



## RESISTANCE OF BAMBOO WOVEN CRAFTSWOMEN TO NATURAL EXPLOITATION

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### *Abstract*

*The exploitation that occurs in nature is a form of domination that is considered to have a relationship with the dominance that occurs in women because the exploitation of nature goes hand in hand with the oppression of women. Nature causes more and more damage, and women get the impact of that damage that leads them to fight against fundamental issues related to their survival. This paper raises the issue of environmental degradation experienced by women bamboo weaving and their active involvement in maintaining natural resources that act as their source of life. This research is a qualitative research conducted in Cimahpar Village, Girijaya Cianjur, West Java, with data obtained from observations, FGDs, and interviews. The data is focused on the perspective of eco-feminism, namely by examining more deeply the dominance experienced by women who are bamboo craft weaver and their efforts to prevent environmental damage and loss for their living. The results show that woman bamboo craft weavers are aware of protecting their environment, which is manifested by fighting against the attempts to destroy the bamboo ecosystem, leading to landslides. To maintain the bamboo ecosystem, the women of Cimahpar continue to utilize bamboo for various purposes. Subsequently, they protect their environment for their living.*

**Keywords:** *ecofeminism; domination; bamboo*

### **Abstrak**

Eksplorasi yang terjadi terhadap alam merupakan bentuk dominasi yang berkaitan dengan dominasi yang terjadi pada perempuan, karena eksploitasi terhadap alam berjalan seiringan dengan penindasan terhadap perempuan. Alam kian hari semakin menimbulkan kerusakan dan dampak dari kerusakan tersebut membuat perempuan harus berjuang untuk melawan masalah mendasar yang berkaitan dengan keberlangsungan hidup mereka. Tulisan ini mengangkat isu degradasi lingkungan yang dialami oleh perempuan pengrajin anyaman bambu serta keterlibatan aktif mereka untuk mempertahankan sumber daya alam yang berperan sebagai sumber kehidupan mereka. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang dilakukan di Kampung Cimahpar Desa Girijaya Cianjur Jawa Barat dengan data yang diperoleh dari hasil observasi, FGD, dan wawancara. Data tersebut difokuskan berdasarkan perspektif ekofeminisme, yaitu dengan mengkaji lebih mendalam mengenai dominasi yang dialami oleh perempuan pengrajin anyaman bambu dan usaha mereka untuk mencegah kerusakan alam dan kerugian yang menyebabkan hilangnya sumber keberlangsungan hidup mereka. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perempuan pengrajin anyaman bambu memiliki kesadaran untuk menjaga lingkungan mereka yang diwujudkan dengan melawan perusakan ekosistem bambu yang dapat mengakibatkan longsor. Kemudian untuk menjaga

ekosistem bambu tersebut, perempuan Cimahpar terus memanfaatkan bambu dalam berbagai kebutuhan mereka sehingga mereka mampu melindungi lingkungan untuk kehidupan mereka.

**Kata Kunci:** ekofeminisme; dominasi; bambu.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, environmental degradation has been caused by the exploitation and destruction of nature on a large scale. Such as illegal logging that occurred in the provinces of South Sumatra, Riau, Bengkulu, West Papua, South Kalimantan, and the Aru Islands, which caused a reduction in forest land (Riski, 2020), the shrinking of mangrove forests in North Sumatra due to the shift in function to fish ponds and illegal logging of mangroves wild for charcoal (Andriansyah, 2020), deforestation in Kalimantan causes flooding (Reuters, 2021), and exploitation of other natural resources causes soil erosion to extreme climate change. The cause of this natural destruction is a threat to all life on this earth, not only a problem for humans but also related to the increasingly scarce flora and fauna that live in this world.

