

Social Capital of the Sendi Indigenous Community through Environmental Management in Facing Post Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

*The existence of the Covid-19 Pandemic phenomenon has had a tremendous impact on all levels of society in the world, moreover, the Sendi Indigenous People who live in the forest area on the slopes of Mount Anjasmara, Mojokerto Regency, have also felt the effects of this phenomenon, causing a shift in their social capital. This research aims to analyze the form of social capital revitalization of the Sendi Indigenous Community in dealing with the aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The theory of social capital by Pierre Bourdieu is used as an analytical knife in understanding and analyzing the phenomenon of existing problems. The method used in this research is qualitative with phenomenological design. Data collection uses observation, interviews and documentation. This research uses purposive sampling in determining research informants and is selected according to the needs of researchers to answer the problem formulation. Data analysis techniques in this study used data triangulation. This research has the result that the social capital owned by the Sendi Indigenous People, namely gotong royong and the preservation of the local identity of *sengkalaning diri* during the Covid-19 Pandemic, has a very significant impact on the lives of the Sendi Indigenous People. This is evident because there is a shift in the values and meaning of life which initially lived together by optimizing existing natural resources but now become more individual and this is what makes their elders to revitalize social capital in dealing with Post Covid-19 Pandemic so that it can return to its original state before the outbreak.*

Keywords: Sendi Indigenous People; Post Pandemic Covid-19; Social Capital

Introduction

In early 2020, the world faced a pandemic disaster caused by the spread of a new virus known as SARS-COV-2, which resulted in a disease known as Covid-19. This pandemic became a significant global health crisis. As the pandemic unfolded, the Indonesian government implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) in July 2020 as a measure to control the spread of Covid-19 in the community. In Indonesia, the spread of Covid-19 continued to increase significantly, showing no signs of decline (Xingchen Pan et al., 2020). The peak of the pandemic occurred in 2021, particularly in July, when Indonesia recorded the highest weekly Covid-19 cases in the world. During the period from July 12 to 18, 2021, there was a 44% increase in cases, with a total of 350,273 cases compared to the previous week (Kurniawan, 2021).

The health crisis caused by Covid-19 has altered various aspects of social structure,

including economics, culture, politics, and other aspects of society. One of the most notable impacts is on socio-economic issues, which have exacerbated inequalities, especially for vulnerable indigenous communities living in poverty. In countries in the Southeast Asian region, which are mostly developing nations, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is particularly felt by indigenous communities. The lack of education focused on indigenous communities has affected their rights and obligations, often leading to injustice, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic vary depending on geographical location, social groups, and specific countries. However, on a smaller scale, it can be assured that almost all layers or groups of society have felt its impact. The same applies on a larger scale, where almost all countries, both rich and

poor, are affected, especially concerning the health rights of their citizens.

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights underlines that the right to health is part of the standard of living that falls under economic, social, and cultural rights. It is the responsibility of the state to ensure that all members of society are treated fairly and respectfully in terms of healthcare (Firdaus, 2016).

Although the impact of the pandemic is felt across the spectrum of society, it appears to disproportionately affect groups that are poor or socially marginalized. More specifically, those in remote areas with limited access to healthcare services are more affected, including indigenous communities.

Firstly, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the global economy has also affected these groups. Movement restrictions and a decrease in demand for agricultural and forestry products they produce have harmed their primary source of income. They face difficulties in selling their products and meeting their daily needs.

Secondly, the health and well-being of the communities have become a major concern. The indigenous community also faces difficulties in accessing healthcare and accurate information about the pandemic. Limited healthcare services and movement restrictions pose serious challenges to maintaining the health of the indigenous community.

Thirdly, social dynamics and community interactions have changed. Interactions with people outside their community have been affected by social restrictions and changes in movement patterns. The pandemic has altered how they interact and adapt to these changes.

In the midst of all these changes and challenges, the indigenous community still holds fast to their values, traditions, and local wisdom. They have wisdom in managing the natural resources that they believe has been applied for centuries. Their way of life is closely related to the surrounding environment, and they strive to maintain ecological balance, which they believe is the key to their survival.

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced the indigenous community to adapt to the new reality they face. One critical aspect of this adaptation is their social capital. Social capital

includes social networks, trust, and cooperation within the community. Social capital has become the key to resilience and ensures that they can adapt and survive in the post-pandemic period.

In this context, this research aims to delve deeper into how the Sendi Indigenous Community in Mojokerto Regency manages the environment and utilizes their social capital in facing the post-Covid-19 pandemic era. We are interested in understanding their efforts to preserve their traditions and values while adapting to the changes brought about by the pandemic.

This research will also investigate how the pandemic has affected the social, economic, and well-being dynamics of their community and how they respond to these challenges through environmental management and social capital.

