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Women's Role in Economic Development to Improve Lives in The Floating House of Tempe Lake

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ABSTRACT

The government asked women to be involved in the effort to face the world's crisis impacts. One of them is by supporting women's movements for food diversification, energy saving, and creative economics. According to the statistical data, 60 percent out of 85,4 millions of small section of men power are *females*. Besides that, for the effectiveness of the family's economic, women are the best one. A lot of facts proved that the wives are capable to do their best effort to support their family's economy. Starting from small businesses to the bigger ones. The skill and the capacity of women's role is not just a nature or biological opinions as commonly debated. This one is depends on the want and studying its potential aspects. Let alone if it is supported by adequate transportation facilities in the land area. And how is the women's role in the improvement of family's economics living on the water?

The existence of the women's community in the floating house living on the lake water in Tempe Lake at the first stage was to accompany their husbands and doing the household chores on the water. For years the family's economics were depend on the husband to make the end meets as a fishermen with relatively small incomes. The limitation of water's transportation is not a hindrance for the housewife to take a role to be involved to help their husbands in the creative economic process to advance

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their family's standard of living. The involvement of the housewives have been proved to give a positive effect in improving fishermen family's economic in the floating house in Tempe Lake.

The aim of the research is to find women's role in developing family's economic to enhance their standard of living in the water settlement environment. The ethno-architecture research approach is used, so that the result of the research is in the form of artifact (physical track of the settlement) and reveal the meaning of the settlement's culture which developed on the water in the view point of the system of people's creative economics living in the water.

Keywords : economics, floating house, women's role

1. INTRODUCTION

Based on the reality that historically, culturally, awareness, perception and behavior, there are many opinions or debates concerning women's role in the society. The unequal role between men and women is influenced by the applied norms, religion interpretation and socio-culture construction which regulates role allocation, attribute, stereotypes, rights, obligations, responsibility, and perceptions toward men or women. (Susanti, 2008). Besides that, marginalization, discriminations, and subordinations towards women made their power of competition in many aspects of life became very low. The combined stagnation of no access to economics ways, social, and power faced by the poor women caused the raise of feminization of poverty. Let alone, to enhance the fulfillment of women's economics rights is one of women's basic rights. Women's economics rights should be functioned so that it is hoped that their quality of life and their family prosperity will be raised gradually (Hatta, 2008). Besides that, it has been conducted into some affirmations in order to raise women's role in the economics developments, such as integrating women's importance into many development programs.

Nevertheless, the awareness of the importance of using women's public rights mainly in the field of economics, and because of the attention of pressure and exploitation of women in their field of jobs, has given a positive effect in women's life (Hatta, 2008). Besides that, family's tendency in supporting this awareness actions has been accepted enough in the developing countries like Indonesia. The consequence of this awareness is in lines with the equal attentions toward men and women, in order to see and discussing again concerning the public role of women in the society (Rahman, 2005).

In the natural environment of the countryside, the women's role will become very crucial in supporting their family's economics which is

traditionally handled. Women's involvement in the production process such as doing the farming, fields, or as a fishermen, has been existed in our traditional society in the countryside, including the role of the women who live on the water. Although at the first stage, it is limited on the production process, but later, would directly involved in the marketing process.

The role of the women who live in the floating house in Tempe Lake of South Sulawesi in helping supporting their family's income, is not just natural decision and also not a biology decision either. The decision in doing the public role, besides domestic role which has been applied so far, is potential discovery which is still learned and still be processed in years adapted with their living on the water. The limitation of education, knowledge, and means of transportations is proved not be influenced significantly in supporting their husbands in doing many economics activity done on the water. Besides that, several public roles which are uncommon done by women in the urban area, has been done properly by the mothers and women in their floating house.

2. WOMEN'S ROLE

Women's profile is described as a human being who must live in the dilemma situations. In one side, women is asked to take part in all sectors, but in the other side, it is asked for women for not neglecting their 'natural destiny' as a woman. Such demands have made women carried doubled burden. Women's role which is constructed by people socio-culture in destiny, the interpretation is biased becomes something which is patched on women and becomes women's self image. The image then gradually formed by the government in Family Prosperity Counseling (PKK) through Five Women Association (Panca Dharma Wanita), the government has been legally applied the concept into five roles. Firstly, Women are the husbands' companion. Secondly, Women are mothers of educators and young generation's counselor. Thirdly, are the economics' administrator. Fourthly, are bread winners companion, Fifthly, are members of society, in women's association, public social, and the like that contributes the society (Susanti, 2008).

