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Roles and development of Bruneian women: A study of education and employment

Farhana Haque^{*}

¹PhD Research Fellow, Academy of Brunei Studies, University of Brunei Darussalam, Jalan Tungku, BE1410, Brunei, Darussalam.
E-mail: dhak_121@yahoo.com

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Abstract

From the earlier twentieth century, Brunei Darussalam had go through some crucial changes from the areas of social, economic and political sectors for the establishment of the British residency in 1906s. In the zone of national development plan from 1953-1984, Brunei commence their contribution and also it as to be noted about the written constitution of Brunei in 1959 as well as its independence 1984. Therefore, the country experienced the expanding involvement of both males and females in the education and employment areas. It is the women of Brunei whoexclusively developed their social-economic standard entirely among the male citizens of this country. Accompanied by the growing socio-economic independence, additional women relish freedom, protection and are more independent as compared to women in the past decades.

Keywords: *Bruneian women, Education, Employment, British residency, Pre and post-independence*

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1. Introduction

The developed position of women and their participation in education and employment in Brunei Darussalam happened since 1929. Therefore, it is salient to give the Bruneian women the proper acknowledgement by knowing their contributions for the country, because they are equally important besides men in determining the development and welfare of Brunei. However in the field of socioeconomic development of women, chiefly in education and employment areas. And suggest reasons about women's success in everywhere of the society, men are still dominant in Bruneian society.

Since 1929, the growing improvement of women in education happened. At present women are doing far more well and innovative than men in some respective areas such as in joining tertiary education. Because it has to be known that through education, women is now capable to acquire more opportunities to attain success in their lives. In the area of employment more Bruneian women are now joining into different type of jobs both in government and non-government organizations. Hence, this determines that women's status in the society got developed.

2. Development of education with the help of British residency

According to the historical background, the establishment of British residency (1906) in Brunei was expected to protect the Sultanate from the hostile non-governmental policy adopted by the neighboring countries such as Sarawak and the British North Borneo (Sabah). These non-governmental policy by Sarawak and Sabah proved to be deadly for Brunei's

^{*} Corresponding author: Farhana, Haque, PhD Research Fellow, Academy of Brunei Studies, University of Brunei Darussalam, Jalan Tungku, BE1410, Brunei Darussalam. E-mail: dhak_121@yahoo.com

sovereignty. Because by the end of the 19th century Brunei, which was used to be as huge as Great Britain but shortened into a small state of the present size. The establishment of British residency in Brunei was proved as the positive sign as it was worked as a savior therefore prevented the interest about Brunei by its neighbors. And then this British residency gradually changed Brunei's political, economic and social construction. As well as they introduced the significance of a structured government, administration and the need of formal education. That is the reason Brunei government saw the British residency as a role model and wanted to be modernized like the British. The government of Brunei not only felt the urgency to change the way of Bruneian citizen's life as modern but also gave emphasis to preserve their old tradition through education and technology. Aftermath, British resident was selected to become the general advisor of the Sultan of Brunei in all types of affairs except traditional customs and religion and started to work on the 'road of development' in Brunei.

From the Brunei and Malay Archipelago, education means religious education and by the coming of British to Brunei the society experienced a great transition from traditional education to westernized education that helped Brunei to transfer a complete illiterate population to a literate population. The main attraction of this process end up with the initiatives of focusing importance on education for both genders rather than only to the male students. Furthermore, though the development of education was not fast but it had modified the local informal education system into an organized formal education with a profane form of schooling system besides the informal religious school.

The main aim of the inauguration of the formal education throughout the country was not entirely focus on the "Islamic religious doctrines and basic cultural values and skills but also the inculcation of knowledge relevant to Western-styled civilization and the development of a modern society" (Mohammad, 1983).

With the span of time many started to realize about the importance of education and therefore an increasing number of boys were sent to school in the four districts of Brunei, i.e., Brunei-Muara, Kuala Belait, Tutong and Temburong through the advancement of education during the British period was more in-depth in the Brunei town. Eventually the parents also begun to agree to send their daughters to school. However the initial response of girls' formal education was not affirmative. But gradually the growing demands of women's participation in various areas of the public sphere such as the employment of women in both government and non-government areas that captivated girls to school.

