

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GIRLS IN THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES OF THE MBOJO ETHNIC, INDONESIA

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Abstract:

Unknowingly, mother's parenting for boys has an impact on the perpetuation of patriarchal culture in the domestic sphere. Boys are not given the responsibility to do household chores, on the contrary, these obligations are often given to girls, such as washing dishes, cooking, cleaning the house, and even washing and ironing the clothes of all family members. Such condition then becomes a shackle for girls when they grow up and get married where the husband cannot take a stand, is lazy, or even thinks that household chores is not a husband's obligation. The researchers conducted an ethnographic study of communication on 20 randomly selected families of the Mbojo ethnic community in Penapali village, Indonesia. The study results showed that there was a gender bias in the communication patterns of parents to their daughters with expressive illocutionary sentences in giving orders, assertive illocutions when girls did not immediately respond to orders, and declaration illocutions when girls disobeyed the social reality. On the other hand, boys are freed from all these communication patterns and tend to be served by their parents or sisters. This communication culture has an impact on the future of women's lives, they face depression and post-marriage stress because they have to act as domestic workers as well as the main breadwinner of the family.

Keywords: Discrimination, girls, household chores, Mbojo ethnic, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Through communication, humans are able to create cultural patterns, one of which is by trying to build communication symbols that separate the power between men and women. Therefore, the identity of femininity and masculinity begins to emerge, and is practiced continuously by observing and imitating. Gradually it becomes a belief that is considered normal and ideal (Eberhardt, 2017).

The Mbojo families in Penapali village, Indonesia also practice a gender-based communication culture to label feminine jobs and masculine jobs. For men, doing something that is labeled as a feminine work is taboo and will disrupt the masculinity system that has been built, on the contrary, for women doing something that is labeled as masculine work will not be a problem in the existing social system.

Consequently, we can easily find conditions in which girls are much more burdened with work responsibilities than boys. In a family environment, girls will receive more commands from their father, mother, and brothers. When their mothers are at work or not at home, girls are positioned to be able to replace their mother's roles such as cooking, washing dishes, cleaning the house, washing clothes, ironing, etc. Girls are even told to serve their father and brother's food or to get their stuff, while boys are not burdened with household chores or other work responsibilities, they are freer to play and tend to be served like their fathers. The division of

responsibility pattern which is applied by parents to their children is not only has a negative impact on children's growth and development as they will not be able to compete in the outside world either through formal or informal education, but also has an impact on their personal lives when they get married. Most of the Mbojo women who live in Penapali Village have to bear the double burden due to culture that requires them to work as housewives and at the same must also have a masculine side to be the breadwinner when their husbands are unemployed as the majority of men in Penapali village are laborers who work on a call from the landlord.

The division of household chore is important to study because it can provide an overview of how gender mechanisms are shaped at home by adults (Cordero-Coma & Esping-Andersen, 2018). In general, the gender-biased division of household work tends to be practiced in poor and developing countries as well as in countries with poor egalitarian gender cultures. This condition increases the number of losses for women in terms of education, career, psychology, and can even interfere the husband and wife relations in household institutions. Data in 2020 revealed that there were 24 thousand Balinese children are working, two-thirds of them are girls (Anak & Tangga, 2021). Indonesian and Pakistani household studies showed that housewives will give the household chores to their daughters (Mehrotra & Biggeri, 2010). In Batak society in Indonesia, the nutrition for boys is prioritized because boys are prepared to be a leader, thus they consider the presence of boys in the family as an achievement. (Abang Ali & Arabsheibani, 2020; Kunto & Bras, 2019). In India, parenting pattern for boys is different from girls. Boys will be given vaccines, vitamins, supplements, and longer breastfeeding duration, resulting in a high rate of infant mortality for girls (Barcellos et al., 2014; Kunto & Bras, 2019). Indian woman takes on heavier household chore when she doesn't have daughters (Larsen Gibby, 2021). Indian boys are raised and prepared for paid productive activities, just like boys in Japan and Denmark, parents' biggest investment is their son (Barcellos et al., 2014; Bonke, 2010; Larsen Gibby, 2021). Such conditions occur when parents with traditional gender patterns place more of their daughters on household chores (Álvarez & Miles-Touya, 2012).

If a family has two sons, each of them spends an average of 42-48 minutes working, while for two daughters it takes 89 minutes each. It shows that adults give their daughters twice the workload (Schulz, 2021). If a family does not have daughters, the workload is left to the mother (Pollmann-Schult, 2017). This causes Japanese women to reduce their interest in getting married and have children, as well as reducing Australian women's interest in having more children (Craig & Siminski, 2010; Yamamoto, 2016). In conclusion, the more children the more household chore a woman will do (Bonke, 2010).

