

Women Workers at Sugarcane Mills at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang: A Study of Socialist Feminism

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ABSTRACT

The interest in working for a woman is influenced by various factors, one of which is the development of industry. Therefore, this article aims to find out the entry of women in Watu-Watu Lantari Jaya Village who are choosing to work at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. Meanwhile, the data in this article were obtained through the method of observation involved, in-depth interviews corroborated with life history, then analyzed using the theory of Socialist Feminism by Heidi Hartman so as to answer the problems in this study as the results of the study show that women who work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang is a woman who works to strengthen family life. This condition can be interpreted as working as employees in the company can provide welfare to their families. In addition, there is an influx of women who work at PT in Watu-Watu Lantari Jaya Village. Prima Alam Gemilang, due to the various facilities provided for women, has a positive work environment in the company because the company prioritizes gender sensitivity and affirmative action for female workers.

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1. Introduction

The role of women in the world of work depends on the availability of jobs and the interests that attract them to choose work [1]. As is known, most women choose to work, one of which is due to economic demands [2]. Similarly, some companies that accept female workers are more commonly found in the industrial sector. This is as revealed by Wibowo & Rusdiarti that companies that stand and absorb a workforce dominated by women are more engaged in pharmaceuticals, garment, manufacturing, food production, plastics and so on [3]. In line with this, every woman involved in the industrial sector also has various reasons. As stated by Kusriani & Suryani in their study, women's work has helped ease the husband's duties in the family so as to reduce internal disputes in the family regarding material issues [4].

Along with the increasing development of industry, the role of women in life continues to change [5], [6]. As is known now, many women actively participate in the industrial sector to meet the economic needs of the family. As the results of Hayati's research show that humans cannot be separated from the demands of the role that must be lived in their lives, women workers who work in the industrial sector have two roles, namely as housewives and as breadwinners [7]. If a female worker can carry out both, then she is considered a complete social and cultural being. Through this research, it can be understood that the involvement of women as workers is due to family economic factors. Thus, by working in the industrial sector, women are considered to be able to help the family economy.

Research related to the above was also shown by Yuliana in the results explaining that women work as factory workers of PTP Nusantara XIV Gula due to economic demands that require them to work to meet their daily needs. In addition, also with the background of coming from families that have a low economy, the majority of husbands of female workers of PTP Nusantara XIV Gula Factory who are only absorbed in the private sector permit their wives to work as workers of PTP Nusantara XIV Sugar Factory to help meet the family economy [8]. This can also be confirmed in her study that the influence of women's involvement in work is influenced by Puspitarini & Familia, women's status including age, religion, area of residence (city/village), income, husband's income level (for those who are married), women's education and domestic unemployment rate [9].

Furthermore, according to Ahimsa, industrial growth in the region now affects various kinds of changes in life, one of which is a change in the role of women. Women are increasingly active in economic activities, and almost one-fifth of women in various developing countries are workers in the industrial sector. With so many women working in the industrial sector, it is considered that it can cause changes in their economic activities, families, and social activities. Through this book, it can be interpreted that with the growth of industry, the community is now experiencing many changes, namely increasing income and meeting various primary needs and education costs of the nation's generation [10].

In addition to the positive impact, women who work as factory workers also certainly feel the negative impact. The positive effects of women working as factory workers can create a safe family and make family relationships harmonious. Meanwhile, the adverse effects of female factory workers are that they often feel tired, and time with family (husband and children) is reduced due to the consequences of the dual roles undertaken. This is emphasized by Mundayat et al. in their study that there are reality problems experienced by women workers, including not getting protection from the workplace, not getting health insurance, and the calculation of overtime pay given is not open. There is no in-depth effort for female workers who succeed in meeting production targets, then often problems related to maternity leave, company officials underestimate sexual harassment, and wages are not in line with meeting daily needs, so they are forced to work overtime [11].

In addition, this article also refers to the concept of women, according to Hochschild in his study, which explains that the factory workforce relates to women's participation in the manufacturing industry or factory sector. This concept involves women who work in a factory environment, where women are usually involved in the industrial sector in the production of goods such as textiles, electronics, food, or automotive [12]. But, throughout history, it is known that women's participation in factory work has changed. At first, women often worked in factories as cheap labour was used for jobs that were considered "light" or "harmless". However, as industrialization progressed, women began to engage in a variety of factory jobs, including those requiring technical expertise. As Foucault explained, in economic engagement, it is expected that relations occur in the role of a person or group who has a plan in which the process of mutual influence to reach a public decision is made. The resulting planning product can run as expected [13].

