Does gender equality in salt community business decision exist?

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Abstract. The salt business is not only conducted by the salt aquaculture. Salt aquaculture requires their families to help them producing salt. It is still not visible that there is gender equality in this business. However, there is no gender equality in the salt aquaculture business in Pati Regency in this research hypothesis. Thus, the question arises whether all salt aquaculture always make with their family or are carried out by the salt aquaculture themselves? This paper aimed to analyze the role of gender equality in decision making in households, both in domestic and public activities. This study conducted in 2012 with data updating in 2018 analyzed in 2020—the data took using questions guideline at Pati Regency. This research's primary funding was the investment decision made together in this district's family together. Training or socialization was still only given to the head of the family. It would be better if the wife also gave financial training.

1. Introduction

The aquaculture business is not only operated by salt aquaculture but also requires the salt aquaculture family's help to produce salt. The production process, starting from land cultivation, land irrigation, salt production, harvesting to packaging, or putting it into warehouses, also requires others' help. Financial conditions cause the family to help with the work of the pond. Their wives assist some salt aquaculture; their children assist some. However, the weakness of salt ponds is that labor is not paid [1,2].

The aquaculture is not assessing that this assistance can cause unfairness in the provision of salaries. Thus, it looks as if the income is sufficient for salt aquaculture. If calculated carefully, the salary is still insufficient. Apart from this problem, the decision making in a salt pond business seems to be handled only by the husband. Meanwhile, women-only accept or take other decisions outside of their business. Not all agree like that. Rochwulaningsih stated that there is a role for women in the salt making, especially in salt making using boiling techniques such as in Aceh [3].

This research is essential because, in 2018, Ministry for Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) received the title as a mentor for gender equality and justice in various MMAF policies from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection [4]. Moreover, MMAF also has several implemented policies informing of programs to achieve equal rights and responsibilities and business opportunities between men and women. These programs for marine and fisheries stakeholders [1,2,4].

However, it seems that there is no gender equality in the salt aquaculture business in Pati Regency as this research hypothesis. For this reason, a research question arises, whether all salt aquaculture always produces together or does it by salt aquaculture themselves? Is their family helping with production or done with someone else? How is the decision made, is it done unilaterally by the
husband or by discussing it with his wife? It is essential because businesses need capital, process, and also generate profits. If these three things cannot be managed appropriately, it will cause salt farmers' losses, and their business will be massive for the next year. Thus, this study aims to analyze the role of gender in aquaculture and household decision-making in decision-making in domestic and public activities. There are researches about gender in Indonesia's fisheries sector; however, there is still a lack of gender research in salt aquaculture.

2. Material and methods
The research was conducted in 2012 in Pati Regency, updated in 2018, and analyzed in 2020. Data collected from the salt aquaculture as the respondents in Pati Regency with total respondents 32 persons consist of Salt Cultivators, Salt Pond Aquaculture Owners, Salt Pond Aquaculture Tenant, Salt Collector Traders, and Salt Processor. Research selects the respondent above who have complete information about salt production. The data used in this research follow a range of income level distribution, social status, social stratification, activity profiles in salt aquaculture households, gender roles in household decision making, decision making in public activities both for farmers and their wives. This research using we analyze using the method of the pattern of division of labor and gender contribution to household income from a previous study [5–7]. This research is also using content analysis to support the data that established on literatures and reports. The data was collected using survey methods for primary data and literature studies. The data will be explained using the description analysis [7–10].

