



Livelihood Strategy Based On Assets As Efforts To Establish Scavenger Empowerment In Facing The Poverty Of Living In The City (Case Study of Scavengers at Njawar, Surabaya)

Ita Kusuma Mahendrawati

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,
Bhayangkara University Surabaya

Tri Prasetyowati

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,
Bhayangkara University Surabaya

ABSTRACT

Surabaya as the second largest city in Indonesia has its large scale Final Disposal Site (FDS) in Njawar. There are quite a lot of scavengers in this area. They live in a village not far from the landfill site - FDS. Unfortunately, the Surabaya city government has already extended the waste management to the private sector leading to an impact on the income of the scavengers there. On the other hand, the human resources are very minimal. In responding such a situation, the scavengers apply the livelihood strategy to empower themselves to survive amid the urban poverty. This study aims to determine the livelihood strategy undertaken by the scavengers in building their empowerment in Surabaya landfill and some factors affecting it. The livelihood strategy consists of acquisition, allocation and social networking. Also the community applies the livelihood strategy for the assets owned comprising of physical, financial, social, waste, and spiritual assets. In addition, the results of research indicated that work ethic, work motivation, the role of the collectors as mediators, facilitators and patrons have a significant influence on the livelihood strategies undertaken by the scavengers. The job as a scavenger can be classified as a profession although this type of profession has not been recognized by the state. Such a condition like this leads to less government participation in the scavenging community. The result of the study recommended the involvement of the related agencies such as Social Service, Office of Sanitation and Gardening, NGOs and Universities to issue a policy to regulate all the necessary things in finding out the matters of the scavengers. The participation of the governments of the native cities of the scavengers is highly expected. Some employments are supposed to be provided by their hometown so as to reduce the flow of urbanization.

Keywords: Livelihood strategies, existence, scavengers, urban poverty.

INTRODUCTION

The presence of scavengers in the rigors of city life is caused by not only the problems related to economic poverty but also social and cultural factors. The condition suggests that scavengers are present not only as a result of a culture of poverty that characterizes scavenging work as a fatalist act, but also as a result of structures that view the work as a compulsion in the absence of choices. (De han, 2000) The study took place at Njawar landfill (FDS), Pakal sub-district, Surabaya city because the location is the most populated location of waste pickers or scavengers in Surabaya. The reason to take the scavengers as the subject of study is that the scavenger community has its own characteristics. On the one hand, their presence is rejected by the people because they are considered to have a potential to commit a theft, not to be trusted, and as the object of suspicion. On the other hand, their presence is really needed to minimize the waste disposed in landfills (FDS), especially the inorganic waste needed by certain factories.

Related to the condition of the scavengers living in Njawar Disposal Site (FDS), they have to face the problem of the change in the landfill management which is now conducted by the a private party with the authority to run the project to make use of the waste as a power source. It automatically leads to the reduction of their income. In response to the problem, the scavengers have to apply the livelihood strategy for their empowerment to occupy the position as the subject. Through the perspective, we have the ability to see that the scavengers are not static but they are able to deal with any changes and pressures for the survival to live in Surabaya city.

Livelihood Strategy of Scavengers

As Ellis (2000) points out, livelihood is

"A livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household"

The description above can be submitted that livelihood strategy is a variety of efforts by a person or individual, household or family by utilizing various resources to earn income so as to maintain its survival. The concept of livelihood strategy is closely related to the concept of capital or assets (Coloman, 2010). There are several terms relating to capital, resources and assets, all of which bear the purpose of benefit and carrying capacity that sustains the livelihood of individuals, families or households, as well as the community. As Scoones (1998) explains, a livelihood strategy is a way of leveraging assets, asset choices for investments and how the households retain the assets and revenues. Assets consist of various forms of capital, such as social, physical, human, financial, waste and spiritual capitals possessed and they are used for the lives of individuals or households to maintain material well-being at different levels of survival (DFID 2001) .

There are three strategies in relation to the livelihood strategy undertaken by the scavenger community in establishing its existence: the first one is acquisition, the second is allocation, and the third is social network utilization. The scavengers cannot be entirely dependent on both the shrinking waste assets and the acquisition strategy through the kinship and non-kinship ties (Lewis 1998) such as the relationships with the fellow scavengers, with stall owners, or with landfill apparatus. When they do the allocation strategy, they will share the experiences, provide some helps for other scavengers. These experiences can be shared with the fellow scavengers so that the other scavengers can learn and do so if they are considered profitable and able to increase the

income. The allocation strategy can sometimes be manipulative tactics to make a profit (Scott, 1977). In the strategy of social network utilization, they are use the built-in pulp product network which involves the role of the collectors as mediators and as facilitators in providing the life facilities and the as patrons in flexible patron-client bonds between collectors and scavengers. Through the livelihood strategy, the scavengers show that there is the potential to build up their empowerment and also a means of protest against the dominance of powerful structures (Scott, 1988)

SOME FACTORS INFLUENCING THE LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY OF THE SCAVENGERS

Work Motivation

The scavenging work has become a life choice because it provides more income than the previous work. The scavenger are motivated because this work does not need any special requirements nor capital money. They only have to provide their energy to work. In addition, they are highly motivated by the obligation to send money to their families living in the villages of origin. These are the reasons why the scavengers undertake the livelihood strategy in order to build their empowerment in the Njawar FDS.

