

The Concept of Gender Education in the Family to Help Achieve Sustainable Development Goals

Nina Nurmila*, Supiana, Irma Riyani, Acep Aripudin

Postgraduate Program

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati

Bandung, Indonesia

*nina.nurmila@uinsgd.ac.id

Abstract—One of the goals of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is gender equality (Goal 5). Therefore, to achieve this goal, the concept of gender education is needed especially in the family, in which the basic and the first education starts. The aim of this article is to offer the concept of gender education in the family. The methodology used in this paper is feminist methodology, which facilitates women to become visible and the subject of knowledge, even though either male or female can become feminist who support for gender justice. The data for this paper is based on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were collected through observation of the court hearings and interviews with divorcees. The secondary sources consist of literatures on gender and SDGs and annual reports on divorce from Religious Courts Ciamis, West Java, 2017-2019. These data show that the cause of divorce is mainly economic problem, in which the husbands are financially unable to support the family but they still expect their wife to do their traditional roles of serving them, taking care of the children and doing house works. Based on these data, to help save the family from getting divorce, gender education is important. The concept of gender education offered in this article suggests flexible roles between men and women since their early age, in which both girls and boys are prepared to be ready for any gender roles so they are ready to face any circumstances in their adulthood: either to be family breadwinner or to take care of the family at home.

Keywords—gender, education, sustainable development goals, gender equality

I. INTRODUCTION

As part of the global world, Indonesia has committed to be one of the countries which aim to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are set by the 70th United Nation (UN) General Assembly in September 2015 in New York, United State of America. SDGs consist of 17 goals and 169 targets which were set to be achieved by 2030. SDGs are the continuation of the previous goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the UN in 2000 to be achieved by 2015 [1]. MDGs were agreed by 189 countries [2] and Indonesia was one of the countries who signed this agreement and incorporate MDGs into its development process. SDGs have also been signed by even

more countries, 193 countries, and Indonesia has integrated SDGs into its development process through Presidential Regulation No. 59/2017 on the Implementation of SDGs with the President as the Head of Managing SDGs and the Minister of Planning and National Development as the Implementation Coordinator [3].

There are 17 goals of SDGs: (1) No Poverty; (2) Zero Hunger; (3) Good Health and Well-being; (4) Quality Education; (5) Gender Equality; (6) Clean Water and Sanitation; (7) Affordable and Clean Energy; (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth; (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; (10) Reduced Inequality; (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities; (12) Responsible Consumption and Production; (13) Climate Action; (14) Life Below Water; (15) Life on Land; (16) Peace and Justice Strong Institutions; (17) Partnership to achieve the Goal [4]. This paper will mainly focus on the effort to achieve gender equality in the family, which can help achieve SDGs Goal 5: Gender Equality.

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper uses feminist methodology and the concept of gender as a tool of analysis. Feminist methodology is one of the qualitative methodologies which criticizes the invisibility of women, either as the object or the subject of social science (social scientist): it is the development from —a sociology about women to a sociology for women [5]. In feminist methodology, the function of the researcher is to give voice to the silenced group [5], in this case the women. To give voice to women is the development in the history of feminist theory to knowledge which has been used as a tool of oppression, in order knowledge can be used to free individuals, especially women, from oppression. This means that in feminist methodology, the voice of women or the oppression against them is not only described, but it is also criticized and challenged. Feminists argue that the oppression against women has been internalized and is no longer being aware of (hidden), and therefore, the technique in feminist methodology is consciousness raising [5].

The data for this paper were collected through observation in the court hearings of divorce cases and interviews with

divorcees in West Java, Indonesia. For ethical reason, all names of the interviewees are pseudonym. In addition, this paper is also supported by the data from secondary sources such as literatures on gender and SDGs and annual report from Religious Courts in West Java.

