



The Underlying Causes of Poverty among Fisherman in Deli Serdang Regency

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ABSTRACT

Fishermen in Indonesia are generally relatively poor. Low education is widely accepted as the cause, while others appointed terrible habits and bad custom practices as the main contributors. The fishermen are also accused of being lazy and fatalistic and like to waste money if they happen to have a big catch. However, we believe that the problem is not as simple. Therefore, we aim to explore the issue more and seek an understanding of the underlying cause of poverty among fishermen in Indonesia, especially in Percut, Deli Serdang Regency. Designing the study as a qualitative study, we use in-depth interviews to collect data from various actors, such as 39 fishermen, the head of the village, and two hamlet heads. The sampling technique was conducted using the snowball technique. The data analysis method of this research uses daily interpretative analysis. Our results show that the general assumption mentioned above is not valid. They are hard workers and not money wasters. The poverty is caused more by the

lack of access to many aspects of life improvement. Poor access to education, poor market access, and poor access to credit institutions; some also have poor access to their primary resource, the sea, since they do not possess adequate equipment for it. These have limited the possibility for fishermen to improve their well-being.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has the fourth largest population in the world, which is approximately 278,7 million people (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Of this population, 65% of the population lives and resides around the coastal area (PPID Diskominfo Kota Serang, 2023). Most of the population in coastal areas work as fishermen and contribute around 22% of the national gross income (Joseph, 2020). They depend directly on marine products, either by catching or cultivating.

Geographically, fishing communities are communities that live, grow, and develop in coastal areas, namely a transition area between land and sea areas (Prayogi et al., 2019). As a system, fishing communities consist of social categories that form a social unit (Manggabarani, 2016). Communities in coastal areas mostly work as fishermen who have been passed down from generation to generation from their ancestors (Fernanto et al., 2022). The characteristics of fishing communities are formed following the dynamic nature of the resources they work on, so that to get the maximum catch, fishermen must move. In addition, the high business risk causes fishing communities to live in a harsh natural atmosphere, which is always filled with uncertainty in running their business.

With 95.181 km long shoreline (Lukman et al., 2021) and 12.827 coastal village (Nasution et al., 2018), the number of people in Indonesia depending their lives to marine resources are massive. However, unfortunately, traditional fishermen in Indonesia are generally living around poverty line (Juliantono & Munandar 2016). According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics 2017 in (Wijaya & Fauzie, 2020) there are 2,164,969 fishermen in Indonesia. The largest number is in the 30-49 age group reaching 62.20%, while the 10-19 age group, which is 0.56%, is the smallest number. Ironically, there are still 8.30% of fishermen aged 60 years and above. This data shows an ironic condition, especially when associated with the number of fishers based on activity. Full-time fishermen account for 55.93%, main part-time fishermen account for 31.20%, and additional part-time fishermen account for 12.87%. This shows that most fishermen in Indonesia in the age group of 30-49 and 60 years and above depend entirely on fulfilling their

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economic needs as fishermen. This condition is very vulnerable because income as a fisherman is highly dependent on the potential of the sea and the weather. Some literature states that fishermen are a group of people who are classified as poor (Anwar & Wahyuni, 2019). Even when compared to other groups in the agricultural sector, fishermen (especially fishing laborers and traditional fishermen) can be classified as the poorest social layer (Winahyu & Santiasih, 1993 dalam Sjafari et al., 2018). Based on data from the 2017 National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS) by Zuzy Anna, 11.34% of people in the fisheries sector are classified as poor, higher than the restaurant service sector (5.56%), building construction (9.86%), and waste management (9.62%) (SDGs Unpad, 2020). Furthermore, Ridwan & Mochamad (2023) conducted a comparative study between fishing communities from Air Napal Sub-district, North Bengkulu Regency and farming communities from Pondok Kelapa Sub-district, Central Bengkulu Regency. The findings explain that the comparison of the severity of poverty of fishermen and farmers as measured by the poverty severity index between fishing communities and farming communities in rural areas (P2-Fishermen is 0.171 and P2-Farmers is 0.004) shows that the severity of poverty of fishing communities is higher (more severe) than farming communities. This condition illustrates that the majority of fishing communities have not been able to optimally utilize all the potential around their environment for economic activities that can improve their welfare. Where there are almost 14.58 million people or around 90% of the 16.2 million fishermen in Indonesia have not been empowered economically or politically, and are below the poverty line (Anwar & Wahyuni, 2019).

