

# To Be or Not to Be: Choosing the Path

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As modernization advances, more and more women have chosen their roles in the society. These days, women have more freedom compared to previous decades. The way women are featured at the same level as men in regard to positions in the society makes us understand how women today can be everywhere and pursue their passions.

Freedom achieved by women makes them explore the life and the world easily. I remember how women in American society were pictured in the movie titled *Mona Lisa Smile* starring Julia Roberts. In this movie, we can see how women are pictured as being at lower levels compared to men, no matter how high their educational background was. If we take a look at today's society, we can see how women are choosing a way to participate in the world.

Astri, a 34-year-old woman currently living in Surabaya city, East Jawa has a bachelor's degree in communication, and went on to a master's course in the same subject. After the graduation, she chose to work full-time as a communication officer in a government institution. She had worked there for about 8 years, and then decided to resign from her job in order to become a stay-at-home mom. At that time, Astri was already married and had a baby under one year old. For Astri, it was better to stay at home since it was not easy to find a nanny who could also become a teacher for her daughter. It was Astri's choice to become the mother and the teacher at the same time.

Astri chose her own path, I would call it. She had freedom to become anyone or anything, and she decided the path she wanted to take for the future. At present, her daughter has already grown, reaching about 3 years old. Then Astri decided to do a job that can be done while caring for her daughter. She decided to start an online shop, selling stuff from home. After carefully examining many things, now she has an online shop that she promotes through social media such as Facebook or Instagram with the help of her husband, who is working as a journalist for a national newspaper. For Astri, it's all about choices.

As mentioned above, Astri clearly spoke her mind through her action. Right now she is a stay-at-home mom, with a main goal of becoming a mother and a teacher for her daughter. She was able to fulfill her role, partly because of the help of her husband. This case illustrates how modern life enables women to accomplish their goals. When she decided to do the online shopping activity, she chose part of the life path she would follow.

Many women might not have such a choice for their paths. Choosing a path is a rather important step for any women when they are faced with options. In modern society, women with high educational background are sometimes assumed to become full-time workers in the so-called "fancy environment". However, along with the advancement of technology and people's ways of thinking, most women are now gaining control over their own lives. Eventually, women will always be a part of the society itself.

It is clearly shown through the case example above what kind of roles women can pursue and achieve. Even in the modern era, still, it is women who shoulder the responsibilities of child care and development. The existence of many paths for women would offer more options for women to choose from. Although women may be relied on more to fulfill the role of child

education, men can also take part in the childcare. At present, Astri is so happy with her path. She might choose another path when her daughter becomes a bit older and more independent. We can say that women are now able to make choices on their own free will since democracy and freedom are also part of the current movement.

Women's empowerment is supposed to be not only about egalitarianism or such issues, but also about addressing much broader issues such as how women can choose their own paths.



Astri is packing fish products.