An undeniable fact is that the process of modernization and development is one of the most responsible factors for the destruction of nature. Modernization and development are patriarchal capitalists who culturally distinguish between opposing sides, namely between those who are always considered more robust, oppressive, and felt more advanced than others. In contrast, the other party is the party that is regarded as weaker and is considered backward or lacking in knowledge (Shiva and Mies, 2005). The development or modernization process will always involve nature as the 'controlled' party with the 'controlling' party. Nature is included in the feminist issue because there are overlapping domination properties (Warren, 1997). Thus nature is subordinated to men and creates a duality between women and men; consumption in production, to the local level to the global level (Shiva and Mies, 2005).

Feminist issues and ecological issues became the foundation that gave birth to ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is a new term for an old idea (Diamond, 1990) Although the word appeared for the first time in 1980, it was only known when various kinds of protests and women's activities against environmental destruction were triggered by ecological disasters that occurred globally repeated (Shiva and Mies, 2005). This approach emerges by bringing facts related to nature so that ecofeminism aims to show nature in real terms, namely by understanding the social construction of nature (exploitation and destruction), which cannot be separated from the social construction of gender (Warren, 1997).

The social construction of gender that is built is a patriarchal system. This system can bring modernization under the guise of development that causes various environmental problems such as environmental degradation, natural destruction, and global warming. The patriarchal system is the systematic domination of women by men through institutions (including policies, practices, roles), behavior, and ways of thinking that give men higher values, privileges, and power than women (Warren, 2000). Patriarchy gives rise to an androcentric view that places men as the sole, central, and everything ruler (Sakina, 2017), so that domination can occur in various aspects of human life and creates gaps in the gender realm.

The premise of androcentrism comes from the self-concept of 'human self-importance' and 'human centered,' which gives rise to egoism so that they think that they are the center or power that can control other parties or things outside themselves, in this case men are considered as the benchmark in views everything, in other words masculine (male) is considered as the center, while feminine (woman) is considered as other (Plumwood, 1997). The androcentrism structure, which considers men as the center and women as 'others, is

caused by the emergence of exceptions to other groups deemed inferior. There is homogenization in various ways, and shows that the contribution of women in any collective effort will be rejected and considered not essential and does not need to be considered, in this case, women's tasks that are motivated by significant aspects of life are often classified as natural because they do not involve special skills or care (Plumwood, 1997; Harstock, 1990). Based on this, androcentrism becomes the basis for feminist views because it is related to patriarchal culture, including it becomes the basis for ecofeminism which sees nature and women as parties that are considered to be controlled by male power so that women (feminists) as parties who are considered the other continue trying to fight and get out of the trap.

Ecofeminism is a whole theory and practice that demands the integrity of every element of living things. Like other feminists, ecofeminism contains a critical view of power, power relations between dominant groups and marginalized groups and shows the way certain groups, especially men, maintain their superior status through the subordination and domination of women and nature (Mallory, 2006). The ecofeminism approach is considered relevant and accurate for assessing environmental and gender issues because it combines the perspectives, knowledge, and voices of women's groups who struggle to protect their land (Mallory, 2006).

Women who take action against ecological damage will soon realize that the relationship between patriarchal violence has caused injustice to women and nature, so they refuse and try to protect nature based on their concern for life, especially for the lives of their descendants as the next generation. Examples of women's struggles against ecological degradation are the struggle against limestone mining and shipping by women in the Himalayas (Shiva and Mies, 2005), the Green Belt women's movement in Kenya (Dankelman and Davidson, 1989), women's struggles in North India (Chipko) to saving forests as their source of life (Warren, 1997; Shiva, 2005), as well as the efforts of other women in the South to maintain water distribution, soil conservation, and their livelihoods from forests. As has been done by indigenous Mollo NTT women who protect their forests from marble mining (Asriani, 2015; Maemunah, 2015; Dalupe, 2020), the struggle of indigenous Mali Dayak women who defend their land and nature from the expansion of oil palm companies (Niko, 2019), the struggle of the Amungme women in Papua against the seizure of land and vegetable gardens from the Timika community from PT Freeport (Clark, 2000; Triyanto, 2018), the struggle of indigenous Samin women and women in the Kendeng area of Central Java to fight the construction of a cement mine (Fitri and Akbar, 2017; Nawiyanto, 2016; Musyfiqin, 2019; Setyani et al., 2020), as well as the struggles of other women in simpler communities to protect their environment from plastic waste (Ankesa et al., 2016; Sholikhah, 2017; Priyatna et al., 2017).

