



## Accepting fate and retaining status quo: Shifting masculinities among husbands of small-scale entrepreneur women in Surabaya *Kampung*

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### Abstract

This study examines the ways men negotiate their gender roles in the situations where women play bigger roles sustaining a family's economy. The data were collected by interviewing husbands and wives residing in a suburban Surabaya neighbourhood or *kampung*. The *kampung*, Kampung Kue, is well known for its economic sustainability, generated by women who make and sell traditional snacks. The findings show that the husbands, who mostly were laid off by their former employers, were initially reluctant to help their wives making and selling the snacks as these activities were traditionally attached to women. However, as they realized that these activities have helped the families during economic difficulties, they started to help their wives run the economy. They helped their wives in matters related to the delivery of food and buying the ingredients. Despite their seemingly reluctant response to the wives' economic activities, these husbands in general have been supportive. They did not see their wives' increasing financial roles in the family as a threat to their masculine pride. These men considered this shifting situation as the fate given by God, a condition which has to be responded to by *sabar* and *ikhlas*. These two notions and attitudes are Islamic notions which are important markers of Indonesian masculinities. These restrained and less domineering masculine norms challenge the association of masculinities with domination and power.

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### Introduction

Masculinities or ways of being male have been long perceived as norms that are static, unproblematic, and taken for granted. This means that masculinities have

tended to be taken for granted and seen as less complex than the cultural notions of femininity. Everyday social practices in different cultures may serve to illustrate this. For example, it has been culturally common and relatively acceptable for a woman to behave, dress, and speak like a man. On the other hand, a man who transgresses gender boundaries by dressing and behaving like a woman is widely perceived as culturally deviant. The conception that men are normatively expected to be physically and mentally strong, affirmative, and financially responsible for the wellbeing of the family has become a dominant

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gender ideology adopted by many societies. This is affirmed by Hearn (2004) who argued that the domination and accumulation of power by many men in significantly big numbers of walks of life had become an important issue in gender studies (Hearn, 2004, p. 51).

This leads to the lack of studies on the complexities, problems, and challenges of the norms. Meanwhile, abundant studies on women and femininities have been conducted since the awareness of the marginalization of women emerged. The early stage of the feminist movement in the western world in the 19th century can be said to be an important driver of the awareness. The notion of male supremacy has driven strong supporters of feminist movements to demand equal rights for women.

However, the roles of men in creating gender equality for women and men tend to be side lined. According to R. W. Connell, the awareness that gender equality was also men's business emerged just recently. For a long time, the issue had been perceived to be solely women's issues, as it was women who mostly experienced gender marginalization (Connell, 2003, p. 3). Heavy emphasis on concerns with women to elevate their socio-cultural, political, and economic status has undermined the important role of men as key actors to sustain patriarchal values. As the biggest portion of policy-making actors as well as financial resources to support the decision-making process have been dominated by men, the roles of men are crucial in the realization of gender equality. This was voiced at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. Paragraph 25 of the Beijing declaration clarified the issue by stating that it was important to "encourage men to participate fully in all actions towards equality" (Connell, 2005). Therefore, as Connell (2005) affirmed, men are the "gatekeepers" of gender reforms.

In English speaking countries, particularly in the northern hemisphere, attempts to study men as gendered persons started earlier than in Indonesia. In Europe and the US, Men's Studies as subjects in universities emerged in the 1980s. Despite the absence of specific study programs on men and masculinities in Indonesian universities, a number of initiatives showing the awareness of men's roles in gender equality started recently in the country. One of the pioneers in these initiatives is Aliansi Lak-laki Baru (ALB). Founded in 2009, this men's movement aims to support women's movements in creating gender equality and preventing gender-based violence (Himawan & Nodia, 2016).

The Beijing initiative and the formation of ALB as a men's movement in Indonesia show the increasing awareness among men of their crucial roles in creating gender equality. As the parties having benefited most from the patriarchal system, men are the main actors to

reform the gender landscape. In unfavourable situations for men, such as in the current time when many men are losing their jobs and their ability to be the breadwinner, their roles in creating gender equality are even more crucial.

The current world economic condition weakened by the COVID-19 pandemic has hit many sectors profoundly. A significant number of factories and companies have had to close down, and many workers laid off. Consequently, men who have dominated the work force and employment are affected greatly by this current economic contraction. The data provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO) informed that there was a global gender gap in relation to employment or labour force. It said that the participation rate in labour force for women was significantly lower than the employment rate for men. According to the data, the labour market participation rate gap stood at a staggering 27 percentage points (International Labour Office Geneva, 2017).