III. THE CONCEPT OF GENDER EQUALITY

Gender is a term which began to be used by feminists in the early 1970s. This term is to differentiate between sex (God-given/*kodrat*) and the social construction of femininity and masculinity based on sexes (gender), which is human made. Gender is roles, attributes, characteristics and behavioral differences between men and women developed in a society which are regarded to be ideal for men and women [6]. Before the term gender was used, people tended to assume that being family breadwinner is the God-given (*kodrat*) for men and that being housewife is women's *kodrat*, which is unchangeable. After the use of gender, people can differentiate between the aspects of God-given, which is unchangeable, and the human construction, which is changeable. The God-given is biological differences between male and female such as that male has penis and sperm which allow him to fertilize the ova; while female has breast, womb and vagina which allow her to menstruate, to be pregnant, to give birth and to breastfeed. Based on these biological differences between male and female, a society construct idealities such as that male is idealized to be a leader, family breadwinner and to work outside the house; while women are idealized to be at home, to take care of the children, to cook and do house works. Because gender is constructed by a society, therefore it can be reconstructed based on the changing circumstances of this society. For example, during the Hunting Society (Society 1.0), males were idealized to be family breadwinner to protect women from wild animal in the forest due to the importance of women's reproductive roles in bearing children [7]. However, in Society 5.0, when we live in technological advances, both educated men and women can work to earn the money for a living by using their knowledge and technological skills [8].

The use of the term gender is to achieve gender equality. There are four indicators of gender equality: access, control, participation and benefit [6]. Access here means that both men and women can access such as education and health services; control here means that both men and women can control such as over their income and their body (when to be pregnant and how many children they want to have or not to have); participation here means participation in decision making process at home or in the parliament; benefit here means both men and women can enjoy the benefit of the result of Indonesian development. These four indicators need to be achieved by both men and women.

Other than the indicators of gender equality, there are five indicators of gender inequality which needs to be eradicated: subordination, marginalization, stereotype, violence and double/multiple burdens [9]. Subordination here means assuming women to be lower, such as in their ability, than men; marginalization here means that at work or in the society,

women are mainly put in marginal position, not important position such as being leader; stereotype or negative labelling here means that women tend to be labelled negatively, such as being emotional or gossipers; violence can be in the form of physical, psychological or sexual and women can mainly become victims; double or multiple burdens here means when women work outside the house to earn the money for the family, they are still expected to do house works, take care of their children and serve their husband needs. These are all forms or indicators of gender inequality which need to be eradicated in our society to achieve gender equality.

IV. GENDER RELATION IN THE FAMILY

Indonesia adopts traditional patriarchal gender relation in which men are assigned to be family breadwinner and women are assigned to be house keeper. This traditional gender expectation is stated, for example, in Indonesian Marriage Law Number 1/1974 Article 31 (3): "A husband is the head of the family and the wife is a house keeper". This article was further explained in Article 34 which describes the expected roles of husband and wife in the family that: (1) "A husband is obliged to protect his wife and give all her daily household needs based on his capability; (2) A wife is obliged to manage household affairs well" [10].

This gender expectation is further strengthened by religious interpretation of the Qur'anic verse An-Nisa (4): 34 which is mostly interpreted that men are the leader of women because men are more superior than women and because men become the family breadwinner. This kind of interpretation is written in many influential books of Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*) such as those written by Ibnu Kathir (d. 774 H) [11], Jalalayn (d. 864 H) [12], HAMKA [13] and Quraish Shihab [14]. This gender expectation stated in the law and *tafsir* affect the way Indonesian family raise and socialize their children, in which boys are generally educated and expected to be ready to be family breadwinner, while girls are socialized to be housewife.

However, the better facilities of education built since the beginning of the 1970s has given the opportunities for both boys and girls to continue their education beyond primary schools and open up employment opportunities for them [15]. Other than going to school, girls are usually expected and trained at home how to do house works, to cook and to take care of their younger siblings in order they are ready to do their expected roles as house wife. This means, girls receive double process of education: (1) at home to be ready to take care of the household and (2) at school to be ready to continue their further studies and employment; while boys are only educated at school and mostly are freed from doing house works except in certain families who are already aware of the importance of boys to be capable of doing house works.

The result of this general socialization in which boys are educated only to be breadwinner and girls are educated and socialized to be housewife may work well for some families, especially middle and upper income families who can rely on single income earners. However, for many other families

whose family breadwinner cannot afford to pay all daily needs alone, this socialization can create problems and tensions in the family which may lead to the increasing rate of divorce. This can be seen, for example, in the Annual Reports on Divorce in Ciamis Religious Court [16–18]. In 2017, there were 4134 divorce cases with the highest number of reason for divorce was economic reasons (3341 cases), and is followed by one of the spouse leaving the house (separation), usually the husband who is unable to provide for the family or may have an affairs with another woman (350 cases), disputes (321 cases) and domestic violence (100 cases) which are usually caused by economic reasons too. The rest of the reasons are getting drunk (4 cases), gambling (1 case), imprisonment (6 cases) and polygamy (7 cases). The 2018 and 2019 Annual Report is also consistent with that of 2017 Annual Report in which the highest number of reason for divorce is economic reasons. This can be seen in the following Table I:

