

The Contribution of Female Muslim Scavenger in Supporting the Family Economy

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ABSTRAK. This research aims to know the phenomenon of contribution of female muslim scavenger in improving the family economy and the supporting factor and its inhibition factor. The type of this research was descriptive qualitative. The research subjects were 8 female muslim scavengers, their husbands, and kids. Data were collected through interview, documentation, and observation. The technique of data analysis used narrative technique. The research results show that female muslim scavengers in Pekanbaru city are very helpful in alleviating the burden and responsibility of their husbands. They choose to work as a scavenger because it can assist paying the house rent, kids' school tuition fee, electricity, and other daily life needs. They work as a scavenger with work hours start from 6 a.m until 10 a.m, continued after Zhuhur prayer until night. The average income they obtained is IDR 800.000,- per month. The supporting factors that make them become scavengers are because the goods collected are easily obtained while the inhibiting factors are the rainy weather, suspicion from the residents due to allegations of theft and age.

Kata kunci: *Female Muslim, Scavenger, Family Economy.*

INTRODUCTION

The demands and necessities of life in this globalization era make every family strive to work hard in order to survive. In this case the status of a wife and mother for their children must be able to play a dual role, be responsible for domestic affairs and make a living (Dwiantini, 1995). Gender inequality in women known as the *double burden*, according to the Family Planning Dictionary (<https://glosarium.org/kata/index.php/term/knowledge>) means the differences in treatment of a gender by providing more responsibilities (multiple) compared to other genders. In this case means more work on the part of women namely carrying out domestic work taking care of the house, children, serving her husband and having to work outside the home to help the family economy. According to Pujiati (1986), women work outside the home due to the economic factors.

Other research found out that women work outside the home not solely for reasons of such a difficult economic factor, but also some other motivations, such as husbands are not working/earning less, wanting to earn their own money, spending spare time, looking for experiences, participating in the economy family and the desire to actualize themselves (Novari, et al. (1991). So it is not merely because of economic factors that cause a woman to work until she experiences a *double burden*. According to Jockes (1985) in Nuril Huda (2008) the form of family structure in which women go to work who get wages can be analyzed from theory gender which emphasized that women who work and also carry out domestic tasks at home are inseparable. This is an integral part of the whole social system.

In fact there are still many stereotypes that emerge in society that women are low-class creatures below men and secondary producers of overall household income. In reality, the economic

condition is indeed a very influential factor in family life. Many divorce cases occur that are triggered by problems of insufficient living necessities. This was evidenced from the highest divorce rate in a religious court in one of the major cities in Indonesia in 2016 due to economic factors (Octavia Devaluasia, 2017: 108), where each pair is not strong enough to face the economic problems in their family. In essence the socioeconomic status of the family differs from others, which can be divided into three levels, namely high, medium and low (Sutrisno Hadi, 2001).

In social life there is social stratification, namely high, medium and low economic groups. The economic situation of the family those who are high tend to be able to send their children to a higher level of education. On the other hand, the low economic level family is only able to send their children to a low level of education, usually only up to elementary school. Poor criteria with a benchmark index of needs minimum energy of 2,100 calories per capita/day (approximately 2000-2500 calories per day for adult men). The World Bank defines absolute poverty as living on an income below USD \$ 1/day and medium poverty for income below \$ 2 per day.

The social minister said based on the BPS (Central Statistics Agency) indicator the poverty line that was applied was a family that had an income below IDR150,000 per month. Even Bappenas stated the same opinion based on the BPS (Central Statistics Agency) indicators for the 2005 family poverty threshold are those who have an income below Rp. 180,000 per month. For rural areas poor households are determined if the expenditure is less than 320 kg of rice or equivalent, very poor if expenditure is less than 240 kg of rice or equivalent, and the poorest if expenditure is less than 180 kg of rice or equivalent per capita per year. For urban areas, poor, very poor, and the poorest households are household expenditure of 480, 360, and 270 kg equivalent to rice.

The low level of family life is very different from the high family economy. If a family with low economy will experience difficulties in meeting their needs while a family with high economy will find it easy to meet their needs. This happens to families who live in the city but the husband does not have a permanent job so the activity of collecting waste that can be recycled is known as a scavenger. This phenomenon is interesting to see from the lives of Muslim female scavengers who carry out picking, choosing and selling recycled garbage, to help supporting their families. They do this job sincerely and try to solve their economic problems without asking for a divorce even though the husband was still unable to support their family life.

