



Integration of Multi-Gender Roles in Women Farming Groups: Public Administration Policy Analysis in Bener Meriah Regency

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to examine the dynamics of multi-gender roles within the Karya Maju Women Farmers Group (KWT) in Bener Meriah Regency, particularly with the management of Gayo coffee cultivation. Despite KWT being administratively overseen by women, this research identified that men's contributions remain substantial in facilitating physical labor, including land cultivation and the transportation of agricultural goods. This study employs a qualitative methodology utilizing in-depth interviews and participant observation to analyze patterns of gender involvement in KWT. The research findings indicate that while men's participation is not formally organized within the KWT framework, their presence illustrates the interdependence between women's managerial positions and men's physical labor. The incorporation of gender roles in KWT could enhance the efficiency and sustainability of agricultural enterprises, although it has not been adequately addressed in current regulations. This research concludes that KWT Karya Maju serves as a forum for women's empowerment and a platform for collaboration between women and men to enhance the welfare of agricultural families. This research advocates for the implementation of more inclusive and adaptable policies to address gender roles in the agricultural sector, hence enhancing organizational effectiveness and the sustainability of coffee production.

INTRODUCTION

The Women Farmers Group (KWT) comprises 25-35 women farmers together to pursue shared objectives. This group is mostly informal and comprises small-scale farmers engaged in subsistence agriculture. (Ingutia & Sumelius, 2022). Membership in community organizations that promote the usage of village resources, such as farmer groups and Women's Farmer Groups (KWT), remains predominantly comprised of older and elderly individuals (Prayitno, 2022). Furthermore, this group is involved in the collective planning, implementation, utilization, and evaluation of agricultural activities (Wulandari & Kusumaningrum, 2024).

The regulations outlined in Law No. 19 of 2013 indicate that the purpose of empowering women farmers is to enhance and develop the mindset and work patterns of women farmers, as well as to strengthen and expand farmer institutions to enable them to compete and maintain a high level of competitiveness (Tasyarah, 2023).

The function of KWT as a community empowerment instrument is elucidated through the role of farmer groups, as outlined in the Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 82 of 2013, regarding Farmer Institutional Development, specifically as a learning platform, a means of collaboration, and a production unit (Suswadi, 2024). Agriculture possesses substantial and diverse resource potential, contributes significantly to national income, sustains the livelihoods of numerous citizens, and serves as a foundation for rural development (Kurniawan, 2023).

KWT Karya Maju, established in 2016 in Bener Meriah, is an organization dedicated to the advancement of Gayo coffee cultivation. This KWT possesses the legal status of a Notarial Deed and a Decree from the Regent of Bener Meriah. This group, with 30 members, is dedicated to enhancing the Gayo coffee growing sector, known for its quality, while empowering women in all facets of coffee production, which has become emblematic of the region (Anhar et al., 2021). Gayo Arabica coffee possesses distinct characteristics compared to Arabica coffee from other regions of the archipelago. Consequently, to preserve the authenticity of this coffee, it is essential for regional government trade rules to be implemented to ensure the protection and integrity of this commodity (Mursyidin et al., 2023).

The inception of the women's cooperative in Bener Meriah Regency was driven by the aspiration of these women to emulate men in decision-making to enhance household economic welfare independently, culminating in the establishment of a gathering space for women, known as the Gayo Women's Coffee Cooperative (KOKOWAGAYO) (Mursyidin, Darmansyah, & Yulianda, 2023).

Even though KWT Karya Maju is formed specifically by women, the phenomena that has evolved reveals the engagement of men in hard work that is not included in the group's official organizational structure. This phenomenon underscores the contribution of men who assist KWT in executing physically demanding tasks, such as land cultivation and the transportation of agricultural products.

Nevertheless, the men's involvement in the organization is informal and supportive, as it is not structured. The heavy labor performed by men outside of this structure is essential for the efficient operation of coffee production, as KWT Karya Maju frequently encounters the issue of limited labor, which is determined by physical capacity, when conducting production activities.