This pattern of division of household chore builds the mindset and attitude of boys that are different from girls. Most girls will do more household chore in their future, but only few boys will link the habit of doing household chore with their future life (Leonard, 2009). Women spend the most time on household chores (Craig & Powell, 2018). Many women admit that they are often tired because they are also earning a living, so they expect their husbands to help with household chores. A sense of injustice and inequality begins to emerge, because they spend too much time working. (Altintas & Sullivan, 2016; Lee, 2002)

On average, children aged 12-17 in Germany and Italy will follow their parents in the division of household chore, therefore children's attitudes are strongly influenced by adults (Dotti Sani, 2016; Gupta, 2006; Schulz, 2019). It is evidenced in a study conducted on members of the British cohort aged 16 and 13 that there will be a productive relationship when boys are accustomed to doing or are given the responsibility to complete household chores in their youth, and it tends to shape men to be responsible for routine household chores (Anderson & Robson, 2005).

The unequal division of household chore between girls and boys should be the focus of many researchers to reduce the gender gap in childhood which has implications in adulthood and married life, due to the fact that women who are confined to their unpaid work are included in the category of state assets with the lowest value (Singh & Pattanaik, 2020).

Therefore, the researchers consider it's important to conduct this research on the Mbojo tribe to reveal the hierarchical communication culture of adult actors (parents) which control the role of girls in household chores and its impact in adulthood, by using Searle's speech act theory.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researchers use an ethnographic study of communication as a data collection method, which is carried out through observation and in-depth interviews to obtain natural research data on the family and social environment of the Penapali village community in Bima Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, and Indonesia. The researchers started the research by observing the behavior and habits of families in Penapali village in managing and distributing the domestic roles of adults to children. Observations were made on 20 randomly selected families from March to December 2021.

The research took place in Penapali village in Bima Regency, Indonesia. This village is inhabited by 1302 people, of which 665 males and 637 females, while the number of households is 400 families (Penapali village population census data for 2020). Penapali village is classified as a village with low-income households, it is showed from the small and inadequate housing buildings which in one house can be occupied by three families. Most of the male population works as agricultural laborers (fish ponds and rice fields), generally they seek income by working on the landlord's land. The majority of the female population work as small traders (selling fish, rice, side dish, vegetable, grocery stalls, etc.) to meet their household needs, because most of their husbands are laborers with irregular incomes. The education level of the villagers is mostly junior and senior high school graduates. As for the quality of education, most elementary school children cannot read until they are about to enter junior high school. Most of the villagers are not fluent in Indonesian, so most of the interactions are in the local language. Of the total population in the village, only 5 managed to enter college, and parents who have capital tend to enlist their sons in the army.

To obtain a natural observation data on interaction and communication in the family environment, the researchers disguised the observation purpose by approaching the mothers first and following their activities in earning a living, then interacting with other family

members at home. The process of interaction and communication was using the local language. The researchers have an advantage on this occasion because the researchers are a native of the research location, making it easier to understand and translate the language used by the research subject, the process of building emotional closeness to blend in and live with the subject's family was also easier and did not arouse suspicion. Besides observing the interactions of parents and family members at home, the researchers also observed the community activities by walking around the village, interacting with villagers, and visiting other families who were not the main research subjects or did not live with the researcher, in order to obtain a more massive data where the pattern of family interaction will ultimately form the cultural structure of communication of the village community. Furthermore, the researcher also approached the village leaders such as village head, hamlet head, head of the neighborhood, and village elders. To observe the position of women in the village, the researchers involved themselves in major events held in the village.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Boys spend more time playing and lazing, while girls are given the responsibility of completing household chores such as sweeping, mopping, washing clothes and cooking for family members' needs. Parents do not put pressure on boys to do household chores at all. The unequal treatment of parents towards girls and boys is almost found in all families in Penapali village. Parental tolerance for laziness in boys is higher than in girls. It is more acceptable when boys don't do anything. In contrast, when girls don't help with household chores, parents, especially mothers, will act hard and decisively both verbally and physically to make their daughters obedient and willing to work.

The first research subject, Mrs. Maria (60 years old) has a daughter (32 years old) and a son (28 years old) who are not yet married. Mrs. Maria is a housewife and her husband is a landlord, her son is in college while her daughter is only a junior high school graduate. At 05.30 in the morning her daughter has started doing the household chores like cooking and cleaning the house, while her son was still sleeping in his room. Mrs. Maria seemed to have got used to the condition, she gave instructions to her daughter to cook fish according to her orders. After cooking her daughter would do the dishes. There hasn't been any activity from her son until 1 p.m. He finally woke up at 2 p.m., took a shower and ate his sister's cooking. At 4 p.m. he took out his motorbike and rushed out of the house to play.

