

“Disaster” Within Disaster Management: Women and Nonhuman Animals Issues

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:
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This analysis will refer to the structural inequalities under disaster management context, where women and more-than-human animals receive imbalanced preparedness for disaster management, risk reduction, and resilience. The concept of feminism and speciesism will visualize the similarity between women and more-than-human animals as an “object” exclusion instead of “subject” inclusion. The vitality of observation is considered from assessing women's capacity to cope, adapt, and survive during and post the socio-ecological emergency (social instability and natural and human-made disaster). The data shows that women were the most susceptible in rapid or slow-onset emergencies, whereas the nonhuman animals will be objectified as no more than property. These two normalized-lens navigate to the skills and knowledge acquired by women regarding socio-ecological resilience. On the other hand, the demand for equal treatment for women and more-than-human animals will be based on their intrinsic values. This article argues that the phenomenon is highly influenced by religious and cultural values in shaping socio-ecological treatment and power relations. In other words, the patriarchal system and human supremacism will become the most influential aspects. The epistemological revolutions through proper laws and policies are required to promote and achieve a more stable socio-ecological structure of women and more-than-human entanglement within disaster management in particular.

1. INTRODUCTION

The social norms are shaped based on the general perspectives that live daily and culturally rooted. Most people assume that the work or labor division is divided into two major classes: “productive work” (produce money, such as factory laborer) that generally executes by men, and “reproductive work” (work that does not generate money, such as

a housewife)¹ and is mostly attributed as a women's profession—and it affects other aspects of life, for example, property access, decision making, as well as socio-ecological resilience victims. Similar issues happen to the epistemological aspects of how society constructs the definition of nonhuman animals. There are many ways to perceive the existence of nonhuman beings, yet mostly it links to the “property” with lower status compared to human beings. Creating a boundary between human and nonhuman animals.² This phenomenon leads to the creation of social and ecological issues in disaster resilience. In Indonesia, particularly in Aceh and Yogyakarta, these two regions have the privilege to govern their jurisdiction. Aceh with its Islamic Jurisprudence (Sharia Law), and Yogyakarta with its Sultanate. Regardless of the basic social norm regarding the women's position and nonhuman animals definition, this paper will also identify the gender perspective and nonhuman animals based on the local culture (as socially attached) and from a religious view (particularly in Aceh). Feminism will feature the condition of women and men hierarchy, while for speciesism perspective will render the hegemony between human and nonhuman animals. How these two ideologies can give a *blindness* to see women as equal to men, and nonhuman animals as equal to humans.

Gender-blindness can be defined as neutrality to see people regardless of their gender. The treatment to acknowledge the intrinsic value as a human—their capacity, to be involved, to be heard, to be respected for their existence: their lives, as the most suffered casualties or the wives who lost their husband, and it lifts the number of women as the head of the family.³ The consequences are both short and long-term in the aftermath of natural disasters. The accentuation of gender lens is to evaluate the role of women and the patriarchal system in a society that is influenced by the local culture, religion, laws, and policies concerning gender-blindness in this perspective. In addition, this topic will also refer to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (as ratified by the Indonesian government, Law No. 07 of 1984); and Law No 24 of 2007 concerning Disaster Management (Indonesian Disaster Management Law), the applicable law concerning nonhuman animals in Indonesia—to unpack the perspectives of socio-culture, current laws, and policies concerning gender-blindness and nonhuman animals perception—and how it is accommodated?

¹ Alia Fajarwati et al., “The Productive and Reproductive Activities of Women as Form of Adaptation and Post-Disaster Livelihood Strategies in Huntap Kuwang and Huntap Plosokerep,” *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 227 (2016): 370–77, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.06.084>.

² Thom van Dooren, Eben Kirksey, and Ursula Münster, “Multispecies Studies,” *Environmental Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3527695>.

³ Virginie Le Masson et al., “How Violence against Women and Girls Undermines Resilience to Climate Risks in Chad,” *Disasters* 43, no. 3 (2019): S245–70, <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12343>.

The method used in this study is a statutory and conceptual approach to provides an analytical point of view to solve problems in legal research from all aspects of a basic legal concept, even from values contained in norms and regulations related to legal concepts.

