Phenomenon of Women Marginalization in Poor Family in Pakpak Community
(A Case Study in Pegagan Julu Village, Sumbul Subdistrict, Dairi Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia)

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Abstract: This study is taken from the study of marginalization cases experienced by Pakpak women of rural poor families. The study was conducted in Pegagan village of Sumbul subdistrict, Dairi, North Sumatra Province. The marginalization phenomenon is shown in some aspects, restrictions on women’s access to formal education, tendency of dropping out of school having no in heritance rights and no role in the decision making of custom. Related to this phenomenon, the research question of this study is how the process of marginalization experienced by women in their family is. Marxist structural feminist perspective and qualitative approach with feminist perspective were used to answer the research question. The findings of the study finally, show that the structured patriarchy ideology as gender ideology in family becomes the cause of women marginalization. Patriarchy becoming gender ideological construction in Pakpak family is interpreted and expressed in the form of private patriarchy that is a hegemonizing system or structure of men power that has dominated and sub-ordinated social position of women in Pakpak families.

Key words: Marginalization, Pakpak women, family, private patriarchy, gender inequality, Pakpak community

INTRODUCTION

Marginalization phenomenon is an issue of gender inequality and inequity in women who have relevance to the issues of gender inequality such as violence, stereotypes, sub-ordination and double burden. The phenomenon of marginalization is mostly experienced by women in various communities and cultures. Therefore, it is not exaggerating when it is said that the phenomenon of gender inequality (marginalization) is likened to an iceberg phenomenon. The tip is visible from a distance, if it is observed more closely there are still many cases of gender inequality experienced by women in the world including Indonesia (Anonymous, 2009; Maria, 2003; Hunter, 2005; Yount and Carrera, 2006; Zaman and Rothenberg, 2000).

The occurrence of marginalization in women lives has relationship with other gender issues such as subordination, stereotyping, double burden and violence. Thus, the explanation of marginalization must be frequently placed within the framework of the analysis of subordination, stereotyping, double burden as well as violence (Fakih, 1996a, b; Holzner and Saptari, 1997; Winchester, 1990; Chavous and Cogburn, 2007; Johnson, 2005; Chowdhury, 2005; Abell, 1999; McFadden, 2001).

Marginalization coming from gender inequality within the feminist standpoint is defined as a social process of marginalizing/excluding women to gain access or opportunities to all social and economic resources available in the communities (Fakih, 1996a, b; Holzner and Saptari, 1997; Winchester, 1990). Regarding the symptoms or causes of women marginalization can be seen from cultural and structural aspects. Structurally, the marginalization experienced by women are usually structured through social structures such as the role of state through the green revolution agricultural development policies that are not gender sensitive (Eiturtk, 2007; Holzner and Saptari, 1997; Boserup, 1970, Hartini, 2004; Fakih, 1996a, b; Munthe, 2007; Maquire, 1984; Stamp, 1986; Kaber, 2005; Pitaloka, 2004; Cevallos, 2003; Coomaraswamy, 2005).

Regarding the marginalization as the issue of gender inequality, this phenomenon is also experienced by the women of Batak Pakpak ethnic Pegagan village of Sumbul subdistrict, Dairi Regency. Dealing with the study of Pakpak women marginalization, previous studies (Anonymous, 2002) suggest the tendency to lack of opportunities to get formal education for women in the family. Other findings are emergence of phenomenon of women as head of households in poor families, inequality of women participating in politics, difficulty of women to access economic resources and the weak position of women in custom due to patrilineal culture system. This
study also reinforces the notion of Pakpak women as the women community relatively left behind socially and economically than women from Batak Toba sub-ethnic, Simalungun, Karo and Mandailing. Various assumption and discourse set questions the Pakpak women underdevelopment in the public sector when compared to their peers from other Batakethnics, for example: there are many women of other Batakethnics becoming academics, businessmen, politicians and other professionals but Pakpak women ethnic are not widely known and do not perform in the public sector.

In addition, the study of Pardede (2010) in the context of indigenous people show that women in Pakpak indigenous communities often experience violence associated with the cultural system embraced by the community. Pardede (2010) findings show the existence of various cases of domestic violence in the form of physical, psychological, economic, sexual harassment, unfair inheritance system, marriage system unfavorable to the rights of women and husbands authority to repatriate their wife.

