



Culture Clash: Conflict and Its Management (Case: the Kalijodo Merchant)

Puri Bestari Mardani; Maria Febiana Christanti

Department of Communication, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta,
Indonesia

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v6i1.1042>

Abstract

Conflict that arises due to culture clash could not be avoided. One of the Slum area that once known as the area of prostitution, Kalijodo, were being transformed by the local government into an area of green open space and also child friendly integrated public spaces. This transformation has a significant impact toward the Kalijodo merchant. These merchants face many and serious conflict. The conflicts due to culture clash and its management that were being faced by Kalijodo merchants are the focus of this research. This research uses a qualitative approach by gathering data and information through observation and in-depth interview. The concept of personal and interpersonal conflict and conflict management model by A.Devito (2011) is used in order to get a comprehend understanding of the conflict that rise, and ways to manage it. This research shows that the Kalijodo merchants faced intrapersonal conflict because they were forced to choose between two difficult option, and also interpersonal conflicts that occurs in two waves. The first wave was during the eviction and renovation (conflicts between Kalijodo merchants), and the second wave was from the moment that the renovation is completed until this present time (conflicts between Kalijodo merchants and newcomer merchants from other district). Furthermore, the conflict management that was applied is the conflict management model of accommodation (I lose, You Win). Kalijodo merchants put aside the personal interests in order to make the local government mission accomplished.

Keywords: *Conflict; Conflict Management; Culture Clash*

A. The Background

Adaptation to a new and different culture, value, an also habit is not an easy. This is what the Kalijodo merchant felt when their district was being totally renovated by local government. In the past, Kalijodo was known as a place to find soul mate or in Bahasa we called 'jodoh'. Kalijodo district was well known, as an area where many night entertainments such as gambling, prostitution, and liquor trade takes place. These activities were considered inappropriate since children also inhabit the neighborhood around Kalijodo. Therefore, the local government of DKI Jakarta, under the leadership of Basuki Tjahja Purnama or Ahok, issued an order to transform Kalijodo into a more child friendly environment.

This transformation caused a change in culture, the new culture that must be adopted by people in Kalijodo is very different than the culture they had before. The night entertainments were the main income for Kalijodo businessman and traders. Kalijodo businessman that previously own a building for their business of bars or discotheques had to let go of their ownership and must be willing when their business place was being wrecked down. In addition, they must also have to obey the new regulation that was applied in the new Kalijodo if they still want to continue trading in this region.

Since the remodeling of Kalijodo region, on February 22nd, 2017, the local government of DKI Jakarta returned this region function as green open space. These were continue to the act of closing bars and strictly prohibit night illegal activities such as prostitution and liquor trade. In order to support this act, the local government gave a letter of notification regarding the plan to remodel Kalijodo area to building owners, businessman and worker of Kalijodo.

The local government of DKI Jakarta has a target to development a green open space or *Ruang Terbuka Hijau (RTH)* in Kalijodo. Ahok also targeted, a child-friendly integrated public space or *Ruang Publik Terpadu Ramah Anak (RPTRA)* being built in this area. The remodel concept of the new Kalijodo was already being prepared, and with the collaboration Sinarmas Group, PT Bumi Serpong Damai Tbk, the expense to transform Kalijodo was taken out from Sinarmas corporate social responsibility (CSR) budget.

These CSR activities, opening a green space and child-friendly public space in Kalijodo, changed the lives of the Kalijodo merchants and residents. These CSR programs are viewed as good programs that bring out many appreciations from the public. It is because this CSR programs seems to be able to erase the inappropriate night activities that were freely held for more than 30 years.

Meanwhile the changes that were judge as a good thing to do were actually hide many conflicts. Kalijodo merchants who out of the sudden must followed and obeyed a new regulation that is contradict with the previous Kalijodo regulation faced many conflicts. After their business space was destroyed, they no longer have a trading space. Kalijodo region was proven to be owned by the government, so in the new Kalijodo area, there were no more citizen ownership. The Kalijodo merchants that choose to stay in the new Kalijodo area must adapt themselves into this new regulation and culture.

These traders were not only work in Kalijodo area but they also lived there. During and after the remodeling of Kalijodo, these people experience a major culture shock. They were force to adapt with the new culture applied in Kalijodo. Culture is related to livelihood system and financial aspect. Livelihood system is a culture that is inherited or has been agreed by certain community. A person will bring the same value, belief, and behavior from their previous culture, even though they moved to a different environment that adopts a different culture. This situation may result in disorientation, misunderstanding, conflict, depression, or even anxiety.

