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## WOMEN AND ECOFEMINISM: A Phenomenological Study of Female Batik Artisans in the Coastal Area of Telaga Biru Village, Tanjung Bumi District, Bangkalan Regency, Madura

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the practices and meanings of ecofeminism in the village of Telaga Biru. Ecofeminism in Madura has its unique characteristics. The coastal conditions in Telaga Biru reflect a marine-centric environment, differing from ecofeminism in other regions. The socio-cultural and religious context of Bangkalan, characterized by traditional Islam, also shapes the ecofeminism practices in this area. Notably, the ecofeminism movement here is driven by female batik artisans, as Telaga Biru is a tourist village known for its batik industry, which women predominantly lead. This study investigates two main issues: the practices and meanings of ecofeminism using a qualitative method and a gender perspective. The research subjects are 300 female batik artisans, with a focused sample of 20 informants. Guided by Vandana Shiva's ecofeminism theory and Alfred Schutz's phenomenology theory, the findings reveal that the batik artisans engage in ecofeminist practices. They serve as the frontline of environmental conservation along the coast, interpreting their actions as adherence to Islamic teachings to protect nature. Beyond religious doctrine, they also aim to avoid bad karma associated with environmental harm. Their efforts span generations despite limited support from the local government.

**Keywords:** Ecofeminism, Madura, Practice and Meanings, Women,

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### INTRODUCTION

The study of the role and position of women in Madura consistently provides valuable insights due to the strong influence of the region's socio-cultural conditions on the social construction and perspectives regarding women. In Madura, religious teachings and cultural values dominate women's habitus and social construction, including studies on women and ecofeminism. One of the earliest studies on this topic was conducted by Anke Niehof in 1985 in her work titled "Women and Fertility in Madura." In this study, Niehof observed two main groups of Madurese women living in coastal and inland areas. Her findings revealed differences in the dynamics of social relations between the coastal and

inland communities, represented by Patondu (coastal) and Tambeng (inland) villages. In these settings, strong patriarchal tendencies were evident, where men often spoke on behalf of women in social and family matters, even during interviews. These findings were corroborated by Hidayati (2012), who stated that Madurese women are trapped in industrialization, where male dominance is significant. This study takes a new approach, focusing on women in the coastal area of Telaga Biru Village, Tanjung Bumi District, Bangkalan Regency. This village is a tourist destination and a center for batik craftsmanship, with approximately 300 female batik artisans and 50 batik entrepreneurs. These artisans produce art and are involved in collective movements focused on environmental management, particularly addressing waste from batik-making activities. Ecological awareness has long been ingrained in this community, as reflected in their batik motifs, which often depict the natural conditions of the coastal and marine environment. In this way, batik art serves as an aesthetic creation and a symbol and reminder for the community to preserve their environment. Thus, this study highlights coastal Madurese women as agents of environmental stewardship despite being constrained by patriarchal norms.

The practice of batik-making and efforts to preserve the coastal environment have become integral parts of life in Telaga Biru Village. Most women in this village work as batik artisans, while their husbands are typically fishermen, forming a social and economic relationship that has existed for nearly a century. Although Telaga Biru is a tourist destination, the fishing profession remains a cultural identity for the men of this area.

This research focuses on the ecofeminism movement undertaken by female batik artisans to preserve the marine and coastal environment in Telaga Biru Village. Within the patriarchal culture of Madura, these women adopt unique approaches to environmental preservation. Ecofeminism offers an integrated conceptual framework that weaves the principles of various movements into a coherent worldview. This perspective is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of life on this planet in all its forms (Pompeo-Fargnoli & Alyson, 2018). Madurese culture views women as central figures who are protected, as explained by Wiyata (2002), who noted that Madurese women are regarded as sacred family members who must be respected. This indicates that, within the social structure of Madurese society, women occupy an honorable position, albeit within spaces different from those of men. While husbands typically make key family decisions, wives have their ways of practicing environmental management movements.