3. Result and discussion
3.1. Ownership
Most aquacultures were husband or husband in the household due to the incredible support of natural resources in the Pati Regency. In salt aquaculture, lands were given throughout generations. Moreover, the salt business required more physical work and activities; thus, it only passed to this regency's husbands. Therefore, the majority of respondents had status as a husband. Their position in Table 1 consisted of the salt pond landowner was 14 people (43.75%), while the farmers who were cultivators were four people (12.50%). As tenants were nine people (28.13%), collectors were two people (6.25%), and processors were three people (9.38%).

| No | Respondent status               | Husband | Wife |
|----|---------------------------------|---------|------|
|    | Number respondent | Percentage (%) | Number respondent | Percentage (%) |
| 1  | Salt cultivators               | 4       | 12.50 | 0   | 0   |
| 2  | Salt pond aquaculture owners  | 14      | 43.75 | 0   | 0   |
| 3  | Salt pond aquaculture tenant  | 9       | 28.13 | 0   | 0   |
| 4  | Salt collector traders        | 2       | 6.25  | 0   | 0   |
| 5  | Salt processor                | 3       | 9.38  | 0   | 0   |
|    | Total                          | 32      | 100   | 0   | 0   |

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2020.

On the other hand, there was no wife work as a wife salt business in this Regency. It had happened because many wives did not do more physical work and only did household chores. If they worked as salt aquaculture, it only helped their husbands and in a small number. This type of work was not chosen by the wives, due to their timing taking care of the household. This finding was the same with previous study [5,7], whose wife was only helping their husbands do their business. It showed there was no equality in ownership of the salt pond in Pati Regency.
3.2. Income

The respondent's income level was a significant factor in the family's life and welfare; a person's income would affect family welfare. The higher the level of income, it was expected that the higher the level of life would be. The income level criteria were on three categories: low, medium, and high levels of income from interviews with respondents. The income level data for salt farmers and their wives were in Table 2.

Table 2 showed that the most significant salt aquaculture was at the middle-income level (68.75%), while the 2nd portion was low-level. The last part of the group was the high-income class. This income level was a monthly basis. However, even if they were in the middle-income group, it was still around the regional income level at IDR 837,500 [11]. On the contrary, the salt aquaculture in Pati Regency farmers had no income because they were only housewives or only helping their husbands in doing their business [12–17].

On the contrary, it was different from Hikmah’s founding [7] that wives also had income. One thing that might make it different was that the wife did not do other activities than what their husband did in this research [18–22]. Thus, the only income was selling the salt, which was mainly what their husbands get. It showed there was no equality in income from the salt pond in Pati Regency.

| Husband income (IDR/Month)/ N=32 | Wife’s income (IDR/Month) N = 32 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                                  | Low     | Middle | High | Total |
| Low                              | 7 (21.87%) | -      | -    | -     |
| Middle                           | 22 (68.75%) | -      | -    | -     |
| High                             | 3 (9.3%)   | -      | -    | -     |
| Total                            | 32 (100%) | -      | -    | 32    |

Information:
- Low income level = < Rp.750,000
- Middle income level = Rp.750,000-Rp.1.500,000
- High income level = >Rp. 1.500,000

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2020.

3.3. Social status

There were usually some figures in every community that could become a role model for other community members. These conditions brought them to a position or social status known as community leaders. It happened because they considered having authority and influence that the community recognized in an institutionalized form and those that had not been institutionalized. The sources of power could come from the control of capitals, ownership of the means of production, or the inheritance of individual value systems or traditions.

According to Azizi [6], community members' classification in a position can occur because of wealth, power, honor, or even knowledge. In comparison, the position could be obtained in two ways: birth or descent and the efforts made purposely. Meanwhile, Azizi also [6] explained that the stratification in society containing patterns of leadership or community figures could be formed based on economic factors, occupational factors, or political factors.

The average social status of the respondent in the salt aquaculture family in Pati Regency was a part of the shared community. Due to the low level of education and the lack of social relations to the salt aquaculture community, they were busy every day with their activities (Table 3). It showed there was no equality in ownership of salt pond in Pati Regency.
Table 3. The social status of salt aquaculture communities in Pati District, 2012

| No | Social status         | Husband | Wife |
|----|-----------------------|---------|------|
|    |                       | Number of Respondent | Percentage (%) | Number of Respondent | Percentage (%) |
| 1  | Religious leader      | 3       | 9.3  | 0       | 0         |
| 2  | Traditional leader    | 1       | 3.1  | 0       | 0         |
| 3  | Community leader      | 6       | 18.75 | 0      | 0         |
| 4  | Common people         | 22      | 68.75 | 32     | 100       |
|    | Total                 | 32      | 100  | 32      | 100       |

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2020.