Essentially, a human being can be adapted to the their own culture more easily than, so when a person enters a new and different culture, the tend to experienced in culture shock (Brent T. Ruben dan Lea P. Stewart, 1998:349). Culture shock refers to a psychological reaction in a person, because situated in the middle of a certain culture, which is much different than his or her own culture. Some of these shocks or surprises arise because of many things, which are the feeling of alienation, prominent, and being very different from the others. The symptoms are associated with the feeling of frustration, helplessness, anger, anxiety, or an extreme loneliness (Brent T. Ruben and Lea P. Stewart, 1998:349). Winkelman defines culture shock as a variety of experience, which was cause by a lot of pressure that occurs when interact or deal with new culture.

Clash between cultures tends to cause many conflicts, both internal and external conflicts. This research focused on the type of conflicts experienced by kalijodo merchants due to the culture clash and its management.

B. Research Theory

Conflict

Conflict is unavoidable in all ongoing relationships, in other word conflict will occur and remain exist whether we desire it or not. Roloff(1987) establish many source of conflicts. First, conflict occurs when a person misinterpreted others behavior. Second, conflict occurs when there is a mismatch of perception. Third, a conflict occurs when a person disagree with oneself of others behavior. (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003:296).

Intrapersonal communication can be done consciously or unconsciously, for example the act of thinking. This type of communication is the foundation of in other communication contexts. In other words, intrapersonal communication is inherent with communication between two, three, or more people. This is possible because before we communicate with other people, we tend to have a conversation within ourselves (make perception and ascertain the meaning of other people's messages). Intrapersonal communication is the conflict of someone within him or herself. The success of communication with other people depends on the effectiveness of communication within ourselves (Deddy Mulyana, 2000:272-273). There are three types of intrapersonal conflicts, which are:

1. Approaches-approaches conflict is when a person faced with two tempting and free choices.
2. Approaches-avoidance conflict is when a person faced with difficult choices.
3. Avoidance-avoidance conflict is when a person faced with certain things that have either positive or negative value.

Conflict is also possible to be occurs in interpersonal communication. Interpersonal conflict is a contradiction between one person and another because of conflicting interests. Interpersonal conflict can be caused by many factors, such as individually differences in their feelings and point of views. Everyone is unique and have different point of view that can be contradict with others point of views. Other things that caused conflict are the difference in cultural background since it forms a different identity. Every individual is influenced by thoughts and values that were formed by his or her social community. These differences will eventually cause conflicts.

Difference in interest will also cause conflicts to occur. The purpose and way to achieve difference goal may also bring out conflict. Interpersonal conflicts in marriage occur from disagreement between husband and wife. Conflicts may also happen due to ineffective communication because of perception difference in message interpretation.

Conflict Management Models

Interpersonal conflict was viewed a negative thing and must be avoided because it can destroy a relationship, such as causing distortions in communication. Conflict is not always negative, it also contain some positive aspect. If a conflict is viewed from a conflict management perspective, it may bring benefit for certain people who involve in that conflict. The benefit that a conflict may bring are as a basis to led a problem solving, updating rules, and renewing a relationship. In line with Joseph A.Devito (2001:139) who stated that conflict the most fundamental part in human life. The most important thing is if we know how to manage a conflict, we were able to use conflict for better development in society.

There are five models in conflict management. First, is competing (I win – you lose), which is the aggressive approach, could not be cooperative, following only personal interests and sacrifice others. Second, is collaborating (I win – you win), in this case both side creatively attempt to find a new solution that can maximize their effort in reaching their goal. Third, is compromising (I win and lose - you win and lose), which is an action that positioned in the middle of a settlement. One of the problems in this compromising model is people tends to succumb too quickly so they failed in reaching a solution and bring benefit to others but not themselves. Fourth, is avoiding (I lose, you lose), in this model does not force or act passively. This act is done to avoid discussion about the arising problem. An individual who use this model of conflict management will withdraw him or herself from the society, unable to solve an issue and seems unhappy in their relationship with others. The last model of conflict management is accommodating (I lose – you win), which is an action to arise when a person willing to cooperate and does not force others. In this model, a person put aside his or her own interest in order to pleased the others. This act was done due to avoid action that will harm his or herself and minimize their loss rather than losing everything.

C. Research Method

This research uses a constructivism paradigm that confirms an individuals understanding of world reality is primary. Using this paradigm, researchers develop a subjective meaning about the adaptation proses of Kalijodo residents. The approach that used in this research is qualitative approach since the aim of this research is providing an in-depth description in every adaption stages that were experienced by the residents of Kalijodo.