These women's struggles show that women worldwide feel uneasy about the environmental damage that has occurred, so they feel a responsibility to protect the natural resources that support them by preserving the environment and stopping this natural destruction. Their struggle is motivated by the spirit within themselves, namely a woman's energy to love life. The spirit is inherent in all elements contained in the female body, especially in the female sense experience (Shiva and Mies, 2005). So that it can be said that spirituality is a form of love; without spirituality or affection, there will be no developing life (Shiva and Mies, 2005).

The ecological relevance of this emphasis on spirituality lies in the rediscovery of the sanctity of life, namely life on earth which can be preserved if humans begin to understand and live all forms of life as something to be appreciated (Shiva and Mies, 2005). For women in the South, including in Indonesia. They view the earth as an element of life that can ensure their survival and other living things. They highly value the authenticity of nature and reject

the damage that occurs to nature. They also respect biodiversity and obey natural boundaries that should not be violated. It can be seen from the actions of local women whose daily activities are related to nature, such as those done by women as farmers, weavers, artisans, and processors of natural foodstuffs. They play a role in protecting nature with love so that they do not act out of bounds by seizing what is in nature because they see nature as something that goes hand in hand with them, not as something that they must control.

These women have different ways to protect nature according to the conditions they face. The similarity is that they have to face giants in the name of development and modernization that continue to take their source of life. 'Development' is culturally an unequal process that can damage health and lifestyle on an ongoing basis and can even result in material poverty or another suffering that ignores the meaning of survival, namely through the conversion of natural resources into commodities that are intensive in exploiting nature (Shiva and Mies, 2005). The development was carried out at the expense of wildlife and forests by illegal logging, deforestation by deliberately burning them, to logging planned by certain corporations.

One of them is experienced by women who work as woven bamboo craftswomen. They have to face a situation where the bamboo trees that are their source of life are taken away by the capitalists. For them, bamboo is a crucial resource and has a special relationship with them because it is related to survival. Bamboo is a whole plant with a long history, especially for rural communities. Planting bamboo, harvesting, and processing it are included in subsistence activities (Rao et al., 1995), carried out by local communities to produce high-quality use-value for domestic and economic needs. Not only serves as an item of value for use, but bamboo also has benefits in maintaining natural ecosystems, especially water and soil. So if there is large-scale logging of bamboo, the victims of the logging are not only women who are woven bamboo craftsmen, but also their nature.

Another problem faced by women is plastic and plastic waste, which is increasing day by day. The impact of the production and daily use of plastic can be fatal. Women who act as mothers will not let the threat of pollution befall their children and families, especially children who have a higher sensitivity to chemical contamination that can affect their health conditions. The plastic problem has spread to all corners of the world because plastic has become a part of human life today. The substitution of traditional tools for tools made of plastic is a big challenge for local craft activists, including woven bamboo artisans. One of them is because it is related to meeting their needs which causes the demand for local equipment made of bamboo to decrease. In addition, women woven bamboo artisans act as producers and consumers of the crafts they produce; they are active users of their crafts. If viewed from the conventional paradigm related to development, traditional equipment in their daily needs will be considered irrelevant to the present and far behind because they are considered not modern.

This paper tries to build an argument motivated by the dominance experienced by women craftsmen of bamboo weaving, namely the domination of the capitalists on bamboo logging and the supremacy of capitalist products (plastic) present during their lives. It shows that the domination by the capitalists over nature is also domination against women because nature is related to women's lives themselves. This paper raises a struggle to fight against the domination of women who are woven bamboo craftsmen based on their ways, awareness, and concern for bamboo and its nature.

