

SOCIAL LIFE OF THE MALAY COASTAL COMMUNITY OF PANTAI CERMIN

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Abstract

Coastal communities play an important role in food provision, especially marine products such as various types of fish consumed by the wider community. The vastness of Indonesia's waters means that the country has coastal communities whose livelihoods are highly dependent on marine resources. Living in direct contact with the sea shapes the unique socioeconomic characteristics of coastal communities. This article discusses the social life of coastal communities, particularly the social structure that encompasses various levels, from fishing leaders, bosses or middlemen, fishermen who also own boats, to fishing laborers. The coastal community in Karangantu has distinctive characteristics such as a strong identity, consisting of various ethnic groups but with uniform economic activities, high population density, and limitations in meeting their daily needs. The factors that influence their economic conditions include natural conditions, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, access to capital, government policies, and market price fluctuations.

Keywords: *Characteristics, Social, Economic, Coastal Communities, Karangantu Port.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a maritime country with a maritime area that is much larger than its land area. According to data from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (Pratama, 2020), Indonesia's total area is approximately 7.81 million km², consisting of 3.25 million km² of maritime area and 2.55 million km² of Exclusive Economic Zone. Meanwhile, its land area only covers approximately 2.01 million km². The vastness of these waters shows that Indonesia has great potential in the maritime and fisheries sectors. The government has recognized that the maritime sector, particularly fisheries, is an important resource that can drive national development. This can be seen from the increase in the value of fishery exports in 2019, which reached Rp73.68 trillion, up 10.1% compared to the previous year. However, despite its abundant marine wealth, coastal and marine areas have not yet become the main focus of national economic development. This condition is reflected in the low level of welfare of coastal communities, most of whom live below the poverty line (Fatmasari, 2016). The lives of fishermen, who constitute a large part of the coastal community, are also still a cause for concern. They are often viewed as a group with low social and economic status, even though they play an important role in providing seafood for consumption by the wider community. Fishermen and farmers are similar in that they are both primary sector workers, but differences in natural conditions lead to differences in their social lives.

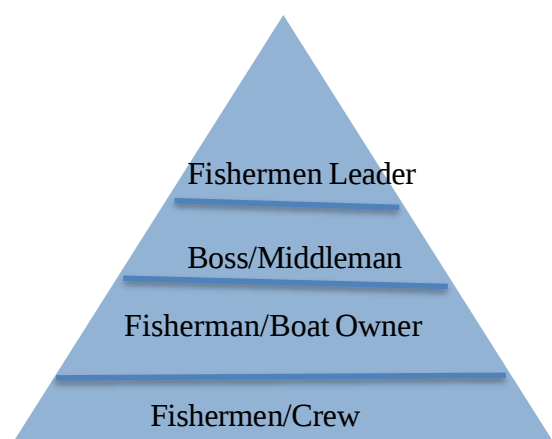
Coastal communities are an important part of the sustainability of civilization (Satria, 2015). Redfield refers to coastal communities as communities, which are divided into four types: large cities, small towns, farming villages, and remote villages. Generally, Indonesian coastal communities fall into the categories of farming villages and remote villages, with different cultural characteristics depending on the geographical conditions of each region. Based on this, the author wishes to examine the social and economic conditions of communities in the coastal area of Pantai Cermin. In this study, several factors were found to influence the economic conditions of local communities, such as the availability of facilities and infrastructure, access to capital, and the role of government policy. The development of coastal communities should not only be viewed from an economic perspective, but must also include social, cultural, and physical environmental dimensions (Anah, 2017), considering that all these aspects are interrelated and influence the welfare of the community. Based on this background, the author is interested in further researching the "Socio-Economic Life of the Community in Pantai Cermin."

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a method that presents research results and discussions in the form of descriptive descriptions (Usop, 2016). The subject of this study is the coastal community living in the Pantai Cermin area. Data collection techniques were carried out through direct observation and interviews with five fishermen as informants. These informants came from various ethnic backgrounds, namely Sundanese, Javanese Serang, and Bugis. The instruments used in this study included interview questionnaires, documentation tools, and writing equipment. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), the data analysis process was carried out simultaneously during the research, covering the processes of data reduction, compilation of findings, drawing conclusions, and data verification (Wahidmurni, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pantai Cermin is one of the main locations for fishing communities to carry out their economic activities, especially fishing using boats or ships. In addition, various other economic activities have also developed in this area, such as the provision of tourist boat trips and trade carried out by residents around Pantai Cermin. Social life in this area is reflected in the various activities of the community, which are interrelated and influence one another. Based on observations, the majority of the community at Pantai Cermin work as traditional fishermen or fishing laborers. This group plays an important role in contributing to national fish production, as evidenced by the existence of official facilities such as the Nusantara Fishing Port Office (PPN) to accommodate their catch. However, fishermen in Pantai Cermin still face inequality in the social structure, which causes their social position to remain marginalized. This can be seen from the social structure of the community around Karangantu Port, as shown in the following table:



