

Description of The Meaning of Expressions in The Implementation of Famotu Ono Nihalo in Gunungsitoli

Herni Berkat Gulo^{1*}, Sensi Darnia Lase², Afore Tahir Harefa³

^{1,2,3}Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Nias, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
Email: ^{1*}herniberkatgulo9@gmail.com, ²sensidarnialase@gmail.com, ³aforetahirharefa@unias.ac.id
(* : coressponding author)

Abstract – The purpose of this study is to describe terms used in the Gunungsitoli, Nias, and implementation of Famotu Ono Nihalo. A deeply meaningful and culturally significant ritual for the Nias is called Famotu Ono Nihalo. The community and traditional leaders speak in a variety of ways during this rite. In order to collect data for this study, qualitative methods, including literature reviews, interviews, and observation, were used. Understanding the meaning of terms in the context of Gunungsitoli's application of Famotu Ono Nihalo is aided by this research. This knowledge can contribute to the preservation of Nias customs and culture as well as enhance Indonesia's cultural assets.

Keywords: Famotu Ono Nihalo, Expression, Meaning, Nias, Gunungsitoli, Custom, Tradition, Culture

Abstrak – Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan istilah-istilah yang digunakan di Gunungsitoli, Nias, dan pelaksanaan Famotu Ono Nihalo. Ritual yang sangat bermakna dan signifikan secara budaya bagi masyarakat Nias disebut Famotu Ono Nihalo. Masyarakat dan para pemimpin adat berbicara dalam berbagai cara selama ritual ini. Dalam rangka mengumpulkan data untuk penelitian ini, metode kualitatif, termasuk tinjauan literatur, wawancara, dan observasi, digunakan. Pemahaman akan makna istilah-istilah dalam konteks penerapan Famotu Ono Nihalo di Gunungsitoli dapat terbantu dengan adanya penelitian ini. Pengetahuan ini dapat berkontribusi pada pelestarian adat dan budaya Nias serta meningkatkan aset budaya Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Famotu Ono Nihalo, Ungkapan, Makna, Nias, Gunungsitoli, Adat, Tradisi, Budaya

1. INTRODUCTION

The Famotu Ono Nihalo custom has been upheld by the people of Nias, particularly in Gunungsitoli, for a considerable amount of time as a priceless cultural legacy. This custom serves as a thank you for all of the favors received and a show of respect for ancestors. Famotu Ono Nihalo has expressions that are loaded with messages and meaning beneath her sparkle. The secret to enhancing tradition's essence and keeping it alive in the contemporary period is to comprehend the meaning underlying these terms. Indonesia, with its wealth of cultural diversity, has a great deal of meaningful customs and rituals that support the lofty aspirations of the Nias people, who want to create a link between their predecessors and their offspring.

The ceremony of Famotu Ono Nihalo is intricate and significant. It consists of a number of components, such as prayers, sacrifices, and words said by the community and traditional officials. These aren't just words; they have a deeper significance and represent the ideals that are important to Nias culture. According to Verawati Br. Matondang (2017), Famotu Ono Nihalo is a medium for transmitting Nias cultural values to the next generation, especially to women. The cultural values instilled through this tradition are expected to be a guideline for Nias women in living a harmonious and prosperous household life. Erniwati Sitompul (2018), Famotu Ono Nihalo is a tradition full of meaning and cultural values of Nias. This tradition contains moral and ethical messages that are expected to be upheld by the bride in living her married life.

The purpose of this study is to explain the meaning of terms used in Gunungsitoli, Nias, in the context of the application of Famotu Ono Nihalo. Among the many factors that drove our research was the significance of Famotu Ono Nihalo as a customary practice for the Nias people. According to Margareta Meiwati Laia (2024), Famotu Ono Nihalo is a series of advice delivered to Nias brides in the form of traditional expressions containing cultural values and morality. These pieces of advice aim to guide the bride in carrying out her role as a wife and mother in a Nias household. In addition to strengthening the bond between ancestors and offspring, this ceremony

helps members of the family and community feel more unified and cohesive. Even though Famotu Ono Nihalo has been the subject of numerous studies, there are still not many that concentrate particularly on the significance of the terms employed in this ceremony. Gaining a deeper grasp of Nias culture can be facilitated by learning the meanings behind expressions like Famotu Ono Nihalo. This knowledge can also contribute to the enrichment and preservation of Nias customs and cultural treasures owned by the people of Indonesia.