In societies where the gender norms assign men as the breadwinners of their families, losing a job that sustains a family financially will have an extreme effect on their pride and dignity. This is a situation where men face a masculinity crisis. As Horrocks (1994) has maintained, this is a serious consequence of the extent to which patriarchal societies have overtly highlighted men's financial power. However, not all societies respond to the crisis homogenously. Norms and values that are upheld in a society will be important determinants affecting the resilience of both men and women in dealing with the crisis.

It is important for men to raise the awareness of the socio-cultural aspects of masculine norms. Rather than being unchanged, innate and biological traits, masculinities should be understood as gender norms dependent on the dynamics of the socio-cultural landscape.

## Literature Review

### *Influences of Economic Crisis on Masculinities*

Economic field is a gendered arena. Formal and global financial sectors have created forms of masculinity which value certain types of behaviors, such as "aggression, competitiveness, individualism, and risk-taking" (Griffin, 2012, p. 12). Generally, an economic crisis will disable men from exercising these traits. For men who used to compete in the competitive, individualistic, and risk-taking global financial arena, the disappearance of the arena will cripple them. In less formal economic contexts, such as in agrarian and fishing societies, disruptions in their economic activities will also affect the dynamics of their masculine norms.

However, economic disruptions do not always and homogenously weaken men's masculine pride. On the contrary, they can retain and even strengthen hegemonic masculine traits associated with bravery, physical strength, and risk-taking. As Kheuntha's study (2017) on a fishing community in Thailand has shown, legal reforms on fishing have resulted in fishermen's attempts to retain their hegemonic masculinities. The ban on illegal fishing in the community has driven the fishermen to keep fishing illegally, as they found it difficult to find alternative jobs. It has forced them to even risk their lives at sea. Rather than weakening the fishermen's male self-esteem, the illegal fishing ban had developed their stronger sense of maleness.

In another study conducted by Perry (2005), the introduction of a neoliberal economic system to a poor agrarian community in West Africa, was proven to be increasing female autonomy. The introduction of international financial donors, and the dissolution of cooperatives in the community have forced women and wives to sell agrarian products to modern markets in the city. Their attempt to back up their families' economic survival has unexpectedly strengthened the women's autonomy. Meanwhile, men's roles in public lives are practically not affected by these economic disruptions, as they are still the main decision makers in public affairs.

To some extent, an economic crisis does affect gender landscape. But, men's domination from different contexts in the studies tends to remain the same and even stronger in Kheunta's study. More studies about the impacts of economic disruptions on men's masculinities need to be conducted to affirm this argument.

#### *Socio-Cultural Factors and Their Impacts on Gender Norms*

As societal norms, masculinities are not singular. Non-biological factors or socio-cultural ones are proven to be significant in shaping and determining what forms of masculinities and femininities that should be upheld in society or a social group. The studies by Errington (1990), Crotty (2001), and Connell (2020) affirm the ways societal and cultural elements play an important role in forming the nuances and plurality of masculinities.

Errington's (1990) main argument revolves around the idea that nature and culture work together to mould complete humans. In an eloquent example, she describes how biological and social determinants are operating mutually. If human social life is like a cake, then its biological ingredients are the cake's flour, eggs, sugar, and butter. What kind of cake is made of the ingredients depends on the way the social chef cooks them. In

implying that the manifestation of biological determinants is contingent upon social or cultural factors, Errington illustrates how adrenalin works in the human body. The emergence of the adrenalin hormone in the bloodstream is triggered by fear and anxiety. But what makes a cultural person afraid or anxious can be different from one culture to another. In short, "humans are biologically unfinished and need human culture to develop into humans" (Errington, 1990, p. 12).

As a part of cultures, literary works are forms of cultural production that are also important to construct masculine norms that should be idealized and adopted by a society. This is what Crotty argued through his study on Australian boys' adventure stories written in 1870–1920. The young adults' adventure stories under study foreground the type of masculinity that show the predominating values of the era. The represented ideal norms in the narratives show the mix of values associated with the typical strength of the British civilization needed to tame the wild Australian land, and the Christian religiosity and domesticity.

