

GENDER AND THE ISSUES OF BIOSECURITY'S MANAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY: OVERVIEW FROM CASE STUDY IN BALI

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ABSTRACT

Many differences between the philosophy of Hinduism in Bali and the religious understanding of the younger generation with the older generation. Where there has been a change because of the ritual performed by Hindus, especially among the younger generation. While on the other hand rituals by several groups including farmers (in the subak organization) is still something that is still being done and taboo to be broken. Just one case in Subak Wongaya Betan who still believe that the spirit of rituals is associated with their implementation in the field of agriculture (Martiningsih, 2011). The same phenomenon also happens in all around Indonesia such as in Eastern Indonesia. In some cases, the philosophy of community awareness in eastern Indonesia will drive a good impact of the quality life of the community. The rituals based on the awareness of something profane which farmers believe determines the success of their farm. Subak Wongaya Betan still implements continuous rituals collectively and personally. These rituals are usually performed in the temple to water resources and the environment in areas of subak such as Subak Temple and family temple. In one growing season subak implement collective rituals such as (1) *Mapag Toya* (2) *mesaba* and *nangluk merana*. All of the rituals have to be conducted by subak's member in one season of plantation are around 12 rituals. In this case, the member of Subak presented the concept of rituals according to Hindu society and how the ritual activities can tighten the social relationship between the member of subak and the village's community. One of the advantages of this phenomena is when the spirit of ritual always stand in rural community engagement. The result of the case study in Eastern Indonesia on gender issues summaries that the role of woman still to improve especially in public role such as an accessibility of leadership, decision-making process.

Keywords: Spirit, decision making, community engagement, subak, leadership

Introduction

Traditionally, a woman's role is related to undertaking reproductive work, related to work at home, while men are associated with productive work outside the home (Mien, 2007); At the same time, women in rural areas of Asia play an important role in productive economic activities related to plant biosecurity especially in areas such as agriculture and food security (Rola and Rubzen, 2007, p. 122-131). All activities such as taking water from the well, getting firewood for cooking, preparing food for their family and other basic needs are carried out by women. In rural communities, women have the central role of managing their environment and sometimes playing the roles of being consumers, campaigners, educators, and communicators (Rodda, 1993). Untung (2007) pinpoints the fact that biosecurity awareness increases when the community is fully involved; However, in Indonesia, at least until quite recent times, poor communities in geographically

remote areas have been neglected by both local and national authorities, and by aid agencies. Hence, they developed specific self-reliance strategies although their local resources are limited and intervention by outsiders has become crucial to development (Ria, 2002). Given women's pivotal role in agriculture and food security, it is nevertheless the case that there is little research concerning what the role of women is in managing biosecurity, and none found on how this can be maximized. For example, in societies such as Indonesia where women have traditionally taken agricultural roles such as planting rice seedlings and harvesting the rice, it is easy to see how they might be better placed to be on the 'front line' of identifying anything unusual in the way of plant pests and diseases. It seems a simple leap to then say how this information can be used towards better managing biosecurity. It is this gap between the 'obvious' and the underpinning cultural complexities, that this article begins to

address. In order to address the gap, the research has had to take a step back and examine the highly intricate and interrelated ways in which culture and gender intermesh with biosecurity practices. It uses a blend of Western and Asian literature about gender and social networking concepts to do so, and only claims to make a small start at the task. Only by understanding these interrelationships will it be possible, as it is at the end of this article, to make some predictions about how women's roles and communities may be used to better manage biosecurity.

This article, therefore, discusses women's roles in agricultural, social, economic and cultural activities and asks whether women participate in their communities amongst different regions, cultural and gender issues? Besides, it describes experiences of women who have received good government training on pest and disease management and are transformational in leading others, for example, the successful IPM (Integrated Pest Management) training to farmers through Farmer Field Schools (SLPHT, Sekolah Pengendalian Hama Terpadu). At the end of this article, I will outline the strategies to be utilized that can build women's capacity in transferring knowledge processes and encouraging women to be aware of pest and disease issues associated with biosecurity management in their plantations.