This is referred to as a multi-gender role, specifically involving the participation of men in KWT. Gender roles refer to the allocation of social responsibilities, encompassing cultural, political, and public rights, between men and women, which are intrinsically linked to biological identity (Farah, 2020). The concept of gender multirole indicates that individuals of any biological sex can simultaneously embody many gender roles. A specific gender role is not exclusively assigned to men or women; it may be reversed or concurrently shared in relation to certain contexts. In this scenario, gender multirole evolved as a consequence of the transformation in gender roles that transpired in the hamlet.

The notion of multi-gender pertains to the participation of men in roles conventionally linked to women, shown by the Women Farmers Group (KWT). This study demonstrates that while most other studies emphasize the contributions of women in KWT, men in Bener Meriah also hold significant roles, particularly in strenuous physical labor and technical facets of agriculture. This illustrates the phenomena of gender multi-roles, wherein roles typically attributed to women may be assumed by males, and vice versa, contingent upon the demands and problems encountered, particularly those shaped by the morphological and geographical characteristics of the region.

The participation of men in KWT highlights a significant multi-gender dynamic in coffee production, serving as the primary source of income for the group. This further demonstrates the significance of multigender in enhancing production sustainability (Abdulsalam et al., 2024), emphasizing that roles typically associated with women are also dependent on the contributions of men, tailored to their unique needs and capabilities. Consequently, the inquiry emerges concerning the manner in which administration or regulations pertaining to the establishment of KWT can incorporate work relationships between men and women to foster a more equitable and sustainable environment. A collaborative approach among communities serves as a strategic method for enhancing business growth and driving economic improvement (Kamil, M., Setyaningrum, A. F., & Astutik, 2024).

Feminist analysis also refers to women farmers as "invisible farmers," despite the fact that their agricultural production accounts for half of the world's food supply (Glazebrook, 2020). According to Jane in Suprihatin (2021) women comprise 25% of the agricultural and family workforce. In order to stabilize the family economy, women in the agricultural sector are capable of increasing their production in agricultural enterprises.

The Women Farmers organization (KWT) is a farmer organization that is composed of women, who are typically the wives of farmers, who are interested in engaging in activities that are not related to farming. Empowerment in the neighboring environment, including the processing of agricultural products, the administration of agricultural affairs, or the creation of crafts, are among the activities of KWT (Sachs et. al, 2016). KWT is a critical forum for the empowerment of agricultural families, as the resources it contains can be leveraged to enhance welfare. KWT plays a significant role in the empowerment of agricultural

families by examining the potential of women (Camalin, 2017). Multiple productive activity programs are being implemented to enhance family income, alongside initiatives to provide facilities and infrastructure for business operators. The establishment of KWT as an institution aimed at empowering women farmers represents a significant advancement in enhancing community welfare. (Abidin & Prasetyani, 2021).

The role of women in farming has been the subject of numerous previous studies on Women Farming Groups (KWT), which have established that their position is equivalent to that of males (Pratama, 2022). Additional research indicates that the participation of women in KWT can have a beneficial impact on agricultural administration, resulting in an increase in the income of both the village and the family. (Arintyas, 2024; Margayaningsih, 2021).

However, research conducted by researchers in Bener Meriah shows significant differences, namely even though other studies reviewing KWT focus on women. Nonetheless, KWT Karya Maju in Bener Meriah incorporates men's contributions beyond the formal framework, particularly in facilitating heavy physical labor and technical components of agricultural practices. There are significant morphological and geographical factors that cannot be addressed solely by women.

This research addresses a notable gap in existing studies by demonstrating that, contrary to earlier findings that focused solely on the contributions of women within the Women's Farmers Group (KWT), men also play a significant role outside the formal structure in Bener Meriah. Their involvement, particularly in physical labor and technical agricultural aspects, is shaped by regional morphological and geographical factors. Consequently, this research is essential for offering a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics in KWT, particularly in regions characterized by challenging geographical conditions.

Sachs et al. (2016) and Camalin (2017) emphasize women's empowerment in KWT as an effort to improve the welfare of farming families through productive activities involving women, such as processing agricultural products and crafts. These theories inadequately address the role of men in group dynamics, particularly regarding the physical and technical aspects of agricultural work influenced by the area's morphological and geographical factors. This study addresses this gap by demonstrating that in Bener Meriah, the role of men is significant, despite their absence from the formal structure of KWT.