In addition to external societal, cultural, and political factors, the expression of masculinities is also attributable to socio-economic class. The seminal study by Connell attests this notion. Based on life-histories of men from four different social and economic backgrounds, Connell's study asserts the heterogeneity of male identities. These different groups of men, namely, working-class men, men working with green politics, new gay men, and professional men, showed different expressions of masculinity. Machismo, for instance, was an important identity marker and spirit among working-class men to claim power that had been disabled by economic weakness. In contrast men working with green politics tended to challenge the glorification of macho men mainly because of their commitment to equality, the philosophical basis of their organization.

The three studies discussed above imply that masculinities are fluid and diverse. However, in our common knowledge, masculinities tend to be seen as being homogeneously associated with muscularity, rationality, and power. This perception of masculine norms is strongly imbued with the Western notion of modernity. We need to explore more of masculinities in non-Western contexts and settings in order to provide a richer picture of men and masculinities.

#### *Masculinities in Non-Western Contexts*

A number of scholars affirm that masculinities in non-Western contexts are not always associated with muscularity, rationality, and financial power. In Southeast Asian context, for instance, several scholars have

identified the presence of women's public and financial roles, as well as the association of men with restraint, not the assertion of domination and power. This is proposed by Brenner (1995), Reid (1988), Taylor (2003), and Wulan (2009). Brenner's study on Javanese trade women in Solo, Central Java, reveals new insights into Javanese gender norms, which have been generally claimed as being patriarchal. By responding to important studies that have been conducted, among other things, those by Keeler (1990) and Anderson (1972), Brenner explores their main arguments which reinforce the idea that Javanese people who can attain self-mastery are those who are able to concentrate their inner spiritual power by fully controlling and refining their emotion and behaviours. This spiritual potency is the core notion which is highly valued among traditional aristocratic Javanese elite or *priyayi*. Although *priyayi* can refer to males and females, Brenner argues that the spiritual potency strengthens the position of male *priyayi* in particular. She asserts that Javanese women are positioned in lower position than men since they are believed to be unable to control their emotion and behaviour. However, her study among Solonese trade women in central Java shows the gap between the ideal gender ideology that positions Javanese males as more superior than Javanese women and the real embodiments of power circulated in homes and marketplaces where she focuses her study. In fact, the domination of Solonese trade women in marketplace and home show their ability to control and generate money, which in turn maintains the family's status in the wider social context. Thus, this finding contradicts the long-held idea of the association of men with self-control and status. Solonese women, in indirect ways, also play roles in maintaining their husbands and families' social status.

The ambiguity of Indonesian gender roles can also be seen in contradictory findings of historical studies conducted by Reid (1988) and Taylor (2003). Reid identified that in Pasai, which was the first major Muslim port located in the northern tip of Sumatra, there were two queens in succession between 1405 and 1434 (Reid, 1988, p. 170). Meanwhile, in Burma, the only woman on the Burmese throne led the region in the period when Pegu emerged as a major entry point in the Bay of Bengal (Reid, 1988, p. 170). However, with the introduction of formal religions into the region, this trend disappeared and was replaced with dominant male leadership.

In addition to female autonomy in political spheres, Reid also argues that early modern Southeast Asia was characterised by the relatively autonomous role of women in terms of sexuality and marriage:

The relative autonomy enjoyed by women extended to sexual relations. Southeast Asian literature of the period leaves us in little doubt that women took a very active part in courtship and lovemaking, and demanded as much as they gave by way of sexual and emotional gratification. The literature describes the physical attractiveness of male heroes and their appeal to women as enthusiastically as it does the reverse (Reid, 1988, p. 147).

The broad patterns of sexual relations during the period, as summarised by Reid, were "relative pre-marital freedom, monogamy and fidelity within marriage (which was easily dissolved by divorce), and a strong female position in the sexual game" (Reid 1988, p. 156).

Reid's explanation on the tendency of some states to be governed by women, however, does not seem to represent high status of women in the region. Taylor points out that before and after the coming of Islam, the kings in Java, in which influential and important kingdoms were located, and other archipelago political units, shared the idea that "maleness was an essential attribute of rulers" (Taylor, 2003, p. 94). Despite the presence of female leadership in major ports of Southeast Asia illustrated by Reid, female autonomy in the political domain did not seem to last long before male dominance in the sphere prevailed. In relation to political authority, Taylor asserts that female leadership in pre-Islamic Java and elsewhere in the archipelago was not common and most political rulers were men (Taylor, 2003, p. 95).

The ambiguity of gender relations in the contexts explained above, namely the absence of a clear-cut gender division, is also identified by Wulan (2009). Examining the representation of masculine norms in Indonesian literature for young people in the colonial period (early 20th century), Wulan argued that colonial Indonesian masculinities were associated with the Javanese norms related to restraint and self-control. This is different from the notions of masculinities in the Western world, which tend to be linked to assertiveness and will to power.