## **METHOD**

The design of this research refers to cultural studies, namely by trying to criticize and raise marginalized groups or have never been touched before. Therefore, this research is qualitative research conducted in Cimahpar Village Girijaya Cianjur, West Java, using ethnographic

methods so that the data obtained comes from observations, FGDs, and interviews. Observations were made to determine the environmental conditions of Cimahpar Village to the social conditions of women craftsmen of woven bamboo, which are described from their actions in weaving activities and other daily activities. The FGD was carried out as an initial stage to seek information related to the bond between bamboo, nature, and women by being directly involved in joint weaving activities. Then interviews were conducted more intensely with fifteen women weaved bamboo artisans who have been weaving activities for a long time. The data obtained from observations, FGDs, and interviews were then discussed based on an ecofeminism perspective

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Nature and Bamboo Weaving Women**

Nature is perceived as a mother because it is interpreted as a source of life for living things that live in it, including humans. Humans have a crucial view of nature because nature is valuable as support for survival and fulfillment of their life needs. However, with the statement that nature is the source of fulfilling the necessities of life, they often explore nature excessively, causing natural conditions to be increasingly eroded. The degradation of nature is increasingly visible when the concept of 'development' appears as a capitalist product. It causes humans no longer to see nature as a fulfillment of subsistence needs but begin to consider the benefits derived from that nature.

Since humans are obsessed with progress and development, which is seen as the determining force of the evolutionary process, humans are moving to pursue this development massively. On the other hand, the natural conditions are getting worse day by day. However, the development strategy is still being carried out without regard to natural shapes and indifferent to groups that need healthy nature for their survival. In this case, women are a marginalized group due to this 'development.' Women have a special connection with nature because most women support their lives and their offspring through nature. They worry about many things related to environmental degradation that can impact their lives and offspring. So based on this development creates an antagonistic attitude from women, namely as a form of women's rejection and resistance to the impacts caused by development because they are considered custodians of life. Women play a significant role in maintaining their source of survival.

Nature is included as a feminist issue because it creates bias and male domination. It happens because the root of the problems experienced by nature and women is exploitation in the name of 'development.' This development is identified with men as the leading party who wants progress; this is following the roots of feminism that the androcentric premise is the point where women try to fight domination in various things. Women are considered weak because exploitation that occurs in nature causes suffering to women both related to their health, their food sources, and their livelihoods to those related to their offspring. Exploitation that happens in nature has indirectly killed women's productivity because they have immediate access to nature to utilize nature according to their needs.

Women have various ways of carrying out natural use activities; in some areas, some women cultivate plants from the forest to be used as their staple food. Some women independently try to grow plants that are their primary source until they cultivate plants or trees for crafts. As done by women who process bamboo trees to be used as domestic equipment, that is done by women in Cimahpar Village. The women who are woven bamboo craftsmen in Cimahpar are local communities who depend on bamboo for their livelihoods because their domestic and economic needs come from bamboo. Bamboo is beneficial for the lives of women weaving artisans, and bamboo is a plant that protects the ecosystem in their

area to protect their land from erosion and landslides. Mainly because the environmental conditions in Cimahpar Village are mountainous areas with undulating land contours, the village can be categorized as an area prone to landslides, bamboo as a plant that functions to absorb water is vital to maintain their soil.

The bamboo that they process to be used as cooking utensils and equipment for agriculture is *apus* bamboo (*awi tali*); this type of bamboo has a more flexible character to be woven. In addition, according to the women who make woven bamboo, *apus* bamboo has fibers that can eliminate toxins in processed foods that are exposed to pesticides. The processed food becomes more fragrant and has good quality. *Apus* bamboo grows more in the Cimahpar area than other types of bamboo, such as *ater* bamboo and *gombong* bamboo. The *apus* bamboo clumps can be found at many points, namely around their homes, sloped land, and rice fields in the village.

