

The Domestication of Women's Role on a Small Island: A Case Study of Women at Tnyafar on Selaru Island, Tanimbar Island Regency

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Research about Tnyafar is still quite limited, and therefore, this research attempts to fill in the gap by investigating the domestication of the women's role at Tnyafar. The method of research used is the qualitative approach with a case study. This research was conducted during May 2017. The informants include men and women who have activities at Tnyafar, with a total of 40 persons (31 women and nine men). The result research shows that women play significant roles, either inside the house or outside of it, and mainly in the farm or hamlet. The total timeframe of these activities ranges from 16 to 19 hours, with an average activity time of 17.5 hours. The break time ranges from five to eight hours, with an average break time of 6.5 hours. The women have more activities than the men, and it proves the domestication of the women's role. There are so many activities that are done by women and all of them are considered as being trivial by the cultural context of the community where the women live.

Keywords: *Domestication, Women's role, Small island, Tnyafar.*

Introduction

The women's role, principally refers to anything that is done by a woman in daily life. This role is classified into two categories, namely domestic activity and public activity. Both activities are connoted as works done by someone. The works performed by a woman are the implementation of the women's role.

There are many studies already about the role of women and the results are varying. Salaa (2015, pp.1–16) showed that wives who take livelihood works outside the house, never

abandon their roles as a housewife and mother in the family. Suardi and Syarifuddin (2015, pp.10–18) found that wives in the farming community play two roles. One is a domestic role that includes cooking, cleaning the house, and educating the child/ren, while the other is a public role that involves helping the husband at a farm or caring for livestock. Moreover, Hanum, Qurniti, and Herwanti (2018, pp.36–45) discovered that family welfare improvement is not only determined by the husband's capability in livelihood works, but the wife's role is also important in this matter.

The domestication of the role of women has been examined by many studies. Khotidjah and Madkur (2018, pp.197–212) indicated that Salafi women in the metropolitan City of Lampung believe, that basically, the shariah they profess never questions women's domestication, and therefore, the husband's order is to never be a trouble. This finding is quite similar to the conclusion about women's activity on Selaru Island, West Southeast Maluku (Sopamena, 2018). The women on this island sincerely accept all the workloads that are given to them, due to the conviction that this arrangement is ordered by customs. The rationality behind the domestication of women's role between the metropolitan City of Lampung, and Selaru Island in West Southeast Maluku, is almost equal because the use of religion as a reason of rationality in the city is compatible to the reason of customs on Selaru Island. A different result is shown by Kustanto (2017, pp.89–102), who mentioned that the domestication of the women's role still remains, despite women's participation in the house yard planting initiative organised by the National Program for Woman Empowerment.

Although aiming at the same direction, another study also showed a different result. Muassomah (2009, pp.217–229) explained that man's role has shifted from the public domain to domestic activity. A possible reason for this, is that the woman begins to take on livelihood works outside the house, which leaves the man to take care of the domestic works in the house. This finding is proof of the domestication of the role of the man. It differs from the findings of previous studies, that mostly show domestication on the role of the woman, rather than the man.

The problem of this research is written into the following question: "How does the domestication of the woman's role at Tnyafar on Selaru Island, West Southeast Maluku Regency occur?". The aim of this research is to analyse the domestication of the women's role at Tnyafar on Selaru Island, in the West Southeast Maluku Regency.

Method

The research location is Tnyafar (a temporary shelter during work at a farm or hamlet) on Selaru Island, in the West Southeast Maluku Regency, Maluku Province. The initial stage of this research is emphasised on obtaining information. This activity involves making

appointments with the key informants and asking them several questions. The informants are customs elders of the Adaut Village on Selaru Island because they are considered as being well informed about the Tnyafar local wisdoms. The informants were selected with a snowball technique, as explained by Moleong (1989). The first key informant is Mr. EL, 67 years old, who is known as the former Chief of Village, the former Chief of Tnyafar, and the former Chief of Soa, but he still holds the rank of Landlord in Soa Onjout, the oldest Soa in the Adaut Village. The researcher was directed by Mr. EL to another informant, the Chief of Adaut Village and the Chief of Tnyafar. The total number of informants is 40 persons, consisting of 31 women and nine men. The information focus is stressed upon the domestication of the women's role at Tnyafar.