Work Ethic

The work ethic can be interpreted as the attitude shown by the scavenger of the work done which is based on the scavenger's life philosophy of work. The philosophy of life is what makes the scavengers can live together in Njawar FDS. They personally feel on the same boat because they are poor, leave the village to come to the landfill or FDS to find a source of life, and they do not receive any helps from others .

The Role Of Collectors As Mediators

The role of the collectors as a mediator is described as the role in the system of retail goods management which is more familial. There is a symbiotic relationship between the collectors and the scavengers. This is a kind of reciprocal behavior and it is an evidence that the scavengers need the collectors and vice versa. The collectors, however, have the power to the price decisions based on the manufacturer.

The Role Of Collectors As Facilitators

The collectors have the role to provide some facilities such as the dwellings or warehouses for a few scavengers to live or some money to lend. The dependence of the scavengers on the collectors as the facilitators is a form of social capital in the form of trust and the participation in the form of force to apply a livelihood strategy in order to survive in Njawar FDS. Some facilities provided by the collectors are the supporting factors in making a livelihood strategy run well.

The Role Of Collectors As A Patron

The role of the collectors as a patron is described as a position of a protector for those who become his clients. Based on some concepts of some experts, it can be seen that the patron – client relationship is a social exchange relationship of two or more persons that evolves toward an imbalanced relationship in which one party clearly has a higher position than the other. This position is due to a greater ability of the superior to that of the second one, the inferior, which causes the second party to become dependent on the first one. In return for the first party, the second one provides some assistances and supports covering personal services so that the collectors have a position as a facilitator (Kusuma I, 2014)

In any case, the motivation will always give an impetus or motivation to the achievement of the actions taken by a person, including, in terms of, having a work ethic in the form of a mental attitude. It is the basis held by the scavengers to judge that the work of scavenging has something positive for the improvement of a better quality of life. It is very important for the scavengers to have such a mental attitude for the high spirit. The spirit is a form of living energy that one needs to interact with others. This kind of spirit is then called the spiritual and it is an asset or capital owned by the scavengers in conducting a livelihood strategy. This spiritual capital is the foundation in utilizing other capital. It serves to strengthen the mental of the scavengers to be always strong and tough, willing to accept any situations, ready to be insulted, willing to give up but still maintain self-esteem and dignity. It is the foundation in mobilizing the other capitals.

CAPITAL OR ASSETS OF SCAVENGER COMMUNITY

The concept of livelihood strategy is closely related to the concept of community assets. The capital or assets owned by the scavengers include:

Human Capital

Human capital refers to individual or household labors that includes education, skills, and health. The main assets owned by scavengers are their own labors. Labor as an individual or household asset must be free from various illnesses or health problems that can reduce the productivity (Ellis, 2000). Furthermore, Baiquni (2007) conveyed that man as a household capital has the knowledge, skills, and ability to seek a better livelihood. The development of human quality is crucial, given that it is the man who will manage all assets to be utilized and sustainably conserved.

Natural Capital

This natural capital is also referred to as an environment that is a combination of various biotic and abiotic factors around humans. This capital can be either a renewable or non-renewable resource. Some examples of natural resource capital are water, trees, land, timber stocks from the gardens or forests, fish stocks in waters, as well as mineral resources such as oil, gold, coal, garbage and others. Ultimately, the natural resources can generate some profits if people have the secure access to this natural capital.

Financial Capital

Financial capital is the financial resources that can be used and utilized by the community to achieve their livelihood objectives, which include: reserves or inventories in the forms of financial resources such as savings, deposits, or movable goods that are easily cashed. It also includes the financial resources provided by banks or credit institutions.

Social Capital

Social capital is an asset that individuals can use to sustain the survival (De Haan, 2000). It is the source of household livelihood strategy in times of crisis or socio-economic change. Furthermore, according to Baiquni (2007), social capital as a force to cultivate livelihoods through networking and linkages that enable social resources to be integrated like mutual cooperation involving a trust and benefits to gain the social security. It includes the prevailing social ties and norms in the scavenger community.

Physical Capital

Physical capital is the basic infrastructure and other facilities built to support the community livelihood processes. In this study it is a tool or facility owned by the scavengers to live their lives. It covers the ownership of home, means of transportation, economic properties, electrical appliances like TV, Radio, VCD or DVD, HP. Physical capital can support in living life

Spiritual capital

Spiritual capital is one of the capitals to build a positive work ethic, strong, brave mental, and loose moral values that make them not depressed and not revile each other, and strongly believe in God and that the life is already there. The scavengers are armed with the mental attitudes to accept everything, willingness to succumb, being ready to be humiliated but still maintaining the self-esteem and dignity as the power to survive. Through the philosophy of life, the scavengers are able to make a livelihood strategy to utilize and distribute all the resources owned to establish their own existence.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE LIFE OF SCAVENGERS

In the 1945 Constitution, Article 7 paragraph 2 states that every citizen is entitled to work and a decent living for humanity. Similarly, in Chapter XA, article 28 A states that everyone has the rights to live and to preserve his or her life and livelihood. The right of the citizen is more complete when it is added by Article 28 H paragraph 1 stating that physically and mentally everyone has the right to live prosperously and get a good and healthy environment and is entitled to get a health care service. Scavengers are Indonesian citizens who must also receive the equal treatment from the government and the law as stated in the 1945 Constitution.