It is interesting to study how the economic crisis affects masculinity in a society having particular values and norms. In addition, men's inability to be the breadwinner has forced women to take more active roles in sustaining the family. This study investigates the ways men negotiate their shifting gender roles in an urban neighbourhood (*kampung*) in Surabaya. In this neighbourhood, most men used to work in factories near the residential area. The global economic crisis has affected the factories, forcing them to lay off a big number of their workers, including those living in the area under study. Under the leadership of a strong female figure,

*Bu* Choirul Mahpuduah, the *kampung* has been successfully transformed into an economically thriving society. Its economic survival revolves around the production and selling of local food (*kue basah*) mainly generated by women of the local area.

## Methodology

The methods of this research were designed by adopting and modifying the methods used in Wyrod's (2008) study about the shifts of masculinity discourses in Uganda. Although the study was based on a community in Uganda, the methods used in the research can be applied in this study. This is because the issue analysed in the study, namely, the ways masculine norms shifted in responding to economic crisis, is similar to the main topic of this article. The Indonesian socio-cultural contexts of this present study, which are different from the socio-cultural contexts of Uganda, will hopefully contribute to the nuances and varieties of the ways an economic crisis affects the dynamics of masculinities in different societies. This study is qualitative research, in which the main data are husbands and wives who run small or micro businesses of selling local snacks (*kue basah*). The area where the study was based and conducted is a neighbourhood in Surabaya called Rungkut Lor. There were ten couples under study, their age ranges between thirty-five to sixty years.

The research combines observation and interview methods. Besides conducting in-depth interviews with the couples, the researcher also observed the residential area during the times when the area was used as a market for selling the food, i.e. from 4 to 6 a.m. This observation provides important data about what males and females did during the activities, and how the tasks related to food selling and production were divided between males and females, and other relevant information. Most of the residents were not the natives of Surabaya. Rather, they were mostly from towns outside Surabaya, coming to the city to find jobs.

The data were collected by interviewing ten couples in the neighbourhood. All of the husbands in these ten households were former factory workers who had been laid off. To ensure the households survived, the wives took the initiative to earn money by making and selling local snacks. *Bu* Choirul Mapuduah, an important figure in the area as well as a former labour activist, had a pivotal role in enabling the wives, as well as the residents in the area in general, to be economically sufficient from food production and selling.

The questions asked in the in-depth interviews revolved around their perceptions about gender divisions in the households, what it means to be male and female, and most importantly, how the husbands respond to the greater roles of their wives in the family's economy and negotiate their shifting roles in the family.

The data obtained from the interviews and observation were classified according to the ways the husbands negotiated and responded to their shifting roles. This analysis is framed using Connell's notion that masculinities are heterogeneous and contingent on changing and various socio-cultural contexts.

## Results

### *Kampung Kue as Representation of a Changing Gender Landscape*

Behind the popularity of Kampung Kue as one of key snack producers in Surabaya, there is an influential and inspiring woman in the area, *Bu* Choirul Mahpuduah, who has been known as the initiator of the entrepreneurial neighbourhood. She is usually called *Bu* Irul by her neighbours. *Bu* Irul was born in a small town in east Java, called Kediri, and moved to Surabaya in 1990 to work as a factory worker. She and her husband, who was also a factory worker, were labour activists before both of them were laid off. In the interview, *Bu* Irul said that she once had to confront a barricade of police officers during one of her protests against draconian industrial bills in the provincial parliamentary building. Her labour activism had even brought her to Europe where she had to share her activism in an event organized by the International Labour Organization. This information demonstrates her bravery and determination to achieve what she is fighting for.

Shortly after her employment was terminated, her husband also faced a similar fate. Being jobless, the couple decided to sell street food to survive. In 2005, she organized women in the area to create entrepreneurial activities that could help them to be financially independent. At that time, many men in Rungkut Lor, who were mostly factory labourers, were laid off and financially affected greatly by the economic crisis in the late 1990s. This situation was worsened by the residents' dependence on informal moneylenders, who charged high interest rates, trapping the lenders in unbreakable chains of debt.

