

WOMEN AND ROOM TO MANOUVRE FOR THEIR LIVELIHOOD

It is undisputable that many texts have relentlessly issued the burden and injustice faced by women. In various aspects of life, women are the subject vulnerable against discrimination, both material and mental suffering, up to serious case of violence. Both on the nearest level of our daily life up to the policy level, for instance, women issues are still way from easy solution due to its way too complicated tangle of values, norms, tradition, authority, as well as interpretation about women's personal space.

This edition Journal of Social Analysis is dedicated to women issues through articles showing the intricacy of the issue. Eight main articles in this edition present various fields, such as agrarian affairs, social-economy, law, and popular culture. These articles described micro process of research and conceptual review as well as experience in mentoring, all of which eventually seeking for further equality for women, despite the long and winding road awaiting.

The problem of equality begins in the household. Household is indeed one of the main focus of negotiation between women and men about access of resources, production distribution, job classification, and power allocation. Job classification on domestic and public area consequently causes the household to be exposed to external influences. Changes of the environment, such as agrarian changes or agricultural modernization, create a great influence on the structure and dynamic of a household. A study of Brunt (1992) on agrarian changes in Mexico, for example, shows clearly how the introduction of irrigation, sugar cane

cultivation, as well as fruit and vegetable farm, has shifted and transformed the role of men and women in both domestic and agriculture area. Women in this case is losing control on the agriculture activity they were used to (and from which they gain some income), namely planting staple food (corn and seeds) and cattle farming. They are marginalized and 'forced' to stay at home and become housewives (housewifization), while the men are in turn controlling the newly introduced agriculture and plantation system. Modernization and industrialization of agriculture are causing both men and women to face changes, the men are dealing with new system of agriculture, governance, and market, while the women with the husband and men in house, to ensure the survival of the household and children. Some women in the Mexican case have shown strategies to create 'room to manoeuvre' to gain access and manage resources, thus making them economically independent from their husband and able to keep their family life, particularly raising the children.

Another interesting case from Palopu, Central Sulawesi, written by **Laksmi Adriani Savitri**, shows similar process of the Mexican case upon women in Desa Palopu, in which the women manage to create women's 'authority space' to preserve rice cultivation (including the forest that produces water to the fields) when cacao and clove plantation intrudes and promising male farmers a higher profit. In this article, Laksmi highlighted the fact that despite the profit of cacao, paddy field survives. This is possible while the women are traditionally in charge of paddy field and household food supply. Based on that tradition and food sovereignty in the household, the paddy field in Palopu is survived by the women. Meanwhile the cacao are planted entering the forest by the male farmers.

The dynamic of environmental competition outside and inside the Java Island are naturally different. The most significant factor is the scale of field and authority as well as ownership system, and the livelihood pattern. All will naturally influence the dynamic of household structure and job classification inside. Nevertheless, women everywhere are inseparable with the effort of household survival. The life of women and their effort of creating livelihood in a village in Central Java is presented in an article by **Dede Mulyanto**. Here the writer described the sources of livelihood explored by the women and the reason why. This is a valuable and important contribution in understanding the most updated situation of life and livelihood, work and job classification in a village in Central Java.

This paper, which is part of a larger research conducted by AKATIGA, shows how the job classification within a community is closely related to composition and job classification in the household.

Apart from agriculture and rural fields, women in entertainment field have their own story about inequality they faced and their strategy to cope. In the entertainment world, discrimination based on gender ideology, in particular in relation with sexuality issue, obviously appears. The patriarchal gender ideology place the women as problem maker, thus must be monitored and led by their men counterpart on activities outside domestic area, else they might cause disgrace on the family. That's a small description of how the gender ideology place women to disconnect with the world outside and hand everything to men. On the other hand, mental and physical violence upon women might occur. Most women create then their own strategy. The third article is about women and music entertainment industry, with its sexuality standard that not in favour of women. In "Inul Daratista and Dewi Persik vs. Sexuality in Dangdut Music Industry", **Sisilia Wahyuning Astuti** described and analysed the sexuality phenomena of 2 prominent dangdut singers, Inul Daratista and Dewi Persik. The writer shows that through the two cases, sexuality standard is difficult to attain, due to its being multi-interpretative and interest. The multi-interpretative aspect is proven as the women singers are the only one subjected to discrimination, and not their male counterpart who also shows similar sexuality. Despite the enormous critic and condemn, the singers are not passive victims, they know exactly their job risks. And toward the sexuality based pressure, both are making their own way through business diversification and performance upgrade.