Thus, with various explanations related to women involved in the industrial sector, this article was then developed on the focus of discussion related to women who work as employees at the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. The focus of the discussion related to the condition of the Sugar Factory PT. Prima Alam Gemilang, which absorbs more than 50 women who work as employees. According to the results of the data found at the beginning, the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang (PT PAG) is one of PT's subsidiaries. Jhonlin Batu Mandiri (Jhonlin Group) is located in Watu-Watu Village, Lantari Jaya District, Bombana Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province. PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory has a production capacity of up to 12,000 tons of sugarcane per day. It is the sugar factory with the most significant amount of production in Indonesia, owned by domestic entrepreneurs. PT. Prima Alam Gemilang also has a land area of around 20,000 Ha, 8,000 Ha, which is now a factory infrastructure used to grow sugarcane.

In addition, the existence of various facilities provided by the company is considered to be able to solve women's problems and achieve gender equality in the work environment. Thus, every company that provides facilities for workers is part of a driving strategy in supporting work activities with the aim of achieving good work results in producing company products. Therefore, the existence of this statement is the primary purpose of this article, which is to find out the entry of women working in the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang.

2. Method

This article focuses on women who work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. The selection of objects in this article was made with the consideration that many women work as employees in the company because this company is more gender-sensitive and promotes affirmative action in prioritizing women as workers. Therefore, through the observation involved, in-depth interviews and life histories were conducted with the aim of knowing the activities of working women in depth and finding out why women have the desire to choose to work at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of Women as Employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang

Women who choose to work in the industrial sector are motivated mainly by poor living standards. There are various obstacles faced, such as the lack of income for husbands, increasing daily needs, and other economic problems. Now, women are often required to work to help the economy and improve family welfare. As the profile of women who work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang is described as follows:

1) Indah Ayu Lestari

Indah (25 years old) is a firm and independent woman, and she graduated from S1 Pharmacy at Halu Oleo University in 2018. Indah is the first of three children. Indah previously lived in Kendari City, but now she is domiciled in Watu-watu Village, where she now lives and works. Indah works as an employee at the sugar factory, specifically PT. Prima Alam Gemilang and placed in the field of analyst lab. Previously, he worked in a pharmacy for 1 year. But he chose to leave the job because he felt uncomfortable with his job. Now, Indah works in Sugar Factory PT. Prima Alam Gemilang Bombana Regency.

While working at the sugar factory, Indah felt happy with her work because she had a comfortable working environment, including good friends and facilities available, and the company treated all employees equally. Even so, he still adjusted when he first entered work. As Indah told her, when she first started working, Indah had to adapt to the environment around her.

Working in the field analyst lab is a job that Indah likes, with a salary of Rp.5.000.000 per month. The salary includes basic salary and benefits such as transportation, meals, health, and holiday allowances. With a salary of Rp.5,000,000, Indah usually sets aside money for herself and her parents and puts it in savings for the future. Apart from the large salary, Indah also feels happy to work at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang because the company provides training and self-development, namely special training designed to improve women's technical and leadership skills. Here's Indah's company with her coworkers:



Fig. 1. Togetherness Indah with her colleagues at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang

2) Dhesty Virvana

Dhesty is 28 years old, independent, hardworking, and loves her family. Mrs. Dhesty is from Lampung City. She migrated to Bombana Regency and has been working in a sugar factory since 2020. Mrs. Dhesty is also a graduate of S1 Communication. Mrs. Dhesty lives in PT. Jhonlin Batu Mandiri, Wau-watu Village, Lantari Jaya District. This housing is one of the facilities provided by the company PT. Prima Alam Gemilang.

Mrs Dhesty was placed in one field with Indah at the beginning of her time as an employee at PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory. It also felt like Indah had to adapt first to the surrounding environment. During Mrs Dhesty's work, she also felt happier because she could get colleagues who were very compact and encouraged each other. In addition, Mrs Dhesty also said that she thought of various challenges while working as an employee at the sugar factory. These challenges included high workload, harsh work environment, and gender discrimination, where there are still some people who view women as unsuitable to work in sugar factories. However, Mrs. Dhesty faced these challenges, as evidenced by Mrs. Dhesty and other female employees in the sugar factory who were able to work well and make a significant contribution to the progress of the factory.

Related to the above, it can be shown that Mrs Dhesty and Indah feel comfortable working at PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory because of the facilities provided by the company, such as housing, salaries, benefits and training. As explained by Mrs. Dhesty and Indah, they feel satisfied with the work done as employees because they get good facilities such as housing, salary and benefits, and training. In other words, with the facilities and policies of training programs provided by the company for women who work as employees, in addition to helping the family economy, it can also provide an increase in the skills and experience of women who work in PT Prima Alam Gemilang's Sugar Factory.

