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Migrant and Ethnic Malay Marginalization in Tanjung Putus Village, Langkat Regency, Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Hapri Wannazemi [™] ¹, Hidayat¹, Ibnu Hajar¹

Correspondence:

¹ Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia
☑ nazemihapriwan@gmail.com

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe the migration of migrants to Tanjung Putus Village, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, which has an impact on the marginalization of the indigenous population. The local government seems to support the marginalization of the indigenous people, namely, Malays who come from the coast of Sumatra. This study uses ethnographic research, meaning that the researcher will act as an anthropologist to find and describe the factors of migration and the efforts of the Malay community to maintain their identity. Data was collected using observation, interview data, and document study. Marginalization implies differences in rights and obligations that are socially formed. The marginalization of ethnic Malays forms social patterns manifested in the attitudes and behaviors they embody in their daily lives, and these conditions will be very vulnerable to conflict.

Keywords: malay; marginalization; migration; local government

Introduction

Malays are a tribe originating from the coast of the island of Sumatra. The Malay ethnicity is one of the ethnic groups in the province of North Sumatra (Damanik, 2018). Ethnic Malays in North Sumatra are still in one unit with ethnic Malays in Riau, Riau Islands, and even Malaysia; Brunei is also still a unit. Ethnic Malays in Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam have dialects and characteristics that are almost similar; a kinship system that uses the imperial system, dances, and traditional food.

According to the author's attention, Malay culture is experiencing an unequal ritual in perpetuating its culture or civilization. Tanjung Putus Village is a village located in the Langkat district. The original inhabitants of Tanjung Putus village are ethnic Malays and are currently a minority population. They lived side by side with immigrants from Toba who came from the Lake Toba area, the Banjar tribe from the Banjar, and the Javanese from the Javanese contract laborers. Migration that occurred in Tanjung disconnected village



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occurred around 1970, where at that time, the area of Tanjung Putus disconnected village was an area that was still empty of residents where Malays were still inhabited.

Because the population was still small and the distance between houses was still far apart, immigrants from other tribes began to come to live and grow crops in this village. The number of Toba, Banjar, and Javanese tribes who began to settle in the village of Tanjung Putus was influenced by the willingness of the landlords; where at that time, the Malays owned many lands, and the need for workers in the Malay gardens and began to allow them to build settlements and cultivate crops. Currently, the Malays who live in the village of Tanjung Putus are approximately 75 heads of families. Some are second generation and third generation. They still remember their former vast land, recite the Malay language very fluently, and continue carrying out the Malay tradition. The constitution mandates that the state controls earth, water, and state assets. They used as much as possible for the prosperity of the people (Triningsih, 2020).

State policies related to nature must be populist, emphasizing the distribution of the results of natural wealth to the holders of power, namely the people. However, the government seeks to profit by exploiting natural resources without humanizing the indigenous population (Asmuni, 2014). Meanwhile, to explain the phenomenon of local population marginality about globalization as a movement, one can borrow the dependency theory's explanation. Gunther Frank (in Yuwana, Nugroho, & Abdullah, (2015)) introduced dependency theory in 1967 by taking advantage of Paul Baran's thesis, which states that third world exploitation was more widespread after the end of the colonial era but also more effective.

There is underdevelopment resulting from the economic exploitation of disadvantaged areas by newcomers in an area (Kustanto & Sholihah, 2020; Mulyadi, 2016). Frank provides an exciting phrase about the development of retardation. According to him, development and underdevelopment are not only relative and quantitative but also rational and quantitative. The concept of marginalization in the context of individuals or groups who are isolated or incompatible with the dominant society and culture and is considered a fringe in society or social units, including minority groups with detrimental implications (Muttaqin, 2014). On the other hand, the marginal from an administrative point of view is seen as vital if it leaves the main direction close to the center of power and control needed.

Ethnic Malays marginalization is a socially marginalized group. The implication is that there are differences in rights and obligations that are socially formed. The marginalization of ethnic Malays forms social patterns that manifest in the form of attitudes and behaviors that they manifest in everyday life. Therefore, this study aims to describe the presence of immigrants and the marginalization of ethnic Malays in Tanjung Putus Village, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province.

