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PUDJIWATI SAJOGYO



Gender, Class, and the Concept of Equality
in Women's Studies

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Abstract

Pudjiwati Sajogyo was the first person to initiate academic studies on women in higher education. In the 1970s, she integrated gender and class studies into the various subjects she taught when the New Order government ensured that wives' duties were to be housewives (Marriage Act Number 1/1974). This Marriage Law is still in effect today. Therefore, Pudjiwati, under the influence of Ester Boserup, challenged the assumption that women in the household sphere do not play a role in national development. She showed how the national development that discriminated against women has made many women have to play a dual role to meet their household needs.

In 1978, she founded the Center for Women's Studies at IPB and this is considered to be the pioneer in the establishment of Women's Studies Centers at various universities in Indonesia.

This paper will discuss her form of women's studies discourse (women in development discourse), her ideas on gender equality, how they influence the current development of women's studies in Indonesia today.

Keywords: gender and class studies, gender discrimination, gender equality, national development, women's studies

I, personally, never had the opportunity to know Pudjiwati Sajogyo. I had only read some of her papers and research reports when Eko Cahyono and Ahmad Jaetuloh, from the Sajogyo Institute, invited me to discuss her thoughts.

I accepted the offer because, since 1985, when I was still an undergraduate student at the Faculty of Law, Brawijaya University, I had been interested in women's studies. My interest in women's studies grew when I became Ratna Saptari's research assistant for her dissertation at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. We studied female cigarette factory workers in Malang city and regency from 1988 to 1990. I think it was during that research that I first learned the name Pujiwati Sajogyo, namely when I briefly read one of her books: *Peranan Wanita dalam Perkembangan Masyarakat Desa (The Role of Women in the Development of Village Communities; Rajawali, 1983)*.

Therefore, in this paper, I will discuss her ideas on women's studies, her views on gender equality, and how her

thoughts influence women's studies in Indonesia today.

So, this paper is the perspective of someone unfamiliar with the thoughts of Prof. Dr. Ir. Pudjiwati Sajogyo and Prof. Sajogyo. I wrote this paper more as a personal attempt to understand their thinking. I would be grateful if this paper is useful to its readers.

Women In Development

Pudjiwati Sajogyo (1929-2002) and her husband, Sajogyo (1926-2023), were professors of rural sociology at the Bogor Agricultural Institute (*Institut Pertanian Bogor/IPB*). As a lecturer and researcher at IPB, Pudjiwati produced numerous books and articles on rural sociology, development sociology, and rural women. She was also a pioneer in integrating gender studies into various teaching subjects. Furthermore, she pioneered the establishment of the Center for Women's Studies at IPB, which was later adopted by various universities in

Indonesia.¹ In this paper, I will only discuss her thoughts on rural women.

I found around 40 seminar articles and research reports written by Pudjiwati from 1972 to 1990. The seminar articles and research reports were themed "the role of rural women in development." It seems that the thoughts of Ester Boserup (1910-1999)—a Danish economist, who wrote the book titled *The Role of Women in Economic Development* and Pudjiwati wrote the foreword to the Indonesian version of the book (Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1994)—also influenced her.

In the book, according to Pudjiwati, Boserup states that agricultural modernization and the shift of jobs from agriculture to industry will indeed change the division of labor between men, women, and other family members. However, this does not mean that women, who live in the private sector (the consumer sector), do not play a role in development. Cooking, caring for children, and cleaning the house are

¹ "Pudjiwati Sajogyo", <https://sajogyo-institute.org/pudjiwati-sajogyo/>

forms of support for men who work outside the home. This women's work has economic value for men and for national development:

Mengurus 'pekerjaan rumahtangga' pun perlu kita dudukkan pada tempat yang wajar (memasak, mengasuh anak, dan sebagainya): walau tak langsung berarti "penghasilan" pekerjaan itu memberikan dukungan bagi anggota "pencari nafkah", untuk memanfaatkan peluang kerja.

Pemikiran mengenai perumusan tentang pengertian "bekerja" yang relevan terhadap permasalahan tersebut harus mencerminkan "peranan kerja" (*work role*) yang dilakukan oleh yang bersangkutan dalam rumahtangga, dan masyarakat luas, oleh pria dan wanita, dewasa maupun anak-anak.²

² Pudjiwati Sajogyo, 1984, "Pengantar" dalam Ester Boserup, *Peranan Wanita dalam*

[We also need to put 'household chores' in their proper place (cooking, childcare, etc.): even though it doesn't directly mean "income", the work provides support for the "breadwinner" member, to take advantage of job opportunities.

