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# Phenomenology Study of Rural Women Identity, Information Communication Technology and Human Security

Muhammad Hanif Fahmi<sup>1</sup>, Sri Widayati<sup>2</sup>, Lian Agustina Setiyaningsih<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Information System, Universitas Islam Raden Rahmat Malang  
Jl. Raya Mojosari No. 2 Kepanjen, Malang, 65163 Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Communication Science, University of Merdeka Malang.  
Jl. Terusan Dieng No. 62-64 Malang, 65115, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author: E-mail: [lian.agustina@unmer.ac.id](mailto:lian.agustina@unmer.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

The problem for women in rural areas is the lack of access technology based on information. Especially in terms of using devices based on Information communication and technology (ICT). In relation, the use of ICT to access information can shape women's identity in supporting their existence in the public sphere. Gender inequality among village women often occurs, in the form of discrimination in the freedom to access information. Whereas in the village, women also support the family economy as well as guard the family. The main problem for women is the digital divide. The substance of this article is to describe the identity of village women through the use of ICT-based media to establish human security. The method used is qualitative phenomenology by looking at the linkage of village women's identity indicators, ICT and human security. This study involved key informants, representatives of women who live in villages in Malang Regency. Data collection techniques using interviews and documentation. Data analysis used Schutz's phenomenology with the stages of describing the identity gap, perceiving behavior and meaning as well as intersubjectivity to connect research data. The result of her research is the formation of village women's identity through digital literacy. The community literacy model can form human security in the form of a community-based security system. The community functions as an information filter so that women can gain freedom in realizing their desires and success.

**Keywords:** Human security; Identity; Information communication technology; Rural women

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Technology was created as a media of solving problems in a practical and efficient way. Ideally, technology can be accessed and utilized by all people, both men and women, of productive or non-productive ages. However, in fact, the constraints on the use of technology arise among women, both at productive and non-productive ages. Therefore, there have been many studies on technological literacy in groups that have not been able to optimally utilize technology. The era of communication technology brings a new culture in everyday life. For the urban community, the use of and access to technology and technology-based information devices has become a habit that is closely related to everyday life. However, it becomes a problem when looking at the phenomena that have emerged in rural areas

APJII (2016) also explains the gap in internet and technology use in terms of age. From the overall data, the dominant age group is 35-44 years at 29.2%, followed by the 25-34 age group at 24.4%. In the third rank, is occupied by the age group 10-24 years as much as 18.4%, followed by the 45-54 age group at 18%. The age group above 55 years is 10%. The most productive age group, namely 25 sd. 44 years the number reached 53.6% or as many as 71 million people, becoming the most dominant Internet users

Meanwhile, from a professional perspective, Internet users are dominated by groups of workers / entrepreneurs as many as 62% or 82.2 million people. Surprisingly, in second place, housewives are the largest internet users with 22 million people or 16.6%. In third place, there is a student group with a total of 10.3 million (7.8%). The student group numbered 8.3 million people (6.3%) (APJII, 2016).

Basically, the use of technology can benefit women, such as the results of research by Najih (2017), the use of information and communication technology can help women in the online trade economy.

Whereas in the field of education, gender inequality can be seen in the choice of majors in secondary schools and colleges, where the choice of majors for women is related to their domestic function. Women need assistance in the use of technology because they have limitations in terms of abilities and skills. Therefore a companion is needed in utilizing technology in life (Astuti, 2017).

If you look deeper into the phenomenon of rural women, they have various problems both in the domestic and public sectors. In Indonesia, from the results of the Women's Alternative Education Circle study in 2017, the domestic problems often experienced by women are a lot of burdens, subordination and stereotypes (KAPAL, 2017). Whereas in India (Gupta et al., 2019), China (Zhong et al., 2018) and Nepal (Shah et al., 2018) the biggest problems are violence, discrimination and stereotypes. Looking at cases in various developing countries, if it is drawn the problem of women lies in self-esteem. And according to the release of the United Nations Information Center, one of the main causes of discrimination for women in rural areas is the traditions that are still very strong in the village. In addition, three issues that become the priority of women in rural areas are health, education and the economy. And these three problems have a correlation and relevance to the use of technology (Dini, 2013).