Other study shows low political participation of women in society (Boangmanalu, 2009) due to masculine cultures and political work systems and Pakpak society culture which are patriarchal. The low level of daughter education in rural areas is due to cultural value that prioritizes sending sons (Adriana, 2009). Timendung (2011) study confirms the existence of a double value imposed on daughters. This means that the favorable values such as heritage, opportunities to have high level of schools are given to sons while the adverse value such as job and responsibility become the part of daughters that they consider unfair.

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Formulations of problem: The phenomenon of women marginalization in Pakpak community family according to the kinship and social system is patriarchal, its bloodline with withdrawal, both clan and family are always drawn from the male line. Related to this explanation, the research question of this study: How is the process of women marginalization in family in Pakpak community?

Theoretical perspective: To examine the issue of Pakpak women marginalization in family, the Marx feminist perspective or structural feminist is used as the theorizing framework used to explain the problems of this study. This feminist perspective emphasizes a thesis that the inequality of women actually stems from the social structure and system, that is patriarchal ideology becoming gender ideology on society (Lengermann and Jill, 2008; Chafetz, 2006; Tong, 2006). Structural feminist perspective also state that patriarchal ideology as the basis of gender ideology manifests as structural and social system in society becoming the source of women’s oppression within the framework of patriarchy and class analysis. In a society that knows the patriarchal system and power, the social position of women tend to be subordinated and dominated by men power in the family defined as “private patriarchy”.

Associated with patriarchy as the embodiment of social system and structure, Walby (1990) argues patriarchy theorizing as private and public patriarchies. Private patriarchy rests on household production as a social environment that is oppressive against women. The second type, public patriarchy is the patriarchy grounded on public environments such as employment or state. Both patriarchial are distinguished for analytical purposes but the two of them are related or continuum not dichotomous (Susantry, 2003). Feminist asserts that family is as the social instution earliest practicing patriarchal ideology then practiced widely in the communities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research was qualitative using a case study. Selection of various cases of women marginalization in family was determined based on various categories/characteristics of age, clan/bernri the terminology used for women in mentioning clan. While for the sons, it was called clan, marital status, education, livelihood and abode (according to Pakpak family characteristics). After doing the selection process by category as well as the characteristics required then it was obtained 8 cases of marginalization in 3 daughters of junior and senior high school education from various clans with variations in age from 19-21 years old. Next 3 cases of marginalization of married women with elementary and junior high schools education from different clans with the age category of 30-50 years old and the rest two cases were the marginalization of widows with elementary and junior high school education by age category respectively 30 and 40 years old. Such information was very important because it was in accordance with the demands of research having feminist perspective, that was aimed at revealing the diversity of women’s experiences constructed based on the standpoint of their life experience (Holzner, 2003; Fakih, 1996a, b).

In addition to acquiring data from informants that have the cases, this study used key informants as the primary data source. There were 3 key informants, one person from community community leaders concurrently as religious and traditional leaders and two people of the village administration. Related to this study, the research setting was Pagangan Julu village becoming an
administrative region of Sumbul subdistrict, Dairi Regency in North Sumatra. There was an underlying reason why this area was determined as the research location. It was based on the socio-demographic considerations that the village was still a native living area of Pakpak community and also until now the majority of the population was Pakpak community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of women marginalization in family in Pakpak community: The analysis of women marginalization cases in family in Pakpak community within the framework of structural marxist feminist theorizing is expressed in several instruments, namely. First, women emic understanding on marginalization experienced in the social institutions of Pakpak community. Emic understanding explains what kind of women initial knowledge in terms of interpreting the marginalization phenomenon constructed from knowledge existing in the community. In another sense, the marginalization experienced by women who are the focus of this study is interpreted or understood by them as a form of gender inequality even as a local moral values sacred by the community.

The subsequent dimension of marginalization element is studied in the second point, that is the history of the occurrence of marginalization in the women lives. In the context of gender study, the feminists look at the dimensions of history of gender issues as a strategy to obtain gender inequality data from the standpoint or subjectivity of women who experience it (Wijaya, 1996; Moore, 1988).

