



Batak Women in Globalization and Feminism

Marudut Bernadtua Simanjuntak^(✉), Ilza Mayuni, Zuriyati, Sintowati Rini Utami,
and Ninuk Lustyantie

Applied Linguistic Study, State University of Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia
marudutbernadtuasimanjuntak_9906921013@mhs.unj.ac.id

Abstract. The existence of policy cannot be separated from the role of women as a supporting factor for the policy itself. The modern era of globalization affects the continuity and change in every line of local policy. The Batak tribe as an ethnic group that upholds local policies has also adapted to the pattern of globalization which inevitably must be followed to achieve existence in a culture. Women as one of the media that bridge every element of culture in the next generation must participate and adapt to globalization. This study aims to show a simple study of the views of women of the Batak tribe studied in Batak literacy which without having to demand gender equality or justice, has directed respect on all sides. Changes and adjustments that occur in the socialization process carried out by women in maintaining local cultural identity are mainly aimed at maintaining the culture itself and the status it holds.

Keywords: Batak women · Globalization · Feminism · Batak tribe

1 Introduction

Culture is an inseparable part of society which naturally, people in various parts of the world construct themselves in a patriarchal culture where men are usually exalted and superior with their masculinity side while the role of women with their femininity is considered as a complement to men [1]. The gender differences between masculine and feminine in patriarchal cultures are very clear, and these gender differences can be found in society in a variety of ways in eastern cultures. One society that adheres to a patriarchal culture is a society that lives in a pluralist culture, including Indonesia in various tribes. In many cultures in Indonesia, masculinity and femininity are not statuses given from birth, but a social construction. It is like two different poles or like an arc, each of which when drawn in value will give a grade and even a price [2]. Gender observers, especially feminists, state that the ideal masculine figure is a man who is strong, handsome, and captivates the hearts of many women.

According to Munroe, in many cultures, the ideal man is a man who has the ability to be responsible for earning a living and can pass down offspring and power [3]. It can be understood from this opinion that men will dominate women and women will be dominated. Behind this male domination, the position of women is questioned [4]. In this cultural view, women are the property or object of men. These thinkers also assume that domination over women is a form of masculinity and male power that is often seen

in many eastern cultures. In this case, women also do not have independence because the submission, dependence, and submission of women to men is a symbol of the nobility of a woman's heart. From various cultural terms, it can be concluded that women are indirectly placed as objects, while men in the subject position can provide a concept of how women's roles, duties, and positions should be. However, along with the impact of globalization and modernization, this position and concept began to have changes [5].

Modernization is a major factor in the process of globalization which has a very large role in the development and dissemination of the concept [6]. The development of information technology, the open acceptance of science and communication as a sub-factor of modernization of society and individuals facilitate every access to various information in all things, times, and places that are not reached by limitations. According to Verbeke, et al., globalization forces people, both men, and women, to quickly compete or not to achieve superior values. To support this statement, Jasanoff assumes that modernization, globalization, technological developments, and communication are closely related to each other that cannot be separated [7, 8]. This concept is not wrong if, in the end, people perceive globalization as a disaster that can eliminate local cultural policies owned by the community, but affects their views on gender relations.

Globalization is very closely related to western culture or in developed countries where the role of women is usually quite visible. Globalization unconsciously spreads Western cultural values to other developing countries which only receive the impact of globalization itself [9]. Mastery of technology and communication as the main factors supporting the globalization of the western world erodes local cultural values owned by developing countries. Poor or developing countries in the era of globalization are still at the receiving level of all the impacts caused by globalization itself. Indonesia as a developing country that carries out and accepts the influence of globalization consciously or not has many parts of local culture and policies that will inevitably influence cultural views or gender views from past heritage [10]. Embracing the teachings of western culture, especially gender equality in the era of globalization, is not only limited to the western world as a regional boundary indicating developed countries but as an invitation. Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia which are considered as developing countries that seem to be able to compete or balance the literacy thinking of western countries also provide their own voice in eroding local cultural values and causality of views on gender relations.

