



Traditional Fisherman Communication Network in Improving Competitiveness During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Traditional fishermen in Sendang Biru, Malang Regency live side by side with the Mina Jaya Village Unit Cooperative, the Malang Regency Fisheries Service, and the Entrepreneurs Group. Empowerment of small fishing groups (traditional fishermen) is the most important thing so that they can improve their own abilities together with partners. This study aims to establish a communication network in traditional fishing groups in Sendang Biru to determine the flow of information from each member in the group. The communication network formed within the fishing group is to unite the understanding of group members and realize information disclosure. This study uses a case study approach with qualitative methods. The selection of this approach and method aims to obtain information based on the experience of disseminating information to fishermen in Malang Regency in an effort to increase their competitiveness. The communication network formed between fishermen, the Fisheries Service, the Mina Jaya Village Unit Cooperative, and fisheries entrepreneurs forms a four-sided communication pattern that can increase competitiveness during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Keywords: *Communication Network; Traditional Fishermen; Competitiveness*

Introduction

Various government strategies as a form of taking sides with traditional fishermen are related to regulating the use of fishing gear, protecting marine areas from fishing theft. The Regional Government as an extension of the Central Government is optimized by developing a strategy for empowering traditional fishermen. Research results (Taib, 2019, p. 9-20) related to the development of the fishery sector for fishermen in the 3T area, Morotai Island Regency, Kolorai Village, which must be supported by market demand so that the results obtained have an economic selling value to improve people's living standards. Almost a similar opinion was also conveyed (Kusumajanti, Widiastuti, Nashir, 2020, p. 12-21)

“Fisheries Department develop strategies for improving the welfare of traditional fishermen, among others, encourage the formation of fishermen cooperatives with legal status. Socialization of the

use of fishing gear which is not prohibited by the government. This is because there are still many traditional fishermen in Pandeglang who use Cantrang that can threaten the sustainability of marine ecosystems. The local government through related offices has not been actively involved in providing assistance to traditional fishermen so that they have high competitiveness such as maintaining good quality fish quality, stable catch quantity, environment of fishery and marine areas that is maintained so as to ensure the sustainability of existence fish in the sea”.

Everyone can be a member of several groups that are tailored to their existence and needs. Basically a group is a collection of two or more people who interact and depend on each other, join to achieve certain goals. Various reasons people join a group, namely (1) a sense of security, by joining a group, individuals can reduce the insecurity of being alone; (2) status, joining a group that is considered important by others provides recognition and status for its members; (3) self-esteem, the group can give members a feeling of self-worth; (4) affiliation, the group can meet the social needs of its members; (5) power, which cannot be achieved individually is often made possible through group action; (6) achieving the goals of members and groups.

This part of the task requires an agreement from each party which can be completed in various ways, one of which is using group communication. The power of group communication provides an opportunity for each party to express their opinions based on their respective experiences (Kusumajanti, 2018, p. 118-120). Openness among group members makes it easier for them to find out the problems experienced by each member. This openness can occur because they have interpersonal relationships that are always fostered by both parties. This is in line with the case that occurs in the Catfish Farm Group in Gunung Sindur, Bogor Regency. The group must have the confidence to develop the business. The synergy between the Catfish cultivating group “Curug Mutiara” as catfish producers, related Agencies in Bogor Regency, Officials from Curug Villages, Gunung Sindur District, Woman Farmers Group in Curug Village, Curug Village Cooperatives resulted in product collaboration as desired by the group, each part has its own task (Kusumajanti, 2021. p. 1030).

This study uses a Case Study approach to answer all problems related to the implementation of the Four Sides Communication Model in increasing the competitiveness of traditional fishermen in Java. The uses of this approach is intended to emphasize an otology based on historical realism where Indonesia is known as a maritime country with strong fishing power.

Transactional epistemology and a dialectical methodology. The Case Study approach proposed by Robert K. Yin is expected to be able to provide direction in the case analysis process of the implementation of the communication model carried out at TPI Sendangbiru, Malang, so that the competitiveness of traditional fishermen can increase. The groups that play an active role in creating messages related to efforts to increase the competitiveness of traditional fishermen consist of: (a) Malang Regency Fisheries Service; (b) Sendangbiru TPI Manager, Malang; (c) Fishermen Groups / Organization; (d) Bakulan / fishermen entrepreneurs.