3. Education system in Brunei from 1912-1929

When the British resident arrived in Brunei that time the only available education was traditional which refers with close relation with religion, i.e., Islam. Only few locals knew how to write and read in Jawi which is not enough to prove they know about formal western educational system. According to the annual report of 1912, there were hardly anyone who could read and write in Brunei at that time. Following with the report we can get that: "Preparations were made to start schools in the New Year. It is most difficult to find anyone who can read or write amongst Brunei Malays so this led to the employment of foreign Malays" (BAR 1909-1911).

By the above statements it is clear that reading and writing in Jawi does not follow to the standard of Western education. Hence it does indicates that even by the 20th century, the people of Brunei were still illiterate. Religious study played the significant roles in people's lives during that period and was given much importance to the students as graduates from any religious school. One the other hands the informal education did not need the requirements for attending school as like in religious education such as Quran recitation could be taught by their own family or the local mosque. And according to the traditional Bruneian locals it was discouraged to send their children to join schools. However, the existing informal education in the form of sekolah pondok, surau, balai and mosque was a more appropriate place for the education of the agrarian and fishing society.

4. The educational system in Brunei after independence

Brunei had achieved independence and sovereignty as a country by 1984. And in the sector of education this country got its landmark to gain more success and development in the field of education. In 1986 the first Government University of Brunei, known as University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) was established. There are an increasing number of undergraduate students from both gender which can be considered as the success of the government's efforts and fighting against illiteracy among its citizen and inculcate the interest to academic study.

We can discuss about the illiteracy rate among the Bruneian by gender. In 1981 the rate of literate males were 67,241 and illiterate males were 10,718 and also the percentage of literacy for males was 46.57. Then in 1991, the literate rate for males was 100,136 and the illiterate rate was 7,431 and the percentage of literacy was 79.14. On the other hands the literate rate for females in 1981 was 48,701, the illiterate rate was 17,735 and the percentage of literacy was 33.73. Then again in 1991 the literate of females was 80,319, the illiterate rate was 14,454 and the percentage of literacy was 63.48 (Suzimah bte

Hj Abdul Latif, 1996), So by this ratio it can be said that illiteracy has been reduced as much as 32.57% for males and 29.75% for females. That actually indicates that more people can read and write by 1991 compared to the initially introduced formal education. By 2004, the literacy rate among its population has increased more than 90%, though distinction was created between male and female. The number of undergraduates from 1989-1991 by gender we can also explore. In the English medium system of education in 1989 and 1990 the rate of male and female education in BA program was nothing to mention while in 1991 that rate was 7 for male and 8 for female. For BSc program, in 1989 the rate for male was 9 and for female it was 3, in 1990 the rate for male was 8 and for female it was 17. In 1991 that rate was 6 for male and 15 for female. In the BA Primary Education in 1989 the rate for male was 5 and for female it was 5, in 1990 the rate for male was 9 and for female it was 21. In 1991 the rate for male was 9 and for female it was 13. In BA Management Studies program in 1989 the rate for male was 15 and for female it was 3, and in 1990 the rate for male was 10 and for female it was 16. In 1991 the rate for male was 12 and for female it was 14. In the BA Public Policy & Admin, in 1989 the rate for male was 8 and for female it was 16, in 1990 the rate for male was 4 and for female it was 9. In 1991 the rate for male was 4 and for female it was 8. Besides the English medium system, in Brunei there is the Malay medium system. So it can be like this In BA Pendidikan (Pengajian Islam) in 1989 the rate of male was 3 and for female it was 6, in 1990 the rate for male was 5 and for female it was 5 and in 1991 the rate for male was 8 and for female it was 4. In BA Pendidikan (Bahasa dan Kesusasteraan) in 1989 the rate for male was 21 and for female it was 24, in 1990 the rate for male was 19 and for female it was 14 and in 1991 the rate for male was 17 and for female it was 8. In BA Sastera in 1989 the rate for male was 37 and for female it was 12, in 1990 the rate for male was 28 and for female it was 13, in 1991 the rate for male was 29 and for female it was 7. In total in 1989 for male the rate was 98 and for female it was 69, in 1990, for male the rate was 83 and for female the rate was 95, in 1991 for male the rate was 92 and for female the rate was 77 (Education in Brunei Darussalam (1992)).