Festival cultures, such as dangdut or competitions that can be participated by cross-gender people are increasingly in demand by people in Indonesia, which are considered more modern and fair. A conventional culture that prioritizes polite respectful speech, respects elders, and togetherness that dominates the role of men is no longer considered something that must be of value compared to the excuse of freedom of expression, work, self-recognition, and achievement. The biggest problem has been going on for a long time since the start of the era of liberalism in Indonesia. In the liberal era, foreign cultures entered Indonesia in line with their influence, which would be feared not even balancing gender relations, but as if showing the superiority of each gender, or even using the pretext of oppression to be supported by many empathetic people [11].

The family as one of the smallest units of society has the most important and major function in maintaining the existence of local culture in the era of globalization [12].

One of the functions of the family is as a function of socialization. A mother is a stakeholder in the process of value socialization which greatly influences the socialization process, without having to aggregate domination and rights. Women identified in the household sector are not inferior to men who have authority in the public sphere [13]. Values in the domestic sphere will change when socialization agents accept different values or even only from the outside world. The existence of the Batak ethnicity that spreads in various parts of Indonesia and even the world often positions women as “daughters of the king”. Even in hooking up or in planning a family, Batak women must be taken seriously by men from any ethnicity, especially the Bataks themselves, because the potential for positioning a balance between men and women in the Batak tribe mindset is very good, in family, respect to men without having to demean men or be demeaned by men.

2 Method

This study uses a qualitative method which is carried out by literature studies and literary literacy studies. All studies were obtained and recorded as the main data which was formulated into a narrative. Some documentary data also supports research analysis. The interpretation of the values that will be socialized by Batak women will have an impact on the existing local culture [14]. Thus, one of the biggest challenges in this era, in terms of local culture, is to maintain the existence of the smallest unit of an independent family. Women as agents of socialization in the family have their own strategy to maintain the existence of local culture in the era of globalization [15].

In reviewing these problems, researchers will use qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach that relies on critical theory [16]. The data used in analyzing the problems above are primary data received directly by researchers from the field using participant observation and in-depth interviews. As supporting data, researchers will use primary data from existing library materials. The setting is set in metropolitan cities, taking into account that the metropolitan city in Indonesia is one of the cities most favored by urbanites for the Batak ethnicity.

3 Result and Discussion

Feminism always questions oppression and injustice that causes women to experience discrimination, harassment, humiliation, and marginalization in almost all systems and structures of society [17]. Feminist literature cannot be easily and simply formulated as literature by women and about women only. Feminist literature is not about women themselves, but about God. According to Juster, when women do literature, their literature is based on facts and experiences in the light of religious and cultural teachings and concrete actions towards equality between women and men [18]. Therefore, the advocacy of equality and friendship and the search for a new equal way of life in the structures and systems of church and society are on the agenda of the struggle of feminist theologians. This includes questions asked about religious symbols, androcentric relationships between men and women, and relationships between men and women.

Between humans who express an authentic vision of redemption as a form of liberation from sexism which turns out to have an unfair impact on women [19]. This kind

of awareness must start from the interpretation and exploration of literary studies to find the vision and meaning of the intended liberation. In the view of Batak literature, especially the notion that positions women as “daughters of the king”, the feminist view in many literary studies such as *The Legend of Lake Toba and Samosir*, positions women as something valuable and even balanced for men, but women also play their role as wife and mother.

Batak feminist literature is literature that is driven to explore equality where women and men seek transformation and liberation of dignity and values. According to Glenn, human dignity is still oppressed in the life of society in general [20]. Gender studies basically pay attention to the cultural construction of two living things, male and female. Gender is often defined or even contrasted with sex, which is biologically defined in terms of male and female categories. In layman, both can be translated as gender, but the connotation of the two remains different. Sex refers to a biological meaning while gender refers to social meaning. Gender studies cannot be separated from anthropological studies. When babies are born, they already have a gender, but do not yet have a gender [21]. A person’s biological sex is determined by the view of physical anatomy, culturally this is the root of experiences, feelings, and behaviors that are based on adult association. In terms of these thoughts, of course, the process of globalization has contributed to providing views on gender positions.