Women in Cimahpar have full responsibility in the weaving process, starting from the process of cutting bamboo into smaller flat-shaped blades, sharpening or smoothing the flat blades, making woven patterns according to the craft to be made, to forming ropes on the edges of the woven so that the woven patterns are assembled. They act as producers as well as consumers of the handicrafts they produce, the plaits they produce include *boboko* (baskets), *aseupan* (a place to cook rice), *ayakan* (tampah), *hihid* (fans used to cool rice), bags made of the bamboo they usually use when they go gardening, and *dudukuy* (a type of hat). All of these tools are produced, owned, and used by women who are woven bamboo craftsmen in their daily activities.

Women woven bamboo artisans have strong family characteristics. They carry out weaving activities together and care for each other, thus describing the characteristics of rural communities that are thick with togetherness and showing that natural resources have a social aspect. Their knowledge and experience in weaving bamboo continue to be developed and trained through a process of interaction intertwined with one another. It is following the opinion of Long (1985). He explained that the interactions between individuals could form a local community that presents a society with a specific structure that works to provide results to their other members. In this case, women who are woven bamboo craftsmen are local communities who work to produce production goods that are useful for them and a guarantee of survival for other family members.

Weaving activities are done to fill their spare time and are their livelihood to get the economic value of what they produce. Some of the weaving are sold to collectors at a price that is not too large. Although the income they generate is not comparable to what they do, the payment from weaving is essential when they have no other source of income. This income is not proportional to those who have dual roles as weaving artisans and housewives, so that they have to divide time for their families and do weaving activities. It is not uncommon for them to bring their children to the weaving area to take care of children, and weaving can be done simultaneously. Based on this, the work done by women has a longer time than men because women have to do weaving activities, take care of children, prepare food for their families, to prepare other things needed by their husbands. Meanwhile, men are in charge of public affairs related to interacting with parties outside their area, namely selling plaits to traders outside their region.

Cimahpar village is an area that is rich in varieties of flora, especially with the proliferation of bamboo clumps around their village. Bamboo is a plant that holds water supplies in their villages, thus protecting them from water crises and protecting them from natural disasters. However, conflicts began to arise when the development project was carried out; Cimahpar Village became the target of natural resource extraction, which was sent to big cities to be used as material needs in development projects. When a development project is carried out, the development will seize land and break the bond between the community and

the ground (Shiva and Mies, 2005). As experienced by women who make woven bamboo, where the logging causes unrest for women craftsmen of woven bamboo because they are afraid to make nature angry and cause natural disasters that they do not want, they are scared of losing their source of life. They are worried that they will not be able to be productive again because of their expertise. derived from the use of the bamboo.

For people who earn their living from the soil, in this case, women who are woven craftsmen who get their source of life from bamboo, bamboo is not just a wild plant with a fast growth process. Still, bamboo has a deep meaning for women because bamboo is a resource for their various activities. Therefore, bamboo and women have created a cosmic relationship so that women as woven craftsmen have an intimate connection to the bamboo.

The existence of bamboo is crucial for the lives of Cimahpar residents, both men, and women. However, there are differences in the purpose of their use of bamboo. Men use bamboo to make a more significant profit, so when logging occurs by a development project, they support it. Meanwhile, women have different interests, namely interests related to their survival, by using bamboo as handicrafts for a longer time. It is shown that there is a male and female bias in the use of bamboo trees. The service made by men tends to be exploitative, while the use of bamboo by women is more progressive.

The bias of men and women in the use of nature is referred to as orthodox forestry by Warren (1997) because women are more dependent on forest products than men, where bamboo is an essential element for the household economy for women. After all, bamboo can be used as food, fuel, handicraft products, and sources of income. Women who make woven bamboo are considered wiser in using nature than men because women who make woven bamboo are the primary users of the bamboo tree. They have local knowledge that grows in their daily lives and has experience managing the bamboo tree to continue to work together sustainably used by them. They also play a role in caring for small-scale production as a form of caring for nature and their livelihoods.

