



FEMALE WORKERS IN BANJAR SOCIETY: DYNAMICS, CHALLENGES, AND ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS IN SOUTHERN KALIMANTAN

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Abstract

This study explores the resilience of female workers in Banjar society in South Kalimantan, particularly in three key regions: Banjarmasin, Martapura, and Bati-bati. In Banjar society, working women play a crucial role in supporting both family and community economies. This study highlights the various challenges and opportunities faced by female workers, including online motorcycle taxi drivers (ojol), traditional food vendors, and agricultural laborers. Using a qualitative approach, the study finds that the primary motivation for Banjar women to work is to support their families economically, avoid financial dependency, and maintain social dignity. Despite facing numerous challenges such as harsh working conditions and social stigma, Banjar women persist with resilience and family support. The findings indicate that women's work in Banjar society is not merely an economic activity but also a vital aspect of social and cultural resilience.

Keywords: female worker resilience, Banjar society, family economy, gender, South Kalimantan

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas ketahanan pekerja perempuan dalam masyarakat Banjar di Kalimantan Selatan, khususnya di tiga wilayah utama: Banjarmasin, Martapura, dan Bati-bati. Dalam masyarakat Banjar, perempuan yang bekerja memainkan peran penting dalam menopang ekonomi keluarga dan komunitas. Studi ini menyoroti berbagai tantangan dan peluang yang dihadapi oleh pekerja perempuan, termasuk ojol (ojek online), pedagang makanan tradisional, dan pekerja pertanian. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa motivasi utama perempuan Banjar dalam bekerja adalah untuk mendukung perekonomian keluarga, menghindari ketergantungan finansial, dan menjaga martabat sosial. Meskipun menghadapi berbagai tantangan, seperti kondisi kerja yang sulit dan stigma sosial, pekerja perempuan di Banjar tetap bertahan dengan semangat dan dukungan keluarga. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kerja perempuan dalam masyarakat Banjar bukan hanya sebagai aktivitas ekonomi, tetapi juga sebagai bagian dari ketahanan sosial dan budaya.

Kata Kunci: ketahanan pekerja perempuan, masyarakat Banjar, ekonomi keluarga, gender, Kalimantan Selatan

INTRODUCTION

Allah swt has universally positioned men to have several advantages over women, as Allah swt says in the Quran, Surah An-Nisa, verse 34:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَأَلْصَلِحَتْ فَبِتُّ حَفِظْتُ لِلْغَيْبِ
بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَأَضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْتَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

"The men are the leaders of the women, because Allah has preferred some of them (men) over others (women), and because they (men) have spent some of their wealth. Therefore, the women who are righteous are those who obey Allah and keep themselves when their husbands are absent, because Allah has taken care of them. If you fear that they may be unfaithful, then counsel them, separate them from their beds, and beat them; then if they obey you, then do not seek ways to distress them. Indeed, Allah is Most High, Most Great."

Men have an obligation to provide for their wives and children, which requires them to strive and work to fulfill their household needs.

In addition, the Prophet has also encouraged his people to be active in trying to find halal sustenance so that it is blessed and useful, both for the benefit of life in the world and in the hereafter. The Prophet's advice is directed at men who are the backbone of the family.

Among the Prophet's recommendations are found in many of his sayings, as follows

- Encouragement to do business honestly and transparently

حدثنا أحمد بن سنان، حدثنا كثير بن هشام، حدثنا كلثوم بن جوشن القشيري، عن أيوب، نافع ابن عمر، قال: قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: "التاجر الأمين الصدوق المسلم، مع الشهداء يوم القيامة"

Abmad bin Sinan narrated to us, Kastir bin Hisham narrated to us, Kultsum bin Jusyan Al-Qusyairi narrated to us, from Ayyub, from Nafi' from Ibn Umar, he said: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: "An honest and trustworthy Muslim trader will be gathered with the martyrs on the Day of Resurrection." (HR. Ibn Majah, No. 2139)

- The advice to do business by relying on one's own efforts (independent).

حدثنا أبو بكر قال: حدثنا أبو معاوية، عن وائل بن داود، عن سعيد بن عمير، قال: سئل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: أي الكسب أطيب؟ قال: "عمل الرجل بيده، وكل بيع مبرور"

Abu Bakr narrated to us, he said: Abu Muawiyah narrated to us, from Wail bin Daud, from Said bin Umair, he said: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) was asked "O Messenger of Allah, what is the best livelihood?" The Messenger of Allah (SAW) replied: "The work of a man with his own hands and every sale that is mabrur (blessed)". (HR. Ibn Abi Syaibah, No. 23083)

- Encouragement to go into business to provide for oneself and one's family

حدثنا هشام بن عمار قال: حدثنا إسماعيل بن عياش، عن بحير بن سعد، عن خالد بن معدان، عن المقدم بن معديكرب الزبيدي، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: "ما كسب الرجل كسبا أطيب من عمل يده، وما أنفق الرجل على نفسه وأهله ووولده وخادمه، فهو صدقة".