3) *Nurnia Fatmawati S*

Mrs. Fatma, aged (27 years) is a hardworking woman. She is a graduate of S1 Environmental Engineering at Halu Oleo University. Mrs Fatma has been working in the factory for 3 years since 2020. Mrs. Fatma has 1 child who is still in grade 2 elementary school. Before working in a sugar factory, he helped the family sell groceries. However, because the income from the job was still not enough to meet the family's economic needs, Mrs. Fatma asked permission from her family and husband to work in a sugar factory. Mrs Fatma is also one of the women who works as an employee at the PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory and gets housing facilities. With the facilities provided by the company in the form of a place to live, the place has now been occupied by Mrs Fatma and her family.

Mrs. Fatma works in the finance department of the sugar factory and has a salary of around Rp.6,000,000 per month. In addition to the basic salary, he also received various benefits such as transportation, food, health, and holiday allowances. Ibu Fatma said that with a salary of Rp.6,000,000, Ibu Fatma felt enough to meet the needs of her family and the cost of her son's education. However, Mrs Fatma hopes that the salary given can increase again along with the increase in work experience.

In line with the above, Mrs. Fatma's hope to get an additional salary is supported by training as a company policy to help female employees improve their skills and experience. This training includes technical training, work safety and self-development. In addition, PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory also implements a gender equality policy for its employees. Fatma said that this policy guarantees all female employees the same treatment as male employees, both in terms of salary, facilities, and career development opportunities.

Related to the above, it can be shown that women who work as employees at PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory feel comfortable working in the company because of the facilities provided by the company, such as housing, salaries, benefits and training. As explained by Mrs Dhesty, Indah and Mrs Fatma as employees at PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory, they were satisfied with the work because they got a good environment and facilities provided by the company such as housing, transportation, salaries and benefits, as well as other training programs. In other words, with the facilities and policies of training programs provided by the company for women who work as employees, in addition to being considered to help improve the family economy, it can also provide an increase in the skills and experience of women working in PT Prima Alam Gemilang's Sugar Factory.

3.2. The Entry of Women Working as Employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang

1) *Economic Factors*

According to women's expressions, involvement in work in the industrial sector is one of the right actions to take in living life. These actions are considered to help stabilize finances and

improve welfare in family life. Related to this, women in Watu-Watu Lantari Jaya Village choose to work at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang due to various reasons, one of which is due to economic factors.

The unstable economic conditions in family life are often the reason women in Watu-Watu Lantari Jaya Village choose to work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. Even in these companies, not a few women who come from outside the region choose to work for the same reason. This proves that the economy is one of the main factors that influence women's choice to work in the industrial sector. Therefore, with these conditions, it is also necessary to know the causes of unstable economic occurrences in family life, especially for women who choose to work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang.

This is the cause of the unstable economy in the lives of women who are employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang can be shown in her profile, as this article has explained some profiles of women who work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang shows that most of them have low economic backgrounds, such as insufficient husbands' incomes and increasing living needs, as for the relationship with the role of women who should only be at home and do housework. These women work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang is precisely the job considered to be the right action to solve family economic problems. It has been proven that women who work in the company are able to stabilize the family economy, and this is undoubtedly due to the support of their husbands and families. From this explanation, it can then be interpreted that the involvement of women working as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang, due to unfavourable economic conditions, so to overcome the problem, they finally chose to work in the company to improve the economy and improve family welfare.

2) *Factors of the Environment, Social and Work Culture of the Company*

Social and cultural factors also drive the interest of women choosing to work in the industrial sector. In this case, what is meant by social factors is the influence of the social environment that influences women choosing to work at the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. This is the reason women choose to work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang because they get a sense of comfort in the work environment with other employees in the company, both men and women.

Related to the above, a comfortable and peaceful environment was created in the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang certainly depends on the workers. In other words, without good social relations in the work environment as employees, workers will experience discomfort in doing their work. Thus, a sense of comfort in the work environment will be felt if all workers are able to create good relationships with each other. Therefore, to develop good social relations in the company, women who work as early employees enter work usually adapt to foster mutual empathy and mutual support for each other.

In addition to the relationship between workers and employees, in the social environment, the relationship between workers and superiors also affects the interest of women choosing to work as employees at the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. Good social relations, in this case, can be seen in the large number of female workers employed in the company. This is another reason that makes women choose to work as employees at the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang is because of the facilities provided expressly for company employees. Therefore, the sugar factory leadership needs to provide suitable facilities for workers, such as health facilities, food and transportation. By providing these facilities, sugar factories can create a safe, comfortable and friendly working environment for workers.