Research Methods

In this study, the researcher uses ethnographic research, meaning that the researcher will act as an anthropologist to find and describe the factors that occur in migration and the efforts of the Malay community to maintain their

identity (Firdaus & Shalihin, 2021). Ethnographic research is a qualitative research strategy in which researchers investigate a cultural group in a natural environment for an extended period (Windiani & Rahmawati, 2016). Primary data collection, observation data, interview data, and document study (Hasanah, 2017). Ethnographic research is considered capable of digging in-depth information from extensive sources using participant observation techniques. As part of anthropology, ethnography usually consists of detailed descriptions of aspects of behaving and ways of thinking standardized on what is learned, in the form of writing, photos, pictures, or films containing the report or description. In other words, the object of this research is humans or people who develop in different cultures, religions, and ethnic groups. Spradley (1997) reveals the steps of conducting ethnographic interviews to seek conclusions for ethnographic research.

Observations and in-depth interviews with informants are part of one of the methods that researchers use when discovering social phenomena in the field. Armed with the theories and concepts studied, the researcher obtains as much information as possible and understands the social facts in the field, following the actual reality to be used as data analysis. The researcher uses this ethnographic research to describe the experience of the Malay community who migrated to Tanjung Putus and the efforts of the Malay community to bring up their identity so that the latest data will be obtained regarding their perspective on migration and the identity of the Malay community in Tanjung Putus. Of course, the involvement of researchers is possible because, in terms of language and culture, there are no obstacles with the people of Tanjung Putus.

The data collection technique is a primary data procurement process for research purposes. The data in this study were collected using three techniques: The observations made by the author in this study were in the form of participant observation (McGrath & Rudman, 2019). In this study, the object of observation is to see firsthand the various activities carried out by the Malay community in Tanjung Putus to know how people live and social relations in Tanjung Putus from various aspects such as social aspects, economic, behavioral, cultural, and religious. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews before the research was conducted and when the research was carried out (Rutakumwa et al., 2020).

This interview or conversation was carried out with people considered informants and key informants. The key informants were traditional Malay leaders in Tanjung Putus village, elders in the Malay community, Javanese ethnic communities, and informants, namely religious leaders, educational leaders, economic figures, and entrepreneurs. With the involvement of researchers and informants, they can understand and explain what they do in their daily lives and train researchers to be closer and adapt quickly to informants. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, and informants were more focused on what factors influence the marginalization of Malays in Tanjung Putus Village and how the Malays try to maintain their ethnic identity as a separate ethnic group in Tanjung Putus Village.

Document Study: Researchers will explore various data from books, scientific journals, and various archives related to research. In this study, the researchers explored various data from books, scientific journals, and archives related to the marginalization of Malays in Tanjung Putus.

Data analysis in research is the author's view to be objective toward the data

obtained in the field (Sutton & Austin, 2015). All data obtained from the results of the field research will be re-examined or re-edited. In the end, this activity aims to re-examine the completeness of field data and interview results. This study uses an ethnographic data analysis model. Spradley (1997) explains that includes ethnographic data analysis models, namely, domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, component analysis, and analysis of cultural themes. Domain analysis investigates units of tremendous cultural knowledge called domains. Here, the researcher will look for cultural symbols that belong to a larger category (domain) based on similarities. So domain analysis is generally carried out to obtain a general and comprehensive picture of the social situations to be studied.

This study uses triangulation to check the validity of the data. Jespersen & Wallace (2017) states that triangulation is a data collection technique that combines various techniques and existing data sources. The triangulation technique is a data collection technique in which researchers use different data collection techniques to obtain the same data. The researcher simultaneously used several qualitative data collection techniques such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies for the same data source. Meanwhile, source triangulation is a data collection technique where researchers use the same technique to obtain data from the same source.

Results and Discussions

Many domestic and foreign researchers have done literature discussing Malay ethnicity in North Sumatran society. One of the scientists who discuss the Malay ethnicity is Tome Pires. Ethnic Malay and Batak emerged as concepts in the 15th century in the writings of foreign ethnographers who visited North Sumatra. For the first time, the Batak concept appears in the writings of Cortesão (2017) to refer to the people who live in the interior of Aceh and North Sumatra. The inaccuracy concerns the homogenization of inland society into a category called Batak and the categorization of coastal society called Malay. It must be understood that these two concepts are not intended to refer to ethnic groups but instead refer to the general characteristics of settlers in the interior (inland) and the coast (coastal).