From the above ratio of English medium and Malaya medium it has to be said that the increasing participation of women in University joining immense courses besides men. Although the total number of men varies from 1989 to 1991, but from 1990 to 1991 the number of women joining the education courses Management Studies and Public Policy remnants higher than men. The flow of the higher number of women compared to men in BA Primary Education courses can be a sign of the ongoing stereotyped gender roles. Women are frequently connected with the capacity of child care, being a primary teacher involves a lot of uncomfortable situation as well as interaction between teachers and young students. Therefore women are recognize to be more suitable in that type of career. In the 21st century the higher number of women entering University compared to men and there is an increasing gap between the number of male and female intakes. In year 2000, the gap was 909 and it increased to 931 and 946 in 2001 and 2002 separately. This happened because men are tend to study more in the technical and vocational studies after finishing their 'O' levels and 'A' levels. Moreover, besides UBD, those who want to specialize in accounting, business, etc. may do so at the Institute Technology of Brunei (ITB). The numbers of undergraduates in the year 2000-2003 by gender are given below. In the year 2000 the rate of male was 979, for female it was 1,888, and the gap between male and female intakes was 909. In 2001, the rate for male was 1,219, for female it was 2,150 and the gap between male and female intakes was 931. In 2003 the rate for male was 1,238, for female it was 2,184 and the gap between male and female intakes was 946 (Brunei Statistical Yearbook 2003).

Furthermore, entirely the number of men and women are also joining the Nursing College that situated not far from the Brunei Town. The Nursing College; Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashida Saadatul Bolkiah Nursing College which was first established in 1986 and it provides courses for students. By the late 1986, there were only 23 students. By 2003 there were at least 1,249 students who did finish their courses and graduated where 625 of them are now working at hospitals and health centers in Brunei. With the improvement of higher levels of educational institutions in Brunei, the number of schools established is also increasing compared to when it was first initiated nearly a decade ago. By 1991 there was as many as 194 schools whereas by 2001, it has extended 236. Then again by 2003, there is a total students of around 63,690 with a total of 247 schools all over the country.

Recently, with a literacy rate of above 90% in 2004, education in Brunei for both men and women are at remarkable rate as education yielded for all the inhabitants, though education is not compulsory like the written laws in the United Kingdom. In Brunei the educational system is similar like the educational system of Malaysia, where they both provide education for all as free basis but it is not made compulsory. Therefore parents have been upset with opportunities and choices of sending their children to school or let them be at home. In spite of the non-compulsory nature of education system most parents feel the need to educate their children. Hence, parents send their children to both government and non-governmental school. It can be the sign of increasing importance of education in Brunei as learning has become part of Bruneian culture and also for future job opportunities as well as for self-development.

After gaining the full independence in 1984, of Brunei Darussalam there was an expansion of government ministries and departments that resulted in huge demands for manpower. This had encouraged more boys and girls to receive

education for entering in the employment sector. However, women are now more aware of the significance about education, they are more positive and active in education and some are even high-successor compared to men. At the present time, huge numbers of women can be seen in the various levels of education. From the kindergarten level, primary and secondary levels, to the degree, masters and PhD level women are proving their wit and quality.