This study aims to investigate how a more equal allocation of tasks within KWT Karya Maju can enhance the wellbeing of its members and bolster local economic resilience. This study examines the implementation of administrative policies that promote gender equality in KWT to establish a more inclusive and sustainable agricultural system in Bener Meriah Regency.

METHOD

Qualitative Method

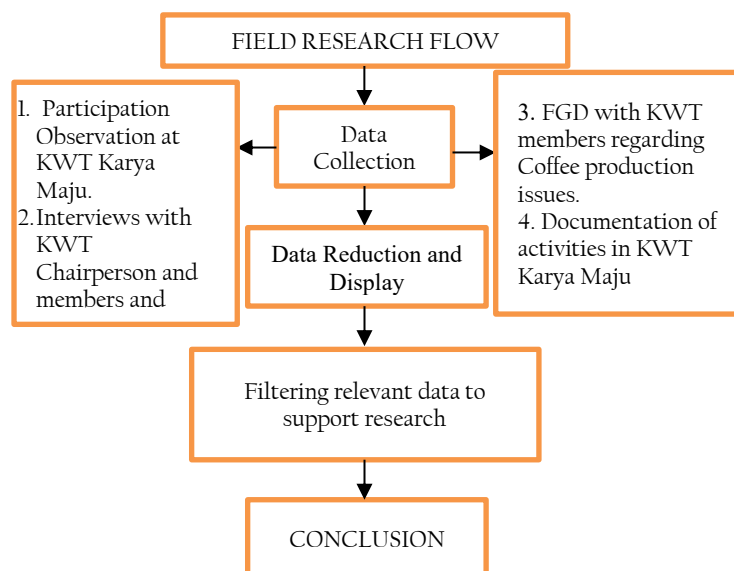
This research employs qualitative methods devoid of statistical analysis (Moleong, 2010). Qualitative approaches are useful for examining the integration of multi-gender roles in groups of women farmers since this approach offers an in-depth understanding of social dynamics and interactions between group members that cannot be measured with numbers or statistics.

Primary and secondary data sources are employed in this investigation. The primary data was collected from informants who were directly selected, while the secondary data was sourced

from papers, online journals, and relevant institutions that were relevant to the research issues of gender collaboration in coffee administration at KWT Bener Meriah. An incidental sampling approach was employed to select informants, in which samples were randomly selected based on the research context.

The concept of data intersubjectivity is employed to conduct data analysis, which involves the random selection of informants, known as incidental sampling. In intersubjectivity, the researcher analyzes and reinterprets the subjective interpretations of a variety of participants in order to obtain data. Researchers verify these interpretations using data from documents and observation notes, and they continue to reinterpret until they reach a saturation point, which occurs when no new pertinent data is discovered. The researcher generates a narrative research report that is dense in description at this saturation point. (Zamili, 2015).

The analysis of data was conducted qualitatively through Grounded Theory, which entails the categorization of data to facilitate comparison and comprehension of the problem formulation. The analysis process persists until significant categories surface, allowing the researcher to synthesize the data and create a narrative that encapsulates the primary themes of the study. (Marshall, 2016; Thornberg, 2014).



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Results

1. The Dynamics of Multi-Gender Roles in KWT Karya Maju Bener Meriah

In an endeavor to support inclusive and sustainable agricultural development, gender roles in farmer groups, particularly Women Farmer Groups (KWT), are a critical factor that requires serious attention (Wahab, 2023). KWT Karya Maju, a farmer group with members of diverse genders, exhibits intriguing dynamics in the allocation of work, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. The involvement of women in the management of coffee cultivation in Bener Meriah is crucial, particularly through their engagement in Women's Farmer Groups (KWT), such as KWT Karya Maju, in overseeing coffee production. This aligns with feminist analytical theory, which posits that women frequently serve as unseen farmers, yet their contribution to world food production is substantial (Vent, 2023). Women engage not just in physical labor but also in the processing of agricultural products, as well as in management and

administrative functions. (Uduji, 2020). Through this engagement, women play a significant part in augmenting family income, while certain physical chores still necessitate male assistance (Bryan & Garner, 2022).

