

Reinterpretation of Maritime Identity of Small Fishermen on the North Coast of Semarang City

Moh.Sholehatul Mustofa^{1*}, Rini Iswari², Asma Luthfi³, Evi Kristiwati⁴, Risalah
Devi Anugrah⁵

¹*Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia*

²*Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia*

³*Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia*

⁴*Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia*

⁵*Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia*

*Email: mustofa@mail.unnes.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Normalization of the East Canal Flood River and the Development of a Marine Tourism Village in Tambak Lorok, Semarang City, have had an impact on the lives of the people in Tambakrejo Village, both environmental changes and socio-economic changes. Residents who initially lived in the riverbanks were evicted. Some of them moved to other areas and some remained in Tambakrejo with jobs that no longer depended on seafood. This study aims to explain the maritime identity of the small fishing community which has experienced reinterpretation after the relocation of the Tambakrejo village community. This research is a field research that uses qualitative research methods. Sources of data in this study are primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are humans as subjects or informants. Secondary data sources are documents relevant to the research focus, such as events or activities related to the research focus. This research describes: (1) the existence of small fishermen in Tambakrejo before the construction of a fishing village, (2) the socio-economic conditions of small fishermen after the construction of a fishing village, and (3) reinterpretation of the maritime identity of small fishermen after the construction of a fishing village.

Keywords: *Maritime Identity, Reinterpretation, Semarang Coast, Small Fishermen*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelago consisting of 17,506 large and small islands, with the second longest coastline in the world, reaching 81,000 km[1], [2]. Almost 2/3 of Indonesia's territory is dominated by the sea, so it has the potential for large maritime resources if it is managed wisely and wisely. One of the contributions of the maritime sector as a contributor to foreign exchange is through captured fish products. Even though it was during the Covid-19 pandemic, the export value in the marine sector increased by USD427.71 million in March 2020[3]. Seeing this potential, the Government as a policy maker is promoting various development efforts in the maritime sector to improve the people's economy[4], [5].

One of the provincial capitals in Indonesia which is located on the coastline is Semarang City, Central Java with a coastline of 36.63km. This region has potential in the field of fisheries including marine fisheries and

inland fisheries[6], [7]. The city of Semarang is inhabited by 1,419,478 people with a composition consisting of 1,104 fishermen, 1153 fish traders, fresh and processed fish traders, 502 pond farmers and 373 fish cultivators[8]. One of the coastal villages in Semarang is Tambakrejo village with an area that is directly connected to the coast and the majority of its residents work as fishermen[9]. The community's economic sector which relies on maritime resources makes the local government try to build infrastructure to optimize the existing potential. One of them is the construction of a Fisherman Village in Tambakrejo RT 5 / RW 16.

The development of the Fishermen's Village in Tambakrejo is a government program and the desire of residents whose homes to be evicted due to the *Banjir Kanal Timur* river normalization project. This project is an effort to tackle floods in the city of Semarang as well as a manifestation of the Government's

commitment to building comfortable, healthy settlements for small fishermen. Apart from that, this project is also intended as a role model for the development of settlements held in the context of the welfare of the community. However, the residential project of the fishing village in Tambakrejo also raises new problems in economic and ecological aspects.

To build coastal settlements, it must be oriented towards the pillars of sustainability, namely integrated social, economic and environmental aspects where coastal communities act as actors as well as objectives of sustainable settlement development. In other aspects, there are three pillars of development in sustainable settlements, namely social capital, economic capital, and natural / environmental capital which mutually influence the quantity and quality of the level of sustainable development[10]. The development pattern of the Fishermen's Village in Tambakrejo is considered to have paid less attention to economic and ecological aspects, because their sources of livelihood have not been revitalized. This condition forces people to adapt to all existing limitations and independently develop their life patterns to meet their daily needs.

In carrying out a pattern of life development, the community must be able to identify its potential so that later it can be used to move the wheels of the economy, especially when the Fishermen Village project has been completed. In addition, many small fishermen have diversified their jobs so that their economic businesses are no longer dependent on marine products. Based on the above problems, the aim of this study is to see how small fishermen in Tambakrejo reinterpret their maritime identity in the midst of changes in their livelihood conditions in coastal areas.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach method. The qualitative approach was chosen by the researcher because it is suitable for obtaining an in-depth picture of the research topic. The data in this study are information or facts obtained through field research that can be analyzed to understand a phenomenon or support a theory[11]. The location of this research is located in a village called Tambakrejo RT 05 RW 16 in Tanjung Mas Village, North Semarang District. The population in this study were all residents in Tambak Lorok

Village. By using a sampling technique, namely a simple random sampling technique, this study hopes to describe the state of the population in Tambakrejo Village, which in fact is a coastal area. There are three data collection techniques in the research, namely (1) in-depth interviews, (2) participatory observation, and (3) documentation study[12]. Data analysis in this study includes: (1) data reduction, namely organizing, classifying, directing, and eliminating unnecessary data, (2) data presentation, which is the process of finding meaningful relationship patterns and providing the possibility to draw conclusions, and (3)) drawing conclusions[13].

