

## WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING DISCUSSION AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF VILLAGE LAW NO. 6 OF 2014

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### ABSTRACT

*Village Law gives opportunity for marginalized groups to participate, including women. This article tries to analyze the role of women in Mejobo village, Mejobo District, Kudus, Central Java, Indonesia in delivery their aspirations during village development planning discussion. The method used to answer this question was qualitative approach. The results showed that this law does not bring significant changes to women's participation in village development planning discussion. Based on the attendance of female stakeholders, it was very high, but not aligned by activeness during the discussion. These female stakeholders conditions are caused by internal obstacles, namely: 1) the lack of competence in managing the village; 2) the lack of confidence to speak in front of public, and 3) double burden experienced by female stakeholders. While the external obstacles include: 1) Village officials who do not consider the importance of women presence during village development planning discussion; and 2) Patriarchal culture which placed the women in domestic area.*

Key words: Participation of Women, Village Development Planning Discussion, Village Law No. 6 of 2014

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Development planning discussions in various levels are admitted not to make people who follow it to have rich experience and inspiring things. In fact, the existence of development planning discussions in the planning process is an opportunity to apply the principle of bottom-up approach. And if it is associated with the budgeting process, development planning discussion is one of stages where people's needs can be identified and budgeted.

However, the facts show that development planning discussion is just like ritual activity that qualifies a democratic planning. There is not much discussed there because the materials from year to year are same, even in some places, those materials are just copied and pasted. The process is very fast and there is no debate because the participants are those who are in the power circles.

How about the development plan discussion at the village level? The presence of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning villages in Indonesia has given opportunity for more participative villages' development. It is like stated in article 82 which gives rights to village communities to obtain information about the plan and the implementation of village development, monitor the implementation of village development, report the monitoring results and complaints on the village development implementation to the village government and Village Consultative Board or Badan Permusyawaratan Desa (BPD), and participate in the village discussion to respond the report of village development implementation. In addition, the village government is also obliged to inform the planning and implementation of the medium-term village development plan, village government work plan and village budget to the villagers. The opportunities to participate for the villagers are not fully gotten by the women though woman is formally one of society elements whom should be invited in village discussion as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 43 of 2014 section 80.

The presence of women in decision-making board becomes important to discuss because they are expected to bring the women aspirations and solve the problems related to women. It is like slogan "the interests of women are only able to be understood by women" and "women can make the difference" which can be true (Fitriyah, 2004: 2). Women's participation in decision-making boards is also believed by Adriana in Dewi (in Palastren Journal, 2008: 108) that it is essential in order to create a new world that is free of discrimination, including discrimination on women.

Based on the facts above, the researcher is interested to see how the women role in discussion of village development planning after implementation of village law No. 6 of 2014 by conducting case study in Mejobo village, Mejobo District, Kudus, Central Java. This village is interesting to be observed because it is as the central of district with better infrastructure than the other villages. This village is also categorized as the advanced village or Index Desa Maju (IDM).

### II. METHOD

#### A. Page Layout

This research was a field research with qualitative approach. There were two data sources, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained by having interview and observation toward the female BPD members, women figures who were present in development planning discussion and Mejobo village head. While the secondary data were obtained from journals and

books related to this theme. The analysis techniques which were used belong to Miles and Huberman including data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion. While the credibility test used triangulation of sources, techniques, or time.

### **B. Result**

Mejubo village is village center in Mejubo district Kudus Regency with total of population 7724 people. This number includes 3878 men and 3846 women. And the number of household heads are 3299. The majority of people work as cigarette workers and industry workers such as blacksmiths industry which becomes superior business there.

The total of Mejubo village government officials are 16 and all of them are men. And, from 10 members of the Village Consultative Board (BPD), there is only one female. While total of RW head is 4 and RT heads is 35. All of them are male.

Activities related to women's empowerment are embodied in the organization of PKK and in 2015; they became the second winner of administration orderliness category in regency level. While the other women's empowerment activities are conducted by Muslimat NU religious social organizations with Jamiyah tahlil NU in every RT there.