A qualitative approach is used as the research method. The primary data were collected through questionnaires given to the respondents (Babbie, 2004) and in-depth interviews with the key informants (Debus & Novelli, 1996). The secondary data were obtained with participative observation (Robert & Lincoln, 1994; Babbie, 2004), which is the technique of the researcher being directly involved in the daily life of the community by listening and differentiating any things that are said and done by the community. The data analysis is presented in tables and figures to assist the readers in understanding the explanations of the results.

Result and Discussion

Women's Domestication at Tnyafar

The work performed by women at Tnyafar is varied. Surprisingly, most works at Tnyafar are done by women. An explanation of the women's activity is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Variety of Works Done by Women at Tnyafar (Sopamena, 2018)



The reality encountered by women at Tnyafar is described as follows. Indirectly, women experience domestication by customs, culture, and community habit. The men's domination is really strong, and it affects the women's perspective on domestication. Indeed, women do not view domestication as a burden, but consider it as an obligation to the family. The informants' answers are almost similar, and it indicates that community — especially women — on Selaru Island is homogenous. Therefore, it is believed that the women on that island must be experiencing the same condition. Most domestic works in the family are not supported by the man (husband). This reality seems overwhelming because the woman not only performs livelihood works, but also spends time on domestic tasks as a housewife. Such dual roles create a dilemma on the woman. On the one hand, the woman struggles to fulfil family necessities, but at the same time, the woman is required to handle the domestic tasks.

In-depth interviews were conducted with a few mothers. The women's activity at Tnyafar is elaborated in Table 1. A majority of time is allocated into domestic activity. For example, cooking for breakfast, afternoon snacks, and dinner can take timeframes of 3–3.5 hours. Housekeeping, including sweeping the floor and arranging furnishings, requires timeframes of about 4–4.5 hours. The journey to the farm consumes approximately 1–2 hours. After farming, the women's work is continued by preparing meals for tomorrow, and that needs a timeframe of 2–2.5 hours. Other in-house activity before bed can also take timeframes of 2–2.5 hours. Therefore, the total time needed for domestic activity is around 12–14 hours every

day. If farming activity is done for 4–5 hours, then the total time spent by women in daily activity will be 16–19 hours, with an average activity time of 17.5 hours. The rest time for women at Tnyafar is 5–8 hours, with an average rest time of 6.5 hours. This rest time is very short, and it is not compatible with the length of times that the women spend performing daily activities. The domestic activities performed by the women seize more than half of a 24-hour day. This situation is the proof of the domestication of the role of women, due to the effect of the family structure during the opening or occupancy of Tnyafar.

Table 1: Variety of Activities Done by Women at Tnyafar (based on the information of Mrs. Tina)

No.	Activity	Time Allocation	Location
1	Wake up in the morning.	4:00am – 5:00am	In house
2	Wash face and take a bath.	5:00am – 5:10am (10 minutes)	Outside house
3	Draw water from the well.	5:10am – 5:15am (5 minutes)	Outside house
4	Clean the house.	5:15am – 5:25am (10 minutes)	In house
5	Wash the dishes.	5:25am – 5:35am (10 minutes)	In house
6	Cook breakfast.	5:35am – 7:05am (1 hour and 30 minutes)	In house
7	Have breakfast with the family (<i>alas poro</i>).	7:05am – 7:15am (10 minutes)	In house
8	Wash the dishes and clothes, if any.	7:15am – 7:55am (35 minutes)	In house
9	Prepare food and water for cooking at the farm.	7:55am – 8:00am (5 minutes)	In house
10	Journey to the farm.	8:00am– 8:15am (\pm 15 minutes)	From Tnyafar to the farm
11	Put <i>boti</i> (basket) at <i>walang</i> (farm shelter) and take out machete, hoe, and seeds.	8:15am – 8:18am (3 minutes)	Farm
12	Pull out grass; sow seeds (spinach, bitter melon, <i>patola</i> and others); hoe to make combing (<i>kuming</i>) before planting edible tubers, yams, cassavas, and purple tubers; prepare cuttings before planting bananas. If husband is nearby, husband does the hoeing but husband rarely does this.	8:18am – 13:00pm (4 hours and 42 minutes)	Farm

