

Patron-Clientelism Business Culture, Social Safeguards (the Bitters) of the Covid Pandemic 19 Study on Female Micro Entrepreneurs

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Abstrak: This study aims to describe how micro businesses survive in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was conducted using qualitative research methods, relying on secondary data. The results of this study show that the micro-businesses that are mostly engaged in by women have their own vulnerabilities during the Covid 19 pandemic. Micro businesses that are involved in women have experienced many shocks in terms of marketing and business capital. Micro enterprises, in general, are not familiar with virtual technology to overcome direct marketing, have a hard time surviving. Failure in marketing is the reason for the difficulty of working capital for the next production process. So, the only way is to ask patrons for help to extend the maturity of the fund debt or ask for new debt for business capital. It's used to be done. But during a pandemic, extending the maturity of new debt or debt is a way out so that the business can still survive. Patrons (pengambe ') lend new debt in a condition where the old debt has not been paid off, because it is based on a close personal relationship. In a society with a patronage culture, the owners of this capital are the patrons and the micro-small entrepreneurs are the clients. This business relationship is an important social capital and means social security. During the Covid 19 pandemic, this relationship became functional for the client. Even though, in normal times before the COVID-19 pandemic, the patron-client system working relationship was more profitable for the patron. In the case of fishing communities, landlords profit from monopolizing the purchase of fish. Meanwhile, fishermen have business capital continuity. This relationship is close and unique. In normal times, patronage relationships can form the basis of analysis of exploitative relationships. However, during the emergency of the Covid 19 pandemic, this relationship is useful as a way out. However, the exit was "bitter" and always would be a dangerous spider web trap. It might be better than dying immediately.

Keywords: micro-business, patron-client, covid 19 social security.

INTRODUCTION

Until now, micro enterprises are still the backbone of the national economy, because they can provide direct or indirect employment opportunities for the lower class. Including micro businesses that are managed by women entrepreneurs have contributed to the availability of new jobs for productive women, either directly or indirectly. Employment in this sector is always open and available for entry by any type of workforce. Workers with higher educational qualifications to low educational qualifications. Studies on women's micro-businesses show interesting facts, especially related to the length of the business's existence, which can reach two or three generations, besides that, it is not uncommon for micro-businesses to survive for generations. This shows that micro-business developers do not always correlate with highly educated developers, but this is supported by the characteristics of the business system which are often supported by a patron-client relationship model that is very characteristic of existing business relationships (Dewayanti, Chotim, 2004; Ratna. , Brigitte, 1997 in Kholifah 2015). [1]

This patron client business system makes business carried out based on trust, personal reference, and based on social rules that apply in the community. This kind of business system usually characterizes the rural economy which is almost evenly distributed in most of the villages. Kinship is important because they live together in one location. They are conditioned to work together in various ways for the safety and survival of all of them. Another characteristic, is the process of sharing risk, because business relationships are drawn into personal relationships. This is very different from an impersonal market economy [2]. In the case of business relationships in micro enterprises, there is a fact that relationships in business are not only an exchange and profit sharing, but also lead to the recognition of those who have more power and wealth. Apart from recognizing the power and wealth of others in business relationships, efforts to seek protection are also occurring and are highly expected from small businessmen to big business people. The patron-client relationship is part of an effort to protect during difficult times from the rich to the poor. [3]

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Moreover, women's micro-enterprise groups in society, have two burdens of patronage culture and a burden of gender discrimination. Two things are not profitable in business. Gender discrimination in business is related to several government regulations that still differentiate in terms of access to business funding by banks, processing business permits, increasing business capacity, and certifying business institutions (business permits) [5] [6].

METHOD

This research uses qualitative research methods (Lexy Moleong, 2007, Suharsimi Arikunto, 2009, Kholifah, 2016). The focus of this research is the motivation of women micro entrepreneurs and the policy of empowering micro businesses. The location of this research is in Jember Regency which has a women's micro business center. The data sources of this research are: women micro entrepreneurs at: business centers for processing seafood from sea and land fisheries in Puger District. Data analysis was performed using a quantitative descriptive method (Milles, Matthew B., Huberman, A. Michael, 2007, Sugiono, 2014). [22]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Reality of Women's Micro Enterprises