TABLE I. REASONS FOR DIVORCE IN CIAMIS RELIGIOUS COURT

Year	2017	2018	2019
Economy	3341	3936	4149
Separation	350	470	620
Disputes	321	346	569
Domestic violence	100	21	17
Other reasons	18	26	35
Total cases	4130	4799	5390

Economic reason here means that the husband is unable to do his expected roles as family breadwinner. This for example happened to Tite, 46 years old woman with two children, who decided to ask for divorce because of her husband's inability to provide for the family due to his bankruptcy which caused the family to lost their home (interview with the author, 10 September 2018). Agustin, who got married at the age of 38 in 2007 also asked for divorce in 2012 after five years of marriage without receiving any maintenance from her husband. Agustin and her husband work in the same field, earning almost the same amount of money. When they went out to eat, her husband would ask Agustin to pay for the food, "Please pay, Mom!". After a long period of time, Agustin protested this habit because her husband has never give her any money thinking that Agustin has her own salary. "Where is your money, Dad? Why should I pay every time we go out to eat?" Agustin protested. This was answered by her husband with full of anger: "If you are not sincere in paying for the food, then go to religious court!", hinting to ask her for divorce (interview with the author, 22 August 2018). Linda, 26 years old house wife, also decided to ask for divorce after getting married for about six years. In her view, her husband was very stingy. Even though he earned enough money for the family, he only gave IDR 10.000-15.000 (about USD1) per day, which she could buy only two eggs, while she has a child who needs to buy her needs. Her husband thought that they should save money for the future, while Linda wants to also enjoy their current daily life. She often go back to her parents' house when she was angry with her stingy husband expecting that he would change. Her husband promised to change and share his earnings with

Linda but he never fulfilled his promise and therefore, they were divorced (interview with the author, 9 September 2018).

In addition, even though the husband is unable to be family breadwinner and the wife has to work to earn the money, the husband still sees that doing housework as women's job only and therefore he does not give any contribution to the family, resulting in double and even multiple burdens for the wife who does household chores, takes care of the children and serve her husband, in addition to work to earn the money. This gender inequality in the form of double/multiples burdens can contribute and finally lead to divorce, as happened to one of my colleagues.

V. THE NEED FOR GENDER EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY

All the case studies above show how three marriages ended in divorce due to economic reason: the husbands' inability to fulfil their expected role to be family breadwinner. Tite actually offered her husband to let her involved in managing her husband's business of lending money because Tite was graduated from Economic Secondary School. However, her husband rejected her offer sarcastically by saying: "If you manage this business, then I will stay at home". This shows his rigid traditional gender roles in which the wife should only stay at home, not interfering her husband's business. He also tended to undermine Tite's ability in managing his business, showing his view of women as subordinate being, one of the indicators of gender inequality.

The case of Agustin also shows that not all husbands who earn an income is willing to share his earning with his spouse. Agustin's husband even demanded Agustin to continually sacrifice for their relationship by paying for the food they eat together. Agustin also claim that she paid the down payment to buy for their car, but after the divorce, her husband take the car for himself because he was the one who paid the rest of the installment. All the three case studies above show closed management of the family income, in which the wives have no **control, access and full benefit** over the husband's business/income, showing the absence of at least three indicators of gender equality. All the wives above thought that they have done their expected gender roles to be house wife and therefore they expected their husband to do their responsibilities of giving family maintenance, which they failed to do so, except in Linda's case who still received maintenance from her husband but its amount was too small and therefore this made her feel miserable.

Other than the above three case studies, there are still many other untold cases which show the weaknesses of the existing gender construction of a man should be family breadwinner and a woman should be housewife. Educational opportunities have opened up job opportunities for both men and women. Therefore, women can no longer being socialized to just expect to be house wife and expect to be given maintenance by their husband. In reality, not all men are capable of being family breadwinner and even when they can have an income, not all of

them are willing to share justly with his wife, like the case of Linda.