The concept of ecofeminism was introduced by d'Eaubonne in 1974, merging feminist ideas with ecological perspectives. Ecofeminism posits a close cultural connection between women and nature. Feminism has conceptual, symbolic, and linguistic ties to environmental issues, such as referring to the Earth as "Mother" (Tong, 2006). Ecofeminism critiques patriarchal domination, which oppresses both women and nature, as described by Glazebrook (2002) and Wijayanti et al. (2019). Studies on ecofeminism often focus on feminist, ecological, and patriarchal cultural issues, as seen in the struggles of Aleta Baun in East Nusa Tenggara and the "Ibu Bumi" movement in Kendeng, Central Java (Sulistyawati, 2018; Dalopo, 2020). This study explores the dynamics of ecofeminism among women in Madura, focusing on female batik artisans in Telaga Biru Village. Madura's unique socio-cultural characteristics offer distinct insights into the application of ecofeminism, particularly among women whose profession is batik-making.

The theoretical foundation of this study is based on the ecofeminist ideas of Vandana Shiva, a prominent scholar and activist from India (Chatterjee, 2022). Shiva is a central figure in the global ecofeminism movement and a key reference for numerous ecofeminist initiatives worldwide. Her ideas were shaped within the context of British colonialism in India. Although Vandana Shiva's ecofeminism initially focused on agricultural contexts, its principles are highly relevant to coastal regions, which, like agricultural settings, are closely tied to natural environments and subject to patriarchal systems entrenched in capitalist practices. Therefore, Shiva's concepts remain particularly pertinent for analyzing ecofeminist movements in Telaga Biru Village.

Shiva and Mies (1993) critiqued modern science as reductionist and patriarchal development policies as perpetuating injustice and violence against both women and nature. Shiva (1997) argued that nature, such as forests, can be preserved and women's rights protected if development policies adopt feminine principles emphasizing peace, security, love, and community. These values contrast sharply with masculine traits that prioritize competition, domination, exploitation, and oppression.

Shiva used a feminist perspective to explore the interconnectedness of capitalism and patriarchy by comparing conditions in India before and after British colonization. Before colonialism, Indian society valued forests as a primary resource that supported various aspects of life, including agriculture, social structures, culture, economy, and ecology. This perspective greatly benefited women, as both nature and women were seen as essential producers and preservers of life, holding a respected place in society. However, colonial policies shifted this perception, transforming forests from life-sustaining resources into commodities for commercial exploitation. This shift also altered societal views of women, marginalizing their labor as inefficient and replacing it with industrial machinery predominantly operated by men. Sociological studies suggest that capitalism and patriarchy are deeply intertwined, often to the detriment of women.

Shiva (1997) emphasized that patriarchal capitalism functions as an ideology, embedding values, norms, and beliefs that favor men. This ideology fosters dualistic thinking, creating stereotypes that disadvantage women. It builds hierarchical relationships among people and between humans and nature, privileging dominance and competition over equality. Furthermore, it promotes a reductionist mindset and perpetuates systemic injustices against women and nature. These critiques remain relevant for understanding the dynamics of Madurese society, where patriarchal culture is deeply embedded in its patrilineal social system. This dominant ideology shapes collective consciousness, forming the basis of social structures and directing individuals to align their actions with cultural norms. Besides that, according to Schild and Verónica (2018), it is essential to understand the structural nature of the relationship between women, capitalism, and nature.

To further analyze the struggles of women in Telaga Biru Village in managing the coastal environment, this study employs Alfred Schutz's phenomenological approach. Schutz's theory examines the motives behind human actions, distinguishing between because motives (rooted in past experiences) and in-order-to motives (oriented toward future goals). This phenomenological approach allows a deeper exploration of women's lived experiences, uncovering the meanings they assign to their environmental management practices. By delving into these everyday realities, this study aims to uncover new knowledge about the successes of sustainable practices passed down through generations, offering a nuanced understanding of the ecofeminist movement in the context of Madurese society.