This job is classified as a "despicable" job and do not require skills and capital. According to Azhari (2009) scavengers are social groups who have the business of collecting used goods. They take various secondhand goods, goods taken from roads, landfills, residents' yards, markets, shops, terminals, stations, airports, and tourist attractions, houses of worship, schools, campuses and cemeteries. In dealing with the reality and reality of daily life, female scavengers and their families decide to keep trying to survive and send their children school to reach their dreams to change their destiny. This is in line with what is conveyed in the Qur'an Surah Ar-ra'd (13:11):

لَهُ مَعْقِبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ ۗ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ

"For humans there are angels who always follow it in turns, in front of and behind them, they guard it by the command of Allah. Surely Allah does not change the state of things of a people so they change the conditions that exist in themselves. And if God wants evil against a people, then no one can reject it; and there is no protector for them other than Him".

Based on pre-research studies, it is known that there are some Muslim female scavengers in Pekanbaru who survive collecting used goods from the community to be sold to suppliers to supplement and meet family needs, experiencing gender injustice of *double burden*. They must carry out the mandatory duties of domestic duties in home as housewives and raising their children. The waste collecting work they do is inversely proportional to the results obtained, but in reality they have to live it. Interesting things from the resilience of Muslim women who work as scavengers is the reason for further research. The question to be answered from this research is what is the double burden of Muslim women who work as scavengers? What are their responses and perspectives on this double burden? The answer to this research question is the content of this article.

RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is phenomenological research with a qualitative approach. The study was conducted in Pekanbaru City. The research subjects were 8 Muslim female scavengers as primary informants, their husbands and children as secondary informants. Qualitative research required researchers to function as research instruments that go directly to the field and trying to gather information through observation, and in-depth interviews. The data collected is then analyzed by steps; data collection, reduction, display and finally conclusions and verification of data (Miles dan Huberman, 1984).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The form of double burden on Muslim female Scavenger in Improving the Family Economy

From the results of in-depth interviews with Muslim female scavenger, it is obtained that they do scavenging work every day from 6 AM to 10 AM, continued after the midday prayer even some still continue at night. They wake up before the dawn call to prayer every day. Early morning, they do domestic activities begin with cleaning up homework, preparing family meals before leaving. During breaks, they also have to do household chores such as cooking, shopping for kitchen and cleaning the house, even delivering and picking up children from school. The time to rest they get an average of 5-7 hours a day used to clean themselves (take a bath) and sleep and perform religious activities. Used items taken in scavenging activities come from garbage disposal which is still suitable for sale such as mineral water glass, beverage bottles, cardboard, plastic (karah), scrap metal, aluminum. The collected goods are sold to collectors of around Rp. 200,000 to Rp. 300,000 per week.

The average female scavenger earns IDR800,000 per month. The money raised helps finance rented houses, children's schools, electricity costs, and daily necessities. It was revealed that in addition to scavenging, 4 out of 8 Muslim female scavengers have other jobs, such as: (1) cleaning the existing boarding houses near her residence, with an income of Rp. 200,000/month, (2) filling battery water in the workshop with one thousand per one box of battery water, (3) *single parents* who have 6 children and 12 grandchildren in addition to collecting used items also make cakes that are deposited in stalls and school canteens where their children work. The factor that causes them to do scavenging is the husband's earning is not enough to fulfill their daily needs. This was revealed one of the Muslim female scavengers in the following interview:

"We have been married for 20 years and have 5 children, 4 boys and 1 girl. They still really need money for school. At that time, my husband stopped working as a factory worker due to massive layoffs. Initially with capital money provided by the company where my husband worked, we were able to open a business selling food such as rice cake, pecal and other snacks for breakfast. At that time our family's economy was still pretty good. But only a few years, the place we were selling was evicted by the land owner. We are not allowed to sell there. My husband was discouraged and no longer wanted to work tied to other people. He tried to collect

garbage that could be sold to collectors, while accepting the work that people offered him. The money he gives to me every week is just enough to buy daily necessities and sometimes even less. While the children who attend school also need money. I decide to help my husband, because I don't want our condition to be like this. Actually, if there is capital, I want selling food again, but there is no capital. "

Based on this description it can be seen that economic factors are the main reason female scavengers do the work. This is in accordance with the opinion of Pujiati (1986) women working outside the home due to economic factors. In fact, the families of female Muslim scavenger have tried to do other activities before scavenger but they experienced many obstacles, and they took them as life trials. The interesting thing is that the husband does not want to be bound to work in a rule made by the boss, only appreciated by female Muslim scavengers. He believes that the fortune obtained is for the work done. This concept makes their household not get divorced because of a lack of economic factors. In fact in the teachings of Islam, what is believed by humans is related to business, and then Allah will grant it. As the hadith from Abu Hurairah, ra., Rasulluah said, Allah said, "I (Allah) according to my worshipers' prejudice. This belief makes scavenger families, still able to survive in solving the economic problems.

