

## Economic Burden On The Women Of Pari Island

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### Abstract

*Economic stress is a first-order problem disproportionately impacting women and hampered development. There is a large body of literature on the economic burden shouldered by women. However, literature specifically on women's financial burden in Pari Island is lacking. Furthermore, understanding women's agency and grassroots initiatives could provide localized insights and contribute to broader discussions. The investigation article utilizes a feminist political economy theory to examine women's economic burden. The qualitative research methodology used a case study centered on Pari Island women who faced financial hardship. The findings show that women on Pari Island faced economic difficulties, and the Island's women's group faced obstacles as the government refused to assist them because they were perceived as a dissident organization willing to oppose the government. In addition to promoting women's empowerment, this women's organization allegedly challenged the abuses their community experienced from the government and the mining company that the Suharto dictatorship sold their property. This article recommends that the government should resolve land disputes with foreign investors who claimed the Island was sold to them by the government. To alleviate the economic burden on Pari Island's fisherwomen and petty traders, measures like gender equality, fair trade conditions, equal access to credit and financial support, inclusive policies, and an understanding of women's rights are needed. Government and non-governmental organizations should provide more assistance such as skills and entrepreneurship training.*

**Keywords:** *women, economic burden, Pari Island, fisherwomen, petty trading*

### INTRODUCTION

The financial and societal obstacles that women disproportionately encounter as a result of structural gender inequality in fields including employment, healthcare, education, and unpaid caregiving are referred to as the "economic burden on women." Reduced income, restricted access to resources, and increased susceptibility to poverty are some ways that this

burden may appear (Coffey et al., 2020) . This inequality in the economy includes wage gap, unpaid cared work, and healthcare costs (Women often face higher healthcare expenses due to reproductive health needs and financial hardship due to caregiving responsibilities for sick family members), and poverty rates because women, particularly single mothers and older women, are more likely to live in poverty due to structural factors like limited credit or property ownership access

Indonesia's economy has experienced rapid growth and middle-income status, with a significant decrease in poverty. Agriculture is shifting to manufacturing and services, while manufacturing and services are increasing. However, the gender wage gap remains high, with 34% in the official sector and 50% in the informal sector (“Women’s Economic Participation in Indonesia A Study of Gender Inequality in Employment, Entrepreneurship, and Key Enablers for Change,” 2017).

Indonesia's labor force participation has increased faster than that of its working-age population, with younger employees making up a smaller portion. This has impacted working women's experiences, including employment opportunities and compensation. According to the World Development Indicators, 51.4% of Indonesian women aged 15 or older are employed or seeking employment. Indonesia's labor market participation has remained stable at 50% over the past 20 years, largely due to structural reasons and family obligations, rooted in gender preconceptions and societal norms that limit women's economic potential (Setyonaluri et al., 2023). Family obligations limit women's economic engagement and contribute to job terminations. In 2019, 2.5 million male and 1.9 million female urban young adults left their jobs. Social conventions around gender responsibilities at home may influence women's desire to work from home, while men continue to support domestic roles (Setyonaluri et al., n.d.).

Despite increased awareness of gendered economic inequities around the world, structural gender differences in work, education, healthcare, and caregiving obligations continue to place disproportionate financial and social burdens on women in marginalised groups. International studies have repeatedly shown how women's economic potential is restricted by unpaid care work and salary disparities (Coffey et al., 2020; Garwood, 2024). Studies conducted in Indonesia have revealed that poor social protection, restricted credit

availability, and patriarchal norms hinder the participation of women in the labour field (Setyonaluri et al., n.d.).

Furthermore, research by Firmansyah and Sihaloho (2021) shows that although women are still under-represented and vulnerable in economic decision-making, their empowerment greatly boosts regional economic growth. However, current research frequently ignores the specific, intersectional realities of women in coastal and island communities and has a tendency to generalise women's economic difficulties. This study fills this vacuum by concentrating on the women of Pari Island, a remote and marginalised community in Indonesia's Thousand Islands, who deal with particular economic challenges brought on by environmental deterioration, land conflicts, and a lack of government assistance (Firmansyah & Sihaloho, 2021).

