

# Structural and Cultural Aspects as the Potentials in the Development of Alternative Education for Fishermen Community

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## Abstract

Fisherman community is a community that is generally vulnerable to poverty and underdeveloped education. However, this phenomenon is not found in the Banyutowo village fishermen community because they already have a view to improve their standard of living through education. However, the prioritized education is a formal education that has not been based on the values of local wisdom that they have so that educated people tend not to return to their villages. This study aims to determine the potentials of Banyutowo village that can support the development of alternative education based on local wisdom of the fishermen community. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection methods namely observation, in-depth interview and FGD. Data validity uses source and method triangulation. The results show that: (1) The potentials of the Banyutowo village fishermen community in supporting the development of alternative education include structural and cultural aspects (2) Structural aspect is in the form of educational institutions managed by Christian and Muslim communities and local leadership figures who are able to make the villagers move forward (3) Cultural aspect is in the form of futuristic cultural values orientation, high motivation for achievement, and religious values that support them to become quality individuals.

## Keywords

alternative education, cultural, fishermen community, potency, structural

## INTRODUCTION

One important pillar to improve the quality of human resources is education. Through education, the people of Indonesia can be enlightened and have superior capacity and quality so that they cannot only build their nation independently but also be able to stand up equally and compete with other nations in the world. For this reason, educa-

tion has become one of the aspects mandated by the 1945 Constitution as the constitutional basis of the Republic of Indonesia.

Based on the constitutional basis, the state is obliged to fulfill the livelihoods of people in all lines to obtain education. De-

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velopment programs promoted at this time have shown the government's efforts in developing education, both in formal education and non-formal education (Rahmat, 2015). In formal education, improvements that have been made include the 9-year compulsory education, curriculum improvement, and teaching staff quality improvement, while in non-formal education include improving community soft skills, fostering school dropouts through "*Kejar Paket A*" (special education for elementary school dropouts), and the formation of vocational village. These programs are carried out in all segments of society without exception.

In the fishermen communities, improving the quality of education through formal education and non-formal education is also well organized. At present, some data show that the dropout rate for children in coastal areas belonging to the 9-year-compulsory education has diminished. This is supported by more adequate educational facilities and infrastructure, the increasingly affordable access to education, and the increased awareness of the fishermen community about the importance of education (Noviyanti, Wisudo, Wiyono, Baskoro, & Hascaryo, 2015; Siti & Siregar, 2016). In addition, fishermen's perception of the importance of formal education has also begun to be strengthened (Mizhardi, 2016). This condition can also be seen in the fishermen communities of Banyutowo Village, Dukuh Seti Sub-District, Pati District. As a village that has a coastline and is directly adjacent to the Java sea, the majority of the people work as fishermen. There are those who work as fishermen with traditional fishing gear, there are also fishermen with modern fishing gear. In addition, in Banyutowo Village there are also fishermen or ship crews who do not own a boat but only work on fishing boats that have large capital

Although fishermen's stratification can clearly be seen in Banyutowo Village causing income differences, their level of education is evenly distributed, from early childhood education to higher education. Not a few children of fishermen earn col-

lege degrees and work outside fisheries. On the one hand, this has been an encouraging achievement for the Banyutowo community, but on the other hand, this condition has become a distinct irony for the fishermen community, because their young generation no longer has much knowledge and skills as fishermen. Local knowledge and wisdom systems related to their region and livelihoods are degraded among the younger generation. Formal education in Banyutowo village was apparently not enough to answer these challenges and problems.

With a background of socio-cultural conditions and education in Banyutowo as described before, alternative education can be the solution. Through the alternative education, the younger generation of Banyutowo can rediscover their maritime identity and local wisdom and finish their formal school as well. The socio-cultural potentials of Banyutowo Village is quite supportive for developing the alternative education, both its social institutions and cultural values. Therefore, this paper aims to elaborate further on the structural and cultural aspects as the potentials in the development of alternative education in Banyutowo Village.