Poverty is a classic and long-standing phenomenon that still occurs and continues to be discussed about the root causes of the problem and the solutions to overcome it. Poverty is also associated with limited social, economic, and political rights, causing vulnerability, disadvantage, and helplessness (Kurniawan, 2017) in Triani et al., 2020). The image of fishermen's poverty is actually an irony, considering that Indonesia has a very large sea area, wider than the land area. In the sea area, there are also various resources that have high economic potential, which should be utilized to ensure the welfare of fishermen and their families. The poverty of fishermen is caused by complex and related factors. Previous research examined the problem of poverty factors caused by having many children and not being able to send their children to a higher education level, making it difficult for their children to get a better type of job. This condition forces their children to continue their parents' work and brings further consequences, the difficulty of getting out of the poverty cycle. They do not even feel poor and this leads to structural poverty and cultural poverty (Hakim, 2019a). In addition, people who are also synonymous with slum conditions, high temperament, often work as servants / clerks / laborers because they do not want to take work risks, and a low understanding of religious values that lead to criminal acts. Naturally, the economic powerlessness of fishermen is caused by fluctuations in fishing seasons and the natural structure of village economic resources. Meanwhile, according to Sumodiningrat (1997) in (Faisal, 2020), the factors that cause poverty are divided into 3, namely: (1) natural poverty is caused by the initial condition of being poor (2) cultural poverty is caused by the culture / habits or customs adopted by the community, and (3) structural poverty is caused by human-made policies such as unfair economic policies, unequal distribution of production assets, corruption and collusion, and a world economic order that tends to benefit certain groups.

However, we argue that the problem is not as simple as that. The fishermen have close interaction with the sea. The interaction has formed the skill in dealing with boat and the sea for extracting fish and other marine resource, such as clam, crab, krill, squid, etc. However, they are still living in a poor condition. This indicated that there are various factors intertwined that shaped the poor condition of fishermen.

Deli Serdang Regency is one of the regions in North Sumatra province that is not immune to the problems of poverty, underdevelopment, and conflict (Pane et al., 2021). This region has an area of 4,339 km² which is divided into 33 sub-districts and 617 villages. The livelihoods of Deli Serdang residents are also very diverse, such as farmers, garden laborers, civil servants, entrepreneurs, industrial workers, fishermen and so on. Deli Serdang Regency on the East Coast of North Sumatra has coastal areas and beaches with a coastline of ± 65 km which includes 4 sub-districts, namely: Pantai Labu District, Percut Sei Tuan District, Hamparan Perak District, and Labuhan Deli District with the main function as a center for processing fishery products, plantations, settlements, centers for trade and service activities, warehousing service centers, marine tourism centers and waterfront cities. The number of fishermen in Deli Serdang Regency reached 14,481 people from 4 sub-districts, where the largest number of fishermen were in Pantai Labu Sub-district (4,971 people), Percut Sei Tuan Sub-district (4,089 people), Hamparan Perak Sub-district (3,880 people), and Labuhan Deli Sub-district (1,541 people) (BPS Deli Serdang Regency, 2021).

This research sets the location in Percut Sei Tuan Sub-district, Percut Village, precisely in 3 hamlets. The selection of this location was based on the geographical condition of Percut Village which is traversed by the Percut River so that 3 hamlets out of 19 hamlets are coastal areas, namely hamlets XVI, XVII, and XVIII. This condition causes the majority of the population to work as fishermen. Meanwhile, the other hamlets are plantation and settlement areas where the majority of the people earn a living as laborers and

trade. Based on the results of the previous study through interviews with the Village Head and Hamlet Head, the fishermen in Percut Village are in poverty. The Percut Village Head explained that most of his people are registered as recipients of government assistance, such as Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH), Bantuan Sosial (Bansos), Bantuan Langsung Tunai (BLT), and other assistance. This indicates that most of the people in Percut Village are poor because they are entitled to such assistance. The village head stated that the cause of the poor condition of the fishermen is their poor financial management skills. They never save money. If the catch is abundant, they will not go to sea until they run out of money. They also often squander money if they happen to have more money. In addition, the education level of fishermen's children is low and fishermen do not have side jobs or want to try other jobs due to the low level of education and lack of skills they have in other fields. Based on the background of the above problems, the problem to be seen is how the factors that cause fishermen's poverty in Percut Sei Tuan Subdistrict when viewed from natural factors, cultural factors, and structural factors?

