POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND COMMUNITY WELFARE: A CASE STUDY IN BONDOWOSO REGENCY, EAST JAVA, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Poverty and social welfare are inseparable indicators of poverty alleviation. The purposes of this study were to describe the distribution of poverty in Bondowoso Regency, East Java Province using welfare indicators and to overview the efforts had been made by the local government in tackling the poverty problems. The research was carried out using a qualitative descriptive method by referring to the secondary data with interactive model analysis. Based on the welfare-related issues that consisted of house ownership status, level of welfare, school drop out ,access to electricity, quality of water source, access to subsidized LPG, sanitation facility, working family members, and access to health service, there were five sub-districts of the regency experiencing acute deprivation. At regency level, all these issues were shared in equal proportions in contributing the poverty incidence across the twenty-three sub-districts. There were twelve sub-districts faced poverty problems by complying with at least two welfare issues. The highest level of poverty was found at Wringin Sub-district with six welfare issues, followed by Taman Krocok and Botolinggo Sub-districts with five welfare issues, and Klabang and Cerme Sub-districts with four welfare issues. Although a number of programs related to poverty eradication have been delivered, the root causesof poverty and welfare would still remain unsolved. Special attention and serious handlings for welfare improvement should be given to those sub-districts. The integrated program activities involving various parties should be taken into account to improve the effectiveness of the program as to the poverty alleviation in the Regency.

Keywords: *Bondowoso regency, poverty, social welfare, welfare indicator*

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a multidimensional social phenomenon and embraces a number characteristics,such as poor health, lack of education, inadequate living standard, poor quality of work,limited financial resources, powerlessness, and physical and psychological ill-being. This means that poverty is not simply about the insufficiency of income to meet the basic needs, as commonly used for measuring poverty. It also includes all consequences of financial shortage that constitute poor people's experience of deprivation (Walker, 2015). The complex characteristic of poverty makes it difficult to measure and no single indicator can capture the multiple aspects that constitute poverty. Uni-dimensional measures of poverty only generate policies that alleviate poverty in the short-term (Dagum, 2002). Consequently, poverty should be viewed by multi dimensional measures and its alleviation must be conductedunder structural socio-economic policies to break the reproduction mechanism of poverty in the long-term.

Poverty and welfare are two sidesof the same coin. Poverty exists when one or more persons fall below the welfare level to constitute the basic needs (Lipton &Ravallion, 1995). This notion implies that a minimum acceptable standard of welfare can be used as the indicator to distinguish the poor from the non-poor (the poverty line) (Haughton & Khandker, 2009).Since the goal of welfare programs is to reduce poverty by moving

people out of their deprived state, multiple welfare indicators could serve as the measures for poverty reduction. By using such indicators, the distribution of poverty in a particular area could be mapped to enable of pin pointing the parts of the area should be prioritized with social specific interventions.

Bondowoso Regency's was occupied by 755,826 people and the percentage of the population living in poverty was 15.21% or 114.970 people (BPS Bondowoso, 2013). There were a number of socio economic factors constituting the poverty in the regency, including low education level, low quality of human resources, poor health status, low purchasing power, high unemployment rate, and lack of infrastructure. Despite the local government had endeavored to reduce the poverty in the area through a variety of poverty alleviation program, the issues of poverty remain unsolved. The objectives of this study were to describe the distribution of poverty in Bondowoso Regency using welfare indicators and to overview the efforts had been made by the local government in tackling the poverty problems.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed a qualitative descriptive method to picture the welfare indicators constituting the poverty issues in twenty-three sub-districts of Bondowoso Regency, East Java Province and all program made by the local government as the efforts for poverty alleviation in the regency. Data were collected from the Integrated Database of Bondowoso Regency year 2015 (BDT 2015) and the documentation covering the welfare indicators in twenty-three sub-districts of the regency. The interactive process of data analysis was performed as described by Miles & Huberman (1994) by involving the following components: 1) data collection, 2) data reduction, 3) data presentation, and 4) inclusion/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Over past decades, the social welfare implemented through community development programs has been an integral part of the poverty alleviation. Although social welfare probably cannot eliminate poverty entirely, one would expect ithas at least help to reduce the povertyrate among disadvantaged households. In fact, Lu *et al*. (2013) showed that that social welfare programs in China in 1989 and 2009 have played a significant role in poverty reduction, reducing poverty rates by approximately 32%. Similarly, Narayan & Murgai (2016) reported that the improvement of social welfare has made substantial poverty reduction in India during 1993-94 and 2011-12 where the percentage of people who were poor declined from 45 percent to 22 percent, and 133 million people were lifted out of poverty.

