

HARMONIOUS INTERACTION AMONG ETHNICAL COMMUNITIES IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted in 13 villages of Secanggang district, North Sumatra Province-Indonesia. This study describes the capacity and condition of harmonious interaction among ethnical communities in regional development, which focuses on villager motivation as intervening variables. Motivation is a very important instrument in bridging the concepts of harmony among communities towards regional development. Development of a region is implemented through harmonious interaction among various ethnic communities that can serve motivation as an intervening variable. This study uses a combination of qualitative (exploratory) and quantitative method. There is one factor that plays a role as a determinant factor in causing successful development. The interaction, either directly or indirectly, generates assimilation between ethnical cultures.

Keywords : Regional Development, Motivation, Harmony interaction among inter ethnics community

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilakukan di 13 Desa Kecamatan Secanggang, Propinsi Suamtra Utara-Indonesia. Penelitian ini memaparkan kapasitas dan keharmonisan interaksi antar komunitas etnis dalam pembangunan wilayah yang terkonsentrasi pada motivasi masyarakat sebagai variabel intervening. Motivasi merupakan sebagai suatu instrument yang sangat penting didalam menjembatani antara konsep keharmonisan antar komunitas terhadap pembangunan wilayah. Pembangunan wilayah salah satunya direalisasikan melalui keharmonisan interaksi antar komunitas etnis yang dapat menumbuhkan motivasi sebagai variabel penjelasnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode gabungan yakni kualitatif (eksplorasi) dan kuantitatif. Analisis kuantitatif dengan kuesioner dilakukan dengan pengembangan dan pendalaman di lapangan. Terdapat satu faktor yang berperan sebagai penentu keberhasilan wilayah. Proses interaksi tersebut baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung menyebabkan asimilasi budaya antar komunitas etnis.

Kata kunci : Pembangunan wilayah, Motivasi, Keharmonisan interaksi antar komunitas etnis

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the developing countries in the world that have large pluralistic society. Indonesia's pluralistic society made up of various ethnics, religions, races and groups. It is characterized by a variety of socio-economic conditions. The varieties are also multidimensional, spreads from one community to other community. One of socio-economic variation is including the community that lives below

the poverty line that plays a vital role in regional development.

Reports made by the Central Statistics Agency/Board (BPS) indicate that the number of poor people in Indonesia (the population below the poverty line) is about 31.02 millions (13.33 percent) in March 2010. This condition shows that the number of poor people decreased by 1.51

million. Furthermore, in March 2011, the number of poor people was 30.01 millions (12.49 percent), so there is a decrease of 1.01 millions. Similarly, in March 2012, the number reached 29.13 millions (11.96 percent). It illustrates that the number of poor people decreased by 0.88 million [BPS, 2012]

Overall condition indicates that the problem of poverty is spreading to various regions in Indonesia. In the western part of Indonesia, especially in North Sumatra Province, the amount of the poverty rate is still high. The proportion of poor people in regencies or cities varies highly. As an example, the number and percentage of poor people in Langkat Regency is shown in Table 1.

Based on the rate and percentage of the poor in 2006-2010, poverty rate decreased to about 1.5 percent/year, indicates high poverty rate that difficult to be reduced. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of poor people in Langkat Regency of about 10.85 percent. This percentage is relative high in North Sumatra. The declined poverty rate of only 1.5 percent/year is a potential target for development programs. This can be conducted through community empowerment and allocating natural resources to improve social welfare. There-

fore it means that a process or a mechanism must be taken to strengthen individuals, organizations, or communities to overcome the poverty problem [Wrihatnolo and Dwidjowinoto, 2007].

The empowerment includes a service to the community as the components and also a capability to provide a source of income or increase job opportunity to the community. It is operated based on collaborative process between the provider and the community in a mutual benefit [Dubois and Miley, 2005].

