

Parental Attitudes Impact on Education Past and Present MUKHAMAD Subkhan (Indonesia)

Parents' treat boy and girl children differently. Girls are educated in preparation for marriage, while boys are sent to school in preparation to obtain a profession. After girls are allowed into school, they are directed to major in household economics or caring for children. The selection of subjects or kind of lessons adopted reflect traditional views regarding the roles of women and men. Subject areas are divided-some specifically for men and others for women. Indonesian parents have been carrying out this kind of separate treatment of children by gender up until 20 years ago. Parents, including mothers, take men's receipt of benefits as natural.

This is reflected in the phrase or proverb as follows: "Boys should not cry", "Act like a boy", "He is a really boy." Instead a daughter is called a "*satru mungging cangkakan*", meaning that a daughter is a heavy burden for parents.

These examples show the lack of consciousness about how family education is reinforcing masculine culture. As the male-female dichotomy persists, females are always overshadowed by the so called superiority of men.

The above description describes the state of women in general in the past. However, the Indonesian women's situation today is much different. Namely, they are also required to participate actively in national development. Indonesian women, including those that are married, are seeking opportunities to maximize their potential.

Around 30-40 years ago, sending daughters to school was like sending them "on the road to perdition". However, girls today are free to enter their desired school. After successfully completing their studies in high school or university, most young women; enter the workforce to hold a particular profession. For women, the selection of a profession is not only limited to teachers, midwives, nurses, doctors, heads of various orphanages, but also includes other areas previously monopolized by men. Some examples of the latter area are armed forces; the world of modern business and computer services; notary services; media business; catering; business public relations; marketing research; arts business



Female Soldiers in the Indonesian Army
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and theater. Now, a female occupying the highest leadership in the university or becoming the dean of the faculty is regarded as a natural thing. Furthermore, the increased participation of women in political activities both in the legislature and executive should be noted.

The transitioning up until the 20th Century from the period of passive women to that of active women did not take place suddenly. In the transition period, many women devoted themselves to social activities via organizations both at central and regional levels. Moreover, diversity in religion, customs, education and lifestyles along with efforts to advance women were tailored to local circumstances. Finally, it can be concluded that the women's movement is the most powerful driving force for change in women's lives.