



SURVIVAL STRATEGIES IN FACING CHANGES IN THE COMMUNITY OF DURJELA VILLAGE, ARU ISLANDS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine and analyze the survival strategies employed by the community of Durjela Village in the Aru Islands, Indonesia, in response to environmental changes. The Aru Islands are located in a coastal area with unique geographical characteristics. Environmental changes such as climate change, coastal erosion, and restrictions on natural resources can have significant impacts on the local community's livelihoods. This research is a qualitative study conducted in Durjela Village, the Aru Islands, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Survival Strategies in the Face of Change in the community. The study employed a case study design, allowing for a detailed examination of the subject matter. The research was conducted over a period of 6 months, from March 2019 to August 2019. However, considering the nature and dynamics of the study, the research period could be extended if necessary. Data collection involved various techniques, including in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, ensuring a rich and diverse dataset for analysis. These strategies include active, passive, and network-based strategies. The Durjela Village community employs these strategies to address environmental changes and meet their livelihood needs. Education, knowledge, and social support play a crucial role in strengthening these strategies. However, the community also faces challenges in natural resource management and limited access to resources. This research also highlights the potential of the agricultural sector as a survival strategy that can be enhanced through government support and community empowerment. Moreover, the research emphasizes the importance of collaboration among the government, non-governmental organizations, and the local community to strengthen survival strategies and achieve sustainable development. Overall, this research provides a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and factors influencing the survival strategies of the Durjela Village community in facing changes and development.

Keywords: Survival strategies, Durjela Village, Aru Islands

INTRODUCTION

The communities in the Indonesian Archipelago inhabit various islands with unique characteristics. Consisting of 17,000 large and small islands, this region stretches from 95 degrees East longitude to 141 degrees East longitude and 6 degrees North latitude to 11

degrees South latitude, with a total area of approximately 9,000,000 km² (1). Islands such as Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua are home to diverse ethnic groups, while smaller islands are also inhabited by different ethnic groups (2). These differences are reflected in the traditions, customs, cultures, social life, and lifestyles of individuals, groups, and communities (3).

In the Maluku Islands, there are various ethnic groups or social groups that interact with each other using the term "orang" to assert their identity and regional origin. The inhabitants of the small islands in Maluku also use the term "orang pulau" (4). Additionally, there are also ethnic groups or ethnic communities from outside Maluku. The lives of the communities in the Maluku Islands have distinct differences, including in their traditions, customs, cultures, social structures, and economies (5). The communities in the Aru Islands are also influenced by the physical geography of the small islands. They strive to adapt to their environment to survive, facing climate change, infrastructure limitations, and social, cultural, and economic conditions (6).

One example of a village community facing these challenges is Durjela Village in the Aru Islands. The people of Durjela Village rely on agriculture and fishing as their main sources of livelihood (7). The adaptation of the community in Durjela Village in the Aru Islands to environmental changes and natural resource management is supported by their local knowledge. They rely on traditional knowledge and experience in managing natural resources in their surroundings (8). The concept of local wisdom is crucial in understanding how the people of Durjela Village adapt to climate and environmental changes and how they manage natural resources to meet their daily needs (9).

However, despite their valuable local knowledge, the community in Durjela Village still faces challenges in natural resource management. One of the main challenges is limited access to effectively manage natural resources. Factors such as land ownership, government regulations, and the presence of external parties gaining access to natural resources often limit the participation and control of the local community over these resources (9).

Furthermore, exploitation by external parties also poses a threat to the community in Durjela Village. External actors who come to profit from the natural resources in the area can endanger the sustainability of the local community's livelihoods (10). Overexploitation and the use of environmentally unfriendly technologies can damage the island's ecosystems and threaten traditional livelihoods such as agriculture and fishing (11). In facing climate change and environmental challenges, the people of Durjela Village also have to address issues arising from their coastal geographical conditions. Being a village located near the coast, they are vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods and erosion (12). Rapid climate change and rising sea levels have increased the risk of such disasters. Storms and tropical cyclones often hit the islands in the Aru Islands, causing infrastructure damage and losses in the agricultural and fishing sectors (8).

Furthermore, the lives of the community in Durjela Village are also influenced by the knowledge and local wisdom they have gained from years of experience with their surrounding environment. Although not formally documented, these values of local wisdom serve as the foundation for decision-making and the development of community survival strategies. However, in this modern era, the people of Durjela Village are faced with more complex changes. Rapid climate change, limited infrastructure, as well as social, cultural, and economic factors pose new challenges for them. Poverty remains a problem faced by the majority of the village residents, particularly due to limited employment opportunities and a lack of access to natural resource management.