According to the stereotyped male dominated society women are being 'shaped' to fit with the traditional roles. But now more women are actively joining in education to seek for independence and security. And though women were not allowed to attend schools as "...parents would not have them taught to write because daughters would only use the knowledge to write love notes and did not need writing anyway" (Kimball, 1980) mothers are now getting more open-minded and allowing their daughters attending schools for education and after that they are joining in the employment sector. However, despite all the changes in realization and through available opportunities, there are women who still put less importance on education. There are still women who had never attended school or dropped out at a very young age to support their family or to get married. Therefore, one sees the continuation of women who are doing low paid jobs that may arise due to their different aspirations as well as submission to education and knowledge. Though in previous times women were willing to set up stalls and used to worked long hours to make extra income. But there are some unemployed young women who tend to be too choosy to even open stalls for selling foods and cloths and girls now in a way are more pampered and are messed up by their choices.

5. Women in the sector of employment

Employment refers to the state of being engaged in an activity or service for wages and salary. This term employment is considered as the affirmative element for both the economic and social improvement of an individual country. Employment is very significant issue for a country as it provides the country with labor force and human resources to support in establishing the country. However, employment is known as a source of self-independence as it progressively reflects a symbolic status of an independent and stable individual.

Employment has the influence to take the individuals such as men and women for a better lifestyle. With fast economic development Brunei has to have modified advantages in order to compete in the global market. Most countries became interconnected and independent because of the process of economic globalization that had broken the barriers. Historically, it is known that, Brunei Darussalam was holding an agrarian and fishing society therefore its economy was mostly based on fishing and agriculture. There were also various industries, hence women embraced majority of the unpaid and low-paid labor working in the domestic fields and the private weaving industries individually. After unearthing of oil, it had strengthened Brunei's economy as it came out as a dominant industry and gathering huge amount of profit compared to other industries. But, in Brunei the major problem is in the shortage of local labor due to its small size of population and also the isolation of women from the public employment. As a result the country became highly dependent on men as well as the employment of foreign men as they Brunei has always faced problems of local labor shortages due to its small size population and the seclusion of women from the public employment; the country became highly dependent on men as well the employment of foreign men as they obtained more skills compared to locals. That is why a high number of foreign workers are getting opportunities to work in Brunei Darussalam. Though more profits achieved through the oil industry. Different industries which has all three levels such as primary, secondary, tertiary and these were developed to create diversification in the economy and to minimize nation's over-dependence on oil and gas.

According to the statistics Brunei is a nation with an estimation of 348,800 people throughout the four districts, with around 176,300 male and 172,500 female. Consequently, women should be added in the socioeconomic and political domains as their contribution should not be confined if the country were to gain comparative developments in this era of globalization. By doing so it will increase the human resource capacities of the country as it yields equal opportunities and chances for both women and men in the work place.

British residential system established in Brunei in 1906, and one of the government's initiatives was to inspire the involvement of women in the society and economy as the British resident initiated the plans to develop Brunei through the establishment of an exact and organized system of government, education, health services, welfare, industries, etc. It is only with the inclusion and commitment of both genders which can assist all this.

But the involvement of women into the employment sector was slow, though the long-term effect remnants salient and can be seen in Brunei. However, recently more women are more active participants in developing the economy.

6. Unseen work of women

Concealed women's work is one of the chief problems experienced by women in the past and present. Women are generally assigned by the household work such as cooking, washing, looking after the kids and husband and also they

have the responsibility to manage the entire home and family as their largest occupation according to the male dominated society. Unfortunately, most of the women who worked in their own animal farm or vegetable farm, in the paid field, they try to sell those small stalls by the road sides, also they sew cloths for other people in their own home, etc. that goes unnoticed. The concealed contribution of women remain unpaid in households and in the informal and agriculture sectors. From the statement above it shows that majority of work done by women in the private sphere are unpaid. Hence, it is treated as unseen as society defined work as being employed outside the home and paid monthly salary.

After observing the male dominated society it is so vivid that women's work is defined by men seen as invisible just because they stayed at home doing housework; doing unpaid labor. Women are in fact working all day long at home, sacrificing the prospective wage they could have earn in paid labor but they sacrificed those things just to ensure that everything is perfectly done for the family.

