

Education Model Based on Local Wisdom: The Socio-Legal Studies on the Socio-Economic Behavior of Samin Community

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Abstract: Indonesia has a cultural diversity that affects the socio-economic activities of society and its impact on the environment. This study focuses on how the local wisdom of the Samin community enables them to conduct economic activities while preserving their environment and local nature. The purpose of this research is to de-scribe environmental education model based on local wisdom of society Samin. This research is socio-legal by using legal and environmental economic approach. Results show that the traditional law in Samin community is pretty solid and that people, there are still adhered to it. Most of Samin people rely on farming activities, but this is only meant to meet daily needs. Samin people do not consider costs and losses and are not familiar with the concept of trade. This economic philosophy enables them to preserve their environment. Samin people up-hold the principle of cooperation and are not against cooperation with any party to help preserve their nature. The educational model recommended from this research is observational learning and self-regulation. The national government must also play a role in preserving the local wisdom of Samin community as a cultural heritage.

1 INTRODUCTION

The development of a country depends largely on its resources as the production factor in its economic activities. Nonetheless, economic activities by people of a country often result in negative effects for the environment. Most economic endeavors focus on quickly, effectively, and efficiently improve economic growth without considering the future of the environment. Many cases in different countries point to false understanding that economic growth and environmental concerns are two opposing sides. Environmental degradation is then understood as the cost for economic development of a nation (Basiago, 1999).

The phenomenon of environmental degradation is of major concern in economic development in developing countries. People dwellings in an area play important roles in environmental changes. Environmental use is an important factor in fulfilling people's economic needs. This often leads to uncontrolled, detrimental, and excessive use of nature. (Bannon and Collier, 2003)

Technological development brings real changes in social life. Events in certain areas are known at the other regions at an instant. People also tend to lead individualistic lives, especially when it comes to fulfilling basic needs. This individualism also affects the way modern people make their livelihood, in that they often cross borders and boundaries, hence the term "homo hominy lupus", meaning a man consuming another, in real and implicit term.

The Samin communities are people clinging to Saminism that was first disseminated by Samin Surontiko in the mid-1890s. Samin communities spread in some regions across Central and East Java. They have contrasting views from ordinary Javanese communities. They have a distinct language, religion, and life philosophy. They tend to defy the existence of a nation that they become 'another entity' living in the midst of state and modern infiltration. These are the main reasons as to why they are categorized into a less privileged traditional community (Her-man, 1994).

As with the other traditional communities in Indonesia, the local wisdom of Samin community is very strong. They uphold certain attitudes and/or

prohibitions when it comes to everyday living. They must not have formal education, they cannot wear trousers, they must not wear 'peci', they must not trade, and they cannot have more than one wife. Some of those principles are almost impossible to keep nowadays. One good example is the impossibility of having formal education, as the government has pledged nine years compulsory education for all citizens. In the Samin community, children only learn informal lessons from their parents. The present day still witness members of Samin community that do not have formal education.

The view of Samin community on their environment is very positive. They make use of nature (e.g. taking firewood) as they need them without any intention to exploit. This is in line with their simple thinking of being enough and as it is. They treat land as their mother earth that gives them life. As farmers, they treat their land the best way they can. They only plant seasonal crops and trees that fit the cycle of both rainy and dry season. Samin community is very much aware the sustainability of natural resources depends solely on them.

Those phenomena emphasize the fact that in their communal life Samin community strives to regulate themselves in terms of thoughts, feelings, and attitudes as to adhere to the principal of Samin teachings and not over exploit nature. The local wisdom of Samin community stems from self-regulation, which is a process when individuals plan, direct, and control their behaviors to reach certain goals (obedience to folk law and environmental protection) by involving cognitive, affective, and psychomotor elements. The ongoing modernization and economic activities result in a sort of trade off in decisions taken by individuals in a community. One of those tradeoffs is the choice to utilize and maintain environmental quality. This research is aimed at analyzing how local wisdom of Samin community affect the way they run economic activities by still adhering to the folk law in order to preserve their surroundings and the environment. This model of local wisdom can be used as a model of environmental economic education.