The results of this research are expected to provide deeper insights into how rural indigenous communities are dealing with social changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic and how they are using their social capital to confront these challenges.

Literatur Review

Social capital is a force with the potential to build civil society that promotes participatory development. Therefore, the fundamental elements of social capital include trust, ideology, and religious aspects. Social capital can be recognized through an individual's willingness to prioritize communal decisions. The consequence of this willingness is the creation of sustained interactions that result in socially valuable performance. Robert Putnam (1993) describes social capital as a characteristic of social life that includes work networks, norms, participation, and trust that form interactions and cooperation that benefit common goals. Francis Fukuyama (1995) defines social capital as a set of informal values and norms shared by group members that enable cooperation. In a broader sense, social capital encompasses all elements that drive communities to work together to achieve common goals, with evolving and respected values and norms (Gootaert, 2018).

Bourdieu (1986) and Kusumastuti (2016) explain social capital as a resource owned by individuals or groups through the utilization of established networks or

relationships, where the involved members recognize each other. Whitley in Regus (2020) suggests that social capital refers to interpersonal relationships and social networks that provide identity, shared responsibility, and collective accountability to individuals. Furthermore, Moita and colleagues (2019) state that social capital can interact with the values of local wisdom in advancing cooperation and social solidarity among citizens in addressing social, economic, and cultural issues.

Method

This research adopts a qualitative approach, in line with the perspective of Denzin and Lincoln (1994), who emphasize that qualitative methods are more focused on achieving in-depth understanding of specific organizations or events, rather than providing superficial descriptions of research objects. This approach aligns with the research's goal of comprehending social interactions in the context of institutional perspectives naturally.

The research centers on the strategies of the Sendi Indigenous Community in revitalizing social capital in the aftermath of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In this research, there are two (2) sources of data, namely primary and secondary sources. For primary sources, data collection involves interviews, documentation, and field observations conducted in the village of Pacet, Pacet District, Mojokerto Regency, East Java Province. As for secondary sources, the research incorporates articles and books relevant to the research topic, which is social capital in the context of facing the Covid-19 pandemic. The research employs purposive sampling and involves informants from the Sendi Indigenous Community.

Table 1 Informan research

No	Nama	Keterangan
1	Sapardi	Pamengku Adat
2	Badik	Jogo Wono
3	Aries Setyawan	Cakra Buana
4	Subur	Banjar Agung

Based on Table 1, the researchers selected informants according to the research needs to uncover the strategies for revitalizing the social capital of the Sendi Indigenous Community in the post-Covid-19 pandemic context. The data analysis technique employed

follows the approach proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

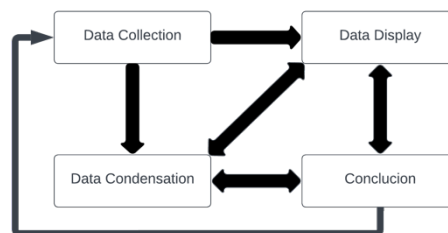


Figure 1. Interactive Data Analysis

Source: Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014)

This research employs data validation techniques through the use of data source triangulation and data collection methods. This is done to compare the obtained data to ensure its validity and accuracy.

Result and Discussion

In various strategies for implementing the revitalization of social capital by the leaders of the Sendi Indigenous Community, there are currently challenges arising from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and changing mindsets of the younger generation, who are digital natives using digital devices in their daily activities. The visible effects of these social changes encompass aspects such as technology, livelihoods, beliefs, arts, and education.

Based on the interview conducted with Mr. Sapardi, it was found that the state of solidarity among the Sendi Indigenous Community is currently experiencing fluctuations due to social changes from both internal and external factors. Here are the results of the interview:

At present, the condition of the Sendi community is generally fine. However, due to economic pressures resulting from the previous pandemic, many residents have become less active in participating in various activities organized by community leaders aimed at fostering unity among all residents within the Paseban Agung forum. This information was gathered from an interview conducted on July 19, 2023.

The economic pressures mentioned by Mr. Sapardi are primarily due to the significant increase in needs. This situation is exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led many Sendi residents to shift

from their previous professions as farmers, plantation workers, and traders to become formal sector employees, as explained by Mr. Wawan.

The Sendi community initially worked as farmers, plantation workers, and traders, both in local markets and through their own shops. However, due to the impact of the 2020 pandemic, they experienced a significant economic blow, leading many to change their professions, especially those in need of a substantial income to support their families. This information was gathered during an interview on July 19, 2023.

Mr. Wawan's opinion is supported by Mr. Badik, who agrees that the Covid-19 pandemic last year has indeed resulted in significant social changes.