Therefore if women stop doing works at home then the family will have to employ a helper known as maid or servants, to help them organized their home. At the present time, maids are often employed to work as substitute housewives by doing house chores such as cleaning, washing, cooking and ironing and looking after the children for the family but the only difference is they work for money. In Brunei, this is an expanding trend because now a days more and more women are involving themselves to their career along with their family life.

Thought in Brunei, women get help from their mother-in-laws to look after the children but despite of this facility most family recruit maids as well. The reason behind this is to reduce the burden and prevent their mother or mother-in-law from extra works. Therefore most have more faith in letting their children's grandmother looking after their children, and the maids are there only to help the mother or mother-in-law in child care. Because those maids works are more focused on doing other household chores.

In Brunei, the cost of employing foreign maids are expensive, for example it varies from \$200 to \$350 per month. As it can be said that doing house work does comes with a price, and when a wife staying home for doing all the household works then they should not be ignored and unseen as they contribute a lot to the savings of the household budget and at the same time they give contribution to the country's budget. Development of women's employment; pre and post-independence.

Lately the involvement of women in the employment sector was highly because of the traditional construction of women's work and space. According to the past times it can be said that women's work was narrowly defined; for example, "...the main occupation of the Brunei woman is marriage and the main pre-occupation of the Brunei woman is man" (Blundell Peter, 1923). They were also thoroughly involved in agriculture activities, house work and different types of stereotyped women's work.

In Brunei for traditional women the norms are confined and it's not permissible to for them to work outside the home both in public and private sectors. But luckily if the women get chance to work outside then they have only access to work within the domain of feminine works such as teachers, nurses, midwives, clerks, secretary, etc. Hence, the scenario of male dominated society becoming changing and the mentality of people is also improving in the fields of education system, in the sector of civil service and as a result women are getting opportunities to work in various levels of employment emerged due to the need for more workforce in nearly all sectors. For women this changed condition in working experience became an acceptable reality of life. Therefore this actually creates some major opportunities for women to work outside and the private sphere is becoming actively assimilated into education, finance, business, and health, religious and social sectors both in the government and non-government fields. In 1929 oil has been discovered in the district of Seria and this worked as a catalyst for bringing the drastic changes to the economic outlook of Brunei. Oil is the chief producing industry for the country until the present time and it had incidentally changed the social structure of the country. Oil started to increase commercially and becomes the main source of economic growth of Brunei. As a result the country are offering more employment to the public as more labor are demanded by Shell Company.

7. Improvements of women's employment: Pre and post-independence

As Brunei gained its independence in 1984, therefore the government had accumulated a lot of money for the improvements of the facilities demanded by the society. And also in developing various public which compartments that gradually happened in a shift of the country's dependence on traditional occupation to a more modern occupation as money grew in its significance due to capitalism and globalization. However the inclusion of women into the economy is the most important and noticeable matter to observe.

Moreover, to analyze the transformation of women's jobs throughout the years since 1929, the employment of women has been halved into two period, one is pre-independence and the other one is post-independence. In the pre-

independence era based on the majority of women's involvement in the private domains of women's lives. Therefore their lives were confined within the domestic life. Home is the place where they socialize. For example, women usually socialize in the kitchen and for this reason kitchen area is usually larger in size as compared to the other rooms as that is the place where most of the work and talking kind of stuffs happens between the female members or friends.

In the public sphere women work with other women and unluckily segregated from the men. Women are hardly seen in the outside of home working actively in the government and private sectors. However, it is to be noted that, working in workplace was extremely gender oriented since 1921. Though the government of Brunei got the wish to make women join in the public spheres but the society was highly conventional and divided that even in the 1950s, "there were some old women in kampong ayer who claimed never to have set foot on dry land" (AVM Horton, 1985).

For women in 1921 there were the lack of education and presentation among women that caused because of the shortage of proper knowledge and experience and as that is why majority of women were still deprived from formal education. Consequently women endured confined within the four-walls such as different kinds of household chores or confined to their private space doing agriculture work and other traits of domestic life obeying to the tradition. Since long it was noted that there was a strong belief onto Islam among the Bruneian women as they were often seen in purdah. The task of covering of one's head and sometimes face with the teaching of Islam. Therefore, it is only natural to observe that there was no amalgamation between men and women's work place.