Nestled within the rich tapestry of Nias culture lays Famotu Ono Nihalo, a time-honored tradition practiced during weddings in Gunungsitoli. This ceremony transcends a mere exchange of vows; it's a poignant moment where female elders impart wisdom and guidance to the bride, illuminating her path towards a fulfilling married life.

Our exploration delves into the profound meaning hidden within the expressions used during Famotu Ono Nihalo. We will embark on a journey to understand how these words, imbued with cultural significance, serve as a roadmap for the bride, equipping her with the virtues and values essential for navigating the complexities of marriage and motherhood.

This analysis will not only unveil the symbolic layers of these expressions but also shed light on how experts interpret their significance within the broader context of Niasese culture. Through this examination, we gain a deeper appreciation for Famotu Ono Nihalo's role in preserving traditions and shaping the lives of Niasese women.

2. METHOD

The qualitative research approach employed in this study provided a rich and nuanced understanding of the meaning and significance of expressions used during Famotu Ono Nihalo. By combining observation, interviews, and document analysis, the research delved into the cultural context, symbolic meaning, and personal experiences associated with this important Nias wedding tradition. The findings of this research contribute to a deeper appreciation of Nias culture and the role of Famotu Ono Nihalo in preserving cultural heritage and values. Merriam & Tisdall (2022) provides a comprehensive guide to qualitative research methodology, including data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of findings. Tracy (2023) provides an easy-to-understand introduction to qualitative research methodology, focusing on various types of qualitative research and their applications.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nias culture is the age-old custom of Famotu Ono Nihalo, which is observed at weddings in Gunungsitoli. This ceremony is more than just an exchange of vows; it's a moving occasion where the bride receives insight and direction from female elders, guiding her on the way to a happy married life.

Our investigation explores the deep significance that lies beneath the phrases used during Famotu Ono Nihalo. We will set out on a quest to discover how these words, rich in cultural connotations, function as a guide for the bride, bestowing upon her the virtues and ideals necessary to successfully negotiate the challenges of marriage and motherhood.

In addition to revealing the symbolic depths of these statements, this research will provide insight into the ways in which scholars understand their meaning in relation to the larger Niasese cultural background. This analysis helps us understand Famotu Ono Nihalo's significance in upholding customs and influencing Niasese women's lives.

3.1 Exploring the Meaning of Expressions in Famotu Ono Nihalo

3.1.1 The Cultural and Historical Background of Famotu Ono Nihalo: Examining the Significance of Expressions in Customary Wedding Practices of the Nias People

A deeply meaningful and culturally significant wedding custom known as Famotu Ono Nihalo has been practiced for centuries and is an essential component of the Nias people's identity. This custom encompasses not only the bridal procession but also the journey of life, love, respect,

and optimism for the future. Here, we are able to follow the traditions historical the rich and varied culture of the Nias, which was shaped by their Southeast Asian forefathers, is the foundation of the Famotu Ono Nihalo heritage. The core principles of Nias culture include kinship, gotong royong, ancestor respect, and tradition observance. The Famotu Ono Nihalo ritual has changed over time in response to societal and cultural shifts. Its essential principles and symbolic connotations have endured nonetheless. Interaction with other cultures and colonization had an impact on the Famotu Ono Nihalo custom. But by upholding their cultural beliefs, the Nias people were able to keep this custom alive. Both in Nias and abroad, Nias people continue to preserve and practice Famotu Ono Nihalo today. Additionally, this custom has grown to be a popular cultural tourist destination for nearby and foreign tourists.

3.1.2 Understanding The Full Meaning Of These Expressions Requires An Understanding Of Denotative And Connotative Meanings.

