



Higher education and development in Indonesia: A gender perspective

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 24 May 2017;

Received in revised form:

10 July 2017;

Accepted: 20 July 2017;

Keywords

Higher education,
Gender Mainstreaming,
Development.

ABSTRACT

Higher education has a strategic role in empowering women and in achieving gender equity. However, the increasing of women participation in higher education does not automatically extend and transform into the enhancement of women's access and benefits from development. The purpose of this article is to explore gender issues and strategies of gender mainstreaming in higher education. It contributes to the analyzing of concepts and the implementation of power in organizational structure and practices in revealing the complexity of gender inequality in higher education. The intertwined of organizational, institutional and market significantly affect the realization of gender equality in higher education.

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Introduction

The significance of education in a country's development have been extensively discussed and pointed out as the requirement and indicator of development (UNDP, 2006; USAID, 2008; UNESCO, 2010; UNESCO, 2015; World Bank, 2012). Since 1990s the international community increasingly realizes the centrality of education in development as included in MDGs, which was then extended to SDGs, and resulted in the Education for All (EFA) movement. International agencies and national government emphasize and formulate education as both development goal and strategies which should be implemented in development processes.

Education and other development goals are closely intertwined. Social survey on economic growth in Asia and Pacific demonstrates that besides obstructing economic growth, gender gap in education also resulted in feminization of poverty, high maternal mortality rate, bad quality of water and sanitation, environmental destruction and the increase of violence (UNESCAP, 2008). This ESCAP's report calculated that gender based gap has contributed to the losses of US\$40 billion annually in Asia Pacific region due to women's limited access to education, US\$16-\$30 billion due to gender-based gap in education. This figure reveals the loss of more than US\$13 billion which can be used to achieve gender equality. Using expenditure and consumption to reveal gender-based gap in education and health, the World Bank Report (2007) entitled Gender Equality, Poverty and Economic Growth highlights the obvious correlation between poverty and the extensive gender-based gap in developing countries.

To date, university still functions as one of machine of economy based on knowledge through education, research and innovation. The negative consequences of gender-based inequity access and completion in primary and intermediate education became more obvious in inequity in access to higher education which then serves as culmination of problems rooted and resulted in poverty, social discrimination and consequently affects lower education (UNESCO, 2009). Investment in education has encouraged economic growth in

East Asia in which more women involve in labor force and thus increase their income more through higher education (World Bank, 2007). Through increased investments in female education in the BRICs and N-11 countries, tend to raise GDP growth by 0.2% per year and together with the effort to narrow gender gap in employment increases income per capita to 14% higher (Lawson, 2008). The intertwined between gender equality and macro and micro level of development are evident in higher productivity; higher returns to investment, higher agricultural yields, and a more favorable demographic structure and contributes positively to improve the education level of the next generation (Fatimah, 2010; Dauda, 2013; Kim and Hagiwara, 2010. Yumusak et als., 2013).

Gender-based gaps in all education level especially in male and female participation in registration at primary, intermediary and high education has been closed quantitatively (WDR, 2012; UNESCO, 2015). In some developed countries female participation rate in higher education exceeds of male's participation (Crawford and Greaves, 2015; UNESCO, 2010). Indonesia has also gain good achievement in gender equity in registered participation rate at primary and intermediate education as a result of the implementation of a 9 year obligatory basic education in which almost 98% of girls attending primary education and continued to high school (UNDP, 2011). Indonesia's MDGs report more comprehensively reveals significant improvement in education in which more women have access to higher education and female literacy rate almost reach 100% (Bappenas, 2012). In Southeast countries female participation rate in higher education reach 50% and more.

The link between education and development is not limited to merely economic growth (Balatchandirane, 2007; McMahon, 2009; World Bank, 1997). Education is a crucial component to provide opportunities and empower women in enhancing women's quality of life and their contributions to overall development. Some empirical studies reveal that women education may increase their income and extend their contribution to family and community which frequently extends men's contributions (Lawson, 2008. World Bank, 2011. Yumusak et als., 2013).

