

Housewives' Psychological Well-Being From Qur'anic Perspective: The Case Of Women's Roles In Improving Family Economic Welfare In Bugis And Mandar Communities

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Abstract

The discourse on the involvement of women in socio-economic activities is still a discourse that is both pro and contra from an Islamic perspective. Muslim scholars who are against the involvement of women in economic activities argue that Islam forbids women to work outside the home. Meanwhile, a Muslim scholar who supports the involvement of women in the workforce views it from the interpretation of moderate al-Quran verses and hadith. They also argue that the involvement of the housewife in economics can increase family happiness and the women's psychological well-being. This study, therefore, aims to study the role of the housewife in economic activities from the al-Quran perspective and the relationship with local culture and the women's psychological well-being. This study used the qualitative ethnographic method. The study was conducted for one year in Bugis and Mandar women's ethics. Data were collected using direct observation and in-depth interviews with local women. Data were analyzed using grounded theory, in which the data was analyzed through three iterations; open, axial, and theoretical coding. The findings show that the Bugis and Mandar women actively involve in earning income to help their husbands and improve families' income. They did not experience constrain because Muslim scholars in the area moderately interpret Al-Quran verses on the role of women in the workforce. In addition, the culture of sibaliperriq, or partnership and collaboration, is also in accordance with Al-Quran versus values. The women who are involved in economic activities are considered to be practicing jihad because they help their husbands and improve families' happiness. For the local women, working outside the home is a part of practicing Islamic values in which Islam demands humans to work. When the women perceive their involvement as jihad for families' welfare and as a means to practice Islamic values, they feel relief and cause psychological well-being. As such, women's happiness is improved because, at the same time, they can practice Islamic values and fulfilling families' economics.

Keywords: Women in economic, Al-Quran perspective, women psychological well-being, Bugis, Mandar.

INTRODUCTION

Discourses around the role of women in building the family economy have long been discussed in various circles and from various perspectives (Crittenden, Crittenden, & Ajjan,

2019; Feeney & Stritch, 2019; Ferragina, 2019). The role of women in helping the household economy is an interesting theme in various studies that experts have conducted. Experts conduct research related to the role of women in helping the household economy

with various perspectives, such as sociological(England & Lewin, 1989), political (Ferragina, 2019), business(Rachmawati, Suliyanto, & Suroso, 2022), informationtechnology(Crittenden et al., 2019), dan religion(Syed, 2010).

The involvement of women in the economy is also related to psychological aspects in order to achieve material happiness in helping their families(Handayani & Nurdin, 2021; Haworth, Jarman, & Lee, 1997).In other words, women who work to earn extra money are not just a matter of fulfilling finances but also meeting psychological needs.Women are involved in economic activities because they want to achieve a balanced life both materially and psychologically(Feeney & Stritch, 2019).In this context, women have indeed considered beings who have a more materialistic view, but women are also humans who have sensitive feelings and perceive things more with feelings.

Research on the role of women in the economy has been carried out in various perspectives and approaches.However, this research has been the subject of various debates from various researchers, such as researchers who use economic, sociocultural, and researchers who use religious approaches (Priadi & Nurdin, 2021). The occurrence of these different perspectives has had an impact on people's attitudes.This difference also needs to provide more enlightenment to the community, causing a lack of support for women's involvement in the economy, especially the household economy.

From a sociocultural perspective, especially in traditional societies, the involvement of women in working to earn additional income is considered something that is not in accordance with the culture of a region.Likewise, from a religious perspective, the involvement of women in working to help their husbands is also considered incompatible with Islamic religious values, which prohibit women from working outside the home.This view has had an impact on managing

the potential and empowering women to achieve their happiness both materially and psychologically.

The role of women as housewives in economic matters is part of the gender discourse, which has become an important concern for experts as well as the government.This role has been regulated in law no.25 of 2005 concerning women's empowerment. The law support women to achieve a good quality of life for better Indonesia's national development.In the Al-Quran, it has also been stated that women may work as in the Al-Quran surah Annisa verse 32. Then in the perspective of interpretation of legal verses regarding gender, it shows that indeed the responsibility to provide for the family is the responsibility of the husband, but this task can be divided based onconventions and cultural values adopted.Thus there is a need for in-depth and good research to provide insight into the role of housewives in economic activities in order to support the creation of women's happiness materially and psychologically.

