

# Woman Participation on Conservation, Study in Bunaken National Park, North Sulawesi, Indonesia

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## **1 Women participation on conservation, study in Bunaken National Park, North Sulawesi, Indonesia**

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### **1 ABSTRACT**

Empowering of coastal communities in the Bunaken National Park (BNP) area in the past was temporarily, but recently seems to be encouraged to achieve the goals of the management of National Parks where beside conservation value, will give also an economic value. Various social issues are part of challenge that must be overcome before empowerment can be done. One of the potential in the coastal community empowerment is gender. This study used the method of Participatory Action Research (PAR), where the researcher and the communities observed can work together in identifying problems in the community. The primary data were conducted through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and by a deep interviews using interview questioner list. While secondary data were gathered through authority offices and literature review. Respondents were 89 housewives. The study took place in northern and the southern part of BNP. Women's participation, especially in remote areas of small islands, are generally limited as a housewife who can only take care of family. Women in the BNP area are mostly work in the private sector (43.82%), and follow by farmer (41.57%), and only 5,6 % work in fisheries sectors. Women education in BNP area is generally at the level of junior secondary school (43%), primary school (36%), high school(14%), no school (5%), colleges (2%). Most of women in the BNP area have the awareness, motivation, and participation in the management of BNP. Based on their income level, women in northern BNP area have a high level of prosperity.

*Key words: Bunaken National Park, Women Participation, Conservation*

### **Introduction**

Bunaken National Park (BNP) has features such as unique and interesting coral reefs, a wide mangrove forests, and high natural beauty and diversity of aquatic flora and fauna, including of few are endemic species. Bunaken National Park is a tourist area that became a pride and an icon of the people of North Sulawesi, Indonesia because it has a national

conservation value, representative of Indonesian tropical water ecosystems. The park also has an international conservation value, considering its location in the center of marine biodiversity and coastal areas of Indo-Pacific. Bunaken National Park is a center of tourism destinations.

Empowerment of coastal communities in the BNP area in the past was temporarily, and will continue to be strongly encouraged to achieve the goals of the

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management of National Parks that based on the conservation value, but it will give an economic value. Various social issues are part of challenge that must be overcome before empowerment can be done. One of the potential in the coastal community empowerment is gender.

There has been an assumption of policy makers that there is an uniform desire of the community. However, this assumption was proven wrong because there are no differences in reaction to the specific desires and priorities between women and men. Terney in: Helen Blau and Feber (1992) stated that based on terminology of gender, women are socially and culturally different from men, in terms of positions, participations, and behavior. The differences can be seen in economic behavior, such as the decision whether women will work or not. The purpose of women working not only to maximize income with minimum cost, or "invest to limited resources for maximum results", but more determined by factors outside themselves such as the presence of children under five, permission from her husband, and others.

Pattern of capitalist development that relies on economic growth, is a hallmark of the development of patriarchy and gives a tremendous impact on the lives of women. An example, coastal women were never involved in decision making processes relating to natural resources in their territory, and not also involved in the economic process of the resources. So, the needs and interests of women are often ignored. Based on the reasons, the research activities carried out to find:

1. How far are women involved in the management of BNP either in the process of ecological conservation or in monitoring?
2. Is the involvement of women in the management of BNP provides a significant influence on their income?

### Research Methodology

This study used the method of Participatory Action Research (PAR), where the researcher and the communities observed can work together in identifying problems in the community. Full involvement of community members in every stage of research is very crucial, both at the stage of reflection, planning, action, and data analyzing.

The primary data collected in this study were conducted through Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

and by a deep interviews using interview questioner list. While secondary data were collected through authority offices and literatures. Unit of analysis in this research is the level of the individual.

Samples were taken based on the stratified random sampling. The consideration was taken on the geographical location and populations were not evenly distributed in one village. The unit of analysis in this study is the household. Respondents were 89 housewives.

Inductive analysis of qualitative research has been used to see patterns or relationships of the data collected. The analysis process will begin by reviewing the data obtained in the field from a variety of sources or information, either through observation, FGDs, in-depth interviews and documentation that has been collected. The details of these processes are as follows: organizing data, data management, and data verification

The study took place in northern and the southern part of BNP (Figure 1). Data collection was conducted at several villages on August to October 2009.

## Results and Discussion

### Activities of Women in BNP

Women's participation, especially in remote areas of small islands, are generally as a housewife who can only take care of family. Many reasons why women do not generally have high self-sufficiency. Dependency on husband as a head of family and generated of family income, is very dominant. Actually, from the aspect of time availability they should be able to help her home life, especially in generating income.