This study distinguishes itself from other ecofeminism studies, such as the research by Wiasti and Suarsana (2023) on female farmers in Bali. Their work highlighted the dominance of patriarchy in Bali's agricultural social environment. Although both Bali and Madura share religious communities, the application of ecofeminism values in Madura is more deeply rooted in its strong Islamic culture, contrasting with the cultural context of Balinese society. Wiasti and Suarsana's research focused on the oppression of women due to patriarchal culture and utilized critical ethnography to empower the women involved. Meanwhile, this study explores the efforts of female batik artisans in Telaga Biru Village to preserve the environment despite living within a strongly patriarchal culture. The struggles of these women demonstrate their dedication to environmental preservation while facing challenges from patriarchal relationships in their daily lives. A phenomenological approach is essential to uncover these social practices.

A phenomenological approach emphasizes the direct, everyday experiences of the female batik artisans in their ecofeminist movement. This approach is expected to deeply

uncover the meanings embodied by these women in their efforts to preserve the coastal environment, revealing profound truths about their social practices.

Thus, this study focuses on female batik artisans' efforts in Telaga Biru Village as they strive and dedicate themselves to coastal environmental preservation. Despite challenges from patriarchal culture, their existence continues to benefit the environment. This research benefits the people of Madura and the broader Indonesian community in managing coastal areas. It also emphasizes the role of the government as policymakers in coastal management. The field findings will assist policymakers in crafting policies related to environmental preservation in coastal areas. Another benefit of this study is the enhancement of knowledge and new insights, especially highlighting the significant role of women in coastal management activities. Ultimately, this research contributes positively to academic sociological findings, particularly ecofeminism issues.

## **METHOD**

The research site, Telaga Biru Village, is one of the coastal tourist destinations in Bangkalan Regency. Most men work as fishermen in this village, while their wives are batik artisans. However, the primary environmental preservation efforts are carried out by approximately 300 women who are also batik artisans. Therefore, the subjects of this study are female batik artisans. Out of the 300 artisans, 20 were selected for in-depth interviews, representing different age groups. Five unmarried participants aged 10–15 years were included. Another five participants aged 16–30 years are young mothers. Five more participants aged 31–55 years represent mature adults, and the final five participants are older women aged over 55 years. This age-based categorization facilitates the collection of diverse data based on their daily experiences in preserving the coastal environment.

In addition to in-depth interviews, the researcher collected supporting data such as the duration of the participants' work as batik artisans, their marital status, and their knowledge of environmental preservation. This data was obtained through direct observation and by administering a simple questionnaire to all 300 batik artisans. The collected data will be presented in tabular form to aid analysis.

Once the data from interviews, observations, and questionnaires have been collected, they will undergo analysis using the three stages of descriptive-qualitative analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman (1992): data reduction, data display, and verification. The collected data will first be transcribed, then reduced and organized according to the main topics of the study. After presenting the data, the researcher will proceed to verify it.

Data interpretation will be conducted using the "thick description" model developed by Geertz (1973), which involves continuous processes of "thinking and reflecting" and "thinking of thought." This means that data interpretation will involve an ongoing refreshment of ideas and insights, drawing from prior literature, the theoretical perspectives of Vandana Shiva's ecofeminism and Alfred Schutz's phenomenology, and the specific concepts shared by the informants.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

#### **Getting to Know Telaga Biru: A Tourism Village and Batik Center**

According to the klebun (village head) of Telaga Biru, the village's name traces back to a pond, or telaga, whose water was described by locals as blue. In reality, the water appears green, but in the Madurese language, "blue" is often used to describe green. This unique linguistic nuance made the pond known as "Telaga Biru." The pond is circular, resembling a ring, with an area of approximately 6 square meters and a depth reaching 17 meters. Additionally, in 1910, the first village head in the area was from Kampung Tlaga, further linking the name to the village's identity.

Telaga Biru Village is located in Tanjung Bumi Subdistrict, Bangkalan Regency, in the northern part of the regency. The village lies about 44 kilometers from Bangkalan's center and is bordered by four other villages within the same subdistrict. To the west, it borders Tanjung Bumi Village; to the east, Pasaseh Village; to the south, the Tanjung Bumi main road; and to the north, the Java Sea.