An understanding denotative and connotative meaning thoroughly is necessary to fully understand expressions in Famotu Ono Nihalo, especially when explaining emotive meanings. The literal, objective definition of a word or phrase as it appears in a dictionary is known as denotative meaning. Connotative meaning, on the other hand, refers to the extra layers of associations and significance that a word or phrase holds; these associations are frequently shaped by cultural settings, feelings, and values.

Understanding Famotu Ono Nihalo expressions requires delving into both connotative and denotative meanings for several reasons.

- a. Words with connotative meanings are frequently used in Famotu Ono Nihalo's utterances to convey deeper meanings and intentions. We can determine the expression's genuine meaning by comprehending these layers of connotation.
- b. A word or phrase's connotative meaning can greatly influence how well it communicates the intended meaning. We can determine whether an expression is appropriate and effective in communicating the intended message by analyzing connotative nuances.
- c. To Avoid Misunderstandings Connotative meanings can vary between individuals and cultures. Recognizing these variations helps prevent misinterpretations during communication.

Examples of Famotu Ono Nihalo Expressions with Denotative and Connotative Meanings:

Example 1:

- Denotative: "Lafo nu Vili" (lafo = speak, nu = of, Vili = respected elder)
- Connotative: "Words of Wisdom" (Implies: The expression refers to sayings or advice spoken by a respected elder, carrying weight and importance due to the speaker's stature.)

Example 2:

- Denotative: "Hina ni Mata" (hina = light, ni = of, Mata = sun)
- Connotative: "Hope" (Implies: The expression literally translates to "light of the sun," but connotatively signifies hope, possibly because the sun brings light and warmth, signifying a brighter future.)

By understanding the denotative and connotative meanings, we can further explore the meaning of Famotu Ono Nihalo expressions and increase our understanding of the expressive nuances contained in the language.

3.1.3 Exploring the Meaning of Expression in Famotu Ono Nihalo

Famotu Ono Nihalo is a traditional Niasese wedding ceremony that holds deep cultural significance. It is a time for the community to come together to celebrate the union of two families and to impart wisdom and guidance to the newlyweds. One of the most important aspects of the Famotu Ono Nihalo is the expression of values and beliefs through various symbolic gestures and utterances.

Words play a pivotal role in conveying the essence of Famotu Ono Nihalo. Through carefully crafted speeches and proverbs, the elders of the community impart valuable life lessons to the bride and groom. These words serve as a compass, guiding the couple through the challenges and joys of married life.

Examples of Expressions in Famotu Ono Nihalo:

- a. *Ma'u Ma'u Ale*: means saying a request and prayer so that everything runs smoothly and gets blessings from the ancestors.
- b. *Omo Sebua*: This expression is used to signal joy and happiness over important events in traditional ceremonies, including when the bridal procession arrives at the bride's house.
- c. *Lamo Li'a, Wula Wuli, Haho Haho*: Is a series of traditional songs that accompany the ritual steps in a traditional Nias wedding.
- d. *Hofu Faito*: expresses feelings of emotion and prayers so that their new life journey will be lived out with blessings.

3.1.4 Nias Proverbs and Sayings in Famotu Ono Nihalo

Nias proverbs and sayings are a rich and valuable source of local wisdom. Understanding these proverbs and sayings helps us to understand the deeper, implied meaning behind the expressions in Famotu Ono Nihalo. This traditional Nias wedding tradition is not just about marriage, but also about cultural values, respect and hope for a new life full of happiness. Here are some examples of Nias proverbs and sayings relevant to Famotu Ono Nihalo:

- a. "*Gofu hadia ia niwa'ö ziso fönau khöu, ba gofu hadia ia ni'owalu khöu.*" (Give love to your in-laws and sister-in-law, like you give love to your own parents.)
- b. "*Gofu hadia ia niwa'ö ziso fönau khöu, ba gofu hadia ia ni'owalu khöu.*" (Give love to your in-laws and sister-in-law, like you give love to your own parents.)
- c. "*Fa'ohe ba ginöri, ba lö fa'ohe ba wolu.*" (Speak politely, don't be rude.)
- d. "*Naso dome zitohöna yomo, balö tolalö'ö Nionangegö da'ö, mendrua manö ae.*" (Always remember your origins, your hometown, and your ancestors, protect their good name.)
- e. "*Lö sökhi mbu'u haga, fa mao nasu, ba lö sökhi mbu'u awöna, fa mao ba wolu.*" (Don't be arrogant, because you are only dust, and don't be arrogant, because you only have two hands.)