Self-esteem has a relationship with women's identity where there are obstacles in arousing the identity of village women that lies in women and the patriarchal system in them. The problem of using ICT is a trigger in the midst of modernization faced by rural women. The affirmative action that village women should have received has yet to be realized. Many of the burdens carried by village women are bound by patriarchal culture. The village community generally interprets women as the second sex which has an impact on their role.

Technology-related problems include aspects of how to use them, understanding content and problem solving. This is related to the sense of security of village women in the face of an event or incident. These three things can be related to one big issue, namely digital divide from village women. Gender violence that occurs originates from discriminating access to information. As a study in Ghana, when rural women get technological literacy, they can independently rid themselves and their families from various diseases. This is because village women can automatically be empowered in accessing health facilities and health information (Laar et al., 2019).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Rural women identity and information, communication technology**

The gap is the use of ICT media in accessing information. Women who have jobs as laborers in companies also experience multi burdens. So there is a correlation that women workers who come from villages have a low ability to access technology-based media. The low ability to access correlates with the references they have, a study on female workers who come from the village (Rosenbloom, 2011).

In Indonesia, out of 10 village women, 8 are rural women who are not yet ICT literate (Kurnia, N., & Astuti, 2017). Meanwhile, 59.28% of rural women in India do not have ICT literacy (Thanuskodi, 2019). The link between the use of ICT and village women lies in literacy. Where the use of ICT becomes a new medium that is very important in everyday life, it requires understanding and user agency, because technology is only a tool that does not determine how we should act (Koltay, 2011).

The development of ICT is marked by media convergence and interactivity, literacy is not only related to digesting media content, but also producing multimedia text and even interactive text in the hypermedia context. This is due to the very rapid growth in internet use (Buckingham, 2006). And directly it has implications for changes in knowledge and behavior which in turn form a new culture, namely digital culture (Setiyaningsih & Fahmi, 2019)

Various problems faced by village women such as hoax information, privacy violations, cyberbullying, violent and pornographic content, and digital media addiction are considered the latest digital problems (Kurnia, N., & Astuti, 2017). The solution to the above problems is to explore various types of digital literacy that are creative and empowerment actions for women. Rural women in Bangladesh experience fear when faced with the use of technology. This is due to the initial knowledge of ICT that village women do not have (Sultana et al., 2019).

### **Gender bias, community and identity**

Gender bias is a problem that is not only faced by women but also men often become victims of gender bias. However, women become the most victims if proxied as objects of gender bias. This is because the culture that is formed in Indonesia is a patriarchal culture. This culture is a culture that places the male sex in the main position in all sectors of life, both domestic and public.

Gender bias is defined by Sadker & Zittleman (2009) as actions that harm humans due to gender violence. The forms of gender bias include violence (physical, psychological, economic), multi burdens,



marginalization, discrimination, subordination, stereotypes. According to Wang et al., (2019) gender bias does not only occur in disadvantaged areas but also occurs in the scientific community. That the gender bias that occurs most often is role discrimination. Continuing from the study above, prior to the study, the phenomenon of discrimination in South China occurred due to the low education of women (Hannum et al., 2009).

From the conditions above, it is necessary to provide affirmative action for women to grow and develop independently in the context of their social life. There are still not many affirmative actions given to help increase the class of women in developing world countries (Tisdell & Shekhawat, 2019). Affirmative action that can help women is in the form of giving equal opportunities to men in various sectors. The real power of women lies in the community. Especially village women like to do activities together with their community. And the community can be used as a forum for empowerment to explore its potential.

