

## **A Disadvantaged Tribe in Bajoe Village, Bone Regency: A Phenomenological Research on Bajo Tribe's Social Life in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi**

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**Abstract:** The aims of this research are: (1) to reveal the dimensions of life within Bajo Tribe at Bajoe Village, Bone Regency; (2) to reveal the dimensions of disadvantaged social life within Bajo tribe at Bajoe Village, Bone Regency; (3) to find the right solution for changing the condition of the disadvantaged Bajo Tribe. The approach used in this research is qualitative method, specifically a phenomenological research on nine informants taken by purposive sampling. All data obtained through in-depth interview and observation are then analyzed inductively. The research findings include: (1) the discovery of real disadvantaged condition within the life of Bajo Tribe concerning the fulfillment of daily needs such as: the discrepancy within the expectation achievement and the shifting of social order and culture; (2) the discovery of each pattern's relation and ways of thinking in Bajo Tribe which controlled by the custom; (3) the repairment effort of theoretical solution against two conditions, the first is controlling the social consciousness of Bajo Tribe toward the tendency in current survival, the second is how to enhance Bajo Tribe with active participation and put every activity on rational choice. The theoretical solution in the first condition is dealt with the theory of awareness control by Herbert Blumer, while the second condition is dealt with the theory of rational choice by James Samuel Coleman.

**Keywords** - Disadvantaged Tribe, Social Life, Phenomenological Research, Bajo Tribal Community

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Bajo Tribe is a tribal community which the whole facet of life obviously indicated as a coastal community with a variety of characteristics that only attached by their ways and tradition.

A wide range of researches and articles have been done to this tribe. For instance, the life spread is available in several published research journals. They are Saat and Mokhtar (2008, p. 402-403), Utina and Alwiah (2001, p. 1-3), Syam, Ronald, and Sarwadi (2004, p. 19-20), (1998, p. 61), Zacot (2008, p. 60), and Purwanto (2001, p. 13).

In the same way, especially for Bone Regency, the first arrival of Bajo tribe and settled around Bone Gulf is estimated to take place at a range of 17th and 18th century. As mentioned by Mohtar and Saat (2008, p. 407), the existence of the tribe in Indonesia can not be actually ascertained, but in *lontara*' history, around year 1700 CE they had docked in Bone Gulf. Even in *Gowa* history, it is stated that at the time of the war between the Kingdom of Bone with Netherlands in 1825 and 1909, Bajo tribe also fought defending the Kingdom of Bone from the coastline. The life condition which is above the waters of Bone Gulf is what often becomes an interesting case for researchers. But after decades, or precisely in the year 1975, this tribal community was then occupying a new location, which is in Bajo hamlet. Moreover, it is no longer in coastline which makes them "typical" as floating society.

One attractive thing to be analyzed is a life condition with underdevelopment in Bajo tribal community at Bajoe village. There researcher's interest is not solely due to the existence atmosphere with underdevelopment, but rather why they develop slowly compared to other societies' condition outside the tribal community.

### **II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research design is qualitative research. All data were analyzed from the findings of nature of mind disclosure, the attitude, and the behavior image of Bajo tribe. Additionally, there were also written information such as scientific journals, scientific texts from seminar results, and other researches oriented in the social life of Bajo tribe.

Techniques of data collection include observation, participant observation, in-depth interviews with stages, and documentation. By applying the techniques, the researcher accommodates data and information through nine informants from Bajo tribe who live in Bajo hamlet, Bajoe village, East Tanete Riattang Subdistrict, Bone Regency.

Technique of data analysis was administered through four stages, that is: a) domain analysis; b) taxonomic analysis; c) component analysis; and d) theme analysis. The whole stages are integrated along with the study of sociology to be then constructed into a whole form of research findings.

### III. FINDINGS

#### 1. Further Description of Research Location

##### 1.1 Bajoe Village

*Kelurahan Bajoe* is a village located in East Tanete Riattang Subdistrict, formerly called as *Desa Bajoe*. The area range covers 5.58 km<sup>2</sup> and administratively this village governance consists of 6 hamlets, namely: Appasareng hamlet, Pao hamlet, Bajo hamlet and Rompe hamlet, Tengnge hamlet, and Macedde hamlet.

Subsequently, the geographical area of Bajoe Village is within the boundaries of several areas as follows:

- a. The north is bordered by Lonrae Village;
- b. The east is bordered by Bone Gulf;
- c. The south is bordered by Kading Village;
- d. The west is bordered by Cellu Village.