KWT serves as a platform for women's empowerment, reinforcing the notion that women in agriculture possess significant potential to enhance communal welfare (Sari, 2022). KWT serves as a platform for women to engage in productive endeavors while facilitating the optimization of local resources to enhance the welfare of agricultural families (Casminih, 2023). This research identified that KWT was established as a platform for women to engage in agricultural activities within the framework of coffee management in Bener Meriah.

However, administratively, KWT is defined as a group whose members are all women (Kurnia, 2023). KWT assists women in optimizing their involvement in coffee product processing and family economic management, hence contributing to household economic stability (Dana, 2021). The reality is that KWT continues to require male employees for a number of positions, particularly those that necessitate technical skills and physical stamina.

This research indicates that while KWT Karya Maju is exclusively managed by women, male participation in strenuous physical labor remains essential for the sustainability of coffee production. Men, who are not part of formal organizational structures, significantly contribute to land cultivation, the transportation of agricultural products, and other physically demanding tasks. Nonetheless, their role is supportive and lacks formal organization within the KWT framework.

This signifies the sustainability of the coffee farming sector within the Women Farmers Group (KWT), which relies not solely on women's empowerment but also on an equitable distribution of roles between women and men (Civera, 2018). The establishment of KWT as a women's empowerment organization necessitates robust infrastructure support and engagement with other family members, including men (Djami, 2022).

In KWT Karya Maju, women are able to not only increase production but also establish synergies that promote the sustainability of farming as a whole, thanks to the multi-gender roles. This phenomenon demonstrates a solution to the challenges associated with the division of roles, which often neglects structural integration between genders, despite the fact that both are dependent on one another to achieve the same objective, which is to advance Gayo coffee production.

The inclusion of men in the KWT Karya Maju demonstrates the reality that there are tasks that are not entirely capable of being performed by women, such as the distribution of agricultural products and the maintenance of production equipment. Nevertheless, the integration of men in the KWT continues to encounter administrative obstacles due to the fact that current regulations do not permit the presence of male workers in the official KWT structure. The diversity of skills and perspectives in decision-making contributes to the enhanced effectiveness of the organization. (Cai, 2023). In this context, this research corroborates the notion that more inclusive policies are required to acknowledge the contributions of males while maintaining the identity of KWT as a women's group. The diagram below provides additional information:

Table 1. Karya Maju Women Farmers' Group (KWT) Contribution to Bener Meriah Regency's Coffee Management

No.	Activities	Men	Women
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1 Routine Fertilization	✓
2 Fertilizer Supply	✓
3 Land Preparation	✓
4 Seedling Selection	✓
5 Pulper	✓
6 Trimming	✓
7 Harvesting	✓
8 Crossbreeding	✓
9 Sortir (DP)	✓
10 Drying	✓
11 Huller	✓
12 Washing	✓
13 Marketing	✓
14 Distribution	✓
15 Packaging	✓
16 Seedling Planting	✓

Source: Author's Findings, 2024

This study discovered that the Karya Maju Women Farmers Group (KWT) in Bener Meriah Regency has a substantial gender-based division of labor in the administration of coffee. Women are more engaged in activities such as seed selection and drying, while males are more dominant in activities that necessitate more physical exertion, such as lifting and distributing coffee (Table 1).

Empowering women through KWT involves not only enhancing their roles, but also fostering an inclusive work environment and facilitating collaboration among family members, including males. The equilibrium of roles between women and men must be a priority in programs and policies that support KWT (Rahmawati, 2017), in order to ensure that the coffee farming sector not only endures but also thrives by integrating the full potential of agricultural families.



Figure 1. The role of men in starting and repairing the coffee pulper machine.

This picture depicts a man who plays an active role in the maintenance and operational process of a coffee pulper equipment. The man in the photograph appears to be skilled and focussed as he initiates the machine that is used to peel the coffee beans. In addition, he was observed repairing or altering machine components, which indicates his involvement in the maintenance of the efficient operation of coffee production.