Hisbam bin Ammar narrated to us, he said: Ismail bin Ayyas narrated to us, from Bubair bin Sa'd, from Khalid bin Ma'dan, from Miqdam bin Madikariba Az-Zubaidi, from the Messenger of Allah SAW, saying: "There is nothing better than a man's effort except the work of his own hands. And whatever a man spends on himself, his wife, children and servants is sadaqah. (Ibn Majah, No. 2138)

Taking into account the explanation of the verse and hadith, it can be understood that basically working to earn a living is a noble task of a man that is highly recommended in Islam. However, on the other hand, it turns out that it is not only men who are actively trying to make a living, but there are also women workers who play an active role in supporting the family economy.

Noting the phenomenon that exists in Banjar society, there are not a few female workers who participate in coloring the business scene in various fields of community life. The city of Banjarmasin, which is the capital of South Kalimantan, has seen many women working to earn a living, and uniquely with the advancement of technology now giving rise to new internet-based business opportunities, such as online gojek, the women are also seen actively taking part, although not as much as the men.

In Martapura, which is famous for its "*kelelepon*" snacks, women are also seen actively selling them on the streets. It's a high-risk job, as it involves being out in the open amidst the hustle and bustle of traffic.

Likewise in Bati-bati, many women can be seen cultivating rice, tapping rubber and picking oil palms. All of these business activities are demanding and challenging work for women.

Based on this background, the author intends explore more deeply of women workers in Banjar society. Further and in-depth research is needed to obtain information and confirmation so that at the applicative level it can be understood wisely in addressing the issue of women workers who actively participate in advancing the economy of the family and the community.

A. LABOR IN SOUTHERN KALIMANTAN

The location of this research was carried out in South Kalimantan. In order to focus the research, the research area was limited to three regions, namely three regions that are considered to have a distinctive typology by considering the uniqueness of each region, namely: Banjarmasin, Martapura (Banjar Regency) and Bati-bati (Tanah Laut Regency). The uniqueness referred to here is by looking at the female workers engaged in various different professions. Banjarmasin with its

female online motorcycle taxis. Martapura with its female cake (kelepon) sellers along the main road. In the Bati-bati region, there are women farmers (rice, palm oil, rubber).

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics of South Kalimantan Province, the total population based on the labor force for the Banjarmasin City area is 346,184. Meanwhile, for the Banjar Regency area it is 309,609. Meanwhile, the population of Tanah Laut Regency is 171,565. From this data, it can be seen that Banjarmasin City occupies the first position, followed by Banjar Regency and Tanah Laut Regency.¹ This distribution is a condition that is recorded and evident in daily activities, among the number of workers are women.

The explanation from BPS above is that there are workers who have a job but are temporarily not working, namely the condition of someone who has a job but during the past week temporarily did not work for various reasons, such as: illness, leave, waiting for harvest, strike and so on. Examples are as follows:

- Permanent workers, government/private employees who are not working due to leave, illness, strike, absenteeism, damage to company machinery/equipment, etc.
- Farmers who cultivate agricultural land and are not working due to illness or waiting for the next job (waiting for the harvest or rainy season to cultivate rice fields).
- Professional workers (having certain / special skills) who are not working due to illness, waiting for the next job / order and so on. Such as puppeteers, barbers, masseurs, shamans, commercial singers and so on.

B. CONDITION OF WOMEN WORKERS IN BANJARMASIN

In 2018, the sex ratio in Banjarmasin City was 100.56. This illustrates that the male population is still larger than the female population, although the difference tends to be small. Based on the subdistricts, almost 46.79% of the population of Banjarmasin City resides in South Banjarmasin and North Banjarmasin Subdistricts, with the highest population density in Central Banjarmasin Subdistrict, reaching 14,358 people/km². The population of Banjarmasin City is dominated by young people, with the 0-4 age group accounting for 9.24 percent of the total population. When viewed from the 0-29 age group, the population of Banjarmasin City in that age group totals 364,348 or more than half of the total population of Banjarmasin City (51.98 percent).²

¹ <https://kalsel.bps.go.id/subject/6/tenaga-kerja.html#subjekViewTab5>. Accessed March 5, 2020.

² BPS Banjarmasin City, *Banjarmasin City in Figures 2019*, (Banjarmasin: BPS Banjarmasin City, 2019), p. 89.

The dependency ratio is one of the most important demographic indicators. The higher the dependency ratio percentage, the higher the burden that must be borne by the productive population to support the unproductive and unproductive population.