The 2018 Indonesian documentary film "Perempuan Pulau Pari" (Women of Pari Island), which is directed by Edwin Tomasyus, centers on the lives of women living in the isolated island of the Indonesian province of Jakarta, namely, Pari Island. The documentary focuses on some dimensions of these women's lives, such as their economic hardships, attachment to traditional customs, and endurance of hardship. One of the women interviewed during the documentation of "Perempuan Pulau Pari" is a member of a women's group in Pari Island called Mbak Atik. During her interview, she highlighted many instances of economic burden on women in Pari Island's family welfare, which leads to a huge economic burden on women. Cultural norms and remoteness in Pulau Pari limit women's access to education and employment opportunities, perpetuating economic burdens. Women are primarily responsible for childcare, domestic responsibilities, and subsistence farming, while men fish for income. Pulau Pari's isolated location and inadequate infrastructure make access to basic amenities like healthcare and education difficult, leading to families needing financial assistance. A woman, Mbak Atik, refers to men as 'loan sharks'. Traditional norms in Indonesia justify men's control over women, as they may feel too big to lend money. In Pari Island, women face economic burdens due to inadequate infrastructure and geographical restrictions, making it difficult for them to access financial resources. They also face economic disparity due to their daily economic burden. "Perempuan Pulau Pari" highlights the economic disparity in the Pari Island fishing sector, where men and women rarely work together. Feminization of labor ( refers to the prominence of traditionally feminine

characteristics, roles, or conditions in sociology, gender studies, and economics, with specific implications depending on the context) has also occurred, with men fishing at sea and women limited to resellers. The 2018 Indonesian documentary film emphasizes the need for laws supporting gender equality and economic strength for local communities (Edwin Edwin, 2018).

Pari Island, a coastal village in Jakarta Province, was once a significant seaweed transporter to Japan, providing access to seaweed vegetables and coral reefs. However, its ownership by a company changed its fortunes. The Island was transformed into a resort with yacht piers and 48 villas, causing destruction of seaweed habitats and restricting community access to Pulau Tengah (Save Pulau Pari). There is no denying the truth that men dominate the fishing industry. In small-scale fisheries, nevertheless, women fishers work just as hard as their male counterparts. This encompasses everything, from supporting and fishing to purchasing at auction and performing post-harvest chores, including packaging and processing, this contributes to the heavy burden they are faced with economically. However, their people are unwilling to acknowledge their efforts (Save Pulau Pari). Indonesian Law No. 7/2016 defines a small fisherman as an individual who obtains fish for subsistence without using a fishing vessel. The economic burden of poverty is a cause and outcome of women's economic activity, resulting in limited access to credit, control over resources, and biased norms, this could be reenforced from the findings that “fisherwomen are not entitled to any benefits... there is no guarantee and compensation for fisherwomen because of their identity as housewives.”(Mrs. A, *interview*). This complicates poverty, puts women's opportunities for education at risk, and can lead to mental health issues and physical violence(Fawole, 2008). Indonesian Sisterhood of Fisherwomen, Masnuah, highlights climate change's vulnerability to work-related accidents, school dropouts, financial debt, and increased domestic responsibility (Fawole, 2008).

Economic burden restricts development, and reducing disparity is crucial. Structural reasons and family obligations hinder women's participation in the work market, rooted in gender preconceptions and societal norms. Indonesia's women are vulnerable to poverty, but government initiatives support the fishing industry (Widaningrum & Wahyudi, 2023). Indonesian laws and decrees regulate the fishing industry, with Law No. 7 of 2016 covering

fish farmers, salt suppliers, and other marine and coastal resource-dependent sectors (Setyonaluri et al., 2023).

Gender equality (SDG 5) focuses on empowering women by removing financial barriers and promoting fair participation in markets and decision-making. However, women continue to face systemic challenges such as low financial literacy, gender-biased regulations, and complex procedures (Caraway, 2005). Coffey et al. (2020) highlight the global undervaluation of women's unpaid care work, totaling 12.5 billion hours daily and worth \$10.8 trillion annually, which reinforces gender inequality. They argue for taxation reform, wealth redistribution, and systemic changes to create a feminist human economy that values care labor. Garwood (2024) explores economic abuse in the UK, revealing how financial control by intimate partners undermines women's autonomy and causes long-term harm. The study calls for improved data collection, policy reform, and greater recognition of economic abuse as a form of domestic violence. In Indonesia, Cameron (2023) finds that women's labor participation is stagnant due to caregiving burdens and limited economic opportunities. In places like Pari Island, women multitask as caregivers, traders, and service providers to survive poverty. Firmansyah and Sihaloho (2021) show that increased women's empowerment significantly boosts regional economic growth, stressing the need to close gender gaps in education, employment, and politics.

Studies on economic exploitation further reveal its global reach. In Sweden, Bruno et al. (2024) document how men in intimate relationships use economic power to dominate women. In India, Ohlan (2021) links economic violence to barriers in healthcare, education, and mobility. Miah and Sifat (2024) connect male unemployment to rising violence and economic abuse, urging governmental action to tackle the economic roots of gender-based violence. Together, these studies emphasize that gender inequality is deeply tied to economic structures, requiring legal reform, policy innovation, and cultural change to address the financial vulnerabilities and exploitation women face globally.