The social and cultural life of Telaga Biru's residents is deeply rooted in local traditions and customs, particularly in the craft of batik-making. The village is renowned as a hub for batik activities, with many residents working as batik artisans or participating in the batik industry. Batik has become a cherished cultural heritage, preserved and passed down by the community, and serves as a distinctive region icon.

Economically, the villagers rely heavily on two main sectors: marine fisheries and the batik industry. Since the early 1900s, the economic roles of husbands and wives in the village have been delineated—men traditionally go to sea as fishermen. At the same time, women stay at home with their daughters, producing batik. Over time, batik has evolved from a small-scale household craft into a thriving small and medium enterprise (SME) industry. The involvement of financial institutions offering business loans has further fueled the growth of the batik industry.

Although the village generates some income from tourism, visitor numbers are not consistently high. As a result, the community's primary income sources come from fisheries and batik production. This economic structure has allowed families to preserve their traditions, with men continuing to fish, often venturing as far as the waters of Kalimantan and Sulawesi in search of a good catch.

### **Female Batik Artisans in Telaga Biru Village**

According to data recorded at the Telaga Biru Village Secretariat as of mid-2024, there are approximately 300 registered female batik artisans. In addition, 50 individuals are registered as batik entrepreneurs. However, these entrepreneurs do not directly engage in batik production. The total number of artisans and entrepreneurs can be categorized in the following table:

**Table 1. Identity of Female Batik Artisans**

Age (years old)	Count	Get Married
10-15	30	5
16-30	80	80
31-55	150	150
>55	40	40 (5 husband dead)
Total	300	295

The 50 batik entrepreneurs mentioned earlier primarily focus on promoting the products to find customers and managing financial matters, particularly handling loans from banks. The production system allows batik artisans to work from their own homes. Once the batik-making process is complete, the finished products are handed over to these entrepreneurs.

For women, batik-making in this home-based industry is considered their primary occupation. However, the primary breadwinning role remains with the men (husbands) working as fishermen. The skill of batik-making is a tradition passed down through generations. The length of time these women have been involved in batik-making can be categorized in the following table.

**Table 2. The length of time spent as a batik artisan**

The length (years)	Count
0-5 year	10
6-10 year	50
11-20 year	80
>21 year	160
Total	300

**Utilization of Coastal Areas by Female Batik Artisans**

This village is located in a coastal area, making the beach and marine environment integral to daily life. The coastal area of Telaga Biru has primarily been used for beach tourism, offering a serene and natural seaside atmosphere for relaxation. Over the past decade, the development of Telaga Biru Beach has intensified. Although it is not a flagship program of the regency government, village funds have been allocated to improve this coastal area.

Despite these efforts, tourist visits remain modest. On average, weekday visitor numbers do not exceed 100 people (according to Telaga Biru Village data). Consequently, the beach often appears quiet. Instead, the bustling activity of female batik artisans is the dominant sight. Upon entering the village gate, visitors are greeted with numerous signs showcasing the names of locally managed batik businesses. As of 2024, several state-owned banks, including Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI), Bank Mandiri, and Bank BNI, have provided capital assistance for SMEs and partnerships within the village.

Given this dynamic, it is no surprise that Telaga Biru Village is synonymous with its batik industry. Although officially recognized as a tourism village, the number of visitors remains minimal. Interestingly, the batik motifs in Telaga Biru often draw inspiration from the coastal and marine environment. Visitors to this batik center will notice that the artisans incorporate coastal and marine elements into their designs, as illustrated in the figure below.



**Figure 1. Image Batik Telaga Biru**

Telaga Biru batik, based in Tanjung Bumi, shares similarities with other types of batik in terms of pricing and the uniqueness of motifs that reflect regional characteristics. What sets it apart is the consistent use of coastal and marine themes in its designs. Such motifs are rare and distinct from those found in other batik centers, such as Kerek Village in Gaji Subdistrict, Tuban Regency. Research conducted by Ciptandi et al. (2021) on the Kerek Batik center revealed that their motifs are characterized by forest and inland themes, reflecting the region's geographical identity.