Improved women's education obviously enhances development attainment which is based on Human Development Index (HDI) such as health, education and children's life. The recent Sustainable Development Post-2015 report describes that higher education not only contributes to poverty reduction, women empowerment but also extend to protection of environment, thus, closely linked with the achievement of global development targets described in MDGs and SDGs (UNESCO, 2015). Higher education is considered as a fundamental tool towards conservation of scarce resources (UNESCO, 2014). Furthermore, women's education also includes structural and institutional transformation through the enhancement of democratization and performance of civil society. Education is crucial for growth, development and social transformation based on rights (USAID, 2008). Higher education enhances women's choice of family size and perception of their freedom. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/4 In Pakistan, women's confidence in making decision about the number of children increase to over 70% among women with higher education (UNESCO, 2014). Hence, higher education is a significant catalyst for social transformation in the process of re-allocation of social influences and power.

Based on gender perspective, education at all levels is crucial in empowering women but women's role in higher education becomes more urgent if women intend to influence development policies, processes and the enjoyment of development more extensively and strategically. Higher education is important as a strategy to enhance women's capacity and capability as independent agent in transforming community locally and globally. However, to date studies on gender and education is still more focus on primary and intermediate education and ignores strategic role of higher education in realizing gender equality. Most studies of gender equality and higher education originate in developed countries with high economy (Crawford and Greaves 2015; Lancrin, 2008; Morley, 2005; OECD, 2015). In developing countries, studies on gender and education focus more on primary education which characterized by a gender neutral approach (Morley, et als., 2003).

Research Method

This study is based on literature review and utilizing content analysis in exploring diverse women's role in higher education. Review of policies on higher education and women's experiences across countries is aimed to identify whether policies, processes and programs in higher education have integrated gender or not. Case study of higher education in North Sumatra used to explore the gendered aspects of higher education in Indonesia. Utilizing a poststructuralist feminist perspective, this article attempts to reveal the multiplicity of the focus and locus in understanding diverse experiences and strategies in gender mainstreaming higher education.

Results and Discussions

A. Between Feminization and the Persistent Masculinity of Higher Education

The quantitative increase of gender equality in almost all level of education has been accompanied by the emergence of new gender-based paradoxes and gaps in higher education. Gender-based segregation in choosing knowledge discipline in higher education is still difficult to overcome. Women are under-represented in science and technology and more concentrated in the field of science that considered relevant to women's traditional role such as in education, social,

humanities, arts, nursing and medicine (OECD, 2015; UNESCO, 2002; UNESCO, 2010; WDR, 2012). This fact demonstrates the strong persistent of traditional gender role stereotype in influencing and constructing the different decision between women and men in choosing the field of knowledge they intend to study.

Interestingly, the globally higher participation of women than men in higher education reveals the emergence of a new gender gap in higher education. Fewer men registered in higher education (OECD, 2015; WDR 2015). Globally, the participation rate of women registering in higher education increase by seven times in three decades with the highest women's attendance rate in Republic of Korea, Japan and the Pacific Islands, followed by Thailand, China and Philippines (UNESCO, 2010). Since 1970 to 2008 female higher education students increase by seven times from 10.8 to 80.9 million, whilst the increase of male students only increase by four times (UNESCO, 2012). Besides, there is a tendency which reveals that attendance rate, passing grade and the achievement of female students are higher than those of male students. In some higher education institutions in Europe and Caribbean, male students become more socially excluded due to the majority number of female students (Morley, 2005).

Although along with the increasing participation rate of women there seems to be the feminization of higher education, analysis which is based on gender perspective highlights the occurrence of gender-based paradox in which at the same time masculinity in higher education still persist. As with other institutions, education is also constructed by gender bias and discrimination. Studies in developed countries reveal the complexities of structural, institutional and psychological obstructions in realizing gender equity in patriarchal institutions (Lancrine, 2008; Grebennikov and Skaines, 2009; OECD, 2015).

The increasing women's access and participation in higher education has not been followed by the improvement of women's representation in leadership in higher education. Very few women lead science institutions or big technology corporations. Leadership in higher education is still dominated by men. Women are also under-represented in research and development within the academic sphere, public sector and private corporations (UNESCO, 2009; WDR, 2012). Gender gap also occurs at the University of Sumatra Utara in which of the 1589 lecturers, there are 857 male and 732 female lecturers, 91 male and 27 female professors, and 179 male lecturers hold the Doctorate degree compare to 107 female lecturers. Gender segregation also obvious by the fewer numbers of female lecturers at faculty of Engineering and Science and Math compare to those female lecturers at faculty of Public Health, Psychology, Nursing and Social Sciences. Study conducted by the American College President (ACPS) in 2007 shows the 23% increase of female President/Rector. The Commonwealth Universities Yearbook in 2008 reported that universities at 23 out of 35 Commonwealth were led by men (Singh 2008). This fact demonstrates that higher education, as with other institutions, is also constructed by gender bias and discrimination. Hence, the awareness and understanding on the roots of discrimination and gender inequity in higher education is crucial in enhancing the role and contributions of higher education to a just and gender equal development.