Existing studies on gender disparities, labor exploitation, and economic empowerment overlook the unique economic challenges faced by women in Pari Island. They lack localized primary data and first-hand accounts, overlooking intersectionality and focusing on systemic issues. Pari Island's economic burden on women is influenced by intersectional factors like class, education, marital status, and marine tourism dependence. The economy's fluctuations,

competition, and limited access to capital exacerbate financial pressures while underrepresenting the dual burden of unpaid domestic work. The literature on women's economic empowerment in Pari Island is insufficient, lacking specific interventions or policies. Understanding women's agency and grassroots initiatives could provide localized insights and contribute to broader discussions.

This article seeks to fill this gap by understanding how the economic burden affects the livelihood of women on Pari Island. The research question guiding this article is, “How is the economic burden affecting women in coastal communities?” The main objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to shed light on the problem of the economic burden on women in Pari Island; (2) to understand how that economic burden impacts their financial situation and economic empowerment; (3) and what drives caused the dominance of women in one particular economic activity. This study explores the economic burden on women in Pari Island, focusing on fisherwomen and petty traders.

In understanding how the economic burden affects the livelihood of women on Pari Island, the study employed Feminist Political Economy (FPE) framework. The study *Understanding Pari Island's Economic Burden for Women through the Lens of Feminist Political Economy (FPE)* by Juanita Elias and Shirin M. Rai emphasizes the central role of social reproduction and power dynamics in shaping women's economic experiences. FPE shifts the focus from global capitalism to the everyday realities of women's labor, particularly unpaid care work and subsistence activities. On Pari Island, women are engaged in informal, low-wage sectors such as petty trading, fishing, and tourism, while facing unequal access to capital, land, and technology due to legal, cultural, and structural barriers. FPE helps unpack how patriarchy, violence, and entrenched gender norms restrict women's mobility, access to education, and decision-making power. It also recognizes the intersection of gender with class, ethnicity, and environmental challenges, such as resource depletion and climate change, which further deepen women's vulnerability (Elias & Rai, 2018).

This study focuses on the fisherwomen and women petty traders of Pari Island, employing a qualitative case study methodology to explore their economic burden. The research subjects include women engaged in fishing or petty trading activities, with key informants comprising two female petty traders aged 30 and 40 years and above (both married), one fisherwoman aged 30 and above (married), and a women's empowerment

activist aged 30 and above (married). A supporting informant includes the husband of one of these women. Data collection involved in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and observation. FGDs included both young and older women from the women's group on Pari Island, all engaged in income-generating activities. Interviews were conducted with the aid of a voice recorder, transcribed, and analyzed. Observation was used to complement these methods, providing deeper insights into the economic challenges faced by these women.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **How Women of Pari Island Experience the Economic Burden**

Spousal support surfaced during the research when both Mrs. A and her husband Mr. S (interviewees) explained that they both support the family's upkeep. Mr. S said he supports his wife by helping her in the shop when she is away either at sea, farming or engaged in the activities of the women's group. Mrs. A said her husband supports her group to empower the women of Pari Island. While most men do not support this group, he did because he believed in his wife and knew that she was fighting for justice, not only for the women but also for their community, which conflicted with the company that claimed to own the land. Mrs. A went further to explain that she and her husband go fishing to add more income to the family, and sometimes both go fishing together so that both could get big catches, which can generate more revenue for their family. They made their fishing nets and had a fishpond, which added to the family income.

During weekends, the family relied on income from the homestay because local tourists visited the island for recreation. Social reproduction, according to Elias and Rai, "includes unpaid production in the home of goods and services and the reproduction of culture and ideology that stabilizes (as well as sometimes challenges) dominant social relations" (Elias & Rai, 2018). This correlates with what is discussed above on spousal support by both Mrs. A and her husband about how they support each other in their various work to generate income for their family, despite the obstacles they individually faced in their work based on their gender identity. From my observation, Mr. S is an outstanding husband for supporting his wife unlike other men who were just sitting idly while their wives were in their different stalls selling, this is one of the factors of economic burden on these women

with limited economic diversification, and they all end up being stall sellers to sustain their families. The support he gives to his wife challenges the culture and ideology of the village, which highly values dominant social relations. Based on my observation, he is the only man in the community who helps and coordinates with her wife for economic gains and family support. FPE advocates for gender equality by promoting resource allocation, women's training, and policy changes to acknowledge and promote women's financial contributions. Despite their significant economic contributions, women are still referred to as "housewives" in official government records and are not recognised as official fishermen, which prevents them from receiving the safety nets and subsidies that male fishermen are entitled to. In Kabeer's (1999) paradigm on institutionalised disempowerment, women's marginalisation is purposefully perpetuated by gender-biased structures that deny them institutional and legal status (Kabeer, n.d.).