In the reality of the life, destiny is not merely done by women and doubled role is not a new thing. Since they were young, women is educated to be survived and support their family by working. The industrial development has made women in poor condition, the machines and skilled-workers has replaced women in their jobs. In the field of job, women are lack- of- skill worker, thus, women are limited by cultural norms on the filed of job which properly done by them. It is different with men who are able to choose many kinds of jobs and educations to support their jobs. Let alone,

women, specially the poor ones, are the main workers equal to men in their family. In fact, women are always claimed as the bread winners companions.

3. THE REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S ROLE

3.1 As a Result of Economics Conditions

The family's matter in the people of the countryside aroused since the economics matter has come and the chance of looking for a job are more open. In the past, people who live in the countryside, the chance of women in looking for a job is limited, either its kind and its place, women are supposed to obey their husband commands. However, nowadays, the norms which has been applied by the countryside's people are gradually changed due to the economics' demand which are urgent. The economics' urgency has caused women can not only work in their domestic areas, or helping their husbands doing the jobs in the farms or yards. The public sectors which have already been dominated by men, has been an interest to women. The openness of variety of job vacancy in the urban area nowadays has also influenced the interests of women in the countryside specially those who lived in the slum areas. The informal domestic sectors such as to be a house maid is their first choice, the uneducated and low-skilled women, is one of the causes to be a house maid abroad. The fact showed that ever since 1980s, the sending of working women abroad has been conducted so that the husband's role which initially be the beard winner of their family's economics role has been removed by their wife's role in earning *dinar* or *ringgit*.

3.2 As the Result of Absolute and Structural Poverty

The removal of the women's role besides of the family's demand which becoming hard, but also as the struggle of absolute poverty which happened in the family's environment in generations and the struggle of structural poverty which so far has been claimed caused by the government. The women's poverty is influenced by tradition factor, religion, and gender with the complex and negative implication on women's health and education status. The women's struggle and the want to end the poverty that faced by them and the fact that there are many well-educated women caused women started to take the role in the public sector, such as supporting their husbands or be the main bread winner. According to Ruth Alsop and Andrew Norton (2004) in *Poverty Reduction, Power, Rights, and Poverty" Concepts and Connections*, poverty is categorized as something which is against with human's basic rights. For that reason it is conducted women's resources. The women's resources can suppress the poverty's digit by changing and improving women's lives. The resource is a combination between two factors which are tied each other that is agency and chance structure. Agency is an

ability of a person in deciding his or her own real choice. While chance structure are many kinds of aspects which make makes a person to be able to do because of his ability to choose. Many proves showed that a woman has an ability to decide to do a business in a small scale to a bigger scale has proved to solve their family out from poverty (Sen, 2004).

4. WOMEN'S ROLE TOWARDS FAMILY'S ECONOMICS IN THE FLOATING HOUSE

The Economics' Activities in the floating House

The economics' activities which done by community in the floating house on the water is strictly related to women's role. Not only the domestic economics' activities but also the public economics' activities. The economics' activities of people living on the water are in the informal economic factors as fishermen catching on the fish, cultivating the fish, handling the fish and selling the fish. The fishermen doing the activity to catch the fish by using one-machine boat on the lake, in the morning time until night time. The tool which is used to catch the fish is called *jala* (casting net) and *jabba* (fish's trap made of iron). To the fishermen, the fish can be cached throughout the lake areas except the cultivated fish areas which are called *Palawang* and *Bungka*. The income money from the selling of the fish will be used to spend the family's daily needs or part of them will be sold to the fish dealers. To the fishermen who cultivate their fish, the fish is cultivated in a basket on the stream which is surrounded by what it is called *belle* (made of bamboo's sticks which are implanted on the lake's ground to support the fish). The place is called *Palawang*, the location is on the lake's side. While the cultivation which on the middle of the lake using the water's plants which circulated by using bamboo's sticks implanted in the middle is called *Bungka*. The cultivation in *Palawang* and *Bungka* begins by the time the water of the lake rose so that the fish can be harvested when the water ebbed. The kind of fish in the lake and can be cultivated are fresh water fish, like Nila fish (*Oreochomis niloticus*), Gurami fish (*Trichogaster pectoralis*), Kandeia fish (*Pantius goneonotus*), Gabus fish (*Channa Striata*), Betak/Oseng fish (*Anabas testudinens*), Golden fish (*Cyprinus carpio*), and many other kinds (Dinas Pengairan Wajo, 2006). The harvested fish from the Tempe Lake, besides for the local consumption is also delivered to the other areas.