Another unique feature of Telaga Biru batik is its coloring process, known locally as **batik gentongan**. This unique batik is named after the large containers (*gentong*) used for dyeing. The colors are derived from natural materials, such as *jambal* bark for yellow, *mengkudu* bark for red, and *mundu* bark mixed with alum for green. These natural dyeing ingredients are sourced from the surrounding coastal area. Unlike regular batik, batik gentongan undergoes an extensive dyeing process, with immersion lasting anywhere from

a month to a year. The longer the fabric is immersed, the richer and more durable the color becomes, increasing its market value.

However, due to the lengthy production time—often taking several months to over a year—batik gentongan is rarely made. Despite this, it remains an iconic symbol of Telaga Biru batik and holds a special place in the village's cultural identity.

Another notable aspect of coastal utilization in Telaga Biru is managing waste from the batik industry. Artisans do not dispose of industrial waste, particularly dye residues, into the sea. Instead, they have created dedicated containment areas behind their homes. These waste ponds are specifically designed to manage batik byproducts, ensuring no waste contaminates the coastal area. This practice has existed since the village was established in 1910, reflecting the community's long-standing commitment to environmental preservation.

### **Awareness of Female Batik Artisans in Coastal Management**

Female batik artisans have long practiced a deep-seated awareness that living in harmony with nature is an integral part of daily life, making it their duty to protect and care for the environment. This knowledge is instilled from a young age within the family and through teachings at religious study sessions (*mengaji*) and schools. When researchers posed questions about their daily practices, the responses can be summarized in the following table 3.

**Table 3. Ecological Awareness of Women in Preserving the Coastal Environment**

Statement	Yes	No
1. Dumping household waste on the coast	0	300
2. Disposing of batik production waste on the coast	0	300
3. Urinating and defecating on the coast	0	300
4. Washing clothes or dishes, bathing on the coast	0	300

The table illustrates that female batik artisans are highly aware of and committed to managing the coastal environment. Observing the coastal area, one notices the absence of scattered waste, as further evidenced by the following figure.



**Figure 2. Telaga Biru Coastal Area**

### **Concrete Participation of Female Batik Artisans in Coastal Preservation**

Female batik artisans in Telaga Biru Village actively participate in community activities such as religious gatherings (pengajian) and social groups. These groups, which include PKK (Family Welfare Movement), religious study groups, and savings clubs (arisan), often combine their activities into a single agenda. A notable aspect of these gatherings is the focus on environmental awareness, where women are educated and motivated to preserve their surroundings.

According to Suhartatik, an active community leader and batik entrepreneur in Telaga Biru, religious gatherings and savings group meetings serve as platforms to reinforce women's motivation to manage nature responsibly and refrain from littering. Once a month, through PKK and religious gatherings, the women collectively clean the coastal area to ensure the beaches and sea remain free of waste. They also emphasize that coastal development projects, such as coral reefs and shellfish, must not harm marine ecosystems.

This proactive engagement contrasts with the roles of their husbands, who are often at sea for weeks as fishermen. With the men primarily occupied with fishing, the responsibility for managing and protecting the coastal environment falls mainly on the shoulders of the women. These women serve as homemakers, batik artisans, and the primary agents of coastal stewardship.

Another unique aspect is the enforcement of social sanctions for villagers caught littering on the coast. These individuals are publicly addressed during religious and PKK forums, leading to a sense of shame that deters them from repeating the offense. Additionally, a long-standing tradition in the village involves instilling the belief in younger generations that polluting or harming the coast will result in negative karma, such as poverty or a difficult life. This teaching emphasizes that living in harmony with nature requires care and preservation.

Religious leaders also significantly reinforce this cultural doctrine during religious gatherings, emphasizing that environmental preservation reflects one's faith. This blend of cultural and religious values ensures that the women of Telaga Biru, mainly the batik artisans, remain vigilant and committed to managing and safeguarding the coastal environment.