13	Take a break.	13:00pm – 13:03pm (3 minutes)	Walang or farm
14	Prepare and cook lunch in the <i>walang</i> (farm shelter).	13:03pm – 14:32pm (1 hour and 30 minutes)	Walang or farm
15	Serve and have lunch.	14:32pm – 14:52pm (30 minutes)	Walang or farm
16	Take a break.	14:52pm – 15:00pm (8 minutes)	Walang or farm
17	Work again at the farm; pull out grass if it is still there; if there is empty space, prepare combing (<i>kuming</i>) to plant tubers or prepare cuttings to plant bananas, sugarcane or similar; sow the seeds of the vegetables previously harvested; collect firewood from around the farm.	15:00pm – 18:00pm (3 hours)	Farm or forest
18	Prepare before going back to Tnyafar.	18:00pm – 18:05pm (5 minutes)	Walang or farm
19	Journey to Tnyafar.	18:05pm – 18:20pm (15 minutes)	From farm to Tnyafar
20	Arrive at Tnyafar and organize the belongings.	18:20pm – 18:25pm (5 minutes)	Tnyafar
21	Take a shower.	18:25pm – 18:55pm (30 minutes)	Side of the house
22	Cook dinner.	18:55pm – 20:20pm (1 hour and 30 minutes)	Tnyafar
23	Prepare dinner and have dinner with the family.	20:20pm – 19:45pm (30 minutes)	Tnyafar
24	Tidy up the house and rest with sharing stories.	19:45pm – 19:55pm (5 minutes)	Tnyafar
25	While telling stories, thresh corns and peanuts for grains and kernels, and fry them for snacks.	19:55pm – 22:00pm (1 hour and 5 minutes)	Tnyafar
26	Night rest.	22:00pm – 5:00am (7–8 hours of night rest)	Tnyafar

Source: Sopamena (Processed, 2018)

Customs and Domestication of the Women's Role

The result of the research shows that the community perspective on gender is shaped by the customs and culture. The role division by gender has put the woman as a domestic worker, while the man is positioned as a public worker. Domestic activity is not only identified by in-housework but also by out-housework. Despite these dual works, the woman's activity is still classified as being trivial. Public activity is considered heavy and is usually done by the man, especially when the man must cut trees to open a new farm. Whether an activity is heavy or not, depends on its relevance to the fulfillment of the household necessities.

According to Luttrell and Caroline (2002), there is a gender specific risk following the differentiation of the role played by men and women as a social protection provider. One risk inflicted on women is that the woman becomes the social protection provider for the interests of the household, family, and community. However, compared to the man, the woman is not socially protected in daily activity. The woman has performed many activities that possibly overwhelm her own interests but instead, the man is the one who receives the formal social protection. The reality in the community shows that the man and the woman have a different proportion of activity. Customs and culture are the elements that shape the life experience of the man and woman and determine their interest and aspiration. This position has been supported by Chanamuto and Hall (2015, pp.515–530), who suggest that the woman has a strong accessibility to livestock breeding, and even this access has been enforced by the rural community since long ago to anticipate the case of climate change. This habit has lasted for a significantly long period, so much so, that it may have been providing the opportunity and capability to the woman to fulfil their life necessities through the household livelihood strategy that is suitable to their rural area.

A slightly different finding was given by a study on the gender activity condition among livestock breeders in East Africa (Smith, 2014). Animal husbandry works in East Africa are gender based, and livestock breeding activity is dominated by men. Women are only assigned to sell livestock products to the market. Besides handling the domestic (household) activity, the role of the woman is also to contribute to the family income by going to and selling livestock products in the market. Indeed, at Tnyafar of the small island, the woman does a lot of activities that are possibly more overwhelming than the livestock breeding activity performed by the East African woman. At Tnyafar, women must still help the men to feed the livestock, perform farming works, and engage in activities of livestock breeding and fishing.

