



Rural Community Stigma Towards Higher Education for Women

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Abstract

Factors This study examines the views of the Poteran Village community toward women pursuing higher education, with an emphasis on the social and cultural aspects that influence these views. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study aimed to understand the meanings and experiences of women facing social pressures arising from their desire to pursue higher education. The research methods employed were in-depth interviews and participant observation. Interviews were conducted with 10 key informants, including community leaders, religious leaders, highly educated women, and parents. Observations were conducted to examine social and cultural interactions relevant to the research issue. The results of this study indicate a negative stigma against women who choose to pursue higher education, driven by patriarchal culture, traditional values, and economic circumstances. Women are often perceived as more suited to domestic roles, making higher education less important. However, there has been a shift in community perceptions driven by modernization, the success of educated women, and support from family and community leaders. Although this change is not yet widespread, awareness of the importance of higher education for women is growing as part of efforts to achieve gender equality and social progress.

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Introduction

The stigma that women don't need higher education remains a significant societal issue. This perception hinders women from improving their quality of life and job opportunities. Education is crucial, not only for men but also for women, as it can support them in achieving financial independence and gender equality. (Maritza 2023) In many rural areas, negative attitudes still hinder women from continuing their education. Furthermore, the negative perception that highly educated women have difficulty finding a life partner persists. When women successfully complete higher education and pursue successful careers, society tends to assume they will have difficulty finding a partner, or they may prefer to remain single because many men feel inferior about their achievements. Furthermore, men generally prefer women who have more time for themselves. Women with good educations and careers tend to prefer not to marry (Yovita et al. 2022) Especially in Poteran Village, women still face numerous obstacles in accessing higher education, both from the upper and lower classes. This appears to be a common issue, with gender inequality being a key factor. In Poteran Village, the majority of residents still adhere to traditional views that place women in the home, creating an environment that is less supportive of their pursuit of education. As a result, pursuing higher education is seen as less important. This issue often arises in rural communities, especially for women, who face difficulties in accessing education. Many women feel trapped by a strong patriarchal stigma. The community is more inclined to adhere to traditional views than to support higher education for women. One clear example of this view comes from a statement by a community leader, Mr. Maisnawi, who asserted:

"Women don't need to pursue higher education, because they'll ultimately end up in the kitchen, caring for their husbands and children. In my opinion, women's daily roles are limited to the family sphere, such as cleaning the house and raising children."

This statement reinforces the stigma of inequality in educational access, which impacts families' decisions not to support their daughters' pursuit of higher education. Education plays a crucial role in improving the quality of life, expanding knowledge, and opening up employment opportunities for women. However, in Poteran Village, the number of women pursuing higher education remains very low. Based on data from the Poteran Village Government (2022–2024), only 16 women pursued higher education,

while 74 others did not. Most of the women who did not pursue higher education chose to marry, work, or migrate to the Greater Jakarta area. (*Data Perempuan Melanjutkan Ke Jenjang Pendidikan Tinggi Desa Poteran Kecamatan Talango Tahun 2022-2024*, n.d.) This demonstrates the low participation of women in higher education due to stigma and other factors. Despite the significant challenges, there is an inspiring story of a woman named Yurni, from Gelisek Hamlet, who became the first pioneer in pursuing higher education in 2007. Yurni's success not only changed her family's perspective but also gave new hope to other women in the village. She is the first child of Rahnawi and Kisma, who come from a lower-middle economic background. From childhood, Yurni was enthusiastic about education and actively participated in school. However, after graduating from Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic Senior High School), she faced challenges from her family, who still held traditional views and did not support higher education for women.