Research Method

Results and Discussion

The Role of Women

Women's roles in agricultural and social activities, especially in rural communities, are important facts that drive government policy focused on gender inequity issues. Evidence shows that women are direct agents of social change and family unity within a community. Indonesian women are actively involved in social, cultural, spiritual, agricultural, and tourism activities and there are many documented cases in which women have been successful natural resource managers (Nakatani 1997; WALHI 2007). In Bali and other regions of Indonesia which have strong rules and religions such as Eastern Indonesia, are cases of the important role of women in almost all aspects of life. According to Suryani (2006), Women must realize that they are the ones

responsible for fulfilling their obligations. Meinzen-Dick and Zwatteveen (2003) indicate that women tend to have enough additional time to be able to participate in social activities, develop networks, and use their time to transfer knowledge and information. Women always have time to get together and keep their relationship with their community (Maluccio *et al.* 2003). However, there has been little research to determine how women use this positive social capital to empower themselves through understanding and solving problems.

According to Pietra (2006), social capital is a resource that can be used to encourage a community to understand and contribute to overcoming community problems together, to address community interests and increase community awareness. Social capital held by women can be investigated and built on to empower women and their communities. According to Flora (2007), empowering the community to overcome their problems should have an on-going effort. This is particularly important in an era of globalization which has brought on rapid developments in the movement and exchange of goods, services, money, and communities. Globalization has resulted in increased movement of pests and diseases of plants, animals, and humans. If this issue is not taken seriously, food security and environmental balance could be threatened over the longer term. The empowerment of communities to address community problems requires making use of the existing social capital resources that have been developed among individuals or groups who have mutually beneficial relationships.

Community cooperation (Pietra 2006). Furthermore, the intensity of the relationships between communities tends to produce useful communication among different groups of people including women in each activity, which give them the useful knowledge transfer between each other.

At the government level, there is a women's organization called Women, Welfare and Empowerment or Program Kesejahteraan Keluarga (PKK) Which acts as a coordinating body for all women's activities in villages, districts, regencies and at provincial levels. The PKK Was for many years considered as having an important role in the implementation of government development programs, especially

in rural areas. In recent years, the role of this organization has been changed so that only elite women are able to join this organization's program, and the program sometimes only contributes to a small subgroup of members of the organization. Therefore women still need sustainable programs to encourage membership of PKK especially in rural areas (village and district levels).

Gender and Community Issues

The challenge of discrimination against women began about 30 years ago and forced the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) declaration by the United Nations in 1998. In Indonesia, the term that emerged relating to the concept was 'gender', however until now this term is still debated among Indonesian communities. In the 1970s, at the birth of 'gender', the concern was to theorize a social identity not given by 'sex', free from biological determinism and the arbitrary naturalization of the gender order (Pearson and Cecile 2000). Feminists needed to deny that biology was destiny and anthropologists provided the necessary scholarship on the enormous range of different gender identities which formed around biological females and males in other cultures. In the twenty-first century when the term 'feminism' emerged, there was much debate about the concept of this terminology. In Indonesia, many women wanted to articulate and discuss the concept of feminism and women's rights. International communities remained focused on Western feminism views which contained an 'anti-men' focus, namely, women's perception about men who argue for a continuation of the inequitable status between women and men in communities (Saparinah 2002), This is despite the fact that the principle of gender equality is enshrined in Article 27 of 1945 Constitution in Indonesia.

Saulnier (2000) identifies five branches of feminist theory; (1) liberal feminism, (2) cultural feminism, (3) postmodern feminism, (4) Womanist and (5) radical feminism. According to Saulnier (2000), liberal feminism focuses on equal rights, access to service and control over privacy. Cultural feminism focuses on developing women's culture, women's spirituality, peace and ecology, restructuring of society point and increased valuing of women.