During one month of observing the activities of Mrs. Maria's family, the researcher never saw Mrs. Maria's son receiving instructions or taking the initiative to do the household chores, not even once. Unlike her brother, Mrs. Maria's daughter is given many instructions for cooking, cleaning the house, and even ironing the whole family clothes. If the daughter was not at home, Mrs. Maria would rush to find her by calling out loud and immediately giving her work instructions.

The second research subject is Mrs. Samina (58 years) who works as a fish seller. Mrs. Samina is a widow who has to support three family members including her daughter (34 years old) who was abandoned by her husband, granddaughter (15 years old), and son (19 years old). Every

day she collects and sells fish at the market, her daughter works part time in a restaurant, her granddaughter is only an elementary school graduate, and his son has no particular activity either inside or outside the home. For housework, it is Mrs. Samina's granddaughter who has to complete everything such as fetching clean water, washing dishes, clothes, cooking and cleaning the house. Meanwhile, his son only spends time sleeping, wakes up in the afternoon and is busy with his cellphone to play games until the early hours of the morning. Ironically, Mrs. Samina has an obligation to provide her son with a daily pocket money of \$3, and the house she currently lives in has been passed on to her son.

The results of observations on the two subjects above showed that commands and gestures to put pressure on routine household chore are more directed at girls, while boys tend to be more privileged and their needs are served. Girls are more emphasized to complete household matters than to care about the continuity of their education and future careers. Mrs. Maria and Mrs. Samina have the same mindset, both agree that education for girls is not important and has no value in the future.

The third research subject is Mrs. Eni (48 years old), she has a daughter (21 years) and a son (8 years). Mrs. Eni works as a fish seller and her husband (55 years old) is a security guard. Mrs. Eni was offended and complained about her daughter who did not want to help her with the household chores, but she never complained about her son who played more and was rarely at home.

“I am often annoyed with my daughter. After I came home from selling fish, she never helped me to wash clothes or clean the toilet, she could only cook rice. Sometimes I scold her with harsh words, but sometimes I hold back my emotions trying not to be too hard on her, after all she is my daughter” (Eni, Interview on August 8, 2021)

In fact, Mrs. Eni's daughter is positioned to replace her mother's role when she is not at home, from making coffee for her father, fetching water, to the simplest thing of turning on her father's cell phone in the living room, even serving her younger brother when her mother orders her to do so. If the daughter does not obey the command, then the mother and father will call her continuously in a gradually rises voice tone until she carries out the command. Therefore Mrs. Eni's complaints against her daughter are unequal with her upbringing to her son. Mrs. Eni and her husband never ask their son to work or instruct him to help with household chores, instead her son tends to be served like Mrs. Eni treated her husband.

The fourth research subject is Mrs. Yuni (48 years old). Within her family environment, the husband has the highest right to give any orders without objection, and put some coercion when family members disobey his orders.

Husbands often order their wives and daughters to serve them, such as asking them to provide food with the question "where's my food?" and his wife will immediately serve him food, if he is in the living room then his wife will bring the food to the living room, if he is in the yard then his wife will bring the food to the yard, and so on. When the husband has finished eating, the dirty dishes will be taken by his wife or daughter. When the husband wants to smoke, he

will ask "where's my cigarette?" to his wife or daughter. All of these questions mean imperative sentences.

When Mrs. Yuni fell asleep because she was tired after working at the market, her husband woke her up and asked, "where's my coffee?", "I'm tired", Mrs. Yuni replied in a low voice and was forced to open her eyes, but the husband asked again "where's my cigarette?". Inevitably Mrs. Yuni had to wake up from her sleep and could only grumble a little at me (the researcher), "that's my husband" she said slowly, then went to the shop to buy cigarette and handed it over to her husband. During the observation at Mrs. Yuni's house, the husband never once did the household chore and always gave orders to his daughter and wife. The husband's attitude was then imitated by his son. Just like his father, he asked to be served and facilitated by his sister and mother.

The fifth research subject is Ms. Juli (32 years old). She works as a cake seller, has two sons, and her husband is mostly unemployed at home. In the division of household chore, Mrs. July mother has a bigger role in both earn a living and do household chores.

"Once I went to work, I told my eldest son to do the dishes and he complied, but at the same time his friends were recording his activities and bullying him, they said they would post it on social media. Since then, he refused to do the dishes". (Juli, Interview on agustust 5, 2021)

It shows that boys from an early age are familiar with the gender division of labor in their daily activities, and they consider it taboo to do work that is labeled feminist by their social environment.

The sixth subject is Mrs. Rahmi (44 years old), she lives with her husband (55 years old) who works as a farm laborer, son (19 years old), daughter (23 years old) who is married, son-in-law who is also a farm laborer (23 years old), and grandson (9 months old). The house, which is inhabited by two families, only has one master bedroom. It's common in Penapali village where two to three heads of families live in one house (Student of Real Work Course, Interview on April 24, 2021). Mrs. Rahmi often complains that her son-in-law is lazy and only spends time sleeping in his room, but again, she can't convey it and can only communicate it to his daughter. When unemployed, his son-in-law does not help much with household chore, he just stay in his room. In contrast, her daughter is busy doing household chores and selling snacks to cover their daily expenses. Parenting for her grandson is also mostly done by Mrs. Rahmi and her daughter, such as supervising, bathing, feeding, and washing the baby's clothes.

