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The Social Service Activities for Coastal Communities Affected by Coastal Erosion in Karawang Regency

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Abstract

Some coastal areas of Karawang Regency are affected by severe coastal erosion. This condition worsens the socio-economic life of coastal communities in Karawang Regency, particularly those in remote areas, amidst their relatively poor conditions. For this reason, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang and other universities held community service activities in the form of social service involving students. The social service was held on Saturday, October 12, 2024. This activity employs an observational socialization method to arouse students' concern to pay attention to the lives of remote coastal communities in Karawang Regency. As a result, this activity was successful due to the support of the Pasirjaya Village Government apparatus and local community leaders.

Keywords: isolation; observational socialization; poverty

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INTRODUCTION

Coastal areas are transitional areas between terrestrial and marine ecosystems that are affected by changes on land and sea. This area provides productive natural resources through food sources, mineral and energy mines, communication media, and recreation or tourism areas (Hutabarat et al., 2009). However, coastal areas are highly vulnerable to environmental pressures on land and sea (Azuga, 2021). One form of environmental pressure is coastal erosion that has hit various coastal areas in Indonesia, including Karawang Regency. Fauzie (2016) stated that the level of coastal damage due to coastal erosion was already high, especially in the Cibuaya, Cilebar, and Cilamaya Kulon Subdistricts. Nopiana (2021) also reported that based on observations in 1994 and 2018, 135 ha of aquaculture, settlements, and mangroves in the Cibuaya Beach area had been lost to sea waters. Severe coastal erosion at Cibuaya Beach occurred in a fairly dense residential area. On Cilebar Beach, the coastal erosion that occurred covered an area of 45 ha, while in the coastal area of Cilamaya Kulon, the land affected by coastal erosion was 12 ha of aquaculture land.

The high vulnerability in the coastal area of Karawang Regency due to coastal erosion has resulted in major economic and social losses for coastal communities (Nopiana et al., 2020a). For this reason, concern from stakeholders is needed for coastal communities in Karawang Regency. Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, one of the stakeholders in Karawang Regency and other universities, follows up on this need by conducting community service activities. Community service is in the form of social service activities, such as encouraging student involvement so that they care more or increase their attention to the lives of people in the coastal areas of Karawang Regency. The location of the activity is focused on Pasirjaya Village, Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict, Karawang Regency. The village area is one of the Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict most severely affected by coastal erosion

(Nopiana et al., 2020b; Nopiana et al., 2020c; Nopiana et al., 2021; Nopiana et al., 2023; Nopiana et al., 2024).

METHOD

Description of Activity Location

Pasirjaya Village is one of 12 villages in the administrative area of Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict, Karawang Regency. Geographically, Pasirjaya Village borders the Java Sea to the north, Pasirukem Village to the south, Sumurgede Village to the west, and Sukajaya Village to the east. The area of Pasirjaya Village is 8.62 km² or 13.61% of the total area of Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict. 5.51 km² of the total area of the village is rice fields. Meanwhile, the aquaculture area covers 0.6 km². The area of this village is at an altitude of 13.8 meters above sea level, 7 km from the capital of Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict. However, the distance between this village and the capital of Karawang Regency is quite far, which is 40 km. The village area is divided into 3 hamlets, 8 Community Units (RW), and 26 Neighborhood Units (RT). The population of Pasirjaya Village in 2022 was 7,940 people, consisting of 2,975 heads of families (The Central Statistics Agency of Karawang Regency, 2023).

Implementation Method of the Activity

This community service activity is implemented as social service, involving students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang. The students are directed to increase their concern for people experiencing poverty in Karawang Regency, primarily in remote coastal areas. On this basis, the method of implementing this community service activity applies the observational socialization method (Nopiana et al., 2022), namely by inviting students to carry out direct observations in the field, as well as conducting dialogues with remote coastal communities in Pasirjaya Village, Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict, Karawang Regency. This activity aims to foster a sense of empathy and concern among students for the lives of low-income people, particularly the village's coastal communities. This activity also involves neighborhood officials and local community leaders as facilitators and mediators in implementing this social service.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fifteen students of the undergraduate program of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, attended this social service activity on Saturday, October 12, 2024. The activity began at around 7:30 a.m., with the students gathering at the residence of one of the service team members in the Guro 1 area, Nagasari Urban Village, West Karawang Subdistrict, Karawang Regency. Considering it was towards noon, the departure was carried out after the service team checked the belongings for the needs of the social service carried in the students' vehicles. Based on the plan, this activity was held for half a day from morning to noon, with a one-way trip for approximately 1.5 hours. It was done so that the students' stamina would not be drained, and they would not experience fatigue or illness, which could interfere with their daily lecture activities, considering this activity was held during the semester.

