

Patron-Client in Socio Economic Relations of Fisherman in the Coastal Area of Bandar Lampung City, Indonesia

Original Research Article

ABSTRACT

The existence of patrons (juragan) in fishing communities is very strong because patrons are people of a higher socio-economic level. Meanwhile, worker fishermen (clients) who do not have fishing equipment or boats are forced to work for patrons by borrowing boats and their fishing

equipment. The aim of this research is to describe and interpret the characteristics of the socio-economic relations between patrons (juragan) and fishermen workers (clients) who live in the coastal area of Kotakarang District, Bandar Lampung City, Indonesia. This type of research was carried out in a qualitative descriptive manner. Data collection techniques through observation or field observations and in-depth interviews. Data analysis was used by looking at observation notes supported by collected research photo documentation which was then analyzed using qualitative analysis. The research results showed that the fishing community carried out fishing activities using fishing gear. In its operation, it requires the help of a motorboat which is an asset owned by the boss. Apart from that, the patrons also provides operational capital assistance for working fishermen at sea. Therefore, the socio-economic position of the skipper is higher than that of the worker fisherman, so they have a very large level of influence and dependence. With this support, fishermen workers feel emotionally indebted, causing them to obey and obey their patrons as owners of capital. However, even though working fishermen continue to work hard, the fact is that they are still faced with economic problems, so that in these conditions the boss will be present to provide compensation assistance to solve the problems they are facing. Therefore, the socio-economic relationship between bosses and fishermen will continue because it is mutually beneficial for both of them.

Keywords: Patron client; Social; Economic; Fisherman community.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coastal and marine resources are basically common property resources with free and open access to all users. With the increase in the number of people living in coastal and marine areas, the desire to stay alive is driven by all means to survive, resulting in high resource utilization activities which tend to lead to excessive destruction. The damage to the ecosystem in coastal areas is also accompanied by the growth of the human population who live and depend on the sea for their livelihoods. This is of course a phenomenon where Indonesia, with its abundant coastal and marine natural resource potential, if managed appropriately (sustainably), can bring benefits in improving the welfare of coastal communities (Dahuri 2001). According to Khanna et al. (1999) sustainable development has implications for the dynamic balance between maintenance (sustainability) and transformation (development) functions in order to fulfill life's needs.

The development of the fishing community in Bandar Lampung City has been going on for a long time and there are also different ethnic segmentations of the fishing community. Currently, in the coastal area of Bandar Lampung City, there are several ethnic fishermen, such as the Bugis fishing community, most of whom live in the coastal area of Kotakarang Subdistrict, East Teluk Betung District, and even a Bugis fishing village has been formed which is very famous in Lampung Province as Kampung Cungkeng. Apart from that, there are also fishermen communities from the Javanese ethnic group, such as those from Serang, Indramayu, Cirebon, as well as fishermen from Lampung and even fishermen from East Java (Rajab, 2023).

Kotakarang Subdistrict is one of the coastal areas in Bandar Lampung City which is the center of fishing activities in Lampung Province. The fishing community has been active as fishermen by utilizing coastal and marine resources to support their lives. such as being fishermen, cultivators both in ponds and the sea, fish processing, tourism and others. For example, Bandar Lampung City has fishing areas, namely in Teluk Betung Selatan District with a number of fishermen of 7,268 fishermen, Teluk Betung Barat District with a number of fishermen of 7,560 fishermen, and Panjang District with a number of fishermen of 3,668 fishermen. Fishermen carry out fishing activities around the waters of Lampung Bay, Sunda Strait, Java Sea and Indian Ocean using boats without motors and motorized boats (outboard motors and motor boats) (Bandar Lampung City Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Service, 2011).

The phenomenon that is currently visible is that even though it is supported by abundant fisheries resources, the socio-economic life of fishing communities still lives in a mire of poverty. The lives of fishermen in Kotakarang Subdistrict depend heavily on marine resources, where there are 1,039 fishermen who work as fishermen, most of whom work in the capture fisheries sector (Kotakarang Subdistrict, 2023).

For the fishing community in Kotakarang Subdistrict, the dominant fishing gear used for fishing activities is chartreuse fishing gear. Bagan is a type of fishing gear used by fishermen in Indonesia to catch small pelagic fish, first introduced by Bugis fishermen from Makassar around the 1950s. Furthermore, in a relatively short time this fishing gear was known throughout Indonesia. Bagan in its development has undergone many changes, both in shape and size, which have been modified in such a

way that it suits the fishing area. In its operation, the chart uses tools that take advantage of the behavior of the fish. For example, in the use of lifting nets, such as nets, fishermen use light to attract the attention of fish. After the fish gather in the net, the net is lifted and the fish are caught (Sudirman, 2011).