Therefore, due to the standard of Brunei's economy back then, most industries were connected to one's traditional occupation, for instance, the fish industry that symbolized the lives of the majority as fishermen and two of the most important industries for the native lives of the Bruneians are the brassware and silverware industry which were mostly dominated by men.

As for women, according to the BAR in 1929, women in Brunei were documented to be highly involved in the weaving industry centered in Kampong Ayer, i.e., the water village. This was one of the outstanding products made by the Brunei women where cotton sarongs were produced in large quantities and some silk sarongs. According to the past archives, by 1929, they produced a total of 1374 sarongs for exporting to the foreign countries. And by 1931, not only sarongs, but they did extend their creativity with the weaving of table covers and other materials as well. Besides of that kampong ayer women were also highly involved in the floating market known as padian which was one of the important activities for them.

There were also the sago and rice industry which was the main local staple food, indirectly contributing to the economy. However, men's and women's work remained highly isolated, for example, "...woman did half or more rice planting, almost all the work except for the clearing and burning of the fields" (Kimball, 1980). According to oral tradition, in the sago industry, it is the men who goes out and collects the raw materials demanded to process sago, while on the other hands, women's task was to process it into the final product. Men and women played different roles in order to make of sago is highly divided but yet it complements each other, and it is similar to the hunting and gathering societies. Other than that, there are different kinds of traditional work accomplished by women. For example, "she gardens, may raise some fruit trees, tends the family chickens, and gathers edible such as greens, mushrooms and fruits from the woody areas in the woody areas neighboring the village" (Kimball, 1980).

Moreover, in the villages, there were not yet any trained midwives, and as a result the local women usually among the elderly used to voluntarily act as midwives. Midwifery was regarded as the early form of employment for women as most of the midwives did receive payment in return of their great services. This was the early form of employment for women as most midwives did receive some form payment in return for their services. Those payment was not only the money such as foods, clothes etc. Due to the lack of knowledge, experience and skills among the midwives, it was documented in the BAR 1930, "... midwifery is practiced in the kampongs by untrained persons, with results which are bad in the extreme" (BAR 1930). The British residence then felt the need to train them but unfortunately it was hard for the British resident to train a local woman as "any interference with the old established customs is looked upon with suspicion and mistrust" (BAR 1931). However, this signifies how traditional the society was during that time. Majority of the Bruneian women strong believers of Islam as I have mentioned earlier that they wear purdah according to oral traditions since a young age. Women took pride in everything they do and they always commence everything with "Bismillahirrahmanirrahim"; in the name of God. Even in the time of midwifery, different verses from *Quran* (The Holy book) they use to recite in order to make a smooth delivery. Therefore their traditional way changed with the development and advancement of modern medicine and for those women this type of change was unimaginable because they were less exposed to the outside culture. Outsiders started to work as midwives in 1933, a Eurasian woman was a maternity nurse in Brunei and she was helped by two local Malays who did train themselves for ward attendants in 1932 and it did

get positive feedbacks by locals. This was one of the achievements of women in the early modern employment.

By 1933, another Chinese lady was placed as the maternity and health nurse and was received welcomingly by the locals as there were “90% of Malay births in Brunei are attended by the midwife” (BAR 1933). In the same year, a local midwife was positioned in the hospital and more local untrained midwives did volunteer to be trained. Although most women were self-employed, midwives and teachers were the prior occupation of women in the government sectors. By 1938, two teachers were chosen to teach in one of the schools in Brunei and gradually it increase in number as more women are entering teaching college. By 1964 there were more female teachers compared to before, but the gap between both gender remains. In 1964, there were 9 kindergarten schools and the number of female teachers were 22. Then the number of primary schools were 102, where male teachers were 525 in number and female teachers were 324. After that the number of secondary schools were 15 where the number of male teachers were 141 and the number of female teachers were 49. The number of teacher education was 1 where the male teachers were 12 in number and female teachers were 2. If we do the total of it the number of educational institutions in 1964 were 127 where the total number of male teachers were 677 and female teachers were 397 (Brunei Annual Report 1964).