In response to the above problem, gender education is important to prepare both men and women to have flexible roles either to be the family breadwinner or to do house works. Gender education can be done by assigning and habituating both boys and girls from their early age to do house works such as cleaning the house, cooking, washing dishes, and taking care of their siblings, other than sending them also to study at school. Parents need to tell their children, both boys and girls, that doing house works are not women's destiny (*kodrat*), but gender, and therefore can be done by either men or women. Parents also need to tell their children, both boys and girls, to be ready for any circumstances they face in their future that they should contribute equally to their family. Girls need to be socialized not to expect to only be given maintenance by their husband; and boys also need to be socialized not to expect that all house works will be done by their wife. With this gender education, both boys and girls can be ready to face any circumstances in their future when they have family. For women, they do not need to expect to be given maintenance by their husband when they themselves can work to earn the money, such as in the case of Agustin and Linda. For men, they can contribute to the family by doing house works and taking care of their spouse and children when they cannot give maintenance to the family.

This concept of gender education, in which both boys and girls are being prepared to be able to do house works and work outside the house to earn the money, is not contradictory with the Qur'anic verse 4: 34. The new reading of the verse by Nasaruddin Umar [19] shows that Qur'an also differentiate the term *kodrat* from gender. According to Umar, the Qur'an when it speaks about biological differences between male and female, it uses the terms *dzakar* for male and *untsa* for female; while for gender, the Qur'an uses *rijaal* (masculine) and *nisa'* (feminine). The Qur'an 4: 34 uses the word *rijaal* not *dzakar*. The criteria for being masculine who can be family protectors, as stated in the verse 4: 34, are two: (1) to have superiority over the spouse; and (2) to give some of the income for the family. Whoever can fulfil these criteria, either male or female, can become the family leader. This means, a person who is born male, can never be *rijaal* if he cannot fulfil the above two requirements; and *untsa* who can fulfil the two criteria can become *rijaal*. Previously, in the era of Qur'anic revelation and the era when mainstream interpretations were produced, most *rijaal* were *dzakar*. With the changing circumstances, especially in the current era of information and technology, when most women get higher education, there has been increasing number of women who can become *rijaal*. Umar's new reading of the Qur'anic verse 4: 34 is supported by other male feminists such as Nasr Abu Zaid [20] who see that the Qur'anic verse 4: 34 is descriptive, not prescriptive verse; Asghar Ali Engineer [21] who see that the verse is sociological verse, not socio-theological verse; and Husein Muhammad [22] who see the verse as informative, not normative verse. This means that gender relation in the family can be the same or different from what is described in the Qur'anic verse 4: 34.

The important thing in gender relation in the family is to maintain justice. Justice can be implemented in different ways depending on the circumstances. If the husband is the sole family breadwinner, then it is just for the wife to do house works, take care of the children and serve her husband. However, if both wife and husband work outside the house to earn the money, then it is just for the husband to share doing house works and taking care of their children together. Similarly, if the wife become the family breadwinner, then it is just for the husband to do like what his wife does when the husband become the sole breadwinner: to do house works, take care of the children and serve his wife. This is because doing house works, taking care of the children and serving spouse are not women's *kodrat*, but gender and therefore they can be done by both men and women.

VI. CONCLUSION

Both men and women are fully human being with almost the same structure of body except their biological reproductive organs. Therefore, both men and women can be educated and socialized from their early age to clean the house, to cook, to take care of their sibling at the same time they have school education. This process of education is beneficial for both men and women to have flexible roles in their future so that they both mentally ready for any circumstances they face. For women not to expect to be given maintenance by men when the men are incapable of giving maintenance; and for men to still contribute to the family by doing house works and taking care of the children when they are incapable of giving maintenance.

Only women who biologically can be pregnant, give birth and breast feed (women's *kodrat*). During this critical time, it is expected that the husband can give proper maintenance to his wife and share house works to reduce the physical burdens of his wife who is doing her biological reproductive function. This way, double or multiple burdens for the wife can be prevented. Similarly, when the husband is fired and cannot provide income for the family, he can take care of the children and do house works, while the wife work to earn the money to contribute to the survival of the family. Both men and women are equal subjects who can contribute equally to the family in different forms depending on the family circumstances. This way, hopefully, divorce cases which are caused by continuous disputes due to economic problems, can be minimized. When the family is strong, so does the state because families are part of the state.

Gender equality, SDGs Goal 5, is very important to be achieved. One of the ways to achieve this goal is starting from the family: by giving gender education. This can be done by parents to socialize and habituate their boys and girls to do house works and take care of their siblings since their early age, other than sending them to school. Therefore, both of them are ready to face any circumstances in their future family by having flexible roles, inside and outside their home, to keep the family strong and happy.

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