Perret (2010) mentions that a group of people living in the Bukit Barisan mountains north of Panyabungan Mandailing Natal called the Lubu or Siladang people do not fall into this category. In fact, in the Indonesian Anthropology literature, including in North Sumatra itself, the existence of this community group is rarely mentioned. The Lubu people settled in Padanglawas and Mandailing in 1891, with a population of 2,033 people. In 1984 the population was only 1600 people (Butar-Butar, Bakar, & Damanik, 1984), while in 2008, the population reached 2011 people (Matondang & Lubis, 2018).

Likewise, in ethnography writing, the uniformity of the Malay ethnicity in North Sumatra, then this concept is not intended to mention ethnic names but rather as a characteristic of people who live on the coast or the coast and have embraced Islam. Along the coast of Lhokseumawe, as called by Cortesão (2017) in 1515, were Malays, the same thing was also called Polo in 1290, and the settlers on the coast of northern Sumatra were Malay. Some writers from the XIII to XIX centuries AD said that the settlers on the coast were Malay while those in the mountains were Batak (Damanik, 2018). Damanik (2018) said that people

in Langkat, Binjai, Deli, Serdang, Asahan, Batubara, Labuhan Batu even in Riau is Malay.

Uniformity as Malay in North Sumatra raises crucial questions about its relationship with Malays in Riau, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Malaysia. In Kalimantan, for example, they can identify their ethnic origin as Iban or Banjar, even though they call themselves Malay. Likewise, in Sulawesi where ethnic Malays can identify their ethnic origins, such as Mandar and Bugis. Malays in North Sumatra are like Malays in Riau and Malaysia, who cannot show their ethnic origin. Likewise, North Sumatran Malays. Who is the Malay ethnic membership? Although they mention one people, for example, the Malays in Deli do not want to be equated with the Malays of Langkat, Serdang, Batubara, Asahan and Labuhan Batu. And vice versa. Of course, rejection will arise if North Sumatran Malay is equated with Riau Malay, Bugis Malay, Iban Malay, and mainly Malaysian Malay.

Several recent studies have tried to reject the mention of Malays as ethnic. Many authors explicitly mention such as (Damanik, 2018). Stirrat & Perrett (2010) explicitly mentions that the Malays in Deli and Langkat are Karo people who converted to Islam. This fact was seen in Guru Patimpus (supposed to be the opening of the Medan village), Datuk Sunggal of the Surbakti clan, Datuk Brayan, Datuk Denai, Datuk Senembah, Datuk Kota Bangun and others and all of them were from the Karo tribe. Likewise, the village's name in Deli tends to indicate the mention of the Karo tribe, such as Sukapiring, ten two Kuta, Sunggal, and others. Likewise, the Malays in Serdang came from the Simalungun and Karo people who converted to Islam. The history of Serdang as Sinar (1986) cannot be separated from Simalungun, located in Dolok Silau. Furthermore, the Malays in Serdang Bedagai, Tebing Tinggi to Asahan are Simalungun people who converted to Islam.

In the village of Tanjung Putus, the ethnic Malay community still applies the customs and habits of the ethnic Malay community where they still use the local language in communicating with each other, namely Malay from children to adults all passively use Malay, but outside the Malay community they use Indonesian in interacting with outsiders. The series of Malay customs are carried out by the ethnic Malay community in the village of Tanjung Putus, where traditional ceremonies can be considered an opportunity to refresh primodial loyalty. They can enjoy the splendor of their noble culture even though they are far apart physically from the cultural center. The village is also an ethnic stronghold where the Malay ethnic community is free to keep pets, and they raise a lot of goats and buffalo for their needs. These pets can be a defense for them. The ethnic Malay community in Tanjung Putus village maintains their culture in their daily life. Ethnic Malay groups use Malay in their daily lives, from children to parents using Malay in communicating, but they still occur in the village. Traditional ceremonies are also often performed in Tanjung Putus village, such as births, weddings, and death.