D. Data Collection Technique

The data in this research was collected through observation and in-depth interviews. The selection of informants was based on the Kalijodo merchants who seem to have the most direct involvement and affected by the changes in Kalijodo district. Interviews were being conducted in order to revealed many and different thoughts and feelings which could not be understood or revealed through observation. According to Patton (2002:106) there purposes of qualitative research are to understand the informant's viewpoint for many things, to recall past experience, to gain information directly from the expert, to gain an event description that could be seen through observation, and to analyze certain type of discourse.

E. Informant

Informants are the people who know and have the main information that needed in a research. List of informants that were being interviewed by researcher are:

1. Merchant who has been trading in Kalijodo area before the area have been renovated until now (BH).
2. Merchant 1 who start trading in Kalijodo area after the renovation (IL)
3. Merchant 2 who start trading in Kalijodo area after the renovation (BY)
4. Kalijodo security guard 1 (ABR)
5. Kalijodo security guard 2 (BG)

F. Data Analysis Technique

Data obtained from observation, literature studies, and interviews are processed by analyzing all the data since the proses of collecting data. If the required data is incomplete, the interview process will be continuing. The data analysis technique used in this research is based on data analyze by Miles and Huberman (1994: 10-12). The steps in analyzing data are collecting data, reducing data, presenting data (in tabular form), and making conclusion.

G. Result and Discussion

The aim of this research is to find out the conflict emergence due to culture clash that face the merchant in Kalijodo district and also to find the conflict management model. In order to obtain the research data, researchers do observation toward Kalijodo district and also do in-depth interview with the merchant and security guard in Kalijodo. Based on the interview, it can be stated that conflicts in Kalijodo area emerge from the remodeling until the process is completed. This conflict arises because there were inadequate spaces to support the entire merchant. The renovated Kalijodo can only provide 50 booths for both old and new merchant in Kalijodo. The new Kalijodo merchants were the merchants that previously doing trade outside the main Kalijodo area, and they use cart to bring their trading items. The type of conflict faced the Kalijodo merchant are both intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts.

Intrapersonal Conflict

In the Kalijodo merchant case, conflict occurs when the merchants are in the frustrating phase from the adaption proses. Conflict start to arise when the Kalijodo merchants feels anxiety, worry and disappointed with their new environment. The Kalijodo merchant faced a difficult choices which are keep staying in the renovated Kalijodo area but mast follow the new culture adopted in this are, or move from Kalijodo area and try to seek other area to trade. These options were getting harder to determine because the local government offers many kinds of facilities to make the merchants stay in Kalijodo. The facilities offer are trading booth that is fully equipped with electricity, water and security. However there is a price to use this facility, the merchants must pay monthly allowance in the total of IDR 150000 to the government through bank transfer. Beside monthly allowance, there were also weekly allowances that the merchant must pay to the Kalijodo security guard, which is IDR50.000. This amount of money may seem little, but for the Kalijodo merchants have difficulties in paying these allowances. This is because after the renovation, the number of Kalijodo visitor is decreasing drastically. Therefore the Kalijodo merchants faced intrapersonal conflict since they deal with many kinds of feeling like disappointment, worried, and also frustration. This condition was stated by one of the Kalijodo merchant during in-depth interview. This interviewee is a merchant of Kalijodo who has been trading in this area for a long time. Previously this merchant have his own bar that operate during the busy night in Kalijodo, but after the renovation he could not continue his business since it against the new adopted culture in this area. This merchant refuses to leave Kalijodo, so he chooses different kind of business to fulfill his living needs. He changes his business from a bar into selling Indonesia traditional food, nasi kuning.

“We (refers to Kalijodo merchants from before it has been renovated) had been trading in here and we witness the money earns can be billion of rupiah each night. We spread our profit indirectly to other place since at night we gather money from kalijodo and at daytime we spend that money in are around Kalijodo. This means not only the Kalijodo residents who benefit the night life of Kalijodo but also people in Jakarta” (BH)

“Kalijodo now and before renovated was very different. Before, we have no financial problem,

but now we are facing that problem. Changing in the rule and culture also make some of my friend (Kalijodo merchants) have no other choice than stayed at home. At home, my friends feel stress because of uncertainty in their own area” (BH)

Kalijodo Merchant has no other skill to change the business. They also lack of modal to start an entirely new business. Therefore, many of these kinds of merchant feel stress and depressed. This feeling arouse because they no longer have income to fulfill their living needs due to the culture clash in Kalijodo.