Therefore, this research examines the role of housewives of the Bugis and Mandar tribes in improving the household economy in order to achieve psychological well-being from the perspective of Al-Quran verses to provide new insights to academics and practitioners.This research aims to build a new paradigm for the role of Indonesian Muslim women in supporting the household economy in order to build family welfare from both material and psychological aspects.Thus the role of housewives in working gets support from the government and society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Related Studies

Many researchers have researched women's role in the household economy.For example, research on housewives' role in helping the family's economy during the Covid-19 pandemic in

Giriliya village found that the role of housewives in helping the family's economy during the Covid-19 Pandemic was very important in reducing family stress. (Ilah, Dedeh, Patonah, & Haryati, 2021). Next, another study conducted by Husnul Fadli (2019) focuses on empowering women through the business of groups of rope bag craftsmen. Packing finds that women can be part of the solution to the family economy by developing skills and independence. With this independence, women have mental resilience in dealing with difficulties in everyday life and also eliminate dependence on other parties.

The role of a housewife in realizing family welfare is not just being a wife, but a woman needs to play other roles to be happier. Other additional roles include seeking additional income to help improve family welfare. In addition, research conducted by Widodo et al. (2020) found that women who take part in additional activities, such as engaging in various skills training, can increase their skills and knowledge about a particular field of business. Thus, these housewives have an optimistic outlook on life and become happier.

Women participate in various empowerment activities outside the home also allows them to collaborate with other women in various productive activities. For example, a collaboration between housewives and entrepreneurs provides more opportunities to communicate with each other. Good communication with friends is believed to reduce mental stress because there is an opportunity to convey various difficulties to colleagues.

Theory of Interpretation of Gender Verses in Qur'an

The Holy Quran contains many verses related to the role of women. Even the Annisa surah is specifically intended for women in which it discusses verses that contain gender, especially

the role of housewives in the development of family welfare and economy. The theory of interpreting gender verses uses the al-'urf and al-Ihsan approaches because gender issues are closely related to sociocultural constructions in certain communities. One cultural value applicable in a community or place is not necessarily relevant and acceptable if it is carried over to other communities and places.

Every place and community has its own cultural values, which may be the same or different. The principle of binding value is the existence of interests based on the belief that sacred texts cannot conflict with good and goodness. What is likely to happen is the interpreter's mistake in understanding the sacred text or the inaccuracy in understanding the benefit. The accuracy of the interpretation of the gender verses will be tested to determine if it is useful in people's lives.

In this context, understanding gender verses can be approached with the Qath'iy, and Zhanni approaches. Some of the messages are universal (mujmal), and some are primordial (mufradi), depending on the message to be conveyed. There are universal messages in the Qur'an that talk about God's provision regarding the creation of nature based on its size, and this verse is qath'i in nature. As God says, "Verily, We created everything according to measure" (Qs. 54: 49). What is meant by qadar is "the size of the characteristics that are determined for everything that exists in nature". Therefore, men or women as individuals and gender have their own nature.

Allah SWT. has given gifts in the form of the same potential and ability for them to carry out God's commands and stay away from all His prohibitions. In this case, the Qur'anic text is positioned as final and cannot be tampered with anymore. What has never been completed is the meaning of every sociocultural change in all spaces and times.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative method. Qualitative research aims to describe an object or phenomenon in depth. In this research, the object of study is the role of housewives in building the family economy by looking at its relationship with their mental well-being using the perspective of the Koran. Data were collected using direct observation techniques, in-depth interviews, and analysis of various written documents (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022). The interviews involved sixteen informants from the Bugis and Mandar tribes. The interviews were conducted in-depth, between thirty and forty-five minutes for each informant. The results of the interviews were then given back to the informants for verification (Rusli, Hasyim, & Nurdin, 2021; Rusli & Nurdin, 2021).