Regarding social relations in the work environment, gender equality is also one of the influences that show the reason women choose to work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang. With the number of employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang, which shows that women are more than 50 women, this condition can be interpreted that there is gender equality in the absorption of workers in the company. In line with this, the condition of gender equality is also strengthened by the existence of other facilities that support the lives of women as employees in the company. As the results of an interview with one of the women who works as an employee at the Sugar Factory of PT. Prima Alam Gemilang, Mrs Irma (32 years old) said that in addition to facilities such as housing as a place to live, health facilities, food and transportation, they, as workers in the company, also received training program facilities to support women in improving their skills and experience.

Thus, the holding of a particular training policy for employees has now received many positive views from workers, especially women who work as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang, it is proven that there is a lot of appreciation and recognition related to the training program, one of

which is that this program is considered very helpful for them in developing themselves and giving them the opportunity to achieve better position goals. With this condition, it can be understood that many women choose to work at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang, because they get a sense of comfort from gender equality, such as the availability of various facilities provided by the company for female employees aimed at improving self-development, and female workers get the same treatment as male workers, both in the form of salaries, benefits and other facilities.

Discussion

Women as employees at PT. Prima Alam Gemilang does its daily work by involving various things, including energy and time spent with family. It is hoped that the activities carried out can help solve economic problems in their lives, ranging from helping to meet the increasing needs of life to the cost of education for children's schools. With this involvement, it is also expected that there will be additional income from company policies in order to provide them with more savings and help with the cost of daily living needs in the family.

In line with the above, according to Prantiasih, the role of women in the fields of education, health, socio-culture, politics, law, and the economy is still low because women in the community still lack support, including gender equality and justice [14]. Therefore, women, in order to be involved in decisions, must be influenced by economic independence so that they can avoid often depending on men for their lives, which will ultimately harm them.

This can also be related to the concept of women as factory workers below, which has been divided into several perspectives. First, from an economic perspective, women factory workers are part of the productive workforce that plays a vital role in the economy. They produce goods needed by the community, thus contributing to economic growth. In addition, women factory workers also contribute to increasing family income and reducing poverty. Second, from a gender perspective, women factory workers are a form of gender equality. They have the same rights as men to work and earn income. Women factory workers also play the primary breadwinner, not just as housewives. Third, from a Social perspective, women factory workers can experience various challenges, such as (1.) the dual role of women factory workers have a dual role, namely as workers and as a housewife, (2.) discrimination, women factory workers still often experience discrimination, both in ape places and in society. They are usually degraded and considered incapable of working in specific fields, and (3.) violence women factory workers are also vulnerable to violence, both in the workplace and outside the workplace. This violence can be physical, sexual or verbal.

Thus, to overcome the challenges mentioned above, various efforts need to be made, including increasing gender equality, increasing legal protection, and increasing women's empowerment. With these multiple efforts, it is hoped that women factory workers can work comfortably and productively so that they can make a more significant contribution to the economy and society. This PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory has overcome the challenges as described in the concept of women factory workers. Especially when facing various challenges from a social perspective, PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory has provided a policy in the form of a training program for women who work as employees in order to improve their experience and skills. In addition, the sugar factory also provides various facilities, including housing, transportation, food and other benefits. These policies and various facilities certainly have a positive impact. This is evident from the recognition of women who work as employees at the PT Prima Alam Gemilang Sugar Factory, and many say that they feel comfortable and safe working at the company because they get excellent facilities and training programs for self-development, equality, and improving family economic welfare.

4. Conclusion

There are several reasons women in Watu-Watu Lantari Jaya Village choose to work as employees at PT Prima Gemilang Sugar Factory, including economic, social and cultural factors that influence them. Working as an employee at PT Prima Gemilang Sugar Factory is not only considered to help solve various family financial problems but the job is also considered to provide opportunities for them to improve their skills and experience. Thus, to create a prosperous family

and better self-quality, companies need to offer various facilities that can support the needs of their workers. As in this article, PT Prima Gemilang Sugar Factory provides many facilities for employees, such as housing, health, food, transportation, and training programs. These various facilities show that women who work as employees at PT Prima Gemilang Sugar Factory feel safe and comfortable because by working at the company, they are able to improve the family economy. They also feel valued because of gender equality, which provides opportunities for them as employees to develop themselves through training provided by PT Prima Gemilang Sugar Factory.

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