According to the research conducted by Sihombing [2007] on decentralization and community development in coastal area of Langkat Regency, the level of coastal community welfare in Langkat Regency is still very low. Coastal and inland areas in Secanggang District consists of several villages, in which the population is characterized by a variety of ethnics. Most of the population in the villages lives below the poverty line. In reality, the poverty in Secanggang District is not only experienced by one particular ethnic. However, most of the ethnic groups are undue poverty. Some indicators of poverty in the Langkat Regency, particularly Secanggang district are shown in Table 2.

Tabel 1. Number and Percentage of Poor People in Langkat Regency in 2004-2010

No	Year	Amount	Percentage
1	2006	199.24	19.65
2	2007	185.8	18.23
3	2008	152.98	14.81
4	2009	133.14	12.75
5	2010	104.80	10.85

Sources: Indonesian Population Board (BPS) Langkat, 2013

Table 2. Poor Families in Secanggang District, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province 2008-2012

No	Village/Rural	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1	Kepala Sungai	548	439	342	342	628
2	Teluk	457	615	489	489	480
3	Cinta Raja	110	113	89	89	20
4	Hinai Kiri	522	542	403	403	389
5	Kebun Kelapa	422	374	291	291	303
6	Sungai Ular	374	375	281	281	422
7	Tanjung Ibus	488	537	443	433	592
8	Secanggang	914	935	767	767	715
9	Selotong	714	508	493	403	351
10	Karang Gading	947	715	482	482	742
11	Jaring Halus	507	520	503	503	373
12	Telaga Jernih	672	625	563	563	580
13	Perkotaan	290	276	161	161	271
14	Kwala Besar	193	175	149	149	203
15	Karang ayar	770	542	484	484	410
16	Pantai Gading	634	493	430	430	433
17	Suka Mulia	634	493	291	291	318

Source: Monographic data of Secanggang District, Langkat Regency, 2012

The poverty in Langkat Regency, particularly Secanggang district is a very fundamental problem. Therefore it has become main focus in the implementation of development programs. At present, development programs come from both within provincial government of North Sumatera and government of Langkat regency.

The willingness of community members to accept the implementation of development programs is based on their motivation. This means that they have an impulse, desire, passion and other driving force to do something, which is government programs in particular [Gerungan, 1987]. Similar motivation of the community members represents characteristic of a community. In order to achieve same goals, harmonious interaction among the community must exist although the community consists of different ethnics. Based on the description presented above, conceptual question can be formulated. This paper intended to assess whether harmonious interaction among ethnic communities, especially driven by the motivation of the community

members, has positive influence towards regional development.

According to Weber in *Anwar and Adang*, [2013] there are several models in integrated and coherent inter-ethnic relations, as follows:

1) Ethnicity as a form of status groups

As a group, ethnic group presents a subjective belief in their offspring because of their similarities in physical aspect. Fundamental principle of the first model describes the existence of a certain ethnicity of the group's trust. In addition, ethnicity apparently reinforced and affirmed in the realm of cultural or physical similarities or in the basis of sharing memories together.

2) Ethnicity as a mechanism of social monopolistic exposure

Within a group there is social monopolistic exposure that prevents people who are not the members of the group to gain symbolic status or material inside the group. The exposure is based on the attitude of ethnocentrism. According to *Summer* [1939] in *Veeger* [1985], in ethnocentrism attitude, there is always a conflict between their

own group with other groups that begins by latent conflict. Although the conflict is always inherent in any society, especially in Indonesia, the phenomenon is not always permanent [Nasikun, 1995]. This is because any conflict between an ethnic group with other ethnic group will soon be neutralized by the presence of dual loyalty (cross-cutting loyalties), which often called general assessment standard or known as basic (fundamental) social values. The role of the general assessment standard or basic social values, in turn will create social integration inside the existing community members. The process begins with the interaction between members of the community with each other to foster the perception of each member in the community. Thus, it is not impossible if in a certain period of time, a motivation to have same identity as other parties will spread. The identification process not only stops here, but will continue to evolve with emerging new motivation.