The reality of the growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is an important part of the socio-economic growth of a country. In Indonesia, the MSME sector contributes significantly to employment and income. Based on data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (UKM), MSMEs in Indonesia contributed nearly 58 percent to real Gross Domestic Product

(GDP) in 2016. MSME accounts amounted to more than 97 percent of total employment in 2016. Even though they have a contribution which is high in employment, many MSMEs are facing difficulties to grow and develop their businesses into large businesses. [7] [8]

In fact, women who run micro businesses face a bigger challenge. Although there is an increase in women entrepreneurs, the growth has not shown a good trend. The World Bank Jakarta study on microenterprise [8] reports that women experience economic exclusion in every global context more than men. One of the main challenges faced by MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, micro and small businesses is the low access to finance. Women entrepreneurs have a low tendency to seek external funds because many of them operate in sectors that require low capital intensity and at a lower scale. In addition, women are considered less educated than men and have low financial literacy. Women entrepreneurs also tend to have lower access to bank services than men, such as current accounts and savings accounts. The Global Findex states that only 19.21 percent of women in Indonesia have accounts at formal financial institutions and only 8.15 percent receive loans from financial institutions.

The data on women's micro-businesses above is the initial data that opens insights for the development of women micro entrepreneurs. So far, many micro-business development models are based on the view that women should be able to be a part of development (woman in development). [9] Women must be able to be involved in enjoying welfare from the results of development equally and equally with men. Therefore what must be improved is the ability of women to be able to access whatever they need, equally and without discrimination. In order to be able to access all lines, women must build their awareness towards critical awareness. This means that his critical awareness must be continuously honed and be brave enough to speak out about things that are not right and gender imbalanced. Furthermore, it is not only in thinking that critical awareness must be grown, but women must be willing to participate in the public sphere so that women can influence policies that will be and or are being implemented in the public sphere. In the end, women must be able to control what is happening in the public sphere which can directly or indirectly affect the lives of women. By adhering to these five characteristics, women can lead to empowerment. This model is used as a community empowerment development concept which has been ratified by various groups in order to empower women. [1]

However, empowerment efforts in reality face many cultural problems. Patriarchal culture is the cause of the high resistance to women's empowerment. This culture also influences the policies implemented. So this is a problem that hinders women from engaging in all aspects of life. The cultural approach sees that the issue of women's subordination is rooted in the socio-cultural construction or formation that places women under men. Women become second-class citizens, both in the family, in the community and when dealing with the state. This cultural construction is understood as something that has been passed down from generation to generation in the form of values that apply in society. Critical education and women's organizing are the main strategies derived from this approach. On the other hand, structural problems in the form of policies are considered as the second inhibiting factor which is considered to discriminate, hinder, and limit women's activities. [10]

The barriers to micro merchants vary widely. As well as the study of Dewayanti, Chotim, 2004; Amelia 2007 (in Kholifah 2015) [1] The barriers to women micro entrepreneurs are very complex from upstream to downstream.

The reality of micro-businesses, there are two things that marginalize micro-business development, namely marginalization and exploitation. The efforts to marginalize women entrepreneurs can be observed

from the production system carried out by women micro entrepreneurs which is still very traditional and far from the touch of technology and modernity. This production system is crushed by a production system that is capital intensive and technology intensive. Meanwhile, micro enterprises, with a small capital structure and the use of manual production technology and tend to be traditional and highly dependent on natural resources, have made these micro businesses less developed. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the capitalization of the production system will eventually marginalize micro businesses and impoverish micro entrepreneurs quickly. In addition to the marginalization caused by capitalization and technological modernization, a very influential thing also on micro businesses is the exploitation of the trading system from the level of suppliers, collectors and dealers. These three levels of trade take advantage of the productivity of micro-enterprises that are heavily dependent on this institutionalized marketing network. [11]

The reality of Micro Businesses in the midst of the Covid 19 Pandemic, there are at least five things, first is that micro businesses have experienced a decline in sales. Since the corona outbreak, of course this has had an impact on the purchasing power of the public. This is what makes sales of micro-businesses decrease. As many as 68% of the 78 micro businesses surveyed experienced a drastic decline in sales. This decline was felt in various businesses. Second, it is difficult for women micro entrepreneurs to get raw materials so that entrepreneurs find it difficult to produce. Apart from experiencing a decline in sales, these business actors also admit that they have difficulty obtaining raw materials due to restricted trading activities.