Assessing how poverty and related indicators of welfare should be based on good understanding the effect of each welfare element on poverty. People are deemed to be poor if and onlyif their welfare indicators are below the line of particular society. Conceptually, welfare can be seen from the subjective and objective perspectives (Soetomo, 2014). From the subjective perspective, welfare is the depiction of welfare conditions based on the construction of a particular society or community, while the objective perspective is a picture of welfare according to scientific studies that can be used so that generalizable or can also be a formulation of welfare based on certain political and ideological views. From a subjective perspective, the welfare view cannot be generalized so that every society has a different construction on the condition of welfare.

The normative measure of welfare based on the people's welfare index contains three components: social justice, economic justice, and democratic justice. social justice contains a number of indicators: 1) access to electricity, 2) average length of school, 3) access to health, 4) sports-art recreation 5) social security 6) life expectancy 7) access to clean water 8) access to sanitation 9) number of poor 10) gap level. Economic justice contains indicators: 1) the ratio of Local Own Revenue (PAD) to Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD), 2) availability of access to banking, 3) population 15 years and above working 4) homeowners, 5) household expenditures on health and education, 6) community poverty levels. Meanwhile, the components of democracy can be measured from the indicators: 1) sense of security, 2) access to information, 3) civil liberties, 4) political rights, institutions, and democracy (Soetomo, 2011).

Table 1 portrays the poverty map among 23 sub-districts in Bondowoso Regency based on the observed indicators of welfare problem. In general, Bondowoso Regency faced 47 welfare issues, all in almost equal proportions. The seriousness of poverty is indicated by the number of welfare issues perceived in the

corresponding sub-district. Among the sub-districts, there were twelve sub-districts faced poverty problems by complying with at least two welfare issues. The highest level of poverty was found at Wringin Sub-district with six welfare issues, followed by Taman Krocok and Botolinggo Sub-districts with five welfare issues, and Klabang and Cerme Sub-districts with four welfare issues.

Table 1. The poverty map in 23 sub-districts in Bondowoso Regency based on the indicator of welfare issues

No.	Sub-district	Welfare issue									Total
		Live-in rented house	Low level of welfare	School dropout	No access to electricity	Poor quality of the water source	Cannot afford the subsidized LPG gas	No sanitary facility	Unemployed family members at age 15 years and over	Less access to health services	
1	Maesan			√				√			2
2	Grujugan										0
3	Jambersari DS		√	√		√					3
4	Tamanan										0
5	Pujer		√								1
6	Tlogosari		√	√							2
7	Sukosari									√	1
8	SumberWaringin					√				√	2
9	Tapen	√									1
10	Wonosari					√		√			2
11	Tenggarang										0
12	Bondowoso	√									1
13	Curahdami					√					1
14	Binakal										0
15	Palem						√		√	√	3
16	Wringin	√	√	√	√	√	√				6
17	Tegalampel								√		1
18	Taman Krocok					√	√	√	√	√	5
19	Klabang				√			√	√	√	4
20	Sempol	√						√	√		3
21	Botolinggo	√		√	√			√		√	5
22	Prajekan										0
23	Cermee		√	√	√			√			4
	Total	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	6	47

Although a number of social welfare programs had been delivered by the government of Bondowoso Regency, the incidences of poverty were remain exist, most notably the sub-districts having 2 or more welfare issues. Low integration and lack of continuation of all programs in targeting the poverty eradication could be the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the efforts. The followings were the poverty alleviation programs implemented by the government of Bondowoso Regency:

1. Partnership development program:
    a. Optimization and utilization of the CSR,
    b. Optimization of the microfinance institutions,
    c. Optimization and utilization of Zakat, Infaq, and Shodaqoh,
    d. Increasing the number of Self-Help Society.

2. Poverty reduction program based on the empowerment of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises:
    a. Optimization of the cooperative sector,
    b. Optimization of the industrial sector and MSMEs,
    c. Optimization of the trade sector.

