

House Does Not Be for Sale, Begawan Solo Watershed Communities Forced to Survive

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Abstract: People who are living in the Begawan Solo watershed in Bojonegoro Regency were asked why they would not move even though they would face flooding every year, most of them felt fine with that. For them, they don't mind because the flood is not dangerous. The answer comes from the construction they received from previous generations. However, later in the study it was found that they did not want to move because their house was difficult to sell. Residents outside the neighborhood do not want to buy, because they already know that houses in that location will be flooded every rainy season every year. The people living in the area are not able to solve their problems. Every year they will continue to experience flooding, without the participation of the district and provincial governments to overcome the problems they face.

Key word: Begawan Solo, flood, not want to move, flood area

I. INTRODUCTION

Flooding is a significant disaster in Indonesia, even in 2015, as many as 23 provinces were flooded (Jawa Pos, 2015). Floods that occurred in Indonesia during 2018 happen 506 times, from 1999 natural disasters (Kompas, 2018). According to Sulaeman, Asep, and Sumiadi (2017) flood disasters that hit the Begawan Solo watershed always occur in the rainy season every year and have been going on for a long time, maybe even decades. From small scale to massive scale floods. However, the people who are flooded every year in the most extended river area on the island of Java are still not willing to move. They remain to live in high flood-prone areas.

The research in Ledok Wetan Village, and Sumbangtimun Villages, Bojonegoro Regency, used a qualitative method, aiming to find the reasons for their survival in the flooded area, whether religious aspects, education, income or other factors aside from those three things.

Informants in the two study locations only determined based on their location but not considering other demographic factors. Thus, informants in the Ledok Wetan Kelurahan are all in the mid-low level of education. Mostly only elementary and high school education. While in Sumbangtimun, there are two informants with S-1 degrees. In other words, only a few highly educated informants that included in those criteria.

It happens because most of the people in the two research locations are indeed in the mid-low level of education. A

similar fact also occurs for matters of religion and income. The majority of Bojonegoro residents in those the two research sites are Muslim and having a low income, which makes the informants such. Only two informants in Ledok Wetan have quite a high income, even one of them earning an average of around Rp 6 million a month.

The system of determining informants builds upon the location of their residential homes that are routinely affected by flooding. Take Kelurahan Ledok Wetan, for example. They used to live on the inside of the embankment and the edge of a large river. While in Sumbangtimun Village, many kinds the informant lives due to the overflowing of the Bengawan Solo tributary, which they called the Kawung River. Those people were having a different problem when facing floods. From their house to their farmland are submerged.

II. NOT A MATTER OF RELIGION

Unintentionally all informants are Muslim, but only a few informants answered relatively upright related to religion. Those informants are three people from Ledok Wetan and two people from Sumbangtimun or 25 percent of the total number of informants. They were accepting their fate to live in the flooded area with many words, such as 'giving up' and 'patience'. Therefore, only a few informants linked their understanding of disaster to religion.

But aside from being frank in saying 'surrender' and 'patience', apparently there are still a number of other informants whose statements can be related to religious aspects, such as those obtained in Ledok Wetan Village and Sumbangtimun Village, even though they do not talk about religion. With such an explanation, at a glance, it can be said that the religious aspect does not have a significant relationship with their willingness to stay or move from the flood-stricken location, either in Ledok Wetan Village or Sumbangtimun Village.

However, apart from being straight in saying those words, there are still several other informants whose statements can be related to religious aspects, such as those who obtained in Ledok Wetan Village and Sumbangtimun Village, even though they do not talk about religion. With such an explanation, briefly can be said that the religious aspect does not have a significant relationship with their willingness to

stay or move from the flood-stricken location, either in Ledok Wetan Village or Sumbangtimun Village.

However, if examined further, the informants who have lived in the location for a long time tend to accept what came from the previous generation or the surrounding community if the Bengawan Solo flood as an inevitable because Berger and Luckmann (2012) explain if the construction process of social reality takes place through a process of externalization, objectivation, and internalization continuously from the previous generation to the next generation.

They received an explanation from the previous generation that the Bengawan Solo flood that occurred every year was harmless, which eventually formed a mindset if the floods that occurred were a normal phenomenon. They think that a disaster considered dangerous, according to the local community, if it is causing a life or death situation while harm means of loss of property in large amounts.

As a result, the perception that arises in most communities, the Bengawan Solo flood, must be accepted as something that will happen every year. With such a perception, there is no positive or negative thought about the flood. The community will accept those floods disaster with no hard feelings.

When associated with the definition, the Big Indonesian Dictionary (Depdikbud, 1995) states, perception is a direct response (acceptance) of something or a process of someone knowing things through their five senses. Sugihartono et al. (2007) explained that perception is the ability of reason to translate stimulus or the process of translating stimulus into human senses. Humans can perceive differently. Some perceive that something is good (positive) and bad (negative). It will affect how humans are responding.

Walgito (2004) explains that perception is a process of organizing or interpreting the stimulus received by an individual or organism so that it becomes something meaningful and an integrated activity within that individual.