Third, it is stated the factors and reasons why the women experience marginalization. It is also stated what values or norms constructed and implemented in the family social structure, so that, women experience or receive marginalization in their life. Fourth, how is the treatment and forms of marginalization experienced by them in family? Fifth, who are the main actors who marginalize them in the family institution? Sixth, who are the supporting actors of such marginalization? Seventh, how is the system of sexually-based work division or gender role ideology imposed in the family institution? Eight, how is the construction of gender relations occurring in their family. To facilitate the case discussion, systematically the framework used in this study is organized in the form of a chart or diagram. The process of Rural Women Marginalization in Family/Domestic Institution (Fig. 1).

Women emic understanding on marginalization: Based on the analysis of all women who experience marginalization in the family, it can be seen that most Pakpak women tend to interpret marginalization as the implementation of the cultural values and traditions that have been commonly practiced in the community. Practices in the family that always prioritize the interests of sons to get higher education, heritage always given to men, as well as dominant men authority in the customare the construction of values that have been socialized and internalized in the family. In addition, according to the men custom, it is kula-kula, that is the highest customary element Pakpak customary structure. Kula-kula is brothers of women in the context of the nuclear family and extended family that have legitimacy and authority of the “Blessing” grantor to women, so that, women should be submissive and respecto males in their family. If they do not respect the brothers, according to the custom they will be given social and moral sanction by called them “Not well-mannered women” and “Bot feasible to get blessing”. These sanctions are sacral and unintended by the women in their life.

![Fig. 1: Thinking framework](image-url)
History of women marginalization occurrence: History or women marginalization is one of the strategic instruments to capture the experience of gender inequality (Wijeya, 1996; Moore, 1988). This instrument aims to reveal the reality of gender inequality from the point of view of women subjectivity as party experiencing it directly or known by the feminist as herstory. Based on herstory, all women marginalization cases in poor families show that they experience marginalization starting from children to young adults and married.

Most of them think that it is the life reality of daughters. Parents teach them that brothersare the successor to the family and become kula-kula and should be treated special. At Pakpak custom, there is applicable value teaching that kula-kula is a party that is respected because of their role in giving “Blessing” to Pakpak women starting from family, household up to society. Kula-kula blessing is required by Pakpak women with the goals that they happy life and successful in all aspects. For women who are not married, if they are given blessing by their kula-kulathey would “Easily getting married” and have “Abundant fortune”.

The views have been already acquired by women, since, an early age through the process of socialization and internalization of values in their family. The values taught by parents to daughter are implemented in a number of policies and measures in the form of supporting and always prioritizing the interests of brothers. On the one hand, daughters have been already accustomed to working more and more severe. Pakpak women’s life reality in rural areas tend to position women to work harder and also illustrated more in the life experiences of all these women. Based on a review of herstory, there is a tendency they have become accustomed, since, childhood to work at home or in the fields or gardens.

Factors contributing marginalization to women: The consequences of patriarchal Pakpak society structures and systems have spawned also a patriarchal power system in Pakpak families. The implication is that the patriarchal control, power and authority become factors that cause women experience marginalization in the family. Construction of gender ideology resulted from patriarchal ideology puts women in the position of subordination, and according to hierarchy, men hold the power and women are under the domination of men. Powers and authority of men in the family have put them in superiority position. In addition, of the patriarchal system that manifests itself in gender ideology as the root causes of marginalization, the poverty factor faced by faced by families are also potential causes of the women marginalization.

Treatment and marginalization forms experienced by women: Treatments of marginalization against women in family show variation. Among others, parents as father and mother who ask their daughters not to continue their education because there is no money but the brothers remain at school. Some are asked not to study at school first because they are obliged to replace her mother domestic duties when parents should be workers in the garden of Raja Tanoh, that is rich person or family who control and own the land or the spacious garden in the village as the landlord. Other treatment is that parents prefer giving inheritance to sons. The marginalization of daughters in the form of restriction on access to school also shows an empirical reality of smooth and disguised exploitative practices to women in family. In their young age, these daughters have already born a great responsibility in order to strengthen the family economy security. All of these treatments are directly or indirectly intended to support the success of sons, so that, their moral and material contributions are absolutely necessary. This empirical reality strengthens an objective reality of a “Gender-based structural oppression” in family where the sons are conditioned to obtain any preferential treatment in their lives.