B. Household, Market and Higher Education: The Intertwined Factors in Pursuing Gender Equality in Development

Although women's participation continuously increasing quantitatively, it is yet to have optimal positive impacts on the quality life of women. In many countries, the achievement of participation rate in higher education is yet to eliminate gaps in other aspect of development. Women's social status remains low despite of the increasing education participation and literacy rate (UN, 2012; World Bank 2010). Despite differences in economic growth among countries, the fact lingers that higher education in many countries do not ensure that women will gain better position compare to men. Gap in women's access to health, economy and political participation is not solely determined by gender gap in education but also influenced by income, ethnicity and location.

Segregation in education and market bias also resulted in gender gap in salary and income accepted by men and women. On the other hand, gender inequity in education widened the gap of income in general (Gregorio and Lee 2002). The AAUW's *The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap* described that in USA women were paid just 80 percent of what men were paid (AAUW, 2016). Other paradox can be seen from the increasing period of women from 1.4 to 6.1 year compared to that of men from 6.7 to 7.6 year, yet income gap between men and women increase up to 7.4% (AWID, 2009). Income gap between women and men does not only occur in developing countries but also in developed countries. A comparative study in UK and New Zealand on female academe in higher education reveals that women working in low position and low income, working part time and as contracted researchers (Brooks, 1997). Thus, it is obvious that closing gender gap in access to education is much easier compared to eliminate gender gap in occupations and income which require simultaneous changes in government policies on household, market and institutions.

Feminist poststructuralist perspective contributes significantly in revealing the complexity of gender inequity in higher education by focusing on intertwined of various factors of individuals, market and community. Gender inequity in higher education closely related with gender inequity at household, law, culture, work place, public policy and strengthened by other institutional factors at household and public level. Gender inequity cannot be revealed without related it to the discrimination which resulted in the disappearance of women's self-esteem and self-confidence as well as in domestic burden they have to bear when participating in higher education.

Women who participate in higher education have to take personal risk due to dominant social patriarchal structure. In some cases women who have career and involve in higher education face difficulty to get married due to perception that a woman with a high education is not in line with the ideal perception of a wife (Lumumba, 2006). This conventional view on the ideal role of a woman focuses on the main role of woman in household and has a subordinate position to husband who is perceived as having higher position than woman. Woman with high education is perceived as a threat to the authority and superiority of a husband. Thus, higher education may increase women's access to work and career but at the same time also frequently becomes the social and structural constraints to women's mobility.

Gender relation in household is a significant level of analysis in discussing gender equity in higher education.

Through interaction between household members in daily live, household serves as a site where gender is continuously reproduced (Morgan, 1999; Sommerville, 2000). Women's marginality in decision making in public sphere is the consequence of the weak position of women in decision making in household (Bhatta, 2001:25). Study in Indonesia reveals that the higher education level of a woman, the higher of percentage of those drop out of education due to marriage problems (UNESCO, 2008). Research on 139 women working as lecturer and staff at HKBP Nommensen University reveals the positive relationship between women's multiple role and work stress in which 88.7% of work stress is caused by conflict (Putri, 2010). Eventhough organizational factors such as inadequate working facilities, unsupportive leadership, inadequate salary, working demand contributes to 11.3% of work stress, conflict related to women's multiple role due to traditional women's obligation towards family, household and children contribute to 88.7% of the stress.

C. Gender mainstreaming Higher Education

The diverse and complexity of intertwined factors influencing the realization of gender equity is impossible to solve by solely giving attention to strategies which focus on women as source of problem. Hence, gender relations at household, market and governance should be the main focus and strategy in pursuing gender equity as have been argued by Gender and Development (GAD) theorists. GAD approach reveals the diversity between men and women which is based on the constructed social relations.

Poststructuralist feminist based on GAD approach assume that development is not gender neutral due to the existence of gender ideology in all life aspects including social economy, working environment, distribution of wealth, income and other resources, decision making and political power (Kothari, 2002; Saunders, 2002). The root of gender inequity does not solely focuses on women rather it is caused by social relation construction between men and women which resulted in women subordination. The shift of focus from women to gender relations includes the extension of reproductive role such as health, family planning and education to a more general rather than sectoral macro issues of national economy planning, structural adjustment, environment destruction and conservation as well as community organizations and politics (Pearson and Jackson, 1998). Therefore, the realization of a gender equal development requires radical transformation of social and economic system, social and political institutions in which development is conducted (McGee, 2002).