Yurni didn't give up. She tried to convince her parents of the importance of higher education, explaining that an academic degree would provide more opportunities to contribute to her family and community. With the support of her teachers and friends, Yurni was finally accepted into STAIN Pamekasan (now UIN Madura). The struggle was not easy, as she had to overcome the stigma that higher education was not important for women. However, her success became a beacon of hope and inspiration for other women in Poteran Village. After completing her education, Yurni returned to her village and became a teacher at SDI Al-Hamidiah. This case demonstrates that, despite stigma and social challenges, one individual who dares to pursue education can inspire change and provide new hope for other women in the community.

Poteran Village is a rural area with unique social and cultural characteristics. Patriarchal views still dominate, with women often viewed solely as housewives, with no opportunity to pursue careers or higher education. Perceptions about higher education for women are related to gender issues. There is equality in human access to higher education, as opportunities for higher education are not only available to men but also to women (Jatiningsih 2021). Many parents believe it's better for their children to start working as farmers, laborers, or migrant workers to help support the family rather than spend years in college with uncertain outcomes. Women feel this sentiment even more strongly. In some traditional communities, women who pursue higher

education are often viewed as overly ambitious or defiant, as social norms relegate women to the domestic sphere (Dwiyanti 2025). Society believes that higher education is more suitable for men, while women are prioritized to be wives and mothers. This cultural norm contributes to the belief that men's education is more valuable than women's. Stereotypes such as "women don't need to pursue higher education because they will eventually return home" reflect conservatism values that hinder women's advancement. This situation is further complicated by the fact that many women who graduate from college choose to become housewives, even though the knowledge gained is still useful in educating their children. In this context, women's success is not always measured by their presence in the job market, but rather by their ability to educate the next generation.

Economic factors also pose a significant obstacle. Most residents of Poteran Village work as farmers and migrants. High tuition costs, coupled with limited transportation access to urban universities, present obstacles for women who wish to pursue higher education. This situation narrows women's opportunities for higher education. Several previous studies also support these findings. Research by Suparno (2023) shows that the community holds diverse views regarding higher education for women. Some support it, while others still believe that women's roles are limited to the home. (Suparno, Mira Hastin, Ni Kadek Sri Sumiartini, Dwi Pratiwi Lestari, Antonius Rino Vanchapo 2021) Research by Faiqotus Silvia Nabila (2020) in Curahdringu Village shows positive developments with an increase in the number of women pursuing higher education, although some still doubt its importance. (Nabila 2020) Research by Eny Rosyidah (2008) in Bangelan Village found that despite positive assessments of higher education, women's interest in pursuing higher education remains low due to economic factors and a lack of information (Rosyidah 2008).

Higher education is crucial for the well-being of all people, regardless of gender. Both women and men have equal rights to pursue higher education. Education is the primary means to a better life in the future. Furthermore, women will be the primary educators of their children, further emphasizing the importance of higher education for women. (Dwi, Asih, and Anzari 2021) This is related because if women become educated mothers, they will be able to give birth to a quality next generation. Higher education can broaden a mother's knowledge and skills in parenting. Mothers

with higher levels of education have greater access to information and resources to support the parenting process. This includes methods to stimulate the development of social, emotional, and cognitive skills in children.(Octavia 2019).

Education for women is a step to improve women's abilities, both intellectually, in character, and in skills, so that they can become good educators for their children in the family, community, and school environment. "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a family (nation)," said James Emmanuel Kwegyir Aggrey, an African-American teacher and missionary known as a pioneer in understanding the importance of education for women. (Hidayah 2023).

From this statement, it is clear that education for women is vital, not only for themselves but also for their families and communities. In fact, women are the first educational institutions for their children. For women, education is an effort to become intelligent in their work and to educate their children. Therefore, women must have the courage to set aside negative opinions to pursue higher education. After all, a woman needs intelligence to produce an intelligent generation.