In direct observation, there seems to be a different atmosphere between Bajoe Village to others. It is the crossing port of Bajoe as a port of freight carrier, goods, and services.

Moreover, adjacent to the port which is within 500 meters, is located Bajo hamlet where Bajo tribal community lives.

#### 2. Further Description of Bajo Tribal Community in Bone Regency

##### 2.1 The Settlement Area

The community of Bajo tribe as a whole resides in Bajo hamlet. It has an area of 12.65 hectares or 2.27% of the total area of Bajoe Village. Also, it is the smallest hamlet from the others.

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Bajo Village is adjacent to Lonrae village in the north, Bone Gulf in the east, Tengnge subdistrict in the south, and Pao and Appasareng hamlet in the west.

Considering the environment of Bajo hamlet as mentioned above, it should give good opportunity for the living improvement in Bajo Tribe. But the fact is not as expected.

As experienced by Mr. Suroso (72 year old) as a Chief of Bajo Tribe, he stated that:

*"Bajo Village before 1992 is a village that looks naturally blend with seawater. Around the house we live in is still surrounded by the sea, but then in July 1992 this started to change. Our environment was embanked and partly concreted to be a residence area and fish auction as well".*

To observe carefully that within the residential area of Bajo Tribe in Bajoe Village, it can be mentioned only a few passages that can leave evidence. This community used to be a community living and building a house on the coastal surface.

By living within the new area, all the systems and community symbols of Bajo Tribe also give different effects beforehand. As perceived by Mr. Sudirman (41 year old), a chief in a hamlet, he stated that:

*"When I was young... around 7 year old, the family life still referred to food hunt activities such as hunting fish in the middle of the ocean. We, children, were taught to dive and clean the body with sea water. Then if you want staple food and clothing, we boarded a boat to the ground to meet fishermen. Well now, as you witness, it has totally changed."*

The current settlement atmosphere of Bajo Tribe obviously tends to be left behind from the development existence.

##### 2.2 The Existence of Social Facility

Based on the observation, it turns out that the researcher only attains several social facilities. They are a unit of mosque building and for educational facility is a school unit of kindergarten.

##### *Population*

Another possible thing that considered as a social problem in Bajo tribe is population. Based on residence data

taken from the village’s administrative office, it is found that Bajo Hamlet which is about 12,67 hectare was inhabited by 1600 residents with 220 households. In other words, the population density rate is about 126 people per hectare which makes it as a populous region.

In general, it is also stated by Mr. Suroso (72 year old) that:

*"The residents of Bajo tribe who inhabit the village in one household commonly live two or three families. It means that in one house may consists three families with seven to eight members."*

Furthermore, Rahayu, S.Sos (29 year old) who acted as Administrative Head of Bajoe Village since 2013 up to present also stated:

*"In fact, the measurement of population density shows that the densest area around Bajoe Village is Bajo hamlet. Moreover, this area is generally dominated for settlement only, not for other facilities."*

**Education**

Equally important, considering the condition of education run in Bajo tribal community, a description obtained by the researcher shows in the table below:

**Table 1. Reading-Writing Capability of Bajo Hamlet in 2014**

Age Period (year-old)	Capable	Incapable
14 – 24	200	280
25 – 45	144	294
46 – 59	80	253
60 or older	84	265
<b>Total</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>252</b>

Source : *Compilation Result of Bajoe Village Database, 2014*

Next, other educational information shown in the following table:

**Table 2. Population and Educational Level of Bajo Hamlet in 2014**

Educational Level	Graduate		
	Male	Female	Total
Elementary School or equivalent	82	67	149
Junior High School or equivalent	15	12	27
Senior High School or equivalent	8	19	27
Non-degree Diploma	1	2	3
Bachelor Degree	2	1	3
Master Degree	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>209</b>

Source : *Compilation Result of Bajoe Village Database, 2014*

From the data shown in Table 1 and Table 2, it appears that until 2014, Bajo tribal community’s residents are still far behind on the educational matter.