## **Discussion**

### **The Unique Practice of Coastal Ecofeminism**

In line with gender mainstreaming in social capital, ecofeminism aims to empower women to preserve natural environments or resources managed by women in local communities (Husein, Herdiansyah, and Putri, 2021). And then, when discussing ecology and women's movements, the ideas of Vandana Shiva often come to the forefront. Shiva (1997) critiques patriarchal capitalism through five aspects. First, patriarchy as an ideology is a set of values, norms, beliefs, and ethical principles that inherently favor men. Second, patriarchy views human existence dualistically, creating stereotypes that advantage men. Third, social relationships between humans and nature are built on hierarchy, dominance, and competition rather than equality. Fourth, patriarchy fosters a reductionist mindset. Lastly, patriarchal systems result in injustices against both women and nature (Shiva, 1988, 1997, 2005).

Observing the lives of female batik artisans in Telaga Biru, a clear division of roles emerges: men go to sea, while women make batik. This pattern, inherited over generations, reflects a societal norm where men are the primary breadwinners. This is because earnings from fishing are significantly higher than those from batik-making. As Mrs. Musrifah, a 48-year-old batik artisan with nearly 30 years of experience, explained:

*"My husband works as a fisherman, earning up to three million rupiahs a month, while I earn only around 800 thousand to one million at most. A woman's role is to support her*



*husband, not to be the primary breadwinner. This has been a common practice in this village. A wife's role is only to assist."*

(Source: Interview with Mrs. Musrifah, 27 July 2024)

Mrs. Musrifah's statement highlights that batik-making is primarily a supplementary activity. Women are not expected to earn a living; that responsibility lies with the husband. However, what stands out is that women play a leading role in managing the cleanliness of the coastal area, demonstrating their significant contribution to environmental stewardship.

This differs from ecofeminism practices observed in Bali, as studied by Wiasti and Suarsana (2023). These practices highlighted patriarchal dominance in Bali's agricultural social structure, where women were often excluded from development programs. In contrast, in Telaga Biru, women are at the forefront of coastal management and development efforts. This underscores the exceptional dedication of Telaga Biru's women, who, despite living in a patriarchal culture, actively protect their environment.

A similar dynamic can be seen in Batu City's ecofeminism movement, where women manage household waste through community initiatives like the "Zona Bening" (Yasin et al., 2021). While the types of waste differ—Telaga Biru being a coastal area and Batu a mountainous region—the essence of women's ecofeminism struggles is the same. In Telaga Biru, the added responsibility of batik-making does not deter women from their role as coastal conservation stewards. The women's struggle in Telaga Biru is arguably more challenging but remains rooted in Vandana Shiva's ecofeminist ideals.

Female batik artisans juggle multiple responsibilities. Their primary task is batik-making, followed by household duties such as cooking and childcare. On weekends, they participate in religious gatherings (pengajian) and PKK activities, including coastal clean-ups once or twice a month. They also manage batik industry waste, ensuring that dye residues are contained in unique ponds behind their homes to prevent coastline pollution. As Mrs. Muzayanah, a religious leader and batik artisan, explained:

*"Every day, we, the women who make batik, focus on completing our batik tasks. We also cook and care for our children. On weekends, we join religious gatherings and clean-up activities on the beach, which we do once or twice a month. Every day, we also ensure that batik waste is managed in ponds behind our homes so it does not pollute the coast. This is something we do diligently every day."*

(Source: Interview with Mrs. Muzayanah, 27 July 2024)

This waste management practice is not limited to individual families but is a collective effort among all batik families in Telaga Biru. It reflects a shared social consciousness rooted in cultural traditions passed down through generations.

The role of religious communities is pivotal in driving the ecofeminism movement in Telaga Biru. Unlike ecofeminist struggles elsewhere, such as Aleta Baun's movement in East Nusa Tenggara or the "Ibu Bumi" movement in Kendeng, Central Java (Sulistiyawati, 2018; Dalopo, 2020), Telaga Biru's ecofeminism is led by female batik artisans and coordinated through religious study groups. While Madura is known for its patriarchal culture, the women champion environmental conservation.