The Sendi community originally worked as farmers, plantation workers, and traders, both in markets and in their own small shops. However, due to the pandemic in 2020, it dealt a severe blow, leading to a significant shift in their professions, particularly those who needed a substantial income to support their families. This information was gathered from an interview conducted on July 19, 2023.

As a result of the previous Covid-19 pandemic, there have been numerous changes in the types of jobs pursued by the Sendi Indigenous Community. This has led to a shift in mindset from relying on daily income to seeking stable and secure monthly earnings. It has particularly affected young heads of households, discouraging them from continuing work as farmers or in agriculture. This change in perspective is also supported by Mr. Sapardi, who explains that most of the current generation in Sendi aspires to work in the formal sector.

Many young families in our community aspire to become factory workers or engage in other formal sectors rather than pursuing agricultural and plantation management activities, which we have traditionally practiced. This phenomenon poses a significant challenge, especially considering our ongoing efforts to attain recognition as

an administrative village and not just as an indigenous community. This issue was highlighted in interviews conducted on July 19, 2023.

The Covid-19 pandemic has dealt a severe blow to the lives of the Sendi Indigenous People. This is evident from the emergence of thoughts and behaviors that deviate from their local wisdom, particularly the principle of "gotong royong" (community cooperation). Furthermore, the introduction of the internet into their region has led to increased gadget usage, primarily for gaming, resulting in social changes influenced by external factors. Additionally, the research findings highlight the impact of their geographical location in the mountains. To attract tourists to their area, internet access is provided in recreational areas, which was also confirmed by Mr. Subur

In Sendi, internet access is indeed provided through WiFi networks available in several local shops and tourist spots that can still be reached by the service provider's cables. This was confirmed during an interview on July 19, 2023.

One of the impacts of these social changes is the cultural assimilation with non-Sendi cultures, which occurred as a result of their displacement during the Japanese occupation and the Dutch military aggression when their location was a battlefield. As a consequence of these displacements, their original culture mixed with that of other villages. In fact, Mr. Toni even left the community temporarily in search of more information and knowledge to help rediscover the customs and traditions that had been lost due to the domination of their area by Perhutani. This information was gathered during an interview.

I once went to Bogor in an effort to reclaim our ancestral lands that were controlled by Perhutani. I was also there to learn about developing the concept of agroforestry. My parents fully supported my quest for knowledge, and they encouraged me to work with other people. This information was obtained during an interview conducted on July 19, 2023.

The efforts made by Mr. Sapardi to study the history and work towards revitalizing the culture of the Sendi indigenous community

were also carried out by Mr. Suwoko, who serves as the leader (kasepuhan). He made efforts to locate the original Sendi residents who had been displaced to other villages, inviting them to return and inhabit the land and forests acknowledged by Perhutani.

I made efforts to reconnect with the descendants of the Sendi community who became refugees. I reached out and gathered data from the Pacet Village Government and the neighboring village governments to trace the origins of the newly registered refugees. We invited them to return and inhabit their ancestral land. This interview took place on July 23, 2023.

The efforts made by Mr. Sapardi and other tribal leaders yielded positive results. In 1999, the People's Struggle Forum (FPR) was formed to fight for the return of Sendi community's ancestral land that had been controlled by Perhutani, aiming to restore ownership to the rightful descendants. In line with this, the lack of knowledge inheritance from their parents among the descendants of the Sendi Indigenous People led to the loss of the old Sendi community's local wisdom. Here's Mr. Sapardi's statement on this matter.

Many of the current generation are not well-versed in the knowledge of Sendi passed down by their parents, especially when it comes to local wisdom. This is evident from the efforts to rediscover traditions aimed at preserving the environment. Here's the statement from the interview conducted on July 20, 2023.

The process of rediscovering the traditions of the old Sendi Indigenous Community, led by the community elders and figures like Mr. Toni, involves conducting interviews with the previous generations' elders. Additionally, they rely on the practice of "impen," which involves seeking guidance and inspiration through dreams, believed to be sourced from their ancestors.

We are rediscovering the traditions of our ancestors by consulting with the older generations of Sendi descendants who were alive in 1999. This is because we also lack definitive knowledge, and as a result, we are shaping a new identity by seeking guidance from our deceased ancestors,

often through dreams. from the interview conducted on July 20, 2023

The revival of traditions for environmental management in the face of climate change impacts presents a significant challenge to the Sendi Indigenous Community, which has been striving to regain ownership of their assets that were taken by the state through Perhutani, and to address the planting of industrial trees like pine that have been damaging the water sources in the mountainous areas of Welirang and Anjasmara.

The process of revitalizing social capital within the Sendi Indigenous Community encounters obstacles and challenges, particularly related to social change. The tangible impact of interactions with external parties is evident as foreign elements have been adopted over time, leading to assimilation and acculturation. This transformation can be traced back to the history of the Sendi Indigenous Community, which originally adhered to Hinduism but later converted to Islam when they became displaced during wartime.