In facing these challenges, the community of Durjela Village must strive to adapt agricultural activities to the local geographical and climatic conditions. They can employ farming methods suitable for the coastal environment, such as water-based agriculture and efficient irrigation management (8). Additionally, efforts in soil and water conservation are crucial to reduce erosion and maintain soil fertility. The implementation of environmentally friendly and sustainable agricultural practices can help the community mitigate the impacts of climate change and maintain the sustainability of natural resources (9).

Apart from the agricultural sector, the people of Durjela Village also rely on the fisheries

sector as their primary livelihood source. They depend on fish catches for food and additional income. However, the fisheries sector also faces challenges such as limited equipment and restricted market access. Insufficient fishing gear can affect catch yields and the efficiency of fishing efforts. Furthermore, limited market access hinders the marketing and selling value of fisheries products, making it difficult for the people of Durjela Village to increase their income (13).

The efforts of the community in Durjela Village to develop survival strategies are not yet clearly revealed. Through a sociological perspective, it is important to examine the survival strategies of the Durjela Village community in the face of these changes. The island environment significantly influences human life, and community adaptation can be understood as a process that connects cultural systems with the environment. The people of Durjela Village live in social and cultural interdependence and play a role as cultural beings. They form groups, interact, and rely on each other to survive and meet their needs. The challenges they face, such as climate change, limited infrastructure, and the exploitation of marine resources, drive the people of Durjela Village to seek solutions and develop more adaptive survival strategies. Therefore, it is important to conduct an in-depth study on the survival strategies of the Durjela Village community in the Aru Islands, focusing on identifying sustainable practices that have been developed by the people of Durjela Village in response to these changes.

Methodology

This research utilizes a qualitative approach with a case study design. The researcher aims to provide a detailed overview of the Survival Strategies in the Face of Change in the Durjela Village community in the Aru Islands. The study was conducted for a period of 6 months, from March 2019 to August 2019, although an extension of the research period is possible due to the nature and dynamics of the study. The research location is in Durjela Village, the Aru Islands. Various techniques were employed for data collection, including in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. These three techniques were used to obtain complementary data and information about the survival strategies in the face of change in the Durjela Village community in the Aru Islands. Purposive sampling was conducted to select informants with relevant knowledge and experience. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis and thematic analysis. Data validity was ensured through data triangulation. Research ethics were maintained by preserving informant confidentiality and respecting the culture of the community. The research findings will be interpreted critically and reflectively by comparing them with relevant theories on survival strategies.

Results and Discussions

This research is informed by several relevant references in understanding the survival strategies of the Durjela Village community in the Aru Islands. In this context, survival strategies are measured using three dimensions: active strategies, passive strategies, and networking strategies. Sociological theories that support the understanding of survival strategies include social system theory and cultural theory^(14,15,16). In active strategies, the Durjela Village community seeks additional income through activities such as making copra, crushing stones, or becoming motorcycle taxi drivers in response to the resource limitations and opportunities available in their environment. Social system theory helps explain the importance of the interaction between individuals and social structures in these strategies. On the other hand, passive strategies are carried out by reducing household expenses and utilizing the natural resources around them. These practices of frugality and resource utilization have been internalized as part of their culture, in line with cultural theory.

Furthermore, networking strategies can be observed in the utilization of social networks, such as borrowing money or goods from neighbors or close relatives. This is reflected in the strong culture of mutual assistance and familial relationships in the Durjela Village community. Social system theory also plays a role in understanding how social connections and interpersonal relationships support these networking strategies.

However, the community of Durjela Village also faces challenges in the management of natural resources. Factors such as land ownership, government regulations, and exploitation by external parties often restrict their participation and control over natural resources^(10,11). Additionally, they

are vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods and erosion due to climate change and coastal geographical characteristics^(13,7). Furthermore, the network strategy is employed by utilizing social networks, such as borrowing money or goods from neighbors or close relatives. This is done within the culture of mutual cooperation and strong familial bonds in the community of Durjela Village. The network strategy can also be understood through the theory of social systems, which emphasizes the importance of social connections and interpersonal relationships in achieving specific goals. In this regard, the community of Durjela Village relies on their social networks to help meet urgent needs and support each other in difficult situations. Overall, the community of Durjela Village employs active, passive, and network-based survival strategies to meet their livelihood needs. Sociological theories of social systems and culture help explain why communities employ these strategies within their social and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, this research also demonstrates that the community of Durjela Village has potential in the agricultural sector as a survival strategy. Although the Durjela Village has a vast coastal area, the community tends to focus on coconut farming, which is a long-term crop. They embrace the philosophy of "it is better to cultivate a hoe in a garden with visible results than to plant an anchor in the sea with no signs," as the foundation for selecting their survival strategy. This philosophy can be linked to sociological conflict theory, which emphasizes differences in interests and resource distribution within a society. In this context, the community of Durjela Village chooses farming as a survival strategy because they perceive it as providing greater certainty and income potential compared to relying solely on the fishing sector, which has limitations.