The first objective of this study is to analyze the factors that cause fishermen poverty in Percut Sei Tuan Subdistrict when viewed from natural factors, cultural factors, and structural factors. Second, to determine the interrelationship between natural factors, cultural factors, and structural factors and determine which factors are most influential on fishermen's poverty. The results of the study are expected to serve as a scientific basis for finding solutions to overcome fishermen's poverty.

2. METHOD

In this study, we used a descriptive Qualitative Research Method with a deductive approach. Deductive approach starts with general theories, then continues with observations to test the validity of the validity of the theory. This type of research seeks to describe events or phenomena according to what happens in the field, where the data generated is qualitative data expressed in written words from the results of interviews. In-depth interviews were used as a tool to collect data from the interviewees. Interviews were conducted with the Percut Village Head, 2 heads of subvillage, and 39 fishermen from 3 subvillages as research samples. The sampling technique was conducted using the snowball technique. The sample was determined based on the help of key informants, which in this study began with the help of the Village Head, then the hamlet head, until one fisherman was appointed who recommended other fishermen. The selection of fishermen who were indicated to be poor was determined by other fishermen due to limited access to data on the number of poor people in Percut Village. The in-depth interview method was used because it is able to explore an issue in greater depth. To enable deeper exploration, semi-structured interviews were used. Semi-structured interviews used a structured interview guide with the freedom to add other questions to ensure deeper exploration. These interviews are intended to uncover the various aspects that collide and shape the condition of fishermen as we see it today, such as family history, education, habits, access to resources, access to markets, access to credit, access to power, and other supporting data. The method of analysis in this research is to determine the three factors that cause fishermen's poverty, namely natural factors, cultural factors, and structural factors using daily interpretive analysis, where researchers interpret and draw preliminary conclusions directly after each interview and analyze at the end of each day of field research. The results of the interpretation, analysis and interim conclusions will be the basis for drawing the final conclusions at the end of the study.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Traditional fishers in Indonesia occupy places in coastal areas where they can easily go to the sea and catch fish. They live closest to the resources. However, not all of them have access to resources. Poverty, lack of assets and financial resources prevent them from accessing their sources of income. Often, people who do not live in coastal areas but have sufficient financial resources are found to have better access than fishers. It is not uncommon for coastal communities who call themselves and even we call fishermen, to become workers of the capital owners. And we still call them fishermen.

Considering these circumstances, we analyze our findings using three factors of the cause of poverty according to Sumodiningrat (1998) in (Faisal, 2020), the natural factors, the cultural factors, and the structural factors.

Natural Factors

Natural factors of poverty are those considered naturally causing poverty without the chance to avoid. These factors are illness, old age, heredity, and natural hazard. The illness and old age are causing poverty because the people could not maximize their time to work and gain income, thus their income is low and lead them to be poor. Natural hazard is included as one the factors since it could cause someone to

lose their asset or their source of income due to natural hazard, thus their income is low and lead them to be poor.

We did not find the factors of illness, old age, and natural hazards underlying the poverty of fishermen in Percut Village. However, heredity may underlie the poverty of fishermen in Percut Village. A total of 35 fishers (90%) has a history of fishing in their family. Their families come from generations of fishermen. Therefore, being a fisherman is in their blood. Some of them have tried other jobs. However, they said that they were not suited to the tight work schedule. Therefore, they stopped working and returned to being fishermen. According to them, the cycle of poverty tends to repeat itself while living in coastal areas following the life cycle of their parents. In addition, low education is also seen by some experts as a natural factor of poverty. Low education is included in the natural factors of poverty because it is considered natural for someone to be poor if their education is low. In this case, the level of education completed by fishermen varies. There were 30 fishermen who did not finish elementary school (77%), 7 fishermen who finished junior high school (18%), and 2 fishermen who finished senior high school (5%), and no fishermen who reached higher education. From these results, it can be concluded that the education of Percut Village fishermen is low. Low education indicates low productivity. Furthermore, according to BPS in 2009, the criteria for education of the head of a poor household is not going to school/not completing primary school/only primary school. For fishermen, fishing does not require a high educational background, they assume that being a traditional fisherman is more or less a menial job that relies more on muscles and experience rather than thinking, so no matter how high the level of education of the fishermen, it will not affect their ability to go to sea (Hamdani, H., & Wulandari, 2013). However, the problem that will arise from the low level of education they get is when traditional fishermen in Percut village want to get other more promising jobs. With the low level of education, they have or even not graduating from elementary school, this condition will make it difficult for fishermen to choose or get other jobs besides being fishermen.