As women try to pool resources and support one another financially, even unofficial safety nets like "Arisan" (community savings organisations) offer an alternate form of economic agency and resistance. This is consistent with research by Roy (2010), who investigated how collective activities and informal economies might provide women in the peripheries of both urban and rural areas with grassroots means of financial empowerment (Roy, n.d.)

### ***Why Women Experience Economic Burdens More Than Men***

In this discussion, FPE's perspective on the connection between patriarchy and gender inequality focuses especially on the limited participation of women in their ability to access resources such as fishing tools, land for gardening, and good quality seedlings, and have an impact on economic decisions, which may be hindered as a result. Gender inequality manifested itself during the fieldwork, according to Mrs. Aas, and from observation, I realized that the women of Pari Island work harder than the men because, during our period of stay on the Island, I noticed that every woman was engaged in one form of income generation or the other. Doing their household chores and community services while the men after fishing hang around to drink coffee and chat, unpaid care work as a perspective of FPE explains that the smooth running of the family and community depends on this unpaid work, which is frequently unseen and unrecognized even the women themselves do not consider the unpaid care work as a work that needs to be recognized. FPE perspective also

takes a closer look at economic activities carried out by women, particularly what and why they enter these activities. The FPE suggests that acknowledging unpaid care as a crucial economic activity could encourage policy advocacy for women's financial compensation, social security, or shared responsibilities. It is true that the woman keeps the money of her husband for family use but ends up spending more if the husband does not earn any more, which means in a month the wife spends more than her husband on family welfare, this leads to a huge economic burden on the women and from observation I learn that the flow of business during the week is dull and high during the weekends when local tourists come to the Island.

Even though Pari Island women engage in a variety of revenue-generating endeavors, the fact that their business ventures are so restricted and competitive results in financial strain as they bear most of the household duties. Another gender inequality in the public sector, according to Mrs. A, is the un-identification and non-recognition of fisherwomen in Par, on their ID Cards they are just referred to as housewives, relating this to the analysis of Elias and Rai's. Assumptions about the existence of nuclear households with male breadwinners and frequently backed by state ideologies that promote women as primarily homemakers, mothers, and nation-reproducing agents rather than active citizens with claims on the state are prevalent in economic development planning, and social reproduction is not acknowledged. (Elias & Rai, 2018). When asked if the opportunity is given, can women also fish like the men at sea, Mrs. A said the reason women do not go far at sea like men do is because they do not have the required facilities (equipment) to fish in the sea that is why they only stop at the surface. In case of an accident at sea, fisherwomen are not entitled to any benefits; thus, there is no guarantee or compensation for fisherwomen because of their identity as housewives. The identification and recognition of fishermen gives them an edge over fisherwomen because they get a discount when buying fuel, and fisherwomen do not have this opportunity. According to Elias and Rai Feminist scholarship has been central to unpicking these binaries, revealing, for example, how the household is not, and never has been, a closed space separate from capitalist production but exists as a site in which work, labor, and social reproduction co-constitute every day' (Elias & Rai, 2018).

When asked about the income gap between fisherwomen and fishermen, Mrs. A said the income gap is there because fisherwomen do not go to sea for fish; they only stop at the edge, unlike the fishermen, therefore their catch will not be the same, and the sales will be

different. The reason she gives is that women in Pari Island are not identified as fishers; therefore, they do not have the right tools for fishing, which is the reason they use small nets along the edge of the river to catch any fish available. The women of Pari Island expressed their dissatisfaction with their business's slowness, citing that nearly all of them sell the same products and depend on the local tourists who come to the island for weekends at a time. This reflects the “motherhood penalty” by Swarniati & Setyonaluri (2024). Which implies that for men, even if they are dads, this does not occur to the same degree or at all. Because caregiving is viewed as a cultural and structural responsibility, women bear a disproportionate amount of the economic burden. On the other hand, parenting does not cause men to experience the same kinds of career difficulties (Kadek & Diahhadi, 2000).