The approach taken by women woven bamboo artisans to nature is a spiritual approach, namely by seeing that nature is their mother who gives them many things and gives life to them so that they as the inheritors of the natural wealth play a role in protecting their nature. Bamboo and women woven artisans go hand in hand as providers and custodians so that women woven bamboo artisans do not act excessively (exploitatively) in utilizing these bamboo trees. They use bamboo for subsistence needs because they know that bamboo supports sustainability—their life and the life of other living things, and the balance of nature in their area.

### **Bamboo as Women's Strength to Fight Domination**

Various forms of exploitation of nature in excessive use of natural resources have occurred in many areas with multiple forms of exploitation such as deforestation, forced relocation, or forest destruction. If collected, the exploitation of nature that occurs is rooted in the greed of humans who prioritize their ego to survive by depending on the amount of profit generated. So that they move and explore nature excessively to get the maximum benefit regardless of the natural conditions that are shrinking and have a fatal impact on the living things that live in it, while all this time nature has been supporting humans and other living things with water, oxygen, energy, and food.

The felling of bamboo that occurred in Cimahpar Village for the benefit of development projects is one form of exploitation carried out by superior parties to nature and the people in the village. The large-scale felling of bamboo has caused concern for women because the impact of cutting bamboo can cause natural damage in the form of landslides and water drought, and several women fear this. In contrast, the men are not too worried about what will

happen if the bamboo in the village runs out due to logging. They are more concerned about the profit they can make from the development project because natural bamboo is priced more expensive than bamboo processed into handicrafts by women weaving artisans. So that men are very supportive of the bamboo felling process, which is indicated by their participation in the felling process. Based on that, bamboo cutting is a picture of a patriarchal system, where men have the power to oppress nature and women simultaneously.

Women weaving artisans about the damage to the bamboo ecosystem and nature is their motivation to use bamboo sustainably to increase their family income even in small amounts. The use of bamboo is their access to skills to survive so that bamboo becomes a source of productivity for women weaving artisans in Cimahpar Village. The occurrence of bamboo logging has damaged and killed the natural ecosystems where they live and indirectly killed women's productivity as bamboo-woven craftsmen. The following is a narrative related to the concern of one of the women craftsmen of bamboo weaving about the damage to the bamboo ecosystem, which can impact their lives.

*“awi téh penting kanggo abdi mah, margi patalina sareng kabutuhan abdi. Pami tos teu aya awi didieu, tangtos bingung pisan kedah timana abdi gaduh cecepeangan kanggo murangkalih. Da gening ladang tina awi téh ieu dugi ka tiasa nyumponan pangabutuh malih mah sakedik-sakedikeun tiasa dugi ka nyakolakeun murangkalih”* (Ameh Herlina, 2021)

(Bamboo is essential to me because it relates to my needs. If the bamboo here runs out, I am confused about where to get a hold/saving account for my child because from this bamboo; I can provide for my needs so that a little bit can send my child to school)

The fear and worry that the bamboo trees in their area will run out because it is related to their domestic and economic needs is not the only reason that motivates their actions to protect the environment. But more than that, women weaving artisans are aware of the importance of bamboo trees because ecologically, bamboo can defend their land from natural disasters and maintain water availability in their area. Women's knowledge related to the extent of taking care of bamboo trees as a form of their awareness in protecting nature has been expressed by one of the women craftsmen of woven bamboo below.

*“awi téh dianggo kanggo nahan taneuh, komo seueur tamping didieu mah, awi téh jadi kakuatan taneuh. Lamun teu aya awi téh kabayang kumaha pami nuju usum hujan”* (Adah, 2021)

(Bamboo is used to hold the ground. Moreover, there are many slopes here, so bamboo is the strength for the soil. If there is no bamboo, you can imagine what it would be like if you were experiencing the rainy season)

The woman's statement from the bamboo woven craftsmen shows how the value of bamboo has functional value as a raw material that can produce goods with use-value for their needs. Still, bamboo has value for natural harmony and is more broadly related to other living things' sustainability.