## METHOD

This study uses qualitative research methods that base the activities on descriptive data. This research was conducted in Banyutowo Village, Dukuh Seti Sub-District, Pati District. The location of the study was determined because of several considerations, namely: first, it is one of the fishing villages that has a community with a high level of education. Second, there are several social institutions that support education there. The research target (research subject) was the community (fishermen) in Banyutowo Village, Dukuh Seti Sub-District, Pati District. To obtain additional data, this study determined several people as supporting informants, namely community leaders, village government agency, village / hamlet and sub-district officials, and surrounding communities. Data collection techniques used in-depth interviews, participant ob-

servation and documentation (Moleong, 1991). The Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) methods are used to accommodate the aspirations of the community and other stakeholders. These methods are very good to develop community participation in planning and carrying out sustainable actions. Techniques of data processing and analysis used descriptive qualitative analysis. The analysis process used an interactive analysis model that goes through the following process: collected data is reduced in the form of research findings that are relevant to the writing material, and then presented narratively. Data reduction and presentation are two components of analysis carried out together with the process of collecting data, presented, described and then given meaning by logical interpretation. The activities of the three components interact until the correct conclusions are obtained. If conclusions are inadequate, re-testing activities are needed, namely by looking for more data in the field and trying to interpret it with a more focused focus. Thus, the activities of analysis and data collection is a cycle process until the research is completed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Portrait of Fishermen's Life in Banyutowo Village

Banyutowo village is one of the villages in Central Java which borders directly with the Java Sea. As a community living on the coast, most of the residents of Banyutowo Village work as fishermen. Village monograph data for 2017 states that out of 2,454 people in Banyutowo Village, fishermen are the largest type of livelihood, namely 1,081 people. This amount is the total of all types of fishermen, ranging from fishing boat owners, crew members, fishermen with small boats, to labor fishermen. Because the number of fishermen is large and is supported by a strategic geographical location, the Pati District Government established a Fish Auction Place (TPI) in Banyutowo Village. The TPI building is the second building that was built in Banyutowo after the old one had been

damaged and did not work anymore. With this TPI, fishermen in Banyutowo and surrounding areas no longer have to sell their fish in distant places. They simply land their catches at Banyutowo TPI with a quite large space and equipped with a reliable bargaining agent.

The role of the bargaining agent at the Banyutowo TPI is very significant and becomes the main media for the ongoing process of economic exchange of fishermen with fish traders and consumers in the fish auction. Bargaining agent becomes a unique job that cannot be replaced immediately by others, because the bargaining agent must carefully predict the number of fish auctioned at prices that comply with market standards, ensure that fish are sold at the best prices and must do so very quickly because the fresh fish commodity may not wait long at TPI so as not to reduce its quality. Through this fish auction, fishermen in Banyutowo Village can sell their fish catches to fulfill their daily needs.

### Structural Aspects in the Development of Local Wisdom-Based Community School in Banyutowo Village

As a community living on the coast with a main livelihood as fishermen, the people of Banyutowo Village have a number of socio-cultural potentials which so far have not been fully utilized to support education based on local wisdom. Whereas by maximizing its local potential, fishermen can be empowered and their lives can be more prosperous (Amiruddin, 2014; Aziz, 2011; Indarti & Wardana, 2013; Rochwulaningsih, 2015; Sudrajat, 2016). This makes the children in Banyutowo Village unable to recognize aspects of their locality, even though they attend formal school at a high level. Therefore, the development of community school in the fishermen community of Banyutowo Village is based on the socio-cultural potentials they have.

The high interest of the Banyutowo Village community towards formal education is characterized by the decreasing number of dropouts and the increasing number of people who send their children to college.

In addition to the adequate access to education and adequate educational facilities, the public's interest in sending their children to school is also supported by several social aspects, namely:

#### Educational Institutions Organized by the Religious Foundation.

Banyutowo village is a village that has a composition that is almost balanced between Christians and Muslims. According to Mr Fauzi, the indigenous people who have inhabited the village of Banyutowo for a long time were predominantly Christian, but gradually the religion of Islam developed along with the many immigrants from Demak, Tuban, Sarang, and Palembang who entered and settled in this area. However, there were no frontal horizontal conflicts due to differences in their beliefs. The harmony of religious life is also increasingly strengthened by religious activities carried out alternately and hand in hand.

To support the improvement of the quality of the community in the field of education, each religion also has institutions or foundations that provide formal and informal education. Formal education is held through formal schools such as Raudhatul Athfal (RA) at the level of kindergarten and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) at the elementary level owned by the Islamic Foundation in Banyutowo. Meanwhile, informal education is held through the Sunday School by the Javanese Gospel Church (GITJ), Bethani Church Sunday School and Al-Qur'an Education Group (TPQ) in the Al-Muhajirin Foundation. In these informal educational institutions, children are given religious knowledge, values investment, religious doctrine, and personality formation based on their religious values.

