

The Division of Work Culture System Based on Gender and Inequalities Experienced by Woman as Fisherman in Kandang Panjang Coast, Pekalongan, Central Java

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Abstract. Indonesia is a maritime country with a large territorial of sea. This is the reason that Indonesian population has a livelihood as a fisherman. Fisherman themselves have many fields of work so that it becomes a work culture system. Therefore, finally the work of fisherman is divided into many parts. In fact, this divisions has unique and unequal diversity. The man as fisherman will go to sea at night until dawn. Then they will rest themselves or first, they will repair the damage of the ship's engine (if any). Meanwhile the woman as fisherman have some tasks to sorting the fish when the catch arrives. Not only sorting fishes, they have to process and sell it. On the other hand, they have to balance themselves to become a housewife who has to provide her their family's needs. Through in-depth interviews and participant observation, we are very aware that woman have a strong dominance in the economic cycle of fisherman. But on the other hand, through Foucault's point of view, we are aware of the powerlessness of woman as fisherman. They have to work without knowing about the time, but often they become subordinate who are considered to have no contribution. Because the works of processing and selling fishes is considered as a domestic job. Therefore, we highlight this inequality. The woman as fisherman seem to be the part who is fully responsible for the wheels of the fisherman's economic condition, but they are still become the one who are underestimated. In fact, on several occasions, they are the one to blame if the (fishes) caught do not sell well, or the wheels of the family economic has decreased.

1 Introduction: Woman and Coast

We never expected to go through streets that were filled with tidal water or sea tides that fulfilled the streets of Pekalongan city. It was a hot afternoon, followed by pollution arising from motorized vehicles. However, the tidal water did not decrease. Reduced also only a few inches because of the evaporation by the sun. They have local residents who live in this area, so we wondered, how do they survive? This tidal flood has filled many corners, even in residents' settlements. Do you know what tidal flood is? They usually call tidal flood as ROB. Reporting from Shidiq, et al (2019) tidal floods are when the sea level overflows and reaches residents' areas, which often causes environmental problems. Moreover, sea water has a high salt content, so it has potential to damage all objects belonging to residents due to erosion. So, we looked again, what about their motorized vehicles? Certainly the damage effects of tidal flood will be very detrimental to the residents here. But again, we raise our heads to see the case that we want to deepen in this research that we are still studying. We immediately focused on going to the Fish Auction Place or what they call TPI Kandang Panjang.

TPI Kandang Panjang was relatively quiet that afternoon (maybe because we came at noon). It can be seen that the place is relatively clean, there are several women cleaning the place, there are also those who are lifting processed salted fish. "Ma'am, can we join?" We told one of the women who was drying her salted fish. She smiled then nodded. Mrs. Mariam (pseudonym) is her name, she is 56 years old, has a petite stature and wears a traditional hat. In the end we helped her as much as we could. Through Mrs. Mariam, we received information regarding the problems that they have,

"It used to be very crowded, but lots of 'alang-alang' running around. They like to steal our fish, we end up losing money. The effect is that many fish supply vessels have moved to another TPI. Only our husband's ships and several large ships remained. Our husband's ship doesn't catch too much because the ship is small. Finally, people started processing fish on their own house. But fisherman who don't have enough space to dry their fish like my husband and I, like it or not, have to stay on the TPI and keep our fishes away from the 'alang-alang'." (Mrs. Mariam, July 8th 2023).

'Alang-alang', that's what they call the fish thieves. Usually these 'alang-alang' are a group of small children or adults trapped in structural poverty in the community. They are powerless for their family's economy

condition. So stealing the fishes is their solution. But that's not what we're looking for here, 'alang-alang' might be interesting to discuss, but let's try for another chance, or it could be a new research topic recommendation. Finally, we continued to talk and Mrs. Mariam told us to come early in the morning around 4a.m. to watch step by step of lowering the fish from ship until it was finally auctioned or processed. She said from that process, we would be better to understand the division of labor between men and women in the fisheries and maritime sectors. Therefore, we finally decided to go home.

So far, we see that the women are very 'close' to the edge of the coast, especially at TPI. They become the humans who are most familiar with the fish that will be processed and traded. In particular, they are the first line in processing these fish and trading them in the market later. At that time, we had a brief hypothesis that woman as fisherman were not individuals who would simply sail to the sea directly to catch fish, but they still did the domestic work. The meaning of domestic in our context, they will receive the catch and process it in such a way. Therefore, even though they are in the fisheries sector, they are still the one who take care of the fish their husband's catch. They are classed into subtle occupations.

2 Result and Discussion: Race Horses and the Spearhead of the Economy

We admit, we are not a morning person. But with all our efforts, we pushed ourselves towards TPI. Our eyes were not yet fully open, but we can see the fisherman freshly preparing for the next catch. Although dominated by man, there are also many woman there. They watched the open sea, waiting for their husbands to come with the ship full of catch. Then a middle-aged woman spoke to the another woman next to her, "What breakfast did you make for your husband? I made him an omelette, fried tempeh and spinach. Hopefully he won't protest with the same food all the time." She said while smoking on a nearly-finished cigarette. "I cooked stir-fried tempeh and leftover fish yesterday. If he gets annoyed with the fish, I will throw the fish to the cats." Said other woman. We didn't know who they are, but the conversation became meaningful data for us. Two women discussing about their cooking menu for their husbands who will return from the sea, accompanied by predictions of the expressions of 'protest' from their husband. We think this has often happened in their daily lives.