In the social status of the salt aquaculture community in Pati Regency, there were still inequalities between men and women, both social status as community leaders, religious leaders, and traditional leaders. It was because, in society, women were still taboo to serve as leaders, even though women could take up the position. Thus, it showed there was no equality in the social status of the salt pond in Pati Regency.

3.4. Activities

Profiles of respondents' daily activities included productive activities, domestic activities, free time, and basic family needs and social activities, which would be examined in this study. This analysis was using research from a previous study [5–7]. His analysis showed that the husband or the husband (spent more time on productive activities (8.2 hours per day) compared to the wives' lesser on productive activities (3.8 hours per day). It meant that the husband in salt aquaculture focused heavily on working, compared to domestic. It could be seen in the domestic activities that the wife (6.7 hours per day) gave extra hours compared to the husband (3.4 hours per day). Thus, it explained why the husband earned income compared to the wife (Table 2).

Table 4. Time usage for productive, domestic, free time and basic needs of their family and social activities profiles in Pati Regency, 2012.

| No | Activity Profile                         | Husband (Hours/day) | Wife (Hours/day) |
|----|------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 1  | Productive Activities                    | 8.2                 | 3.8              |
| 2  | Domestik Activities                      | 3.4                 | 6.7              |
| 3  | Free Time and Basic Family Needs         | 2.4                 | 4.4              |
| 4  | Social Activities                         | 3.3                 | 2.5              |

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2020.

Women in Pati Regency were heavily stressed on the family, such as taking care of the household, taking care of children, cooking, and taking care of their husbands. It could be seen in the free time or essential family needs that women (4.4 hours per day) had a more significant portion than husbands (2.3 hours per day). The wife in Pati Regency felt that they were responsible for their kid's education, especially in accompanying their kids doing home and preparing family meals. This analysis got results the same with Azizi [6] but different from Istiana [5] and Hikmah [7]. In Istiana [5] and Hikmah [7] research, the husband and wife had some time for free time or basic family need. The difference was that husband spends more time also in social activities in Pati Regency.

The social activities in Pati Regency that husbands spend more were related to their work. They were social, religious gathering several times a week and gathering to discuss aquaculture problems among aquaculture in the same village. This gathering aim was trying to solve problems in their business based on other experiences. If not, they would try to ask another group the answer to the problem.
### 3.5. Decision making

There are two types of decisions that the aquaculture families have to decide. They are domestic decision making and productive decision making. In making the decision, there are three decisions: wife domination, husband and wife decision, and husband domination. This decision is affected by the involvement of both husband and wife in the activities. This analysis is based on research conducted by Istiana [5] and Azizi [6].

All domestic activities except savings had a relation to production. Therefore, the husband dominated who earned money, determining how many family savings are (Table 5). It was related to production activities (Table 4) and income (Table 2). Another thing that was not directly related to the work was a reproduction, but the husband dominated the production preferences, including how much children they would have (Table 5).

Wife domestic activities (Table 4) affected domination in deciding food preferences and family health preferences (Table 5). This domination happened because the wife had more time conducting family activities. They were the ones who know what her husband's and children's food preferences, nutrition, and what was right for their health care. If her husband and children were sick, they knew the symptoms because it was not usual and had to act fast before too late, especially in this COVID-19 pandemic.

The husband and wife would decide together were children’s education and the procurement of household appliances (Table 5). It had to be discussed together because related to income and savings. Children’s education in this era was not cheap both for entrance fees nor for tuition fees. If the savings that were given by the husband were not enough, the husband had to work harder or find some loan to pay it but paid to the lender later by crediting for sure of the time.

The decision was made because what were the activities that they did. Thus, in decision making, there were gender activities related to deciding so that it explained why wife in Pati Regency would prefer more in the household compared to production activities.