2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Gender, Nonhuman Animals and Nature: Socio-Ecological Overview

It has been well-addressed that the current ecological era has altered and conveys different and varying consequences for humans. The source of issues can be social, cultural and religious views. To have a better and comprehensive understanding, the acknowledgement of ecological and social aspects will render more perspectives on gender exclusion, the patriarchal system, privilege and legitimacy, nonhuman animals perception—and how these matters are entangled with one another. For this case, the actors are not limited to the society itself but the government and its power involvement. It interprets how laws and social policies regulate and direct the people in perceiving definitions of “women” and “nonhuman animals”. As for many countries, history and social values have an immense contribution to the current life of its people. The new creation and continuation of the existing culture of social classification, power relations, and dominance. This event also directs to gender⁴ and human-nonhuman dichotomy conceptualization within society, and its impact from their interaction to the other sector including the natural resources access and personal capacity to cope with social conflict as well as natural disasters. This paper will render how social construct the term “gender” based on “sex” and “nonhuman animals” as something biologically endowed. The perception of men being superior to women is well-established due to its essentialism that has been implanted hereditary, and it also applies in Indonesia.

Why gender-nonhuman animals and environment? Why social and ecological resilience? The gender issue interlinks with violence,⁵ where gender-based violence can doubtlessly be received from many events (social, economic, political, see table 1) done by many actors (e.g. intimate partner, family members, society).⁶ For nonhuman animals, it is perceived that they are no more than property within multi-perspectives, including Indonesian laws and regulations. However, from those three types of violence mentioned, there is one source missing from social life: ecological violence. Ecological violence is identified as a natural change and crisis (mostly extreme phenomena) caused by human and environmental interactions as a result of natural hazards, social conflict, and it is often

⁴ Gunardi Lie et al., “Problematik UU No. 37 Tahun 2004 Tentang Kepailitan Dan PKPU Terhadap Bank Sebagai Kreditor Separatis,” *Jurnal Bakti Masyarakat Indonesia* 2, no. 2 (2019): 159–68.

⁵ Örjan Bodin, Beatrice Crona, and Henrik Ernstson, “Social Networks in Natural Resource Management: What Is There to Learn from a Structural Perspective?,” *Ecology and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-01808-1102r02>.

⁶ Momsen and Janet Henshall, *Gender and Development* (London: Routledge, 2010).

exacerbated by the absence and or insufficient focus concerning related regulations. The most unfortunate part about this ecological violence is the equal risks with unequal effects that men, women, and nonhuman animals received. In Indonesia, particularly in Aceh and Yogyakarta, the situation also will be shaped hardly by the influence of religion (Islam) and culture. Regardless of what sort of sources of ecological emergency, the capacity of survival, equal skill, and social responsibility towards gender roles must be equilibrium.

Table 1. Type of Gender-Based and Nonhuman Animals Violence

No.	Type of Violence	Description
1.	Social	Common and socially influenced view about women's position is always at a subordinate level. It leads to psychological pressure and brainstorming them as a human with a lower level. In consequence, women are seen as powerless and socially depressed. Nonhuman animals receive the same or even worse treatment, the attachment of "animals = property" will give them a cheap price as a sentient being, particularly in moral and ethical treatment.
2.	Economic	It interconnects with intra-household affairs. Women are categorized as reproductive laborers, where they work inside the house, taking care of the children and elderly, keeping the house clean, all housewives' work, and not producing money—as opposed to the husband or men. It creates financial dependence. Their (women) needs will be relying heavily upon their husbands. It will be worse if the family is living as a lower-income family. Nonhuman animals are used as a means of transaction, they are valued based on their "instrumental" aspect: to generate money—as part of a cheap nature strategy in capitalism.
3.	Political	The lack of women's participation in decision-making is one of the political processes. The lack or absence will fail to accommodate the needs of women, particularly in demanding their rights. In terms of nonhuman animals, the political aspect has a role to play in defining nonhuman animals and their treatment. The lack of specific Indonesian regulations concerning this issue will direct the "dehumanize" treatment of nonhuman animals themselves.
4.	Ecological (environmental changes: disasters, climate crisis)	Women and children, and nonhuman animals are the most suffered victims in the aftermath of the (natural and human-made) disaster. Their resilience skills are different from men's—and humans. This disparity of adaptability makes women and nonhuman animals susceptible. If women are safe from the hazard, they will bear some economic burden post-disaster, moreover if their husband/father are casualties. However, nonhuman animals will remain as property for human beings.