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Overview of Tambakrejo Community

A fishing village is a village that is usually located near the sea or coastlines, lakes, swamps and other water areas. Generally, residents in fishing villages work as fishermen both at sea and in ponds. Very rarely do they have jobs other than fishermen, or don't even have the skills to get other jobs. Tambakrejo Village is located in Tanjung Mas Village, North Semarang District, Semarang City which is surrounded by water. The northern part is directly adjacent to the Java Sea. On the east side it is bordered by the East Flood Canal and the Banger River. While on the west side it is bordered by the Mati River (dead end).

Geographically, the Tambakrejo fishing community is a community that lives, grows and develops in a coastal area, which is a transitional area between land and sea areas. The people of Tambakrejo are generally very dependent on sea conditions, because it can be said that they live because of the sea. The average education of the Tambakrejo community is elementary school (SD) graduates, so that also makes them work as fishermen because what they need is only experience and knowledge for fishermen. In addition, some people in Tambakrejo are migrants from outside the city of Semarang who married people from Semarang and settled there.

3.2 Existence of Small Fishermen in Tambakrejo Before Construction of Fishermen Village

There are 97 head of family in RT 05 RW 16 Tambakrejo who have been evicted due to the normalization of the East Canal Flood River on the

north coast of Semarang City. Prior to the eviction and relocation, most of the Tambakrejo community were working as fishpond fishermen, net fishermen and fishing rod fishermen. The condition of the area which has brackish water makes milkfish widely cultivated by the community through aquaculture businesses. Meanwhile, net fishermen and fishing rod fishermen also get quite a lot of results because of the large number of mangrove trees that grow around the coast and along rivers. Overnight, they can find enough fish and crabs for their daily needs without having to go out to sea long distances. Fishers in Tambakrejo are classified as small fishermen because of their simple fishing gear and close fishing distances.

After the normalization of the *Banjir Kanal Timur* river project took place, the condition of the sea and the coastal environment in Tambakrejo changed and small fishermen experienced a decrease in their catch. Medium and large scale fish are rarely found in this area and usually only small shrimp, small fish, and green mussels. This is because the mangrove trees are being cut down a lot and the ponds are also being evicted. For this reason, they use small motorized boats to fish offshore. The distance traveled is also further and the number of boats is minimal, so they have to be used alternately. They bought the boats from the Demak area. This is also because most of the fishermen in Tambakrejo Village are migrants from Demak. In Tambakrejo Village, it is very rare to find indigenous people who work as fishermen. Even if there are residents who are the original descendants of Tambakrejo, they are already elderly. These difficult living conditions make them have to look for other sources of income besides being small fishermen.

3.3 Socio-Economic Conditions of Small Fishermen After the Development of Fishermen Village

After Tambakrejo village, especially in RT 05 RW 16, was evicted and renovated by building raised beds or temporary shelters above the dead river. Prior to the eviction of the village, there were 97 KK (heads of households), but the eviction of some of the community moved and occupied a residence outside Tambakrejo village. Currently, only the remaining 55 families (heads of households) survive in emergency housing. During their life in this emergency house,

people receive subsidies from the government in the form of free water, free electricity, and basic food items every month. The Tambakrejo community feels this assistance is very helpful in meeting their daily needs. This is because their sources of livelihood are uncertain and marine products are no longer providing a good income for improving family welfare.

During life in a makeshift house, the interaction between communities is harmonious and increasingly intense, because one emergency house is similar to an intermediate barracks, inhabited by 10 to 15 households. Apart from that, their togetherness is also supported by the joint activities they often do, such as community service and national and religious holidays. Based on the narrative from Mrs. Fadhillah (52 years old), previously the people in Tambakrejo Village were individualistic and did not place much importance on joint activities, but as a result of this eviction, the community felt they had the same fate and suffering, so that social solidarity between them increased. For this reason, in Tambakrejo community meetings are often held. The gentlemen's meeting was held on Friday, while the women's meeting was held on Saturday, in conjunction with the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) activity. Meanwhile, the youth in Tambakrejo Village usually accompany their parents to go to sea. However, if they don't go to sea, they are just unemployed at home because they don't have special skills. They learn how to catch fish and so on. However, these youth only graduated from high school, so the majority of them only worked in factories located outside the village and some worked in ports.

The fishermen's wives in Tambakrejo Village are mostly housewives who have permanent jobs in the public sector. However, there are several points where fishermen's wives gather and look for activities that can help support the family economy. Usually they clean the fishermen's catch in the form of green shells. From this activity, they can earn reasonable wages to buy cheap daily necessities, such as soap, salt, and herbs. In addition, there are also those who work as middlemen at the Tambaklorok Fish Market to help their family's economy.