The reason for choosing TPI Sendangbiru, Malang is because the results of previous research obtained information about the gap between fishermen and vessel capacity ownership. Most of the fish caught are to meet the export market and local market demand. This research is to explore the communication network formed between communication actors in meeting consumer needs, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Result and Discussion

The Fish Auction Place in the Sendangbiru area, Malang Regency is a place to auction fish caught by fishermen in this area. Fishermen catch fish in groups in a boat with a capacity of more than 10

GT. Each ship consists of a captain / *Nahkoda* who acts as a leader. A fisherman whose job is to catch fish using fishing gear such as fishing rods, nets, ship workers. A ship worker acting as a general assistant will be tasked with cleaning the ship, regulating the amount of ice in each tank containing fish. Fish that are caught in this areas are types of Tuna, Albakor, Bloated Fish, Squid, Shrimp. The types of fish that can be caught depend on the season, such as squid and shrimp, which will be difficult for fishermen to find in the middle of the full moon.

In addition to the traditional fishermen in the Sendangbiru area, there are groups of entrepreneurs who buy fishermen's catch. The entrepreneurs are very obedient to the non-standard group rules regarding fish auction procedures. The fish auction was conducted by the Mina Jaya Village Unit Cooperative under the supervision of the UPT TPI of the Fisheries Service, Malang Regency.

The next group is the Department of Fisheries whose scope of work is ini Malang Regency. A Head of Service heads an agency engaged in Marine Fisheries and Freshwater Fisheries. A Head of UPT Fish Auction Place as the smallest work unit in this service to supervise and report fishing activities.

Broadly speaking, there are four major groups in TPI Sendangbiru that are directly involved in fishing activities and selling them, namely: (1) Fisherman; (2) Mina Jaya Village Unit Cooperative; (3) Fish Entrepreneur; (4) Malang Regency Fisheries Service.

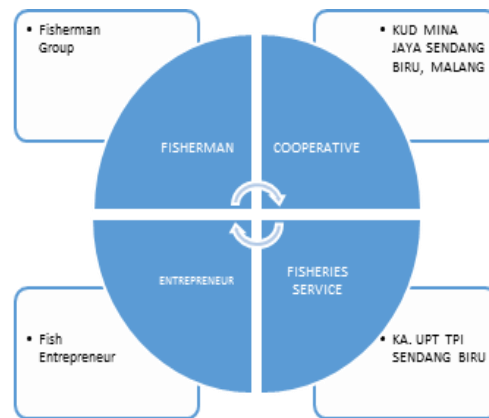


Figure 1. Communication Network ini Sendangbiru, Malang Regency

Source: researcher, 2021

Fisherman

Fishermen in the Sendangbiru area consist of two major groups, namely: (1) Big Fisherman; This Fisherman has his own boat, and the crew of the ship are the captain, fisherman workers, and errand boys. Big fishermen are also known as Entrepreneur Fishermen, that is, besides those in this group, they have a profession as fishermen, and they are also entrepreneurs who buy fish caught by other fishermen through auctions. (2) Little Fishermen; Most of the small fishermen do not own boats and they usually work as fishing laborers, and join or work with fishermen entrepreneurs.

The Fishermen in Sendangbiru are members of the Association of Rukun Jaya which is engaged in social activities. During the Covid-19 Pandemic which also hit some fishermen and their families, the Rukun Jaya Association was actively involved in handling it. Traditional medicines are widely used to cure patients.

Fisherman Entrepreneurs

Fishermen entrepreneurs are often known as *Pengambak*, whose job is to provide capital to small fishermen. This capital provision is based on an agreement to return the borrowed capital by adding a loan interest of around 5% - 10%. Small Fishermen will return their capital loans using the proceeds from the sale of the fish they catch. The sale of fish caught by fishermen is carried out using a fish auction mechanism. The price offered is very open, so the selling price of fish is in accordance with the market price. Fisherman entrepreneurs in various occasions act on behalf of fishermen groups to sell fish.

Fishermen entrepreneurs to develop their fish trade always try to find information about the selling price of fish in the market and the need or capacity of local markets in Java and Bali. Fishermen entrepreneurs on average own 10-50 boats, most of which are handed over to small fishermen to be used by way of leasing and putting them into the capital component.

Fisheries Service

The Malang Regency Fisheries Service is tasked with providing guidance to Traditional Fishermen, with vessel ownership characteristics of around 5 GT. In Sendangbiru, most of the fishermen are bid fishermen with boat ownership above 10 GT. The fishermen in Sendangbiru assess the Head of the Malang Regency Fisheries Service as a leader who is willing to learn and able to understand all the needs of fishermen, especially small fishermen.