Integrating religious and ecofeminist practices in Telaga Biru exemplifies how Islam can inspire women to protect and preserve the environment. Islamic teachings on cleanliness as a part of faith strengthen the knowledge and commitment of female batik artisans to engage in ecofeminism. This connection was emphasized by Mrs. Annah, a local leader and batik artisan:

*"Our parents and teachers have taught us batik-making and religious values since childhood. Even now, we pass this knowledge on to our children and others so that they*

*can care for nature. Religion, especially Islam, is our foundation. It teaches us to maintain the cleanliness of ourselves and our environment. Just look Telaga Biru's coastline; it has remained clean for generations." (Source: Interview with Mrs. Annah, 28 July 2024)*

This demonstrates a clear relationship between Islamic values and environmental conservation practices. While Madura's culture is deeply religious and patriarchal, its women, particularly in Telaga Biru, play a critical role in preserving nature, embodying the essence of ecofeminism. This condition is similar to research conducted by Bozok (2024); women demonstrate a strong concern for their well-being, the welfare of their communities, and the environment.

### **The Meaning of Ecofeminism for Female Batik Artisans in Telaga Biru**

For the female batik artisans in Telaga Biru, ecofeminism is perceived as a practice rooted in Islamic religious doctrine. According to one informant, Mrs. Suhartatik, Islam emphasizes the importance of maintaining cleanliness and preserving the environment, viewing these actions as a reflection of one's faith. This doctrine instills a sense of responsibility among the batik artisans to manage waste and care for nature, which is passed down to their children. As Mrs. Suhartatik explained:

*"I manage my waste and make sure not to pollute the beach as a form of obedience to Islam. This teaching was passed on to me by my parents since childhood and reinforced by my teachers at school and religious teachers during Islamic study sessions. Even now, I am reminded of it in religious gatherings because religion is the foundation of life." (Source: Interview with Mrs. Suhartatik on 27 July 2024)*

Another artisan, Mukhalalah, an 18-year-old who has been making batik since she was 12, shared how she learned batik-making from her mother. She observed her mother diligently managing batik waste to ensure it did not pollute the beach and separating kitchen waste from batik waste, recognizing their different handling needs. Her mother's message was clear: always care for nature and never pollute it. Her school and religious teachers echoed this teaching. Mukhalalah stated:

*"I have now graduated from school and focus on batik-making. My parents and teachers taught me to always care for nature. In addition to religious doctrine, there is a belief that polluting and damaging nature will bring bad karma, such as poverty and hardship." (Source: Interview with Mukhalalah on 29 July 2024)*

This highlights that maintaining environmental cleanliness in Telaga Biru is viewed as a moral obligation driven by Islamic teachings and the belief in lousy karma as retribution for harming nature. In this context, Karma is seen as the consequence of one's actions. Drawing on Alfred Schutz's (1967) phenomenology, the social meaning of their ecofeminist practices can be understood through motives (obedience to religious teachings) and to motives (avoiding lousy karma). For the women of Telaga Biru, ecofeminism is fundamentally motivated by religious faith and the pursuit of a virtuous life. Financial gain is secondary, as their belief system prioritizes spiritual well-being over material wealth.

This contrasts with ecofeminist practices in other regions, particularly in Bali. Research by Wiasti and Suarsana (2023) on female farmers in Bali revealed that their ecofeminist motivations stem from Balinese Hinduism, a deeply ingrained cultural and spiritual tradition. While the religious context differs, the similarity lies in how faith serves as a driving force behind ecofeminist actions.

