Father’s Involvement in Household Tasks and Students’ Attitude to Gender Roles

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Introduction

Mapping the attitudes to gender roles among children and understanding how these attitudes are shaped, are useful instruments for policy makers seeking to design effective strategies to achieve gender equity in Indonesia.

The aim of this paper is to examine to what extent gender roles socialization at home and through formal schooling may influence the degree of egalitarian attitudes among Year 6 and Year 12 students in Jakarta, West Java, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi.

The way forward with this study is that in the near future Indonesia can adopt progressive gender roles in both public and domestic spheres through socialisation in the family and schools. In this study, the research team defined progressive gender roles as a stage where the promotion of gender equity can be achieved and where both women and men can have an equal opportunity; in sharing domestic duties and child rearing; education and work; working relation status; equal rights to leadership in bureaucracy, society, religious activities and politics; as well as being treated equally in all aspects of life.

Methodology

Data

The study is based on a cross-sectional survey of Year 6 students (n=1,836, males =49%; females=51%) and Year 12 students (n=6,555, males =48.6%; females=51.3%) in general school and Islamic Religious schools. These surveys were conducted in Jakarta, West Java, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi.

Gender role attitudes measurement

This study uses 17 items from the 19 statements listed to generate a gender role attitudes score for each respondent. A higher score reflects a more egalitarian outlook. The attitudes to gender role score have a possible range from -17 to 17.

Variables

Dependent variables: (1) Egalitarian attitude scores (continuous variable); (2) Men should also participate in doing housework (dummy variable); and (3) public sphere - Community leader can include women (dummy variable).

Independent variables: In the model we control gender, age of respondents, number of cooperated tasks between parents, regions, school types, school class, interaction term between gender and school, and interaction between gender and school category.

Regression method

We applied Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression for the first dependent variable, and logistic regression for the second and third dependent variable. The estimated results for OLS regression were presented in coefficient form, while the estimated results for logistic regression were presented in odds ratio.

Egalitarian index score for respondents in Jakarta was higher compared to those in West Java

The mean (SD) egalitarian index score for both males and females in Jakarta was higher compared to those in West Java (Males: -1.08(4.3) vs. -1.25(3.5), p<0.05; Females: 1.1(3.7) vs. 0.3(3.7), p<0.05).

For Year 12, the mean (SD) egalitarian index score for both males and females in Jakarta were higher than those in West Java (Males: -1.2(4.3) vs. -1.94(5), p<0.01; Females: 1.7(3.7) vs. 1.1(3.7), p<0.01).

The results also indicate that students in Jakarta are more egalitarian than those in West Java and West Nusa Tenggara.

The egalitarian index of students in public school was higher than those of students in Islamic Religious school

For Year 6, the mean (SD) egalitarian score for male students in public and Islamic school were -0.6(3.9) and -2.3(3.9) with p-value<0.001; and the mean (SD) of egalitarian score for female student in public and Islamic school were 1.3 (3.5) and 0.03(4.1), with p-value<0.001.

For Year 12: the mean (SD) of egalitarian score for male student in public and Islamic school were -1.0(4.5) and -2.0(4.0) p-value<0.001; and the mean (SD) of egalitarian score for female student in public and Islamic school were 1.9 (4.4) and 0.5(3.9), with p-value<0.001.

Who does what in your home? for Year 6

- The students nominated fixing broken tiles, participate in neighborhood, working in paid employment etc. as activities predominantly performed by fathers.
- Cooking, shopping for daily needs, cleaning the house etc. are activities predominantly done by mothers.
- Maintaining neighbor and family relationship, looking after sick family members and children, works to earn a living are most likely to be done by the parents.

Who does what in your home? for Year 12

- The same pattern of parents’ tasks sharing was found among Year 12 students as the Year 6 respondents. Though participation of parents in shared domestic tasks is higher among Year 12 students.
- Parents of Year 12 students were less likely to share tasks in cooking, shopping, cleaning (traditional role of mother) and fixing broken roof tiles. But they are more likely to share looking after children.

Conclusion

- Students’ attitudes to gender roles are still demonstrating traditional gender roles.
- In the homes, the students reported that fathers are more likely than mothers to do tasks such as working in paid employment, fixing broken tiles, paying bills, cleaning the garden, and participating in neighbourhood meetings. In contrast, mothers are more likely than fathers to do tasks such as looking after sick family members, cleaning the house, shopping for daily needs, maintain neighbourhood relations and cooking.
- The number of domestic tasks that both father and mother do together increase the likelihood of egalitarian attitudes on children.
- The study concludes that both school environment as an extension of the state, where students are educated, and the home environment where children spend the majority of their time, continue to reflect powerful male breadwinner ideals.
- The way forward is for father to be more involved in domestic duties and have a gender neutral family home environment.

Who are more likely to be egalitarian?

For year 6: “Men should also participate in doing householdwork”:
- Female students were more likely to be egalitarian than male students (54% vs 46%, p<0.005).
- Jakarta students accounted for more than one third, while South Sulawesi contributed only 15% of total egalitarian attitude (P<0.05).
- Public school students were more likely to be egalitarian than Islamic Religious school students (66 vs. 35%, p<0.001).
- Egalitarian students were more likely to have higher number of task that parent cooperated than non-egalitarian students (3.0 vs. 2.1, p<0.001).

For year 12: “Men should also participate in doing housework”:
- FEMAles were more likely being egalitarian than males (60% vs. 40%; p<0.001).
- The difference between egalitarian and non-egalitarian students were significant over provinces (p<0.001).
- Egalitarian students had a higher prevalence of both parents working than non-egalitarian (45% vs. 39%); non-egalitarian students had higher prevalence of only the father who works in the family than egalitarian students (50% vs 44%).
- Egalitarian students was more likely to have higher number of tasks that parent cooperated than non-egalitarian students (4.2 vs. 3.2, p<0.001).

Predictors of egalitarian attitudes for year 6 students

Egalitarian score attitudes-Model1:
- Female students were more likely to be egalitarian than male students.
- A higher number of tasks that both parents were cooperative increased egalitarian attitudes score.
- Students from public schools were more egalitarian than those from Islamic Religious schools.
- DKI Jakarta students were more egalitarian than those from West Nusa Tenggara.

Private sphere: “Men should also participate in doing housework”- Model 2:
- The number of domestic task that parents shared increased egalitarian attitudes among Year 6 students.
- Students from West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi were less likely being egalitarian than those from DKI Jakarta.

Public sphere: “Community leader can include women”- Model 3:
- Female students were more likely to be egalitarian than male students.
- Students who came from West Java and South Sulawesi were less egalitarian than those from DKI Jakarta.
- Female students from a top performance school were less egalitarian than those from an average school.

Predictors of egalitarian attitudes for Year 12 students

Egalitarian score attitudes-Model1:
- The results show female students were more egalitarian than male students (p<0.001). Furthermore, Female students from the top performance school were less egalitarian than those in the average school.
- The number of tasks that both parents were cooperative increased children’s egalitarian attitudes score. Students from DKI Jakarta were more likely to hold egalitarian attitudes than those from West Java.
- Students from public schools were more egalitarian than those from Islamic Religious schools.

Private sphere: “Men should also participate in doing housework”-Model2:
- The number of domestic tasks that parent cooperated in doing household tasks increased children’s egalitarian attitudes.
- Female students from top performance schools were less egalitarian than those from average schools.

Public sphere: “Community leader can include women”- Model 3:
- Consistently, female students were more egalitarian than male students in term of public sphere.
- The number of domestic tasks that parents cooperated increased egalitarian attitudes.