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Fiqh Teachers' Understanding in Gayo Lues on the Dual Role of Female Civil Servants

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Abstract

In the perspective of *fiqh*, both classical and modern, domestic work such as cooking, washing, cleaning the house, and so on is not the absolute obligation of the wife. Therefore, such work should not be entirely imposed upon her. However, female *fiqh* teachers of civil servants (ASN) in Gayo Lues, despite having professional responsibilities outside the home—where both husband and wife spend relatively equal time working in the public sphere—still bear the entire burden of domestic work, resulting in a double workload for the wife. This phenomenon of dual roles among female *fiqh* teachers of civil servants attracted the researcher's attention to conduct this study, analysing how their understanding of *fiqh* influences women's roles in the household. This study employs a qualitative method, with data analysis carried out through a descriptive-analytical approach using phenomenology. Data were collected through in-depth interviews as primary sources and literature study as secondary sources. The findings reveal that the dual roles of female ASN in Gayo Lues consist of public and domestic roles: as civil servants and breadwinners, while simultaneously acting as domestic workers. Almost all of them understand that domestic work is not the absolute obligation of wives, and that household responsibilities should be shared fairly in accordance with Islamic principles. However, this understanding has not yet succeeded in changing the unequal division of labour within households. Their understanding of *fiqh* has little influence on shaping their household roles, being overshadowed by cultural systems, gender norms, psychological pressures, economic conditions, and a less inclusive religious understanding. Therefore, the researcher recommends positioning *fiqh* not merely as a set of normative laws, but as a means of social transformation capable of adapting to the realities of contemporary women's lives.

Keywords: *Dual Role; Fiqh Understanding, Female Civil Servants.*

A. Introduction

In our daily lives, we constantly interact with roles, rights, and obligations. As family members, citizens, or workers, we have specific roles that carry with them rights and obligations. Roles, rights, and obligations are interrelated and inseparable concepts. Awareness of the relationship between the three helps us behave responsibly and respect the rights of others.

When a man and a woman are bound in a marriage relationship, they will have rights and obligations that they did not have before (Saebani, 2020). Men have rights

and obligations in their role as husbands, and women have rights and obligations in their role as wives (Soekanto, 2016). In this context, rights refer to what a person should receive or be entitled to from another. Obligations, on the other hand, are things a person must do and fulfil. Obligations exist because of the rights inherent in the legal entity (Syarifuddin Amir, 2017). The role of women in the household has always been a matter of debate between religious and cultural norms that develop in a society.

Gayo Lues is a regency in Aceh Province that remains deeply rooted in Islamic customs and culture. Its people adhere firmly to Islamic teachings in their daily lives, but in social practice, custom often dominates in determining women's roles within the household. The culture holds a stereotype that women's roles and responsibilities within the household are the three Ms: cooking, caring for the children, and caring for the children. The perception also affixed to women in the household, whether wives or daughters, is that they are responsible for the kitchen, the well, and the bed (DPK, Putri, S., 2019). This term describes the role assigned to women in the household as domestic workers. Traditionally, women have been held responsible for all domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, caring for children, and so on.

Roles always carry with them rights and obligations. The role of women, perceived by society as domestic workers, contrasts with the notion that household chores such as cooking, serving food, washing clothes, cleaning, and so on are women's responsibilities. There is also a perception that domestic work is "a woman's nature." This so-called nature reflects the stratification of women. All household chores are considered an absolute obligation and responsibility of a woman within the household. Therefore, it is considered taboo for men, who act as husbands, to perform household chores.

In this increasingly advanced era, many women are working in the public sphere, due to educational and economic factors, among other factors. Some women work in offices, such as civil servants (ASN), in factories, as entrepreneurs, and even as successful women in the public sector, becoming regents, governors, mayors, and even heads of state.