Another African study, but in the East and South Ethiopian context, has found that sociocultural construction and customs have shaped the gender activity in the rural area (Tedesa, Mengistu, Kesari, Mohammed, Kebede, & Abegaz, 2015). Livestock breeding is the oldest organised way of human community to attain a sustainable life. However, this life

method is becoming extinct. Recent government policies, in many dimensions, including politics, law, society, and economy, are no longer sensible to livestock breeders' interests in East and South Ethiopia, who are mostly women and children. This lack of sensibility is possibly related with the habit of allocating religion education exclusively to boys, while girls are excluded from any kind of education. Breeders undertake a variety of activities, such as making decisions about production intensity, rearing and herding livestock (especially camels), and performing milking, marketing, and other related activities. Under the culture construction of the East and South Ethiopian community, the man dominates activities that generate household incomes. The woman is not only excluded from education opportunities, but also from having proper access to household incomes.

Still in Africa, other study concluded that although the number of women in livelihood activities is increasing, men are still dominant over women in income contributing works (Zakaria, Afishata, Adam, & Salifu, 2015, pp.36–51). Gender-based livelihood diversification is considered usual in Northern Ghana. The number of men is greater than women in livelihood activities. Furthermore, men have been significantly outnumbering women in these activities, in the last twelve months. The role of the woman seems to be more dominant in non-farm works, mainly as a worker in a private enterprise. This study concluded that women's economic welfare can be empowered by sending women into financial training or a financial institution that may help women to build their entrepreneurial capacity beyond farming.

The findings about women's activity at Tnyafar are almost identical with those of women's studies in other contexts. Pudjiwati (1983) showed that the role of women in the Javanese rural area has entered the public domain, and women have allocated times greater than men in the activities of this domain. Sahunilawane (2012) explained that the women at Kisar Island in Northeast Maluku not only fulfil the food necessities of the household by performing farming activities, but also by performing off-farming activities to contribute to the family income. The woman's contribution to the household income is not greatly inferior to the man's, and even its purse management is separated from the man. Compared to other women, the role played by the Javanese and Kisar women may be similarly heavy, but the "submission to culture" among them is different. Among the Javanese and Kisar Island women, the submission to culture has reached a strong level, and even it disregards whatever income and energy contribution that the women have given. This situation remains apparent, although the woman's role cannot be separated from the man in the family context. A different cultural structure causes the Javanese and Kisar Island women to have a different perspective from the women at Tnyafar on Selaru Island.

Women's Acceptance to Work Division with Men as Obligation to Manage Household Livelihood Sources

All female informants perceive that they consider their activity as an obligation. They do not reject any activity assigned to them. From waking up in the morning and until sleeping at night, timeframes allocated by the women shall be overwhelming, and they may be excessively more than the men's. A significant amount of time being allocated to the women is caused by the great deal of activities that the women must do as part of their obligation. Besides housekeeping, the women also perform out-house activities that remain in the domestic category.

The same condition occurs in Brazil, where the women help the men working at the farms, but at the same time, find their fate determined by the men (Brumer, 2008, pp.11–28). The man is considered as being the superior, while the woman is the subordinate. Having a status as a subordinate, the woman must do anything that is said by the man, as her superior. Even worse, the woman is excluded from having access to land possession as an inheritance. It may weaken the position of the Brazilian woman, but the Tnyafar woman assumes it as an obligation rather than a compulsion.