In relation to various marginalization treatments carried out by parents against women have been implicated also in various forms of marginalization experienced by women. From overall cases analyzed, it is showed that daughters as the most vulnerable children experience educational and inheritance marginalization. Meanwhile, the daily reality in family shows that daughter responsibilities and workload are more and heavier both at home and in garden than sons. While, custom marginalization are mostly experienced by women who have been married because they are not involved in decision making and right to speak in customary issues in family. In fact, women are required to attend and participate in all customary activities carried out in the village. The various customary activities are morally and materially time-consuming for women time and power. They still have to perform various reproductive and productive obligations, so that, multiple burden is prevalent poor women in their marriage.

Main actor of women marginalization in family: Actor is of the main elements that play important roles in a social system or social structure. Actor has significant roles to construct and reproduce certain values in existing social institutions. Similarly, the roles of social actors have important place and discussion in the cases of women marginalization in Pakpak community families. In this study it is found social actors playing roles to construct,
reconstruct and reproduce patriarchal values as the cause of women marginalization. The description of actors as the party that constructs and reproduces patriarchal values or norms that are implemented in the practices of women marginalization is clearly found in cases existing in this study. The presence of father, husband and brother as the main actor in the cases of women marginalization is shown in the form of men power as the decision maker on various basic and strategic aspects in the family such as economy, education, inheritance, determining the future and couples of women.

Meanwhile, the reality showing parental role of women or mothers as the main actors of women marginalization is expressed in a variety of experiences of most women. Marginalization cases experienced by most women accentuate that the marginalization actors are dominated more by female parent (inang) which means mother or Mamak. In particular, Pakpak community calls inang for the female parent in family in the context of nuclear and extended family. The term inang in the context of Pakpak community is aimed at all adult and married women. Patriarchal authority or legality embedded in the women as mother show how inang as social actors who potentially perform marginalization practice to their own daughters.

The involvement of women as the main actors that marginalize women in family is related to the status and legality as a mother (inang) through roles of motherhood attached to them. Motherhood roles attached to inang are embodied in the form of policies, decisions and treatment prioritizing sons to study to the high levels. On the other hand, a mother imposes an obligation to daughters to take care and give special attention to their brothers, imposes a system of sexually-based work division and gender roles that tend to be unfair and burdensome (exploiting) women, the tendency of employing daughters from poor families to support sons’ education.

**Supporting actor of women marginalization in family:** In addition to highlighting the roles of main actors as figures performing women marginalization practices in family institution, the roles of supporting actors are also found in this study. From various cases that have been reviewed, some of which highlight the role of women as the supporting actors of marginalization. The presence of women as supporting actors of women marginalization is reflected in the cases of widow marginalization of accessing the core family and marital family inheritance. The position of women who do not have husband anymore is relatively weak economically and customarily in family, so that, they are marginalized in the context of family and custom.

Various motives underlying inheritance conflicts between widows and their sister in law are strongly associated with the construction of patriarchal values adopted and constructed by women themselves. The picture of conflict among women accessing family inheritance resources is reinforced by community and customs figures that having many cases of land and parent inheritance house disputes in the village. They in detail stated that some accidents such as inheritance disputes between Pakpak women and their brothers are driven by the roles of women nearest with Pakpak men. Usually, women as a wife or mother-in-law have a major role in conflict with their husband’s sister (in law) to influence their husband or son-in-law. Visibly, on the surface it is seen that Pakpak women are in conflict with their brothers but if studied carefully there is interference from wives as sister in law or mother in law of Pakpak women’s brothers.

**Sexually-based work division system in family:** Patriarchal community tends to construct sexually-based work division system or gender-based role division embracing the patriarchal ideology. Domestic roles interpreted as the works in household area are performed by women and public roles defined as the social sector work are performed by men. While the works in public sector are related to the works of making money as the family livelihood. Such dichotomy of sexually-based work division bears conflicts that can lead to the exploitative gender relations. Due to domestic works are synonymous with works that do not make money while public sector works are works that bring money, so, the impression is that these public sector works have economic value but domestic works are considered as works that do not have economic value.