3. The family-based integrated social assistance program
    a. Rice assistance for poor families,
    b. Scholarships,
    c. Public health insurance (Jamkesmas),
    d. The family program (PKH),
    e. Rehabilitation of Houses Unfit for Habitation (RTLH),
    f. Clean Water Development,
    g. Construction of family Toilets,
    h. Subsidy of PLN and PLTS Electricity Network,
    i. Cash Assistance and Foodstuffs Assistance,
    j. Other Roads to Independent and Prosperous (JALINMATRA) Program.

4. Community-based poverty eradication program
    a. Rural Infrastructure Development Program (PPIP)
    b. Program for Provision of Community-Based Drinking Water and Sanitation (PAMSIMAS).

At the national level, the decree of the President of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 the Year 2010 has provided a guideline to accelerate the poverty reduction. There were four strategies adopted implementing the decree, namely: 1) improve social protection programs; 2) increased access of the poor to basic services, 3) community empowerment, and 4) inclusive development. In addition, the central government has also established poverty reduction instruments in four clusters based on the beneficiary characteristics and objectives, namely:

1. Family-based integrated social assistance program (Cluster 1). It is poverty-based relief and social protection programs aim to fulfill basic rights, reduce live burden, and improve the quality of life of the poor. This cluster includes Jamkesmas facility and Family Hope Program**.**
2. Community empowerment based poverty prevention program (Cluster 2). This program was intended not only to raise awareness of the poor about their potential and resources but also to encourage the poor to participate in a broader scale especially in the development process in the regions. This cluster covered in the National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM).
3. Poverty alleviation based on economic empowerment (Cluster 3). The program was aimed to provide economic access and strengthening of micro and small business actors. This cluster was represented by People's Business Credit (KUR).
4. Poverty alleviation for more specific target groups, such as urban poor occupation, fishermen and so forth (Cluster 4). This cluster was marked with the distribution of the social protection card (KPS) for the households with the lowest socioeconomic status. The card can beused to take benefit from the Rice Subsidy Program for low-income communities known as the RASKIN Program.In addition, KPS can also be used to benefit the Poor Student Assistance (BSM) program and the Direct Community Assistance Program (BLSM).

Based on the analysis of program activities operated by the local government work units (OPD) during the period 2015 and 2016, it could be inferred that generally, each OPD focused only on Cluster 4. Consequently, the outcomes of the program activities for acceleration of poverty reduction did not meet the central government expectation. Furthermore, the local authorities were often trapped in misleading paradigms as described by Huraerah (2015), namely: 1). The program is still oriented on economic aspect rather than an aspect of multidimensional; 2). More oriented toward mercy rather than productivity; 3). Positioning the poor society only as an object not as subject in the development, and4). The government acts as a ruler rather than a facilitator(Huraerah: 2015).

All in all, the poverty alleviation should be an integrated activity and involved various parties, including (1) The government as the implementer of community empowerment policies; (2) The legislative as the determinant of budget in the implementation of community empowerment; (3) Universities as innovators and evaluators in the implementation of community empowerment; (4) The business world as the donor, in the form of CSR, for the community in community empowerment; (5) NGOs as the control systems in the implementation ofcommunity empowerment; (7) Social organizations as the government partners in the implementation of community empowerment; (8) Community as the beneficiaries of the implementation of community empowerment; and (9) Mass media as the control systems in the implementation of community empowerment.

CONCLUSION

All endeavors made the local government of Bodowoso Regency in combating poverty were still unfinished. There were twelve sub-districts faced poverty problems by complying with at least two welfare issues. The highest level of poverty was found at Wringin Sub-district with six welfare issues, followed by Taman Krocok and Botolinggo Sub-districts with five welfare issues, and Klabang and Cerme Sub-districts with four welfare issues. All welfare issues covered in this study, namely: house ownership status, level of welfare, school dropout, access to electricity, quality of water source, access to subsidized LPG, sanitation facility, working family members, and access to health service shared equal proportions in contributing the poverty incidence across the sub-districts. Special attention and serious handlings for welfare improvement should be given to those sub-districts facing a higher number of welfare issues. The integrated program activities involving various parties should be taken into account to improve the effectiveness of the program as to the poverty alleviation in the regency.

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