Postmodern feminism articulates a feminist viewpoint, analyzing how women are affected by the social World, examines Power and Knowledge, and imagines society's transformation. Womanist feminism focuses on social action and social change, articulation of social consciousness, self-healing find resistance systems of oppression. The last branch, radical feminism, draws on connections between personal and political, eliminates male privilege in Public and private spheres, heals internalized sexism, protects Women from male violence and restructures society. Furthermore, Saulnier (2000) states that feminist theories articulate the structure and dynamics of women's experiences based on sociopolitical and interpersonal sexual hierarchies. She also argues that the division of feminist theory into several branches is a useful way to select the strategies for solving women's problems in different situations, different times and different backgrounds. The National

Community Empowerment Program (Program Nasional Perberdayaan Masyarakat - PNPM)¹ in Indonesia has reported some useful results to guide the rules for women's engagement and also encourage and reward innovation. The PNPM reports that gender roles are ascribed by norms and influenced by various factors such as tradition, religion and state ideology. Further, they argue that women would not be confident when they argued with the men in general, but they would feel comfortable when they discussed the issues among females. These findings can be utilized to improve women's communication to produce an enhanced impact through the peer groups, which is also useful for the knowledge, transfer process between communities. Overall, an increase in awareness of problems amongst women's communities is likely to broaden their horizons and improve the capacity of women, protecting the cultural identity and empowering the community (Suryani 2006).

In regards to Bali, Ardhana (1994, p. 6) argues that two major problems currently grip this Province: problems associated with human capital and natural capital. According to Pietra (2006), these are the two pillars of social capital which guarantee development and community empowerment for sustainable livelihoods. A feeling of cultural ownership which supports community empowerment will fade (Pietra 2006). This notion is supported by Suryani

(2006), who asserts that harmony in life should be nurtured so that life is not only for working but also for creating good relationships with others.

Pietra (2006) discusses several phenomena that occur within the village that hinder the community's unique ability for self-development, contribution to nation-building and development of the local culture of the village. However, these resources within the local community will play a role in confronting globalization and economic liberalization. Villages possess strong social capital in the area of community development, which can drive improvements in rural communities. A lack of understanding of social capital, work networks, and local leadership may lead to negative effects on the relationship between communities and their environment. Without social capital, community cohesion is reduced so that communities may not be able to organize themselves to create sustainable livelihoods (Beeton 2006). This is also evident in the increased level of crime and other social issues in the community, particularly issues around traditional practices in Bali and a reduction in family cohesion and community participation (Grootaert, 1998).

Hery's (2007) research on how to utilize the Integrated Pest Control School for empowering women farmers finds that if the training for women was conducted regularly and involved women farmers actively in the field during the training, female farmers improve their knowledge and abilities faster than male farmers. Further results indicate that after four to five planting seasons, farmers are already expert enough to share their knowledge with others. They are also confident enough to do plant a variety of crops on their land without guidance from agricultural extension officers. Farmers also usually share their new knowledge and innovations with other farmers. Currently, women farmer groups are gradually starting to develop all of the technical knowledge and skills related to integrated pest and disease control.

This model shows the elements of a strategy to empower farmers which can contribute to sustainable and secure livelihoods. Roshetko et al. (2007) find the farmer extension approach an important way to empower motivated farmers to enhance the productivity and profitability of

their agroforestry systems to gain market opportunities.