3.1.5 Nias Community Perspective on the Meaning of the Phrases of Famotu Ono Nihalo in Gunungsitoli

A deeply meaningful and culturally significant wedding custom among the Nias is called Famotu Ono Nihalo. The Nias people's views on marriage, family, and the future of life are better understood when we are aware of the meanings behind the terms used in this culture. It is crucial to protect and uphold this custom as a part of our cultural legacy.

The perspective of the Nias people in the meaning of the expression Famotu Ono Nihalo can be seen from several aspects:

- a. Life Cycle:

A representation of the never-ending cycle of life and death is Famotu Ono Nihalo. For a husband and wife, marriage is considered the start of a new life in which they will raise a family and carry on family customs.

- b. Deference and Deference:

Famotu Ono Nihalo's expressions show a great deal of reverence and respect for parents, ancestors, and traditions. Families use this custom as a significant way to send their girls off to start new lives.

- c. Cohesion and Dedication:

Famotu Ono Nihalo highlighted the value of dedication and togetherness in marriage. It is expected of married couples to assist one another and collaborate to create a fulfilling and profitable existence.

d. Optimism and Hope:

This custom is tinged with optimism and hope for married couples' future. The Nias people think that married couples would be lucky and happy if they use Famotu Ono Nihalo.

e. Local Knowledge

The cultural legacy of Famotu Ono Nihalo is rich in the indigenous knowledge of the Nias people. This tradition upholds admirable principles like cooperation, respect, and responsibility that are still applicable in today's world.

3.2 Types of Famotu Ono Nihalo and the Meaning of Their Expressions

A significant Nias wedding custom called Famotu Ono Nihalo provides insight into the philosophy and cultural values of the Nias people. Famotu Ono Nihalo is a reflection of life's journey, love and respect, and optimism for the future. It is more than just a wedding custom.

The expressions in Famotu Ono Nihalo are more than just words; they have profound symbolic significance. They express the Nias people's expectations for a happy and long-lasting married life, as well as their cultural beliefs and customs.

We may more fully understand the meaning of these expressions with the aid of semantic theory. According to this theory, a word or expression's meaning is influenced by both its literal definition and the context in which it is employed.

Table 1. Distribution of the phrase "Famotu" in the Nias Traditional Wedding Ceremony.

| Types | Meaning | Language | Pronunciation | Proverb | Symbolism |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Famotu Me | I was cut off | Nias language (gunungsitoli dialect) | Full of emotion and happiness | Famofu ba gae ba woga | Leaving the family and starting a new life |
| Famotu Ina | Cutting the umbilical cord for ina (mother) | Nias language (gunungsitoli dialect) | Full of emotion and affection ina | Ba woga, ama ba gae | Express gratitude and respect to mother |
| Famotu Ama | Cutting the umbilical cord for ama (father) | Nias language (gunungsitoli dialect) | Full of respect and obedience | Ama ba woga, ina ba gae | Asking for father's blessing to start a new life |
| Famotu Adat | Obey the customs seriously | Nias language (gunungsitoli dialect) | Full of seriousness and responsibility | - | Respect nias cultural values and customs |

The labels "major" and "minor" are not strictly used to indicate the relative importance of various parts or activities in the ceremony; rather, they are employed in the context of the traditional Nias wedding rite, "Famotu Ono Nihalo." Instead, the terms refer to the general framework and sequence of the ceremony.

a. Major (Faamajoru)