Cultural Factors

Cultural factors are internal factors that occur as a result of the attitudes and habits of a person or community, generally derived from the culture, customs, and norms in the case study area that do not want to improve their standard of living with modern procedures. These factors include laziness, arrogance, apathy, giving up, overconsumption of useless goods, relative dependence on others, and post-fishing habits. Each of these factors will be discussed below.

A person is considered lazy if he or she works less than 8 hours a day or 40 hours per week. A total of 39 fishers (100%) interviewed stated that they go fishing every day except Friday. Fishing schedules vary among fishermen. Some prefer to fish during the day, and some fish at night. Therefore, we cannot say that they are lazy. Meanwhile, Hakim (2019b) revealed that the factor that causes fishermen's poverty is fatalism, where fishermen are satisfied with their catches and stop working after their livelihood needs are met. They believe that a person's sustenance has been arranged by God Almighty. Therefore, they work no more than enough, even though they have the ability to do more than that, for example to save for the future. Meanwhile, Prasetio, et al (2019) revealed that the habit of the fishing community to surrender to fate is also increasingly causing them to remain trapped in poverty. The people of Timu Village, especially the poor fishermen, do not have a high motivation to achieve their welfare. They tend to give up and surrender to the fate that has been outlined by the creator without having any effort to improve it. This is in contrast to fishermen in Percut Village, who do not show this fatalistic attitude and continue to work even though their daily needs have been met.

Pride is defined as an attitude that prevents a person from taking up a job and changing their standard of living due to the negative image of the job in question. In the case of fishermen in the case study areas, we did not find any fishermen who refused to become fishermen due to pride. However, there are 18 fishermen's children (46%) who do not want to be fishermen because there are too many jobs with little income, not because of pride. Apathetic is defined as the attitude of accepting his condition without the willing to struggle for a change. We can find this attitude in the case study area. There are various aids available for fishermen from the government. However, the aids are based on fishermen group and not all fishermen belong to a group. If he is not a member on any fishermen group, he will never receive a fishermen-based aids. Facing this condition, the fishermen just accept it and think that they did not receives any aids because they are not entitled to. Given up is similar to apathy. These two things are sometimes confused and misunderstood. Given up is something that has to do with taking advantage of opportunities. On the other hand, apathy is accepting the conditions without willing to fight. We can't really say that fishermen have a lot of free time. The workload is high and very time-consuming. As for their spouses, most of them help the family economy by making dried salted fish. A total of 21 fishermen's wives (54%) process certain types of fish if they happen to get a larger catch of a certain type of fish. There are types of fish that

are very cheap. Therefore, they process it into dried salted fish. The price increases three to four times if sold as dried salted fish. A total of 10 fisherwives (26%) open a small kiosk in front of their house, while 8 fisherwives (20%) make food or snacks and sell them. Looking at these conditions, it can be concluded that they have not given up on their poverty.

Excessive consumption of useless goods is defined as spending money on something non-essential such as cigarettes, gambling or illegal drugs. The fishers stated that they do not gamble and do not consume illegal drugs. However, all fishers (100%) smoked. With their low income, they are still willing to spend it on something that is not only unnecessary, but also bad for their health. Unfortunately, this can be found all over Indonesia. Cigarette consumption is high among poor households in Indonesia. It is suspected to occupy the highest portion of household consumption. Some experts point out that the amount of money spent on cigarettes is essentially higher than the money spent on food, let alone on education (Supriadi & Rusyiana, 2018).

Community ritual or custom is defined as the custom or ritual the fishermen community have related to their culture of believe. Some fishermen communities have some kind of rituals to show their gratitude to the sea, their source commodity. These rituals would become an issue if the money spent for those rituals are too high. However, these rituals are no longer apparent in the case study area. In the old days, the fishermen used to hold these rituals. Today not anymore. Some insight on the cultural factors are presented in Figure 3 and 4.