2.2. Risk-Management Capacity: Rapid and Slow-Onset Emergency

Further analyzed, the effects of ecological emergencies that result in the disaster will hardly affect women and nonhuman animals, both rapid or slow-onset emergencies

(see table 2). The patriarchal system and cultural hegemony that is rooted within society directly to the “perk of being men and human” and the opposite to women and nonhuman animals. Not to mention when it is also aggravated by the human capital owned by women—for instance, when it comes to technological things or development, this will automatically be attached to men and boys.⁷ The gender-based issue also links to the capacity of women and men in preparing themselves to be able to see the problem and its resolution, in this case, disasters. According to data, the 2004 Aceh Tsunami’s casualties were approximately 230,000 people.⁸ Although there is no exact data on gender-based casualties, it is assumed by families and society in Aceh that women were the most suffered and led to death.⁹ It is believed that women in Aceh were not trained to be able to swim—moreover, in Tsunami attacks. This phenomenon can simply be described as a rapid emergence of natural disasters.

It is different as compared to the 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake, where most women were saved but the opposite to men.¹⁰ However, it is still burdensome for women due to their double workload to take care of home affairs and earn money daily. The survival needs are not limited to the capacity of “self-escape” yet including economic survival. By far, women (housewives in particular) are focused on household stuff and rely on their husbands in terms of economic basis. It can be understood as a slow-onset emergency and will happen in the long run. Besides, the disaster effects can slightly be released by a social responsibility to help one another and rebuild socio-economic conditions as done by the Yogyakarta community. In response to that, the focus to have capacity building for preemptive measures also must be accommodated to minimize the effects—to be more manageable in controlling the (unpredictable) disaster risks, and to empower women within society. Resilience must be recognized to deal with other possibilities: health issues, natural resources access post-disaster, with no bias over gender. There will be no masculinity or femininity to be resilient equal capacity for well-preparedness to confront the ecological emergencies and their numerous effects.

Table 2. Type of Gender-Based and Nonhuman Animals Violence

No.	Type of Disaster Impact(s)	Rapid Emergency	Slow-Onset Emergency	Region (In Indonesia)
1.	The women are the most suffered casualties (the death	✓		Aceh (2004 Tsunami)

⁷ Coles et al., *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Development* (London: Routledge, 2015).

⁸ Shannon Doocy, “Tsunami Mortality in Aceh Province, Indonesia.” *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 85, no. 4 (2007): 273–78.

⁹ William G. Smith and Jrh, “Geder Equality in Disaster Management and Climate Adaptation,” *Diseases of the Colon & Rectum* 27, no. 1 (1984): 61, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02554083>.

¹⁰ Amirul Hadi, “Aceh in History: Preserving Traditions and Embracing Modernity,” *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 37, no. 2 (2016): 449–64, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v37i2.92>.

No.	Type of Disaster Impact(s)	Rapid Emergency	Slow-Onset Emergency	Region (In Indonesia)
	rate is higher than men). The men survived the tsunami, while most women could not swim.			
2.	Most women were able to survive, but the men (father, husband, man family member) were the casualties. The workload of women is getting doubled due to both reproductive and productive work becoming women's responsibilities.		✓	Yogyakarta (2006 Earthquake)

2.3. The Exclusion, Social Perspectives, and Power Relations

“*Wuwusekang wus ing ngelm, kaprawolu wanudyo lan priyo, Ing kabisan myang kuwate, tuwin wiwekanipun.*” (who have finished studying, women are only one-eighth of men in terms of intelligence, strength, and wisdom). This Javanese proverb clearly shows where the level of women is, particularly in Javanese society. The proverb has been existing for ages and is rooted until present times. The Javanese character (including Yogyakarta) is sturdily attached to the cultural values, where it also intertwines with other facets, creating a hierarchy system, the class discrepancy between men and women—even though it does not apply to all societies. The other point that can “incriminate” the gender in social status is related to “*unggah-ungguh*” in Javanese ethics and practice—the act will be based on the cultural hegemony and applies to the way women respect men. This attribution becomes soft law within community and society-valued, and why this event is becoming one of the socio-ecological rationales. The nexus between social conflict and ecological emergencies are hitting women harder.

In context, Aceh is influenced by religious views that affect all life's aspects. Aceh Province is governed by special sharia law granted by the Indonesian government—and becomes the only province that sets its regional laws and regulations that refers to Islamic jurisprudence. To some extent, this has been a dilemma for Aceh people due to some religious restrictions and leads to the women's wiggle room.¹¹ As mentioned in the previous part, when the tsunami attacked Aceh in 2004, women became the most vulnerable and had less capacity to escape from the tsunami—because they could not swim and mostly wore long skirts. According to Islamic teaching, and is emphasized by

¹¹ Ravera et al., “Gender Perspectives in Resilience, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Global Environmental Change,” *Ambio* 45, no. 3 (2016): 235–47.