Most of the respondent are work in private sectors and they involved in the management program of BNP. The involvement can be direct as a member of management group of BNP (Table 1 and Figure 4), or indirect such as participation in mangrove planting activities, cleaning beaches, or in cleaning environment. The BNP also provided information through social / religious activities such as the PKK (Government Family Welfare program), churches, mosques, and others. Because of economical advantages, the community is racing to create employment in the development of nature tourism supporting activities in the Park, such as:

- Opening homestay, restaurants, or work as tour guides.



- Making or selling souvenirs and snacks.
- Few of them were work in sea transportation.

### Women Job

1 Women in the BNP area are mostly work in the private sector (43.82%), and follow by farmer (41.57%), and only 5,6 % work in fisheries sectors. This figures shown that job oriented of the women in the BNP area for their livelihoods is still on the land. Activities as fishermen are still dominated by men.

The pattern of women's participation in the economic sectors is significantly different with men. Women worked in sectors which are not the primary sectors for men. The main employment in the island is related to fisheries and coconut plantations. But in terms of benefit from the efforts made, there were no significant differences between men and women incomes. They enjoy together in the family level.

### Education Level

Community education level is strong related to the level of the successful of management of National Parks, and the mor awareness of the importance of BNP management. Women education in BNP area is generally at the level of junior secondary school (43%), primary school (36%), high school (14%), no school (5%), colleges (2%). Most of women in the BNP area have the awareness, motivation, and insight in their participation in the management of BNP.

### Level of Income and Expenditure

Income levels of women in the BNP area were categorized into high, because it is close to and above the 1 minimum wage (IDR 1,000,000) per month.

Based on their income level, women in BNP area has a high level of prosperity, especially in the Northern BNP. Thus, the advantages motivated women to prevent the natural resources of BNP area from any damages.

### 2 Participation Rate of Women In Management of Bunaken National Park

2 Participation rate of women in management of BNP were measured by looking at the involvement of women through conservation activities directly or indirectly, and economic activities which directly provide additional income of women.

The results of respondents (from total of 89 respondents), actively participate in conservation of BNP. The moral consciousness arised from the understanding that BNP will provide great benefits

to the community (100% of respondents). The such understanding they got from seminars, lectures, counseling conducted by various parties such as Bunaken National Park Board, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Science UNSRAT, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Government of North Sulawesi, Manado City Government, NGOs, and others. Benefits that they perceive are additional income, new job, clean environment, many guests, can learn a foreign language, and pride.

In economic aspect, the level of direct public participation is still relatively small. In the southern BNP, there is no economic activity is related to the management of BNP (Figure 4).

This can be understood that activities related to marine tourism is still focused on the northern BNP (Bunaken, Siladen, and Manado Tua islands).

### Strategy Household Welfare Improvement Society in Bunaken National Park

Policy strategy to improve the welfare of communities in BNP. should be suitable and applicable to the needs of the community. Community in accepting the temporally programs, should be grouped based on the kind of business. The routine training in terms of improving the quality of human resources, and the technology resource management around BNP including the utilization of permitted fishery products, product diversification, improved quality and continuity of product and market expansion are still needed. This is to streamline existing programs, which empowering the communities, such as: souvenirs, T-shirt printing, cakes sales and better marketing. The access is also the same to quality of processed products according to market demand for increased revenue.

The existence of government policies to provide capital in various community economic empowerment programs especially women should be funding for productive activity through joint ventures or cooperative group with a low interest rates credit guarantee system. Also provide a period of one year to process credit installment, this is more an opportunity for women to have a bigger capital. Development of programs that without gender-bias has a great significance important in the coastal area, not only because of the more population of women, but also because of women have a very strategic role in managing BNP.

Participation of women in productive activities in the coastal areas has also been proven to be able to

maintain the economic sustainability of the household. The role of women in BNP has a good opportunity because commonly their husband gave their income to wife. This is also give responsibility to women to manage the family finances. This would make women more independent and confidence to manage housework and also to participate in the conservation activities of BNP. So, those internal supports will be more optimal if intervention programs by the government also touched the women in BNP.

Based on the identification of internal factors and internal issues analysis and problem-solving strategies of gender roles in society of BNP, using the SWOT analysis recommendations to decision-makers, in order to improve the welfare of community in BNP, can be decided as following:

1. Improving the quality of fishermen through training, skills, business management, entrepreneurship and access to good quality of fishery products or fishery products souvenirs, as well as

agriculture.