In Gayo Lues, the number of women working as State Civil Apparatus (ASN) has increased (Data from the Regional Civil Service Agency of Gayo Lues Regency, 2023). As civil servants (ASN), they certainly have a great responsibility in carrying out government duties and public services. A civil servant is required to be professional, competent, and highly dedicated to their work. However, the responsibility and workload as a civil servant does not free or change the role of women in the household, namely as domestic workers. In addition to work as civil servants, they must still do household chores such as cooking, serving food, washing clothes, cleaning the house, taking care of children and so on without the involvement of their husbands, because their role as a wife is considered a domestic worker. This is different from men who work in the public sphere, for example as civil servants, men will only carry out the role of civil servants, but not as domestic workers.

This indicates a role conflict within Gayo Lues households, namely an imbalance in the roles of men and women. A woman working as a civil servant (ASN) assumes a dual role within the household, requiring both public work and household chores.

In Islamic law, namely in the basic principles of *fiqh*, scholars have explained the roles and responsibilities of women in the household. In several *fiqh* books including al-Mughni by Ibnu Qudamah, al-Umm by Imam Syafi'i, Bidayatul Mujtahid by Ibnu Rushd, Fathul Qarib by Sheikh Ibnu Qasim al-Ghazi, the book Fathul Mu'in by Sheikh Zainuddin al-Malibari, Majmu' al-Muhadzab by Imam al-Syirazi, Hasyiyah al-Bajuri, Nihayat al-Zain by Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani explains that household work is not a woman's absolute obligation, but rather a man's responsibility as a husband. Likewise, *fiqh* scholars believe that household work is not the wife's responsibility alone but the husband and wife's responsibility, so it must be done together.

This shows that there is a contradiction or difference regarding the role of women or the division of tasks in the household between the social construction of society in Gayo Lues and Islamic Law, namely that contained in the Fiqh book, especially regarding Domestic Work (Household Work) which is the reason why women carry a dual role, both in classical *fiqh* and modern *fiqh*.

Women who work as civil servants are women who have completed at least a high school education. Female civil servants who work as *fiqh* teachers have studied *fiqh* in their education. The female civil servants who will be studied in this research are female civil servants who work as *fiqh* teachers, where their understanding of *fiqh* is strongly suspected to be very good. Therefore, the phenomenon of the dual role of female civil servants as *fiqh* teachers in the household attracted the author's attention and made the author feel it was important to conduct research on their Dual Role in the household from a fiqh perspective. Therefore, the author focused on female civil servants who work as *fiqh* teachers, so that the author could analyse how their understanding of *fiqh* influences their role in the household. From here, it is hoped that the factors that cause women to remain domestic workers even though they have worked outside, namely as civil servants, can be discovered, whether religious, customary, psychological, economic, and soon.

This research will not only explore how *fiqh* addresses women's domestic responsibilities and how socio-cultural factors shape perceptions regarding women's roles in Gayo Lues society, this research will also examine how the influence and role of *fiqh* on women's roles in households in Gayo Lues. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how Islam and local customs interact in shaping women's roles and how women in Gayo Lues can obtain justice in the division of household tasks according to Islamic principles and find answers regarding how *fiqh* plays a role in shaping the status or position of women in the household, especially female civil servants who work as *fiqh* teachers in Gayo Lues.

B. Methods

Data collection was conducted through field research. The author observed, and conducted direct interviews regarding the dual role of female ASN (*fiqh* teachers) in households in Gayo Lues and their knowledge of *fiqh*. This resulted in data on the dual role of female ASN in the household within Gayo Lues culture and the influence and role of their understanding of *fiqh*. Furthermore, library research was conducted by reviewing various literature containing material on the roles, rights, and obligations of husbands and wives in the household. The material on roles, rights, and obligations is explained in detail in several books written by scholars, including Fathul Qarib, Fathul Mu'in, Majmu' Syarah Al-Muhadzdzab, al-Bada'i, al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah al-Muhadzdzab, and Bidayatul Mujtahid.