Islamic scholars, Muslimah (Muslim women)—should wear loose clothing and not showing their body curves. In addition to that, the incapacity to escape from disaster can be considered by referring to the situation showing most (Muslim) women were focused and “assigned” to be at home. It interprets under Al-Quran surah *Al-Ahzab*: 33:

“And reside in your homes, and do not flaunt your finery as was the flaunting of finery in the earliest (times) of Ignorance [...]”

It has somehow become difficult for those who translate this into practice, while Islam will not complicate and risk its followers. The problem does not always lie in the intrinsic value of cultural or religious matters, but the ability to transcribe it also becomes one of the concerns. The post-tsunami has transformed the views on women in Aceh—as featured by the establishment of the Aceh Charter of Women’s Rights. This Charter accommodates the women’s needs culturally, socially, economically, and it has received recognition and great endorsement from both political and religious actors. It has successfully reconstructed gender-blindness into gender-inclusiveness. The power relations must be addressed as a way to access to be treated equally.

2.4. Gender-based and Nonhuman Animal Issues: Laws and Policy Discourses

This part will identify how far the laws, regulations, as well as policy discourses at the international, municipal, and regional-level are dealing with gender issues that can be interpreted and analyze its effectiveness towards women in socio-ecological resilience.

Under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):

Article 3:

“The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.”

Article 6 point 1:

“Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.”

Under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR):

Article 3:

“The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant.”

Article 7 (a) point (i):

“Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind, in particular women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work;”

Under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW):

Preamble:

“Noting that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women, [...]”

Under Indonesian Law No. 24 of 2007 concerning disaster management, under Article 3 (1) letter c and d, it states that disaster management is according to the principle of “equality”: *“... disaster management must not contain matters that differentiate between backgrounds, among others, religion, ethnicity, race, class, gender or social status.”*

A very great recognition of the gender-based dimension has been addressed in all levels of legal systems, from international to municipal—as represented by the stated Articles above, where both women and men acquire similar rights and should be guaranteed by formal laws and regulations. However, it is challenging at the stage of problematizing, conceptualizing, and framing the issues. Government Officials emphasize the same thing, but with no actual practice and no agency participation,¹² and it leads nowhere. The aspects of cultural and social values are considered much stronger in practice, compared to the formal and legally binding regulations made by the Government. The power relations in social and gender classes are less being interfered with by the top-down approach. In other words, the gender-based notions must be locally grounded, locally rooted yet must be adaptive as well.¹³ This “brainwash” injection also must target all levels: men, women, girls, boys, children, elderly, by the point of social responsibility and sensitivity to the most vulnerable, and being well-prepared to the social-ecological conflict. It can be a disaster or social instability post-disaster. However, for nonhuman animals in Indonesia, the availability of Indonesian regulations, such as Indonesia has Law Number 18 of 2009 concerning Husbandry and Animal, Law Number 5 of 1990 concerning Conservation of Biological Resources and their Ecosystem, and Government Regulations Number 95 of 2012 concerning Public Health and Animal

¹² Ravera et al.

¹³ W Adger et al., “Are There Social Limits to Adaptation to Climate Change,” *Climatic Change* 93, no. 3 (2008): 335–54.

Welfare—does not adequately accommodate the proper treatment of nonhuman animals, particularly in dealing with disaster management.

3. CONCLUSION

The aim to address gender-blindness issues under feminism and nonhuman animals under speciesism context over socio-ecological resilience in Indonesia is considered vital. The assessment is during and post-ecological alteration both rapid and low on-set emergency as referring to natural hazards and or social conflict. Women and nonhuman animals are considered as the most vulnerable actors due to several rationales: cultural, social, economic, religious, geographical, that are shaped and live over generations. For the 2004 Aceh Tsunami and the 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake, the religious and cultural aspects were the most concerning points of view. Most Aceh people who are governed by Sharia Jurisprudence, there are a lot of aspects of life that refer to sharia laws. A similar thing happened in Yogyakarta—under its Sultanate, cultural values are still rooted robustly. However, those most crucial points regarding gender-based issues are not placed in the intrinsic value of cultural and religious morals, but the misinterpretation and translation on how it should be practically applied. Unfortunately, that perception has been socially transplanted, and the need for grounding and localizing the gender-blindness and nonhuman animals' matter in their treatment, preparing the unprecedented, unpredictable socio-ecological changes is an a-must-need. It can be bolstered by the current Indonesian laws and policies as a formal reference to achieve gender-blindness and nonhuman animals in socio-ecological resilience.

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