

Women and Family Welfare in Indonesia: A Critique of the Family Model “Man as the Breadwinner”

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Abstract

The emergence of the welfare state form in the West positions women in the traditional role in the domestic sphere. In the context of Indonesia, the critique presented by the feminist in the West to the concept of state and family welfare cannot directly be used to analyze how the country put the women in the family welfare policies. By using some concepts of the state welfare, this paper will explain the bias in formulating the position of women in social policy in the field of family welfare in Indonesia. Social policy for women within the family unit is still discriminatory against women. This is a consequence of the model family with a male breadwinner. The guarantee of women's and children's rights is determined by the legitimacy and their relationship with the husband as head of the family. For poor women the economy and domestic job work is not an option but a requirement. Woman as the head of household is a unique picture of the viability of women from the poverty of the families. These symptoms should be seen as the practice criticizing the assumption of the family model with a male breadwinner. These examples may be early clues to search defamilization concept in Indonesia.

Keywords: Women, Family Welfare, Family Model, Breadwinner.

Introduction

A report of the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komisi Nasional Perempuan—shortly abbreviated as Komnas Perempuan) published in 2008 noted that 60% of household expenditure structure managers are women. Thus women are responsible not only for the role of caregiving, but also the household economics (family). Various methods are undertaken by women to maintain family welfare, ranging from marriage, being a mistress, settling debt, spirituality, and becoming migrant workers (Komnas Perempuan, 2008). Furthermore, women hold more decision-making power with national strategic issues such as household energy conversion from kerosene to gas (LPG). In 2010, the National Commission for Women noted that in the kerosene conversion program, the State Ministry for Women's Empowerment was defined to organize the socialization program. This means that women will be the major target of the socialization of household fuel conversion at the national level.

The previous examples confirm that the position of women in the management of the family is very important as well as vulnerable. This paper specifically discusses the vulnerability to economic pressures that threatens family welfare. This description tries to see how far the position of women has been considered by the government as an important factor for the welfare of the family. This paper also tries to analyze whether the position of women in the state policy in the field of family welfare has put women in an unfair position. The main criticism of feminism in relation to welfare state is due to biased thinking and policies of European countries after World War II to explain the position of women in the political economic structures that encourage the emergence of the welfare state in that period. However, due to the unique economic, social and cultural in Indonesia, the critique presented by the feminist of the West to the concept of the state and the family welfare cannot be directly applied to analyze how the country puts women in the family welfare policy in Indonesia.

Feminist Criticism

The typical mindset of welfare states in Europe after World War II is a family with a male breadwinner as a target of social security, while the women as wives are dependent to the husband (Meulders

& O'Dorchai, 2007). This outdated analysis of welfare state does not account for gender analysis (gender neutral). Esping Andersen (1990) was criticized for his model of the welfare state typology which only emphasizes aspects of de-commodification, i.e. the extent to which countries provide social security to individuals outside of their participation in the labor market (Meulders & O'Dorchai, 2007). The model and analysis developed by Andersen tend to place women in the role of parenting in the household (care giver). Sainsbury criticized the idea of a welfare state with a male breadwinner model of this kind (Sainsbury, 1996). With this kind of model, women are seen as objects of social policy beneficiary (recipient). Furthermore, social policy tends to divide the sexual type of work (gender-based work) between the work of women in the household who cannot be remunerated and work in the market mechanism, where the social security gained from working on household tends to be lower.

The criticism shows social policy in welfare states still use the gender division of labor, in which the woman's role as caregiver in the home and the man is the breadwinner for the family. It then makes Andersen noticed that the role of the welfare state should not only be measured by the extent to which it is able to protect or replace aspects of individual commodities (de-commodification), but furthermore also measure how far the state can provide a space for women (and other individuals) to escape from their domestic roles in the family through a concept called de-familization (Andersen, 1999). Knijn and Kremer further argue that the state must recognize the right of citizens for care as the state protects the right of citizens such as the right to work, the right to get social security and other rights in general (Meulders & O'Dorchai, 2007). In further developments, the welfare state in the West began to adopt aspects of gender in social policy schemes, ranging from minimal recognition such as allowances for children and allowances for the mother during child care, to a form of dual parental (Ferranini, 2006). The traditional family model of men (husbands) as the main breadwinner still survives, but has changed over time, a change driven by the fact that more and more women are entering the work force.