**IV. DISCUSSION**

As described in the research findings, it obviously can not be separated from the following discussion. It is about some other findings that according to the researcher as social realities experienced by Bajo tribal community in Bajoe Village, Bone Regency, at the present time. The intended findings are described in the following details:

**1. Social Awareness Perspective**

Currently, Bajo tribal community is still aware that in living reality, they are in a state of very slow progress which affects the following aspects: a) full adherence to the traditional values in all aspects of life to the way they struggle to meet the needs of the household; b) living conditions that have not changed still maintain the way of life as fishermen; c) tend to survive in a simple life atmosphere which has been accustomed for many years. Such condition is believed to be a part of the inheritance of their ancestors.

From the explanation, it gradually makes a life habit that is difficult to avoid because of the tradition's power that developed from their firm belief and will continue to stick into every activity they attempt to.

Under such circumstances, Ferdinand Tonies confirmed (see Martono, 2012, p. 44-46) the life of a society in which they view future life on the basis of the *Wesenwille* to preserve the wholeness of life according to the full convictions of tradition. If this method continues to bind into the mind and all its activities, then they will be difficult to shift to life based on the consideration of *Kurwille*. Also, Martono (2012, p. 47) stated that such conditions form habits and roles in society which continuously take place by referring to traditional values power.

Those conditions that have been lived in social reality are fully recognized by the people in the community. Nevertheless, such life on the other side has handcuffed the freedom to shift into other living conditions.

This is proven from the consideration stated by Pak Abdul Jabbar (82 year old) as follows:

*"For sure, we are Bajo people have always been unaffected by the atmosphere of luxury, position, and rank. Because we are already living life as it is. And those have become a habit where Bajo people work to catch fish at sea for daily needs and the rest will be sold. So, we just think that way. The religion and custom have already directed us to keep good deeds, and what we are looking for is actually good deeds."*

What is experienced by Bajo tribe as explained by Pak Abdul Jabbar is in line with Beilharz (2005, p. 276) who stated that the weakening influence of disciplinary power gains a chance to rise from a less favorable atmosphere for restoring consciousness into a better life.

### 1.1 Social Behavior Perspective

In this perspective, it is stated that in the realm of social life always goes on dynamically. It is characterized by the existence of various motives of the people in an effort to meet the needs of life.

The fact demonstrated by the informants gives a picture that the attitude of this community still maintains its life as it has been so far. The social behavior shown are also the attitudes of adherence to the traditional rules and to respect their obedience to all the ways of thinking and acting based on the figures they refer as the actors of change.

Another finding is the social behavior that views the outside world differently from its own and regards it as an unsuitable world. From the undoubted facts of Bajo tribal community, it is depicted as a plain, simple life and very close to the goals of life without wanting to live excessively and achieve an important position. Also, they prioritize a lifestyle which appropriates for the character of Bajo tribe itself.

Even so, they live in dynamic interaction but feel needless of a modern motive, nor for positions. They only look for a relationship of interdependence, which is on the boundaries of mutual relationships in the course of living a life that suits their livelihood.

Then another form of social behavior demonstrated by them is to develop social relations according to its own traditions.

### 1.2 Disadvantaged Perspective

The frequent problems related to the disadvantaged conditions are described as follows:

Firstly, the people of Bajo tribe in general still do not shift from the choice of determining the livelihood, as a fisherman. In relation to that, Pak Suroso (72 year old) stated *"... all here live only from the work as fishermen. The ability of Bajo people is only within that limit"*.

Secondly, every activity carried out is always on the consideration of customs and traditions that are established according to consensus and the high value of ancestor's tradition. At these findings, almost all of the ongoing social realities show a less productive situation with its routine nature.

Thirdly, the tied dependence on the way of thinking and acting based on community figure or tribal chief. On this side, the people will always experience a mismatch of expectation and only respond with fear of doing wrong and even appear resignation.

The last is, every effort gained to meet the needs of Bajo tribal community indicates the existence of stages. All provisions are made by the tribal chief after receiving several suggestions conveyed by the respective head of the community and by the head of the hamlet.

## 2. The Disadvantaged Dimension of Bajo Tribal Community in Bone Regency

Several problems dealt by a community related to disadvantaged condition can not only be seen in terms of service facilities' unavailability provided by government agencies, but in this connection may include several dimensions such as:

*Firstly*, on the aspect of need fulfillment. There are tendencies on several factors arising from social awareness which affect the aspect, such as the will orientation of future life, the restoration of human rights, and mutual relationship between action and struggle to meet a change.

In terms of orientation to the real future life, it is found that a number of obstacles in the attitude of choosing alternative livelihood which solely depends on the life of fishermen. Robert K. Merton's points that such reality is a habit that at least has the function of attaching people emotionally to the past (see Nasrullah Nazsir, 2009, p. 11).