Men play a critical role in the operation and maintenance of pulper machinery, particularly in tasks that necessitate stronger physical capabilities and a higher level of technical proficiency. This action not only facilitates the efficient production process but also demonstrates the significance of gender cooperation in the enhancement of the sustainability and efficiency of coffee cultivation enterprises. Consequently, it is crucial to establish

policies that not only recognize the significant role of males in promoting the sustainability of the agricultural sector, but also empower women.

2. Implications of State Administrative Policy on Gender Role Integration

In the context of state administrative policy, the Women's Farmers Group (KWT) is typically considered as a body that is wholly administered and organized by women. This aligns with legislation stipulating that women's roles should be predominant in overseeing agricultural activities at the group level. At KWT Karya Maju, current administrative procedures have been modified to incorporate men's participation in activities necessitating increased physical exertion, such as the distribution and transportation of agricultural products. Although males engage in this arduous labor, their involvement does not undermine the fundamental framework of KWT, which is overseen by women. Conversely, the participation of males fosters a more inclusive and complementary work environment, while preserving the identity and primary objectives of KWT.

This reflects the need for more inclusive and structured regulations in the gender-based division of tasks, where the role of men in physical work needs to be clearly recognized and integrated into the KWT organizational system. The Women Farmers Group (KWT) functions not only as a forum for women's empowerment but also as a place for farming families to utilize existing potential in improving welfare. (Sari, 2022).

The regulations outlined in Law No. 19 of 2013 indicate that the purpose of empowering women farmers is to enhance and develop the mindset and work patterns of women farmers, as well as to strengthen and expand farmer institutions to enable them to compete and maintain a high level of competitiveness. (Analianasari, 2017).

This research suggests a more inclusive legal framework, exemplified by the qanun formulated by the Aceh government. According to Aceh Qanun Number 3 of 2020 regarding the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers, Article 60, paragraph 2 stipulates that the establishment of farmer groups must consider and incorporate traditional institutions such as *keujreuen blang* or other designations, as well as *seuneubok* advice or alternative names, alongside the participation of women farmers.

The institutional arrangement of farmer groups must be implemented in accordance with the principle of The Right Man On The Right Place to ensure that each member is assigned a role that is suitable for their area of expertise. Additionally, the efficacy and efficiency of sustainable agricultural development in Aceh will be enhanced by the implementation of Good Governance in farming institutions. (Najamudin, 2018). This Qanun acknowledges the administrative existence of KWT, despite the involvement of men, as long as the number of male workers does not surpass the designated quota or their participation remains extraneous to the official framework. This is intended to preserve KWT's identity as a women's organization while facilitating unobstructed and sustainable operations in the field over the long term.

KWT serves as a crucial tool for empowering women, enhancing the welfare of rural families through productive endeavors including agricultural product processing and crafts. (Dewi, 2021). Nevertheless, the success of women's empowerment in KWT is inextricably linked to the role of males, particularly in the physical labor that underpins agricultural

activities. Therefore, policies that acknowledge the roles of both genders in KWT, including both productive and non-productive activities, will enhance the sustainability and performance of the agricultural sector, particularly in the coffee production sector.

The results of this research, as demonstrated in KWT Karya Maju, Bener Meriah Regency, indicate that, despite the fact that regulations prioritize the role of women in administration and group management, the role of men in KWT Karya Maju indicates that there is a newness in the implementation of policies that are more inclusive and sustainable. This is also evident in the objectives of the KWT Karya Maju organization, which encompass the following:

- a. Group members' prosperity;
- b. Strengthen the bonds of friendship and brotherhood among members;
- c. Encourage a culture of mutual cooperation among members
- d. Strengthening the agricultural sector's economy;
- e. A platform for the exchange of knowledge and experiences in the field of agricultural sciences;
- f. Foster a culture of thrifty living by judiciously managing the budget and constructing the economy in a systematic, methodical, and planned manner;
- g. Harmonize the agricultural sector's vision and mission.