Of the 20 families observed and interviewed showed the same data where men have privileges from their childhood to adulthood. Women do not have the power to convey messages of disapproval of the conditions that burden their position, and in the end the situation can only be suppressed and carried out. If a girl speaks loudly or tries to voice her objections to an older person, she will be labeled disrespectful, and she must be disciplined by an adult (parent or husband) either by verbal communication or by physical action such as beatings. On the contrary, if a boy voices an objection, he is only labeled with the word naughty and tends to be understood.

DISCUSSION

Gender inequality at the micro level continues to be a major obstacle to social equality of men and women in many countries (Tai & Baxter, 2018). Gender education in the family is often neglected. The starting point of gender inequality in the division of roles in the public sphere begins with the poor division of gender roles in the family. Therefore, the role of parents in educating children in their childhood is very necessary (Boeri, 2018; Cordero-Coma & Esping-Andersen, 2018).

In the case of the Mbojo tribe, in order to understand how they perceive the gender division of domestic work, it is important to find out the cultural values that influence individuals. Thus, a more egalitarian gender value revolution can be carried out (Cunningham, 2005; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Changing the gender hierarchy norms will produce behavioral changes in everyday life (Pierotti et al., 2018).

Adhering to an ideology that is not modern or still holding to a traditional ideology in domestic work certainly cannot produce changes in attitude towards the micro-level division of labor system. (Tamilina & Tamilina, 2014). Therefore, Mbojo women must realize that the unequal communication pattern towards their sons and daughters has a significant impact on their future well-being. We need to continuously provide constructive criticism because social structures and systems are changing from time to time. By being criticized, evaluated, and then produced in the future, it will be able to create new norms of social reality (Suter & Norwood, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The value and meaning of communication used in the daily conversations of girls and adults in Mbojo tribal households is much more beneficial for boys. The gender-biased communication patterns are carried out by parents to girls through Expressive Illocutionary sentences in giving orders, Assertive Illocutions when girls did not immediately respond to orders, and Declaration Illocutions when girls disobeyed the social reality. On the contrary, boys are freed from all these communication patterns and tend to be served and facilitated by their parents or sisters.

This condition has an impact on the future of girls where they are not given the opportunity to improve their abilities in the field of education and proper careers for their welfare. The non-egalitarian communication pattern in the Mbojo tribe creates more complex problems for women. Married women in Penapali village experience stress, depression, and excessive physical fatigue due to the obligation to do all household chores and take care of children. Ironically, they also have to be the main backbone of the family, replacing the husband's role in earning a living. The husband's uncertain income requires wives to work odd jobs to meet the household needs. The failure of men to earn a living is caused by, firstly because of the habit of men in Penapali village who will only start earning a living when they are married, so they do not have other skills besides being farm laborers. Secondly, boys are not trained to be independent from an early age both in household chore and in earning a living, they tend to be pampered and served like their mothers serve their fathers. Thus, when they grow up and get married, they demand the same treatment from their wives.

The state has succeeded in carrying out economic empowerment for women but has not implemented egalitarianism at the domestic level so that women still carry twice the workload as men. Therefore, changes must also be made at level of the men's gender ideology (Ashwin & Isupova, 2018; Elson, 2017), by analyzing men's abilities that can be used as recommendations for a gender revolution in domestic work (Bianchi et al., 2012; Hu & Yucel, 2018). In addition, we also need to reduce intra-gender inequality where women must be equal to fellow women, so that the phenomenon of gender equality in household chores can be created in various dimensions (Hu & Yucel, 2018; Siddiqi, 2021). To date, there are still many women who blame each other, which unknowingly benefits men's position, such as mothers blaming their daughters for refusing to work but leaving their sons without job responsibilities or letting them to supervise and rule over their sister.

We must be able to follow the US and European countries which show that good health has a positive effect on the level of gender equality between men and women, meaning that the mandate of gender equality can be felt not only for women but also for men where the reform of masculine values is directly proportional to improving welfare (Holter, 2014).

Limitation and Study Forward

The limitation of this study is, that it was only conducted on the Mbojo tribe who live in Penapali village, where this village is the only one of the many villages in the Bima district. Nevertheless, in general it can describe how the symbols of cultural communication of the Mbojo tribe treat boys. It is hoped that further research can expand the research area to find a uniform communication pattern that describes the symbols of communication culture in the environment of Mbojo families that are detrimental to the development of girls.

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