

## **GENDER EQUALITY IN ACHIEVING RESEARCH CAREER SUCCESS: A CASE STUDY OF TWO INDONESIAN AQUACULTURE INSTITUTES**

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Considerations of gender-based barriers to career development are of increasing public and academic interest, including the professional areas of fisheries and aquaculture science. This study explored potential differences in career progression paths of female versus male researchers at two participating aquaculture research institutions in Indonesia. Surveys, interviews and focus group discussions reported in this paper were conducted with 59 researchers at the Research Institute for Coastal Aquaculture and Fisheries Extension (RICAFE) in Maros, South Sulawesi; and the Institute for Mariculture Research and Fisheries Extension (IMRAFE) in Gondol, Bali. Three career progression indicators were explored: years working; educational levels (BSc, MSc or PhD); and the current position/pay grade (pay grades at the participating institutions ranged from 1, the lowest grade, to 4, the highest grade). Indicators of research productivity were based on publication records, specifically numbers of publications at conferences; in national scientific journals; and international scientific journals. Data were analysed using SPSS to (1) build multiple regression models; and (2) calculate Duncans' dissimilarity index, a measure of disparity of the occupational distributions between men and women. We analysed data both from our respondents and used bootstrapping to adjust for small sample.

We found that differences in position and pay grade were primarily influenced by education level and years of experience, not gender. Duncan's index score of 25 indicates minimal gender segregation. However, women were more concentrated in the lower-level 2 pay grade, while men dominated the higher-level 4 pay grade. Productivity, measured by publications, was linked to pay and education rather than gender. We found no systematic institutional barriers to women's career advancement, but identified 'time poverty'—the combined pressures of work, domestic duties, and societal expectations—as a significant barrier.

Due to the small sample size, these findings should be confirmed with larger studies. Our data supports two main points: First, the observed differences are likely due to 'generational gap bias' rather than a gender gap, as senior males are compared to junior females. Longitudinal studies could clarify this. Second, time poverty, not institutional barriers, is seen as a major obstacle to career advancement.

In summary, while institutional barriers in fisheries and aquaculture research are important, social barriers related to time poverty may be even more significant. Further research in Indonesia and Southeast Asia is recommended.