

UDC 338

THE SOCIAL PRACTICE OF FLOATING MARKETS: A CASE STUDY ON PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE MUARA KUIN FLOATING MARKET, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

The Muara Kuin Floating Market is a traditional market located on Barito River, at the mouth of Kuin River. The Muara Kuin Floating Market becomes a tourist destination in Banjarmasin. This study aims to describe the factors supporting and inhibiting the social practice in the market. The study uses a qualitative method, with a case study approach. Data collection techniques are interviews, documentation, and observation. Respondents are chosen through the snowball and purposive sampling method. The result of the research shows the supporting factors are as follows: (a) trading in the Muara Kuin Floating Market is a livelihood for sellers, (b) trading is a hereditary livelihood, and (c) there has been an increasing access to the Muara Kuin Floating Market. The inhibiting factors are as follows: (a) the nature, (b) the boats, (c) the limited business capital, (d) the small profit, (e) merchant regeneration, (f) land market of easier access, (g) change in profession, and (h) the emergence of the Siring Pierre Tendean Floating Market.

KEY WORDS

Floating market, river, tourism, social practice.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country surrounded by waters; this is beneficial for the country as it can develop ecological-based tourism or ecotourism. Geographical differences also lead to the diversity of natural conditions, one of which is the number of tributaries in some areas. South Kalimantan Province is famous as Kota Seribu Sungai¹. The Water Resources Service Survey in 2013 mentions that there are 150 rivers in Banjarmasin alone and the number is potentially increasing; the possibility could be 195 rivers with a length of 250 kilometers or more. This includes drainage or dead rivers covered in buildings (Sumedi, 2015). The number of rivers in Banjarmasin has made the life of the community to be river-oriented. Their houses face the river facing the river and they depend more on the river to fulfill their daily needs, including buying and selling through the floating market.

Floating markets are traditional markets whose activities are done on the river by boats. The unique and distinctive floating market atmosphere is the many large and small boats looking for buyers and sellers; the boats are moving along the river. Floating markets are the original culture of Indonesia and Thailand. One of the floating markets in Indonesia is precisely located in Barito River, Banjarmasin City, South Kalimantan (Lisbijanto, 2014).

The activity in the floating markets since 1526 has become a routine of coastal population of Barito River from dawn until daytime. Boats or *jukung* are passing by along the river because of the absence of a fixed place to gather to conduct this market activity. There is no land access to this floating market, so sellers and buyers must have *jukung*; tourists can rent *kelotok*². The river-oriented life of the local people becomes a unique culture attracting many tourists to visit the floating market.

The existing floating market in Banjarmasin is the one in Muara Kuin; it is located on Barito River, at the mouth of Kuin River, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan (Lisbijanto, 2014).

¹ A city of thousand rivers

² Kelotok is a boat equipped with a motor engine. This low-roofed boat is capable of carrying about 10-15 passengers.

The floating market opens every day. It has been doing the business since long ago and it surely needs the government's attention to keep its existence and development.

There has always been a decrease in the number of sellers in the floating market; this is because sellers believe that selling in a traditional land market is more profitable than selling in the floating market - it is easier to find buyers in the traditional land market. The data by the government of Banjarmasin, as cited by Kompas on April 9, 2013, shows that there were only 160 sellers in the Muara Kuin Floating Market - compared to the 300 sellers in the 1970s and 1980s, the number was obviously very low (Yulianus, 2014). The situation has even become worse, as in 2017, there were only 70 sellers doing the business in the Muara Kuin Floating Market. The land development process becomes one of the causes for the sharp decline.

Based on the background, the research focuses on the supporting and inhibiting factors for the social practice of the Muara Kuin Floating Market in an effort to maintain and develop the market, both as a local culture and as a tourism object.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the World Conservation Union (WCU), ecotourism is a tourist trip to areas where the environment is as it is, with respect to its cultural and natural heritage, supporting conservation efforts, resulting in no negative impacts, providing socio-economic benefits, and respecting the participation of local people (Nugroho, 2011). Ecotourism is part of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is a broader economic sector of ecotourism that includes sectors that support tourism activities in general, including beach and sun tourism, rural and agro tourism, natural tourism, cultural tourism, or business travel. Ecotourism rests on rural tourism, natural tourism, and cultural tourism. Using the ecotourism concept described before, it can be concluded that activities in the Muara Kuin Floating Market are conducted in a natural environment area, appreciate and preserve buying and selling activities as a form of cultural heritage in the river, and provide social economic benefits to the local population.