Factors that influence the perception process, according to Toha (2003, p. 145) include:

1. *Stimulus or stimulation*

Perception begins when a person is facing a stimulus/stretch that is came from his/her environment.

2. *Registration*

In the registration process, a symptom that appears is a physical mechanism in the form of sensing and the condition of a person influencing through the senses they have.

3. *Interpretation*

Interpretation is a crucial cognitive aspect of perception, namely the process of giving meaning to the stimulus it receives. The interpretation process depends on the way of understanding, motivation, and personality of a person.

Furthermore, based on Beck's (1998) concept, they are a risky community or called high-risk communities. However, they do not mind at all about the floods because the basis and measurement tools they use for the danger posed by the Bengawan Solo flood is different from the public in general. For them, an event considered disaster if it gets into life or death situation while being harm means only loss of property in large quantities.

Take the people of Sumbangtimumn Village, for instance. They felt they get used to crop failure when the Bengawan Solo children river, or called as the Kawung River, is overflowed. It is a normal phenomenon for them, meaning they accept whatever happens to the plants they have planted. Receiving the final results of their efforts, means they are 'nrimo' (accept) whatever decision Almighty is. Thus, in other words, whether openly or not, the religious factors which take the form of submission to the Almighty's decision, are factors that influence informants to stay remaining on those flooded locations. They accepted, as what the informants said, it is what it is.

The problem comes in understanding the concept of religion, which is Islam due to adopted by all informants. It does teach their people to be patient, even in many verses of the Qur'an that ask Muslims to be patient in facing various problems of life. However, Islam firmly distinguishes between patience and giving up. Patience in Islam means that every Muslim is still required to strive to get out of various problems, while still asking for help from God. Not just waiting for fate and just praying. It is stated clearly in Al-Qur'an that God will not change the fate of people if people do not try to change their destiny.

III. EDUCATION HAS NO EFFECT

Based on information from 18 informants in the two research sites, only two people who were highly educated, level S-1, and both lived in the village of Sumbantimun. One is the Principal of the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah School in Sumbangtimun Village and another elementary school teacher outside his village. Most of the informants who have low-level education accept the situation that they have experienced for a long time. They considered that what they got as a place to live was something to be accepted naturally, and surprisingly that is also the answer from highly educated informants.

There is no answer from the two highly educated informants who can be a measure of the difference in their educational level with other lower-educated informants regarding their living hood that affected every year by the flood. Those who are highly educated even feel accustomed to the village, because they are indeed native residents of the area.

Both said they did not want to move and were used to the area even if the floods regularly happen. Despite the fact, when massive floods come, it will sometimes flood their homes and their paddy field before harvesting, and it is quite harmful. Based on the informant's answers in the two research

locations, it shows that the level of education does not significantly influence a person's attitude to survive or move from a flooded environment that happens almost every year.

IV. RELATED TO INCOME

The opinions or answers of the informants in Ledok Wetan Village and Sumbangtimun Village only became more transparent and real, when the flooding problem was related to their income and related to their possibility to move to a flood-free environment. Because the majority of informants are middle to lower-income, they generally admit they have to stay in the flood-prone area because they do not have the money to move away, especially for those who live on sediment land that belongs to the overseer of Bengawan Solo.

Based on those such conditions, it is reasonable if the people in both locations are trying their best to "make friends" with their natural conditions, including the floods. They try to be "friendly" to the situation is not because they do not want to move but because moving out means having to buy a new home whose price is not affordable.

The answer to not moving was not only the answer given by the informant who came from a low-income family but also from the high-income family, which makes no sense. The two informants, who have high-level income, also claimed not to want to move, because their house had been upgraded and no longer affected by flooding. Their house is no longer affected, even one informant said, "During the 2007 big flood, my house was not affected by a big flood, it only went into the bottom floor,".

However, some informants stated that they were willing to move from the house they lived in Ledok Wetan Kelurahan, but not by buying a house in a new location because the informant did not have money. They will be willing to move if the Bojonegoro Regency government has a program to move them to better housing.

The people in Sumbangtimun Village also have the same respond. They claimed to have felt accustomed to their living environment. They have no problem with the floods that occur every year, so there is no desire to move to another location. One informant from Kelurahan Ledok Wetan (BSB) said:

"Wow ... the flood happens regularly, so there is no need to move. We are just fine here ".

V. UNSOLD HOMES FOR SALE

It turns out that outside the answers given by informants when the interview held, there is one thing that does not emerge from the answers of all informants when the interview took place. Apart from their accustomed reason to live in those flood-prone areas such as feeling 'at home' and enjoy.

The different information instead obtained from a casual conversation (observation) with some community members who were not informers in the area. Information related to the

question of why they 'do not want to' move out of the area turned out to get an unexpected answer.

The straightforward question was posed by several people when casually hanging out in a coffee shop. Some members of the community explained the reasons why they were reluctant or, in other words, had difficulty to move outside the flood-prone area. It turns out that the answers are quite different. They found it difficult to move because the people in the area had difficulty selling their homes to outsiders and not because not willing to move to another place.