2. Improving access to capital resources through joint business group.
3. Increasing responsive and gender sensitive program.
4. Increasing understanding of the family of training on gender roles in family welfare
5. Improving product quality and creating a good market

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

- Women's empowerment through economic approach, by developing the potential of women, can produced a variety of potential winning products. Supporting of management and entrepreneurship as well as appropriate technology, leads to increasing product quality, and furthermore will encourage the role of women in generating family income.
- Women in generally knew and well involved directly and indirectly on the conservation, especially management of BNP, because of the benefits of BNP on their business.
- Women also encouraged communities to create employment in tourism business in the Park, such as homestay, restaurants, tour guides and making souvenir and cakes.
- Participation of women in productive activities in the coastal areas has also been proven that women be able to maintain the economic sustainability of the household. The role of women in BNP was very significant because of the gender equality perception in the community, which made women more independent and confidence to manage housework and also to



Fig. 1 Bunaken National Park

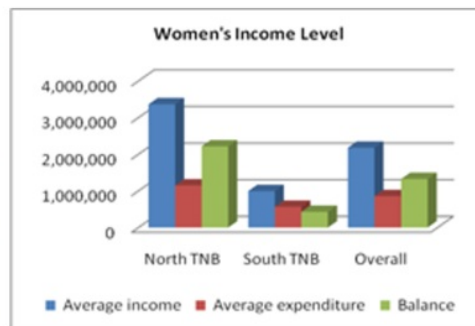


Fig. 2 Income Level Women In BNP Regions

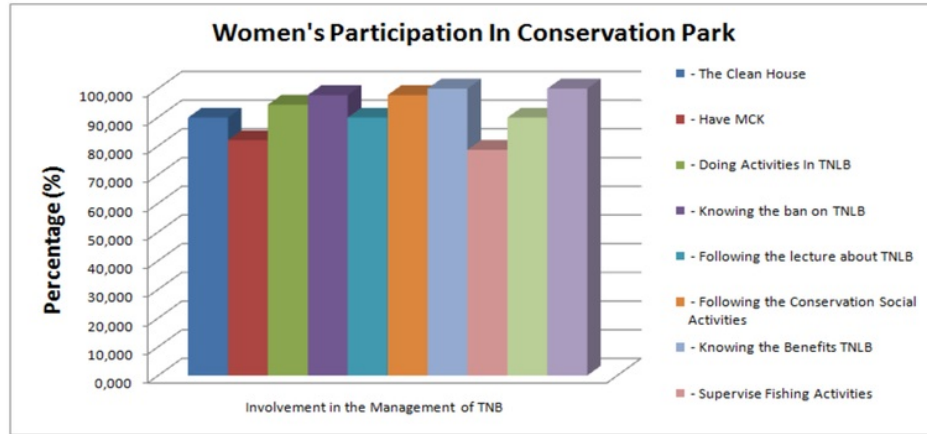


Fig. 3 Participation Rate of Women In Conservation of BNP

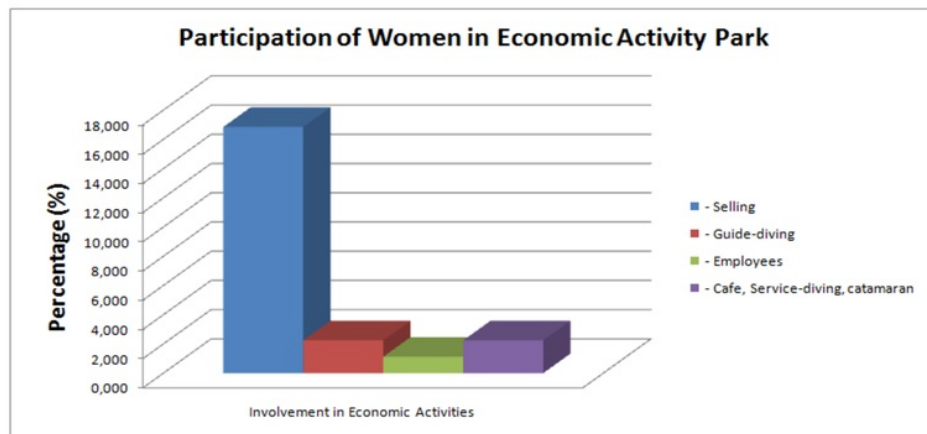


Fig. 4 Participation Rate of Women In Economic Activity in BNP

participate in earning family income as well as in the conservation activities of BNP.

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