The thought about formulating the meaning of "work" that is relevant to this problem must reflect the "work role" carried out by the persons in the household and the wider community, by men and women, adults and children].

Pudjiwati considered it important to research the "role of women in development," because the government, through People's Consultative Assembly Decree Number II/MPR/1983 concerning the General Outlines of State Policy (GBHN), encouraged women to work so they could play a role in national

Perkembangan Ekonomi, Jakarta, Yayasan Obor Indonesia, p. xv.

development. However, the GBHN defined work solely as human activity intended to generate income. As a result, the government considered women to have little or no role in development:

Dalam bidang ketenagakerjaan misalnya, nampak dari berbagai studi “mikro” bahwa pengakuan itu belum “nyata” melalui pola bekerja wanita yang langsung menghasilkan (natura atau cash). Masih terbukti bahwa imbalan yang diterima oleh wanita pada pekerjaan nafkah lebih kecil daripada yang diterima oleh pria, walaupun sifat dan hasil kerjanya sama (Pudjiwati Sajogyo, et.al.1980, 1985; Pudjiwati Sajogyo, 1984). Dalam hal ini jelas tak ada pengakuan terhadap wanita dalam kontribusinya terhadap pembangunan.³

³ Pudjiwati Sajogyo, 1987, “Peranan Wanita dalam Pembangunan: Suatu Tinjauan Sosiologis” (“the Role of Women in Development: a Sociological Approach”), p. 2-3.

[Various "micro" studies on employment show that women's work still produces only a small amount of goods or cash. It has also been shown that the compensation received by female workers is lower than that received by male workers, even though the nature and results of their work are the same (Pudjiwati Sajogyo, et.al. 1980, 1985; Pudjiwati Sajogyo, 1984). That is why women are considered to have a lesser role in development].

Therefore, Pudjiwati – quoting Wallman and Ester Boserup – rejected the notion that work only had economic significance. She believed that work also had psychological, cultural, and social significance.⁴ By thinking this way, she

⁴ Pudjiwati Sajogyo, 1990, "Tenaga Kerja Wanita dan Permasalahannya Dalam Masyarakat Indonesia", makalah dipresentasikan di seminar sehari "Tenaga Kerja Wanita dan Permasalahannya", Kelompok Studi Wanita, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Politik, Universitas Airlangga, 17 November 1990, p. 7.

argued, we can understand the "economic value" of women's works as wives in the household or on their own farms. Because by working in the household, a woman has devoted her energy to earning money and, of course, enables men to work outside the home to earn money.⁵

Pudjiwati then examined the forms and time allocation of women's work in and around the household. She showed that, in Java and outside Java, women who work at their households or around the households to earn money and also take care of household chores experience a double burden, namely they have to work for 11 hours a day. They must work for 4 hours to earn a living and other 7 hours for household chores. Meanwhile, men devote 6 hours to earning a living and 2 hours to household chores.⁶ Therefore, examining the social class of women—by examining the area of land and wealth owned by these women—is important to understand the double burden of the women and their

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

independence in making important decisions for their families. Research on these various things will demonstrate the potential for gender equality between women and men as human beings in development.

Therefore, Pudjiwati—using the theory of Structural Functionalism from Marion J. Levy (a student of Talcott Parsons)—conducted research on how to integrate women in development by revealing the forms of women's work that produce cash or goods and the time they devote to that work; revealing the forms of women's work that do not produce money, but that allow men to work outside the home to earn money; and the forms of women's involvement in decision-making in the household. This research will also reveal the small number of women with formal education which then causes the small number of women working in the public spheres to have a career and earn an income.

This research, according to her, would reveal the meaning of women's roles as individuals in the household and society. Apart from that, it would also

reveal how society's cultural values can accept women's work and independence in making decisions for themselves and their households.⁷

Therefore, the way to realize equality between women and men, according to Pudjiwati, was by proving how development could recognize the economic value of the traditional role of housewives and also how development could reach women, namely changing their traditional role by giving them the opportunity to work in the public spheres, so that women could become equal partners with men in the households and in society⁸:

Integrasi wanita dalam pembangunan mencakup adopsi daripada strategi, kebijaksanaan dan program yang memperlakukan wanita sebagai sumber yang vital untuk pembangunan. Dengan demikian pembangunan hendaknya (harus) menerima wanita sebagai

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5-6.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9-10.

partner (mitra sejajar) yang sama dengan pria baik sebagai pelaksana dan pewaris proses pembangunan.⁹

[The integration of women in development involves the adoption of strategies, policies, and programs that treat women as vital resources for development. Therefore, development should (must) accept women as equal partners with men, both as implementers and beneficiaries of the development process].