The importance of education for women has been widely highlighted, including its contribution to shaping a quality generation and enhancing individual potential. However, economic constraints and diverse societal perspectives remain significant barriers, particularly in areas like Poteran Village, where the majority of the population works as farmers and migrants. This aligns with studies in various scientific publications, which show that limited access and the cost of higher education often prevent women from pursuing their studies, despite growing awareness of the importance of education for women for the advancement of their families and the nation.(Indonesia. 2024)

From this third study, we can conclude that community views on the importance of higher education for women vary. Some consider education essential for self-development and their role as educators in the family, while others are still influenced by traditional perspectives. Although challenges remain, support for women's education is starting to show improvement. In this study, we will explore the perceptions and views of the Poteran Village community, thereby providing a deeper understanding of the challenges women face in accessing higher education in the region. The method used

is qualitative, with phenomenological methods such as interviews and documentation to delve deeper into local perceptions.

Previous research has revealed diverse community views on the value of higher education for women. Some consider education essential for self-development and their role as educators within the family, while others still adhere to traditional views. Despite growing support for women's education, this study aims to address this gap by focusing on the stigma inherent in Poteran Village. A phenomenological approach is used to explore women's subjective experiences related to social pressures in accessing higher education. Through in-depth contextual analysis, this study will explore social, cultural, economic, and religious factors to identify effective intervention strategies to address stigma and increase access to higher education for women in the village, providing a comprehensive understanding and relevant solutions.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological focus, aiming to explore the meaning and personal experiences of individuals related to the phenomenon under study. The research process includes preparation steps, data collection through in-depth interviews and documentation, data analysis, and drawing conclusions. The subjects in this study were the people of Poteran Village, who were selected based on certain criteria to reflect various perspectives related to the problem under study. In data collection, the methods used were semi-structured interviews and documentation studies, with tools in the form of an interview guide and a list of relevant documents. Data analysis was carried out by reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions to identify the main themes and patterns that emerged from the collected data. (Yusuf 2014)

Result and Discussion

The following is a presentation of the data and research findings, collected through interviews with the Poteran Village Head, religious leaders, and the Poteran community. In addition to interviews, the researchers also collected documentation in Poteran village. The data presented relates to the stigma among the Poteran community regarding higher education for women:

Stigma among the Poteran Village Community regarding higher education for women.

The Poteran community holds both positive and negative stigmas regarding women pursuing higher education, related to traditional views that place women's roles predominantly in the domestic sphere as housewives. This is stated by Diana Rosyidah, who stated:

In the past, people in Poteran Village tended not to encourage their daughters to pursue higher education. They were more proud if their daughters were married and working, rather than continuing their studies. However, over time, mindsets have begun to shift. Some parents are now encouraging their daughters to pursue higher education, although some still maintain old views and consider higher education unnecessary for women. This change demonstrates a shift in values and awareness of the importance of education, although it is not yet fully widespread.

The interview results above illustrate an interesting social dynamic related to the Poteran village community's views on women's education. In the past, traditional views emphasized women's roles in the domestic sphere or practical work, rather than their academic achievements. This reflected a deeply embedded patriarchal culture, where women were valued for their contributions to the household and their readiness for marriage, rather than their intellectual qualities.

However, over time, values have shifted significantly. Some parents are now beginning to recognize that higher education is important not only for men but also for women. This awareness may be driven by external factors, such as increased access to information, examples of successful women with higher education, and changing socioeconomic conditions that encourage all individuals, including women, to become more competitive. Support for women's education is a crucial step towards gender equality and is commendable. The culture that has been ingrained in society is one of the reasons why education for men is prioritized over women, or what could be called a male orientation, namely the view that "women do not need to pursue higher education because in the end they will return to their domestic duties."(Amelia 2018)

However, these changes are not yet fully distributed. Some community groups still cling to old values, so the process of social change is slow and faces various challenges. This demonstrates that changes in mindsets within society do not occur uniformly, but rather gradually and require a culturally sensitive approach. The shift in

attitudes in Indonesian society, particularly in rural areas, regarding higher education for women indicates significant social change. Although traditional beliefs that relegate women to domestic roles and deem higher education less important for them persist, awareness of the value of education for women is growing. This reflects a shift in mindset influenced by various factors, such as broader access to information and successful examples of highly educated women, which are slowly breaking down old stereotypes and promoting gender equality in education (Fimela, 2023).