The establishment of an independent community library (*Taman Bacaan Masyarakat*), which is known as TBM Nusantara, in Kampung Rungkut Lor in 2008 was

considered to be an important accelerator of social changes in the area. The library could be established because of *Bu Choirul*'s connection with the operator of a community library run by a big tobacco company. Through this library, women in the *kampung* could borrow and read many books on food recipes, which improved their technical skills and knowledge about cooking. They could also develop their creativity in the food business, which increases their profit. *Bu Choirul* also found a cooperative body to help its *kampung* members solve their problems in financing the business. With these two initiatives, the food business in the residential area has been growing satisfactorily. In 2017, the circulation of money from the business in the area was claimed to be around 25 million Rupiah per day. It was *Bu Mahpuduah* who coined Kampung Kue as the name of Rungkut Lor II.

The community library can be said to be the centre of social changes in the neighbourhood. It was the meeting place for the residents to discuss ways to improve the products, as well as financial help to run the business. In short, *Bu Mahpuduah* is the main agent of change of the wellbeing of the residents. She has led, organized, and motivated men and women in the area to be financially independent and dignified. She has transcended the stereotypical image of women associated with passivity and being followers. Under her leadership, Kampung Kue is a representation of a changing gender landscape where gender division between public and domestic roles have been blurred. The following part of this article investigates how men in the area adapted and negotiated their new roles in the shifting gender landscape.

## Discussion

### *Retaining Old Gender Division within Already Shifting Gender Norms*

Despite the increasing financial roles of women in Kampung Rungkut Lor, as well as the strong presence of a female leader in promoting socio-economic changes in the area, there is evidence that its gender landscape still retains conservative norms. This suggests ambiguity in the expression of gender norms.

According to *Bu Irul*, her initiative to create the entrepreneurial neighbourhood was to empower women in the area, who were mostly affected by the economic crisis. The absence of regular income in the households made women vulnerable to domestic abuse. The situation in Kampung Rungkut Lor in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the financial crisis hit the country, proves it.

Many men or husbands who had lost their factory jobs felt they had lost one of their primary masculinity markers. They tended to project their distress and disappointment on their families at home, particularly their wives. Thus, the women suffered from double burdens, namely financial and mental ones. *Bu Imam*, one of the interviewees, explained that the months after her husband's employment was ended were one of the most difficult phases in her life. During these months, *Bu Imam*'s husband was easily irritated. This happened especially when he felt his wife did not serve him well. As *Bu Imam* recalled, during these situations he often called her "*istri yang tidak berbakti pada suami*" (a wife not devoted to her husband). *Bu Irul* was fully aware that financial problems caused by the unemployed husbands were significant contributing factors to domestic abuse and gendered mental burdens in the households. *Bu Irul*'s entrepreneurship project proved to be able to reduce the financial burden, and in turn, reduced the cases of domestic abuse in the neighbourhood. *Pak Amat* (not the real name), one of the men interviewed, stated that the business helped the family's financial situation significantly. With the profit they gained from selling snacks, they could send their children to study in universities.

In Javanese societies, as Brenner has argued, it is common for wives to be in charge of financial matters in the family. Traditionally, men are the main breadwinners and most of their income will be managed by the wives. From Western capitalist perspective, this can be read as the embodiment of female power, as money is valued highly. Kampung Kue which is located in metropolitan Surabaya, also retains this value. However, the *priyayi* styled gender and masculine norms are not fully adopted in this middle-lower residential area. The idea that masculine norms which value the ability to control and refine behaviour does not seem to be fully present in Kampung Rungkut Lor. This can be seen in the interviews with *Bu Irul* and a number of women, which refer to verbal abuse related to their lack of ability in managing the income from snack-selling business. In addition, in the society under study, the acquisition of money is still considered important as a marker of masculinities.

Most of the women, whose husbands were still able to find irregular jobs after being laid off by the companies, said that their husbands only gave them a small amount of money after their business had shown good prospects. Not just giving them a smaller amount of money, these husbands even complained about their wives' spending, which they considered to be wasteful. This is confirmed by *Bu Ana*, whose husband became an online motorcycle taxi driver after his employment contract discontinued.

According to her, her husband considered her as being recklessly wasteful, as the money he gave her lasted for less than two weeks. Thus, different from the Solo husbands discussed in Brenner's study, the husbands in Kampung Kue viewed the acquisition of money as an important marker of their male identity. Instead of giving the biggest proportion of their income to their wives, they kept most of their income from the irregular jobs for themselves. They felt depressed when they lost their jobs and incomes. Their depression was frequently channelled to abusive treatment of their spouses.