Another strategy often taken by women to reach their goal is building solidarity among women, relatives and, in some cases, mobilizing their children. The fourth article by **Indraswari** presents the strategy of urban women in slum area of eastern Bandung to cope with household's basic needs. Social capital is the main concept brought by the writer to show that the women in her research area are capable to build solidarity and strength to gather resources in cooperating and fulfilling the family needs. The social capital is in form of ladies gathering, cooperative entity, and kiosk business. The writer brought an argumentation that these efforts are a social capital playing a major role in saving and fulfilling incidental need, such as healthcare fund and education fund.

Seeing the many inequality of power and its struggle in the life of women, how could a governance system or the state manage to create more impartiality? This edition also presents an article about democracy and feminism. Here **Nur Iman Subono** tried to see through the two big concept and formulate the relation between feminism and democracy, particularly the female representation in democracy. The writer reviewed what kind of representation is required, and how a democracy system should be pro-women. It is admitted that up to now the democracy running in the country is not yet pro-women, seen from women representation in both formal one, i.e. political organizational or parliamentary representation, and social representation.

How are the men dealing with women activists in both household as homemakers and in alliance movement? The article "Sharing Life with Women: Reading the Pro-Women Men Movement in Indonesia" shows a new perspective in this edition. **Nur Hasyim**, the writer, tried to read and announce the new men movement in individual and alliance scale which develop and campaign a new concept of 'new' pro-women men. The writer saw this pro-women movement among men as a result from women activism. This article tried to assess the journey of this movement in Indonesia, its form, and its objective. This paper believes that pro-women movement has a positive implication on the strategy and approach of women activism, particularly to create equality for all, both for women and men.

From the labor field, endless suffering of the migrant workers is again presented, this time through an article by **Suke Djelantik**. This article reviews the many problems faced by women migrant workers (here referred to as women labor/TKW), working as house maid abroad. The violation of human rights occurred to women migrant workers brought the writer to a conclusion that it was caused by the low bargaining position in relation with agent and employer. Thus political will and legal protection is the answer.

The problem of migrant workers seems to be neverending, but also the effort of women right advocacy to keep pushing the political will of government and influencing the policy making process for legal protection upon women. The dynamic of law and policy with women perspective and its effort to find the right existence is shown in this edition through an article from **R. Valentina Sagala**.

Here the writer tried to see women perspective in legal formulation as a form of room to manouvre, followed by a series of legal products in Indonesia in relation with women. As an activist in women advocacy, the writer analysed these many legal product and policy. Having involved in feminism movement since high school, the writer concluded the fundamental problem of the legal substance and legislation process in relation with women, namely inaccomodation of women experience, criminalization of women body, and uninvovement of women in the process.

In methodology section, **Hani Yulindrasari** wrote a gender sensitive research methodology. This writing is an adaptation of various research guide with gender perspective. Gender sensitive methodology is an improved and non-discriminatory effort in conducting research, and as a guideline this paper shows the definition and stages of gender sensitive method.

In book review section, **Maria Endah M. Rahayu** reviewed a book titled *Perempuan Asia, dari Penderitaan Menjadi Kekuatan* (Asian Women, from Suffering to Strength) which is a good contribution in building the awareness of how special and great is women power in rising from difficulties. The speciality here is how they read the signs in their life journey. In this book, the track of Asian women through migration to international level reveals the fundamental problem in their life condition, namely crisis and poverty.

The supplement part of this journal let us be introduced to interesting short papers about the experience of amateur researchers from **Hapsari NGO**. Despite the lack of clarity in topic and subject and method of research, the all women researcher team shows exactly the fundamental problem occurred as well among professional and educated researchers. All 12 descriptions from Hapsari women researcher show that among the normal daily life of women around them, new things are always found, which opening their eyes. Internally, with their own limitation as a new learner of methodology, they have to cope with lack of confidence, hesitation, and resistance as well as critic, which require mental preparedness, and to be creative in dealing with respondent's reaction. Facts from field brought them to realize the mental and physical load of village women in performing their household duty; how their feelings are, how they perform children rearing, how they manage household economy, and how they face the

problem of women health and illiteracy. Despite its being not yet holistic, the fragments of this research experience are valuable contribution in seeing the general problem of methodology faced by every researcher, and the simple but nonetheless important facts from the daily life of women in Desa Sialang Buah and Desa Bingkat, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra.

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