Data were analyzed using grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), namely through three stages, starting from open coding, axial coding, to theoretical coding. The results of the data analysis then created themes based on the information found in the interviews and observations (Askar, Adawiyah, & Nurdin, 2021). The themes were then interpreted during the coding process to refine conceptual constructs. At this stage, the relationships between those themes were built to guide the subject area being studied. At the final stage, a theoretical concept was formulated and the interpretive constructs' explicit relationship was determined. Conceptual saturation was reached when no new categories were generated from the open codes and the gap in emerging concepts was filled.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Housewife Roles in Bugis and Mandar Ethnicities

Bugis and Mandar's women play an active role in supporting the family economy. The results of the study show that housewives are directly involved

in household economic activities, and these activities have become their culture. Housewives' involvement in the household economy is due to several reasons and has also created positive values that can serve as examples for Muslim women in general.

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with housewives, they are actively involved in household economic activities because of regional culture and also because of the psychological drive for household happiness. The regional culture that encourages them to work is the *sibaliperriq* culture, namely the value of partnership and mutual trust. The *sibaliperriq* culture has become a culture that they care for in their families and communities. In addition, belief in the existence of a feeling of togetherness in the household has provided a positive psychological feeling that can encourage them to work as expressed by a housewife as follows:

I am very happy when I can be involved in supporting family economics. However, when my husband works alone to earn money, I feel guilty because, in our culture, family welfare should be built based on partnership and shared responsibility. So when I work and make money to help my husband, I feel psychological relief even though the job is hard. Besides, our religion does not forbid women to work as long as our husbands give permission.

The statement reflects that Bugisness women enjoy a sense of happiness and psychological relief when they involve in economic activities to support their families income. It does not matter how hard a job as long as it can contribute to their family's welfare, it increases their happiness. Scholars (Haworth et al., 1997) argue that when positive experiences are derived from everyday life, focusing on the domains of work and nonwork, such as leisure, can create a situation associated with positive subjective states and psychological well-being.

Then the local government also created a women's empowerment program in the economic sector, which was also supported by religious leaders such as village priests and clerics. Local religious leaders have never questioned housewives to work outside the home as long as they perform their prayers, maintain their morals, and take care of their private parts. The recitation of the women of the local Quranic recitation assembly is still held on the first Friday night of every month so that it becomes a guide for them in carrying out their duties as wives and as mothers in the household. The local government also encourages women's empowerment through the housewife empowerment program, especially in the economic field and other life skills.

One village head explained that the community upholds the sibaliperriq culture both in household and social life. This culture is very suitable to be applied in the household because wives and husbands can become partners and make sacrifices to improve the household economy to support a happy family materially and psychologically. Thus they will be closer to Islamic religious values, as expressed as follows:

We support house wives who help their husbands to earn money to improve their households' economy. When housewives cooperate with their husbands, they can improve their families' psychological happiness, which leads to family spirituality. This means they become more devoted and closer to God”.

In family life, husband and wife together earn a living. Most husbands and wives in the area are farmers, and they practice the sibaliperriq culture in their lives. This culture of togetherness causes them to feel happier and more prosperous because the burden of life is shared so that it becomes lighter. Men and women can both work to get their share of sustenance as the following word of Allah in Surah Annisa verse 32 which means:

“And do not be envious of the gifts that Allah has favored some of you over others. (Because) for men, there is a share of what they earn, and for women, there is a share of what they earn.”

With the opportunity for Bugis and Mandar women to work to help their husbands, wives feel happy because they can also carry out their responsibilities as housewives. The results of previous research also show that the division of responsibilities between husband and wife can increase happiness and reduce psychological burdens (Ross, Mirowsky, & Huber, 1983). Husbands also feel helped so that the physical and psychological burden becomes lighter in everyday life.

The Important of Working Hard For Psychological well-being

Housewives in the two tribes are used to working hard to earn money to make their families happy. The hard work of earning a living for Bugis and Mandar women is a form of a wife's responsibility and a reflection of the local cultural value of sibaliperriq, which means co-workers and partners in the welfare of the household. One of the informants likened a husband and wife with a pair of footwear in realizing the sibaliperriq culture. Each of these legs must function according to its role, which alternately carries out its duties while remaining side by side. When tired and stopped, the position is parallel, even placed tightly side by side. This is the philosophy of married couples who stay harmonious and support each other without competing. The results are enjoyed together with great happiness.