The subjects of this study were female civil servants (ASN) who work as *fiqh* teachers in Gayo Lues Regency, with a sample size of 10–15 informants, as many qualitative research methodologists recommend. John Latam explains that approximately 10 informants can reach data saturation (Creswell. JW., 2019). To enrich and strengthen the data, this study also involved community leaders, traditional leaders, and religious leaders in Gayo Lues to gain a broader perspective on women's roles in the household from a *fiqh* perspective.

This research uses a qualitative approach (social construction) and literature study (*fiqh* perspective). The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to deeply understand the social construction and meaning of the experiences of female ASN who work as *fiqh* teachers in carrying out dual roles in the household, especially in the cultural context of the Gayo Lues community, and analyse them from a *fiqh* perspective. The phenomenological approach is used to explore the subjective experiences of informants by placing their perceptions, beliefs, and interpretations of the social conditions of female ASN who have to divide their time between responsibilities as civil servants and as wives or mothers in the family. Similarly, explained by Edmund Husserl, a major figure in phenomenology, this approach requires researchers to "hang judgment" (epoch) on existing assumptions in order to capture the essence of experience purely. Thus, phenomenology is not just photographing external reality, but rather delving into the structure of consciousness and meaning formed by the subject of the experience (Edmund Husserl, 1983).

Data analysis in this study employed a descriptive-analytical method with a phenomenological approach (Manan, 2015, 2021). Phenomenology was used to explore women's experiences in households in Gayo Lues, while descriptive-analytical analysis was used to examine the relationship between *fiqh* principles and customs or evolving social constructions. Data analysis in this study was conducted in stages through data reduction from interviews and observations to identify key themes related to the dual role of female civil servants in the household. The data was then categorized based on *fiqh* and social construction perspectives to examine similarities and differences. The next stage was data analysis using dual role theory and *fiqh*

principles to understand the interaction between religious norms and social realities. The final interpretation is carried out by comparing the research findings with *fiqh* literature and previous research results in order to obtain comprehensive and argumentative conclusions.

C. Findings and Discussion

A. Households in the Gayo Lues Community

Soelaeman states that household structures can take the form of nuclear families and extended families, depending on the kinship system and culture of the society in question (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). In Gayo Lues, family structures tend to be nuclear, creates a household structure that positions men as heads of households and women as domestic workers. Patrilineal kinship system, where lineage and inheritance follow the father's line. Lineage is recognized through the clan, a social group or clan passed down from father to son. Daughters, upon marriage, traditionally "join" their husband's family. Ideally, domicile after marriage is patrilocal, meaning the wife resides in the husband's family territory. Within this structure, sons inherit their father's clan and have social responsibilities to the family (Koentjaraningrat, 2020). Daughters, upon marriage, traditionally "join" their husband's family. Ideally, domicile after marriage is patrilocal, meaning the wife resides in the husband's family territory. The position of family members, is generally dominated by the husband, because the husband's status is as head of the household or leader of the household so that a husband is positioned as a *reje*, where all other family members must obey him.

Women's involvement in economic activities outside the home has given rise to the phenomenon of dual roles, where they must balance their responsibilities as public workers and domestic workers. Although women's contributions to the family economy have increased, the burden of domestic work remains their primary responsibility. In this context, women's dual roles pose a challenge that requires attention, particularly in creating a more equitable division of labour between husband and wife (Center for Gender and Child Studies, 2025). Because this is very likely to cause physical and emotional stress, and affect the balance between work and family life.

B. The Role of Women in Gayo Lues Society

Overall, the role of women in Gayo Lues is shaped by a complex social construct, influenced by the interaction of traditional values, religious teachings, and socioeconomic developments. Social transformations occurring through education and the economy have opened up new opportunities for women, but these changes remain slow due to limitations imposed by deeply rooted patriarchal values. Therefore, strengthening the role of women in Gayo Lues requires a holistic approach, including gender-equality-based education, a reinterpretation of women-friendly

religious values, and strengthening women's capacity to organize and participate in the public sphere.