Besides as ordinary fishermen and the fish cultivator, some of the head of the family in the floating house also do the economics' activity fish dealers. The raw fish from the fishermen will directly bought by the fish dealers in *Kalampang* (floating house) in Tempe Lake area. The raw fish bought from the fishermen are gathered to some amount then be delivered to Sengkang city to the second dealers. Some certain kind of fish will be

preserved and will be distributed to the other areas, and the rest are for the local consumption. Besides that, there are some fish dealers bought certain kind of raw fish just to be dried, and once a week, be sold to the other city. The economics' activities like this is a common view found in the floating community area in Tempe lake. As in the land areas, the floating dwellers economics' activities also varies with opening a small food stall located on the floating house. Besides providing many kinds of food stuff, the stalls also provide fuels for the transportation of the fishermen's boats in Tempe Lake. The existence of the small food stalls on the water really help the people who live on the floating house in fulfilling their daily needs. The distance of the weekly market is quite far from the floating house, and only be reached by boat transportation and follows by public transportation.

Besides that, the existence and the unique of the floating house in Tempe Lake is travel spot which interests and adds the income of the people in this area and nearby areas. The Bugis' traditional house that build on the boat is an catching eye to some foreign and domestic tourists to visit. According to the local citizen, the high visiting season are from July to August. The visitors are commonly come from Spain, France, Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Australia, England and many others. Usually the visitors come in group from 7 to 25 per group. There are also privates individual visitors between 1 or 2 persons. In holiday season (from March to June) the frequency of tourist's visit is 1-3 times a week. While on September to November, the frequency of tourist's visit is only 2 -3 times a week. However, in the rainy season from December to February this area is rarely be visited by the tourists due to the big water current and strong wind which often come to the lake area. Although there are no certain fixed price for one-visit to the floating house, however the income is fairly enough for supporting the fishermen's family for adding the extra income.

Women's Role in the Floating House

The role of the head of the family in the floating house is to catch fish in Tempe Lake from morning to night time. The fish then be selected from the fresh fish which directly be sold to the dealers, or be brought home for the dried. The role of the housewife in supporting the economics' family in the floating house is to help their husbands to add family's extra income. There are many kinds of side jobs done by the women on the water to solve the economics' crisis.

According to the interview with important people living on the water, many decades ago, before women were involved to role in the economics' family activities, the income of the fishermen is only enough for the need living on the water. Such as buying daily food, and fulfill their children's school needs on the land. However, since the women were actively involved

in adding their family's income, the social living of the fishermen is improving. Some fishermen has deposited their money to be used to renovate their floating house, even, can build a new house in the land. This shows that women's existence who live and doing business in the economics on the water need to be considered. Many kinds of economics' activities done by women living on the water are helping the production process and marketing the dried-fish, open some stalls, providing rent-a house for the visitors and become vendors on the water.



Figure 2. Drying Fish Process

4.2.1 The Production Process and Fish Distribution

For the production process from the raw fish to dried-fish is done by the women in the floating house, although sometimes some men were also help when the amount of the fish are plenty. The activity of cleaning the fish, preserving the fish and storing the fish which are died is done in the house. While the process of drying the fish is done the back of the house, which is the roofless open area on the boat. This is purposed so that the fish drying process will get the sun rays maximally. The production process are cleaning the fish, drying the fish, and helping selling the fish to the dealers or the nearest market on the land, For the distribution process, the fish which are catches and dries everyday, gathered in a week, waiting for the market day to come. After the fish are enough to be sold, the housewives and the neighbors carried the fish to the market in other city using boat transportation to the land and the travel will be continued by the rented public transportation which fetch and carry the housewives. The selling fish which is directly sold to the market have relatively higher price than to be sold to the dealers. The income earned by the housewives in a week are Rp. 200.000,- to Rp. 300.000.- This is certainly makes the housewives be able to save some of their money.

