

Socio-economic Dynamics of Traditional Fishing Communities

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Abstract

Traditional fishing communities tend to have low incomes, they often have difficulty in fulfilling basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. The purpose of this research is to reveal the socio-economic dynamics of traditional fishing communities in South Konawe Regency. This phenomenon was revealed using a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data collection techniques were carried out through three stages, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of this study indicate that: (1) the livelihood system of traditional fishing communities can be seen from the main occupation, the use of fishing gear, local knowledge, culture and tradition, community lifestyle, simple lifestyle, and environmental conservation; (2) the socio-economic dynamics of traditional fishing communities include dependence on natural resources, poverty and economic uncertainty, access to resources, modernization and technology, the influence of government policies, climate change.

Keywords: *Social Dynamics, Socio-Economic, Traditional Fishing Communities.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country that has many marine areas and many archipelagic regions. Indonesia is also known for its wealth of fisheries and marine products. Even though it is a country with marine wealth. But it has not guaranteed the welfare of its people. Especially the traditional fishing community. There are still many traditional fishing communities that live below the poverty line. The life of this kind of fishing community can be called a lot of problems or challenges that still need to be revealed in depth.

This phenomenon in social studies is referred to as socio-economic dynamics. Socio-economic dynamics refer to changes, interactions, and processes that occur in the relationship between social factors and economic factors in society. This includes how social factors such as culture, values, norms, social structures, and interactions between individuals affect the economic system and how the economic system affects society.

In addition, socioeconomic dynamics include changes in the economic system, such as technological developments, changes in the labor market, economic fluctuations, and changes in consumption and production patterns. It also discusses poverty and inequality. It deals with how social factors such as income, education, access to employment, and economic opportunity can affect poverty and inequality in society.

Socioeconomic dynamics covers how social norms and cultural values influence individual economic decisions and consumer behavior. For example, social norms can influence consumption preferences and certain economic taboos. It also examines how social structures such as social classes, ethnic groups, and social hierarchies have a significant impact on access to economic resources, opportunities, and social mobility.

Socioeconomic dynamics also include the role of government and public policies in regulating the economy and creating social welfare. Policies such as tax policy, social assistance, and economic regulation play an important role in controlling socioeconomic dynamics. Economic uncertainty, including economic recessions, financial crises, or changes in global markets, can have a major impact on social dynamics, including employment, income, and social stability.

Socioeconomic dynamics is a very important field in social science and economics because it helps us understand the complex relationship between social and economic factors in society. It also allows us to identify challenges and opportunities in creating a more inclusive and sustainable society.

Some of the problems found in research on the socio-economic dynamics of Community (Debele & Negussie, 2022; Druzhinin, 2019; Heggerud et al., 2022; Perruci et al., 2021; Simiyu, 2015). Research on

community social dynamics more specifically on fishing communities was conducted by (Kronen et al., 2010; Seary et al., 2022; Stead, 2005) Some of these studies examine socioeconomic dynamics, and some studies address the socioeconomic dynamics of fishing communities.

More specific socio-economic dynamics in traditional communities are very diverse due to the behavior, lifestyle, marine natural resources, and culture of the community. Each traditional fishing community in various regions has similarities and differences in socio-economic life. Be it income, lifestyle, or use of fishing gear.

The initial phenomenon researchers found at the research location was that the traditional fishing community in South Konawe Regency had a lifestyle that was difficult to improve their economy, there was also a disturbance of social life from outside, namely the arrival of mining companies that polluted the sea where fishermen were fishing. Researchers see the socio-economic conditions of the fishing community and its dynamics. For this reason, researchers raised the study of the socio-economic dynamics of traditional fishing communities in South Konawe Regency.

METHODS

This article is a scientific research article that uses descriptive qualitative research methods (Susanto, 2013; Debele & Negussie, 2022; Bhangu et al., 2023). The location of this research focuses on traditional communities in South Konawe Regency. Informants in this research are fishing communities consisting of village heads, village governments, youth leaders, and community leaders. The data from this research was collected through three stages, namely observation, interviews, and documentation (Ningi, 2022). Followed by data validity methods and extended observation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Livelihood System of Traditional Fishing Communities

The livelihoods of traditional fishing communities can vary from one region to another, the findings of this study are that the livelihoods of traditional fishermen in South Konawe Regency can be seen from:

1. Main Occupation

Traditional fishermen depend on fishing as their main livelihood. They usually go to sea to catch fish

and other marine products. Meanwhile, other jobs support their work as fishermen.