In the socio-cultural context of the Gayo Lues community, women face the reality of a highly demanding dual role. They are not only responsible for household chores but are also required to actively participate in the public sphere, such as working as teachers, farmers, traders, health workers, or government employees. Although women's involvement in the public sphere has increased along with social and economic changes, patriarchal cultural structures remain firmly embedded. Unspokenly, Gayo culture places full domestic responsibilities on women, even when they also work outside the home (Karmila Maryam, n.d.). As a result, Gayo Lues women who work outside the home are still required to cook, clean, care for children, and serve their husbands, without any significant participation from men in household chores. This is a structural problem that often goes unnoticed as a form of gender inequality because it is considered normal in local culture.

This situation demonstrates that the modernization of women's roles in the public sphere has not been matched by a cultural transformation in the division of domestic labour (Dewi Agustia & N. Kusnadi., n.d.). This is evidence that the construction of Gayo culture still places women in a subordinate position, where their success in the public sphere does not reduce traditional expectations of their domestic role.

C. Female ASN in Gayo Lues

1. Subject Profile

The author will describe the profiles of the informants, consisting of 10 (ten) female State Civil Apparatus (ASN) from various educational institutions in Gayo Lues. Seven of them work as *fiqh* teachers and three of them work as PAI (Islamic Religious Education) teachers, each of them has a history of intensive *fiqh* education.

2. The Dual Role of Female Civil Servants in Gayo Lues

Gayo Lues women's economic contributions have not been accompanied by a reconfiguration of domestic roles. The division of household labour has not undergone significant transformation, so the double burden carried by women is seen and assessed as normal or even necessary in local culture.

A wife or mother working as a civil servant and fulfilling a dual role can be assumed to carry a heavier burden than other women who don't have public work responsibilities and focus on domestic duties. This situation is likely to give rise to several problems related to both household matters and public duties.

3. Factors Affecting the Dual Role of Female Civil Servant Fiqh Teachers in Gayo Lues

Female civil servants in Gayo Lues are influenced by complex social structures and value systems. These dual roles stem from cultural structures, gender norms, mental stress, economic conditions, and a less-than-inclusive understanding of religion. These five factors are not isolated but interconnected and reinforce each other, making dual roles a natural and challenging process to change.

Cultural factors are rooted in society's views of women's traditional roles, mental factors relate to the fear of speaking out, economic factors encourage women to work while also taking care of the home, gender bias creates an unequal division of domestic labour, and religious misunderstandings exacerbate women's burdens under the guise of religious obligations. All of these factors interact and reinforce the continued dual role of female civil servants in Gayo Lues.

4. The Impact of Dual Roles

The results of this study indicate that there are various impacts from the dual roles carried out by female Civil Servants (ASN) in Gayo Lues, both physical and psychological impacts. Based on interviews and observations with all informants, they said that they often feel tired due to the large amount of work they have to do every day. In addition to carrying out responsibilities as ASN which requires discipline, they also have to do housework every day, this causes their energy to be drained even more. However, amidst this fatigue, the majority of them tend to not express and convey their complaints openly (do not dare to speak up) because there is a fear of being seen as unable to carry out their roles optimally, both as employees and as mothers.

This state of exhaustion not only impacts the informants physically but also psychologically. One informant said, "Sometimes I want to protest, but it's uncomfortable. I end up keeping it to myself, often crying when I'm alone. "When alone, feelings of stress and inner pressure often arise, as you have to juggle two roles simultaneously without enough space to rest or relax. However, these feelings tend to be suppressed and not expressed.

D. The Influence of Fiqh on Dual Roles

1. Husband and Wife's Understanding of Fiqh in the Household

The research results show that all female civil servant (ASN) *fiqh* teachers in Gayo Lues have a basic understanding of the *fiqh* of women's roles in the household. Almost all of them understand that Islamic teachings regulate women's rights and responsibilities proportionally, both in the domestic and social spheres. However, this understanding is normative and has not yet motivated them to make changes in the division of household duties.