According to Scholte, the process of globalization is taken through several main indicators are internationalization, liberalization, economics, democratization, and deterritorialization [22]. One of the indicators of westernization above is a form of diffusion of western cultural values into local values, which in turn erodes the value of local culture itself. Around the majority of parts of the world that were colonized by Western countries, whether they realize it or not will form a separate mindset for the world that the culture or civilization brought or owned by Western countries is a culture with very high civilizational values [2]. The feasibility of western culture to be imitated by other countries both in all fields related to the concept of modernity has made it legal for each individual who adheres to it. Local culture is a policy or wisdom possessed by a nation. Local culture is a reflection of the agreement – as well as the rules, values, and norms that are born from the adjustment of the circumstances of the people who face the challenges of life [23].

On literacy and gender views for women of the Batak tribe, most of the general views in Indonesia are contradictory. The status of women, in general, will be limited to meeting demands in a community, because of the view that women have not met the requirements for the lines of creativity, intellect, and a broad knowledge competition process of work ethic [24]. In this case, many people view what we often refer to as a patrilineal pattern which is ironically supported by women themselves, who seem to have no intention of balancing position and dignity, instead of agreeing to the situation. Globalization as a driver of competitiveness and openness inadvertently provides an opportunity for women with modern principles to be able to break the pattern of expression of patrilineal that limits their creativity [25]. What about local policies that exist in the world. Batak women who are limited households have a very important role in the process of cultural expansion, which can usually be seen in how they contribute to decisions and roles in the household.

A married woman or a mother will always have an understanding that the development of the child, the success of the child will be determined at the hands of a mother. According to Rosenberg, a mother is the most worthy figure in the process of character building or one's success [26]. From this understanding, the idea emerged that women became one of the most important statuses and roles to pay attention to. Various kinds of women's empowerment programs were created to improve the quality of women's resources themselves. The fading of local cultural values or local wisdom of globalization is closely related to the process of socialization in the family. This is seen in two poor choices that usually rely on superficial feminism. Shallow feminism is meant in two views, namely the view that makes women who are always submissive and without being positioned as the neck in the family when the man is the head so that the role of women is not visible. Another shallow view is that women will position themselves as oppressed, not treated fairly so that it echoes the time for fair attention. This will actually be damaging because the gender role of women is not based on their position as women who are side by side with men, but because they are pitied or even if they have been noticed they will trample on men who have oppressed and weak men. In the view of local policies of Batak women, the relationship between women as necks and men as heads shows balance without demands to be treated fairly.

Globalization is blurring the various boundaries of traditional business, media, and education, restructuring business, encouraging the reinterpretation of trade and investment, health, entertainment, government, work patterns, trade, production patterns, even patterns of relations between people and between individuals [27]. It is concentrated on the challenges for all nations, communities, and individuals around the world. In the era of globalization that revolutionized technology, transportation, and telecommunications have dominant forces so that globalization between regions will make the boundaries increasingly unclear and lead to a global village as predicted. Local culture will fade like the style of dress that is currently considered by the community to consider women's open clothes to be more beautiful than closed clothes. Daily learning of regional language literacy is not suitable for urban areas so it is considered backward compared to foreign influences which are considered more dignified or civilized.

The cultural influence of western feminism, to be honest, has touched all lines of society. Things like this are what encourage women to maintain the existence of local culture from the pattern of globalization scours, all of which will not be appropriate and true to our own culture [28]. Emotionally women sometimes tend to be possessive in addressing a problem so that the role of men is also needed as a counterweight. However, the presence of women is a new force. Women can adapt to the environment in the broadest sense is an important meaning in a man's life well, actively and selectively. In the literacy view of Batak women, the dignity and price of Batak women look more expensive than the price of women who are driven by emancipation. This can be seen from how Batak women must be redeemed with "sinamot" which is a manifestation of the seriousness of men in approaching Batak women.

4 Conclusion

The view that women must be considered and balanced with men in gender studies is indeed necessary. However, without a literate view, this is precisely what if not paid

attention to it will damage the culture and respect for one another. In the culture of the Batak tribe, which is examined from the perspective of the literature, women have a very important role in having a family without having to demand gender equality. The position of women of the Batak tribe who are the “princesses of the king” and must be seriously proposed, as well as their responsibilities as wives and mothers, shows that local feminism views are also good to be studied.

Acknowledgments. The author would like to thank Linguistic Study Program of State University of Jakarta (UNJ), especially the lecturers of Linguistics and Literatures Study who have given the author the opportunity to gain knowledge and support the author to complete this paper.