Picture of dichotomous work division system is found in Pakpak family institution as the focus of women marginalization. In family, it occurs sexually-based division system that tends to exploit women in family. All women who have been the research subject show that they are central worker and responsible in the domestic arena. All domestic works such as keeping and caring for children, cooking, washing and even taking care of farm animals tend to fall on women. Responsibility of daughter to wake up faster and sleep most late is something common in their daily lives.

Specifically, sexually-based work division system is run by poor married women reveals a reality that they are not only limited to domestic roles. They also have to take the role of making money in order to strengthen the economy sustainability of their families. Sexually-based work division system or dichotomous gender based role
ideology, namely domestic and public work sorting can no longer be maintained, especially, for poor families. Poor women are not bound strongly by sexually-based work division rules because there are other more pressing issues, namely the reality of poverty. In the context of village life, the role of breadwinner (the public) usually played by women are closely related with economic activity derived from means of production such as land in terms of farming or gardening. Cultivating land is the central of economic production activities of rural communities. These public activities and public works are performed by women ranging from the age of child to married due to social reality called “Poverty”.

Gender relationships in family: The consequences of patriarchal sexually-based work division system theoretically and empirically will entail the construction of patriarchal gender relations in a variety of systems and social structures. Dichotomy of domestic role played by women and public role of men practiced in the family and community provide impacts on the pattern of unequal power relations or gender relations. The role of men in the public arena interpreted as a strategic role has put men in the highest authority hierarchy (superior) and women as domestic workers are at the lower (inferior). The superiority of men in gender relations are implemented in the role of decision maker in family up to community. Instead, structurally women are positioned as a party that should be obedient and subject to any decision taken by men. The compliance form of women to men decisions is associated with the status as a father, husband or brother in family.

The position of male superiority and female inferiority in the hierarchy of power in community also leads to the construction of asymmetric (unequal) gender relations. Picture of the asymmetric pattern of gender relations in family is reflected in the case of this study. They feel that the strong patriarchal dominance and control determine their lives, since, childhood to adulthood. Patriarchal control oriented from asymmetrical gender relations construction is indicated in terms of future planning, determining the school continuation, getting married, working, and taking advantage of daughter’s revenue in family context. The reality of women as actors and instruments of patriarchal system extension is shown through the female identity that takes the decision to dismiss or not continue her children’s education. Associated with the discussion that covers the process analysis instruments of women marginalization in the family of Batak Pakpak community, briefly it is displayed through this matrix (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marginalization cases</th>
<th>Tiar (Case 1)</th>
<th>Lom (Case 2)</th>
<th>Ms. Emmy (Case 3)</th>
<th>Ms. Reiny (Case 4)</th>
<th>Ms. As (Case 5)</th>
<th>Ms. Renny (Case 6)</th>
<th>Karibul Bog (Case 7)</th>
<th>Ms. Kar (Case 8)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women marginalization dimension</td>
<td>Local wisdom</td>
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<td>Gender discrimination</td>
<td>Local wisdom</td>
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<td>History of women marginalization</td>
<td>Childhood, adolescence</td>
<td>Childhood, adolescence</td>
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<td>Childhood, adolescence, married</td>
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<td>Factors causing women marginalization</td>
<td>Patriarchal value</td>
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<td>Treatment of women marginalization</td>
<td>Right accessing senior high school</td>
<td>Right accessing senior high school</td>
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<td>Forms of women marginalization</td>
<td>Education marginalization</td>
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<td>Marginalization cases/Dimension</td>
<td>Tur (Case 1)</td>
<td>Lbo (Case 2)</td>
<td>Maa Emby (Case 3)</td>
<td>Maa Remby (Case 4)</td>
<td>Maa As (Case 5)</td>
<td>Maa Remby (Case 6)</td>
<td>Kambug (Case 7)</td>
<td>Maa Kar (Kasa D)</td>
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<td>Main actors of women marginalization</td>
<td>Mother (inang)</td>
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<td>Brothers in origin nuclear family</td>
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<td>Supporting actors of women marginalization</td>
<td>Brothers (inang)</td>
<td>Brothers (inang)</td>
<td>Mother (inang)</td>
<td>Sister in law and mother in law of brothers (Simunza Dabron)</td>
<td>Both sisters in law (brother’s wife)</td>
<td>Origin/Nuclear Family from husband</td>
<td>Brothers</td>
<td>Both sisters in law (brother’s wife)</td>
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<td>Sexually-based work division</td>
<td>Women as roles workers/ domestic and public worker</td>
<td>Women as roles workers/ domestic and public worker</td>
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<td>System/gender role ideology</td>
<td>Men or Kunang are prohibited from doing domestic works</td>
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<td>Gender relations in social institution</td>
<td>Asymmetric/ same women</td>
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CONCLUSION