Communities can form an identity based on race, gender, age, and level of competence (Marschall, 2002). Therefore, women also have the power to explore potential and rise from the problems they are facing. As mentioned above, the biggest problem for women in Indonesia is multi burdens and discrimination in the ICT sector. So village women can use the strength of the community to address these problems.

Communities form networks and create social change. Ascriptive is important in shaping identification and the role of welcome in reducing its negative impact (Jones et al., 2018). Ascriptive is meant to include gender such as women, village identity, and culture. The three of them took part in shaping the identity of village women. Identity is a representation of identification and perception of social conditions. Identity is used to predict individual behavior through communities or groups. Indicators in looking at identity include the recognition of women's values and special characteristics, challenges of gender implementation in village women and claims of equality with men (Brandth & Haugen, 2008).

### **Human security**

Factors that influence women's empowerment to be in a safe position according to Pratama (2013) consist of intensity, quality and evaluation of the role of the government, institutions related to women, companions and related communities. Female identity affects the sense of security in women which is often associated with self-esteem.

Connecting the issue of women and human security, it relates to the approach used to solve women's problems themselves. Meanwhile, the problem for women is the quality of women themselves as human beings who have social responsibility (Reardon & Hans, 2018). A gender-based human security approach in the Arctic reduces discrimination rates for minority groups (Scott & Drury, 2018).

Human security is used to understand problems in globalization. Its main goal is to lift people out of poverty and social fear. In Prior (2018), human security in overcoming social problems uses a method of providing experience so that humans can have sensitivity to their problems and their surroundings. Conditions that can use a human security approach are where the community is provided with assistance from a sense of trauma that disrupts community development.

The scope of human security, are security from such as the chronic threat of hunger, disease and oppression and protection from sudden and detrimental disturbances in the pattern of people's lives either at home, work or in society. UNDP divides 7 branches of security to ensure that human security is indispensable for citizens, namely economic security, food, health, the environment, individuals, communities, and political security (UNDP, 1993).

The human security approach views that security is not only about the security of a large group, but also concerns individual security. Security studies will classify into traditional dimensions and non-traditional dimensions concerning human security itself with the intention of expanding the object of security. Persson & Sundevall (2019) explained that the human security approach can be used to explain the phenomenon of the role of women in the military. Women made strategic contributions to US military forces from 1965-2018.

In addition, there are many other studies that link human security to the role of women, especially on gender issues that are often faced. Hilhorst et al., (2018) from their study explained that there is a correlation between human security and gender and discrimination against women. It can be said that human security is also capable of bringing women into positions of empowerment and independence. Through the right empowerment action, the empowerment method chosen in her research is women's community-based which is considered effective in arousing women's motivation and courage in expressing their problems.

### 3. METHODS

The problem of rural women's identity, ICT and human security is discussed using qualitative phenomenological methods. In understanding the problem emphasizes on studying the phenomenon as it is. The discussion process relies on temporary storage or isolating existing assumptions, beliefs, and knowledge so that they are able to make the bracketing process and be able to see the phenomenon as it is (Adian, 2010). The focus of this research is on the phenomenon of identity of the village women's group. The informants involved in this study were groups of village women who are members of non-formal communities in villages such as Karang Taruna and Dasawisma. The criteria for informants include women of productive age between 20-40 years of age who do not work in the public sector. The number of informants involved was ten people spread across various villages in Malang Regency. The sampling method used purposive sampling on the grounds of providing criteria for informants and anticipating saturation in data collection.

Data collection in this study used three methods, namely interviews, observation and documentation and literature study on related issues. This study used Schutz's phenomenology data analysis. While the stages of analysis carried out are describing a) the identity gap, b) understanding the behavior of the informants, c) interpreting the intersubjectivity to connect the research data and d) concluding the sitetisis. The focus of this research includes: the identity of village women, the use of ICT, and Human security.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of forming the identity of village women depends on social and cultural constructs that have long been understood and internalized. The identity of women is often described by the marginalization experienced by women. However, in this study, women's identity is associated with ICT and human security from the perspective of a third world country. The village from the observations has become a granary for women both physically, psychologically and economically in the domestic and public sphere. In this phenomenological study Schutz surveyed the identity of village women, ICT and human security through the meaning of female identity gap and ICT, as well as human security and the village women's community. This phenomenon is analyzed in depth in Schutz's phenomenological perspective, which emphasizes the fundamental meaning of the subject, the informants involved in this study were five informants in Malang Regency.