4.2.2 Stalls

Floating house besides be functioned for living and dwelling place, to some of the wives, be uses for opening stalls. The area of the stall usually is on the front side and be united with the guest's room or be located on the side of the front door or side door. Many kinds of family's daily needs and fuels for boat transportation are sold in these simple stalls, but some sell fuels only, like gasoline and kerosene. People who want to shop the stuff in the stalls only use the boat only as the only one transportation on the water. When the husbands are going to catch the fish on the lake, the wives are busy with their chores to do the household activities, drying the fish, and regulating the stalls. The activity of opening the stalls is to make the ends meet, and some of the income is deposited for the unexpected happening such as their husbands are suddenly ill and can not go fishing.

4.2.3 Rented House

The unique of the architecture of the floating house on the water which is the combination of the concept of the Bugis' traditional house without poles with the use of boat on the lower structure, made this community becomes one of the tourists' destinations in Wajo Regency. The visitors who come from other countries will spend 30 minutes from the downtown using one-machine boat. The destination is to go to the floating house in Tempe Lake. To anticipate these visitor's visits, some wives rent their houses as rented house for a transit for resting place while enjoying the specific local food from Tempe Lake which are prepared by the housewives. By the end of their visit, the visitors usually pay some amount of money to the housewives through their accompanied guides. The total increasing visitors each year, made the income of the housewives also increase. Besides for the deposit money for the family's needs, capital money for trading, and also be used for the financial plan for the health problem if some of the family's members are sick.

4.2.4 Vendors

Women's role in improving family's economics is also be done outdoor, such as become a vendor. The limitation axes to the market place made some of the housewives doing the trading activity as vendors going around the floating community. Each house will be visited in turns by the vendor to offer their stuff using boats. The trading stuff are primary and secondary needs of people's daily needs. The payment system is with the direct pay or can be done by weekly installment. By doing this trading system, women are able to support their husbands in earning family's incomes.



Figure 3.
Women Vendor

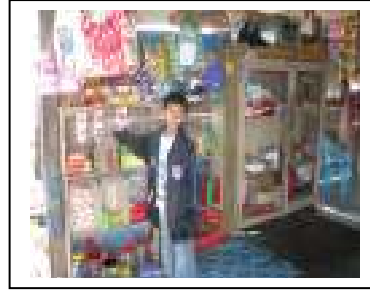


Figure 4.
Stalls in The Floating House

4.3 The Effect of Women's Role in Family's Economics in the Floating House

The role which is carried out by women in the floating house has given an economic refreshment in several recent years. The involvement of women in the direct marketing process to the producers and customers in the market has proven in improving family's incomes. Ever since before women took part in supporting their husbands distributing the fish to the market, the fish will be sold cheaply to the fish dealers on the lake. The price of the fish usually be determined by the dealers' own price since the fishermen were not aware with the recent market price. Consequently, whatever the total amount of the fish being catch, the income are not significantly to fulfill their daily needs. Since the housewives take role in helping their husbands to sell the fish directly to the markets, the price of the fish is relatively higher, so that the incomes from the selling of the fish will be more increased compared with the selling through the dealers on the lake. This can be seen by the fishermen's ability in renovating their floating periodically, the ability to build a better floating house for a better living, the ability to built the Bugis' house in the land, the ability to send their children get a better education, and for a saving. This refreshment is certainly be done because of women's role which are involved in many kinds of economics' activities on the water.

5. CONCLUSION

The involvement of women in improving family's economics productivities in the floating house, is a decision and awareness of potential developments from the result of adaptation for decades. Domestic roles which is so far stacked to countryside women , will be developed gradually become public's

role which is still limited and certainly still in the informal sectors. Nevertheless, this matter shows that the limitation of education and the skill of countryside women and the limitation of transportation on the water are not a hindrance factors in improving the self potentials and women's economics productivity. To resource the women's economics rights is like doing the direct selling in fishery sector which commonly done by men, opening stalls, renting the house, and become vendors has proven improving family's income. As the family's ability to renovate and build the house, paying the children's tuitions and for the saving. Ever since before women has taken role in family's economics' activities by using their economics' rights. The husbands' income is just enough for keeping the lives on the water.

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