

# Female Teachers Holding the Position of Principal (Case Study of Females in Pursuing Career in School)

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**Abstract** The purpose of this study is to reveal the condition of female teachers in the highest position in school as the principal by applying the qualitative approach of case study model. The technique of data gathering used is purposive sampling by snowball method. By this technique, the researcher is expected to obtain adequate key informants. To secure the data validity, triangulation of data sources is applied. The data analyzing technique uses interactive models of analysis having three components, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing and Analysis of Model Gender Sara H. Longwee. The result of study shows that there are two factors inhibiting teacher career development, namely (1) Internal factors: Female teachers' low aspiration and motivation so that they tend to be complacent with the condition achieved so far. Other possibility is that female teachers are worried that the higher position would increase the load and responsibility; (2) External factors: The culture plays a significant role and influences people's mindset, i.e. the position of head is only held by male. Even if the regulations related to structural positions do not hamper female, due to competition with male teachers and the limited number of positions available if compared to the number of teachers meeting the requirements, the number of females holding the position of principal is still low.

**Keywords:** *female teacher, position of principal, case study*

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## 1. Introduction

In Law Number 14 of 2005 of RI is specified that the national development in education is a means to enhance human aptitude and skill, hence the quality of human resources highly depends on the quality of education. Besides, education is the right of every citizen in order to educate the nation's life and develop human beings who observe and fear God Almighty and who have noble character, knowledge and skill, physical and spiritual health. This could be materialized if the existing elements are qualified, related to the education participants, educators, educating manpower, operational funds, means and infrastructures.

Teacher as the main player in education process is a kind of occupation directly related to education world, a kind of occupation largely demanded and engaged by female.

Samarinda as the capital city of East Kalimantan Province has 219 buildings of SD (Elementary School), 73 buildings of SMP (Junior High School), 34 buildings of SMA (Senior High School), and 40 buildings of SMK (Vocational High School) scattered in ten subdistricts (National Education of Samarinda City, 2014). From the data of number of SD, SMP and SMA in Samarinda City, the success of education process should also be supported

by the existing role of teachers in the teaching-learning process. The data obtained from the survey show the number of female teachers in Samarinda City of 4,912 persons (56.98%), while the number of male teachers is only 3,708 persons (43.01%). This condition indicates that the percentage of female teachers is higher than that of male teachers. Although the number of female teachers is higher than that of male teachers, the fact is that only a very small number of female teachers holds the position of principal.

Of 8,620 teachers in Samarinda City, 206 males and only 71 females hold the position of principal. This selection for the principals is certainly very tight, hence the gap between the number of males and females is apparent. This striking difference in the opportunity of holding the school highest position certainly has many causative factors. Whereas in fact the number of female teachers that is higher than the number of male teachers serves as the productive potential and the main asset in holding the highest position in school.

The female empowerment program performed since 23 years ago, precisely starting from 1978, was originally intended for encouraging females to enable them playing their double roles properly as family builder, breadwinner and development player (Mosse, 1996). In the course of time, female empowerment program has been directed to materializing equal partnership between males and

females in the life of having family, society, nation and country ( Hesti Wijaya, 1996; Syaukani, 1999: 43).

Principally, female empowerment is directed to developing and maturing various potentials available in females to enable them utilizing the rights and opportunities in development resources equal to those of males (Soewondo, 1984; Leila Ahmed, 2000). By the existing empowerment performed gradually and continuously, equality and justice of gender in the life of having family, society, nation and country could be materialized ( Fakh, 1996:27; Zuhayatin, 2002:65).

Having entered the two decades of performing female development, today we could see the progress of females in various roles and positions. This diversity indicates that females are in fact the same resources for playing actively in all life aspects particularly the education world, considering the potential of female teachers that is higher than that of male teachers (Notosusanto,1997).

Fitzgerald & Crites state that there is no fundamental difference in career development between males and females, however the career difference between males and

females becomes complicated due to the existing difference of socialization in females. Further it is also specified that the career aspiration of females is lower than the potentials they have, because it has been focused on gender stereotype career (Brown and Brooks, 1991).

By studying this condition carefully, i.e. the existing position gap between female and male teachers, it is necessary to conduct a deep study on the factors inhibiting the career of female teachers in holding the position of principal. The inhibiting factors may be inborn in the teachers or may also come from outside.

The study was conducted in Samarinda city. This selection is based on consideration that Samarinda as the province capital city is an education center and there are quite many female teachers in all education levels, in government/public schools as well as in non-government/private schools. Based on the above clarification, a deep study is required for describing the inhibiting factors causing the opportunity of female teachers in holding the position of principal is very low. Below is the table on teachers and principals.