This Jamiyyah tahlil becomes one of media to share the women's problems. Then, those problems will be conveyed by Jamiyah tahlil leader in village development planning discussion. Based on the result of observation conducted by the researcher, the women who become members of jamiyyah tahlil looked so relaxed and actively express their aspirations. However, it was different with the condition in village development planning discussion, women who were present were women figures, PKK chairman, and women members of BPD are not able to freely express their aspirations. Based on the interviews, that is caused by the small number of women who were present because the access of women to attend was restricted. Only those who are included in the drafting team who had the opportunity to attend and follow the process.

Limited access of women actually begins from the beginning stages of budgeting village, which is when the Hamlet Discussion or Musyawarah Dusun (Musdus). The members who participate are just head of RT, RW, dusun and BPD leaders. While, among them, there is no women. Thus, the only way to convey the aspiration of women is only through female figures, chairman of PKK and members of BPD. Although the aspirations of women entrusted to the men who were present in Musdus, but the results are not so encouraging or ignored.

How is the participation of women who become the budget drafting team or women stakeholders who followed village development planning discussion? To identify women's participation in village development planning discussion, the researcher analyzed the level of women's presence and female stakeholders' activeness. From here, it can be known who participate more and more influential in the meeting of village development planning discussion.

Attendance is considered as part of someone quality actualization in carrying out his or her functions. From the recapitulation of meeting attendance, it is known that the presence of women stakeholders is 90%. This high level of attendance was caused by the responsibility because they have got the mandate. It was as stated by Ms. A as follows: "Attending budgeting meetings is a must for me, unless there are syar'i problems. This is mandate. Mandate should not be left behind ". (Result of an interview held on January 25, 2017).

However, women's presence at high budget meetings was not on time. They were often late like what was expressed by Mejubo Village Head: "The women who become members of APBDesa drafting team are diligent. If they are invited to have a meeting, they must come although they are often late", (The result of the interview on January 22, 2017). They often come late because they have to finish the housework and domestic matters first before attending the trial, as expressed by Mrs. C, as follows: "Although coming late, I keep on trying to attend the village development planning discussion because it has become my responsibility. As a housewife, every morning before leaving, I have to prepare all the household needs first, like cooking, washing, and others. If everything is done, I could leave home ". (Result of an interview on January 28, 2017).

After analyzing the attendance, the researcher analyzed the role of women stakeholders at village development planning discussion. After having data, the researcher knows that only some women stakeholders who talk and argue in the meeting. Based on the data, the women who are active are those whose strong religious base with the largest Islamic organizations in Mejubo. They have real and structured Jama'ah, and regularly hold activities such as lectures, yasinan and tahlilan. Through this forum, women stakeholders often get feedback and aspirations and through that jamiyah, the women stakeholders are always involved in the debate and discussions about women's problems.

Besides being active in meetings to discuss the budget, the women stakeholders also have a female perspective in any proposal even in fighting PKK, they were very insistent to realize the expectation. It is mentioned in the interview with woman B: "Every budget discussion, I always consider whether the budget items give the benefit to women or not. I'm here because of women so whatever we do is for women needs. I am also a stickler to be able to pass a budget for PKK because PKK activities really give the benefits to women/mothers and families ". (Result of interview on January 28, 2017).

In contrast to those women stakeholders that are active in the discussion meetings, some other women stakeholders are less active, even some never express their opinions during meetings in village development planning discussion (Interview with Mejubo Village Head on January 22, 2017). There are several reasons why most of the women stakeholders are silent. One of the reasons is the lack of confidence to express the opinion or idea (Interview with Mrs. B on January 28, 2017).

Thus, it can be said that the participation of women in Mejobo village development planning discussions can be seen from the high attendance aspect. Nevertheless, they are often late. If it is viewed from the activeness in the meeting, only some women who are active. While some others are just silent and passive. It is caused by the lack of confidence to deliver opinions or idea.

However, from the interviews, it can be known that one of the strategies of women stakeholders to pass their proposal is to persevere and build cohesiveness among them although it is not easy. In addition to the insistent manner and compactness built among women stakeholders, there is one more strategy to be taken, namely lobbying other party (men or fathers) to support the proposed agenda. This strategy is done because their number is smaller than men. According to Mrs. C, without support from the gentlemen whose dominant numbers in their team, the proposal of women will not be realized (Result of an interview on January 25, 2017).