It is important to note that though the number of men is much higher, but we can see that in the kindergarten level, only the female teachers were involved in teaching them. Therefore, this proves that though women are now moving slowly away from their private sphere, but there is the recognized fact that women should stay in touch with their motherly task. Earlier on however, Japanese invasion of Brunei did disturb all the things that had been gained by the government under British residency. In that war damages were massive, people were nervous, nationalistic ideas emerged and on top of that, Brunei had to start reconstruct itself again. Therefore, in 1953, the Bruneians experienced the embarkation of the first National Development plan which aims to inflate and increase participation of the society in education, medical services and agricultural sectors. Furthermore the “special feeding schemes”; free meal for school children had been introduced. And for all of these plans, a total sum of \$ 100,000,000 had been cancelled (BAR 1953).

With the extension of plans in different areas of the country, an increasing number of women joined in the public working places. Though the participation of women did not yet reached the demanded numbers, and therefore men still outshine women. But the necessary point is that the expanding number of women are now involved in employment, especially as teachers. Post- primary education was sufficient to help women in acquiring a paid job, and this was due to the comparatively early age of marriage among the women, which is normally between 16 to 18 years of age.

In the years from 1969 to 1971, a study was directed among the locals Malays, and the outcome said that, besides being a midwife, some older women also became trance healers and dukun. Therefore those occupations amplify the role of women according to the stereotyped traits.

In the pre-independence era, women’s work was restricted to particular definition of jobs such as the self-employed padian and sewing and weaving in the industry. It was greatly stereotypical and gendered, which actually impede the development of women involving in what they want and also hamper to reach to their full capability.

In the post-independence era, massive kinds of changes can be seen in the Bruneian society. Thus government is becoming more conscious of the various types of tasks that women are involved in and as a result they calls for equality of employment for both gender. Inside of the Brunei’s written law, the country upholds equality of treatments in the employment sector. For example, it is written that “women are open to equality side by side with men in education and employment, salary and deserves equal chances of being promoted” (Hajah Jusnani Hj. Lawie, Datin Paduka 1993).

Therefore, one of the most significant prolongation of women’s work is that majority of women’s work involves “caring for other people, women work as nurses, teachers, social workers, home helps-all jobs involve caring. Other kinds of women’s work involve servicing people- that is, providing services for them” (Beechey Veronica 1982). In the past the older generation trusted that when women want to work, it is better if they work that symbolized femininity of women and such occupations highlights the femininity of a woman and shows the affection and care in the forms of teacher and nurse, secretary and clerk, and waitress can be a representative display of being able to do house work. The traditional belief was practiced by the older generation and even some of the younger generation as they are individuals who do not want to do the household works that refers to the act of masculinity. Some government departments are only opened to male citizens such as in the area of combat. Thus women can be seen as elevated in employment that presents the image of the so-called ideal women. By 1995 in Brunei women were highest employed as clerical jobs followed by sales etc. And this actually indicates the unseen stereotyped women into certain employment. By the Ministry to Culture, Youth and Sport in Brunei Darussalam the percentage of women in major occupation has been revealed. 63.9% of women worked in a clerical jobs, 37.3% of women worked in a sales jobs, 36.0% of women worked in a professional services, 30.6% of women were engaged in different kinds of services, 16.5% women, 11.9% of women worked in the sector of agriculture and 8.1% of women worked in the field of production (The Advancement of women in Brunei Darussalam (1995).