**Table 1. Data of Teachers and Principals in Samarinda City**

No.	Education Level	Teachers		Principals	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
1.	SD/MI (Elementary School)	1170	2403	198	39
2.	SMP/MTs (Junior High School)	1213	1309	179	15
3.	SMA/MA (Senior High School)	1325	1100	54	16
	Total	3.708	4812	431	70

## 2. Method of Study

The data of study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data are the places and events related to the existence of teachers in schools gathered from observation, interview and focus group discussion for eliciting teachers' experience in pursuing career in school. Secondary data are related to statistical data on the number of teachers separated by male and female, data of ranking, data of working period, data of teacher education, results of related studies formerly conducted.

The technique of data gathering used in this study is purposive sampling by snowball method. By this technique, the researcher is expected to get adequate key informants. To secure the data validity, triangulation of data sources is applied (Muhadjir, 2000:165).

The data analyzing technique uses an interactive model of analysis having three components, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1985). Data reduction is a process of selection, focusing, simplifying and abstraction of rough data found in the field record. The field data are in the forms of results of interview or summary of Focus Group Discussion and secondary data transcribed in the form of report, then reduced to select significant aspects.

In the beginning has been explained that this study is focused on questions which answers are sought, particularly those related to the following: (1) the factors designating the career of female teachers (analyses of documents/government regulations on the requirements or criteria in pursuing career in the position of principal; (2) internal factors causing difference in opportunity between female teachers and male teachers in pursuing career in

the position of principal; and (3) external factors causing difference in opportunity between female teachers and male teachers in pursuing career in the position of principal.

Regarding the above requirements, the data are screened by the main respondents/key informants, namely teachers who have reached the position of principle or vice principal and have held a strategic position in school and teachers who have not become the principal but have met the requirements for promotion to hold a strategic position in school. In providing these data, some techniques are used, namely:

- 1) Detailed interview (interview guideline) and observation, used for screening cases related to teacher's career inhibited by the prevailing regulations.
- 2) Questionnaire, the researcher distributes a questionnaire related to the condition of the teacher concerned.
- 3) Focus group discussion, after selection and sorting of the data, essential data are then discussed to be used as the materials for analysis (Hadjar, 1996).

Data presentation is an assembled information organization enabling conclusion of the study. In this case the data presented cover various kinds of matrixes, drawings or schemes, networks, relatedness of activities and tables. Conclusion drawing is organizing the data gathered so that conclusion can be drawn.

Besides interactive analysis, analysis of model gender Sara H. Longwee by "Female Empowerment Framework" is also used, focusing on the significance of development for females (Rahayu Relawati, 2011:119). Female empowerment covers three aspects: (1) capacity building, namely building of female capacity; (2) cultural change,

namely cultural change favoring females; (3) structural adjustment, namely structural adjustment favoring females. Empowerment efforts are focused on achievement of people's welfare by gender equality. There are 5 (five) criteria of analysis applied in this method, namely: (1) welfare; (2) access; (3) awareness; (4) participation; and (5) control.

### 3. Result of Study and Discussion

There are two factors influencing the prospect of career development of female teachers in achieving the highest position in school, i.e. internal and external factors.

#### 3.1. Internal Factors

The internal factors influencing the career development of women as teacher cover the purpose of women in working, husband's support and children's support.

Females working outside the house certainly play double roles, i.e. performing public work on one side and being demanded to perform domestic works (hence causing a very great work load). This condition greatly affects the career development of females, however if these double roles are addressed positively (in the sense that the working females receive full support from family), the objectives of working females such as actualizing oneself (23.33%), increasing perception (51.33%) and fulfilling family needs (25.33%) no more serve as inhibiting factors for the career of females, instead they may become motivation in developing the career of females as teacher.

If the respondents' answers or comments are studied carefully, the choice of working outside the house (public sector) is very good in the sense it is highly supportive as stimulating factor to increase achievement to a higher level, i.e. holding the highest position in school as the principal. However in reality, the opportunity is less utilized, and even less demanded by female teachers for the reason that they are satisfied with the double works and roles carried so that they become a very heavy burden of work and females are not motivated to promote their career.

A woman working in public sector certainly needs the family's full support (husband and children), because if a woman works without the family's support, this internal factor will become an inhibiting factor for the woman's career development.

If studied carefully, the support given by the husband will be the main asset to promote or develop the achievement of female teachers one level higher. The support given by the husband can be specified as follows:

##### 3.1.1. Support of Husband

The husband's support to his working wife is as follows: 60% husbands respond that they are greatly supportive and 38% husbands respond that supporting their working wives is a proof or the main asset for their career promotion, however this condition is not or not properly benefited by some female teachers. By the support of data of 150 respondents as the samples of study, only 1 person has become the principal and 4 persons as vice principals. This condition is very ironical and much contradictory

with the available husbands' substantial support. In other words, female teachers are still not motivated to hold the highest structural position in school.