Cutting bamboo is one form of visible domination between men and women; as expressed by Kelly (1997:115), male dominance creates another pattern of power for all aspects of culture. It is a powerful political system, thus making women as parties at the

lowest point and men move to carry out another oppression of nature. Therefore, it is pretty clear that the dominance of men over women weaving artisans that occurs in bamboo logging is not the only domination they do to nature. Still, this dominance can penetrate other aspects of women's lives, both in the household, economy, and society.

The restlessness, worry, anger, and injustice felt by the bamboo-woven craftswomen regarding the situation faced by them related to the destruction of nature and the loss of their sources of livelihood have become the motivation for them to survive to protect life, future generations, and their nature. The domination of men over nature and women, which is manifested through bamboo cutting, is a form of power that aims to control other parties so that where there is power, women are not given a place for it. It can be seen from the women woven bamboo artisans who are not involved in decision-making—related to their decision or approval of taking bamboo raw materials to be sent to big cities so that the women who are woven bamboo craftsmen try to find other ways so that they have the strength to fight this domination.

The occurrence of bamboo logging has made women weaving artisans move to revive their livelihoods by stopping logging activities and regenerating bamboo trees by replanting. The seeds they plant to restore bamboo trees in their area come from the remnants of logging. Through their local knowledge in agriculture, they know what kind of seeds can grow back, the soil conditions for planting bamboo seeds, and social expertise related to the collaboration between women woven bamboo artisans to reviving bamboo trees in their area.

The strength of women craftsmen of bamboo weaving is reflected in their view of the value of bamboo and the knowledge and experience possessed by women craftsmen of bamboo. When they think and act to survive the significant threats they face, regenerating bamboo is one form of the strength of women craftsmen woven bamboo to fight the dominance they experienced. They oppose women's detrimental interconnections by developing practices that respect and uphold sensitivity to their environment and nature. So based on this, the actions they take are included in the ethics of ecofeminism because they have concern not only for themselves but also for their fellow women who are woven bamboo craftsmen and their nature.

### **Subsistence Perspective: Assurance for the Sustainability of Bamboo Weaving Craftswomen and Nature**

Another problem that arises in women woven bamboo is the threat of using plastic in the household. The concept of development causes plastic in all aspects of life as the root cause of the ongoing exploitation of nature. They ignore the idea of survival between humans and nature. Therefore, development is always synonymous with the capitalist system that uses the pretext that the development carried out can bring people prosperity. But in reality, the community's welfare is not evenly distributed because certain parties only obtain the interest in question. In contrast, other parties must bear the consequences of the development, one of which is the threat of toxic substances.

Natural resources that should be used to sustain life are increasingly being eroded by the demand for natural resources to benefit the market economy and global interests. The global production system is increasingly being carried out to achieve progress and practicality so that factories are established to create jobs, especially for women. Still, precisely with this development, the exploitation of women is increasingly rampant where one of them is women must bear the consequences caused by exposure to hazardous substances originating from the factory or goods produced by the factory.

The use of plastic in all aspects of life is increasingly intense, especially for women. The capitalists deliberately build a discourse to provide convenience and effectiveness in using plastic in household appliances. Women who are close to the domestic area can use

plastic-based utensils, which can harm their lives. The use of plastic for a long time can have a fatal impact because plastic will gradually cause human exposure to the substances contained in the plastic. In general, plastics can release some chemicals such as PCBs, nonylphenols, bisphenol A, and phthalates. Plastic can also absorb some pollutants such as PCB, DDT, and DDE. All of these materials are hazardous materials for aquatic organisms and humans. Therefore plastic burning at a temperature of less than 12000C can cause the release of PCBs, which are carcinogenic materials and can cause cancer (Himasper IPB, 2017).

During the widespread use of plastic, women craftsmen of woven bamboo in Cimahpar prefer to persist in using household utensils made from bamboo, especially for their cooking utensils. They have local knowledge, which is a strong reason for their decision to prefer using cooking utensils made of bamboo over knives made of plastic. The following is the story of one of the women weaving artisans related to this.