The shift in the Poteran Village community's perspective on women's education is a positive sign of equality and social progress. While this change is not yet fully distributed, it reflects a growing awareness of the importance of higher education for women. Consistent efforts, such as public education and the active role of community leaders, are needed to accelerate the transformation of these values, so that the benefits of education can be felt more widely and equally by all levels of society. This is in line with the results of an interview with Yurni, who stated that:

The stigma against women pursuing higher education in Poteran village is very strong. Many people, including members of my own family, believe that women don't need to pursue higher education because they will eventually get married and take care of the household. This view stems from deep-rooted culture and traditions, exacerbated by economic conditions that make parents prefer to send their sons to school. Higher education for women is considered to offer no significant economic benefits. When I decided to pursue higher education, I faced various challenges, including rejection from my family. However, I persistently tried to convince them that education would give me the opportunity to contribute more effectively to both my family and society. With the support of my teachers and friends, I was finally accepted into STAIN Pamekasan. After graduating and returning to the village to become a teacher, the community slowly began to recognize the benefits of education for women. Today, although the stigma has not completely disappeared, more and more parents are supporting their daughters' pursuit of higher education.

Interviews with Yurni revealed that the stigma against women who want to pursue higher education in Poteran village is heavily influenced by traditional values and local economic conditions. In general, the community assumes that higher education is irrelevant for women, Boys are often perceived as having better and more stable job opportunities after completing higher education, which can provide financial support for their families. However, while the government provides various assistance programs, such as scholarships and educational support, these programs still do not

fully address the needs of women, particularly those from low-income families in rural areas. In some remote areas, economic challenges are exacerbated by a lack of infrastructure and educational facilities, such as difficult transportation access and a limited number of universities in the area. This leaves women in these areas facing greater barriers to education (Ainun Faikah, Baharudin 2019), as they are considered better prepared for domestic roles than professional ones. However, Yurni demonstrated that perseverance, confidence, and support from those around her, such as teachers and friends, can be a powerful force in overcoming this stigma. Her success not only proves that women are capable of achieving success in education but also has the potential to pave the way and gradually change societal mindsets

In line with the opinion of Yurni's parents, namely Mrs. Kisma and Mr. Rahnawi, he is of the opinion that:

Our family recognizes that our choice to support our child's higher education has drawn negative reactions from some neighbors. However, for us, education is vital and the key to a brighter future. Although our family's financial situation is not yet perfect, we are committed to continuing to strive and provide the best for our child's future. We believe that knowledge is a valuable long-term investment. We also recognize that in every struggle, there are bound to be obstacles, including negative views or unpleasant comments. However, these will not affect our commitment. Instead, they motivate us to keep moving forward and support our child in achieving his dreams. We believe that every step taken with good intentions and an unyielding spirit will result in happiness in the future.

Despite negative reactions from some neighbors, our family remains committed to supporting our children in pursuing higher education. For us, education is the key to a successful future, and while our financial situation isn't perfect, we believe this endeavor is a worthwhile investment. Negative perspectives don't dampen our spirits; instead, they motivate us to keep moving forward toward a brighter future.

Parental support is a crucial element influencing a child's educational success, particularly in higher education in Indonesia, where positive parental expectations are closely linked to a child's participation in postgraduate programs. Active parental presence can also foster a love of learning and a positive attitude toward education (L. Suryani 2019). Although the cost of higher education in Indonesia continues to soar and is not in line with increasing parental income, the desire to invest in education remains strong, as it is seen as a valuable long-term investment. Research shows that emotional

support from family has a greater impact on student learning outcomes than financial support, especially for low-income families(Prasetyo 2021) .