Their responses and perspectives on the double burden

From the results of interviews with the 8 female Muslim scavengers information was obtained that they knew the burden of making a family income was not only limited to the responsibility of the husband. They took the initiative to help the husband as much as possible, and the easy way to do this was by being a scavenger. This is due to the inadequate husband's income condition, while household needs are very numerous. Female Muslim scavenger whose position as wife and mother also help finance children's schooling, and even female Muslim scavenger who is widowed with a very old age that is above 60 years had to bear the cost of schooling his grandchildren because his grandchildren had become orphans. Information from 5 female scavengers that the money obtained from scavenging was able to finance rented house since they did not have their own home. Only one family of scavengers who had their own house even though they bought it on credit with installments of Rp. 700,000 per month. Their fortitude stays with the household life which is completely lacking and willing to accept the dual role without blaming the husband to divorce, based on their belief and faith in Allah SWT. This was revealed in the results of interviews with Muslim female scavengers as follows:

"We accept sincerely, whatever happens to our household that is completely lacking. There is no one to blame, such as a husband who is unable to support his family a lot. Allah SWT has given me the opportunity to help my husband by scavenging. For me the important thing is to get together with children and husband and eat that comes from halal money is not stolen. "

Being steadfast in accepting the economic conditions of a poor family and even trying to help a husband by bearing a double burden is supported by a factor where used goods are easily found around the community environment, such as in landfills, around public roads. Used goods can be obtained with minimal capital, by walking, but some take public transportation to get to the destination looking for used goods, and some use motorbikes so that the location of the search for goods is broader. They only use simple tools such as sacks, or hooks used goods so it is not too heavy in doing it. But behind it there are concerns felt by female scavengers, especially because some scavengers are old. They cannot walk too far to pick up garbage. For scavengers who do not have their own vehicles, the location of finding used goods only in one area, so the amount found is minimal, and will have an impact on minimal income as well.

In addition, those who look for goods are not only female Muslim scavengers, but there are many such as men who participate in searching for used goods, so there are many rivals in finding these used goods. The other obstacle that they need to face is when they pass a resident, some

people will ask them to go since the people think that these scavengers are going to steal in their neighborhood. This is one of the factors that hinder the implementation of their work as scavengers. However, their work basically helps the government in reducing waste and utilizing used goods that can be recycled. Their presence in one side can be considered an environmental hero. *Double Burden* are two or more roles that are carried out at the same time, namely as a wife for her husband, mother for her children, and the role as a woman working outside home.

This experience is carried out in line with the traditional role of women as wives and mothers in the family, such as being a husband's partner in fostering the household, providing household needs, and caring for and educating children. Mansur Faqih (1996) explains that since the 21st century women are required to have an independent attitude, in addition to a freedom to develop themselves as people who are in accordance with the talents they have. Indonesian women's profiles can now be described as humans who have to live in a dilemma situation. On one hand she is demanded to play a role in all sectors, but on the other hand comes a demand that they do not forget their nature as women. In conventional families, the husband is in charge of earning a living while the wife is in charge of taking care of the household, but with the growth of opportunities for married women to work, the family pattern soon changes and what is called career dualism emerges.

Traditional values that exist in society can indeed be a social pressure. Increasing the role of women as breadwinners of the family also increases the problems that arise. Both roles require time, energy and attention, so that if one role is done well, the other is ignored so that a role conflict arises. A wife who becomes a housewife and breadwinner (dual role) must fulfill her duties and obligations as a housewife and is expected to carry out her role as a wife and breadwinner. One type of work carried out by women in the context of breadwinners is scavenging. Scavengers, according to Simardjoko, Bambang (2003) are people who collect, and choose waste or used goods that can be used or goods that can be processed again for sale. According to Jhones in Simardjoko (2003) scavengers are people whose jobs are finding and collecting used goods from the city trash. Collected items are plastic, paper, card-board, cans, broken glass, scrap metal, and other used goods. Another definition explains that scavengers are ways of making a living by finding and collecting and utilizing used goods to sell them to entrepreneurs will process it back into new commodity goods or others (Depdikbud Team, 1993).