In reality those rights have not been fully acquired by the scavengers. Therefore, the government should think about the life of scavengers. The figure of the scavengers is completely unaccounted for, and even the law does not mention any opportunities for them to be involved. Although garbage is part of the life of the scavengers, Act no. 18 of 2008 on waste management does not touch the scavengers as the garbage/waste takers. Based on the vision, mission and main tasks, actually the Departments of Hygiene and Gardening and of Social Service of Surabaya are considered close to the existence of scavengers but they have not shown any significant roles in the life of this community. So far the role of the Surabaya city government is limited to granting permission to the scavenger community to settle in Surabaya by reporting to the local kelurahan. In addition, the city government also provides land for garbage disposal so that they can do their work on the land.

The existence of the scavengers is seriously needed, especially, in the management of the environment and opening up new jobs when the government is not yet fully able to provide employment for its citizens (Kusuma I, 2016). Besides, it is necessary for the government or the private sector to intervene in conducting the livelihood strategy. In addition, the Surabaya city government should provide a specific institution for the scavenging community and establish UPTD to take care of them. Furthermore, the scavengers will be distributed to every municipal government office, in every sub-district and urban village, in malls, hospitals, hotels, restaurants and other private institutions in Surabaya as waste management personnel. They are expected to get some incentives from municipalities / private agencies and services, the scavengers also make use of waste to be sorted, recycled and sold which can increase their income. The involvement of commission B of the House of the Local Representative to issue a local regulation concerning scavengers is very important so that this community gets a legal umbrella to protect.

CONCLUSION

1. The livelihood strategy undertaken by the scavengers in building an existence amid urban poverty includes strategies of acquisition, allocation and social network utilization.
2. Some factors affecting the livelihood strategy are work motivation, work ethic, the role of collectors as facilitators, mediators and patrons
3. The assets found in scavengers are physical, social capital, finance, waste and spiritual assets.
4. The city government pays less attention to and has little role in the livelihood strategy of the scavengers. They do not include them as the ones who have a social welfare problem because they are considered a productive community. So far, only the private institutions such as the religious ones, provide some social assistance and social safety nets.
5. Scavenging work can be classified as a profession.
6. The city government of the scavengers come from must play a role in preventing the flow of urbanization by providing empowerment or employment, especially in the marginal groups in the district, so that they have a decent income and do not have to move to the nearest big city to work as scavengers or to do other jobs. The city governments of the scavengers can collaborate with some private parties there by distributing these marginal group personnels to manage the waste in the companies or markets, malls, hotels and hospitals so they can earn some money to support their lives. It is not necessary for them to leave the city to find a job.
7. Non-governmental organizations also participate in the empowerment of the scavenger community. Through the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, it is possible to empower the scavenger community by providing some guidance and training on entrepreneurship or skills, or equipment or capital. Principally the scavengers also want some kind of side job that can supplement their income or if it is possible they do not have to work anymore as scavengers as long as the new types of work can provide more income.

References

- Coloman, J., 2010. *Dasar-Dasar Teori Sosial*, Bandung : Nusa Media.
- DFID, 2001, *Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets*, Department for International Development, <http://www.livelihoods.org/> (diakses April 2016).
- De Haan, Leo J., 2000, *Globalization Localization and Sustainable Livelihood*, *Sociologia Ruralis*, Vol 40, Number 3.
- Ellis, F., 2000, *Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in Developing Countries*, Oxford: University Press
- Kusuma I. 2016. The Strategies of Scavenger in maintaining their viability based on social network in Surabaya city *Journal Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, Volume 3, Issue 5 May 2016
- Kusuma I. 2014. Bond of Solidarity as a Survival Strategy of Scavengers Community in Surabaya City. *Academic Research International Journal*. Volume 3 November 2014
- Lewis, O., 1988, *Kisah Lima Keluarga Telaah Meksiko dalam kebudayaan Kemiskinan*, Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Papanek, Gustav dan Dorojatun Kuncoro jakti (1986) *Penduduk miskin di Jakarta dalam kemiskinan di Indonesia*. Jakarta : Yayasan obor Indonesia
- Scoones, I., 1998, *Sustainable Rural Livelihood: A Framework for Analysis*, IDS Discussion, Institute for Development Studies, Brighton.
- Scoot, 1988, *Perlawanan Kaum Petani*, Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Scott, J C., 1977, *Moral Ekonomi Petani: Pergolakan dan Subsistensi di Asia Tenggara*, Jakarta: LP3ES