According to the stereotyped society men usually grabs the supreme position compared to women both at home and also the outside of home. They have the authority to have all kinds of power and thus they imposed it on women. Therefore this inspired men to fix the role-play between men and women. "Majority of the people still think that men play the main role, while women's roles are only as the assistant" (Hjh Jusnani Hj Lawie, Dato Paduka Datin, 1993). In spite of the prolongation of the various treatment, women are still participating the labor force at an increasing rate. For example the involvement of women in the economy of 15 years old above in the years from 1960 to 1986. In 1960 the total women who joined in the economy sector was 20,781 in number, in 1971 it was 34,457 in number, in 1981 it was 53,744 in number and in 1986 it was 68,461 in number. In 1960 economically active women were 4,171 in number, 1971 it was 6,888 in number, in 1981 it was 16,831 in number and in 1986 it was 26,503 in number. In the percentage involvement of women in the economy in 1960 was 20.1%, in 1971 it was 20.0%, in 1981 it was 31.3% and in 1986 it was 38.7% (Hajah Jusnani Hj. Lawie, Datin Paduka (1993). As can be seen from year to year, the participation of women in employment increased. In the pre-independence year 1981m the involvement was 31.3% therefore in just five years it increased to 38.7%. This indicates about the huge number of acceptance in the job sectors where women working in the society. It is also suggests that more women are now better educated which helps them to compete with men in various posts. Moreover, the achievement of independence had created more request for manpower as the government's activities expanded. Thus women were recruited to fill in the gaps in different government sectors. In the private sectors the numbers of women employed are growing. From 1971 to 2000, in private sector employment increased by gender. In 1971 it was increased 14,692 for male and for female it was 1,645 in persons. Then in 1981 the growth number of male was 22,993 and for female it was 5,080 in persons. In 1991 that increased 43,731 for male and for female it was 10,689 in persons, finally in 2000 the growth for male was 63.315 and for female it was 26,943 in persons (Lim Lay Ting).

From the above statistics it can be said that women's employment rate has outstandingly did increased in 2000 as compared to 1971. This can be the indication that a greater number of women had completed their education and therefore with the knowledge and skills, they did come up with large opportunities and choices in the field of employment. Moreover, by 1991 according to Datin Paduka Hajah Jusnani, there were 21,318 Malay women in Brunei working as compared to around 8,910 ten years before, i.e. 1981. And that means within the period of 10 years, there is the growth of around 12,400 women who worked outside their private domain (Datin Paduka Hajah Jusnani Haji Lawie 1997 wanita Melayu Brunei Menghadapi Abad ke-21).

After seeing the increasing number of women who joined in the private sector it can be said that the number of employment in manufacturing area, trading and giving services such as coffee shop, restaurants and hotels remain highest. All this generally indicates the standard of living of locals and the improvements of women's participation. At present time, there is a variety of jobs available for women in both the government and non-government sectors. There are growing number of women who is working full time as teachers, bankers, nurses, clerks, managers, businesswomen, etc. But most of the women choose to work with the government as it provides them with satisfactory income and better benefits that supplements the job, therefore making the government as the largest employer in the country.

Although women are still seen to be best appropriate at home according to some of the older generation, at the same time they identify the significance of employment for the financial independence of an individual. Specially as there are a greater number of single mothers and also a higher number of women who are choosing to postpone their marriages and giving proprieties to their career first. So the older generation remind women about the importance of not leaving housework completely but also they can't stop them from being employed.

8. Conclusion

In the sectors of education and employment, Bruneian women have developed themselves in a better ways than previous time. In the past most women were not educated but after the establishment of British residency the informal education system included along with the traditional education system for Bruneian citizens. Both the men and women are now getting advanced education facilities specifically the women are benefited more than men in the sector of education. On the other hands, in past women did part time jobs because of their low qualifications and at the same time had to juggle their time between house work and paid work. And most employers preferred to recruit women because they are more loyal, careful, and submissive thus they accept to take low wages. Furthermore, employers find it effortless to fire women compared to men. This is because women are additional earners and work part time for extra money and they are regarded as not the breadwinner for a family.

Therefore, with the inspiration of government as well as the changing scenario of the society and families, and women's higher level of qualifications in different sectors more women are now participating in the labor force for full-time permanent job. Hence, there is a diversification of women applying to join the public working domains.

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