#### Gap identity, rural women and ICT

The phenomenon of gender disparity is a major problem in rural areas, because the framework of thinking and acting in the village scope is based on a long-established patriarchal culture. Until it turns off women's awareness to rise up and take justice for their position in the public sphere. Discrimination that occurs is often cornered rural women into the domestic sphere and minimizes women's involvement in the public sphere. Multi burdens became the main problem experienced by village women, followed by subordination. In accordance with the results of interviews from informants involved in the *dasa wisama* and youth organizations, it was stated that both of them were the domination of problems of village women. Other forms of gender bias experienced by village women from informants' testimonies are discrimination, stereotypes and violence.

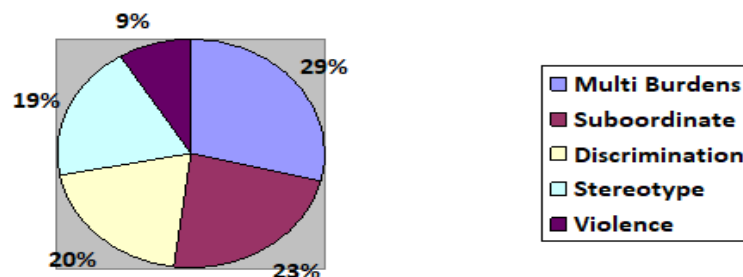


Figure 1. Women bias gender in Malang District

The practice of multi burdens refers to the large number of jobs held by women, especially in the domestic sector. This results in women having minimal opportunities to actualize themselves with their groups in public spaces. Meanwhile, subordinate subordination is also considered normal and natural for

women. The subordination that is meant by the informants is regarding the assumption that women do not have the same rights to express opinions and act independently. All decisions and actions depend on the man who has the highest position in the family. The significant impact that can be portrayed from subordination is that women's level of self-confidence is low and they do not have a high level of survival over a condition.

Discrimination is often experienced by women is in the form of limiting their roles and access to technology. For example, when women want to confirm information, the access is often closed unilaterally. This causes women not to get affirmative action to grow and develop. In terms of stereotypes, women are labeled with the status of the second sex. And this is also experienced in the case that women do not deserve to operate technology-based tools because they do not have the experience and knowledge related to it.

The identity gap that arises from seeing this phenomenon is not autonomous. Identities that can be defined from the lack of autonomy of women include: dependence on men, not being responsible for their environment, not being technologically literate, unable to solve their own problems, unequal position in the eyes of technology and being unable to do self-healing. Basically, the problem for women when faced with technology, especially housewives, is that they are not aware of the use of technology. In previous studies conducted by researchers, housewives did not have awareness of their free time which was accommodated by new technology-based media (Setyaningsih & Jatmikowati, 2019).

According to the informant, the problem of village women is in the digital video. This is due to the imbalance and unequal growth of ICT in villages, especially those that can be accessed by women. The causes include: a) aspects of representation and knowledge: lack of knowledge and understanding; b) financial aspect: financial ability to access ICT-based media. The results of the research by Rahim et al., (2020) show the use of cellphones has an effective influence on the activities of rural women in Pakistan. In their daily use of cell phones can be an effective strategy to increase their self-confidence and sense of security. So in other words, in this study, digital divide can be overcome by using digital literacy in rural women.

Through digital literacy that is applied to village women in Malang Regency, village women can form their identity. The identity in question is an autonomous identity. The concept of autonomous identity to be achieved by village women in Malang Regency includes: (1) being independent; (2) take responsibility; (3) digital literacy; (4) equals in the eyes of technology; (5) self healing; and f) problem solving.