The Bagan fishing community in Kotakarang Subdistrict has some who run their Bagan business by working themselves as fishermen, but there are also those who work as labor fishermen for the Bagan owners (ABK). However, these conditions do not keep them away from the influence of bosses who are economically more established and support fishing equipment ownership. Client-patron relationships also grow on the outskirts of town in the Bagan fishing community in Kotakarang Subdistrict. According to Biermann (2024), patron client dynamics continue to develop, especially in rural areas, involving land owners and farmers through relationships with collectivities such as kinship groups. The skipper in this case is the owner of the bag which is then used by labor fishermen (ABK) for fishing activities. Apart from that, the skipper also has a role in providing capital for fishermen for their fishing needs. Therefore, skippers have a very crucial role in the sustainability of fishing activities carried out by Bagan fishermen. These conditions make fishermen's lives even more difficult than being prosperous. The existence of labor fishermen (ABK) who work for the skipper most of their lives in poverty, even though they continue to work without stopping because of the domination and hegemony of the skipper over the socio-economic life of the Bagan fishermen.

Research on patron-client relationships was conducted by Ranti and Hanjani (2023) regarding patron-client relationships that occur in the dynamics of women farmers in Purwekerto; Hardian et al (2024) conducted research on the dependence of vegetable farmers on middlemen as patron-clients in agricultural activities. In the fisheries and marine context, research by Rifka et al (2024) examines the supply chain relationships of seaweed farmers in a patron-client system, however there is still very limited research that more specifically examines patron-client relationships in the fisheries system, especially in small-scale fisheries. This research will fill this knowledge gap through a study of patron-client relationships in small-scale fisheries systems.

Based on this, the existence of Bagan fishermen is interesting to research by looking at the relationship between bosses and fishermen, which are socially and economically unbalanced and even tend to be in poor economic conditions.

2. METHODOLOGY

Study Area

This research was carried out in January-June 2024 located in Kotakarang District, Bandar Lampung City, Lampung Province, Indonesia or a distance of 5 km from the city center of Bandar Lampung. The research location was chosen with the consideration that most of it is a fishing community using chartreuse fishing gear. Another consideration is that in Kotaarang Subdistrict, Bagan fishing activities are still dominated by the role of the skipper in fishing operational activities.

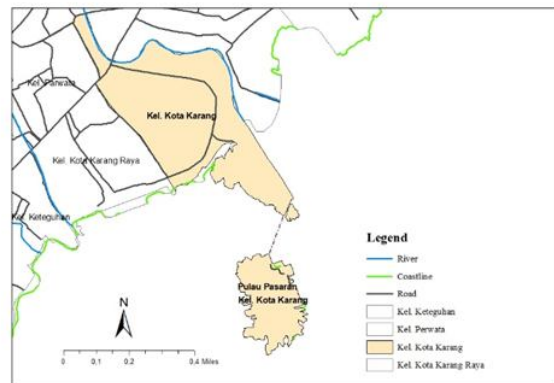


Fig 1. Map of the study area in Kotakarang Subdistrict, Bandar Lampung City, Indonesia.

Study Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach, a research procedure that produces data in the form of speech or writing and behavior that can be observed from the people (subjects) themselves (Furchan, 1992). This qualitative research is based on the constructivism paradigm with a case study method. In qualitative research methods, internal validity is often measured through the credibility or authenticity of findings which looks at how the findings resonate with participants' views, narratives and experiences (Fleury and Schwartz 2017).

Qualitative research data that is descriptive means that the data is reported in the form of words or pictures rather than in the form of numbers (Cresswell, 2003). Data sources were taken based on interviews and discussions with jerry can fishermen as well as with several policy and interest stakeholders. Some secondary data was taken through documentation and additional documents which helped to carry out the research process.

Data originating from in-depth interviews and observations which have been edited and transcribed are then analyzed using qualitative

analysis. Qualitative analysis aims to analyze the process of a social phenomenon in a community and obtain a complete picture of this process and analyze the meaning behind the information, data and processes of a social phenomenon (Bungin, 2007).

To further strengthen the analysis in this research, the researcher also used a qualitative-verification data analysis strategy referred to Bungin. According to Bungin (2007), the qualitative-verification data analysis strategy is an effort to inductively analyze research data carried out throughout the research process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The fishing community in Kotakarang District uses chart fishing gear which is known locally as chart congkel where the fishing ground is in the waters of Lampung Bay. This chartreuse fishing gear is a modern fishing gear with fishing technology that is more advanced than other types of chartreuse fishing gear. Bagan congkel uses a boat engine so that it can reach fishing locations that are farther away compared to the type of bagan tancar which has a passive operating nature because it cannot move.



Fig 2. Bagan Congkel fishing gear in Kotakarang Sub District, Bandar Lampung City, Indonesia.

In the operation of the bagan congkel there is a role as a patron or ship owner (juragan), usually

referred to as a skipper and fishermen who work for the skipper to operate their fishing gear are

called worker fishermen (ABK). The obligations given by the skipper are usually capital for going to sea such as fuel, such as diesel and engine oil. According to information from informants, diesel fuel usually costs up to IDR 6,000,000, and oil up to IDR 500,000. Apart from fuel, the consumption of crew members is also the responsibility of the patron, the consumption usually brought by crew members is usually rice, basic necessities and cigarettes. The most important thing that is the owner's obligation is the ship's ownership certificate and permit. According to the fishermen, there are no regulations that bind the fishermen, making them uncomfortable. On the contrary, they feel that they benefit from the facilities provided by the boss and make them feel more enthusiastic about working. Apart from the patron, the client also needs to fulfill obligations such as fishing as much as possible and maintaining assets in the form of ships and cleaning the ships when they are finished going to sea.