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy to enhance gender equity which has been recognized and accepted globally. It means that gender mainstreaming is more of a process rather than a goal to create knowledge, awareness and accountability for gender equity among stakeholders involve in higher education. Gender mainstreaming in higher education includes the assurance that gender perspective and attention to the goal of gender equity is crucial for the whole academic processes, education policy, curriculum, research, advocacy, resources allocation, facilities, planning, implementing and monitoring of higher education programs (UNESCO, 2010).

In Asia, the strategy of gender mainstreaming higher education is mostly conducted by establishing Women Studies Centre. In some other countries especially in traditional Moslem communities and some states in India and Korea the strategy of gender mainstreaming is by establishing universities and education institutions which are aimed especially for women.

This strategy may provide more access, opportunity and room for women to get involve and to determine processes and agendas in all level and administration, management and academic processes and leadership. However, this strategy is mostly utilized by private universities and at the same time may also limit opportunity for women to participate, deconstruct and transform higher education in general where women and men interact (UNESCO, 2010).

Presidential Decree No.9 Year 2000 and Kepmendagri No. 132 Year 2003, reflect Indonesian government political support in implementing gender perspective education policies. In Indonesia, IAIN/UINs Centre for Women Studies have emphasized on the application of gender approach in research and Islamic studies and in revising curriculum and text book which are more gender sensitive. However, the limited budget for this strategy has obstructed the development of innovative research initiative and gender mainstreaming in these Islamic higher education (Kull, 2009).

Gender mainstreaming has become the main issue and strategies for 30 years in higher education management in Nordic countries. Universities in Norway emphasize more on working from within university as a strategy in implementing and pursuing gender equity and gender mainstreaming. An organization within a university which includes all faculties in higher education institutions, has internal agenda in handling issues of gender, equity, ethnic and religious diversity, access and participation of disable people, equal treatment in rights regardless of age and gender identity. Other effective strategy which is implemented by universities in Nordic countries is to collaborate with external stakeholders in promoting and advocating gender awareness and equity.

Understanding gender equity as a multidimensional concept, Sweden develops indicator which reflects more than women representation that is the "4R Gender Analysis Tool". This tool is based on representation, resources, rights and reality. These gender equity indicators assist university management in implementing and monitoring gender mainstreaming in universities.

The obligation of implementing gender mainstreaming in universities in Germany have been conducted for more than 10 years. Although there are policies on how to implement gender mainstreaming in research, education and university administration successfully, combine with formal commitment for gender equity, limitation of continuous actions have hindered the attainment of gender equity objectives which have been defined before.

Gender units with diverse programs and activities including education, research and functions have been formed at most higher education institution in Africa. However, most higher education institutions in Africa are yet to have gender equity policy and interventions (Bunyi, 2003).

Conclusions

Higher education is an extensive and complex process, therefore gender mainstreaming in higher education is more than increasing the involvement of women in higher education and in senior and administrative positions. More critical to the achievement of gender mainstreaming is how all stakeholders involve in higher education accommodate, represent and advocate women empowerment and gender equity. It requires strong commitment of leadership and collaboration between lecturers and policy makers at all levels including at the faculty and study programs in transforming the persistent masculinity in higher education into a more gender sensitive academic sphere. The quality and relevance of education both

to gender equity in higher education through gender sensitive curriculum and teaching materials is urgent for higher education to extend gender equity in higher education institutions to gender equal national and global development.

Considering the complexity of the intertwined factors of market, household and education, gender equity in higher education requires comprehensive and sustainable policies and activities. Issues and processes of gender equity in higher education should be integrated in the whole academic activities in education, research and management. It is imperative to develop a gender sensitive and responsive higher education management by formulating, implementing and monitoring gender bias policy. Capacity building of higher education in planning, formulating policies, strategies and programs which support gender equity effectively and efficiently is a strategic component. To gain extensive support among academes, awareness raising on the significance and contributions of gender issues in all field of knowledge need to be conducted intensively in order to enable lecturers to apply them in learning processes and research.

Acknowledgment

We highly appreciate University of Sumatera Utara, Indonesia for providing funding which enabled us to publish this article.

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