- 1) A woman working outside the house certainly has income. By this income, the woman also participates in the family economy. However, woman's participation does not have a positive response from all husbands. Only 44% husbands are happy if their wives have income and 52% husbands feel just indifferent. This response reflects the husbands' ego that their wives also have income. This high response (52%) is influenced by the cultural factor that the main breadwinner is the man. Therefore, a woman having higher income is just responded indifferently, or more extreme, the husband is afraid of being rivaled. But this extreme response is not found, and only 4% did not give their response.
- 2) A woman who works as a form of self-actualization is demanded to exist more in performing her job. When actualizing herself, any obstacle may arise from the family (husband and children). To eliminate this obstacle, the husband's support is needed for a woman assigned out of town. The husband's support (reaching 87.33%) is the main asset for a woman who works to exist more in developing her career. If the husband does not support or give permission to her when assigned out of town, it will certainly inhibit the wife in actualizing herself. Compared to the high support given by husbands, the 2% respondents giving their answer of not supporting does not really affect female teachers or play the role in developing their career.
- 3) A woman who works will certainly have relation with people who are not members of her family. Therefore she needs her husband's support of trusting her in associating with her friends/colleagues. The result of study shows the existing positive condition by the response of 60% husbands having a neutral (indifferent) attitude and 33.30% husbands being happy to have their wives working. The husband's trust is very significant, because if the husband does not trust her, it will inhibit her activities.
- 4) Someone will be successful in achieving the highest career, if she is interested in doing her job. Most teachers teaching in Samarinda city have had this interest in the job, whether those teaching elementary school as well as those teaching junior and senior high school. It is proven that female teachers in Samarinda city start teaching because of their interest in the job. In general they start teaching from class II and within the term of office between 5 to 26 years or less than 30 years, they generally can reach class IV.
- 5) Someone's interest in completing the job can affect her performance, ultimately can increase her job career. This is also found in the job of teaching performed by teachers in Samarinda city who in general enjoy their profession as teachers.

This is shown by the classes and positions generally achieved by female teachers, namely class III and IVa. However, regarding the desire to hold the structural position as the principal, most of them are not interested to hold that position. It means female teachers in Samarinda in general have not taken the opportunities they have, such as interest in the job and enjoying the job they have had, whereas in fact it could serve as motivation for self-improvement, hence promoting self-quality.

- 6) The desire of female teachers to promote self-quality is shown by the desire of most teachers in Samarinda city to improve their knowledge by participating in upgrading, training, seminar, etc. Even though they are already over 40 years, they still have desire to promote their formal education in university. This is shown from the high interest of candidate teachers of Elementary School and students of PGSD (Education for Elementary School Teachers) taking the qualification program organized by Mulawarman University and Open University. Even the field condition indicates that there are still many teachers in rural areas of East Kalimantan who desire to take higher education, even by their own expense, however they are still unable to realize it due to the limited number of teaching manpower in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.

### 3.1.2. Support of Children

The relation between children and their mothers who work outside the house is very good. This condition is supported by the data on the result of study showing that nearly all children give support to their mothers who work outside the house. The support given by the children can influence the mothers' working mood in performing their jobs outside the house. Such condition is expected to be able to increase the quality of the job performed. This kind of condition is undergone by nearly all female teachers in Samarinda city who generally receive positive support from their children.

In performing their daily jobs, teachers do not just work in classrooms. To improve their capacities, they sometimes receive opportunities/offers in the form of various activities (upgrading, training, higher education) that may be conducted out of town. Female teachers in Samarinda city in general are happy to be assigned out of town, since they are aware that not all teachers can get this kind of opportunity. However, a few female teachers in Samarinda city still have constraints for taking assignment out of town because they are not supported by the children who often do not like being left out of town.

Children will be happy and proud of having a mother who has the profession of teacher. This is proven by their willingness in helping their mother with some of her domestic jobs, other children are even willing to help settle other problems.

### 3.1.3. Personal Internal Factor

The personal internal factor supporting female teachers in performing their jobs and pursuing their career is their pride of their job as teacher. Besides their pride, female

teachers in general are also really interested in their job and glad to perform their job assignments in addition to their desire to increase their knowledge by taking higher education, in case of any opportunity given to them.

In case of any offer of transfer to a new post for position promotion, the majority of female teachers state their reluctance for the reason that they still cannot leave their family and home and they are reluctant or not ready to enter a new environment, because they need time for adaptation.

This indicates that female teachers are still not ready to struggle and fight for a position and pursue their career, if they have to leave home and be far from the family, even if it closes the opportunity for advancement.

### 3.1.4. Government Regulation

The career achievement of teachers can be shown from their structural positions as principal and vice principal and functional positions related to promotion. For this purpose, the government has issued a regulation as the base for rank management and nomination as principal/vice principal.

Regulation on teacher career is articulated in Decision of the Minister of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia Number 085/U/1994 on Appointment and Dismissal of Principal in the environment of Department of Education and Culture.