3.4 Tambakrejo Small Fishermen's Efforts to Re-interpret Their Maritime Identity

Culturally, the maritime identity inherent in the fishing community in Tambakrejo has been strengthened. Parents have transmitted to the younger generation the philosophical values of being fishermen since childhood so that the children in Tambakrejo can survive and get used to the sea. The younger generation in Tambakrejo is accustomed to following their parents when they go to sea so that many are found who can operate boats or help catch fish. Meanwhile, from the elderly, life experiences that have been passed as fishermen as well as environmental habitualization in the marine area have led to a collective assumption that being a fisherman is the best livelihood because there is no time attachment, high educational attributes, or intervention from the authorities at work. Fishing is a profession that requires courage and persistence when at sea and provides its own accessibility or comfort for the perpetrators.

The fishing village development project in Tambakrejo gave birth to a new awareness of the community in re-interpreting their identity as a coastal community. As a result of this relocation, many people have started to switch to jobs that are not related to the marine aspect. They take advantage of job opportunities on land. This makes their interaction and marine activity less and less. However, where they live on the shoreline, they still have room to carry out habits and traditions like beach people. Their character is also very close to the open beach culture, accepts changes quickly, and helps each other. The development of a marine tourism village which also includes the area where they live contributes to the formation of collective awareness of the community as a coastal community. Various activities that are full of maritime nuances are always carried out, both to commemorate fishermen's day and other activities aimed at bringing in visitors from outside. Religious rituals, such as *tahlilan*, *tirakatan*, recitation of al Qur'an, and *terbangan*, are also routinely carried out at certain times which are intended as a means for them to ask God for protection in order to avoid the threat of the sea which at any time could endanger their lives. Other social activities such as fishermen associations, youth associations, and special day celebrations

accompanied by dangdut music. Also held to strengthen their solidarity as coastal communities.

4. CONCLUSION

The development and arrangement of a fishing village in Tambakrejo, Semarang City due to river normalization not only affects its environmental aspects, but also socio-cultural aspects. Some people decide to move to a new place, but some others still survive with the basic conditions. In addition, the condition of the coastal environment which does not provide enough economic improvement has made the people who still live there look for jobs that are no longer related to the sea. This makes people make efforts to re-interpret their maritime identity by continuing to carry out rituals and routines related to the sea and still upholding social solidarity so that they are still a community with a strong maritime culture.

REFERENCES

- [1] Humas Ditjen PDSKP, "Triwulan I 2020, Nilai Ekspor Perikanan Capai Usd1,24 Miliar," *Kementrian Kelautan dan Perikanan Republik Indonesia*, Apr-2020.
- [2] C. Bailey, "The political economy of marine fisheries development in Indonesia," *Indonesia*, no. 46, pp. 25–38, 1988.
- [3] B. P. Statistik, "Ekspor Agustus 2020 Mencapai US\$13,07 Miliar dan Impor Agustus 2020 sebesar US\$10,74 Miliar," Jakarta, 2020.
- [4] R. Lasabuda, "Pembangunan wilayah pesisir dan lautan dalam perspektif Negara Kepulauan Republik Indonesia," *J. Ilm. Platax*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 92–101, 2013.
- [5] S. Ratnawati and H. H. Sutopo, "the Development of Model Empowerment Poor Society in Coastal Area Through Net Marketing," *Acad. Res. Int.*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 237–243, 2014.
- [6] Radar Semarang, "Gali Potensi Kelautan, Tingkatkan eEkonomi Pesisir," *Radar Semarang*, Semarang, 2018.
- [7] E. Sutrisno, "Implementasi pengelolaan sumber daya pesisir berbasis pengelolaan wilayah pesisir secara terpadu untuk kesejahteraan nelayan (Studi di perdesaan nelayan Cangkol Kelurahan Lemahwungkuk Kecamatan Lemahwungkuk Kota Cirebon)," *J. Din. Huk.*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 1–12, 2014.
- [8] K. Prasetio, A. Soemarmi, and A.

- Diamantina, “Penataan Pengelolaan Potensi Perikanan di Kota Semarang,” *Diponegoro Law J.*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 1–14, 2017.
- [9] A. Fama, “Komunitas Masyarakat Pesisir di Tambak Lorok, Semarang,” *Sabda J. Kaji. Kebud.*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 65–75, 2016.
- [10] S. Dimitra and N. Yulastuti, “Potensi kampung nelayan sebagai modal permukiman berkelanjutan di Tambaklorok, Kelurahan Tanjung Mas,” *Tek. PWK (Perencanaan Wil. Kota)*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 11–18, 2012.
- [11] U. Sekaran and R. Bougie, *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. John Wiley & Sons, 2016.
- [12] R. Bogdan and S. K. Biklen, *Qualitative research for education*. Allyn & Bacon Boston, MA, 1997.
- [13] M. B. Miles, A. M. Huberman, M. A. Huberman, and M. Huberman, *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. sage, 1994.