The main occupation of traditional fishing communities is activities related to fishing and other marine resources. They depend on their catch to fulfill their daily needs. The following are some of the main occupations carried out by traditional fishing communities in South Konawe Regency:

First is Fishing. The main activity of the fishing community. They use various traditional fishing gear mentioned earlier, such as nets, trawls, fishing rods, and traps, to catch fish and other marine animals. The second is the provision of marine resources. Apart from fish, traditional fishing communities also seek other marine resources such as clams, crabs, shrimps, lobsters, oysters, and so on. These are important additions to their diet and livelihoods.

Third is the maintenance of fishing gear. Traditional fishing communities must also maintain their boats and keep the fishing gear in good condition. This includes boat repairs, replacing damaged nets, and other routine maintenance. After catching fish and other marine resources, traditional fishing communities usually have to sell their catches at local markets or to fish traders. This involves work such as cleaning, processing, and preparing the fish for sale.

Fifth is resource management. Artisanal fishing communities often have in-depth knowledge of local ecosystems and fish life cycles. They also play a role in maintaining the sustainability of marine resources by implementing sustainable fishing practices. Sixth is ancillary management. Some traditional fishing communities are also involved in processing their catch into products such as salted fish, anchovies, shredded fish, or other processed seafood. Seventh is culture and tradition. In addition to their daily work, artisanal fishing communities often maintain culture and traditions related to life at sea. These include traditional ceremonies, folktales, music, and dances that preserve their heritage.

2. Using Traditional Fishing Gear

Each region has its unique variant of traditional fishing gear according to the water conditions, the type of fish being caught, and the local culture. The use of these traditional fishing gears often involves specialized knowledge and skills passed down from generation to generation, as well as an understanding of the ecology and life cycle of the fish being caught.

Traditional fishing communities in the South Konawe District have also developed a variety of traditional fishing gear to catch fish and other marine resources (Sabdillah, et al., 2020).

These traditional fishing gears are often based on knowledge and techniques passed down from generation to generation. Traditional fishermen in South Konawe Regency work using traditional fishing gear such as nets, fishing rods, bubu, Serong, and wooden boats. They do not rely on advanced technology such as modern fishing boats or automated fishing equipment.

3. Local Knowledge

Traditional fishing communities have strong local knowledge of the water conditions in their area, including seasonal patterns, the types of fish present, and effective fishing techniques. This local knowledge has been preserved from their predecessors to the current generation. Although there is local knowledge that has been eroded by the times, there are still dominant behaviors that always use local wisdom in working as fishermen.

The local knowledge possessed by traditional fishing communities is the result of centuries of experience in interacting with the marine environment or waters where they live. This knowledge covers various aspects of marine life, including fish behavior, weather, seasons, navigation, and the sustainability of marine resources. Here are some examples of local knowledge held by traditional fishing communities:

The first is Fish Movement Patterns. Traditional fishing communities have a deep understanding of the movement patterns of fish and other marine animals. They know when and where certain species usually appear, seasonal migrations, and locations where fish gather to breed. The second is weather observation. They understand the signs of the weather, such as changes in wind direction, changes in sky color, and cloud behavior, which helps them decide when it is safe to go to sea and when it is best to stay on land.

Third is navigational knowledge. Traditional fishing communities often do not rely on modern navigation equipment. They understand ocean currents, natural signs around their waters, and the stars to determine their direction and location. Fourth is resource sustainability. Traditional fishing communities understand the importance of maintaining the sustainability of marine resources. They know when to avoid overfishing, places where fishing is

prohibited, and environmentally friendly fishing methods.