The principal or focal elements of the Famotu Ono Nihalo ceremony are referred to as "faamajoru" (major). These include the primary rites and symbolic acts that embody the spirit of the custom. The most important and crucial components of the wedding process are thought to be the faamajoru aspects. Examples of Faamajoru Elements:

- Famotu Me: The bride's symbolic separation from her family and transition to married life.
- Famotu Ina: The bride's expression of gratitude and respect to her mother.
- Famotu Ama: The bride's request for her father's blessing and permission to marry.
- Famotu Adat: The couple's adherence to Nias customary practices and traditions.
- Famotu Ono Nihalo: The symbolic sacrifice of an animal, representing the couple's commitment to each other and their new family.

b. Minor (Faaminoru)

The supplemental or complimentary elements of the Famotu Ono Nihalo ceremony are referred to as "faaminoru" (minor). These consist of the different traditions, etiquette, and cultural practices that make the whole richer and more complex. The significance of the faaminoru parts is acknowledged, but not as much as that of the wedding ritual's fundamental meaning. Examples of Faaminoru Elements:

- Traditional attire: The bride, groom, and other participants wearing Nias customary clothing.
- Gifts and exchanges: The exchange of gifts between the bride's and groom's families.
- Festivities and celebrations: The communal feasting, music, and dancing that accompany the wedding.
- Customary speeches and blessings: The formal addresses and blessings bestowed upon the couple by elders and community leaders.

In Famotu Ono Nihalo, the difference between "faamajoru" and "faaminoru" has nothing to do with giving any particular element more or less weight. Instead, it draws attention to the ways in which the several elements that comprise this deep and significant customary wedding ceremony are interwoven. The cultural and general importance of Famotu Ono Nihalo in Nias society is influenced by both the faamajoru and faaminoru aspects.

4. CONCLUSION

A deeply ingrained tradition that is carried out during weddings in Gunungsitoli called Famotu Ono Nihalo provides a glimpse into the essence of Nias culture. It's a moving ritual that involves more than simply exchanging vows; the bride gains knowledge and insight from female elders, preparing her for a happily married life.

This investigation explores the deep significance that lies within the phrases used during Famotu Ono Nihalo. We set out on a quest to learn how these culturally rich words provide the bride with a sense of direction and instill in her the values and virtues she needs to face the trials of marriage and parenting.

The idea of "major" and "minor" components does not denote the relative importance of particular components within the event. Rather, it explains Famotu Ono Nihalo's general organization. The ritual is made richer and more intricate by the addition of both supplemental ("faaminoru") elements, such as traditional clothing, and fundamental elements ("faamajoru"), such as "Famotu Me."

The powerful icon of Nias culture is Famotu Ono Nihalo. We may grasp the significance of the Nias people, their values, and their wishes for a happy future for their newlyweds by deciphering

the meaning behind their expressions. It serves as a reminder of how crucial it is to maintain the cultural customs that bind us to our ancestry and communities.

REFERENCES

- Budiman Zebua (2015) Famotu Ono Nihalo: *The Customary Wedding Tradition of Nias*
- Eliazer Zebua (2007) Customs and Traditions of Nias
- Laia, M. M. (2024). *Analysis Of Cultural Values In Famotu Ono Nihalö (Advice To The Bride) In A Traditional Nias Wedding In Gunungsitoli City.*
- Matondang, V. B. (2017). Famotu Ono Nihalo: *The Tradition of Giving Advice to the Bride of the Nias Tribe (Case Study in Bawomataluo Village, South Gunungsitoli District, Gunungsitoli City).* Scientific Journal of Sociology: Study of Social Problems, 13(2), 225-240.
- Nias Proverbs and Sayings by Yohanes Dahyar (2012). PRIMED Journal: *Journal of Basic Education*, 5(1), 1-16.
- Sitompul, E. (2018). *Journal of Sociology: Study of Social Problems*, 14(1), 1-16.
- "The Nias: *An Ethnographic Study of an Island Culture*" by Johannes Verhoeven (1985) Nias Cultural Studies: *Local Wisdom and Community Traditions*" by Medan State University Research Team (2018).