The KWT Karya Maju organization's objectives do not indicate that empowerment is exclusively intended for women; rather, they prioritize the welfare and advancement of all group members. In general, the active participation of all members, irrespective of gender, is encouraged by objectives such as fostering a spirit of mutual cooperation, empowering the agricultural economy, and becoming a forum for exchanging experiences. This provides an opportunity for multi-gender roles, in which men are still engaged in specific activities, such as heavy work that necessitates physical exertion, despite the fact that they are not formally structured within the KWT organization. This enriches the dynamics and strengthens the sustainability of the group.

The involvement of men, particularly in physically demanding tasks like distributing and lifting coffee, does not diminish the significance of institutional formation and women's empowerment in KWT. The integration of gender roles enhances complementary cooperation, fostering a sustainable multi-gender model in agricultural activities (Varas, 2016). The extant institutional structure is not altered, as the presence of men in non-formal structures outside of KWT's core management enables a more efficient division of labor.

The development of KWT, which incorporates the involvement of men, represents a strategic initiative aimed at enhancing community welfare, particularly in boosting the income of farming families. Should state administrative policies become more attuned to the necessity of ensuring an equitable distribution of responsibilities, the coffee farming sector in Bener Meriah is likely to achieve greater efficiency and sustainability. This research demonstrates that gender integration in KWT serves not only as a means to attain equality but also as a strategy to enhance organizational efficiency and sustainability. By formally acknowledging men's contributions within defined parameters, KWT can operate more effectively while maintaining its core identity as a women's empowerment organization. (Maryati & Solehudin, 2024).

State administrative policies should enhance their responsiveness to the necessity of developing more inclusive structures (Elias et. al, 2024). In the agricultural context of Bener

Meriah, it is crucial for KWT regulations to acknowledge the role of males in all aspects of agricultural production, despite the fact that they are not included in the KWT organizational structure. This acknowledgment will enhance the sustainability of the agricultural sector, enhance the efficacy of coffee production, and contribute positively to gender equality in the agricultural sector. Consequently, policies that incorporate the responsibilities of both men and women in the KWT structure will promote a more sustainable improvement in the well-being of agricultural families.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Karya Maju Women's producing Group (KWT) in Bener Meriah not only empowers women in agriculture but also exhibits considerable male participation in sustaining the Gayo coffee producing enterprise. Despite KWT being officially overseen by women, the contribution of males in physical labor, including land cultivation and the transportation of agricultural goods, is a significant factor that must not be overlooked. This illustrates the interdependence between women's responsibilities in production management and men's involvement in physically demanding occupations.

The findings underscore the necessity for a more inclusive framework within the KWT organizational structure, wherein the incorporation of gender roles might enhance the efficiency and sustainability of agricultural enterprises. The current policies prioritizing women's empowerment require reassessment to better align with flexible, gender-based labor dynamics that reflect field-specific needs.

This research is constrained by its focus on a single farmer group, rendering the conclusions potentially non-generalizable to other regions with varying social and economic contexts. Future research may broaden its scope by comparing different KWTs across various locations to achieve a more thorough understanding of gender participation trends in agriculture. Moreover, additional research can investigate the tangible effects of gender role integration on the productivity and economic well-being of agricultural households.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhanced acknowledgment of men's involvement in KWT: More inclusive policies are required to recognize men's contributions to physical labor that supports agricultural output, such as the transportation of agricultural products. A more organized and explicit allocation of responsibilities between women and men will enhance the efficiency and sustainability of KWT.
2. Policies Supporting Multi-Gender Roles: The government must revise administrative policies to empower women while simultaneously recognizing men's achievements in the agriculture industry. This can be achieved by promoting policies that foster collaboration between genders in agricultural management.
3. Training and Infrastructure Supporting KWT: To guarantee the sustainability of empowerment initiatives in KWT, it is essential for the government and pertinent institutions to furnish skills training, facilities, and infrastructure that facilitate productive endeavors for both women and men.
4. Enhancing Collaboration between KWT and Agricultural Families: Fortifying the involvement of

families in agricultural endeavors, particularly in the administration and allocation of agricultural goods, will foster improved synergy and bolster the welfare of farming families.

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