Development is advancing or improving something that already exists. Likewise, there are principles of sustainable tourism development, i.e. helping the planning process and community participation, providing certainty and balance, and maintaining the existence of economic, socio-cultural, and community goals. Then, the relationship between tourism, environment, and culture must be well managed; tourism activities should neither be damaging nor producing impacts not accepted by the community. The tourism site should have a harmony between tourists and the local community; there should be socio-cultural education at every level of society related to tourism activities, laws that definitely protect the culture, as well as education for investors and tourists to respect wisdom local (Suwantoro, 2002).

Butler (in Nuryanti, 1997) describes six stages of sustainable tourism development that bring different implications and impacts on tourism, i.e. the exploration stage (spontaneous growth and exploration), the involvement stage (involvement of local people to develop tourism), the development stage (tourism development), the consolidation stage, the stagnation stage (unstable tourism), the decline stage (decline in tourism quality), and rejuvenation (rejuvenation of tourism conditions, so the destination becomes a new tourist attraction).

METHODS OF RESEARCH

The method used in this study is qualitative method. The method was chosen because this study seeks to understand the social practices of floating market merchants with the ever-increasing development of land markets outside the floating market. Herdiansyah (2011) states qualitative research aims to understanding from the point of view of the subject or a group of subjects so the researcher functions only as a person who reports what is seen and felt by the subject or group of subjects. Social practices in the Muara Kuin Floating

Market will be seen as a phenomenon and it is expected that the study find supporting and inhibiting factors as well as floating market development programs initiated by sellers and government or private actors as to make the market one of the sustainable tourist destinations.

This study uses a case study approach. The case study is used as a strategy with the main question of how or why. Within the approach, the researcher has little or no chance to control the event under study and the focus of research lies in contemporary phenomena within the context of life real (Yin, 2015: 1). This study focuses on floating market activities to find out intrinsic phenomena, regularity, and specificity of buying and selling activities. Based on this, then this study belongs to the intrinsic case study (Creswell, 2012).

The presence of land traditional markets and modern markets in Banjarmasin certainly has an impact on the floating market. The floating market has become one of the mainstay tourism Banjarmasin City. Thus, the effort is to keep the Muara Kuin Floating Market as a sustainable tourism destination.

This study uses snowball technique in determining research informants. Because researchers had not known the study site well, the researchers would meet key informants understanding the focus of research, and these key informants would introduce the researchers to other informants. This research also used a purposive technique in determining informants. This was done to the Tourism Office of Banjarmasin City represented by Head of Development Department of Tourism City of Banjarmasin and Coordinator Menara Pandang Siring Tendean, as informants to support the information or as multisource evidence.

Data analysis techniques used in this study was an interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1992). This interactive model consists of three steps that must be done, namely the (1) data reduction stage, (2) data presentation stage, and (3) conclusion drawing stage. These three stages continue throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Supporting Factors for the Muara Kuin Floating Market. The role of sellers in the floating market can be divided into two. *First*, they are the main breadwinner. Their education is limited to senior high school or lower due to economic limitations, making the skills or expertise of sellers to be minimal. For some women trading for a living in a floating market becomes the main job because the husband is no longer able to work or does not have a steady job or does not able to fulfill the primary needs of the family. Thus, trading in the Muara Kuin Floating Market becomes a fairly easy choice to do. *Second*, they are the secondary income earner. For some sellers, the job they do at the floating market helps the husband fulfill the family's daily needs. Some of the female sellers want to have money from their own work.

The job has been passed on from one generation to the next - this is also becomes the supporting factor. The sellers have been joining the business since their young age making them familiar with the job and making them willing to continue the business.

Trading in the Muara Kuin Floating Market is one of the sources of people's livelihood and is practiced by generations of sellers. This makes it easier for sellers because they already have the capital such as economic capital, like the boat owned by their parents that can still be used, and the social capital letting the next generations have the needed knowledge of trading. Thus, starting a job as a seller or seller in the floating market is much easier for these people because they do not need much capital.

In addition to meet the needs of the family, the Muara Kuin Floating Market continues its existence due to an easier access available nowadays. The presence of the Siring Pierre Tendean Floating Market located in the middle of Banjarmasin as well as the existence of *kelotok* rental allows tourists to visit the Muara Kuin Floating Market. Some hotels in Banjarmasin like Swiss Bell Hotel also provide facilities for the guests to visit the Muara Kuin Floating Market.

Inhibiting Factors for the Muara Kuin Floating Market. In carrying out these trading activities, sometimes sellers also find obstacles such as the following.