The condition of the Sendi Indigenous Community, which once experienced displacement, has resulted in the assimilation of their original culture with other cultures. As a consequence, their current practices reflect a fusion of cultures. Referring to the views of Mutaqin and Iryana (2018), social and cultural change is seen as a transformation that affects various aspects, including prevailing norms, values, technology, aesthetics, and traditions. The phenomenon of social change within the Sendi Indigenous Community has also necessitated changes in some of their original traditions due to the loss of cultural memory and the scarcity of literary works that depict their historical way of life.

Nevertheless, the Sendi Indigenous Community continues to strongly uphold their local wisdom through the reconstruction of their ancestral culture by tracing the footsteps of their past. This commitment to preserving their heritage is particularly evident in their primary tradition, the "ngangsu banyu aras," which remains a central practice held every Suro month following the Javanese calendar system.

To analyze the issues arising from social change within the Sendi Indigenous Community, it is crucial to have an

understanding of social change itself. According to the views of Prasetya and Fauziah (2016), social change in community empowerment activities is fundamentally a deliberate process with a clear orientation. This perspective aligns with the situation faced by the Sendi Indigenous Community, who are experiencing social change due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have had a profound impact on the Sendi Indigenous Community. Many residents have shifted from agricultural work to other professions due to economic pressures, as they found that their income from farming was insufficient to meet their needs. Consequently, numerous individuals have left their homes to seek employment in industrial areas. This shift in livelihoods corresponds with Sanchez's (2020) assertion that pandemic-induced social change is a rapid and sporadic process. While these changes may not have been their preference, the Sendi Indigenous Community has been compelled to adapt to new ways of life, resulting in a shift in social and cultural norms.

The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a severe blow to the living conditions of the Sendi Indigenous Community, as it has led to shifts in both their economic activities and social behaviors. The pandemic has prompted residents to search for more stable employment opportunities due to economic pressures. The generational shift from traditional agriculture to formal sector employment has become more common among the Sendi population.

It is notable that many young families in the community aspire to work in the formal sector, where they can secure a stable and guaranteed monthly income. These aspirations have emerged in response to the economic challenges brought about by the pandemic, which highlighted the vulnerability of the traditional livelihoods of Sendi Indigenous Community members.

The Sendi Indigenous Community, still striving to secure formal recognition as an administrative village, is grappling with this trend. Despite their ongoing efforts to regain the ownership of their ancestral lands, the community faces the challenge of younger generations showing less interest in continuing the farming and agricultural practices that have long defined their identity.

The pressing economic circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have led to significant changes in the livelihoods of the Sendi Indigenous Community. The shift from traditional agricultural activities to formal employment reflects a broader trend among the community, driven by the need for financial security and stability.

The transformation in the community's economic activities is emblematic of a broader societal shift towards formal employment, which is seen as a more secure and dependable source of income. It is worth noting that the Sendi Indigenous Community is still in the process of seeking official recognition as an administrative village, and the changes in the economic activities of its younger generations add to the complexities they face.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left a profound impact on the lives of the Sendi Indigenous Community, particularly in terms of their economic activities. While they continue to work towards the official recognition of their ancestral lands, the changing aspirations of the younger generation have added an extra layer of complexity to their efforts.

The Sendi Indigenous Community has been deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in economic pressures and a shift in the younger generation's career aspirations. These shifts have presented new challenges for the community, especially in their pursuit of official recognition as an administrative village.

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced significant economic challenges to the Sendi Indigenous Community, prompting a shift in livelihoods, particularly among the younger generation. As they seek secure and stable monthly incomes, the community is adjusting.

Conclusion

In the context of the Sendi Indigenous Community, the process of reviving traditions for environmental management in response to the impacts of climate change presents a significant challenge. This community has undergone a historical diaspora that led to substantial social changes, including in the realms of religion and culture. Their contemporary way of life is the result of centuries of assimilation and acculturation. Nevertheless, they continue to uphold their

local wisdom and the traditions passed down from their ancestors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed additional pressure on the Sendi Indigenous Community, resulting in unintended social changes. Many community members have been compelled to abandon their traditional farming occupations and seek employment elsewhere, often in industrial areas. These changes have occurred rapidly and sporadically, disrupting the social and cultural norms they have long adhered to.

In the context of understanding social change, it is essential to acknowledge that social change can happen deliberately or in response to events like pandemics. The Sendi Indigenous Community, like many others, has had to adapt to the new realities they face. In this regard, the efforts to recover lost traditions, local wisdom, and social and cultural norms present a crucial challenge that needs to be addressed to preserve the identity and sustainability of this community amidst ongoing changes.

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