A different condition is found in Afghanistan, where women's involvement in work is less than men's (Tavva, Abdelali-Martini, Aw-Hassan, Rischkowsky, Tibbo, & Rizvi, 2013, pp.111–134). It is apparent because the Afghanistan culture is enforced by religion that has prohibited women from seeing or having an encounter with men other than her husband. Therefore, women's activity is extremely limited, and time is spent more on completing in-house activity. Three farming systems are known in Afghanistan: crop-livestock mix, agropastoral, and livestock only. The climate is the most significant reason for poverty in Afghanistan, and the community there relies on livestock as a main source of livelihood. Until now, livestock was managed through the mix system which involved both crop planting and livestock breeding. The most cultivated crop is wheat because it successfully warrants food availability to the community. Livestock that is to be bred may include cow, goat, lamb, donkey, poultry, horse, and camel. Goat is an important livestock in the mix system because this system is highly dependent on irrigation and rainfall, and the goat has a high survival rate in this system. There are eight activities undertaken by women in relation to livestock breeding. These include constructing livestock stables, preparing feed, tethering, feeding, washing, grooming livestock, cleaning stables, and discharging wastes. Meanwhile, men perform six other livestock breeding activities, respectively, which are herding or escorting livestock, collecting feeds, buying livestock origins, transporting livestock to market, and selling livestock products such as eggs and meats. The regional attributes of Selaru Island and Afghanistan — which is predominantly climate — are almost equal but the social structure of both places is different. Selaru Island's social structure is based on culture, while

Afghanistan's is emphasised upon religion. This difference creates different views concerning the roles of men and women. Surprisingly, there is similarity between both, concerning women's acceptance to the work assigned to them. Both Tnyafar and Afghanistan women show acceptance to any work issued to them, without any rejection.

Huyer (2016, pp.105–116) has explained a few aspects related with the work relationship between men and women in the farming environment. These aspects are described as follows: (1) technology must be understood in conforming to the contexts, which can be local knowledge, culture, gender relation, capacity, and ecosystem; (2) Technology is not gender neutral because it is able to not only support one gender or its power relation, but is also able to undermine other gender in the process; and (3) the gender role and gender relation have been changing in anticipating the socioeconomical and environmental pressures, work pattern changes, and technological advancement. It becomes clear that the global work relationship between men and women is still challenging due to the different perspectives. However, at least, it can be said that if it prevails globally, then it also does locally. The local knowledge context can support the balance between roles and gender relations.

The social norms in certain places may stimulate that the “husband [is] to obtain more over [the] wife” (Bertrand, Kamenica, & Panami, 2015, 571–614). Such norms are controversial because they intrude on the relative income distribution of the household, reduce job availability for women, and distort the productive activity division between men and women or husband and wife. The relative benefit obtained by women after exploiting market chances in half a century has made their gender identity become increasingly relevant. The income contribution (or economical aspect) is changing faster than the social norms that always move slower, and this fast-moving change is supportive to gender balance.

Referring to the domestication of the role of women, it is said that the women's role is important for the livelihood strategy. The role division between men and women, so far, supports this position. The studies carried out by Pudjiwati Sajogjo on Java Island are still relevant to be used as references concerning gender construction in the community at Tnyafar. One of her studies examines the power division in the household, finding that the distribution and allocation of power among household members has been arranged in a way that respects the woman's position inside and outside the family and household (Pudjiwati, 1983). Blood and Wolfe (1960) found that the most important aspect in the family structure is the position of family members based on the distribution and allocation of power, which is then followed by the aspect of work division in the family. Power is defined as the ability to make decisions to affect the family life. The husband and wife may share equal power or have a different power value, based on the work.



The problem in the current research is that the culture on Selaru Island declares that the power value of the man (husband) and the woman (wife) is determined by the balance of heavy and light work. Heavy work is the man's responsibility and is hardly shared with the woman. Light work is the woman's responsibility, but it is possible to be assisted by the man. This arrangement indeed reflects the balance of value between the man and woman. The power allocation in decision-making is done together, but still with male domination. When the man is absent, the woman can make decisions about her work. In this situation, the power of decision-making is not determined by the income contribution level in the household. However, it is not in line with the previous finding which stated that the power distribution is derived from the resources contributed by the husband or wife in the marriage, and this contribution of marital resources greatly affects the distribution of power or discretion in the family or even culture (Pudjiwati, 1983). However, still, this opinion shall be analysed deeply by referring to the marriage construct in the culture observed.