Interpersonal Conflict

There are also conflicts between merchants in Kalijodo area. The first interpersonal conflicts exist when there is a social jealousy because not all of the merchants received a booth to continue trading in the new renovated Kalijodo. From all of the merchants in Kalijodo (both the merchant who trade inside Kalijodo area and the merchant who trade using cart in surrounding area of Kalijodo) only 50 of them who received a new trading space inside Kalijodo area. This situation is tense since in the new renovated area of Kalijodo there are new rule that prohibited people to trade in surrounding Kalijodo area, trading spaces were only allowed in Kalijodo main or inside area. The local government arranges the merchant who gets the trading place or booth in the new renovated Kalijodo area randomly. Social jealousy occurs when a Kalijodo merchants for have been trading in this area for many years, even more than 10 years ago, did not get a space in the renovated Kalijodo. Meanwhile, new merchants who previously do not own a trading space in Kalijodo get a trading space an able to enjoy the facilities that provided in it.

“The merchants were not actually mad, but just have a feeling of social jealousy when this area had just finished being renovated. Some of us wonder why the native Kalijodo people does not get a chance to trade in their own place, but the trading place that once belong to them were given by new comers. This arrangement was based randomly made by the government. At first, I doubt that I will get a booth here. Previously, my trading space in Kalijodo was located at the front or the main part, but now I got a booth at the back part. So randomly, the government not only decide who gets the new booth but also decide the location of the booth”. (IL)

Moreover, Interpersonal conflicts also occur between the native Kalijodo merchant who is also the resident of Kalijodo and the new comers merchant who only come to Kalijodo for trading. This new temporal merchants were government merchants, sinarmas merchants, and merchants who pays to a special fee to rent a booth in Kalijodo. These merchants have a better and more profitable booth. The Kalijodo native merchants of Kalijodo feel being disadvantages by the presencr of this temporal merchant. This is not only that because the temporal merchant’s booths were being place in the main crowded area of Kalijodo but also because there is no rule about the items that they trade. The permanent and temporal merchants tends to sell the same item, and since the location of the temporal merchant booth is more selling, visitor prefer to buy in main booth rather than have to walk to the back are of Kalijodo for buying the same item. This brings out the feeling of social jealousy, especially to the permanent Kalijodo merchant who have their selling booth located at the back area of Kalijodo.

Accomodating Model of Conflict Management

Conflicts that occurred in Kalijodo are quickly suppressed before it became much more endanger and serious. One of the ways to deal with conflicts in the new renovated area of Kalijodo is by appointing a person in lead that is respected by the Kalijodo residents. This person, Daeng Jamal, was a role model for the people in Kalijodo. This role model is a figure who united all the Kalijodo residents, including

Kalijodo merchants. The people of Kalijodo called Daeng Jamal using the term 'boss'. The Kalijodo residents believe that Jakarta Governor, Ahok, appointed Daeng Jamal to maintain the security in Kalijodo from before it was being renovated until the remodeling completed.

“So, if anything happen that treats the security on this area, Daeng Jamal will directly solve it. Any kinds of conflicts will be handle by him” (BH).

“Under the leadership of Daeng Jamal who manage this area, Alhamdulillah (praise the God). Until there was a song title ‘dari Sabang sampai Marauke’ (from Sabang until Marauke) that is well known in this area.

According to the Kalijodo resident, Daeng Jamal is a figure that can be trusted and hoped for, however also feared. Daeng Jamal made a song title ‘Dari Sabang sampai Marauke’, which describe the unity of Indonesia, from the most western side (Sabang in Aceh island) to the most eastern side (Marauke in Papua island). Daeng Jamal himself with his family member sings this song and uploads it to social media, such as youtube as an effort to unite all the Kalijodo residents.

Furthermore, the conflict management model that is applied in the new Kalijodo renovated area is accommodating model (accommodating – I lose, You win). This type of conflict management can be seen from the different in strength and power between the Kalijodo merchant and the government. Therefore the Kalijodo merchant put aside their own interest so the government able to execute their mission and make Kalijodo area more civilizes. Even though this situation brings many advantages for the Kalijodo merchants, they could not do anything else other than trying to minimize their lost. They have no other choice except to accept the small booth provided by the government as an exchange for their business building. Otherwise they would not be able to have a trading place to continue their business in Kalijodo area.

These merchants must also accept the government decision that put some of the native Kalijodo merchant at the back part of Kalijodo area. This area was the deserted part of Kalijodo, where only a few or even no visitor at all would visit this place. Moreover, the native Kalijodo merchants have to accept merchants from other place to trade in their district. The loss of Kalijodo native merchant increases, when these merchants from other place received the main part of Kalijodo for trading.