Not all respondents know about this regulation, therefore even if they meet the specified requirements, they have no idea regarding their right of being able to be nominated.

If we carefully observe the education levels, ranks and working periods of the respondents, females in general meet the requirements specified in decision of the Minister of Education and Culture on candidates for a principal, but unfortunately the number holding the positions of principal and vice principal is still very low.

Functional positions are particularly regulated in the Joint Decision of the Minister of Education and Culture and the Head of Personnel Administration Board Number 0433/P/1993 and Number 25/1993 on Implementation Guideline for Teacher Functional Positions and its Implementation Regulation.

The respondents in general know and understand the regulation on functional positions, as it is directly related to the management of credit points for rank promotion, at the same time the functional position promotion.

Although the number of females holding structural positions as the career positions is still very low, female teachers are capable of reaching high position levels. Forty nine percent of the respondents studied hold the functional position of Coaching Teachers (class IV.a), which describes the capacity of females in pursuing their functional career well.

The functional career is decided by the teachers themselves according to their diligence, capacity and skill in carrying out the teaching-learning process without any tight competition with males. This condition indicates that if females have to compete with males, they still receive less opportunity.

Respondents who understand the regulation related to the requirements for a principal in general respond that the existing regulation is not encumbering, therefore all female and male teachers meeting the requirements

actually have the opportunity to be the principal candidates. Similarly, the rules related to functional positions are generally understood by the respondents and considered not encumbering, hence female teachers are capable to meet the credit points and to hold high functional positions.

The high number of respondents capable of holding the functional positions of Junior Teacher, Senior Teacher and Coaching Teacher indicates that the government regulation on functional positions is known, understood and not being an obstacle in the career achievement of teachers.

## 3.2. External Factors

### 3.2.1. Response of Society

The response of society regarding women who work is not entirely positive, because there are still many people having the opinion that women preferably do not work, and it is often such a psychological burden to women who work. Society's positive response will be followed by indirect support for women who work, for instance they do not demand women who work to perform social duties. Even any positive response as members of society does not enable them to be fully active in social life.

Generally the society supports women who work as teachers, because teachers are considered having a noble task and they do not work full-time like working in other institutions. The society's view that working as teachers are more suitable for women also gives opportunity of great support to women and their acceptance in various social/community organizations having the purpose of social works or fighting for women interest in social, cultural, community, religious, political fields and other fields of women empowerment.

Despite working, the respondents are also members of various social organizations at various levels as the form of self-existence and public recognition of their capacities, knowledge, perception and the existing desire to continuously exist besides being teachers.

Women's high capacities are not only proven from their career as teachers, but also from their involvement in various social and community organizations. The respondents are usually members of social, woman and religious organizations in their dwelling environment as well as organizations of higher levels such as City and Provincial levels.

### 3.2.2. Working Environment

Other external factors assumed capable of influencing the development prospect of female teachers are viewed from working environment aspect, where the respondents teach. The working environment usually consists of both male and female employees, in which any apparent or vague competition frequently colors employees' activities.

Generally, the respondents' working environment does not discriminate between male and female teachers as they have performed their jobs according to the subjects and classes they respectively control. Good cooperation among peer teachers does not discriminate gender, therefore the teachers support each other.

The support given in the form of cooperation in performing their jobs, such as replacing teacher in case

any of them is absent, is based on the same field/subject taught without considering the gender. Therefore, the absence of anyone of them does not create an obstacle in so far coordination has been conducted with other teacher of the same field.

Objectivity in evaluation conducted during the teaching-learning process is described by the absence of discrimination of teachers based on the gender, either among peer teachers or by the principal to teachers. Therefore this kind of conducive working environment can motivate female teachers in developing their career. This is also shown from the absence of obstacle for female teachers in achieving their functional position level.

## 4. Conclusion

1. Based on the result of study, all related elements in internal factors in the overall support female career development. However, this primary asset is not/less utilized by female teachers for holding structural positions in school. This condition is supported by the low aspiration and motivation of female teachers so that female teachers tend to be quickly satisfied with the condition currently achieved. Other possibility is the worry of female teachers that the increasing position will increase their burden and responsibility.
2. The external factors inhibiting the career of female teachers are: (a) the regulation related to structural positions will not inhibit female teachers, however due to competition with male teachers and the limited number of positions available compared to the number of teachers having met the requirements, the number of females holding the position of principal is still low; (b) the society in general gives positive response to females who work as teachers, therefore they are not demanded to perform social duties if it is unlikely for them because they are busy working; (c) the working environment does not discriminate male from female teachers, because the job performed prioritizes the skill in the subject taught without considering the gender. The support of working environment to females is shown from good cooperation among peer teachers and between teachers and the principal or vice principal. Therefore, working environment does not potentially inhibit females in developing their career.

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