#### Table 5. Decision making in the domestic activities of salt aquaculture in Pati Regency, 2012.

| No | Domestic activity profile       | Wife domination | Husband + wife | Husband domination |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1  | Food preferences               | X               |               |                   |
| 2  | Children’s education           |                 | X             |                   |
| 3  | Family health preferences      | X               |               |                   |
| 4  | Savings                        |                 |               |                   |
| 5  | Procurement of household appliances |               | X             |                   |
| 6  | Reproduction preferences       |                 |               | X                 |

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2020.

Decision making in productive activity was critical in salt production activities. The decision consisted of investment/capital investment for salt production, salt pond business management, processing business management, and social community. If they made the wrong decision, it would affect production, income, saving, and the salt aquaculture's welfare.

Even though salt production would be conducted in every half year, they would need investment or business capital to conduct the business (Table 6). The tool the invested some times could be used for more than one year, but some had to be replaced every year. The material of the tools would determine how long it would last. If they bought low material at a lower price, it would break faster and cost more than buying a slightly more expensive tool. It was also affecting their saving for family needs. Thus, sometimes, they had to be solved only by the husband, and some times together if it would affect the family's needs.

Only the social and community activities were handled by both the husband and the wife but separately (Table 6). It was because both the husband and the wife had different and separate
activities. The wife had both formal and informal activities. Formal social institutions such as empowerment of family welfare activity (PKK) and integrated service post (posyandu) were places for women. Inform of non-formal institutions such as regular social gatherings to conduct a lottery (arisan), and recitation were for women. The salt aquaculture groups were formal institutions made for men.

The rest of business decisions, such as salt aquaculture business management and salt processing business management, were handled by husband domination. The husband handled the salt aquaculture business because they worked in the field with extensive sun heat. It was quite heavy for females, except their wife, who was willing to help if the husband did not have anyone else to help him or cannot afford to pay other people to work with him. In the Salt processing business, there was an accounting for calculating the production and money, so the husband did not work on his own. However, it would be better if the wife helped him with accounting instead of using other persons.

Table 6. The distribution of decision making in public activities in Pati Regency, 2012.

| No | Production activity profile                  | N=32 |
|----|---------------------------------------------|------|
| 1  | Investment/business capital selection       | X    | X    |
| 2  | Salt aquaculture business management        | X    |      |
| 3  | Management of salt processing business      |      | X    |
| 4  | Social and community activities             | X    | X    |

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2020.

Thus there was no indication of a gender gap in decision making on productive activities. It was because both husband and wife were working related to activities (Table 4), ownership (Table 1), income (Table 2), and status (Table 3). The reason that wife was not related to the salt production activities was that the products heavily require physical straight. Thus it would harm their wife if they had to help them in the salt pond. In the end, the husband was trying to protect their wife, but if the wife wanted to be involved in the salt pond business, they could be involved in using soft skills compared to physical strength.

Thus, the wife also had to be trained in financial planning. It would be used in order to help their husbands making a promising future. However, training or socialization was still only given to the head of the family. It would be better if the wife also gave financial training to strengthen gender equality in the salt pond business.

4. Conclusions
Apart from doing household activities, women also played a role in producing salt, although not much time they would spend. This research aimed to analyze gender roles in household decision-making, both in domestic decisions and in production activities. Thus the results showed that women had a significant portion of time and focus on domestic policy-making compared to business activities. However, they still spent a small amount of time helping their husbands did business work, although not as much as their husbands. Even though at the beginning, it seemed there was a gender gap in Pati Regency, but it seemed that the wife was more household decision making.

The husband eventually attempted to defend their wife. If the wife wished to be involved in the salt business, they would be interested in handling or using soft skills. For example, they could be involved in discussion partners for decision making on productive activities, such as their involvement in determines the amount of investment in the salt aquaculture only, but not in operations. They could
also involve in determining sales, such as price or where to sell it. Thus, it would be related to allocating the money they saved for business capital for the next production season so that their husbands could still do business and their families did not sacrifice.

This financial management was the initial basis for aquaculture wives to do business in salt aquaculture. Thus, it was necessary to have financial management training to develop a better business and manage the capital for business. It was even better if they could manage the accounting for this business.

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