Limited Role of the State

What about the position of women in family policy in Indonesia? To clarify the position of women in the family welfare policy in Indonesia, there are some contexts that should be noted. First, in Indonesia, although the country has policies in areas related to social welfare, its scope is limited to civil servants, the military, the police, as well as formal workers (Ramesh and Asher, 2000). Second, the difficult economic conditions make women undergo both economic and domestic roles. The development and criticisms of the welfare state in Europe are different from post-colonial developing countries such as Indonesia. In developing countries the individual's welfare cannot rely on the services of state and labor markets, according to Andersen (1990). Gough and Wood (2004) explain that in such countries the state is not able to work perfectly while market mechanisms are only partially available (the capitalist economy mixed with the traditional economics). As a result, the public, particularly those with a weak economy, have to rely on informal social relations in the community to obtain welfare benefits (Gough & Wood, 2004). Gough and Wood named countries with such characteristics in terms of Informal Security Regime.

Social policy in developing countries is generally limited and residual – limited in the sense of the social policy of inadequate numbers (incremental) and residual in the sense that social assistance aims primarily for the poorest communities (Midgley, 1982). In the Informal Protection Regime (IPR) state institutions provide social security to a limited extent. Before Act No. 40 of 2004 on National Social Security System (*Sistem Jaminan Sosial Nasional-SJSN*) was passed, social security in Indonesia was very limited for people who had formal jobs both in the government and private sectors. The social security was typically in the form of social security of employment (occupational schemes) managed by TASPEN for civil servants, ASABRI for the military, and JAMSOSTEK or other private insurance for workers from the private sector. Social security schemes provided by the state are minimal in terms of both nominal and population covered by the social security. Although it has not yet been judged successfully as SJSN program which is not already running, efforts to develop SJSN will expand the coverage of state social security services. Formal models of social security in Indonesia above were generally modeled on the "male

breadwinner" stereotype.

Those living in poverty, which represents a large part of the population, are not included in the formal social policies of this kind. Beyond the social security scheme, the state provides social assistance for the poor. For example, cash transfer assistance (*Bantuan Langsung Tunai*-BLT) or conditional cash transfer (means tested based). The total of social assistance is limited in scope and not sustainable. This kind of help is developed by Indonesian government to compensate for fuel price increases occurred in 2005. The problem of male breadwinner model in Indonesia has different challenges to feminist analysis of the welfare states in Europe. Obviously, with this model, women are regarded as the receiver of a social policy. For example, article 20 paragraph (2) Act of SJSN states that a family member is defined as: ... *legitimate wife/husband, biological children, step children of are legitimate marriage, legitimate and adopted children, as many as 5 (five) people.*

The Act of SJSN requires a good and clear administration of marriage. Act of marriage No. 1 of 1974 has not been able to guarantee the rights of the wife and the children born from a legitimate marriage (see: *Pendapat Hukum Komnas Perempuan dalam Pengujian Undang-Undang No. 1 Tahun 1974 tentang Perkawinan*, 2007). It is surely more difficult for SJSN to protect the wife and children in polygamous marital relationships or underhand marriage. Meanwhile, the marriage can be used by women to get informal social security both economically and culturally that considered unmarried woman as a failed social product. Social security system with the male breadwinner model requires that a strict governance of administration and law in governing the relationship of rights and obligations of each party in it, whether husband, wife, and even relationships outside of marriage (cohabitation). For the context of Indonesia, the male breadwinner model will not be able to provide assurance of protection for the family if the existing policy including acts such as marriage act does not provide legal guarantees and equity for women and children.

Table 1: Some Forms of Social Security in Indonesia (excluding SJSN scheme):

Forms of Social Security Employment Insurance (including pension)	Social Security Provider		
	State Social Security	Private Social Security	Informal Social Security
	Employment Insurance managed by state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that are paid by the companies, workers, and state subsidies. For examples: TASPEN, ASABRI, JAMSOSTEK, ASKES.	Employment Insurance run by private (paid by companies and workers). For example: insurance provided by private companies with the payment of premiums by the company and the workers.	x
Social Assistance	Ideal Family Program Women as beneficiaries.	x	Helping families experiencing distress or misfortune, <i>zakat, infaq</i> , charity, donations (donations), feast gift.
	Cash transfer assistance (BLT)	x	

Compiled from various sources.