4. Dependence on Weather and Nature

They are highly dependent on weather and nature. Their fishing activities are often affected by factors such as weather, seasons, and natural cycles. This dependence is caused by:

- a. Navigation. Traditional fishermen often do not have modern navigation equipment. They rely on weather knowledge and natural observations to determine when it is safe to go to sea and when it is best to stay on land. Weather conditions such as wind direction, wind speed, and ocean waves can affect their decision to go to sea and the route to take,
- b. Bad weather, such as storms, high waves, or strong winds, can threaten the safety of traditional fishers and their boats. Therefore, they must understand the weather to avoid dangerous situations at sea,
- c. Fishing. Fishing activities are often affected by the weather. Some types of fish appear more abundant or active during certain weather conditions, such as before or after a storm. Knowledge of weather patterns helps fishers determine when is the right time to catch certain fish,
- d. the right time. Knowledge of the weather is also important for determining the right time to carry out activities such as fishing, sailing, and fish drying. Weather can affect the success and quality of the catch, as well as the processing and storage of fish,
- e. income, and livelihoods. The catch of traditional fishers is their main source of income. Unpredictable weather conditions can affect their income, as bad weather can hamper their ability to go to sea and catch fish,
- f. the sustainability of marine resources. Knowledge of the weather can also help traditional fishers maintain the sustainability of marine resources. They can avoid overfishing or damaging the marine environment when weather conditions are unfavorable,
- g. Cultural heritage. Knowledge of weather and nature observation is also part of the cultural heritage of traditional fishing communities. This knowledge is often passed down through generations and becomes an integral part of their culture and identity.

As such, natural weather plays a very important role in the daily lives and livelihoods of traditional fishing communities. They rely on years of local knowledge to make wise decisions in the face of a dynamic marine environment that often cannot be accurately predicted using modern technology.

5. Community Lifestyle

Traditional fishers often live in small communities on coastal or small islands. They tend to lead lifestyles that are closely tied to the sea and their daily activities. Many fishers live in very close-knit communities. Fishing families often work together on boats, and community solidarity is very important. They often form fishermen's groups or cooperatives to address common issues, such as the joint purchase of fishing gear or supporting members who are experiencing difficulties. The lifestyle of fishing communities can vary greatly from place to place, depending on factors such as geographic location, cultural traditions, and changes in the fishing industry.

6. Culture and Tradition

Traditional fishing communities often have strong cultural heritage and traditions related to the sea. The culture and traditions of fishing communities in South Konawe Regency are still found to be frequently associated with fishing communities.

- a. First is the ceremony. Many fishing communities have special ceremonies before they go to sea. These ceremonies can be prayers or rituals to ask for safety and a bountiful catch. For example, in Indonesia, there is a tradition of praying together before sailing called "*Tujuh Hari Tujuh Malam*".
- b. the second is the Sea Mantra. Sea chants are often an important part of fishermen's culture. They often have mantras that tell of their experiences at sea, their lives, and the myths of the sea. These songs can be passed down from generation to generation.
- c. Third is Distinctive Clothing. Some fishing communities have distinctive clothing that they wear when they go to sea or when celebrating sea festivals. These clothes often have motifs and colors that reflect marine life.
- d. Fourth is Traditional Musical Instruments. In some places, fishers also use traditional musical instruments such as drums, gendang, or other percussion instruments to celebrate their catch or accompany traditional sea dances.

- e. Fifth is Myths and Legends of the Sea. Many fishing communities have myths and legends about sea creatures or supernatural events that occur at sea. These myths are often used to teach cultural values and moral lessons to the younger generation.
- f. Sixth is Environmental Sustainability. Some fishing communities have a strong tradition of environmental sustainability. They respect the principles of sustainable fishing and often follow traditional rules to keep marine resources sustainable.
- g. Seventh is Birth and Wedding Celebrations. As in many cultures, births, and marriages in fishing communities are often celebrated with special ceremonies and festivities. These traditions can vary from place to place.
- h. Eighth is Death Rituals. When a member of a fishing community dies, there are often special rituals performed. These can involve sea burial ceremonies or religious rituals associated with marine life. *Pola Hidup Sederhana*

The lives of traditional fishers are often simple, with limited access to modern amenities such as electricity and running water. They live in simple houses on the coast or in fishing villages. This type of living space predominantly uses wooden houses on the coast. Although there are many permanent fishermen's houses, they are still inseparable from a simple lifestyle. The simplicity of the fishing community is due to economic limitations that cause them to live simply. Besides that