Criticism of Women in Development

While Pudjiwati corrected the misconception that housewives' work lacked economic value, in Indonesia, the prevailing belief is that a wife's primary role is in the household and that the husband is the head of the household. Marriage Law No. 1/1974 formalized this general assumption and stated that if one party fails to fulfill these primary duties,

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

the other party can file for divorce (Article 33, paragraph 4).

Pudjiwati's criticism and her proposal to integrate women into development were the embodiment of the concept of "Women in Development." The "Commission on the Status of Women" and the "Social Development Commission"—two UN agencies—formulated this idea in 1972.

This "Women in Development" perspective was criticized in the 1980s. Ratna Saptari, a visiting researcher at Leiden University, stated that the "Women in Development" perspective assumes that development as an idea is fair and good for women. However, she argued that the causes of discrimination against women do not originate externally, but within the concept of development itself. She stated, by citing Caren Grown and Gita Sen, that export-driven and export-oriented development (as practiced in Indonesia in the 1980s and nowadays) fails to address economic disparities between classes and gender. This development model increases workloads, increases working hours, and

lowers wages to meet export targets. Furthermore, agricultural land is converted into industrial sites to meet export targets, reducing women's employment opportunities in agriculture:

... asumsi yang dipakai oleh para ahli WID tersebut serupa dengan pandangan kaum feminis liberal yang beranggapan bahwa siste ekonomi dan politik sebenarnya sudah mempunyai tatatan yang adil. [...] Pandangan demikian, menurut mereka, tidak melihat bahwa marginalitas perempuan mempunyai akar yang berasal dari sistem itu sendiri.¹⁰

[...the assumptions used by the WID experts are similar to the views of liberal feminists who believe that the economic and political system already has a just system. [...] Such a view, they

¹⁰ Ratna Saptari, 1997, "Studi Perempuan: Sebuah Pengantar" dalam Ratna Saptari dan Brigitte Holzner, *Perempuan, Kerja dan Perubahan Sosial: Sebuah Pengantar Studi Perempuan*, Jakarta, PT Pustaka Graffiti (Diterbitkan untuk Kalyanamitra), p. 85.

argue, fails to recognize that women's marginalization has roots within the system itself].¹¹

Patriarchy Is Everywhere

Thus, the "women in development" perspective implicitly views the consumerist household as a backward place, economically dependent on the public sphere, and a place where women are discriminated against. The "women in development" perspective assumes that women will be emancipated and equal to men if they can pursue careers and earn income in the public sphere. Therefore, this perspective tends to view patriarchy as existing only in the private sphere.

However, critical women's studies perspectives (e.g., Marxist feminism) consider development to be a concept that discriminates against women. Furthermore, development oriented

¹¹ Ratna Saptari, 1997, "Studi Perempuan: Sebuah Pengantar" dalam Ratna Saptari dan Brigitte Holzner, *Perempuan, Kerja dan Perubahan Sosial: Sebuah Pengantar Studi Perempuan*, Jakarta, PT Pustaka Graffiti (Diterbitkan untuk Kalyanamitra), p. 85.

toward economic growth will extract natural resources and lead to environmental crises (floods, landslides, deforestation, global warming, and climate change). Development will also displace indigenous communities and relegate women to unskilled labour.

Thus, discrimination and violence against women occur not only in the households but also in the workplaces and in other public spaces. When Pudjiwati introduced the Women in Development perspective in the 1970s and 1980s, the term "violence against women" was apparently unfamiliar. The term was introduced through Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence. However, this does not mean that violence against women in the home was non-existent before 2004. Prior to 2004, Indonesians generally considered such violence as a private matter. Then, in 2022, the government enacted Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, which covers sexual violence both in private and public spaces. While this law does not specifically protect

women, it does detail the elements of various acts of sexual violence, particularly those that allow us to imagine that women can be the targets.

Thus, it can be concluded that public spaces are also rife with discrimination and sexual violence against women. However, as Aminatul Faizah points out in her research, *Post-Feminist Body Politics: A Gender Study of Forms of Sexual Violence in Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence* (FHK, Soegijapranata Catholic University, 2026), this law can only protect women who are victims of various forms of sexual violence; it cannot eradicate patriarchy as the cause of sexual violence and discrimination against women.

The "women in development" perspective fails to clearly identify development as a cause of discrimination against women. Therefore, it's time to explore women's studies with a more holistic perspective to identify the causes of discrimination and violence against women in both the private and public spheres.



Collaboration with:



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