References

1. Millett, K. (2016). *Sexual politics*. Columbia University Press.
2. Gannon, M. J., & Pillai, R. (2015). *Understanding global cultures: Metaphorical journeys through 34 nations, clusters of nations, continents, and diversity*. Sage Publications.
3. Munroe, M. (2017). *Understanding the purpose and power of men*. Whitaker House.
4. Whyte, M. K. (2015). *The status of women in preindustrial societies*. Princeton University Press.
5. Frangoudes, K., Gerrard, S., & Kleiber, D. (2019). Situated transformations of women and gender relations in small-scale fisheries and communities in a globalized world. *Maritime Studies*, 18(3), 241–248. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40152-019-00159-w>
6. Fox, A., Feng, W., & Asal, V. (2019). What is driving global obesity trends? Globalization or ‘modernization’? *Global Health*, 15(1), 1–16.
7. Verbeke, A., Coeurderoy, R., & Matt, T. (2018). The future of international business research on corporate globalization that never was.... *Journal of International Business Studies*, 49(9), 1101–1112.
8. Jasanoff, S. (2015). Future imperfect: Science, technology, and the imaginations of modernity. *Dreamscapes of modernity sociotechnical imaginaries and the fabrication of power* (pp. 1–33).
9. Pieterse, J. N. (2019). *Globalization and culture: Global mélange*. Rowman & Littlefield.
10. Suarta, I. (2017). Revitalization of oral literature tradition of Balinese society based character values as deradicalism effort. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(3), 8–16.
11. Hidayah, N. (2019). Islamic law and women’s rights in Indonesia: A case of regional sharia legislation. *AHKAM Jurnal Ilmu Syariah*, 19(1).
12. Stahl, K. A. (2016). Local home rule in the time of globalization. *BYU Law Review* (p. 177).
13. Barker, K., & Jurasz, O. (2019). Online misogyny: A challenge for digital feminism? *Journal of International Affairs*, 72(2), 95–114.
14. Gultom, S. (2018). Batak women in Surabaya between globalization and local policies. *Jurnal International Conference on Contemporary Social and Political Affairs (IcoCSPA 2017)* (vol. 7, no. 3). Atlantis Press.
15. Bhandari, P., & Titzmann, F.-M. (2017). Introduction. Family realities in South Asia: Adaptations and resilience. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, 16.
16. Padgett, D. K. (2016). *Qualitative methods in social work research* (vol. 36). Sage Publications.

17. Morrissey, M. B. Q. (2018). Challenging power structures of the academy that marginalize and silence women: A call to resistance and social action—Psychology’s ethical mandate. *Humanistic Psychology*, 46(4), 344.
18. Juster, S. (2018). *Disorderly women*. Cornell University Press.
19. Ware, V. (2015). *Beyond the pale: White women, racism, and history*. Verso Books.
20. Glenn, E. N. (2016). Social constructions of mothering: A thematic overview. *Mothering* (pp. 1–29).
21. Oakley, A. (2016). *Sex, gender and society*. Routledge.
22. Scholte, J. A. (2017). *Globalization: A critical introduction*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
23. Thomas, D. C., & Peterson, M. F. (2016). *Cross-cultural management: Essential concepts*. Sage Publications.
24. Mayer, C.-H., Oosthuizen, R. M., & Surtee, S. (2017). Emotional intelligence in South African women leaders in higher education. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 43(1), 1–12.
25. Zhu, P. (2020). From patricide to patrilineality: Adapting the wandering earth for the big screen. *Arts*, 9(3), 94.
26. Rosenberg, M. (2017). The self-concept: Social product and social force. *Social psychology* (pp. 593–624). Routledge.
27. Roberts, P., & Peters, M. A. (2019). *Neoliberalism, higher education and research*. Brill.
28. Bashkow, I. (2017). *The meaning of whitemen: Race and modernity in the Orokaiva cultural world*. University of Chicago Press.
29. Gheorghiu Bobaru, M., Pasareanu, C. S., Giannakopoulou, D. (2008). Automated assume-guarantee reasoning by abstraction refinement. *Computer Aided Verification* (pp. 135–148).

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