Basically, motivational behavior is a manifestation of what human think related to their life in society. In this case, *Newcomb* [1978] says that the motivational behavior collectively referred to all forms of behavior, that role as an effort to achieve the goal. According to *Newcomb* [1978], is a behavior includes everything that can be seen, done, felt and thought by someone in the way he interacts to pursuit certain goals. How strong the motivation of a person will determine his/her quality, both in the context of learning and life.

THE METHODS

This research took place in Secanggang District. Regional development measured using regional planning perspective, while sociological perspective measured using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods [Gray, 2009]. This method focuses on the concept of multi ethnics harmonization capacity, measured through ethnic motivation variables, towards

community participation in regional development. This study was conducted in thirteen villages in Secanggang. This study implemented firstly by pre-survey preparation, field orientation, preliminary information gathering, direct identification in the location, and analyzing the results by descriptive method.

According to several issues that have been formulated, the object of this study is the villagers in the district of Secanggang. The villagers consists of various ethnicities that have formed certain communities. This is particularly for those who lives in middle-low level of socio-economic status. To determine the number of samples, multivarious sampling or combined sampling is used, namely cluster sampling (sample by regions) and random sampling.

Data in this research is collected based on qualitative and quantitative method, which then measured for its validation. The data is collected using these techniques: 1) Observation - the researchers examine the activities of the subject in the study and obtain the results without getting any help from anyone. 2) Questionnaire - data is collected using structured questionnaires (structured question) to facilitate data processing. 3) In depth interview - used during the pursuit of answers in doubtful categories. 4) Appreciation (*Einfuehlen*) - a technique of data collection through deepening of respondents perception/ opinions.

To address several issues that have been formulated conceptually, several variables are used. The variables are defined below:

1. Harmonious interaction among ethnic community; is harmony and balance of the interrelationships in all aspects of life, including human beings as individuals and as a group, and also between groups from different ethnics in certain society.
2. Motivation; is a driven factor and willingness to colaborate with other

parties related to the dynamics of life aspects.

3. Regional development; is community empowerment of to improve science and technology, infrastructure, and facilities including socio-economic consolidation through allocation of existing natural resources.

This study also uses quantitative techniques to find out few aspects. The techniques used are:

1. Sample design technique; is a technique to calculate number of required samples. According to *Riduwan* [2007], the samples are determined by using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{N.(d)^2 + 1}$$

2. Product Moment Correlation calculated using the following formula:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \cdot \sum xy - \sum x \cdot \sum y}{n \cdot \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2 \cdot n \cdot \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2}$$

To determine the level of correlation, classification from *Riduwan* [2007] is used as a reference (Table 3).

Table 3. Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient r Value

Coefficient Interval	Level
0.80 - 1.000	Very Strong
0.60 - 0.799	Strong
0.40 - 0.599	Strong Enough
0.20 - 0.399	Weak
0.00 - 0.199	Very Weak

- a. Partial correlations with the formula used as follows :

$$r_{xy.z} = \frac{r_{xy} - r_{xz} \cdot r_{yz}}{\sqrt{(1 - r_{xz}^2)(1 - r_{yz}^2)}}$$

To prove the hypothesis, analysis of primary data taken through multiple regression method in *SPSS 12.0* program.

In this research, conceptual flowchart presented to facilitate the analysis (Figure 1)

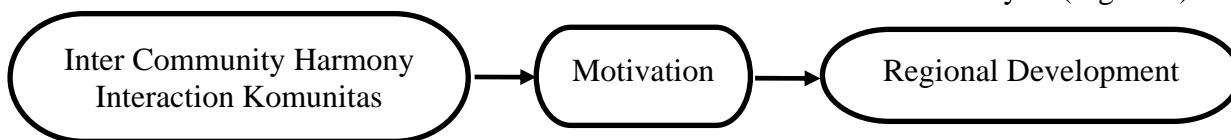


Figure 1. Conceptual Flowchart

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Secanggang District, with area of 223.27 Ha, consists of seventeen villages. Based on the observations of researchers from these villages, there are thirteen villages which can be categorized as pre-prosperous villages. The villages are namely: Kepala Sungai, Hinai Kiri, Kebun Kelapa, Sungai Ular, Tanjung Ibus, Secanggang, Selotong, Karang Gading, Telaga Jernih, Perkotaan, Kuala Besar, Jaring Halus, Karang Anyar, and Pantai Gading.