Mechanism for Sharing Wages and Results

Wages are employment or labor rights received and expressed in the form of money as compensation to workers/laborers which are determined and paid according to a work agreement. Wages are very meaningful for every worker/laborer because every worker/laborer has daily living needs. So they can get this from the wages they receive.

Based on the results of interviews with Bagan fishermen informants, information was obtained that the catch is usually divided into 3 parts. First, the total catch will be deducted first by the amount of capital spent. The capital in question is all costs incurred during the fishing process, such as consumption materials and ship operations. After deducting the amount of capital, the proceeds will be divided in half by the ship owner (patron) or skipper. After dividing the results in half, they will then be shared equally with all working fishermen (ABK) including the boss. So in this final distribution the boss will still get a share. According to informants during this research, this distribution was reasonable compared to the capital issued. The average income of fishermen is Rp. 300,000,- in one trip to the sea. One of the informants said that:

"In one go to sea we usually get a maximum of three hundred thousand from fishing, sometimes we even lose because we don't catch the same amount" (JM, 47 years old).

The distribution of the results above is a distribution that has been mutually agreed upon and has never been rejected by the fishing workers. Because that's the distribution

mechanism. In this case, the retainer owns the capital and also the ship, so the skipper

automatically takes the most income. Then the captain, as the leader and guide and knows the direction of the place where the fish gather, then he gets half of the remaining share with the skipper who owns the ship. If calculated into the daily needs of the captain, he will definitely be able to meet the daily needs of his family. This is different from fishing workers who only get their final wages from profit sharing because they only have the skills and energy to catch fish. The worker's wages can be said to be very minimal and cannot even meet his daily needs, especially as living needs nowadays are starting to increase (expensive).

Social and Economic Relations

The economic relationship that exists between the skipper and the fishing workers (ABK) shows that both of them need each other, a skipper with a higher socio-economic status uses his resources as leverage to provide protection and benefits for the fishing workers where the worker fishermen need social security for people with higher economic status in order to meet the economic needs of the workers.

Fisherman workers consider their patrons (masters) as their own family. When they have a wish, the courtier usually helps them by providing financial assistance for that wish (Denis, 2022). The retainer and the fishing worker must uphold mutual trust. The worker must obey all orders and rules given by the boss and never betray the trust that has been given. A retainer must protect the good name of his worker's family and vice versa, a worker must also protect the good name and honor of his boss. For example, a worker experiences a problem or is involved in a problem with an outside party, for example he is involved in a problem with another employee or security apparatus or a civilian. So the role of the boss here is very large. The boss tries to protect his workers because if his workers get into trouble or are disturbed by other people, it is the same as causing the retainer's self-esteem to drop in the eyes of other people.

The findings of this research illustrate that the small-scale fishing community is also feeling the impact of the continued development of this patron-client system. This is also in line with research developed by Feriyandes et al (2017) regarding patron-client relationships in the fishing community in Pelabuhan Ratu which occur between Bakul, Taweu, and Labor Fishermen and the position of Labor Fishermen is more likely to be Clients and subordinate to Patrons. Then, research conducted by Suleman et al (2019) on patron-client relationship patterns can encourage economic activity because it provides jobs through

a profit sharing system according to the agreement.

Furthermore, it was researched by Handoko et al (2022) an agreement between a patron and a client in which the client declares his or her ability to work for the patron by receiving wages and social security in which the patron expresses his or her ability to employ the client. Patrons receive 65% of the catch and clients receive 35% of the catch.

CONCLUSION

This research provides an overview of the patron-client socio-economic relations that occur in the Bagan fishing community, especially the Bagan Congkel fishermen in Kotakarang Sub District, Bandar Lampung. The socio-economic relations are the relationships contained in patron-client. A skipper has the capital of a motor boat and charts to support fishing activities, while labor fishermen (ABK) only have the capital of labor. Therefore, a larger proportion of the profit sharing will be received by the bosses and labor fishermen (ABK) with a small share. Of course, this has an impact on labor fishermen (ABK), because from these results the energy used by labor fishermen (ABK) is not balanced with the results received. However, this condition can be accepted by labor fishermen (ABK) considering the position of patron who has provided work opportunities and capital for both goods and services to labor fishermen (ABK).

Not only that, but there are other reasons why this patron-client system continues to operate in the Bagan fishing community, namely the existence of strong social ties such as protection and assistance which labor fishermen (ABK) usually feel directly from the kindness provided by the fishermen skipper. This further emphasizes the position of the skipper as a "god of salvation" in the difficult conditions felt by the labor fishermen (ABK) so that for the labor fishermen (ABK) there is a sense of responsibility and reciprocation for the services provided by the skipper such as loyalty, honesty, respect and even voluntary assistance. This is what causes patron-client social economic relations to continue because they think this relationship provides benefits for both.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologists such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of this manuscript.

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