2 METHODS

This research observes socio-economic behavior of Samin community in the socio-legal context that stems from constructivism paradigm that never ceases to discover values of truth. This type of research no longer divide disciplines onto discrete subject, but integrate law, humanity, social, and natural sciences

into an integrated socio-legal activity (Edward O Wilson, 1998).

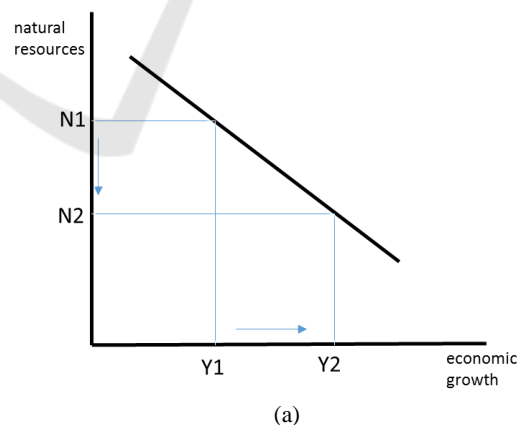
The data were analyzed qualitatively using logic, induction, deduction, analogy/interpretation, comparison, and the likes. This research also employs descriptive analysis founded on an interactive model of analysis. This interactive analysis is based on three components; data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing (Creswell. 2003).

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Economic Growth and the Environment

Economic growth acceleration in developing countries results in natural resources exploitation. The higher production activities, the more production factors are required. Environmental production factor may lead to resource crisis and even environmental destruction when it is not properly managed. The more production factors are used, the less available they will be (Sutikno and Maryunani, 2006)

The relationship of natural resources and economic growth by the negative slope, as depicted in Figure. 1a. This means that when economic growth increases from Y1 to Y2, it results in fewer natural resources available. That is, down from N1 to N2.



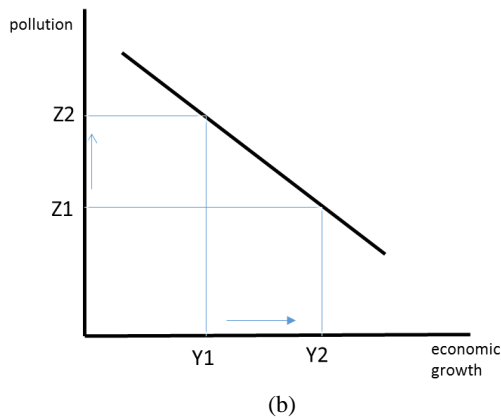


Figure 1: The relationship of economic growth, natural resources, and environmental pollution.

Other than fewer natural resources available due to production activities and economic growth, there are also negative externalities to the environment. This is only natural as industrial and people’s consumption rise. The next consequence is environmental pollution. Economic activities always come with waste that can pollute the air, earth, and water if they are not properly managed. The relationship economic growth and environmental pollution is described on a positive slope (to the right) in Fig. 1b. Economic growth from Y1 to Y2 is accompanied by increased environmental pollution from Z1 to Z2.

This is the condition referred to as tradeoffs in people’s economic activity. On one side, production and consumption of goods and services results in positive outcomes for economic growth and welfare. On the other side, they come with the negative side, which is waste or pollution (Fig. 2).

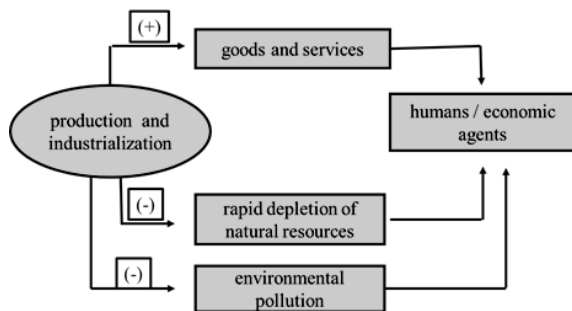


Figure 2: Flow diagram of economic and environmental activities.

3.2 People and Education Model using Self-Regulation and Local Wisdom

Education is a product of society and is a factor of social change. This is also known as dialectic relationship of society and education. An education system is a category of historical process related to all stages of development and is also a geographical category concerned with political, social, and ideological matters of a nation. Nowadays, education is undergoing a crisis that a more creative and pure approach is required in order to refresh its organization structure and method. One of those new methods is an education model using self-regulation based on local wisdom (Zimmerman and Paulsen, 1995 in Boekaerts, 2000).