The existence of the Fisheries Service in Sendangbiru is represented by a Head of the UPT Fish Auction Place (TPI). Mr Purwoadi (Ipung) is The Head of UPT TPI Sendangbiru, as a leader who protects and likes to help fishermen. Mr. Ipung's job, as the fishermen greeted him, was to arrange/manage orders to Pertamina, the use and distribution of fuel oil (BBM) to fishermen who would go to sea. Mr. Ipung, who has a mission to provide guidance to fishermen, entrepreneurs, and Village Unit Cooperatives (*Koperasi Unit Desa/KUD*), tries to make a direct approach to the community in these three groups. Various fish customer regulations can be easily applied by the Fisheries Service because they cooperate with KUD as auctioneer in the field. The Data on the results of the fish auction was submitted by KUD Mina Jaya to Head of UPT TPI Sendangbiru which later became the material for Mr. Ipung's monthly report to the Malang Regency Fisheries Service.

Mina Jaya Village Unit Cooperative (KUD Mina Jaya)

KUD Mina Jaya as a business unit owned by Sendangbiru Village is tasked with conducting auctions of fish caught by fishermen. An open fish auction system, with fish prices according to the market. The percentage of fish auctions is the main producer for this KUD. Fish sales transactions are carried out by KUD by accommodating fish payments by entrepreneurs. KUD cooperates with bank, namely Bank of Jatim. The management of open auction activities makes fishermen, businessmen and agencies believe that the KUD conducts buying and selling transparently. Besides being directly involved in the Fish Auction, KUD Mina Jaya also sells the need for fuel oil for fishing boats. The selling price of BBM offered is the same as the market price, while the profits derived from the fee provided by Pertamina.

Discussion

1. Communication Patterns Established by Communication Actors

Communication actors in the fishing environment of Sendangbiru consist of the Fisheries Service / Local Government, Fishermen's Groups, Fishermen Entrepreneur (Bakulan), Fishermen's Cooperative "Mina Jaya". The Four actors at TPI Sendangbiru, Malang, in order to improve the competitiveness of traditional fishermen / Small Fishermen, seem to coordinate with each other. Based on the data obtained,

it shows that the communication pattern built by the actors shows a circular shape. Every actor has the freedom to relate to each other.

Interpersonal communication model can be used to build interpersonal relationships. The closeness of interpersonal relationships will make it easier for people to communicate. This means that each actor can communicate personally, not on behalf of the institution or group. This model allows them to be more open to each other. The element of closeness of relationship between individuals also provides an opportunity for them to convey messages verbally and non-verbally so that their interlocutor can understand and respond according to the content of the message. The closeness of the relationship is closely related to the element of personal openness. Personal matters are easier to convey than in groups.

2. Form of Communication Model

Communication model that is formed so as to increase the competitiveness of traditional fishermen in the TPI area of Sendangbiru, Malang. The result of observations made by researchers indicate that the Interactional Communication Model is used to communicate as a form of interaction between communication actors.

Communication Interaction that is run is two-way from the sender of the recipient of the message, and vice versa. The process of delivering messages as a form of communication that is always ongoing. Interactional model undertaken by the communication actors in Sendangbiru has the ability as a message sender and a message receiver in an interaction alternately depending on the response desired by the sender of the message. For example, a fisherman who join a ship receives an additional wage in the form of five tuna fish. The fishermen need their wages in the form of money, so the fish that the captain gives them are sold to fish traders without going through an auction. One of the important elements in the Interaction Communication Model is the existence of feedback. The Malang Regency Fisheries Service has an obligation to record the catches of fishermen, and how much fish is sold through auctions. For this purpose, the Fisheries Service will interact or communicate with fishermen, the Mina Jaya Cooperative, and Fish Traders.

The last element in the Interactional Model is the person's field of experience, which in this case is each actor. The experience that is meant is how the culture or the habit of selling cough fish, if we take the case at the Sendangbiru TPI. This experience will affect the ability of fishermen to communicate with other actors. Everyone will bring a unique experience, such as the procedures for the fish auction in Sendangbiru with its own uniqueness that will be different from other regions.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the Communication Network in Sendangbiru uses the Interactional Communication Model. In this model, the communication process occurs when there is an exchange of meaning with good feedback that connects the source and recipient of the message.

The field of experience possessed by each communication actor in Sendangbiru is related to culture that has been going on for generations. However, this habit/culture can be changed based on the experience of the next generation, so as to change the pattern of selling.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, every communication actor in Sendangbiru tries to maintain relationships so that they remain in the ties of the fish supply chain. The activities of catching fish in the sea continue during this pandemic, even though the number of fishermen who go to sea is not as much as before the pandemic. This is because the demand for fish is not as much as in the pre-pandemic period.

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