Figure 3. A fisherman's wife helps the family financially by opening a stall



Figure 4. Noodle stall owned by a fishing family closed due to lack of capital

Structural Factors

Structural factors of poverty are factors related to the social structure of society that prevent a person from accessing potential income or resources or other income-generating activities. Structural factors occur in a socio-cultural or socio-political order that is less supportive of poverty alleviation. Furthermore, Sumodigningrat (1998) in (Henry et al., 2022) said that the emergence of structural poverty is due to efforts to overcome natural poverty, namely by planning various programs and policies. However, due to unbalanced implementation, unequal resource ownership, unequal opportunities cause community participation to be uneven as well, resulting in an unequal community structure, according to Kartasasmita (1996) this is called "accidental poverty", namely poverty due to the impact of a certain policy that causes a decrease in the level of community welfare. We will discuss this factor by dividing it into four aspects, namely access to power, access to resources, access to capital, and access to markets.

Power and access to power is influential in structural factors. Those with power, such head of village or those with access to power, such as the relatives of head of village, would be able to more easily access opportunities. Unequal opportunity for joining a fishermen group that would lead to the access to aids is a form of an unequal access to power.

Thirty-two fishers (82%) complained that the poverty assistance they used to receive had stopped for different periods of time. They had reported to the village head's office but nothing came of it. They don't know where else to go. They are helpless because they realize that they have no access to power, which tends to lead to apathy. The same is true for the fishermen. This indicates that apathy is a condition influenced and shaped by feelings of helplessness and realizing that they are helpless because they do not have access to power so they choose to do nothing. In this case, apathy is not a cultural factor that causes poverty. It turns out that it is motivated by structural factors

The fishers stated that there is assistance and training or capacity building for fishers. However, the training or assistance is group-based. Not all fishers have access to become members of the group. From the interviews, 26 fishermen (67%) joined the fishermen group. The inability to access fishermen's assistance from the government is a form of unequal access to resources. The government needs to think of other schemes or needs to change the arrangement of the scheme so that it can be accessed by everyone.

Another form of unequal access to resource is that not all of the fishermen have access to the sea because not all of the so-called fishermen have the adequate tool for it. Sometimes access to diesel fuel is also experienced by fishermen, where the distance from fishermen's settlements to gas stations is quite far so that diesel distribution is placed in one place. From there, fishermen buy diesel fuel with a predetermined amount. The limited quota of diesel distribution that can be purchased by fishermen hinders access to the sea because they run out of fuel to move their boats. Their solution to this is that they simply join another fisherman with a boat or go on operating someone else's boat. However, beside of having lower share of the catch, he can be seen as merely a worker of the boat owner.

Fishermen poor access to resource is influenced by their poor access to capital (Triyanti & Firdaus, 2016). There are actually other credit institutions that offer loans to fishing communities. Based on data obtained through Percut Sei Tuan Sub-district in Figures (2022), Percut Village has 2 types of cooperatives that are actively operating. The two cooperatives are *Koperasi Unit Desa (KUD)* (1 unit) and *Koperasi Simpan Pinjam (Kospin)* (1 unit). However, the cooperative that often comes to offer loans is the mekar cooperative. The cooperative offers loans with low interest rates. However, the amount of credit given is low. For the first loan they can only get Rp. 2,000,000, which must be paid in one year. The next loan they can get Rp. 3,000,000. The amount can be increased every year but only up to Rp. 5,000,000. With a loan of this size, it is impossible to use it to buy a boat or build a house. Ironically, fishermen borrow money from the cooperative only to fulfill their daily needs when they do not get sufficient catches and have no savings to fulfill their family's needs. It cannot be denied that fishermen must also use the loan to fulfill their smoking needs because 100% of the fishermen we interviewed smoke but do not gamble or drink alcohol. Sometimes the loan is used as additional capital for small businesses. However, the income from the business often cannot fulfill all the needs of the family if it is not supported by the income from the fishermen's catch. This habit of fishermen often traps fishermen in debts that are never finished, which in turn increases family expenses. The results of this study are similar to the findings of Hamdani & Wulandari (2016) but slightly different. When fishermen's catches cannot fulfill their daily needs or during the lean season, fishermen often borrow money from juragan, moneylenders, or relatives. The loans are allocated to fulfill living needs, smoking, gambling, and drinking alcohol. This habit is almost common among fishermen who are less devout in their daily lives.

Koperasi Unit Desa (KUD) has members from rural communities whose main activity is to support the economic efforts of the Percut Village community, especially economic activities in the fisheries sector. Meanwhile, a Savings and Loan Cooperative is a single business with a type of service in the form of storing

and lending funds for its members. These cooperatives are often used by households, especially fishing households, to help manage the family's economic activities.