Samin community has some moral virtues in dealing with the tradeoff of economic activities and taking care of their environment. Samin community has regulated themselves in terms of thoughts, feelings, and attitudes as to adhere to the principle of Samin teaching without over exploitation of nature. Self-regulation is understood as a process of activating the mind, attitude, and affection continuously to reach the goals (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2000). It is a personality process to plan, direct, and control attitude in order to reach targets (adherence to folk law and environmental protection) by using cognitive, affective, and psychomotor elements.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Samin community or “Seduler Sikep” (as they prefer to be called) in Sumber village are still related to each other and are the fourth direct descendants of Samin Surosentiko (Predicted to be born in 1859). The social order maintained by “Sikep” Community stems from their understanding and humane sense as creatures of God in social interactions and their relationship with the environment. Samin community does have every day norms as their guide. The Samin community referred to in this research is the one known as Seduler Sikep or “Wong Samin” living in Sumber village, Kradenan sub district, Blora regency, Central Java. The other Samin communities are spread in some regencies in Central Java such as Kudus (Kutuk sub district), Pati (Kandangan sub district), Blora (Kradenan, Klopoduwur, and Nginggil sub districts), Brebes (Gunung Segara sub district), Rembang, Bojonegoro (Tapelan sub district), and Lamongan (Tlaga Anyar sub district), and also Ngawi.

Samin teachings concerns values in human lives. These teachings are guides that tell people how to live and behave. They do undergo changes in their implementation over time. For Samin people however, the most important thing is their attitude towards life.

Just as the other communities, Samin people also have social groups that later affect their economic activities. According to Bannon and Collier (2003), communities are made of individual interrelationships bounded by certain territorial boundaries while making the most of the natural resources available according to the regulation set by those communities themselves. The social groups in the Samin community of Sumber village are: first, the Primary group that are attached to each other as they are part of the nucleus family. For Samin people, the core family members are those living together in a house. This means that a house should only have the main core members of a family, namely a father, a mother, and their children who are not married yet. But this is not the case found in the field. Interview results show that some houses are occupied not only by the core family members but also the other relatives such as nephews or parents in law. This is later referred to as household. These households serve as the bond that ties the members together in their daily activities. The more family members a household has, the more activities are required to meet their primary needs like place, clothes, and food.

Second, kinship, groups of people living close to each other in one village known as neighbors. Nonetheless, this type of relationship also applies to those living in other areas. Members of this kinship group will gather for their activities. This concept of kinship is based on the feeling of being related/become relatives. It encompasses wider members than the people in the core family. They also term this relationship with 'isih kulit' or literally means still the same skin, due to genetic relations and also relationship by marriage. The process of social interaction in this kinship allows individuals to easily solve problems in their social and economic activities.

Third, internal and external relations. This means relationships among members of Samin communities and relationship of Samin communities with the out-side societies. Internal relations involve members of one Samin community to the members of the other Samin communities in many regions. They have solid relations. The care about each other dearly. They of-ten pay visits to members of the other Samin communities. This feeling of belonging to one another is very much evident. Their external relations with the other members of the community is also

going well, they have harmonious relations with them. They follow the traditions and customs of their own society and those of the others', even though they do not always actively participate.

Most Samin people work as farmers. However, they do not trade their produce. They only keep them for their daily needs. Sedulur Sikep members do not know the concept of profit and loss. They do not understand trade. Kinship is everything for them. They would rather sacrifice their belonging than having to lose a relative. They uphold the philosophy of 'tuno sathak, bathi sanak' which literally means, it is better to lose a fortune to get a relative.