*“But again, the gender equality here is not very good, so women only manage money. While men when they come from the sea, earn money, they give it to their wives. The wife manages the money. But when the husband doesn't earn, the wife ends up having a double burden. Especially if the husband is a smoker, if he doesn't get any money from the sea, that's it. Automatically for the family as well”. (Mrs. A, interview, 9:00 am).*

Elias and Rai (2018), suggest that space is relational and a gendered terrain of the everyday. In terms of time, they reflect upon the rhythms of gender-segregated reproductive social work, generating strains of sociality that become evident in the negotiation of space and everyday violence, both structural and domestic. The Space, Time, and Violence (STV) framework, embedded in regimes of class-, racialized-, and sex-based exclusion, is therefore manifested and experienced differently, in different social contexts (Elias & Rai, 2018). From my observation, these work stereotypes constitute the main reason for the economic burden on women on Pari Island because the men believed that sitting in stalls selling, gardening, and processing fish were woman-like jobs. Therefore, even when they do not go to sea, they prefer gathering together and chatting; then the women from that competitive work (stall selling) will be compelled to take care of the family's responsibilities until the man can provide again. This economic burden can affect the general well-being of these women as they spend most of their time on economic income generation and domestic chores.

On Pari Island, women are responsible for both earning a living and performing unpaid domestic work, while men are socially allowed to relax or mingle after fishing. This is consistent with global trends where women handle a disproportionate amount of unpaid caregiving and household chores, which limits their free time and ability to engage in activities that generate revenue (Ferrant et al., 2014).

Unlike their male counterparts, Pari Island's fishermen are not officially recognised, do not have access to fishing gear, and do not receive government subsidies. This discrepancy is in line with international research showing that discriminatory norms and legislative restrictions limit women's access to technology, financing, and land (2010-11the state of Food and Agriculture women in Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap for Development, n.d.). On Pari Island, women are still categorised as "housewives," which excludes them from economic protection and public programs, while males are recognised as "fishermen" and enjoy institutional recognition and market connections. This illustrates how women's labour in the unorganised economy is structurally undervalued (Thomas, n.d.)

Gender roles on Pari Island are still shaped by the idea that men should be the main breadwinners and women should be the carers or supplemental earners. Women frequently make up for men's poor performance by spending more on household expenses, particularly when men's incomes are erratic. Patriarchal economies are characterised by this "male entitlement" to leisure and financial power despite low contributions (Elson, n.d.). In addition to limiting their access to resources, Pari Island women's lack of acknowledgement as economic players also has an impact on their self-esteem and social position. Feminist literature on "recognition poverty" emphasises how women's symbolic and material invisibility is exacerbated by their designation as "housewives" rather than producers (JUSTICE INTERRUPTUS, n.d.). Haq et. al. also highlighted that Women are still expected to handle household chores even when they make financial contributions. This "dual responsibility" adds to their financial and emotional burden, frequently without corresponding compensation (Haq et al., 2023).

According to the article "Early Marriage: Understanding Motivations and Impact," women are disproportionately impacted by early marriage since it significantly restricts their long-term economic agency by requiring unpaid domestic work, mandating reliance, and halting their education. These restrictions do not apply as much to men, who usually marry later and continue their schooling for longer. Early marriage is therefore both a cause and an effect of women bearing a greater financial burden than men. From this perspective, it could be safe to say that women getting married at a young age could contribute to their economic burden, which women of Pari Island experienced (Suyanto & Wirawan, n.d.). One of the article's main conclusions (Early Marriage Limits Educational and Economic Opportunities)

is that young marriage frequently interrupts or ends a girl's schooling, making it impossible for her to obtain the credentials required for respectable work. Women who lack education are more likely to work in low-paying occupations or be financially dependent on their husbands or families, which perpetuates gendered economic disparities. This restriction is less likely to affect men, who usually marry later. Although the research does not directly focus on early marriage and the undereducation of women, during data collection, all the subjects explained that they had not attained higher education. One of the subjects stated that

*I got married when I completed my junior secondary school when I was very young (Mrs. A interviewed 11:am)*

Due to deeply embedded systems of exclusion, which the GESI framework identifies as both institutional and cultural, women in Pari Island face greater economic burdens than men due to institutional and cultural exclusion systems. Although gender equality is acknowledged, implementation is often superficial, especially in rural communities. Policies are developed without women's input, leading to generic solutions. Religious and cultural values often reinforce male-dominant status, and women's minimal representation in local leadership hinders their voices. This results in a gendered distribution of economic burdens (Nikmatullah et al., n.d.).