Maintaining their culture in their area makes their primordialism not disappear, and their identity as Malays is visible. Although there is cross-marriage between ethnic Malays and immigrant ethnic communities, the cultural assimilation is not visible because ethnic Malays who have married ethnic immigrants will follow Malay culture and enter the religion believed by the Malay ethnic community, namely Islam. This makes people ethnic Malays who marry ethnic immigrants stay away from their ancestral culture and enter

and learn a new culture, namely Malay culture (Atmaja & Kurnanto, 2018; Herlina, 2014; Neo, 2006). Paying attention to the Tanjung Putus village area and other areas where most of the population is Malay, the distribution of power has slowed down due to cultural factors and low levels of education. Indeed, some people can develop, but the correlation has not been able to cover the inter-ethnic ties in the Malay tribe in Tanjung Putus.

Sanusi (2017) discusses the globalization of Malays; actually, what is called the Malays is not an ethnic or ethnic community as understood today. Ihsan Sanusi then explained that the Malays collectively fix their views on Malay fixing their views on different paradigms at the horizontal level through a not narrowly localized perspective. That because Malay is not something that localism in identification and revitalization of Malays requires support both intellectually and physically experts so that in the context of modernity, Malay civilization, which has found its identity, will become more advanced and will be able to influence the world's great civilizations (Chalid, 2016).

The habits of the Malays in Tanjung Putus, which are very close to being intimate in coffee shops, are very entrenched from generation to generation. They discussed various things there, both in politics, economics, and socioreligious. Because of this, tradition and culture are very attached and even known by other ethnic groups. Ihsan Sanusi explained the current context; the results of the long modernization process will continue to be secularization and globalization. Globalization causes political, economic, and cultural integration (Estuningtyas, 2018; Ferdiansyah, Se Tin, & Anthonius, 2016). The principle of deterritorialization is crucial because it becomes a turning point in a contemporary civilization with broad implications for social and cultural processes. Deterritorialization has resulted from globalization, causing people from various backgrounds to be integrated into a community (Dewi, 2019; Ernawam, 2017).

The Malays reference the composition of family members, such as Yong, calling the first child, the second child as Ngah, and the youngest child as Uncu. Ethnic Malays adhere to a parental system where the position of the father and mother is the same (Hardian, 2021; Wahyuni & Nurman, 2019). There is no clan or lineage, either from the father or the mother. About social change and alternative theories about the dynamics of social life, it is emphasized that society can be seen as a continuous process. Society (groups, communities, national organizations, states) can only be said to have social change if something happens; specific actions are taken, and certain changes and specific processes are always working. Social change will have different meanings between the state of a particular society and the state of society in different periods (Sztompka, 2000).

The migration of the Malay ethnic community is also influenced by the knowledge already held by each nomad, where if their knowledge increases, the motivation to migrate will be even more significant because they want to get better prosperity that they do not get in their hometown. The knowledge of the ethnic Malay community turned out to be an adaptation strategy for the ethnic Malay community to interact socially with the ethnic Malay community, whose knowledge at that time was not yet widely developed, especially concerning environmental management because the ethnic Malay community mostly worked in the water sector as fishermen rather than farming (Andaya, 2014; Ihsannudin, Hidayati, Ariyania, Subejo, & Suadi, 2019; Yeoh & Yeoh, 2015).

Conclusion

Based on the research results found earlier, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, the migration of ethnic Malays in Tanjung Putus village was carried out in the 1960s because of the push factor and pull factor. The push factor is an effort to improve the situation to save themselves from political and economic conflicts, and the pull factor is caused by the community's interest in an area because it can provide a source of life and good facilities for the ethnic Malay community. The motives and reasons for self-preservation and the economy are the most dominant factors in the purpose of wandering.

Second, the efforts made by the ethnic Malay community to maintain their identity in their overseas areas continue to use Malay as the everyday language of their fellow ethnic Malays and non-Malays, carry out traditional ceremonies of birth, marriage, and death which are carried out as an effort to maintain their identity. Moreover, the last conclusion, the local government needs to prepare regulations to regulate the lives of ethnic Malays and immigrants so that a harmonious, peaceful life can occur and can work together to advance in Tanjung Putus Village, Padang Tualang District, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province. Conflicts often occur in many areas due to conflicts of interest between indigenous people and migrants who cannot manage this diversity by local governments.

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