Woman as Head of Family

Women Empowerment as Head of Family (*Pemberdayaan Perempuan sebagai Kepala Keluarga-PEKKA*) noted that many households are actually headed by women, and in general this group comes from the poor. According Susenas Indonesia in 2007, the number of households headed by women reached 13.60% or about 6 million households in Indonesia (http://www.pekka.or.id/8/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=27&lang=in). Women as heads of household who are described by PEKKA includes women who are left/

divorced, left/the husband died, unmarried, married but the husband cannot perform his duty as head of household, and married but the husband was gone for over a year. Despite poor economic conditions, the presence of women as heads of household shows that women are able to become leader of the family to look after the welfare and to do upbringing in the family. The status of the woman as the head of the family has not yet received official recognition and protection of the government. But strangely the government is increasingly taking into account the role of women in the management of the household. So some social policy also begins to consider women as important actors for the implementation of the policy.

Table 2: Assistance Scenario of PKH (Ideal Family Program):

Assistance Scenario	Assistance per RTSM/ year
Fixed assistance	Rp. 200,000 (US 20,-)
Assistance for RTSM with: Children under 6 years old, pregnant/lactating women	Rp. 800,000 (US 80,-)
Children at primary school	Rp. 400,000 (US 40,-)
Children at junior high school	Rp. 800,000 (US 80,-)
Average assistance per RTSM	Rp. 1,390,000 (US 139,-)
Minimum assistance per RTSM	Rp. 600,000 (US 60,-)
Maximum assistance per RTSM	Rp. 2,200,000 (US 220,-)

Source: (http://pkh.depsos.go.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=20&Itemid=60). RTSM (*Rumah Tangga Sangat Miskin* means Very Poor Households).

One such policy is the Ideal Family Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan-PKH*). PKH is a program of social assistance for Very Poor Households (*Rumah Tangga Sangat Miskin-RTSM*). Assistance is given on conditions (means tested) that families bring their family members (mother and/or toddlers) regularly to health facilities, send their children

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to school and ensure the attendance of children in the schools. The beneficiaries are mothers (women as the housekeepers). PKH Program at a glance appears to put women in important positions in achieving family welfare. However, if traced further, the nature of 'requirement' in this assistance, if not carefully done, ends up being more of a burden for women, especially in a society where gender division of labor is as strong as it is in Indonesia. Women who received help from the PKH are not necessarily the only women working as housewives. Keep in mind, this assistance does not provide full reimbursement of wages for domestic work as women in the welfare states of Europe. PKH only provides a maximum assistance of Rp.2.200.000 per annum as additional income for each RTSM, assuming that the family has other sources of income. Such programs should not only aim at targeting women, they should seek to break the veil of gender division of labor in society. With that veil, it would be difficult for the program to achieve its goal of improving the welfare of poor families with women as the main target of the policy without taking into account the double burden experienced by women. Social policy in Indonesia has not touched de-familization concept. This concept becomes unfamiliar because Indonesian women do not have the privilege to choose the economic or domestic role. Both of these roles must be endured by women in particular from the poor level of economy.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the position of women in government policy in the field of family welfare is recipient of policy. The number and scope is too limited. Women and the majority of poor people living on the informal economy are generally not included in the social security schemes of this kind. Social policy for women within the family unit is still discriminatory against women. This is a consequence of the model family with a male breadwinner. The guarantee of women's (and even children's) rights is determined by the legitimacy and their relationship with the husband as head of the family. On the other hand, the role of the domestic economy that many women carry out is not appreciated because it has no economic value. For poor women, the economy and domestic job work is not an option but a requirement. Woman as the head of household is a unique picture of the viability of women from the poverty of the families. These symptoms should be seen as the practice criticizing the assumption of the family model with a male breadwinner. These examples may be early clues to search de-familization concept in Indonesia. With some of the previous findings, further research can be done to determine what models of de-familization and de-commodification are appropriate to the conditions and needs of the people of Indonesia. Two things need to be studied: the omission in the European countries in incorporating gender analysis in the early emergence of the welfare state and the mapping of the position and role of women in social policy in Indonesia. In the analysis, a model of social policy will be able to answer the needs of the public justice and the family welfare by introducing the gender dimension.

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