Based on the results of an interview with the Head of Poteran Village, regarding the positive stigma towards women who continue their higher education, he said that:

As the village head, I recommend that it is important for my people to improve their level of education, because with education and having adequate knowledge, the level of degree and quality of each of us is capable, especially in the field of government and in society, as well as matters related to social life and religious elements, which can be fulfilled with the knowledge itself, especially if we are able to improve the quality of our mindset so that we are able to become truly qualified human beings, both inside and out.

In his statement, the village head emphasized the importance of education as a key factor in improving the community's quality of life. He believes that with a good education, every individual can elevate their status and quality, both in government, social life, and religious aspects. Furthermore, education plays a crucial role in shaping positive mindsets, enabling people to become individuals of quality, both physically and mentally. The village head encouraged all residents to pay greater attention to and improve the quality of education. Education is the primary foundation for creating qualified, competitive individuals capable of making positive contributions in various aspects of life.

The importance of higher education for women has a significant impact on the well-being of families and communities. Mothers with higher education are generally better able to make better decisions regarding the health, education, and well-being of their families, and are able to create a home environment conducive to learning and achievement for their children. While there are still negative perceptions in society that women do not need to pursue higher education, many hold a positive view that higher education is crucial for women, particularly as they will ultimately become educators for their children. Higher education is also an invaluable tool for empowering women, increasing their self-confidence, offering better opportunities, and enriching their lives, ultimately contributing to the overall progress of the country(Rahmayani 2021).

In contrast to Mr. Munihwan's opinion, who does not agree with women continuing their higher education, the following is Mr. Munihwan's opinion regarding women continuing their higher education. He said that:

For me, education is not that important financially nor is it profitable, because education itself will waste money, it is better for us to contribute to our children, both in continuing the work and contributing to better and more real things because there are many examples that have happened, especially for my nephew who has completed his undergraduate education but ended up opening a grocery store in Jakarta, that is proof that money is something that needs to be prioritized and for me, a child who has graduated from high school who understands reading and understands a little about religion already has important capital to live this life.

The view that education often has little financial impact is common, especially when we see examples such as individuals who have completed higher education but ultimately pursue careers in the informal sector. However, it's important to realize that education isn't solely about direct financial gain. It also shapes mindsets, broadens horizons, improves communication skills, and provides greater opportunities in the future. For example, if someone chooses to open a food stall after graduating from college, this doesn't mean their education was wasted. They might run the business with better management, employ more effective marketing strategies, or even consider it a stepping stone to a larger enterprise. Many people achieve success with a higher education, even if their life journeys don't always go according to plan. Furthermore, education isn't just about obtaining a diploma; it also fosters character, ethics, and a broader understanding of life. Furthermore, the interviewee's argument also has validity, particularly in the context of the need for education to be tailored to real economic conditions and societal needs. Not everyone has to follow a high academic path, but basic skills such as literacy, logistical thinking, and religious values remain crucial foundations in life.

While some believe that education doesn't guarantee financial success, it still plays a crucial role in shaping a person's overall quality. Success isn't determined solely by a degree, but also by character, skills, and hard work. Therefore, education should be viewed as a long-term investment, not simply an expense.

Higher education for women often faces discriminatory views, claiming that women's primary duties are solely related to domestic activities, leading to the perception that higher education is unnecessary and a waste of money. While some argue that education does not necessarily guarantee immediate financial success, particularly when considering graduates who subsequently enter the informal sector

into entrepreneurship, it is important to recognize that the benefits of education extend beyond material aspects. Higher education can shape ways of thinking, broaden perspectives, enhance communication skills, and create more opportunities in the future. Even when individuals choose to become entrepreneurs, they may be able to do so with better management and more effective strategies thanks to the education they have acquired. Furthermore, education plays a role in shaping character, ethics, and a broader understanding of life, and is considered a crucial long-term investment for the overall improvement of human quality, regardless of discussions about guarantees of financial success. (Laraswati Lestari 2023)