### *Adopting the Islamic Values Associated with Acceptance*

One recurrent idea that is important to be taken into consideration in the interviews is the notion of *sabar* (patience) and *ikhlas* (accepting fate wholeheartedly). These are mostly found among husbands who were unable to find additional income or irregular jobs after being fired by the companies they had been working for.

*Pak Agus* (not the real name), for instance, explained in a calm and controlled manner that staying at home and helping his wife in running a small business was a decision he had to make. Before his wife started the business, he used to be an entrepreneur in civil works, whose civil projects were mainly located in islands outside Java. His business thrived before the economic crisis hit in 1998. Soon after that, his wife made a decision to start the business, a decision that was also shared by other women in Kampung Kue. The business, which was pioneered by *Bu Irul*, sustained their family economically. The orders mostly came from offices, and *Pak Agus'* every day job was delivering the orders.

*Pak Agus'* facial and emotional expression during the interview showed that he was genuine in talking about his acceptance and patience in his new role as his wife's business helper. This complimentary role is quite different from his former role as the owner and leader of his own civil-works related business. Rather than directing and controlling his staff, in his new role, he had to follow instructions from his wife. This is a radical shift that he had to undergo. However, the man did not show disappointment and regret in his new role.

Responses showing acceptance and patience in playing the new role as the business helper are also shared by a number of male respondents. *Pak Dwi*, for instance, believed that accepting his fate unconditionally was a way to gain God's blessings. He was sure that God's sustenance to his family was delivered through the business initiated by his wife. Accepting one's fate unconditionally is not shown instantly after the individual

is struck by an unfavorable event. It is a norm that is believed to be an important sign of a good and pious Muslim, no matter how hard it is to attain the acceptance. It is also a religious strategy to cope with trials and tribulations in life.

Although the husbands were initially in denial of their jobless status, as the time went by, they realized that the business run by the wives had to be supported. It was instrumental for the survival of the family so that their children could have a better education, a better life than their parents.

*Sabar* and *ikhlas* are two important Islamic teachings, that should be used as the basis of Muslims' conduct. They refer to the notion of restraint, the notion which is also the cultural basis of Javanese people. Based on these notions, Muslims are expected to be willing to accept their fate in the world. It is based on the belief that everything in this temporary world happens because of God's will. *Sabar* and *Ikhlas* demonstrate full submission to God, a key tenet in Islam. Willingness to accept destiny and fate is a must in Islam as it implies a belief that God's will happens for good reasons. It is the duty of Muslims to be able to infer the meaning and lessons behind their fates.

As the biggest Muslim country in the world, masculine norms constructed, idealized, and disseminated among Indonesian men cannot be detached from Islamic teachings. These have shaped forms of masculinities in Indonesia, including male residents of Kampung Kue. Their acceptance in playing their shifting roles as husbands, shows this Islamic dimension of masculinities. This can be different from forms of masculinities in the Western World, which tend to be associated with domination, power, and muscularity.

The notions of *sabar* and *ikhlas* can be internalized effortlessly by the Javanese as they are highly in tune with Javanese philosophical norms, which date back long before Islam was introduced to Java. These Javanese philosophical values can be found, for instance, in an old Javanese literary work called *Serat Wedhatama*. It contains knowledge about how to be a noble human and blessed by the divine, including the path for everyone who expects a high spiritual level (Wibawa, 2013, p. 123).

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### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

This study shows that men respond differently to their shifting and new roles in the family. Some men under study displayed reluctance to play the new role as they still believed in the patriarchal and strong gender division of men and women. Others showed more acceptance in their new roles.

Although their strategies in accepting their shifting roles are varied, the overall findings inform about the tendency of these men to be at peace with the new situation. It can be said that the Islamic values related to acceptance and patience play a significant role in their adjustments to new and changing male roles.

Men's responses to their shifting roles are not homogenous. They are varied and contingent upon different socio-cultural landscapes. As this study has shown, even in a relatively homogenous context, the men or husbands responded differently to the increasing financial roles of their wives. Some men who could find casual jobs after they had been unemployed attempted to retain the old patriarchal gender division. Meanwhile, those who were unable to find jobs tended to accept their shifting roles, using the Islamic notion of *sabar* to justify their acceptance. The findings of this study contribute to the knowledge about the construction of new masculinities in changing and shifting contexts. Religious and cultural variables are some of the key factors shaping different forms of masculinity in the world. Therefore, more studies about men in different cultures, particularly in the non-Western world, need to be conducted. In this way, a culturally richer and bigger picture of masculinities can be drawn.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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