The number of job seekers registered at the Social and Manpower Office of Banjarmasin City in 2018 reached 6,156 with the percentage of male job seekers at 48.67 percent and female at 51.33 percent. The number of job seekers with a high school education is the highest with 3,004 or 48.80 percent of all registered job seekers.³ This indicates that women's interest in working is high compared to men in terms of numbers.

At first glance, the majority of workers in Banjarmasin City are men, be it the Civil Service or the private sector. Of course, these jobs vary, ranging from *indoor* to *outdoor* jobs. Some sell merchandise, while others sell services and skills.

The services of motorcycle taxi drivers used to be very necessary even today. But uniquely, in the past, the name ojek drivers were traditional, had a place to hang out and occasionally walked to look for passengers. The current condition is called ojol (online motorcycle taxi), which is professionally organized and relies on the internet network for ordering with various features and variety of services.

Uniquely, previously there were no female motorcycle taxis in Banjarmasin City, but with the emergence of technology now, there are female ojol (online motorcycle taxis) that have begun to appear in the middle of the highway. This condition is an interesting phenomenon, a profession that has only been cultivated by men has begun to be played by women.

Gojek (previously written GO-JEK) is an Indonesian technology company that provides transportation services through motorcycle taxis. The company was founded in 2010 in Jakarta by Nadiem Makarim. Currently, Gojek is available in 50 cities in Indonesia. As of June 2016, the Gojek application has been downloaded almost 10 million times on Google Play on the Android operating system, and is available on the App Store. Gojek also has a digital payment service called Gopay. In addition to Indonesia, Gojek services are now available in Thailand, Vietnam and Singapore.⁴

Various conditions of ojol since its establishment in 2010 until now have experienced various interesting dynamics, among the news that is less pleasant to hear is the problem of layoffs caused by the epidemic that has hit Indonesia in general.

³ *Ibid*, p. 70

⁴ <https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gojek>, Accessed on March 7, 2020

According to Liputan6.com, President of the Confederation of Indonesian Trade Unions (KSPI) Said Iqbal said that it violates the Labor Law. The laid-off workers are not partners, but workers in the company. "Layoffs carried out by companies must comply with Law Number 13 Year 2003, especially those related to articles regarding layoffs. Article 151 Paragraph (1) states, employers, workers, and the government, with all efforts must try to prevent termination of employment," he said in his written statement, Friday (6/26/2020). According to him, management only conducts socialization and notification. Where Gojek conducts layoffs, due to the closure of the GoLife and GoFood Festival services.

In addition, Gojek is also considered not to negotiate with employees and ask permission from the industrial relations dispute settlement institution. Whereas layoffs carried out without permission from the industrial relations settlement institution violate the rule of law. Furthermore, Article 156 of Law No. 13 of 2003 stipulates that if layoffs cannot be avoided, employers are obliged to pay severance pay, long service pay, and compensation. The value is 15 percent of the severance pay and long service award.⁵ This is a phenomenon that occurs in the midst of an epidemic that has hit Indonesia.

The condition of ojol (online motorcycle taxi) in Banjarmasin is still better than some of the less pleasant news that is broadcast in various media. From the results of researcher interviews with female ojol in Banjarmasin City, they are very proud of the profession they live in despite the various unique and memorable experiences, sometimes joy and sometimes sorrow that are felt.

Among the stories of joy they tell is when customers who use their services give more tips to them, the payment that should be returned the rest is given sincerely by the customer. There are also those who order food which they call "*go food*" and then some of it is given to the female ojol who delivers the food order. There was another who asked to be delivered to Banjarbaru and was given more money reaching Rp. 500,000,-.

Aside from the joys, there are also stories of sorrow. Memei said that once he got lost because he misread the address, so he had to turn around many times to get to the destination, he said there was no compensation for gasoline costs and loss of time experienced. But that is the risk that must be accepted because of one's own mistakes. There have also been hit and run and did not want to compensate. There is also being cheated, rained on, there is temptation from naughty men and so on.

⁵<https://www.liputan6.com/bisnis/read/4289562/kspi-sebut-phk-karyawan-gojek-langgar-undang-undang-ini-penjasannya>. Accessed June 26, 2020

According to them, they get a lot of contacts, money, and a sense of pride because they can make their own money, without being dependent on others. In addition, they also receive support from their families, including their children.