However, there are also many idle lands that are not fully utilized by the community of Durjela Village. In this regard, it is necessary to strengthen the agricultural sector and for the government to empower rural farmers in Durjela Village to be more productive through education, innovation, assistance, and job security. The strengthening of the agricultural sector can be viewed from the perspective of sociological theory of social change, which emphasizes social transformation and structural changes within a society. In this context, the government's efforts to increase the productivity of the agricultural sector in Durjela Village are aimed at achieving positive social changes and improving the welfare of the community.

Additionally, the social network strategy that involves relatives and neighbors also plays an important role in the survival strategy of the community in Durjela Village. By borrowing money or goods from these social networks, they can meet urgent needs in difficult situations. Sociological theories of social interaction and social networks support this understanding. According to these theories, social networks provide valuable resources in the form of emotional support, information, and material assistance to individuals and communities. In this context, the social networks established in Durjela Village are an important source for the community in facing economic and social challenges.

Overall, the findings of this research provide an overview of the survival strategies employed by the community of Durjela Village in the Aru Islands, which include active, passive, and network strategies as their efforts to meet their daily livelihood needs. Sociological theories of social systems, culture, conflict, social change, social interaction, and social networks provide a deeper understanding of the social and cultural factors that shape these strategies. Furthermore, this research also reveals that the survival strategies of the community in Durjela Village in the Aru Islands involve maintaining and optimizing the natural resources they possess. In addition to the agricultural sector, the community also relies on the fishing sector as one of their survival strategies. They depend on fishing as a source of food and additional income. However, they face various challenges, such as limited equipment and limited market access.

In this context, sociological theories of development and modernization can provide a broader understanding^(17,18). These theories highlight the importance of economic development and social transformation in achieving community well-being⁽¹⁹⁾. In the case of Durjela Village, the development of the agricultural and fishing sectors is crucial to improve the economic conditions and enhance the livelihoods of the community. Government support, including the provision of modern equipment, introduction of new agricultural technologies, and improved market access, can strengthen these sectors

Furthermore, sociological theories of conflict are also relevant in understanding the challenges faced by the community of Durjela Village. Inequality in resource distribution and access to

economic opportunities can create tensions and social conflicts. In this regard, fair and inclusive policy measures need to be taken to address existing disparities and ensure active participation of the community in decision-making processes related to natural resources and economic development^(20,21).

Moreover, sociological theories of identity and culture are also important in the context of the survival strategies of the community of Durjela Village. The local culture, traditions, and values inherent in the community of Durjela Village can serve as sources of strength and resilience in facing economic and social changes. The government and relevant institutions need to respect and support efforts to preserve and develop the local culture as part of a sustainable development strategy. In order to strengthen the survival strategies of the community of Durjela Village, collaboration between the government, non-governmental organizations, and the local community is crucial⁽²²⁾. Through synergistic collaboration, community empowerment efforts, infrastructure development, access to education and training, and improvement of quality of life can be realized. Thus, the application of various sociological theories can help understand the social dynamics and factors influencing the survival strategies of the community of Durjela Village in the context of the development and changes they face.

Conclusion

In the overall study, it can be concluded that the community of Durjela Village in the Aru Islands employs various survival strategies, including active strategies, passive strategies, network strategies, and optimization of natural resources. Education and knowledge also play a crucial role in strengthening their survival strategies. With a better understanding of these strategies, appropriate policy measures can be designed to support the Durjela Village community in facing changes and building a better life.

In the research as a whole, it can be concluded that the community of Durjela Village in the Aru Islands employs various survival strategies, including active strategies, passive strategies, network strategies, and optimization of natural resources. These strategies are used to meet their daily livelihood needs in the face of economic, social, and environmental challenges. Education and knowledge also play an important factor in strengthening their survival strategies, as they provide an understanding of how to manage natural resources and cope with changes.

With a better understanding of these strategies, appropriate policy measures can be designed to support the Durjela Village community in facing changes and building a better life. Government support, in the form of education, technological assistance, and infrastructure development, is crucial in strengthening the agricultural and fishing sectors, which are integral parts of the Durjela Village community's survival strategies.

Furthermore, an understanding of the importance of equitable resource distribution, environmental sustainability, and respect for local culture is necessary in designing sustainable and inclusive policies. Collaborative efforts between the government, non-governmental organizations, and local communities are also crucial in strengthening the survival strategies of the Durjela Village community.

By combining insights from various sociological theories, such as theories of social change, conflict, identity, and development, relevant policies and interventions can be informed for the Durjela Village community. In the face of the changes and challenges they encounter, holistic and sustainable efforts are needed to improve the well-being and build a better life for the Durjela Village community in the Aru Islands.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest

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