We returned our focus to looking at the ocean. Of course Mrs. Mariam was beside us, also looking at the sea while carrying a towel. Finally the time came, a ship came with a light sign, followed by other ships. However, there are also ships that are larger than the others. “Oy!” shouted the people, both on the ship and on the wharf, without realizing it, the sun was also starting to appear. Finally when the ship docked, the man who are waiting at the pier helped to pull the ropes that were thrown from the ship to the pier, then they would unload the catch together. While the woman immediately scattered on their own duties.

“Which one is for salted fish? Bring it to me!” said one woman, followed by others, asking for their fishes for other parts such as buying and selling raw fish to the market. What's unique is that there is a bargaining process that occurs between woman and man from large boats. “Faster please? I don't want any 'alang-alang' grabbing my catch.” Said the woman from large boats when the bargaining process was very tough. We see the empowerment of woman in this case. They have control over the buying and selling process, and they even pioneer to get the best price. We love to see that, in a sense, woman have power right? Yes, they have power for this sector on TPI.

But on the other hand, we saw a small ‘debate’ that occurred between a husband and wife fisherman, “why are you cooked me tempeh again? Is there no money to buy chickens? I haven't eaten chicken for a long time.” Said the husband with a slightly annoyed tone. The wife sighed of course, “Yes indeed (no money). Where's the money coming from? How big the profits from these fishes? TPI is not as crowded as it used to be, and there's a lot of that annoying 'alang-alang'. If you want more, at least we have to buy a house outside the TPI area, let me have a large yard for drying fish.” Said his wife no less annoyed. The position that we understand here is that there are domestic and economic demands imposed on woman. This became our provisional hypothesis.

Back again, we observed other jobs, there was another husband and wife couple who argued a bit about his wife's buying and selling income, “why are fish sales decreasing? We still owe the ship yesterday.” Said the husband, but the wife could only sigh, as if she was tired of her husband's words and chose to be silent. We started to think, why are the woman as a fisherman become targeted for some criticism if the sales are dropping? What if in reality, the sales are not as good as usual? Moreover, if we draw the line to the previous paragraph, woman still have domestic burdens to

fulfil family needs, such as cooking for their husbands. However, we will not only look at it from the perspective of the woman, let's also look at the perspective of the man.

His name is Mr. Adam (pseudonym) he is quite old, 64 years to be exact. But he is still strong enough to straighten up through the waves for chasing some fishes. We met Mr. Adam when he was busy fixing the ship's engine after a cruise. We could see that he was tired, sweat dripping down on his brown skin, with the traditional hat that covered his head. Some oil stains were on his shirt, proof that he worked hard to repair his not-so-big boat. His wife also sighed while carrying a bowl of food, she looked at the oil stains on Mr. Adam's shirt, "look! It won't fade. You will look shabby if you wear that." Said his wife.

Mr. Adam did not respond much, he was only focused on us watching him repairing the ship's engine, "yes, this is it. I should have been able to rest after going out to sea, but the ship's engine broke down. Such a waste time!" Said Mr. Adam. Then he said,

"We went to sea at 11 p.m. we were ready. We went to the dock then started the engine and departed. No special equipment, we just looked at the stars and wind direction. Sometimes we can get a lot of fish, or not. While waiting, we can also take turns sleeping. After that we will return to the coast. What's annoying is because sometimes there are bigger ships with bigger nets, yes we lose to them. Not to mention the catch didn't sell well. Again, we lost the competition. Then after we return to the dock, if the boat's engine isn't broken, after tidying up and making sure the ship is parked properly, we go home, shower and eat, then we'll rest and sleep. Let my wife take care of the house and children, she doesn't work like me." (Mr. Adam, July 9th 2023).

Through his narrative, we understand that the man are more focused on hunting activities and repairing engine damage. On the other hand, we also sees that man are tasked with lowering the catch and distributing it to other work sectors. Then, with our curiosity, we finally asked them about the work of woman as fisherman. Let's call him Faisal (pseudonym), 34 years old, younger than Mr. Adam, but Faisal is no less tenacious than him.

"*Ah...* woman's job isn't that hard. They only have to process the fish and sell it. It's not like I have to go to sea. They just need to do that. Then prepare for my needs and my 4 children. It's not difficult either."

“...after all, preparing fish means cooking, right? Like splitting fish, giving salt, drying in the sun, then done, right? It's like cooking. That's a woman's job right? It's their duty as a woman.” (Faisal, July 9th 2023).