Based on the interviews with all women stakeholders, the researcher got the same data. That is the benefit gotten by the women stakeholders for their involvement in village development planning discussion. And, they feel that their involvement is helpful enough. These benefits include: 1) They can propose the women needs and aspirations in APBDesa design; 2) They have a chance to fight for the women needs and aspirations to have established and set agenda, 3) They have the opportunity to provide an alternative or solution for problems discussed; and 4) They can set the policies that accommodate the women interests and needs although it is not optimal yet. The benefits received by the women is not maximal yet because many budgets proposed by the women do not become a statute yet. Special budget for women or related to women is only for the items of PKK activities.

Thus, strategically, it can be said that the benefits received by women from village development planning discussion process can be categorized 'quite'. Nevertheless, when viewed practically on the size of the budget that are intended for women who qualify, it can be said that it is less than the maximum or still far from the expectations. This is caused by some obstacles. First obstacle is the low representation of women in a team. Second is the lack of female stakeholders' competence. And, the last is the role conflict experienced by some women stakeholders.

## II. DISCUSSION

In this discussion part, the researcher links the findings obtained with the theory and the rules or policies that underpin this study. Opportunities for women to engage in village development planning discussion can be considered limited if it is compared with the opportunity given to men. Finally, the representation of women is not balanced. There are only three people among 50 people who were invited. This number does not reach the minimum limit for women in the public sector; that is 30% as mandated by the circular of Minister of Home Affairs and Head of the Planning Board and the National Empowerment 2005 instructing the representation of women's groups in the process of planning and development (Subiyantoro, JP, 2006: 76). Whereas, by having more women in decision-making boards, there will be expectation of having more women's interests or needs which are accommodated (Ratnawati, JSP: 2004). Moreover, the lack of representation is not correlated with the level of attendance in village development planning discussion. Related to the presence of women stakeholders, the number is so high, although they are often late. This fact shows that although women are already active in the public world, they still cannot leave their domestic role, like cooking, caring for children and cleaning the house. It is like what Daly in Tong (2003: 68) stated: "Women may not release their feminine nature ". Especially for women of Mejobo village, it is very difficult to let go of their domestic role.

From the above statement, it is also illustrated clearly that women stakeholders still realize that the domestic role is a responsibility that cannot be shared with others. Finally, a woman must struggle to balance family life with work demands. Sometimes the difficulties to balance the two needs have forced women to choose between two options; do not continue their gait outside or let a family affair mess.

Associated with role of some women stakeholders in discussion forums which is not maximized, the result also showed that by having the same position, they may not have the same role. It is like what is claimed by Kodiran that role expectation associated with status does not make everyone in the same status would act in the same way (Koentjoroningrat, 1990: 12) because there are several factors that influence it. Some of them are the level of education, organizational background, experience, and the intensity of communication in other organizations. As said by Thoha (2003: 70), there are several factors that influence the attitudes and behavior of people in carrying out its role. Among them are the background of the organization owned, level of education, experience, and communication which is built.

The lack of representation and gait in the meeting is correlated with the results of village development planning discussion. That is the budget for women that becomes a statute is far from expectations. So we can say that the position of women is in a strategic position, but they have not been able to control APBDesa provisions so the benefit received was not maximized.

The benefits can be divided into two, namely the strategic and practical benefits. Strategically, it can be said that the presence of women in village development planning discussion gain considerable strategic benefits so the women can aspire their needs and they can be heard. However, practically, its benefit is still far from expectations. It can be seen from the budget numbers of the village that can be enjoyed by women is still very minimal.

The cause of the lack of provisions on the proposals is the obstacles faced by the women. If those are mapped, there are two major obstacles faced by women stakeholders in village development planning discussion, namely the internal obstacle and external obstacles. More details can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE I

Detail of Internal Obstacles	Note
Low Competence	Women feel that they can not follow the process of village development planning discussion because of the limitation of knowledge and skill about managing village
The Lack of Confidence	Women feel that they do not believe
Double Burden	Double burden makes the women have role conflict

Source: Interview result with women stakeholders

From the women stakeholders' background, they have limited experience. They are not accustomed to get involved in public scope because so far, they are struggling in the domestic sphere. During this time, public affairs are seen as a male activity. So that when they are in the public domain, shyness, fear, and lack of confidence are carried. Musdah Mulia (2005: 3) said that the nature of self-reliance and courage has never been considered ideal in the woman. Therefore, people always look at women who are independent, brave to express the idea and aggressive as unacceptable or undesirable people.