In Mr. Misnawi's view, regarding the stigma of the Poteran community, he believes that:

For me, for a woman, ideally, improving herself and increasing the quality of religious elements should be the focus until she is called worthy to be a worthy figure for her children and a good figure for her husband in the future, this should fulfill the requirements for women to navigate the sea of life in society, and for the improvement of education itself, a woman should be aware of her position and quality, as well as the opportunities in navigating this life. because higher education is not a guarantee for someone to achieve success either financially or in living this life

The interview above conveys her views on the role of women in life, particularly regarding self-improvement and religious qualities. She emphasized the importance of women focusing on self-improvement, particularly in religious aspects, so they can be good role models for their children and future husbands. She believes these qualities are crucial for living a harmonious life in society.

Furthermore, respondents stated that higher education is not the sole determining factor in a person's success. While education offers various benefits, self-awareness, personal qualities, and the ability to seize opportunities also play a crucial role in life. Therefore, for a woman, realizing her value and role in everyday life is more fundamental than simply pursuing an academic degree.

This interview reflects a view that emphasizes the balance between education and self-development within a social and religious context for women. The respondent believes that religious qualities and self-improvement should be the primary focus, as this will shape women into good individuals who are beneficial to their families and society. She also cautioned that while higher education is important, it does not

guarantee financial success or a fulfilling life. Success depends more on personal qualities, an understanding of social roles, and the ability to capitalize on every opportunity presented.

The opinion of one of the religious figures in our village, namely Ruslan Abubakar, said that:

They generally think it's good, but with a culture that seems to prioritize men over women, a variety of opinions have emerged. Some tend to support it, while others believe that women should focus more on improving their morals through religious education, such as attending Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), after which they are considered to have completed their education. Furthermore, economic factors are a major obstacle, as many graduates of Islamic boarding schools focus more on helping their parents, such as by moving to Jakarta and working.

Based on the interview results above, it can be concluded that although many people generally view it positively, societal views are still influenced by a culture that prioritizes men in education. This has led to diverse views; some support it, while others believe that women are better off focusing on religious education in Islamic boarding schools and then discontinuing it. Besides cultural influences, economic issues are also a major reason, as many Islamic boarding school graduates choose to immediately work and help their parents, for example by moving to Jakarta.

Factors that influence the stigma of the Poteran Village community towards higher education for women

The stigma that the Poteran village community has towards women who continue their higher education is influenced by several factors, one of which is as conveyed by Wafida, she said that:

Rapid urbanization and advances in information technology have influenced the perspectives of Poteran Village residents regarding higher education, particularly for women. However, a strong stigma persists that women should not pursue higher education because they are assumed to be housewives. This view is based on traditional cultural values that emphasize women's role within the home, as well as narrow views of gender roles that limit women's opportunities. Furthermore, the lack of successful female role models from educated backgrounds reinforces the belief that higher education is unimportant for women. However, a new awareness among young people, especially women, who are beginning to recognize the importance of higher education, provides hope for a change in this view, in line with the growing influence of modernization in the village.

The interview results above illustrate how community attitudes in Poteran Village toward higher education for women have changed, influenced by two main factors: urbanization and advances in information technology. These two factors provide access to new information and perspectives, especially for the younger generation, regarding the significance of education, including for women. However, these changes have not completely eliminated long-standing stigmas. These stigmas stem from cultural norms that assume women should play a role at home, as well as narrow gender assumptions that women do not need higher education because they will ultimately become housewives. Furthermore, the lack of successful, educated women around them reinforces these negative views. However, there is a growing awareness among young people, especially women, that higher education is important for their future, indicating the possibility of change in the future.