Moreover, what has been done from the researcher's perspective is not a rational choice as Ferdinand Tonies (see Martono, 2012, p. 44-46) points out that the forms of the will, whether in a positive or a negative sense, are rooted in humanity and strengthened by the prevailing belief of one behavior which is surely difficult to shift to a new life style.

Then in terms of mutual relation, there is a tendency of centralization of thought to the character. This triggers a gap in interpreting interdependence. In that context, the researcher considers something to do with one of George Herbert Mead's views (1863-1931) that human as an individual who experience and become the object is depicted in the physical reality reduced to passive coding. It means that an individual only takes action in an abstract mind or as an idea that has not been observed (see Raho, 2007, p. 99-101). If that is what the tribal leaders of Bajo tribe commit, then most likely it is not fully fulfilled with expectations, as well as the progress. A considerable solution to shifting such consciousness is with the control of awareness as expressed by Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) that a set of meanings born in any social interaction should be a control tool for an action or behavior to be further followed (see Graham C. Kinloch, 2009, p. 137; and Salim, 2008, p. 40).

With such solution, then an act brought by the leaders along the control of most members of the community will make the leaders aware to avoid acting unilaterally.

*Secondly* is the suitability of goals' achievement. The assessment aspects of goals' achievement which become of particular concern to the researcher are: a) aspect of progress; b) aspect of the time utilization; and c) aspect of self-motivation.

Progress is a condition that inherent in certain expectations of a previous social life. From the information gathered, the social life of Bajo tribal community shows some unfulfilled expectations of the residents. Among others are in terms of settlement arrangement, environmental hygiene development and health, and educational facilities. Most of these expectations have not been met well. As revealed by Pak Suroso (72 year old) below:

*"For me, the progress as we see in the life of Bajo tribe here is still far from the expectations. Specifically, for almost 20 years I have become as the head of the tribe, all I got was people can read and write are few, except for the ability of reciting Qur'an. Although the matter of literacy reading in Bajo tribe may have been reduced, other facets are still far from the expected, including less environmental hygiene."*

Furthermore, the second aspect of time utilization. It was revealed by the respondents generally that since 1975 the living improvement of Bajo tribal community has not fully shifted.

Then the third aspect is self-motivation. From the common answers of the informants, they still stick to slow improvement because their motivation is only based on the choice of job motive, the life of fishermen.

However, the theoretical solution that can be applied to such underdeveloped condition is by the rational choice theory from James Samuel Coleman (1926-1995). This theory places an actor with a purpose and an intent. In this case, an actor is also considered to have a choice and an important value. Besides, all the necessary action is to reach the objectives according to the level of society's choice.

*Thirdly*, the social and cultural order. An important element in the social order is the existence of social order as a representation of mechanisms governed and controlled by regulated norms. On the social life of Bajo tribal community, the applied normative aspect is closely related to the traditional norms derived from their ancestors. But it seems to be a problem when associated with culture. In a simple sense, culture is interpreted as what most people call "*way of life*" (Robert 1999, p. 37).

It is also reinforced by Soerjono Soekanto (1982, p. 160) in mentioning several characteristics of culture. One of them is that the culture includes rules which contain accepted and rejected duties and actions, prohibited actions, and desirable actions.

The cultural problems in the life of Bajo tribal community which they implement this far tend to make most of the community's social relations be limited to the scope of the community itself. In other words, it can extend their state of lag in the future.

Thereupon, to deal with such life condition, it should focus to two conditions. The first is how to control the social consciousness of Bajo tribal community and the second is how to tackle with the current behavior of Bajo tribal community to be more active and put every activity on himself or figures over rational choice.

In the first condition, the theoretical solution referred to Herbert Blumer's awareness control theory. While the second condition referred to the rational choice by James Samuel Coleman.

## V. CONCLUSION

On the whole, the conclusion that the researcher formulates is described as follows:

1. Society and individuals are not two separate realities, but one unity that creates social life;
2. Disadvantaged condition is a social condition that shows a form of change in a social life indicated by a change of a) fulfillment of life needs, b) suitability of goals' achievement, and c) social and cultural order;
3. The theoretical solution proposed to change the disadvantaged condition is by two theories, namely the theory of awareness control by Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) and the theory of rational choice by James Samuel Coleman (1926-1995).

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