Gambar 1. Struktur Sosial Ekonomi Masyarakat Nelayan Pelabuhan Karangantu

Based on the interview results, there is a fisherman leader at Karangantu Port who is highly respected by the community. This leader plays an important role in strengthening social relations and resolving various issues faced by fishermen. As stated by an informant with the initial Y, "There is a fisherman leader here whom we respect. When there are issues related to fishermen or the sea, we usually hold discussions together under the leadership of Mr. Wawan. He is an elder who is trusted to resolve problems." In the social structure of the community, fishing leaders occupy the highest position and also act as conduits for information from the government, particularly regarding maritime regulations. Furthermore, another important role is held by bosses or middlemen. They provide capital assistance, such as for boat construction or repair of fishing equipment. A fisherman with the initials Z stated that boss R had helped him with capital, even though the amount was limited, and as a form of repayment, he sold his catch to boss R, who was also a fish trader at the market. Other fishermen, such as informant Y, do the same. At Cermin Beach, some fishermen sell their catch through Nusantara Fisheries Port (PPN) officials, but most still depend on bosses or middlemen. In terms of social stratification, the next group is boat owners. There are two dominant ethnic groups in this region, namely the Serang Javanese and the Malay. Based on the interview results, there is a fisherman leader at Karangantu Port who is highly respected by the community. This leader plays an important role in strengthening social relations and resolving various issues faced by fishermen. As stated by an informant with the initial Y, "There is a fisherman leader here whom we respect. When there are issues related to fishermen or the sea, we usually hold discussions together under the

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In terms of social stratification, the next group is boat owners. There are two dominant ethnic groups in this region, namely the Serang Javanese and the Malay. There are Strong kinship ties foster a high level of solidarity among communities. In addition to shared origins, other bonds such as livelihoods, religion, and leadership systems also strengthen social ties within these communities. According to Redfield, coastal communities as part of rural society have characteristics such as collective identity, small and homogeneous populations, and limited fulfillment of needs. Identity here is not just about origins, but also reflects repetitive patterns of behavior that shape the identity of the community. However, one characteristic not found in Pantai Cermin is a limited population. On the contrary, this area is now densely populated due to the large number of migrants, especially from the Batak tribe who migrated to the coast long ago. Although the community is heterogeneous in terms of origin, they remain homogeneous in terms of livelihood and social activities.

In terms of fulfilling their needs, fishermen in Pantai Cermin are generally only able to meet their primary needs, such as clothing, food, and shelter. Uncertain incomes make it difficult to fulfill secondary and tertiary needs. This uncertainty is caused by several factors, such as unpredictable sea conditions. Bad weather, such as rain, can reduce catches and cause losses. In addition to natural factors, there are also obstacles in the form of limited facilities and infrastructure, lack of access to capital, and market price uncertainty. Facilities such as boats, nets, engines, and fuel are urgently needed, but they are expensive for fishermen with low incomes. Many fishermen who do not own boats have to ride with boat owners and share their catch. The prices of nets and fuel are also high, which is not proportional to fishermen's income, especially if the catch is small.

Capital problems are also a concern for fishermen. Informant E, for example, wants his own boat but does not have the funds, while informant Z complains about the high cost of boat repairs. Many fishermen are ultimately forced to borrow money from mobile banks, which actually adds to their economic burden because they have to repay their debts periodically. In terms of policy, fishermen feel that there are no government programs that truly address their needs. Although there is assistance such as BLT and BPNT, its distribution is considered uneven. As an area with a fishing port, the community hopes for development and special attention from the government for the marine and fisheries sector. Finally, market prices are also a problem. When catches are abundant, fish prices actually fall, so they do not significantly increase fishermen's incomes. This keeps their incomes low even though catches are plentiful.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a country with abundant marine and fishery resources, it is only natural that the government prioritizes development in this sector. Development based on this potential can have a significant positive impact on both the community and the government. Therefore, development in the marine and fisheries sector needs to be carried out in a more optimal and equitable manner. In the process, attention To coastal communities cannot be ignored, because the success of development is highly dependent on economic actors in this sector, especially fishermen. Support in the form of providing facilities and infrastructure, access to capital, and appropriate policies is essential to encourage the improvement of the social and economic welfare of the Karangantu coastal community. Thus, Indonesia's marine wealth can be fully utilized to improve the standard of living of the community, especially those living in coastal areas.

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