C. CONDITION OF WOMEN WORKERS IN BATI-BATI

For the plantation sub-sector, the oil palm commodity is the flagship with a total production in 2018 of 2,326 tons planted on 932 hectares of land. Followed by the rubber commodity which produced 2,300 tons on a planting area of 960 hectares. In the livestock sub-sector, the largest poultry population came from broiler chickens with a total population of 10,856,521 heads. As for large livestock, the largest population came from beef cattle with a total population of 2,091 heads.⁶

The large amount of land with a sparse density makes it possible for the Bati-bati region to utilize the land for a variety of commodities, including oil palm, rubber, rice fields and also for chicken, goat and cattle farming.

Farmers who work in the fields are not only done by men, but also assisted by women. Starting from plowing the fields, *meneradak* (making seeds), planting these seeds, applying fertilizer, spraying pests and diseases to *mengatam* (harvesting). All these activities can not only be done by men, but the women can also do it.

There are many stories of joy and sorrow in cultivating rice. Interviews with female respondents in Bati-bati revealed that among the sad stories they experienced were encounters with creeping animals, such as snakes, pacat (leeches), millipedes, rats, birds and so on.

Pests are also an obstacle faced by farmers when in the process of planting rice. Pests of rats and birds are often found by farmers in their rice fields. To anticipate the rat pests, they try to farm together so if there are rats too, then their term "*tebag*" ratus because of the many rice fields that plant rice. Meanwhile, to repel birds, they usually utilize "orang-orangan" so that burning does not dare to approach.

This is also the case with women planters who participate in planting and harvesting oil palms. From the results of interviews with female respondents, they experienced various stories of sorrow, such as having to sunbathe and sometimes even rain to pick the fruit, sometimes encountering tadung snakes. There have even been cases where the fruit was picked but the buyer

⁶ BPS Tanah Laut Regency, *Kecamatan Bati-bati in Figures 2019*, (BPS Tanah Laut: CV. Karya Bintang Musim, 2019), p. 55. 55.

was late to pick it up due to transportation problems, so the palm fruit that had been picked could no longer be used.

For *menurih gatah*, among the sad stories are the many mosquitoes, the unpleasant smell (odor of *gatah*) but according to them the smell of *gatah* = the smell of money so they are eager to continue doing the activity of *menurih*.

The happy story is when they sell their products and get money from their hard work. Whatever results they get will be accepted with joy and hope to get blessings from the results of their efforts.

D. FEMALE CULINARY VENDORS IN MARTAPURA

For Martapura residents, especially South Kalimantan residents, of course, they are familiar with this *bukhari tail kelepon* cake, besides being soft and delicious, if you eat this cake, it will break and release brown sugar,

This snack is easily found at the intersection of Martapura City or the red light to the dome of the late Syech Muhammad Zaini Bin Abdul Ghoni, better known as the late Guru Sekumpul. Vendors peddle the *kelepon* cake to motorcyclists and cars, both from Martapura and Banjarmasin City.

This Martapura specialty can also be found at Syamsudinnoer Airport Banjarbaru if you go to South Kalimantan it is not complete if you don't try this tailed *kelepon* cake because the price of one box is very cheap, if it is still morning or afternoon for Rp 5,000 if the day is approaching the afternoon the trader also sells per box up to Rp 2,000 because the *kelepon* sold by the traders must run out, considering the cake material is made of sticky rice of course it cannot last until late at night because it can be stale.

From observations at the research location, many female sellers were found selling the *kelepon* cake. Various brand names that are the identity of the *kelepon* production, including the famous *Bukhari*.

Various stories of sorrow experienced by the female *kelepon* sellers include: having to bask in the scorching heat of the sun during the dry season, sometimes having to be willing to be showered with rain during the rainy season, and sometimes even having to experience losses due to sales that are quickly stale (expired). No matter what profession they live in if accepted happily, full of gratitude, it will bring blessings and sufficiency even though according to some people the income they get is "small" but full of blessings.

E. CLOSING

The concept of "work" for women as breadwinners in the perception of *Urang Banjar* in Banjarmasin, Martapura and Bati-bati is an effort to help their husbands, in addition to being the backbone of the family (for *single parents*). This effort as a breadwinner is considered a very noble act of worship in religious terms.

The motivation of Banjar women workers who are willing to become workers (breadwinners) is driven by a high sense of responsibility based on economic factors so that they do not become beggars and a burden on others. Some are divorced from their husbands and become *single parents* in raising their children so that they have the *power to survive* in life.

The community's attitude towards working women is very appreciative, especially when they understand how much struggle they face with the consequences of their work. Working as an *ojol* (online motorcycle taxi), as a farmer and as a culinary seller on the streets are professions with high risks. But all of that is lived steadfastly, patiently and gratefully, so that the community can accept their presence as mujahidah breadwinners.

The gender sensitivity that has developed among the Banjar community regarding female workers is not really an issue because for *Urang Banjar*, working to earn a living is not considered taboo as long as the work is halal and does not violate the nature of being a woman.

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