The problem of Two-Way Communication

In general, there is a community structure in Indonesia, known as Badan Musyawarah (BAMUS Community Discussion Body), which acts as a bridge between the village's government and traditional structures (Surata 2008). Women are not represented within the leadership structure of BAMUS. This was revealed during in-depth interviews in Bali, where one member of the PKK said:

Women need to be included in all leadership structures, including BAMUS because in reality, women are going to be involved in all activities and often in very important positions. Because of the lack of representation of women in BAMUS, which coordinates all government and traditional activities, there is often miscommunication and women are forced to forego their own interests (interviewed by Martiningsih 2008)

One of the Bali sites is a village in the middle of the main tourist area. The community is heterogeneous with almost half of its inhabitants coming originally from an area outside the village (Martiningsih 2008). The majority of people have livelihoods associated with tourism and therefore the community is highly mobile in response to the opportunities in the tourism industry and demands for community obligations. In this village, some economically productive groups are formed but unfortunately, they are poorly organized. The formation of groups is based on their common interests and a common location. The groups include the local traders, massages on the beach and handicraft seller. According to one informant, the reason for group formation was to enhance women's opportunities to earn credit from the bank.

Besides the economically productive groups, other groups were formed on the basis of common hobbies such as sport or art. Interestingly, as Martiningsih (2008) explains, all the Balinese women are aware of and concerned about environmental sanitation, particularly in the laneways. This awareness arose from previous experience with the outbreak of dengue fever in the area. Based on that experience the members of the PKK in all the Banjar: designed a competition for

cleanliness which is judged weekly. Locations are evaluated by members of the PKK who have been recognized for their efforts to eradicate dengue fever. Each Banjar has five groups who undertake a weekly inspection for mosquito larvae in all laneways. Laneway cleaning activities are undertaken independently by the PKK under the guidance of the local health clinics. This shows that women already possess the skills to independently manage their local environment and to maintain common facilities.

As a result, women are greatly in need of support to assist them to understand that group processes that work towards common interests, common problems and increase their awareness of the environment are important. Awareness concerning their rights to improve their collective well-being is also important. Suryani (2006) states that there needs to be increased awareness among women to increase capacity overall. This is important for maintaining cultural identity and harmony and to improve the lives of the family and the broader community.

Decision Making

The disparity in the decision-making powers between men and women indicates a need for strengthening Of women's groups. The formation of strong integrated women's groups will allow increased efforts to improve women's rights for collective development and increased capacity in areas such as agriculture and biodiversity conservation. Flora (2007) describes social capital as the relationship between people and organizations where there are mutual trust and collective action for a shared future, and cooperation for common goals. If this does not occur, it will not be possible to create and maintain healthy ecosystems or a strong economy. Without social capital, cohesion in a community will decrease until the community is not able to organize itself to maintain a reasonable quality of life or sustainable livelihoods (Beeton 2006). According to the World Bank (1998), this is also true of social capital from an institutional perspective as community networks are a product of the political, legal and organizational situation of a community.

Knowledge Transfer

Available data indicates that women in Bali have frequent communication between families, between friends and business colleagues. This regular contact represents an opportunity for women to exchange information. This information sharing is an asset that allows the formation of networks, which in the future may strengthen the ties between members of the community to improve their ability to recognize, understand and overcome problems together. However, so far there is very little discussion about the basic needs for driving collective activities for a common goal. Communication amongst women is still generally limited to discussions about family, tradition and spiritual issues. This social capital should be further strengthened so that this communication can be directed toward addressing community issues and finding solutions together.

Conclusion

Women play a large role in collective activities but continue to be in the shadow of men. Through participation in group organizations, women can improve wellbeing, but this impact is not being maximized and is still undeveloped. The ability and desire for effective communication among Women's groups are present and should be used to assist women to have an impact on their local environment to undertake collective activities for achieving common goals in biosecurity management and other areas. Women have the power to improve the strength of their social capital using the seven aspects of social capital as outlined by Flora (2007), increasing participation and action at the community level by identifying and overcoming social, cultural, spiritual and agricultural problems in the community.

It must be recognized that cooperation between women's and men's groups needs to be strengthened to undertake collective activities for the common good. Inequality within the community culture occurs because of the social structure that has developed over many centuries and become unwritten law, which is held and defended as a 'cultural inheritance'. If this culturally ingrained inequality can be redirected in a positive direction such as by strengthening the social capital already possessed by women, it may be used to empower the community's women to better

address local issues and overcome problems together, including issues of biosecurity.

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