### **Human security and rural women community**

The empowerment of village women through groups has been widely studied and has achieved effective results. Village women's farmer groups in India are able to create innovations in developing their agricultural products independently (Agarwal, 2020). ICT can encourage women's empowerment, by optimizing their abilities and skills in the field of technology. The determining factors for its success are the level of adoption, access, and orientation. This study underlines that various types of access such as mental, material, skills and use contribute significantly to the adoption of ICT in rural women's communities. The adoption leads to innovation because the strength of the community is the initial capital for transacting and transforming messages. The intention of adoption is a driver of digital literacy orientation.

Previous studies suggest that the biggest problem for women in using ICT is panic when accessing information (Setyaningsih, 2020). This is also the case with village women; however, the community is the gate keeper of information. According to the informant, the strength of the community is one of the places that can provide them with a sense of security in the midst of a patriarchal culture. So far, village women think that they are victims of technology because of the lack of knowledge and skills.

The sense of security that village women want can be achieved by collaborating and connecting with village women in building a digital literacy paradigm. Communities or groups help facilitate the mastery of ICT. Where the way it works is based on gender humanity and security. This practice emphasizes social commitment, collaborative learning & mainstream gender. Indirectly, they protect the autonomous identity that has been formed. Local wisdom in Malang Regency is as a farming and coastal community. It takes the form of social cohesion which becomes the capital to change the habits of village women. Farmers, fishermen, traders and laborers are the entry points for community development towards digital literacy.

Village women who are technology literated will be free from the stigma of victims and technological slaves. A holistic perspective on human security problems in rural women facilitates the overcoming of gender bias that has occurred. Basically, the informant explained that a sense of security can arise when there is solidarity and a sense of acceptance by fellow women. So, the human security approach is an entry point to make rural women more aware of the use of ICT.

The identity of village women can be understood as an awareness of the differences, both between the sexes of men and women and also between groups of women from one another. Village areas are considered to have a heavier burden of oppression and discrimination than urban areas. The form of gender bias experienced by village women has a tendency towards multi burdens, discrimination, subordination, stereotypes and violence (physical, psychological and economic). This practice is based on colonial and imperial oppression under one umbrella, namely patriarchal culture. The impact of this practice is that the identity of village women leads to productivity and rationality when dealing with technology.

Gender bias practices that occur in rural women, especially in the use of ICT, lead to subaltern conditions. The basic problem of village women in building identity lies in the logic of thinking, awareness and understanding of their position. Therefore, it requires a transformation of awareness and knowledge by understanding the differences in women's experiences. Transformation actions can also be directed at matters that are essentialism and strategic. Actions that can represent essentialism are building awareness of the position of women who always partner with men or other groups of women. Therefore, the initial position of women determines the next steps of the village women. Meanwhile, being strategic means that women are able to think about and solve their own problems without depending on anyone effectively and efficiently.

Human security that can be described from the link with the identity of village women and ICT lies in the awareness and logic of thinking of village women. If village women have awareness of the same position and rational thinking logic, a critical dialogue will be created in themselves. And from these activities, village women are automatically able to build security for themselves and their environment. Because they are able to independently create an understanding of an autonomous identity. If linked to ICT, this autonomous identity can be achieved through technological literacy towards village women.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In this study, it can be concluded that digital divide and gender can trigger non-autonomous identity in rural women. The identity formed by village women is an autonomous identity. Gap identity in Malang Regency can form an identity (1) independent; (2) take responsibility; (3) digital literacy; (4) equals in the eyes of technology; (5) self healing; and (6) problem solving. Identity can be formed through community-based digital literacy. The community functions as a filter of information so that women can get freedom in realizing their desires and success. The identities formed are village women who are media literate, independent and can identify and solve their own problems. This has a connection with human security, that this approach is able to form awareness and logic of critical thinking for village women. So that in the end, they are able to make decisions and resolve their problems independently.

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