### ***Challenges Faced by Women as a Result of the Economic Burden on Pari Island***

The women of Pari Island, according to Mrs. A as who is a fisherwoman, engaged in petty trade and ran a homestay. Mrs. A herself is also an activist who led a women's group to fight injustice against women in Pari Island. She said almost every woman in the village was engaged in an income-earning activity, either as a fisherwoman, a petty trader, or owning a homestay. The money they earned from these businesses helped them contribute to their family's upkeep, improving their standard of living and their family. Analyzing the income generation activities of Pari Island, as shown during the research using Feminist Political Economy (FPE) by Elias and Rai (2018) about “who gets what when and how,” involves access to disposable time as well as other scarce resources. From a gendered division of labor perspective, according to Sinaga (2022), the economic stress on Indonesian women is this

dual function. And women's unpaid caregiving is "invisible" but essential to the survival of their communities, and it helps the very economic structures that marginalise them.

*“The women here are brave, we sometimes go to the other Islands. We are brave, we use canoes, there’s a strong woman too, but she's not here. She built a house and brought a big dead rock for the foundation of her house. She used a boat to bring it from the middle of the sea. When we used to plant seaweed, we would use our own canoe or sea motor. But because the seaweed has been damaged, we use canoes to go to other islands to look for “bencong” or “mussels”. Bencong is a type of shellfish that lives in mangroves” (Mrs. A, interview, 10:00 am).*

The "politics of time" is intricately linked to women's changing domestic, economic, and political situations. Women on Pari Island face limited economic activities, making their work monotonous. Their activism, especially the president, leads to unpopularity and restricted economic activities. The Husband of Mrs. A is a fisherman like many other men in the community only engaged in fishing. The economic feminization in the income generation of Pari women is limited to petty trading, running homestays, and fish retailers. Therefore, this leads to a monotony of income generation avenues and based on my observation, almost all the women on this Island engaged in petty trading (selling in stalls). In the fishing sector, all fisherwomen are retailers, according to the interview, some of them go to the sea for fishing but do not have good catches thus they rely on fishermen for sales.

On Pari Island, women, particularly small-business owners and fishermen, are not formally acknowledged as economic actors, which prevents them from participating in state-sponsored programs like safety nets, lending, and subsidies. Their financial stability is jeopardised by this institutional opacity (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015). The livelihoods of women, particularly those involved in seaweed farming, fishing, and homestays, are directly threatened by environmental deterioration brought on by land reclamation, tourism infrastructure, and erosion. Despite having the least ability to respond to or affect environmental policy, women experience the first and most severe effects of ecological devastation.(Alston, 2014). Internal tensions are caused by economic inequities even within the women's community. While some women host visitors and operate homestays, others work as domestic helpers or as informal workers because they lack the necessary funds. Class and marital status are two intertwining characteristics that influence their financial burden (Crenshaw, 1994). These challenges could reflect the study that supports the notion that working women frequently bear a "double burden" of juggling unpaid domestic tasks (housework, childcare) and professional work. Men usually contribute at a considerably lesser rate, even when they do so at home, and their jobs are rarely hampered by family

obligations. Women's time is divided between paid and unpaid labour, which limits their access to overtime, promotions, and additional training that could raise their economic standing (Kadek & Diahadi, 2000). From a GESI model, women in Pari Island face economic challenges due to time poverty, limited access to credit, and exclusion from decision-making processes. They are responsible for unpaid domestic work, caregiving, and informal labor. Occupational segregation and inadequate healthcare further exacerbate the situation. These challenges reinforce a cycle of poverty and dependence for women on Pari Island, highlighting the need for gender-responsive planning (Nikmatullah et al., n.d.).

### ***Structural, Social, and Ethnic Factors Shaping the Prevalence of Economic Burden on Women in Pari Island***

FPE examines gender's intersection with social groups like class, caste, and ethnicity, affecting women's experiences, potentially leading to economic hardship and marginalization, and considering environmental factors, this is explored in the discussion with an activist, who stated, “my group (Perempuan Pulau Pari) has never been involved in any form of support from the Family Welfare Empowerment called Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan (PKK)”, despite her group being a women-led group. The economic empowerment training and mangrove seedlings her group was engaged in came from universities in Jakarta and the training school in Bogor. According to her, other women in the community received some kind of support from the Women-led Organization in Indonesia (PKK). When asked the reason for her group not receiving support from PKK, she said that this has to do with the land conflict between Pari Island, the company that bought the land, and the government. Her women's group fought the injustice her village faced from the government, which chose to support international investors.

*“For development, women are usually never involved. Like the construction of the pier, there should be a meeting with the residents first. What is the impact, what is the benefit, but it was never discussed with us. The important thing is that they can build. We as fisherwomen have a huge impact, the sea is damaged, and the coral reefs are damaged. The fish are gone. My husband used to go to the dock to look for bait there. There were many fish, so we netted them. Now we can't. We have to look for a place more in the middle of the sea”*  
(Mrs. A, interview, 11:00 am).