At Sunday School, both at GMTI and at Bethani Church, Christian children are given religious studies and skill development. Religious studies include strengthening the basic teachings of the Christian faith based on the Gospel. Children who attend these schools are those in the range of 3 years old to 12 years old. They are categorized in different classes based on their age. In addition,

at this Sunday school, the students are also given skills such as music, choir and other skills. The instructor is taken from another established church, or a cadre or congregation of the church who has expertise in the matter.

At the Al-Muhajirin Foundation, the Al-Qur'an learning for children who are Muslim is done every day in the afternoon through the Al-Qur'an Education Group (TPQ). Through this TPQ children are taught to recognize hijaiyah letters and read verses of the Qur'an smoothly. Children who take this TPQ are also in the range of 3 years to 12 years old. In addition to reciting, they were also given moral education and personality formation through stories of exemplary teachings from the Prophet Muhammad and his friends.

"TPQ is held two times a day at school hours and as an extra-curricular activity. This is done to give sufficient religious teaching for children since they are living among the other majority of Christians. It will be difficult to build a strong character of moslem if the character investment is not done in the young age. One of the forms of religious character investments is by reciting the Asmaul Husna before starting the classes. This activity is done from the first grader to the sixth graders" (Abdul Musafak, 60 Tahun, Guru MI, 13 Mei 2017)

Children do not get much skills development from TPQ but from formal schools namely Raudhatul Athfal and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. This is because children who attend RA and MI are also students at TPQ. The skills taught in RA and MI are drum bands, badminton and tambourines. Through these skills, children in the village of Banyutowo have been able to compete outside the village such as in the competitions and championships at the district and provincial levels.

To support the development of education in Banyutowo Village, the GITJ Church seems to have a special program, namely the provision of PPA (Children's Education Program) scholarship. This scholarship is an educational donation for economically

disadvantaged fishermen's children whose head office is in Bandung, West Java. In Banyutowo Village, the PPA scholarship is coordinated and managed by the GITJ management. Through this scholarship, many children in Banyutowo Village, especially those who are GITJ Church members, have benefited from the scholarship.

In the Al Muhajirin foundation, the steps to provide scholarships to children from underprivileged families have not yet been seen. During this time, the social organization that was given to poor families was only through the mechanism of zakat fitrah and zakat mal. However, the compensation is still general in nature and has not been specified on strengthening the quality of children's education.

### Local Leadership Figure

As one of the villages on the North Coast of Java, the Banyutowo village is led by the village head who oversees several hamlets. In contrast to agricultural-based villages, Banyutowo village does not have bengkok. In Rural Java, bengkok land is a land owned by the village whose control and exploitation is managed by the village head as a reward or salary for his role in managing the village. But this is not found in Banyutowo Village because this village is a fishing village with minimal agricultural areas. However, village management and arrangements can be carried out by the Banyutowo village head properly. The construction of several village infrastructures has been carried out including road repairs, the construction of Fish Auction Places, and development of educational facilities and infrastructure such as PAUD (Early Childhood Education) and Kindergarten (TK).

The head of Banyutowo village is currently held by Pak Muktari who has entered the second period of his leadership. Before serving as head of the village, Pak Muktari was a fisherman and manager of a cooperative and a fishermen association in Pati regency. Life as a fisherman and taking care of fishermen made Pak Muktari understand much of the grief of the lives of fishermen. For him, work as fishermen is a job that is

vulnerable to problems because the source of their livelihood depends on the wind and weather. This is what makes fishermen always adaptive and ready for all possibilities for the uncertainty of their catch. Seeing this condition, Pak Muktari always encourages its citizens to move forward and not only be satisfied with their current conditions. Moreover, at this time there is a plan of government to develop a Fish Landing Site of Pati district in Banyutowo Village, which makes people need to prepare their resources in the face of the development. In this case, Pak Muktari is very worried that his people will only become spectators in the development not as perpetrators. For this reason, on various occasions Pak Muktari always motivates his citizens to become middle-class fishermen.

Pak Muktari's presence as a visionary local figure is an agent of change in the fishing community of Banyutowo Village. His pioneering role in empowering rural communities is an important step in improving the quality of life of the community. At present, the fishing community in Banyutowo is increasingly aware of the importance of education as a way for them to do social climbing and improve their quality of life. Not a few families of fishermen who work hard even they have to apply for credit at the bank just to send their children to the level of tertiary education. Many of them have been successful and have jobs and positions outside fisheries. This condition is one of the potentials for the Banyutowo Village because they can become pioneers of development. But on the other hand, this has also become a weakness because they have not returned to build their villages and communities after achieving higher education.