The location factor is the main factor causing the people of Ledok Wetan Village and Sumbangtimun Village hard to sell their houses to people outside the neighborhood. Even with certificates of property, the residents of Ledok Wetan Village still find it hard to sell their houses, let alone people of Sumbangtimun Village who does not have those kinds of certificates, only in the form of parcels (petok D). Certainly harder to sell the houses that the land belongs to the overseer of Bengawan Solo in Ledok Wetan Village to the outsiders.

People from outside the neighborhood will be reluctant to buy a house in the two research sites because generally, the people outside the area already know that the environment in their area often flooded every year. Either direct hit from overflowing Bengawan Solo river, or from Kawung river.

"Even if sold, it came from people around here too," that is an explanation obtained when the writer conducted informal talks with residents when hanging out at Warung Kopi in Ledok Wetan Village. Communities outside the Ledok Wetan Kelurahan already know that some of the lands in the flooded area are not their own, but it belongs to the overseer of Bengawan Solo, which means it can be "evicted" at any time.

People in the Ledok Wetan Kelurahan built houses on land that was not their own. At any time, the overseer can ask them to leave the land (not to mention being evicted), if the Bengawan Solo manager issues an announcement to land widening at the most extensive river on the island of Java. Although until now, still no word or action from the overseer regarding the issue, or the eviction.

The informants did not elaborate that one of the reasons they stay is because their house is difficult to sell. However, the results of the observation indicating that there was a significant problem felt by those people to move.

Of course, it is not easy to find people who come from outside the two research locations that are willing to buy a house in a flood-prone area because Ledok Wetan Village and Sumbangtimun are known to the outsiders to submerged when the Bengawan Solo overflowed in every year. Due to vulnerable to flood that makes people who live on the inside of the embankment in the Ledok Wetan Village cannot sell their homes to outsiders. Except when there are people in the neighborhood who are willing to buy.

So it is not because they not want to move, but rather do not have the money. As for selling the house to outsiders and then moving out is also hard. Because of that, the people of Ledok Wetan Urban Village, who have more capital, rather enhancing their houses so safe from floods. Not trying to buy or build a house somewhere else and move. Because it is difficult to find buyers or tenants to buy or rent their house means the existing house will be left empty. Sumbangtimun villagers took a similar step. They generally raise the yard and their floor house, which are still primarily ground, by adding it with more earth and sometimes enhance their house by adding more walls, if they can do it.

This condition is in line with what was stated by Adiyoso (2018, p. 65). The high risk of disasters in developing countries and emerging countries is because people in these countries generally have low incomes, who certainly cannot afford housing with structures that are resistant to disasters. That is what happened to the community in both research sites. Because they cannot afford to buy a better house far from the flood-prone location, there are still many people who live-in disaster-prone locations, such as around the seashore, mountain slopes, and riverbanks.

With weak economic conditions, these communities have to live in substandard houses, maybe even built on land that is unstable and vulnerable to landslides or built-in hazardous industrial locations. The behavior and actions of the community are not well-educated, related to how to deal with and reduce disaster risk.

The condition stated by Adiyoso also occurred in Bojonegoro, especially in the two research areas. They mostly have low-income, so they cannot afford to buy a place to live with better conditions. Therefore, whether they want or not, they have to live in disaster-prone areas, such as in Ledok Wetan and Sumbangtimun Village. At the same time, due to most of them are not well-educated, they lack behaviour and actions to solving the disaster problem. They only follow the habits of their predecessors.

This problem does not only occur in Sumbangtimun Village, Trucuk District, Bojonegoro Regency, but also in the villages that Bengawan Solo passes through. The big river passes through 17 cities and 3 regencies located in the provinces of Central Java and East Java. That is, this problem is not only the problem of Ex. Ledokwetan and Sumbangtimun Villages, but the problem is that tens, maybe even hundreds of villages are affected by the Bengawan Solo flood every year.

The community is not able to solve their own problems, except to survive in the location. The district and provincial

governments must intervene to help resolve the problems experienced by the people of Ledokwetan and Sumbangtimun, as well as other villages, so that they can be relieved of the annual flood disaster.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the data and facts, following the opinion of Adiyoso (2018, p.65), the community at the study site was seen to be low-income earners, who certainly could not afford to buy houses with structures that were resistant to disasters. Due to poor economic conditions, people obliged to live in substandard houses, maybe even built on land that is unstable and vulnerable to landslides or built-in hazardous industrial locations. Those were the behavior and actions of the community that not-well educated, related to how to deal with and reduce disaster risk.

This fact also shows that the Kelurahan Ledok Wetan and Sumbangtimun Villages survive in flood-prone areas not only because of the successful construction of the social reality from the previous generation if the flood of Bengawan Solo is harmless, but precisely because they cannot sell their homes to outsiders and then move on. Their homes are also hard to sell to outsiders because they know the area is high-risk of floods every year.

The district and provincial governments need to step in to help the communities of various villages that are regularly affected by the Bengawan Solo floods so that they are free from the problems they experience every year. Without the participation of the government, the people of various villages will not be able to handle it

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