The loan amount provided by the cooperative is very limited. This is why they turn to boat owners. Nonetheless, most fishers seemed unsure when asked what they would do if given a loan. For those with better management skills, they go the extra mile to buy a boat by borrowing money from their *toke*, the person who buys their catch. Interviews with fishermen showed that 34 fishermen (87%) sell their catches to middlemen or to boat owners, who are most likely also middlemen or *toke*. *Toke*, also known as juragan fishermen, are non-native fishermen but owners of boats, fishing gear, and money who are able to turn fishermen into helpers in their efforts to catch fish at sea. Prices are set by the middlemen with little chance of bargaining. When asked why they do not sell their catches directly to the market, they revealed that although the selling price to the middlemen is cheaper than selling the catches directly to the market, the process of buying the catches is faster to the middlemen, the risk of unsold fish can be avoided, and they are easier to get income every day.

On the other hand, the fishermen also revealed that boat owners have another role in the lives of fishermen. They are a reliable substitute for credit institutions. If a fisherman needs financing for either the purchase or repair of a boat, the boat owner will lend it by deducting the fisherman's daily catch. Although the interest rate is high and no other credit institution is willing to lend such a large amount, this has helped the fishermen in a way.

On the other hand, borrowing money from *toke* is very burdensome for fishermen, as the interest is very high. However, the absence of other credit institutions leaves fishermen with no other choice. This can be a cause of poverty as fishermen's expenses increase every day. Not to mention if the borrowed money is used for consumerism only. But when the money is used to acquire assets and increase fishers' access to resources, which in turn increases their financial strength, *toke* can be seen as an influential actor in fishers' poverty alleviation.

In terms of fishermen and family's effort to improve their income, various effort is apparent in the case study area. Processing dried salty fish, open a small kiosk, selling food and snacks are some examples. However, the market is very limited. Their location limited their access to a wider market.

The connection between natural, cultural, and structural factors

The natural factors of poverty is suspected to also have a structural factor background. Illness would not become a problem if they have better access to health facility. We can compare to those with better financial resource. With the same illness, the one with more money have higher life expectancy. Old age would also not become a problem should they have a retirement program. Natural hazard would not be causing poverty if disaster relief program is accessible for all.

Low education is also very much related to structural factors. Nowadays, some public schools are free of charge but this was not always the case. Therefore, some older generations are unable to access education to secondary school and even primary school levels due to poverty. In terms of location distance, many hamlets only have access to primary schools. The limited junior and senior secondary school facilities in the area prevent many students from obtaining an education. This finding is supported by data from Percut Sei Tuan Sub-district in Figures 2023 (2023), which states that there are no educational facilities in Percut Village at the kindergarten level, 7 primary schools (4 public schools and 3 private schools), 4 junior high schools (2 public schools and 2 private schools), 1 private high school, and 1 private vocational school. In addition, long distances and limited public transportation that can access secondary schools are also factors that cause people to be reluctant to continue their children's education to a higher level. Some insight to the structural factor is presented in Figure 5, 6, 7 and 8.



Figure 5. House of one of the middlemen, boat owners and sales places for fishermen's catches, in Percut Village



Figure 6. Fisherman's house in Percut Village



Figure 7. The fish market in Percut Village, the only market access that fishermen have, is also controlled by middleman



Figure 8. People come from various places to this fish market. However, fishermen do not have access to directly sell their catch to them

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Many argued about the cause of poverty among fishermen. Some other authors say the factor that causes fishermen's poverty is fatalism, which makes fishermen stop working when their livelihood needs are fulfilled. However, from our discussion it is obvious that the dominant factor is the structural factor. Even what seemed to be cultural and natural factors have a background of structural factors. Their fishing skill and their intensive interaction with their source of income, the sea, did not ensure their well being. The fishermen have limited access to power, which lead them to limited access to fishermen aid program and in turn shaped an apathetic attitude. The fishermen have very limited access to capital, which lead them to have limited access to resource. The fishermen have limited access to market, which lead them to a very limited option for income improvement. The authors suggests that to alleviate poverty, it is better to understand the type of poverty experienced by fishermen and develop appropriate alleviation strategies and consider solutions that are local and in accordance with local conditions, because the causes of poverty are not always the same in every region.

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