The views suggested by Pudjiwati Sajogjo are similar to the position of the current research. She admitted that the power of each constituent or spouse is considered "reasonable" because each constituent has authority (discretion) on family affairs. In general, family authority is affected by culture. In a patriarchal community, it is standard if the husband dominates the decision-making process on household affairs. Therefore, the woman's position in Selaru Island is said to be reasonable, although they must do many works in the light category, and as a result, they perceive the works as an obligation rather than as a burden. This statement is in accordance with the previous study that found that productive works in the household environment are done either by men or women, and the household works are not only identified by reproduction works (Sukesi, 2009, pp.105–124). Figure 2 displays the variety of light works performed by women.

Figure 2. Variety of Light Activities Done by Women (Sopamena, 2018)



Conclusion

The women at Tnyafar serve as the proof that the domestication process of women does exist. It is not yet exposed or observed by previous research. The domestication process at Tnyafar is structurally constructed based on the customs and culture, which as a result, the women perceive and accept domestication as an obligation and without any rejection.

Many previous studies always relate the women's role with the domestic role. All the activities that are considered as work and performed by the women are connoted as part of the domestic role. In certain situations, women may undertake public activities, but this activity is still perceived as a domestic role. The women at Tnyafar, therefore, become a reference case to be discussed in this research.

All work that is performed by women at Tnyafar is presumed into the light category. This category includes in-housework (also called domestic work) and out-housework (public work). Surprisingly, some of the out-housework that is done by women is even classified as domestic work because it remains in the light category. The women at Tnyafar actually perform almost all the activities that are done by men, except one, which is cutting trees to open a new farm. It must be noted that nowadays, cutting trees is no longer heavy work

because it is done by machine, namely by chainsaw. The case will be different if one must cut small trees to open a new farm or to clean an abandoned farm (during the fallow period). Women must cut small trees with a machete, and therefore, a woman will rely on her strength while doing so. It will be heavier than cutting large trees with a machine (chainsaw). The question arises: “Is it true that work performed by women at Tnyafar is classified into the light category? Several alternative answers are provided:

1. The works are considered light by the women at Tnyafar because the women do not reject them and even perceive them as an obligation.
2. The works are considered light by the men at Tnyafar because the men regard them as a legacy inherited throughout generations.
3. The works are considered heavy by an outsider (including the researcher) because it is exhausting to do them at Tnyafar.

There are additional working tasks at Tnyafar which are debatable as to whether they are heavy or light. The work in question includes cutting and carrying firewood or carrying harvest products from the farm or coast (such as sea weeds). The women cut and carry firewood with a carrier made from a Palm Tree or Lontar Tree. The carrier itself is called a boti, which is also used to carry harvest products from the farm to the house at Tnyafar. The load volume of the carrier (boti) ranges from five to 50 kilograms. All harvest products, either from the farm or coast (sea weeds), are loaded into the carrier (boti) and shouldered by the women to the house at Tnyafar. This overwhelming process must be understood from the habit perspective. The women at Tnyafar are already accustomed to this process because they regard it as an obligation and therefore, it must be done with sincerity for the survival and sustainability of the household. The food necessities among household members, education for the child/ren, and customs prerequisites, are presumed by the women as their main priorities. Pressure to fulfill such necessities positions the women to accept any work that is given to them as an obligation rather than as a burden. Subsequently, the women do not care greatly whether their work at Tnyafar is heavy or light.

In fact, the researcher has seen firsthand that the women do not assume their obligation as a pressure inflicted by the men. The women understand, perceive and signify the work at Tnyafar as work in the light category, and even considers it as domestic work. Such a process of consideration is called the Domestication of Woman’s Role (DWR), which is defined as the moment when a woman has the conscience that any work is an obligation and that any work that she is obliged to do, is a domestic work that she must do. The change of the work status into the light category indirectly indicates the change from the public to domestic domains, and the word domestication is derived from this process. The women have a total activity time ranging between 16–19 hours, with an average at 17.5 hours. The resting time of the women at Tnyafar is around 5–8 hours, with an average of 6.5 hours.



The women's role at Tnyafar is categorised as "domestication". Principally, this domestication is intended to help women to take care of their household affairs. Indeed, this domestication has put women in the position of assuming many roles, but the roles are useful to the sustainable fulfillment of the household necessities.



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