Incorporating coastal and marine themes in Telaga Biru's batik designs reflects this harmony with nature. These motifs are part of the artisans' daily lives, symbolizing their

connection to the environment and their commitment to preserving it. The belief in bad karma reinforces their responsibility to protect nature, as damaging it would directly impact their families' well-being. As Mrs. Suhartatik explained:

*"Our batik motifs always include elements of nature, such as the beach or the sea—whether animals, plants, or marine themes. We live and were raised here, so we must not damage it. It would be like harming ourselves. That is why we create batik with natural elements as a reminder to care for and not destroy the environment, avoiding bad karma."* (Source: Interview with Mrs. Suhartatik on 27 July 2024)

These practices demonstrate that ecofeminism in Telaga Biru is deeply intertwined with religious faith and the avoidance of bad karma. This strong cultural and spiritual foundation explains why women and girls in Telaga Biru remain deeply committed to protecting their environment. For them, ecofeminism is an environmental practice, a spiritual duty, and a way of life. Such conditions reinforce the earlier findings by Bell, Dennis, and Brar (2022), which stated that the further implications for social work practice include fostering intergenerational organization, living in "right relationships," incorporating spirituality, and revitalizing the profession.

### **Barriers and Challenges in Coastal Environmental Conservation**

Previous research (Rosalinda et al., 2024) has shown that coastal women are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This vulnerability is also evident in Telaga Biru; however, the women there have proactively addressed these challenges by strengthening social networks among batik artisans and organizing collective activities through religious gatherings (pengajian). Issues related to vulnerability are often discussed collaboratively during these gatherings, leading to joint efforts to address them. The solidarity among the batik artisans in preserving the environment is commendable. Even though their understanding of ecological changes may not be theoretical, they receive basic information about climate change during their religious gatherings, which helps raise awareness. Barrero-Amórtégui and Maldonado (2021) argue that, in practice, women's contributions will only be practical if they are actively involved in decision-making processes. This condition is particularly relevant to regional development and environmental sustainability strategies.

The biggest challenge lies in the lack of participation from local government in the coastal conservation process. The women of Telaga Biru manage the coastal environment independently, without financial support from the government. This situation raises the question of how much easier their efforts could be if the government actively contributed to conservation programs. Even the presence of the village government is insufficient, as they fail to allocate adequate funds for these daily activities. This lack of support has led the women to call for help, as expressed by Nyai Farokhah:

*"We work voluntarily to care for the coast through religious study groups. We gather female members and also engage the youth. This collaboration has been effective so far. However, there is no consistency from the government in supporting this program. To this day, our religious study group operates independently without any budget from the government."* (Source: Interview with Nyai Farokhah, 29 July 2024)

Local government involvement needs to be more apparent, especially considering the village's status as a tourist destination and the low income of its residents. Many women live below the poverty line but contribute significantly to environmental preservation. The Bangkalan Regency and Telaga Biru Village governments must address this issue promptly. As mandated by the Village Law of 2014, every village is allocated up to IDR 1 billion annually for infrastructure development, with active involvement from the community in

planning and execution. However, the lack of funding for environmental conservation in Telaga Biru suggests a gap in its application. Research by Zaki (2023) highlighted widespread mismanagement of village funds in Bangkalan. His findings revealed frequent corruption cases between 2018 and 2023, including in villages neighboring Telaga Biru, where village heads were involved in fund misappropriation. While there has been no specific research on managing village funds in Telaga Biru, the lack of government-led conservation programs indicates that environmental preservation remains primarily controlled by female batik artisans.

## **CONCLUSION**

The ecofeminist practices in Telaga Biru Village, Tanjung Bumi Subdistrict, Bangkalan Regency, offer a fresh perspective on the intersection of religion, cultural beliefs, and environmental stewardship. Religious doctrines emphasizing cleanliness and the fear of bad karma for harming the environment have motivated female batik artisans to demonstrate remarkable enthusiasm and commitment to coastal conservation. This movement inspires women's initiatives elsewhere, proving that a strong community and social network can sustain environmental preservation efforts despite patriarchal resistance and minimal government support. The ecofeminism movement in Telaga Biru showcases the success of female batik artisans in protecting and caring for their coastal environment. Through religious and social groups and intergenerational environmental doctrines, this movement continues to thrive and sustain itself across generations.

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