Secanggang districts generally can be categorized as a multi-ethnic district. This is especially based on ethnic diversity,

culture, and religion. Various tribes inhabit large number of villages in Secanggang. Varieous ethnicity in Secanggang has become an actual condition in people's lives. Secanggang population is widespread from various society into a more distant village in the district. Secanggang district is so wide that the villagers realize the existence of various natural resources in these districts.

Differences in natural resources will affect the socio-economic condition of the people. Similarly, in terms of culture, including language, beliefs, customs, family re-

lationship systems, and family life (including the patterns of relationships between parents and their children) also affect the inhabitants. Malay language, which exist in the research area, is very different from the Javanese, Batak, Acehnese, Minang, Banjar, Bugis and Nias. Detailed elements of diversity in Secanggang inhabitants is shown in Table 4.

Secanggang people made up by various ethnics, races, religions and classes that can be referred to as a pluralistic society. No majority or minority groups exist in this area. Community members work together to help each other, with paying no attention to discrimination. This condition represented by respondent answer in Table 5.

From the above data, 81 percents of the respondents agree that there is a harmony and no social conflicts among the local community. This represent that the district apparently has a harmonious society. Samples taken from the population in general are collected from various ethnicities. It means that the respondents agree about harmony in the community instead of just one particular ethnic. In other words, the people of Secanggang categorized as harmonious and peaceful. It means that there are no social conflicts based on differences.

Humans as a social being certainly have an urge to improve their living conditions. This means that dissatisfaction and a desire to create a better or more dignified life are emerging. The spirit on encouraging economic development can be seen from the eagerness of the community member to increase their revenue. Such encouragement can be seen from the results of research (Table 6; Table 7).

Basically, the implementation of development change socio-economic condition of community. Development can also be defined as activities undertaken by go-

vernment to increase quality of life of a society. Development should be viewed as a multidimensional process, including changes in the fundamental social structure, public attitudes, and national institutions. In addition, it can not be denied that development is also related to physical development, it means development, such as construction of physical infrastructures.

In this study, the development process in Secanggang District has been identified through list of questions, which then simply calculated and explained using descriptive analysis. In each class of respondent answers related to regional development dimension, the total score is calculated and then the average value used in the analysis results. The average score of respondent answers and the respondent opinions about the regional development in Secanggang District is shown in Table 7.

From the data in Table 7, it can be seen that the total score is 509. Therefore, it can be concluded that based on respondent opinions, the development Secanggang District are still far from expectations. The approval percentage of 51 percents (equal to 509/1000 respondents), indicates the dominance of doubtful answer class. This value also indicates that most of the respondents consider if there are no optimal development undertaken by the government. According to the assessment, that the region still need better development so that the socio-economic condition can be improved. Based on the calculation of primary data through multiple regression analysis in SPSS 12.0 program, the result is shown in Figure 2. Direct and indirect influences of harmonious inter-community interaction among various ethnics measured through variable of motivation (X1) toward the regional development (Y) and direct influence (X).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Regional development (Y)} &= p X Y = 0.50 \\ \text{Indirect Influence} &= p X X1 * X1 Y \rightarrow = 0.50 - \\ &0.0357 = 0.4643 \end{aligned}$$

Table 4. Population by Ethnicities

No	Ethnic	Malay	Banjar	Javanese	Aceh	Bata	Minang	Sunda	Bugis	Nias	Chinese	Bali	sasak	Others
1	Kebun Kelapa	305	2092	607	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Kepala Sungai	1248	142	5084	-	12	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Hinai Kiri	1918	243	3064	7	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Sugai Ular	71	2415	335	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Secanggang	4048	132	2842	81	45	7	-	17	-	7	-	-	-
6	Jaring Halus	2912	149	89	4	14	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Karang Gading	218	1185	6201	29	79	34	157	-	1	4	1	2	31
8	Telaga Jernih	34	11	4941	4	8	53	-	-	-	17	-	-	-
9	Kwala Besar	1732	-	45	29	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Perkotaan	51	602	1540	62	31	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Selotong	1758	739	1882	20	23	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Karang Anyer	2135	1625	2820	7	31	6	3	5	-	-	-	-	-
13	Pantai Gading	1401	1182	936	10	25	7	1	5	4	9	-	-	-