On the way, the students could fill up with sufficient fuel at the gas station because the journey to the service location was quite far. The students enjoyed the fresh air on the journey beyond the villages in Rawamerta and Cilebar Subdistricts, dominated by rice farming areas. Entering the downstream area of Tempuran Subdistrict, particularly in Ciparagejaya Village, the students were presented with a contrasting view, seeing the border between the rice fields and the aquaculture land. It seemed that they rarely travel to the coastal areas of Karawang Regency, including this area. Furthermore, the road access is only a footpath along the pond embankment, approaching the service location. That is why the service team warned the students to use motorbikes; they previously used cars to get to the location.

Finally, the journey arrived at the service location: Tanjungbaru Hutment, Pasirjaya Village, Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict. That was the second community service activity one of the service teams carried out. First, the community service team visited the neighborhood head's house to ask for facilitation and mediation for the smooth running of this activity. Unfortunately, the neighborhood head was not at home because he worked in the aquaculture land, where there was a salt harvest. However, the neighborhood head's wife, a community leader in the hutment, was willing to facilitate and mediate this activity. After taking a break, the students immediately visited the villagers' homes to catch their living conditions, which were limited. Some of their houses were previously permanent

or semi-permanent, with cement walls and tiled floors. However, coastal erosion slowly destroyed them, and then they were shifted with makeshift construction. Most houses in this hutment currently still have bamboo walls, sometimes covered with plastic and dirt floors. Ironically, in Karawang Regency, which is famous for its rapid economic growth region, with thousands of companies, some of which are sheltered in several large industrial areas, there are still people with lives that are so disadvantaged. This condition confirms the opinion of Nopiana et al. (2020c), who stated that the coastal areas of Karawang Regency had received less development and attention from stakeholders, primarily the local government. The Karawang Regency Government is busy developing in urban areas, while rural areas, particularly in remote coastal areas, have been waiting for development for a long time. That motivated the service team and students to carry out this activity in the midday heat in the hot coastal weather.

The students each delivered the aid they brought from their hometowns to the Tanjungbaru Hutment community. Although they gave only a few items, the hutment community was still comfortable receiving them while expressing their gratitude to the students (Figure 1). A student coordinator supported the neighborhood head's wife in facilitating the aid delivery. The students were amazed and touched to catch an elderly grandmother crying when she accepted the aid. The grandmother was alone in her house, without her relatives. This hutment seems to be a poverty enclave in Pasirjaya Village, Cilamaya Kulon Subdistrict.



Figure 1. Students provide aids to the Tanjungbaru Hutment community

The students were quite satisfied with the activities that had been carried out. They evaluated the shortcomings and limitations of implementing the activity. There will be lessons for them to be better in the next activity. After the activity, they enjoyed the beach view while tasting the food and drinks provided by the stalls sold by the villagers. This session was a time for entertainment and fostering their togetherness, which was included in the implementation of this social service activity (Figure 2). Before the service team and the students went home, they bid farewell and expressed their

most profound gratitude for the support from the neighborhood head's wife. They conveyed their respects to the neighborhood head because they had not met him until they almost went home.



Figure 2. The community service team and students gathered after the activity had been carried out

CONCLUSION

This social service activity was successful and could be held thanks to the involvement of students, as well as facilitation and mediation from government officials and community leaders of Pasirjaya Village. This activity opened the students' horizons about the life of coastal communities, which are uncomfortable and still plagued by poverty. The people of Tanjungbaru Hutment, Pasirjaya Village, felt cared for by parties outside their village amidst their perception of the low level of stakeholder support for them. Suggestions for improvement for this activity in the future include first coordinating with the village government officials some day before the activity is carried out so that the implementation of the activity is more planned and focused. In addition, the aid menu should be prepared with food ingredients that are really needed by the village community, such as rice, in sufficient quantities according to the available budget.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI

The authors declare that no generative AI or AI-assisted technologies were used in the writing process of this manuscript.

CONFLICTING INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors states that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

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