The societal stigma against women pursuing higher education, often rooted in outdated views of women's primary role as homemakers, remains a barrier in some communities. However, advances in information technology and urbanization have begun to change this perception, providing access to new information and perspectives that emphasize the importance of higher education for women, although these changes have not completely erased the stigma.(Annisa, N., Bariah, O., & Sitika 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews conducted, several factors were found. Yusman said that:

Society often believes that women who pursue higher education are simply pursuing popularity, status, or wealth, a view that contradicts the goal of education, which should be holistic self-development. In traditional communities, women's roles within the home are considered more important, so higher education is perceived as a neglect of domestic responsibilities. Furthermore, a lack of understanding about the balance between intellectual and spiritual intelligence makes highly educated women appear purposeless. There are concerns within society that the social changes brought about by higher education could violate traditional norms. There is also a perception that a basic education alone is sufficient for a woman to be a good wife or mother, without the need to pursue a career. Barriers to access and the cost of education further exacerbate this stigma, which is considered unrealistic or useless in rural areas.

This view reflects society's conservative perspective on the function and role of education for women, especially in traditional settings. Higher education for women is often viewed negatively, as it is perceived as focusing more on achieving social status,

wealth, or fame than on overall individual development. This leads to women who do receive higher education being viewed as having deviated from traditional values and their primary responsibilities within the family.

On the other hand, many in society still don't realize the importance of balancing intellectual and spiritual intelligence. Women who choose to pursue higher education are sometimes viewed as lost or neglecting their duties as wives and mothers. Traditional norms also pose a strong obstacle, as there are concerns that higher education will change established social structures. Furthermore, practical obstacles such as limited access and high educational costs further reinforce the perception that higher education is unimportant, especially in rural areas. In such environments, basic education is considered sufficient for women to fulfill their domestic roles.

Conservative beliefs view higher education for women as a threat to traditional values, domestic roles, and spiritual balance. This view is reinforced by barriers to access and economic challenges, as well as a lack of understanding of the importance of comprehensive education for women. As a result, highly educated women are often negatively stigmatized, especially in traditional or rural communities.

Negative views of society towards highly educated women, particularly in traditional settings, are often based on concerns about changes in gender roles and ingrained household values, in line with research showing that higher education for women can be perceived as a threat to the patriarchal social order and norms that limit women's functions within the domestic sphere (Smith 2020).

Based on interviews conducted, several factors influence the negative views of Poteran villagers toward women who wish to pursue higher education. According to Mr. Syam, he stated:

One of the main factors influencing societal views is the traditional mindset that women's primary duties should be focused on household and family matters. As a result, higher education for women is often seen as a neglect of these obligations. Furthermore, there is a belief that women do not need a higher education to be good wives and mothers. This negative view is also driven by a lack of understanding of the importance of education for women in developing their talents and roles in society, as well as anxiety about the social changes that might arise from higher education. Despite this, these interviews indicate that there is growing support for women who wish to pursue higher education, although many views still need to be addressed.

The interview results above explain that one of the main factors influencing society's perspective on women's education is a conservative mindset. This view holds that women's roles are limited to domestic and family duties. Therefore, higher education for women is often perceived as negating these obligations. Furthermore, there is a perception that women don't need higher education to effectively fulfill their roles as wives or mothers. This negative attitude stems from a lack of understanding of the importance of education for women in optimizing their potential and contributing to society.

Fear of social change is also a contributing factor to this view, as higher education for women can bring about transformation within existing social structures. Despite this, interviews indicate that support for women pursuing higher education is growing. However, many outdated views still need to be changed to truly achieve equality in education.

Traditional societal attitudes view higher education for women as irrelevant and at odds with their role at home. Lack of understanding and fear of social change reinforce these negative views. However, over time, support for higher education for women has begun to grow, although more effort is needed to change these long-held views so that women have equal access to education and can make broader contributions to society.

Long-standing societal mindsets often relegate women to domestic duties, assume that pursuing higher education means neglecting their primary family responsibilities, and raise concerns about potential social change. However, higher education is crucial for enhancing women's abilities and participation in society (Dewi 2023).