Stereotypes of women also do not recognize power. Femininity does not load the hardness, strength, or firmness which is as a core element of power. Classic stereotypes about women and femininity do not include the notion of power, and although the conditions have changed, these stereotypes are so difficult to be lost.

The classic image of the femininity is identical with submission, obedience, loyalty, indulgence, softness, and indecisiveness (Musdah Mulia, 2005: 3). Power as the most important element in the leadership is never characterized by feminine nature. The power is identical with masculinity, obstinacy and ability to influence others. Thus, women do not think of power as the men define it in themselves.

Furthermore, Thoha (2003: 770) says that there are several factors that influence the attitudes and behavior of people in carrying out its role, including the experience of organizations background that influence attitudes and behavior.

Office history or experience of a person's activity in various organizations to which he belongs is a factor that determines whether a person is active in a process or not. It is also looked at village development planning discussion. Women stakeholders who have strong organizational background and have member base like NU's Women Organization. If in that organization, they are so active, they are usually active too in following the process of village development planning discussion. Conversely, those who do not have strong organizational experience are mostly silent during the meetings to discuss the budget.

In addition to the internal barriers or derived from self-stakeholders' woman, other factors that become obstacles for woman stakeholders in village development planning discussion are factors that come from outside the woman stakeholders which are also very influential. That factor is village officials have not considered that the presence of women in village development planning discussion is important and they are confused to involve the women. Whereas the village Law in Article 26 and 63 establishes the principle of participation, equality and empowerment. That law is also supported by the Article 58 paragraph 1 which states that the composition of BPD should consider the gender aspect.

The obstacles above are caused by the system of values and patriarchal culture that treats men are more valuable than women. Women are always considered as *konco wingking*. Collins in Megawangi (1999: 86) states that the order of mankind life which is dominated by men has become long history. According to Simone de Beauvoir (2003: ix), the women are placed as the second human being under the men superiority.

As a consequence of the above-mentioned position, there is a presumption that the existence of women in the public is not important. Finally, women are not eager to engage in affairs outside its territory, including in Musrenbangdes. If they are active in the public world, women are hard to let go of their domestic role, so that women can rarely actively involved in public.

Ida Ruwaida Noor (2000: 20) states that the low status and position of women are caused by some factors. The first is cultural factors. It is as a result of their social practices that are constituted by mental attitude (stereotype) that tends to marginalize women. The example is the assumption that the position of men is higher than women. This attitude is reinforced by a system of norms and values of society whether its sources is religion, customs or culture. That condition is also occurred in Temulus village, even religious leaders or kyai also contribute to the above construction. This is like what is stated by Musdah Mulia (2005: 3) that most members of the community are dependent on what is being said by kyai. The second is structural factors which show the weakness of the women status and position is formally endorsed through various policies (state), whether it is general or specific targeted to women.

### III. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

#### A. Conclusion

After the implementation of village Law No. 6 of 2014, in fact, it does not bring significant changes to women's participation in village development planning discussion. The attendance of female stakeholders is very high, but their activeness in the meeting was still low. Only some women stakeholders who were active, while some others were just silent and passive. This is caused by internal obstacles: the lack of competence of women in managing village, the lack the confidence to speak in public, and the double burden experienced by female stakeholders. While the external obstacles include village officials who have not considered that the presence of women in village development planning discussion is important and they are confused to involve the women.

#### B. Suggestion

Village development planning discussion or other public aspirations media should give equal chance to both men and women in the village so that their aspirations and needs can be absorbed more and the gap that has been happening can be resolved.

Related to the obstacles faced by women stakeholders during village development planning discussion, they should improve their capacity (capacity building) by following some training related to village governance. In addition, stakeholders should also build a network for women. By building a network, the women stakeholders will be able to get the experience and information from various parties. Related to the role conflict experienced by women, it is as a result of double role of women, and then women should be able to share work and domestic duties with other family members. Then, they should raise awareness to have role in decision-making boards as a medium to change and improve the quality of women life.

Government officials and BPD has gender mainstreaming and understanding of the importance of involving women in public or village decision-making.

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