The women's group (KPP) supported empowerment yet faced difficulties as well as threats and intimidation from the company. Since all the members of the group were low-income earners and most of their earnings went to family support, they depended on donations to run their garden, which was still not fully established and heavily affected by the climate crisis. According to Mrs. A, the land they used for gardening was also part of the conflict area. As such, they faced threats and intimidation from the company's security. Elias and Rai explained that by integrating every day and social reproduction, we can challenge discrete understandings and acknowledge their crucial role in the global political economy (Elias & Rai, 2018). Applying this to the economic burden of Pari women shows that women's social reproductive role has gone beyond the household to community services.

*“There is training on UMKM (Usaha mikro kecil dan menengah), but UMKM (Usaha mikro kecil dan menengah) only involve PKK (Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga) or dasa wisma women. Meanwhile, my group often receives training from IPB (Institut Pertanian Bogor) lecturers, UT (Universitas Terbuka) lecturers, making eco enzymes, making mangrove syrup. So we get training from lecturers not from the government, the government is more into the PKK members than us”. (Mrs. A, interview, 10:30 am).*

Mr. S believes in his wife and hopes that someday his wife's women group can benefit the people of Pari because both men and women of Pari Island experience conflict in the land in one way or another, that is to say if the community does not support the government's decision of selling the land to investors they do not benefit from any development by the government. This, according to Mrs. A compelled so many men in the village to join the government to get a job. This has brought divergence among the people of Pari Island. Understanding the issue above through Elias and Rai's explanation the politicization of private spaces through housing occupations and collective activism challenges gendered household work narratives, allowing women to focus on themselves (Elias & Rai, 2018). Mrs. A, as the leader of the women's group, was faced with such challenges. She explained the difficulties she experienced as an activist and a housewife, coupled with her income-generating activities. Mrs. A lobbied for funds from international organizations to redress the environmental damage caused by climate change. She explained that during her visit to Germany for a meeting on climate change, she tried to get funds to help with erosion which is eating up the Island due to the climate crisis caused by the investors.

To help increase income generation for women of Pari, the women's group introduced, “Arisan” a form of saving for women to uplift their economic standard. The way it is done is as follows: every Friday after sweeping the beach the women come together to contribute Rp30.000 and make a random selection of group members. The lucky one on that day goes home with over Rp1.000.000, the lady can use that money to start up a petty trade to empower herself economically thus lessening the economic burden. Mrs. A explained that there is no restriction to joining the group. If a woman feels that she cannot continue with the weekly contributions she can withdraw. But that does not mean that she cannot participate in other activities of the women's group. From my observation, this is one of the many complex issues affecting the women of Pari because the government does not see them as very relevant to boosting the economy of Indonesia compared to other women of Jakarta, who are more educated and have the technical know-how for innovation. Elias and Rai, (2018) highlight the importance of studying everyday life in International Political Economy (IPE) to understand how non-elite actors reproduce and challenge global structures. Non-elite actors, including workers, small-scale traders, and marginalized groups, significantly shape economic and political landscapes. Their practices of survival, resistance, and adaptation reveal their agency and challenge social reproduction and economic functioning.

Non-elite actors, including workers, small-scale traders, and marginalized groups, significantly shape economic and political landscapes. Their practices of survival, resistance, and adaptation reveal their agency and challenge social reproduction and economic functioning. Elias and Rai emphasize the importance of understanding the interplay between social reproduction and non-elites, highlighting the transformative potential of everyday practices and the interconnectedness of global structures, especially in economic precarity and social inequality contexts (Elias & Rai, 2018).

According to Mrs. A, the group provides mutual support during times of difficulty. For instance, if a woman urgently needs money but it is not her turn to receive it, the group discusses the matter collectively and allocates the funds to the one in need. This practice demonstrates how the movement fosters unity and strength among the women of Pari Island, enabling them to support one another and alleviate economic burdens. However, this dynamic also highlights the challenges faced by these women. Many are not officially recognized as fisherwomen, leaving them economically vulnerable and hindering their

empowerment. They are constrained by limited opportunities and a highly competitive market focused on petty trading and managing households.