2. The Role and Influence of Fiqh

One powerful factor weakening the influence of this understanding of Islamic jurisprudence is the local culture, which remains deeply rooted in patriarchal values.

In Gayo culture, women are viewed as obligated to serve and manage the household, even though they also work in the public sphere. This culture is deeply rooted and passed down through generations, making it difficult to change through normative religious understanding alone. In practice, these cultural values more strongly shape the mind-set and behaviour of women and men regarding the division of roles within the home.

Beyond culture, gender inequality is also a major barrier preventing women from escaping the burden of dual roles. Informants revealed that despite working and contributing economically, their domestic work is minimally appreciated. Their role as workers is often seen as merely supplementary, while the primary responsibility for the household remains entirely theirs. This inequality creates multiple layers of pressure and places women in a difficult position to advocate for role justice within the household, as mandated by Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), or Islamic legal principles. Thus, the case of female *fiqh* teachers who carry this double burden is a clear illustration that progressive religious knowledge is not necessarily able to change social practices directly without structural changes, support from partners, and collective courage to shift norms that are unfair to women.

E. Analysis and Interpretation

1. Implications of Findings

The findings of this study imply that religious understanding, particularly the understanding of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) regarding women's roles in the household, is not yet strong enough to serve as a basis for social change in the lives of female civil servants in Gayo Lues. This suggests that religious understanding does not stand alone but is heavily influenced by the cultural structures and social values that develop within society. When patriarchal culture is dominant, the values of gender justice in Islam tend to be neglected. Therefore, a more contextual and down-to-earth approach to understanding Islamic jurisprudence is urgently needed so that religious teachings can become a liberating force, rather than the opposite.

Another implication of this research is the need for mental strengthening and empowerment of women so that their religious understanding extends beyond discourse and comprehension, but can become a driving force in building awareness and courage to advocate for justice within the family. Without mental resilience and social support, progressive religious understanding will be unable to change the realities of inequality. Therefore, capacity-building programs for female civil servants, whether through training, religious discussion communities, or institutional policies, are crucial in assisting and supporting them in fulfilling their roles in a balanced manner.

D. Conclusion

Female civil servants (ASN) and Islamic law (jurisprudence) teachers in Gayo Lues face dual roles or burdens in their daily lives. These dual roles include public roles (as ASN teachers, farmers, and traders) and domestic roles (domestic workers). While husbands and wives spend relatively equal time and energy fulfilling their responsibilities in the public sphere, domestic work, such as laundry, cooking, childcare, cleaning, and preparing the family's daily needs, falls entirely on the wife.

Nearly all informants in this study understood the concept of women's roles in the household from a *fiqh* perspective. They understood that, according to *fiqh*, housework is not the wife's absolute obligation; according to Islamic principles, the division of household duties must be balanced according to agreement. Only one informant understood that household chores such as cooking, serving food, washing, cleaning, and so on are a wife's obligations.

Their understanding of religion, particularly their understanding of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), regarding women's roles in the household, is not yet strong enough to serve as a basis for social change in the lives of female civil servants (ASN) in Gayo Lues. Their knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) does not automatically transform deeply rooted social practices. It can be argued that their understanding of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) plays no role or influence in shaping their status or roles within the household. Although they understand the balance of duties in accordance with Islamic principles, this understanding is not yet strong enough to serve as a basis for social change. This is influenced by cultural systems, gender norms, mental stress, economic conditions, and a less-than-inclusive understanding of religion. Therefore, for Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) to play a role in empowering women, particularly in the context of female civil servants (ASN) in Gayo Lues who experience dual roles, it needs to be positioned not merely as a collection of normative laws, but as a tool for social transformation capable of adapting to the realities of women's lives today.

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