Despite their ancient way of thinking. Samin people also embrace modern farming practices. They use tractors and employ some farming technologies. The only thing Samin people cannot accept until today is the existence of a central government, despite the fact that it is an integral part of a changing society. Nonetheless, Samin people are able to protect their surroundings and nature with their old fashioned way of living. Here are the principles of their teachings:

First, religious norm. The concept of religion believed by Samin people differs from those explained by anthropologists and sociologists. According to Samin people, 'agama itu gaman lanang, Adam pengucap, Dam, damele rabi', meaning religion is a weapon and guide to life. This philosophy is also manifested in their social and economic lives. There is more to life than the one we have on earth. Therefore, cheating in trade is not worth it. This belief also prevents them from damaging their nature and environment.

Second, The norm of courtesy, habit, and attitude. In terms of courtesy, Samin people are very nice and friendly when it comes to paying a visit or welcoming a visitor. They warmly welcome guests as they believe that everyone, no matter where they come from, is relatives. They also greet each other upon coming across with one another. Once a hello is not replied. A Samin person will come to that particular person to pay a visit. Samin people uphold honesty highly. Any disobedience to those norms results in stigmatization. The norms of courtesy, habit, and attitude in Samin community include:

- Sabar lan ampun drengki srei, tukar padu, dahpen, kemeren. Aja kutil jumpu, bedhog nyolong (Be patient and do not bother others. Do not start a fight or be jealous. Do not steal or take what is not ours).
- Wong urip kudu ngerti uripe, amargo urip bakal digawa sak lawase (People must understand life. Our attitude here on earth will be held accountable in the hereafter).

The norm of courtesy and honesty in Samin community is an educational model to prevent damage to the environment. As people will be held accountable to what they have done here on earth.

Third, custom norm. The custom norm in Samin community is very much evident in their marriage system. Sikep community believes in monogamy and this is properly expressed in the term 'siji kanggo slawase', meaning one husband/wife forever. The sacred aim of marriage is to have descendants (nurunke wiji sing sakbenere). Samin people still uphold the folk law that governs the way they live such as using Javanese and the observation of 'Nyadran', a procession of cleaning up the village and sacred fountains that have provided great benefits for the community. This customs are laid by their ancestors and are passed on from one generation to the next via habits. Although there is no written regulation, Samin people still adhere to them and believe in them with all their hearts.

In Indonesia, Samin community is known as one of the folk law communities (MaHA). There are at least five elements that deem a community a MaHA status (Dominikus Rato, 2009: 107)

- A community of people feeling united and bound by togetherness based on descent (gene-cology) and/or territory;
- A group of people living in certain areas within certain boundaries they agree on;
- A group of people having their own wealth, both material and non-material in nature;
- A group of people led by a leader or a group of leaders that represent that group with his/her/their own legal power and recognition bestowed upon them by the group;
- A group of people having proper norms that guide them in their social life; and
- A group of people with no intention of separating themselves from each other.

Samin people are abided by the folk law, especially the one concerning environmental sustainability. There are traditional forests run by Samin people themselves with the sole purpose of improving the welfare of Samin people. The way Samin people regulate themselves by abiding to the folk law and preserving the environment (albeit local wisdom) is governed by two mechanisms; observational learning, and self-regulation (Bandura in Boeree, 2008). It is said that a person will be inclined to act in certain ways (observational learning whenever there is attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation.

According to Schunk (in Susanto 2006), self-regulation is the ability to control oneself. Samin

people continuously control their way of life. They activate their thoughts, attitudes, and feelings in order to live up to the values their ancestors have inherited them with as they strive to reach the purpose of their life, despite the fact that their lifestyle differs greatly from those outside their community. In this case, external influences fail to distract Samin people from observing the values of self-regulation they have always believed in.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Folk or traditional laws are still adhered to as they serve greater goals for those observing them. Samin people preserve their environment as they provide them with greater goods in their life. They uphold the principle of 'gotong royong' or working together and are not against cooperating with external parties in order to preserve the environment.

The educational model recommended in this research is based on two concepts of observational learning and self-regulation. The government must also guarantee the preservation of the local wisdom of Samin community as it is an integral part of our national culture.

People's economic behavior must be directed toward preserving the balance and sustainability of nature for the future generation by making use of technologies and methods that are not against the norms and ethics within our society.

The educational model proposed here is aimed at narrowing the tradeoff between people's economic and social need and potential environmental degradation caused by our attempts in fulfilling them, both now and in the future.

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