### Cultural Aspect in the Development of Local Wisdom-Based Community School in Banyutowo Village

In addition to the structural aspects, the development of community schools is also supported by cultural aspects, namely cultural values that are built and capable of being a driving force for the progress of the Banyutowo Village community. The cultural

aspects are:

### **Futuristic Cultural Values Orientation**

Cultural values orientation is one of the substantial things in forming the character and personality of a community group. Through the cultural values orientation, people always act and behave relevantly to the cultural values they have. Although the orientation of a society's cultural values cannot be seen in plain view, it can be seen from the society's daily choices, activities, and actions. In the Banyutowo Village community, the orientation of their cultural values can be seen from their perspectives or daily activities.

For the Banyutowo villagers, their hard condition as fishermen and their financial difficulties do not make them give up to give good education for their children. Pak Sutar (50 years) told that his occupation as small fisherman does not enable him to give good education for his children. Nevertheless, he has a view that his children's education is far more important to get a better work so that his children do not experience a hard life as a fisherman like him. To be able to send his children to school, Pak Sutar has to sail in a long distance to Palembang to find another side job since the fish he caught is not enough. A hard journey with a small ship he did to realize his hope of his children's success in education.

### *High Motivation for Achievement*

Banyutowo village is one of the fishing villages in Central Java which is quite unique. This can be seen from the condition of the people who are in shortage financially but the level of formal education for their children is good. Their motivation in sending their children to school is quite high because it is based on the view that education is one channel to change their lives. Mrs. Sunarti (52 years old) shared her experience when she was about to establish an early childhood education (PAUD) school. According to her, the establishment of PAUD in Banyutowo Village did not experience significant obstacles because mothers were very enthusiastic about welcoming and sending

their children to PAUD. Even though in the morning they were busy looking for extra income by becoming fish fillet workers, they were still enthusiastic to send their children to school.

In the level of elementary, junior high and senior high school, the dropout rate in Banyutowo Village is quite low. Even though children occasionally join *menyang* (looking for fish), it does not make them leave their school permanently. At the university level, the motivation of children in Banyutowo is high enough to attend a reputable university. Some of them can even be successful in the admission test of reputable state universities such as UGM, Undip, Unnes, and UIN. This condition makes parents and their younger siblings be motivated to get the same achievement.

### *Religious Values that Support the Improvement of Reliable Human Resources*

One important aspect that is quite interesting in Banyutowo Village is the religious aspect which is not only a source of their beliefs, but also a driving force for the progress of their education. Even though their religion is different, the religious values of each religion have similarities in supporting education and improving the quality of Human Resources. For people who are Christian, working and learning is a holy way so that they can succeed and serve God. For this reason, the Church strongly supports the improvement of education in Banyutowo Village. One of the supports is through PPA scholarships.

Meanwhile, for people who are Muslim, working and learning is Islamic jihad which means being serious in the way of Allah to achieve glory and piety. For Muslim communities, a weak generation is a generation that is disliked by Allah so they must try to enhance their degree with science. One of the ways taken by Islamic foundations in Banyutowo Village is by organizing dynamic formal education. This means that the rules made by the school are implemented flexibly and not rigidly, enabling child to go to formal school. This is done considering the

condition of children in Banyutowo Village who still often help their parents to catch fish at the sea. If the rules applied are too rigid, the schools is worried that there will be many children experience dropping out of school, so loosening the rules becomes one of the alternatives to embrace them so they can still attend formal school.

## CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion described above it can be concluded that Banyutowo Village experienced symptoms of being abandoned by the younger generation who received higher education because they did not return to the village after completing their education. Therefore alternative education that promotes a variety of local wealth and local wisdom, especially related to the maritime world, is one way out to invite Banyutowo young people to continue to love their villages, and participate in developing the village. Alternative education carried out has a great potential for success due to structural and cultural supports. Structural aspects include the existence of educational institutions managed by Christian and Muslim communities as well as local leadership figures who are able to move the villagers forward. While the cultural aspects are in the form of futuristic cultural values orientation, high motivation for achievement and religious values that support them to become quality individuals.

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