*“abdi ti kapungkur sok nganggo boboko sareng aseupan utamina kanggo masak sangu, margi langkung raos sareng benten rasana dibandingkeun sareng nganggo wadah anu tina palastik mah. Margi biasana pami nganggo wadah tina palastik mah sok jadi rada beueuy kana sanguna, kadang-kadang sok gampil bau, pami nganggo boboko mah sok rada awet da alami téa”* (Tini, 2021)

(I've always used *boboko* (bakul) and *aseupan* (cone-shaped rice bowl) to cook rice because it tastes better and has a different taste than using plastic containers. Usually, if you use plastic containers, rice is easy to wet and stale, sometimes also easy to smell. While if you use *boboko* it lasts longer because it is more natural).

Their local knowledge of the value of bamboo is aware that there are significant differences related to the quality of the food they process using plastic-based cooking utensils and bamboo-based utensils. In addition, they know that the fibers found in bamboo can ward off toxins in food. So based on that, in other words, they have paid attention to the health element in the food they prepare to give to their children. They believe that what is offered and provided by nature is suitable for their lives; with such beliefs, they reject things that come from outside nature, so they choose to continue to take advantage of what nature has provided for them.

The action they take is a subsistence perspective, according to Mies (2005), where what they do by producing woven bamboo to using the craft in their daily lives is a form of work. That is included in life producing and life-preserving, which is needed for sustainability. their life. Indirectly, their actions are also a form of their other resistance to the crisis and exploitation that occurs in nature. The situation that occurs in nature caused by plastic waste cannot be considered a light problem. Because gradually plastic will swallow half of the earth by polluting the waters, causing natural disasters, harming health, and becoming a threat to living things. So the actions taken by women craftsmen of woven bamboo in the use of traditional equipment are the right actions to reduce the adverse effects caused by the plastic.

Even if viewed from the conventional paradigm of development, the use of traditional tools used by women craftsmen of woven bamboo will be considered as something ancient, not modern, and unable to adapt to the progress of time and technology, so that they are referred to as underdeveloped communities. However, their decision to continue using cooking utensils made of bamboo becomes a strength because they realize the essential element and essentiality of nature itself through the bamboo trees they use in their daily lives.

They have applied the lives and concepts of bamboo-woven craftsmen to nature in their daily lives, thus becoming the basis of a subsistence perspective in their own lives. Their

goal to produce woven bamboo is not solely to have commodities (wages or profit) but to reproduce life because they make the use-value of the weaving craft. They respect nature as a form of wealth for their survival and the survival of other living beings to not exploit nature for their benefit. In addition, women who make woven bamboo base their knowledge and skills in processing natural resources as a form of local wisdom and tradition. The social relations created between women are healthier.

Woven bamboo craftswomen make efforts to fight the dominance of men experienced by them and nature by focusing on nature conservation. And the use of natural resources because they work in these two fields, namely by replanting as a form of regeneration of bamboo trees to take advantage of bamboo for their survival in the longer term. Bamboo is a guarantee and strength for women weaving craftsmen, both domestic, economic, and ecological. So that bamboo is seen as a source of livelihood where it cannot be denied that economic factors are indeed one factor that motivates them to act to protect bamboo trees. But more than that, the domination that occurs in nature has shaped their consciousness so that they take action to protect themselves and nature because they see that the seizure of bamboo trees as expropriation of nature has caused injustice to themselves, so they need to fight this domination.

## CONCLUSION

The strategy of replanting and using traditional equipment by women woven bamboo artisans in Cimahpar Village to maintain bamboo trees and bamboo crafts in their area is a form of women's critical action to fight male domination and against the movement of capitalist commodity production. That is oriented towards the development system aggressive and exploitative. They are examples of grassroots movements in more significant ecological problems by forging relationships among women who are woven bamboo craftsmen that are not based on separate parts, such as based on economic interests that are only concerned with individual profits. But they move together based on their knowledge and experience to solve ecological problems and find solutions to these problems through their relationship with bamboo trees and nature so that they have the power to resist domination and play a role in nature conservation in their territory.

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