The third difficulty is distribution bottleneck. As many as 11 of the total 78 micro businesses stated that their business marketing distribution was hampered, especially when there was already the implementation of PSBB in their respective regions. Of course this makes sending or receiving goods to consumers too late. The fourth is micro businesses experiencing capital difficulties. It is recorded that as many as 41 micro businesses (12 percent) complain that they experience capital problems. The fifth difficulty is production bottlenecks. As many as 42 micro businesses revealed that their production was hampered by the Corona Virus (Covid-19) outbreak as it is today, one of which is the difficulty in getting raw materials. [12]

Patron-Client Based Business Culture, Bitter Social Safety During the Covid 19 Pandemic

The type of social capital owned by women micro entrepreneurs in a community with a patronage culture is important. As an illustration of the business culture that develops in a community with a patronage culture, especially in the fishing environment, it is described as follows. The writings of James Scott (Moral of the Peasants, Resistance of the Peasants) [13] explain that the patron-client relationship is the exchange of relations between the two roles which can be expressed as a special case of bonding involving instrumental friendship in which an individual with higher socio-economic status (patron) uses its influence and resources to provide protection, as well as benefits to someone of a lower status (client). Clients reciprocate by offering general support and assistance including personal services to their patrons. As a spread pattern of exchange, the services and goods exchanged by patrons and clients reflect the needs that arise and the resources that each party has.

Activities that occur from patrons to clients are usually related to the life of farmers, namely: basic subsistence livelihoods, namely the provision of permanent jobs or land for farming; subsistence crisis guarantee, the patron guarantees the basis of subsistence for his clients by absorbing losses caused by agricultural problems (famine, etc.) which will disrupt the lives of his clients; protection from outside

pressure. In addition to these activities, there are patrons who also act as brokers and influence clients. Patrons apart from using their powers to protect their clients, can also use their powers to withdraw profits / gifts from their clients in exchange for their protection. Patrons also take advantage of drawing value from the services the patrons have provided collectively. Internally, the patron as a group can carry out its economic function collectively. Namely managing various assistance collectively for clients [13].

Activities from clients to patrons are the provision of services or personnel in the form of technical expertise for the benefit of the patron. These services are in the form of basic work / agriculture services, additional services for households, personal domestic services, periodic feeding etc. For clients, the key element affecting the level of dependence and legitimacy on the patron is the ratio between the services it provides to the patron and the results / services it receives. The greater the value he receives from the patron compared to the costs he has to return, the more likely he is to see the patron-client bond as valid and legal [3].

In a stable condition, prior to the Covid 19 pandemic, the power relationship between patrons and clients became a norm which had its own moral strength, which contained rights and obligations that both parties had to carry out. The norms will be maintained to the extent that they provide basic protection and security guarantees for the client. Attempts to reformulate the relationship are then seen as attempts to violate the structure of the interaction so that it is actually the elite / patron who always tries to defend the system in order to maintain its advantage. This relationship is valid because basically social relations are relationships between positions or status in which each of them carries a role. This role exists based on the function of the community or group, or the actor in society, so what happens is the relationship between the two positions [5].

.CONCLUSION

The basic objective of client patron relationships for clients is to provide basic social security for subsistence and security. If the trade / exchange relationship that forms the basis of this patron client relationship pattern weakens because it no longer provides basic social security for subsistence and security, the client will consider his relationship with the patron to be unfair and exploitative. What happens then legitimacy is not a linear function of the balance of exchange. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are demands from the client on his patron to fulfill his promises or basic needs according to his role and function. In the context of relationships between groups or ethnic groups, the patron-client relationship can be a structural and dominant relationship. And accepted as a truth that has been passed down from generation to generation. [14]

The implementation of the patronage system in coastal communities is not much different. Economic ties between client patrons are built continuously and even from generation to generation. The direction of the relationship from patron to client is economic protection by meeting daily economic needs. Debt as a tie between fishermen and “pengambe” mainly occurs in Jember Regency. The direction of the relationship from the client to the patron is to sell fish caught by fishermen to pengambe 'as the patron. The client cannot deal with other fish traders (pengambe ') other than pengambe' patron. Although, this relationship is often interpreted as an exploitative form during the Covid 19 pandemic, this relationship is very valuable for micro merchants who experience production failure, marketing failure and capital failure. [15] [16].

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