The hard work of the Bugis and Mandar women is also a test of patience. The concept of patience is found in a number of verses of the Koran, such as surah al-Baqarah verse 153, verse 155, surah al_rum verse 60, and surah Hud verse 49. The concept of patience in these verses of the Koran

also contains an attitude of adversity quotient which deity. The belief among Bugis and Mandar women that hard work is a test of patience recommended by Islam has made them enjoy working hard to earn money, as stated by one housewife as follows:

I don't mind working hard to earn money for my family. My religion also told us to work hard, and hard work is also part of our spirituality because it has been told in the Al-Quran. For me, working hard is also to show our patience in this life. When we work hard with patience, we will be happy because we accept the reality of life sincerely.

The relationship between the ability to be patience in a difficult situation reflects emotional stability has been found in a number of studies (Chiang, Fang, Kaplan, & Ng, 2019; Neff, Toothman, Bowmani, Fox Tree, & Walker, 2011). Then, such mental stability can lead women to happiness (Hills & Argyle, 2001). As such, happy women can achieve psychological well-being that leads to the happiness of all their family members because their children and husbands rely on the women's psychological stability in every day life. In Islam, such happy families are considered happy, loving, and supportive, as mentioned in Al-Quran surah Ar-Rum verse 21.

Working for housewives of the Bugis and Mandar tribes is a culture that is no longer contested, and there are no speakers who prohibit it. In other words, in terms of local culture and Islamic law, there is no conflict regarding women working to earn a living to help their husbands. The culture of sibaliperriq is strengthened by the motto: "Mali siparappe, rebbasipatokkong, malilusipakainge" which means to save each other, support each other, and remind each other. Thus, in the context of married life, husband and wife are partners or partners who save and support each other. These values are in accordance with the verses of the Koran and hadiths. For example, the command to

help in kindness and piety is mentioned in Qs. Al-Maidah verse 2.

Happiness in Supporting Husband

The existence of a motto in Bugis and Mandarese society that husband and wife must support, save, and remind each other has encouraged housewives to work to help their husbands. The motto has become a strong guide for the families in the area. This can be seen from the motto being distributed in writing in the form of calendars and pamphlets in people's homes. The values in the motto have encouraged housewives to help their husbands with family financial matters voluntarily. This desire to voluntarily help her husband has formed a feeling of happiness because she can be involved with her husband in making money. One housewife said the following:

"I work in the rice field and garden to help my husband to grow rice and vegetable. We sell rice and vegetable in the market to get some money. You know, when we work together to earn money, I feel very happy because I can share the burden with him. Besides, I also can show my responsibility as a wife as Islam teaches us to help our husbands. When I make some money, I can share it with my husband and other family members. My share can be said as sadaqah (donation), and Allah will give me a reward".

The contribution of a wife in helping her husband to earn money is considered a donation or sadaqah as stated in a hadith from prophet Muhammad SAW as follows:

"If a Muslim provides maintenance for his family and he expects a reward from it, then it is worth charity" (HR Bukhari).

The housewives' contribution to the family's economy is considered as sadaqah or donation because the main responsibilities to earn money rely on the husbands. Therefore, when

housewives have opportunities to work and make money, that becomes sadaqahor donation, which is considered a noble deed in Islam. As such, helping husbands to work together and make money is also considered a noble wife who shows loyalty to their husband. Showing loyalty to the husband has been found to be a major factor that sustains long-term marriage (Levenson, Carstensen, & Gottman, 1993), and long-term marriage leads to women's happiness and psychological stability (Waite, Luo, & Lewin, 2009). In Islam, long-term marriage also leads to a sense of peace and happiness feeling as stated in QS. Ar-Rum verse 21 is as follows:

“And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives of your own kind so that you are inclined and feel at ease towards Him between you love and affection, indeed in that there are signs for people who think.”

We also found that the partners' economic collaboration also strengthened the families' bond, leading to long-term marriage. The housewives who involve in earning money with their husbands feel honored and appreciated as important elements in psychological well-being. Regardless of the types of jobs they do, the housewives' involvement in earning money with their husbands has increased their emotional happiness. Helping husbands is not a burden; instead, they perceive it as an honor and noble deed, as stated in Islam's holy book.