From some definitions of scavengers it can be concluded that scavengers are people who work in a way or activity that collects all kinds of rubbish or waste that can still be used with the aim of earning income to meet their daily needs. Rahardian (2003) explained in his research on the ways of scavengers to survive in dealing with financial problems, namely by regulating consumption patterns, establishing social relations, and following social gathering. The consumption patterns were carried out by scavengers with extraordinary efforts. *First*, the pattern of expenditure is by means of the percentage of household expenditure directed at food needs. Scavenger families prioritized food problems rather than education problems. *Second*, the portion of food consumption with available food that is eating 1-2x a day can eat once a day only during the day and eat twice a day at day and night. Rahardian (2003) explains the form of strengthening social networks is to establish social relations between scavengers, families and communities.

The relationship formed is an Expressive-instrumental continuum relationship that is a relationship that is formed not only to get a sense of security, love, acceptance, friendship, and a sense of benefit between one scavenger and another but also to get help from other scavengers. When a scavenger experiences difficulties they not only want other scavengers to listen to their complaints but they also expect help from other scavengers. The difficulty of scavengers is usually in financial matters. Relationships help build selfless scavengers with the meaning of scavengers in sustaining their lives by establishing mutually beneficial cooperative relationships with various parties together at work. They also participate in social gathering, collecting money obtained is used to buy goods that have a sale value (TV, Radio, etc.) so that when they need it they will pawn or sell goods.

With regard to the role of women in working and carrying out scavenger activities, we need to understand that some false assumptions about the existence of working women still exist in society. Suhandjati and Sofwan (2000) stated that there was an assumption in part of the community, which women were only as helpers and regulators not as one of the leaders in the household, whose function was to support their husbands, whose task was to pay attention to their husbands rather than subjects who needed attention. Women are only considered as subjects whose jobs are as consumers of salary or income earned by their husbands. Such remarks cannot be justified, because it is realized that women are also capable of earning a living or salary, to obtain alternative income and achievement.

The wife in the household is generally on duty take care of the household such as cooking, cleaning the house, making food for the family. Domestic role is understood as a role related to household affairs, such as handling kitchen work, related to household affairs, caring for children, providing school needs, preparing food for the family. The domestic responsibility is identical to the work of the wife who plays a role in the domestic area that is responsible for completing domestic work. Hurt and Horton in Hendi (2001) explained the functions of family functions, namely: biological functions, children's socialization functions, affection functions, educational functions, religious functions, protection functions, economic functions, and recreational functions. According to Budiman (1983) differences in position between fathers and mothers in the family are basically caused by biological factors. Bodily, women are different from men. Female genitalia are different from male genitalia, female voices are smoother, and women give birth to children and so on. Besides psychologically, men will be more rational, more active, and more aggressive.

On the other hand, psychologically women are more emotional and more passive. As for the perspective of Islamic Teachings a wife's obligations towards her husband in relation to family economic problems according to Nurnasrina (2013), namely (1) Not giving up husband's wealth unless there is permission from the husband, (2) Being grateful for the husband's gift, always feeling sufficient and serving her husband well (3) Not doing anything that can hurt and not be liked by the husband (4) Obedience to the husband (5) Keeping her honor, looking after her sons and daughters as well as her husband's property when the husband is not at home. Wendi Zarman (2017: 21) explains that in Islam, earning a living is obligations of the husband, not the wife. However, there are times when the husband's income is insufficient to finance household expenses. If the household's economic situation or other rational considerations require him to work, then the choice to work can be tolerated. Likewise if he has a fardhu kifayah on his shoulders must be fulfilled, that is when there must be women who take certain roles for the benefit of society.

CONCLUSIONS

Being a woman is a God given nature that cannot be chosen when an individual is born on earth. No one denies the fact that men and women are blessed with different potentials by Allah SWT. This differences then give the men and women different roles and responsibilities as well. After she was mature and married and blessed with children, according to Wendi Zarman (2017: 22) since then she was burdened with the mandate as a wife and mother. In fact women have to carry out the burden and double role, because the husband is not sufficient in financing household needs. Women who work outside the home have been tolerated but still have to carry out domestic obligations to take care of the household. The double burden carried by female Muslim scavengers is a form of fortitude that they feel it It turned out that their faith became a fortress to endure life with these double effects. In the future it is hoped that in addition to selling used goods they also learn to process or recycle waste to make it more of a higher economic value. It is also hoped that the government will give special attention to the empowerment of female scavengers, by providing counseling and training to women, so that later they can work in a better place.

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