Sources: Monography of Secanggang District, Langkat Regency

Table 5. Distribution of Respondent Answer on Harmonious Interactions among Ethnic Communities

No	Respondents' Rating Category	Score	F	%	Total Score
1	Strongly Agree	5	30	14	150
2	Agree	4	150	76	600
3	Doubt/Hesitate	3	16	8	48
4	Disagree	2	4	2	8
5	Strongly Disagree	1	0	0	0
Total			200	100	806

Sources: Primary research data, 2012

Table 6. Distribution of Respondents Answers on Motivation of the Community Members for a Better Life

No	Respondents' Rating Category	Score	F	%	Total Score
1	Strongly Agree	5	31	15	155
2	Agree	4	147	74	588
3	Doubt/Hesitate	3	20	10	60
4	Disagree	2	1	1	2
5	Strongly Disagree	1	0	0	0
Total			200	100	805

Source : Primary research data, 2012

Table 7. Distribution of Respondents Answer on Motivation of the Community Members to have the Communication Tools and Technology

No	Respondents' Rating Category	Score	F	%	Total score
1	Strongly Agree	5	61	30.5	305
2	Agree	4	116	58	464
3	Doubt/Hesitate	3	19	10	57
4	Disagree	2	4	1	8
5	Strongly Disagree	1	1	0.5	1
	Total		200	100	835

Source: Primary research data, 2012

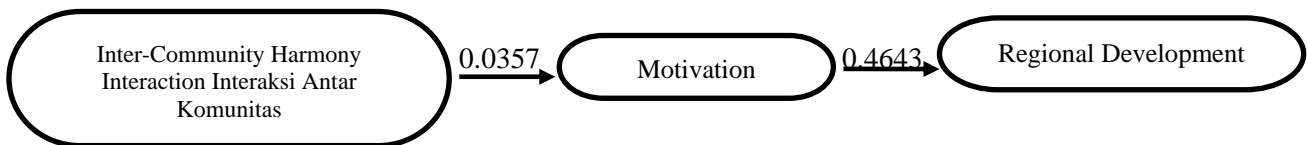


Figure 2. Multiple Regression Value Related to Inter-Community Harmony, Motivation, and Regional Development

Table 8. Distribution of Respondents Answers Related to Regional Development in Secanggang District

No	Respondents' Rating Category	Score	F	%	Total score
1	Strongly Agree	5	10	5	50
2	Agree	4	55	28	220
3	Doubt/Hesitate	3	18	9	54
4	Disagree	2	68	34	136
5	Strongly Disagree	1	49	24	49
	Total		200	100	509

Source: Primary research data, 2012

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Secanggang District consists of different ethnicities which are integrated into various social units and religions. Therefore, it can be expressed as a heterogeneous society. The social diversity expressed by harmoniousness of the people, as indicated by high tolerance, mutual support (known as *gotong royong*), and low social conflicts. Motivation of the inhabitants to gain a better life is quite high. The public has an impulse to live better than previously experienced. However, development implementation in Secanggang District is considered not fully optimal since necessary infrastructures are still limited.

This research also indicates that the harmonious interaction between ethnic

communities affects the motivation of the community. Secanggang communities that live in harmony, tolerance, and strong sense of brotherhood are expected to continually maintain their harmony. Therefore it can provide support to regional development so that the public welfare can be improved. Regional development should be carried out with the involvement of local people. This involves community participation or also known as participatory planning and community empowerment. Harmonious ethnic community interaction in Secanggang District can be used as the most valuable capital in regional development since the development will not achieve its main goal without harmonious atmosphere in social life.

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