Natural conditions (rain and hurricanes). According to interviews with the main informants and data from the Department of Tourism Banjarmasin, there are 5 sellers live in Kuin Urban Village, Banjarmasin. Then, 37 sellers are from Alalak District, Barito Kuala Regency. This means that many sellers have to travel far from their homes to reach the Muara Kuin Floating Market.

The distance from the merchants' house to Muara Kuin Floating Market is also one of the obstacles. When heavy rains and storms happen, sellers find it hard to get shelters. Some sellers still use *jukung*, a traditional boat without a motor engine, and they have to manually paddle it, and rainwater will easily fill it or even make it sink. Sellers who use *kelotok* also find rainy and stormy days hard to beat. Things will get worse if rains or storms come in the early hours of the day, as lighting is very minimal that they only rely on flashlight.

Boat conditions. The old boat is also one of the inhibiting factors. The condition of the boat affects the sales - the bigger the boat, the more the goods can be loaded and sold. Likewise, good and new boats also affect sales because they will perform better than old boats. If the boat is old, it is so vulnerable when it hits other boats. Boat are so expensive that it is not easy for sellers to replace their boats with new ones.

Limited capital. Capital is an important factor in developing a trading business especially for retailers; the more capital means the more goods to buy and sell. Many of the merchants in the Muara Kuin Floating Market are retailers. Merchants need more capital if they want to add the things they sell. These sellers often owe some money from wholesaler.

Low profit. Limited capital leads to low profit. The sellers do not take much profit from what they sell. They have to divide the profit they earn in a day - some for their daily needs and the rest for buying goods to be sold the next day. There are more buyers on Sundays or holidays, and those are times for them to get more profit.

Based on the results of interviews with key informants and data from the Tourism Department, the sellers in the Muara Kuin Floating Market collect only IDR 100,000 per day on a typical day. Some retailers earn only about IDR 25,000 to IDR 30,000 per day on weekdays.

No regeneration. Sellers in the Muara Kuin Floating Market are between 35 years to 70 years old. Of 70 sellers, only 13 are under 40 years old. Sellers who are over 50 years old claim that they work as seller in the floating market because they come from a merchant family who also sells goods in a floating market or has been trading in a floating market for generations.

The old age sellers have no one in their family interested to continue the business in the floating market. The higher level of education these sellers' children get enables them to choose more diverse employment options. The low profit in the Muara Kuin Floating Market is also another reason for the children to choose other jobs.

Land markets of easier access. The construction of roads and bridges has shifted traffic patterns from river-oriented to land transportation. This has made fewer people crossing the Barito River, which also leads to the decrease in income of the Muara Kuin Floating Market sellers. On the other hand, the high cost of transportation or rental of *kelotok* to Muara Kuin Floating Market also reduces the interest of buyers or visitors.

In addition to the increasingly good road access on land, the emergence of land markets and minimarket has also caused the Muara Kuin Floating Market lose its popularity as a center of trading. There is a ferry market near the Muara Kuin Floating Market, which most of its traders are people from Kuin.

Changes in jobs. The next challenge is the low income earned by sellers. Some female sellers have moved to the land markets, while some male sellers have changed their job as farmers or labors. The rest female sellers in Kuin-Alalak try to earn more by making *tanggung*.

The emergence of the Siring Pierre Tendean Floating Market. The Siring Pierre Tendean Floating Market is a floating market created by the Banjarmasin city government to provide additional tourist attractions. The government also presents the potential of a new attraction through the river tour packages. The Siring Pierre Tendean Floating Market allows

buyers or tourists to enjoy the uniqueness of the floating market. Sellers can immediately dock in Siring, making it easier to buy and sell without having to rent *kelotok*. The existence of Siring Tendeau Floating Market located in the middle of the city also makes it easier for visitors. Although it opens only on Saturdays and Sundays or on other major celebration days, the Siring Tendeau Floating Market has attracted many visitors.

The easy access to the Siring Tendeau Floating Market makes many visitors feel no longer need to go to the Muara Kuin Floating Market. Although one of the goals of the opening of the Siring Pierre Tendeau Floating Market is to facilitate access to the Muara Kuin Floating Market with the dock for *kelotok*, no significant impact happens to the income of sellers in the Muara Kuin Floating Market.

CONCLUSION

The result of the research shows the supporting factors are as follows: (a) trading in the Muara Kuin Floating Market is a livelihood for sellers, (b) trading is a hereditary livelihood, and (c) there has been an increasing access to the Muara Kuin Floating Market.

The inhibiting factors are as follows: (a) the nature, (b) the boats, (c) the limited business capital, (d) the small profit, (e) merchant regeneration, (f) land market of easier access, (g) change in profession, and (h) the emergence of the Siring Pierre Tendeau Floating Market.

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