Working as a Way to Fulfill Religious Orders

In Islam, a good woman is a woman who lives life as optimally as possible, as taught in the Qur'an and hadith, which includes being able to carry out her functions and obligations properly as a servant of Allah (Nurhayati & Fahnum, 2017). QS.al-Nahl(16) verse 97 explains that men and women who believe and do good deeds will get a fair reward. The meaning of this verse of the Koran is

the same as the understanding of the Bugis and Mandar peoples that the wife is not a burden on the husband and not just a complement but a husband's partner in managing the family. In this case, women must act as husband partners in building the family economy. Several informants explained the cultural practices of the community that support the role of housewives in economic activities without coercion. For example, a housewife stated as follows:

My neighbor and communities do not mind women working outside houses to get money. Many women here become traders in traditional markets and companies. They are married, and they do not mind as long as their wives are happy, and their children are not abandoned. We work to earn money because we want to make our families happy, not for fun or to go against our husbands.

Bugis and Mandar ethnics' housewives view their involvement in economic activities as a part of practicing Islamic teaching because a number of verses in the Al-Quran allow women to help their husbands to work. For example, QS. At-Taubah verse 105 says as follows:

Say (O Muhammad), work you! Then Allah, His Messenger, and the believers will see your work (QS. At-Taubah: 105).

The Quran says that God asks all humans to work without specifically saying, men or women. This means women can work to help their husbands in fulfilling household needs. Bugis and Mandar housewives consider their involvement in earning money as a part of their obligatory practice of Islamic teaching. Working outside of the home can make women enjoy new environments through collaboration and communication with their work colleagues, which results in positive psychological behavior (Astin, 1984). Positive behavior increases the happiness of women in

families and communities. A housewife of Bugis ethnicity oldher experience as follows:

I cannot stay at home all day without doing productive activities to help my family. When I go to the workplace, I feel happier because I have many friends to talk with. When I have problems at home, I can discuss it with my friends. My friends often give me solutions and suggestions when I have a problem.

The informant's comment above reflects women need a more varied life which helps them to avoid a monotonous environment. When women practice positive life in their working environment, it can increase their mental health. Mental health is important in Islam to help humans live normal life and in enjoying happiness. Mental health has been addressed in a number of verses in the Al-Quran. For example, Q.S. al-Baqarah verse 53; Q.S. Ali Imran verse 200; Surah Ar-ra'd verse 11; Q.S. Yūsuf verse 87; Q.S. Al A'raf verse 199, Q.S. Rum verse 38, and Q.S. Fuṣilat verse 53. The term mental health is also often associated with the word "patient" in Islam. Patient behavior can make human life free from mental illness, nervousness, and depression.

The culture of *sibaliperriq* or partnership implemented by women in Bugis and Mandar ethnics is relevant to the term of *zawjor azwaj* is mentioned in the holy book Al-Quran because the concept of *Sibaliparriq* is understood as partnership and collaboration between a husband and a wife in fulfilling a family economy. In this concept, a woman and a man are equal and have a similar responsibility to a family to become happy. The concept of equality between men and women is also implemented in other contexts, such as social, political, and educational. The equality value is mentioned in al-Quran surah Al-Hujarat verse 13 with the translation as follows:

"O mankind, verily We created you from a male and a female and made you nations and tribes so that you may know each

other. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious among you. Surely Allah is All-knowing, All-knowing."

The Quran clearly states that God creates men and women without saying one is higher than another. Therefore, men and women strongly implement the Quran's values in both ethnicities in their families' relationships. When the value of equality is implemented in a family, a woman feels respected and appreciated as a human being, which leads to psychological happiness (Baker & Kim, 2020; Baruch & Barnett, 1986). Furthermore, such women feeling happiness will lead to the happiness of all family members within a community.

CONCLUSION

Islam allows women to work and make money to support their husbands and families. Our findings show that women in ethnic Bugis and Mandar in Indonesia have equal status in their communities. Their husbands did not forbid them to enter work labor as long as the women still play their roles as a wife and mother of their children. The women also maintain Islamic values in their work environment. Such treatment of women in both ethnicities has led to the psychological well-being of the women ethnics.

Housewives of both ethnicities enjoy the equality treatment from their community and husbands. Such equality treatment has been strengthened by the local culture *sibaliperriq*, which encouraged partnership and collaborative cultures within families. When husbands and wives perceive the values of partnership and collaboration in their households, the couple and family members gain psychological happiness, as mentioned in al-Quran, to become happy and loving families.

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