusting to a partner's culture takes a long time and cannot be grasped in just a few days. Understanding a partner's culture or customs is like understanding their extended family. Understanding a partner's culture isn't just about knowing the culture, but also about integrating with it, and how one participates in their partner's culture or customs. If a person fails to adapt to their partner's culture, there will be ongoing conflict in the household. The most common and inevitable problem experienced by couples who marry in interethnic groups is differences in culture and customs. Similarly, research findings from researchers in the field indicate that married couples. The wife that the researcher met admitted to having problems adapting to her partner's culture. Marrying an interethnic couple certainly presents its own challenges, as they must adapt to their partner's culture. Intervening between customs and culture can lead to marital conflict. Differences don't always lead to conflict if both partners are willing to understand their partner's culture. Providing understanding of each other's culture is the responsibility of each partner in a marriage. If both partners have a shared desire to understand each other, then differences won't be a problem in the marriage.

## 4. Communication

In social life, many people can speak, but the other person may not necessarily understand the topic of conversation. Communication is also one way for people to better understand each other, especially in couples who marry between ethnicities. In several married couples that researchers encountered, some of them admitted to experiencing problems in communicating with their partner's extended family. This was because they could not use the regional language used by their partner's extended family. Although some of them admitted to not experiencing problems because before getting married they were already able to use their partner's regional language because they had lived and mingled with their partner's environment for a long time.

## 5. Environment

Living and residing in an environment close to the extended family is not always good for the household, because living close by often the extended family interferes in household matters, the involvement of the family in household matters can affect the relationship between husband and wife. Usually parents interfere more when it concerns their grandchildren, and can result in conflict in the household depending on how much involvement the parents have in managing their children's household. However, problems or issues don't always lead to marital conflict; they become challenges when faced together. Divorce isn't a reason for separation rather, it's a perfect complement to each other. Marrying someone from another ethnic group doesn't always mean problems, and marital problems aren't always caused by cultural differences.

Domestic disputes have nothing to do with someone coming from a different ethnic group. Domestic disputes are purely caused by individual differences, not by ethnicity or culture. However, this doesn't mean there aren't cultural disputes; they're just less of a problem and are limited to minor disagreements. However, couples who marry between different ethnic groups

are generally more harmonious because they exhibit a higher level of tolerance than other couples (Interview, 2023).

#### **D. What are the Impacts of Inter Ethnic Marriages**

##### **1. Cultural Acculturation**

In the research results obtained from the respondents, researchers found that there was cultural acculturation in the lives of inter ethnic married couples, one of the cultural acculturations occurred during the wedding. Couples who come from two inter ethnic tribes certainly have an inter ethnic wedding procession, from the proposal procession, engagement, ijab kabul, traditional procession on the day of the party, to inter ethnic traditional clothing, in this acculturation they combine two inter ethnic cultures in one wedding procession.

##### **2. Children's Intelligence**

A child born to an interethnic couple has a higher level of intelligence. This is because they have a broader social circle from a young age, encountering people with both Acehese and Alas people characteristics, and from this they learn more about the character of others. Children of interethnic couples will have a richer cultural knowledge, and growing up in an environment with interethnic characteristics will make it easier for the child to later enter a new environment.

##### **3. Environmental Change**

Marrying an interethnic partner will inevitably lead to changes in their environment, including cultural, residential, and mindset. Every positive action taken will undoubtedly have a positive impact on their life and the world around them. Interracial marriages don't always result in marital problems; rather, they can have positive impacts for those who have interracial partners. Respondents noted that, rather than experiencing marital discord due to cultural barriers, they felt incredibly fortunate to have interracial marriages.

It's clear that marriages based on cultural differences don't always lead to ongoing problems. There are always positive aspects to be found when you're with the right person. People often worry that inter ethnic marriages will often lead to problems and arguments later in life. The key to marital harmony lies in good communication with your partner, mutual trust, and mutual understanding.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results above, it can be concluded that the causes of intermarriage between the Acehese and Alas ethnic groups in Banda Aceh City are due to external and internal factors. External factors occur due to environmental conditions, where various ethnic groups mix in a region due to population migration. This diversity allows them to interact with both immigrants and local residents, often resulting in a sense of comfort and mutual attraction. Internal factors include the perceived superior religious understanding of the partner, their good job, and their positive personality.

Problems faced by couples in inter-Acehese and Alas ethnic marriages in Banda Aceh include: obstacles to parental approval, intermediary mindsets, intermediary customs, communication, and the environment. However, the problems faced by respondents do not always result in conflict if they are faced together and there is an attitude of mutual understanding. From the results of the study, researchers found that quarrels in the household are not caused by intermediary ethnicity or intermediary cultural background, but rather quarrels occur due to incompatible personalities and a strong desire to be understood without wanting to understand one's partner.

The impacts of interethnic marriage include cultural acculturation, child intelligence, and environmental changes. Acculturation provides a compromise in dealing with cultural differences and demonstrates respect for one's partner's culture. Children's intelligence is

shaped by good parental upbringing, instilled early in their family life. Having an interethnic partner will lead to environmental changes that are better than before.

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