The native merchants of Kalijodo who accept many unfair treatments does not criticize or file complain or protest since they feel that as a good citizen they must follow the government and the boss rule. Beside that, they also do not have power or courage to fight back and they were also afraid of those who have the power and authority. This was stated by one of the informant, BH, who says ‘like the river, in life we could not fight the stream if we don't want to be drawn and gone. We must always follow the stream to maintain our existence’.

Conclusion

The aim of this research is to find out the conflicts its management that occurs in Kalijodo due to the culture clash in this district. Based on the data obtain from observation and in-depth interviews, it can be seen that these native Kalijodo merchants face both intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts. Intrapersonal conflicts occur when the native Kalijodo merchant face a difficult option either to stay keep trading and stay in Kalijodo area or move to a different area. Theses choices are hard to be determined because if they stay in Kalijodo, they must change their business (or trading item) and must follow the new culture that was newly adopted there. Vice versa if the chose to move from Kalijodo, they will miss their origin place, a place that have been theirs for so long and also starting a new business elsewhere

without skill and capital was not an easy thing to do. These options create a intrapersonal conflict because in dealing with this options, the Kalijodo merchants feel stress, anxious, disappoint, and also worry.

Furthermore, the Kalijodo merchants' also experienced interpersonal conflicts, which occur in two waves, which are during the remodeling, and after the remodeling process completes. During the remodeling process, conflicts that occur are a conflict between Kalijodo merchants. This conflicts occurs because not all native Kalijodo merchant could have an opportunity to keep trading in the new renovated Kalijodo due to the lack of the trading booth that is provided. After the remodeling process completes, interpersonal conflicts occur between the native Kalijodo merchant (who is also the resident of Kalijodo district) and new comers merchant (who come to Kalijodo only for trading). These interpersonal conflicts occur because the government treats these merchants differently. The native Kalijodo merchants were being disadvantaged because the government tend to focus more on the new comers merchants rather than the permanent Kalijodo merchants. The new comers merchants booth was being placed in the main Kalijodo area where there the playground was located, meanwhile the native Kalijodo merchants booth were being placed in a deserted area of Kalijodo.

The native Kalijodo merchants receive much unfair treatment and bring much loss to their business. However, they do nothing to chance this condition. This is because they do not have the strength and power to fight back. This type of conflict management model is a model of accommodating (I lose, You Win). The Kalijodo merchants put aside their own interest to support the government program. The native Kalijodo merchants only make a move to minimize their loss. Rather than not to be able do trading in the new renovated Kalijodo, they have no other choice except accepting the small booth provided by the government in exchange for their large business place. They were also forced to change their profession and also the trading item to maintain their existence in Kalijodo district.

References

- Ahmadi, R. (2014). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif [Research Method for Qualitative]*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Ar-Ruzzmedia.
- Anwas, OM. (2013). *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat di Era Global [Society Empowerment in Global Era]*. Bandung, Indonesia: Alfabeta.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd ed. Sage.
- Gudykunts, B. (2003). *Communicating with Stranger*, 4th Edition. USA: Mc-Graw Hill Companies, Inc.
- Hadi, N. (2011). *Corporate Social Responsibility*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Herdiansyah, H. (2010). *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif [Research Method for Qualitative]*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Salemba Humanika.
- Idrus, M. (2009). *Metode Penelitian Ilmu Sosial [Research Method for Social Sciences]*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Erlangga.
- Kotler, P and Nancy Lee. (2005). *Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing the Most Good for Your Company and Your Cause*. USA: Wiley

- Kristi, E and Poerwandari. (2011). Pendekatan Kualitatif dalam Penelitian Psikologi [Qualitative approach in Psychology Research]. Jakarta: LPSP3 Psikologi UI.
- McQuail, D. (2011). Teori Komunikasi Massa [Mass Communication Theory]. Jakarta, Indonesia: Salemba Humanika.
- Moleong, L.J. (2010). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif [Research Method for Qualitative]. Bandung, Indonesia: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods 3rd Ed. California: Sage Publication, Inc.
- Ruslan, R. (2008). Manajemen *Public Relations* & Media Komunikasi [Public Relations Management and Communication Media]. Jakarta: PT Rajagrafindo Persada.
- Wibisono. (2007). Membedah Konsep dan Aplikasi CSR [Exploring CSR Concept and Application]. Gresik: Fascho Publishing.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).