Despite these challenges, a positive aspect of their economic activity is its integration into leisure time. The women often gather at the beach for cleaning activities, which doubles as a social and collaborative endeavor that could be related to Elias and Rai's explanation that they need to focus on the larger spatial contexts within which women live and work. This leads them to study women and leisure (itself often experienced in small margins, especially by those engaged in how different groups inhabit space in different ways in their leisure time (Elias & Rai, 2018). Therefore, one can conclude that the women of Pari Island used their leisure time to help each other economically through their weekly contributions, which are given to one person as start-up capital while engaging in community work by cleaning the beach. FPE advocates for structural changes, such as equitable land policies, tourism investment, and skill development, to economically empower women and alleviate their burdens. The belief that women can and should engage in economic pursuits is supported by a reinterpretation of religion. But cultural expectations and antiquated perceptions continue to force women into unpaid household work, which increases their financial burden; this could further strengthen the cultural and social barriers for women (Haq et al., 2023). Pari Island's economic burdens on women are influenced by structural, social, and ethnic factors. Inadequate access to essential services, gender-specific constraints, and gender-neutral economic development programs disproportionately affect women. Traditional patriarchal norms and customs, such as adat laws, further reinforce gendered hierarchies, limiting women's participation in public and economic life and hindering their economic autonomy (Nikmatullah et al., n.d.).

The research also found that women on Pari Island were bound to intersectional social relations, with their status changing based on their financial circumstances. Some women could accommodate local tourists by running homestays, but others were unable to do so and were instead employed as domestic assistance for those who did so to earn money. According to the FPE perspective, women's economic activities are also examined more thoroughly, emphasizing what and why they do it. Elias and Rai, (2018) emphasize the

importance of considering the broader spatial contexts in which women live and work, including how leisure time, often minimal for women engaged in social reproduction and paid work, is used to occupy public spaces and navigate the politics of spatial usage (Elias & Rai, 2018). In this context, the women of Pari Island utilize their limited leisure time not only to support one another economically through weekly contributions, which serve as start-up capital for individual members, but also to engage in community activities such as cleaning the beach. From a Feminist Political Economy (FPE) perspective, structural changes, such as equitable land policies, tourism investments, and skill development initiatives, are essential to economically empower these women and alleviate their burdens. The study also found that women on Pari Island are shaped by intersectional social relations, with their economic status fluctuating based on their financial circumstances. For instance, some women run homestays and host local tourists, which elevates their status, while others, unable to afford such ventures, work as domestic help for those who do, to earn an income. An FPE analysis examines these economic activities in greater depth, exploring not only what women do but also why they do it. By understanding the motivations behind these domestic labor dynamics, the varying statuses among women engaged in such work become clearer.

State-sponsored land dispossession is the main cause of the financial difficulties faced by many women. Residents of Pari Island have been uprooted and denied access to vital resources, including farming land and fishing areas, because of the Suharto era sale of the island to corporate investors. Women are disproportionately impacted since they are not acknowledged as legitimate producers or landowners (Borras et al., 2011). Even when they bear most of the financial burden, women's roles as carers, housewives, and supplemental earners are still defined by deeply ingrained patriarchal traditions. Women's time, mobility, and access to opportunities are thus limited. Regardless of their source of income, women are classified as "housewives," while males are publicly identified as fishermen (Kabeer, n.d.).

## **CONCLUSION**

The economic burden on Pari Island is evident in the unequal treatment of men and women in the fishing sector and the burden of sustaining the family. Women of Pari Island are hard-working and can enhance the community's livelihood, despite not being supported by the government through PKK. They face denial of identification and recognition due to their

gender identity, leaving them vulnerable at sea and unable to contribute to family maintenance. Despite this, women continue to take on the same tasks to generate income. They are institutionally underappreciated and unsupported by government initiatives, and patriarchal standards further diminish their contributions. To create policies and interventions that empower women and guarantee sustainable development, a gender-sensitive approach that recognizes class, geography, and social roles is crucial.

To alleviate the economic burden on fisherwomen and petty traders on Pari Island, measures such as promoting gender equality in fisheries management practices, fair trade conditions for small-scale fisherwomen, equal access to credit and financial support, and establishing inclusive policies should be implemented. Stakeholders should work together to create an environment where fisherwomen have equal opportunities for sustainable livelihoods without encountering biases based on gender. The government should address land disputes and provide more support to women to empower them and uplift their livelihoods. Skill training should be provided to diversify income sources, and the water system should be improved to enable women to yield more products. Climate-responsive and environmental support is crucial, with programs focusing on mangrove restoration, erosion management, and environmentally friendly livelihood training. Government and local authorities should gather gender-disaggregated data on coastal economies and promote collaborations among women's organizations, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and international development organizations. Pari Island can serve as a model for ecologically friendly and gender-responsive coastal development.

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