The implementation of Marx structural feminist theory as the analysis framework used to describe the process of women marginalization in family substantially shows some conclusions and also reflections. First, the main thesis believed by Marxists structural feminist that the basic problem of women oppression is started from patriarchy becoming the construction of institutionalized gender ideology become the design or strength applied externally, repressive and oppressive in the social structure, that is family. This thesis emphasizes that women marginalization is a structure that was born from the patriarchy consequences in gender ideology reconceptualization embodied into the system and social structure called private patriarchy (men power) in of household/family unit. In the context of such theoretical analysis, the marginalization is a product of norms or patriarchal structural values taken for granted. It means that this theoretical thought emphasizes that patriarchal gender ideology is given system and structure in Pakpak community, so that, every actor both in the context of individual or group must follow or submissive to this system. Thus, patriarchy as a system that is “Given” and “Taken for granted” is manifested or embodied in the phenomenon and reality of women marginalization. It can be also interpreted that women marginalization as a structure that is “given” as a result of the process of system reconceptualization and reinterpretation or patriarchy structure has an external force and oppressive on women, both as individual and collectivity, so that, they are structured to subject to and accept marginalization as their life objective reality.

Subordination of social actors in the structure is shown by the majority of women who become research subject through the study of marginalization cases they experience, even though there are other realities that show disobedience or resistance of a daughter upon norms, values of structure. Submission and social actors resistance in the structure is expressed by the emic side of the women themselves. Most women interpret marginalization as an objective reality connected with the
understood values of local wisdom or culture. On the other side, a woman interpreting marginalization is not the objective reality but the reality of gender inequality, so that, this reality must be deconstructed into a subjective reality. Therefore, that efforts to negotiate an objective reality into a subjective reality is understood in the form of critical consciousness and resistant action that is by working and at the same time studying in the city. At least the reality of this social actor resistance has become a critical reflection on the theorizing implementation in this study.

The second theoretical reflection is related to the patriarchy thesis that elaborate the role and functioning of men to be patriarchy actor so that it focuses on highlights less on women’s presence reality as the patriarchy actor. This study shows that the marginalization suffered by women is not only played by men actors because women are also the actors that potentially marginalize women. In fact, it is prominently found in family institution through motherhood social roles attached to mother, mother-in-law and sister-in-law. It means that the marginalization that is believed coming from the patriarchal system potentially played by men has tended to shift. The occurring reality is that women are also the significant actors of marginalization. Therefore, this study in conceptualization and theorization is expected to construct the definition of marginalization expressed and extracted from the emic side of women based on the experience of their life (herstory), so that, the women marginalization as phenomenon or reality is possibly derived from the women themselves (female marginalization based female).

The third point, the theoretical relevance which can still be maintained on this structural feminists view that families become the early institution of women oppression is real and found in this study, so far. It means, the phenomenon study of Pakpak women marginalization, so far has been able to prove that it is the family that earliest practices the women marginalization treatment. Marginalization experienced by women in family is seen as the embodiment of injustice and structural violence embedded in various decisions and policies carried out by social actors in family.

Finally, the results of this study emphasize that the process of women marginalization occurring in family is a cultural and structural issues that are interrelated and systematic. It means that marginalization as one form of gender inequality issues defined as cultural problem has been redefined and transformed into structural problem within family institution in Pakpak community.

SUGGESTIONS

Related to the entire presentation and discussion of the issue of women marginalization in poor family in Pakpak rural community, this study suggests the importance of theoretical solutions to deconstruct patriarchal gender ideology in family. This is carried out through promotion and internalization of gender ideology construction values based on norms and values of gender equality and awareness in family. While for practical solutions, it is suggested that the elites of public policy like government at local or regional level consistently implement various gender mainstreaming development programs which have been launched by central and local governments.

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