7. Environmental Preservation

Due to their dependence on natural resources, many traditional fishing communities have a strong understanding of the importance of maintaining and conserving marine ecosystems. They often implement sustainable fishing practices (Abreu et al., 2017; Upe, et al., 2022). Sustainable fishing of traditional fishing communities in South Konawe District is a method of fishing that prioritizes the preservation of fish resources and the marine environment while maintaining the traditional ways that have existed in the fishing culture for many years. The main goal of this approach is to avoid overfishing, care for the marine ecosystem, and ensure that fishermen's livelihoods can continue from generation to generation (de Sousa et al., 2022; Rideng et al., 2022).

Socioeconomic Dynamics of Fishing Communities

The socio-economic dynamics of traditional fishing communities in South Konawe Regency can vary depending on a variety of factors, including geographical location, the type of fishery engaged in, the level of technology used, and existing government policies. However, there are some general trends in the socioeconomic dynamics of fishing communities, as follows:

1. Dependence on Natural Resources

Fishing communities generally rely heavily on natural resources such as fish, lobster, shellfish, and others as their main source of income. Variability in catches and seawater quality can have a major impact on their income (FAO, 2016; Tietze, 2016). If natural resources are good, the availability of marine products is certainly very adequate. The availability of mini-style resources can also be influenced by the quality of the natural environment which is the breeding ground for species in the sea. This dependence on natural resources makes fishing communities preserve the marine environment.

2. Poverty and Economic Uncertainty

Many traditional fishing communities live in vulnerable economic conditions and often face income uncertainty. Their catches can be affected by changes in weather, seasons, and environmental issues such as overfishing. Poverty in fishing communities is also caused by the fishing technology used. It is said that the technology used is based on local knowledge that can only be sufficient for the needs of daily life. So it is natural that traditional fishing communities in South Konawe Regency are called poor fishing communities.

3. Access to Resources

Access to fisheries waters and resources is often a critical issue for traditional fishing communities. Competition over fishing areas and conflicts with other industries, such as tourism or mining, can threaten their livelihoods. This type of dynamic also occurs in South Konawe District where several mining areas are operating and polluting the marine environment. This has an impact on reduced marine habitat species. So that the income of the fishing community is further reduced due to mining activities (Sabdillah, et al., 2020).

4. Modernization and Technology

Some fishing communities have adopted modern technologies in their fishing practices, such as the use of GPS, more efficient fishing gear, and more

sophisticated resource monitoring. This can increase productivity, but it can also fuel inequalities among fishing communities. This impacts the income of fishing communities that use cutting-edge technology and those that still use traditional-based technology.

5. Influence of Government Policy

Government policies, such as fisheries rules and environmental regulations, can have a major impact on fishing communities. Inappropriate or poorly implemented policies can negatively affect their livelihoods. These policies include monitoring marine activities such as mining activities that damage the sea. This results in traditional fishing communities who fish in the affected waters.

6. Climate Change

Climate change, such as rising ocean temperatures and changing weather patterns, can alter fish migration patterns and the abundance of marine resources. This can have a major impact on fishing communities that depend on a stable ecological balance (Aadil Gulzar, et al., 2021; Mohsin, et al., 2022). Traditional fishing communities pay attention to climate change. When the weather of the southern season is strong winds, the fishing community is more dominant in doing boat or fishing gear maintenance.

In some cases, efforts to improve the welfare of fishing communities include livelihood diversification, education, training, and access to capital to reduce dependence on fishing. The socioeconomic dynamics of fishing communities will continue to change over time and various factors, including those mentioned above, will influence their development.

CONCLUSION

The research findings of the livelihood system and socio-economic dynamics of traditional fishing communities in South Konawe Regency are: The results of this study show that: (1) the livelihood system of traditional fishing communities can be seen from the main occupation, the use of fishing gear, local knowledge, culture and tradition, community lifestyle, simple lifestyle, and environmental conservation; (2) the socio-economic dynamics of traditional fishing communities include dependence on natural resources, poverty and economic uncertainty, access to resources, modernization and technology, the influence of government policies, climate change.

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