We looked each other then nodded, we thought that there was a specific point of view for the division of tasks, in which woman were still very closely related to housework. The work is like cooking, washing and fulfilling the needs of their children and husband. This means that woman as fisherman are still in the shadow that man are in power. We couldn't just conclude from these words, then we came back to Mrs. Mariam, who at that time was hanging out with Mrs. Annisa (pseudonym), Mrs. Diah (pseudonym), and Mrs. Utami (pseudonym). We asked questions related to the work by woman as fisherman. Together they were peeling the scales of the fish, their keen eyes scanned surroundings, afraid that the ‘*alangan-alang*’ would take their fish.

"Everything is a woman's work. Sometimes I get annoyed when they say that being a housewife is not a job, even though we have to work 24 hours a day. Taking care of the house, educating children, serving husbands, and take care of family's economy. If we take a wrong step, our children may not eat, our husbands will be angry, he will say that we are not good at managing finances. In a word, if the catch doesn't sell well, then it's also our fault." (Mrs. Utami, July 9th 2023).

“... if we (woman) weren't there, how about our family's needs? It's like we are the wheel of life for our own family. You see, when our husbands finish fishing, they will take a shower, wear the clothes we have prepared, eat the food we have cooked, then sleep all day long. Then before going to sea, they will eat again, then hanging out together with other husbands. While us? Opening our eyes, we have to cook food for them after going to sea, prepare their change of clothes, welcome them at the dock and start doing our work. After that, we returned home to cook and prepare for our children's needs, cooked again, prepared for our husbands' needs for going out to sea at night. After that we process the fish again. Even in the middle of the night, we have to get up and take our husbands to work, preparing meal for them. Look? Our work is non-stop, if we can sleep it is a *alhamdulillah* (gratefulness).” (Mrs. Annisa, July 9th 2023).

"We're race horses you know?! *Ha ha ha*. We have to run as fast as possible with our back constantly being beaten with a stick. If we don't reach the finish line first, we're dead!" (Mrs. Diah, July 9th 2023).

Through these conversations, we realized that woman are still in the shadows of jobs that are not seen clearly. In this case, woman become subordinates who are in the shadow of man. Man become the first shield in field work, so they are considered as literal working parts, while woman are still in the domestic shadow. People (although not all) still view domestic work such as food processing, cooking, and babysitting, is not a job like they see man who work in the external sector. This means that woman are still in the shadow of domination by man who are always seen as the dominant parts in work. This is not something surprising, Karen J. Warren (in Arvia, 2006: 381) says that Indonesian society is formed by a system of values, beliefs, education, behavior, which departs from a patriarchal framework that justifies relations of domination and subordination, it can be said that this means the oppression of woman by man. The suppression can be said as follows:

- a. Ways of thinking with hierarchical values, namely such as the classification of the upper and lower parts, the way of thinking in placing values, prestige status as the "top" and the others are at the "bottom";
- b. Dualism values such as oppositional attitudes rather than complementarity, exclusive (not inclusive) attitudes, status and prestige are the basis of this dualism. This dualism places high value on 'reason', 'ratio', 'man' and not on 'body', 'emotion' and 'woman';
- c. There is an emphasis on logic and domination, for example in the argumentation structure that justifies the labeling of sub-ordination.

Likewise, Foucault (1979) said that specifically, woman's bodies are observed and controlled indirectly through strict normative regulations, because the body is seen as a more effective means of production. So if we take it broadly, woman as fisherman do not realize (or even some, have realized) that they are an interest in fulfilling demands and interests of outside the realm of their desires. They become the axis of economic rotation but they are still in the shadow of man domination as workers (whose productivity is seen more). In fact, woman are the center of all the economic needs of fisherman and while this is being done, they continue to carry out domestic activities in the household realm. Children's education is also their daily obligation, so it can be said that woman's work does not have a limited time vulnerability. Serving family needs and fulfilling domestic needs is actually a tough job, especially in this case, (most) husbands prefer to take advantage of the time to rest, while woman as a fisherman must continue to carry out their domestic obligations and their role as fisherman. If their role as housewives cannot run well, the

family's needs will be hampered and threaten the stability of family life. On the other hand, when they are unable to optimize the sale of fish catches (both raw sales, processed sales or others), the wheels of the fishermen's economy will be decreased, so they will be trapped in low income.

3 Conclusion

We cannot immediately say that there are some peoples who want to prioritize their benefits, but what we can convey in this ongoing research is that woman as fisherman are still in the confines of domination of work that is not looked upon. There are even some woman as a fisherman who say and admit themselves (innocently) that they don't work, they only help their husbands to sell their catch. For ourselves, this has become a job, because in fact woman still have the self-toughness to keep pushing their brain to make money, in order to fulfil their family's economic needs. But once again, they are still in the sub-ordination prison. Therefore, woman as a fisherman need to have more recognition and need to be seen as more empowered. They have an extraordinary double burden in their daily lives, so that woman are the ones who are trapped in the shadow of domesticity but still have the strong side. The strength they have deserves to be recognized as a job that is as valuable as public sector work. It is possible that the community (in this case) still views the work of woman as a fisherman as not a literal job, because their work tends not to penetrate the public market (meet face-to-face with other people, and have extensive interaction). They still see that work in the house, such as processing fish, selling it, and doing domestic fulfilment, is not something that is considered a job, as they see a man's job as a fisherman as a real job.

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