Based on the results of the interview above, it was further strengthened by the opinion of Yurni's parents, namely Mrs. Kisma and Mr. Rahnawi, who stated that:

Speaking of factors, we believe there are two factors that significantly influence the stigma that Poteran villagers hold about higher education for women. One is the economic aspect, where the community's economy in the past was solely focused on agriculture and fishing. This contrasts with the current era, where many Poteran villagers have migrated, although not all of them have migrated. However, with this migration, the economy of the Poteran community has begun to improve. Regarding the second factor, the patriarchal culture, in this village, higher education was previously only intended for boys, because for the community, women were only worthy of staying at home and serving their parents.

Based on the interview results above, it can be concluded that the negative views of the Poteran community regarding higher education for women are influenced by two main factors: economic aspects and patriarchal culture. Economically, limited income in the past, which focused more on the agricultural and fisheries sectors, limited access to education.

These economic factors significantly influence women's opportunities to pursue higher education. Higher education in Indonesia still requires a substantial budget, including registration fees, tuition, living costs, and other additional expenses. For low-income families, especially in rural areas or areas with limited financial resources, the high cost of education is a major obstacle (Patricia Swalika Irawan, Fikri, and Lestarikan 2024).

However, this is currently changing along with increasing prosperity through employment outside the region. On the other hand, from a cultural perspective, the patriarchal perspective that places women solely as household managers is also a major obstacle to obtaining higher education. These two aspects are interconnected and shape how society views women's educational roles.

Economic and cultural factors based on patriarchy strongly impact women's opportunities for higher education, especially in rural areas where low incomes and conventional views of women's role as homemakers create significant obstacles, although economic progress resulting from migration can provide new opportunities (A. Suryani 2022)

Conclusion

Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that the Poteran Village community's views on higher education for women reflect the tension between traditional values and the process of modernization. On the one hand, conservative attitudes that limit women to domestic roles persist, despite a shift in societal views. Poor economic conditions and the low number of successful, highly educated women are the main drivers of this stigma, but urbanization and advances in information technology are beginning to provide new perspectives for the younger generation. The main findings of this study demonstrate the complex interaction between traditional values, economic conditions, and the impact of modernization in shaping stigma against

women's education in Poteran Village, offering new insights into the difficulties women face in accessing higher education in rural areas. The contribution of this study lies in its in-depth phenomenological approach, which aims to understand women's subjective experiences of stigma and identify contextual factors unique to Poteran Village, distinguishing it from previous research. One weakness of this study is its limited scope within the specific context of Poteran Village, requiring caution in applying the findings. Furthermore, the study's limited focus on community perspectives does not fully consider the women's perspectives, which could provide a foundation for future research.

Suggestion

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher offers the following recommendations: The community in Poteran Village is expected to begin changing its mindset and providing equal opportunities for women to pursue higher education. The perception that women should only be involved in the domestic sphere needs to be reconsidered, as women with higher education can actually make significant contributions to their families and communities. Parents should not discriminate in providing educational support for boys and girls. Furthermore, the community is also expected to be more active in participating in outreach or learning activities that discuss the importance of education, so that the old stigma can gradually disappear and be replaced with more just and progressive values.

For researchers, it is hoped that this will provide additional knowledge and innovation for further research on the stigma that Poteran villagers have regarding higher education for women and can help them find more effective ways to reduce this stigma, such as through increasing community knowledge, involving community and religious leaders in educational programs for women, and providing scholarships or financial assistance specifically for women in the area. With a more comprehensive understanding and appropriate strategies, it is hoped that there will be a shift in thinking in the Poteran Village community regarding the importance of higher education for women, which in turn will contribute to improving the overall quality of human resources.

UIN Madura hopes to serve as a reference for further research, benefiting various parties, both academically and practically. This will allow for further development and relevant research results.

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