

# The Acculturation of Peace and Cultural Value between Javanese Transmigrants and Malayan Society in Riau Province

Newman Sango<sup>1</sup>, Ichsan Malik<sup>2</sup>, I Gede Sumertha KY<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1, 2&3</sup>Peace and Conflict Resolution, Faculty of National Security, Indonesia Defense University

**ABSTRACT:** Riau Province, which is one of the transmigration destinations, has minimal conflicts between indigenous people and transmigrants, in this case, the Javanese people. This research aims to analyze the peaceful cultural value of indigenous Malays and Javanese transmigrants in Riau Province. The method used in this research is qualitative, with an interview approach and literature study. The results of this research indicate that the success of cultural acculturation in Riau Province is supported by their both cultures supporting each other, and strategic government policies.

**KEYWORDS:** Acculturation, Javanese, Malay, Riau, Transmigration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian Law article 4 of Law No. 15 of 1997 concerning transmigration sets out 3 main targets of transmigration. First, increase the ability and productivity of the transmigration community (transmigration and the community around the transmigration settlement). Second, building independence (transmigrants and communities around transmigration settlements), and third, realizing integration in transmigration settlements, so that the economy and socio-culture are able to grow and develop continuously. The three targets are projected to build communities through efforts to empower and utilize regional resources in order to realize equitable development and population distribution [1].

The integration of the people that are part of the targets to the three above is the two sides of the same coin. Theoretically, social integration is a progressive development in order to realize a perfect correspondence between the elements, which together embody a universal culture (total culture) [2]. Within the realm of practicality, this process of social integration is colored by conflict and violence. Citing learning resources from the Ministry of Education and Culture [3], cultural differences are 1 of 4 factors that cause social conflicts. The four factors are; differences between individuals, cultural differences, differences in interests, and social changes that are too fast. From this situation, a common thread can be drawn that social integration is a process in a society that is prone to conflict.

In terms of history, there are many social conflicts caused by cultural clashes in Indonesia. The Sampit tragedy, the Moluccan conflict, and the Sambas riots may be Indonesia's greatest historical record in this regard [4, 5]. In addition to these conflicts, conflicts motivated by ethnic issues occur in Indonesia, such as the Lampung and Bali Social Conflicts, Aceh social conflicts, West Java, Yogyakarta, Lampung, and West Nusa Tenggara have their own records in their respective experiences in the phenomenon of social conflict [6].

Specifically related to the issue of transmigration, Ernani Rustiadi et al, showed the low interaction between Ex-Trans Villages and surrounding villages also known as social bridging capital [7]. The pattern of interaction is more dominant in other ex-transmigration villages. This is due to the non-establishment of various facilities and the non-growth of production activities in villages functionally related to transmigration

settlements as per the demand-supply. This is also supported by poor transportation networks and weak social capital development. Another factor is the support by the central government through the transmigration program (social linking capital) to encourage the transmigration area to be more advanced institutionally and regionally. This is why the integration of transmigrants into the social system of local communities is vulnerable to conflict [8].

Social conflicts in Riau are generally triggered by disputes over natural resources, plantations, and forestry. The irregularity of the land system in Riau such as overlapping land permits has triggered social conflicts [9]. This is interesting, considering that Riau is one of the destination areas for transmigration, but it is minimal with social conflicts motivated by cultural conflicts. The first transmigration program to Riau Province occurred in mid-August 1962 with 100 heads of families [10]. The results of the Antar Census Population Survey (SUPAS) by the Central Statistics Agency (2016), in 2015, migration entering Riau Province reached 215.350 inhabitants.

Based on the presentation above, it is interesting to conduct research on the acculturation of peaceful cultural values owned by the Malay people who are indigenous people of Riau with the values of peaceful culture owned by the Javanese people in Riau Province.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

A qualitative technique and a descriptive research design are used in this study. Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin define qualitative research as a sort of study whose conclusions are not derived from statistical methods or other counting techniques [11]. According to Sugiyono, there is a research methodology based on the positivist school of thought that uses the researcher as a major tool to analyze the condition of natural things as opposed to doing tests [12].

The subject of this study was Riau Province with the object of research on the acculturation of the peaceful culture of the indigenous Malay community with the Transmigrants of Java. Data collection techniques were carried out with interviews supported by library research studies. Determination of informants using purposive techniques. Informants are divided into two types, namely the main informant and additional informants. The main informants consisted of 3 people, namely, the Head of the National Unity and Political Agency of Riau Province (Kesbangpol), Jenri Salmon Ginting, AP, M.Si; Lecturer of Sociology, Riau University, Prof. Dr. Yusmar Yusuf, M.Psi; and Chairman of the National Association of Indigenous Peoples (AMAN), Efri Subayang. Additional informants from this study were Commander Danrem 031/Wira Bima, Brig. Gen. TNI M. Syech Ismed; Riau Police Chief, Irjen Pol, M. Iqbal, and Chairman of the Bangkinang District Court, I Dewa G. Buddy D.A, S.H, M.H.

Data and materials that have been collected and obtained from the research were processed, compiled, and analyzed qualitatively, whereas qualitative data processing is a research procedure that produces descriptive data research. From the discussion, deductive conclusions were drawn, based on existing theories.

## III. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

To understand the peaceful cultural acculturation between indigenous Malays and Javanese transmigrants in Riau Province, researchers used the Theory of Cultural Acculturation.

### 1 Theory of Cultural Acculturation

Suyono cites Rumondor as saying that acculturation is the taking or acceptance of one or more cultural aspects that result from encountering two or more cultural elements that are connected to or cross paths with one another [13]. According to this definition, it is obvious that mutual understanding between the two cultures is necessary for the process of intercultural communication to take place. Additionally, Nardy, explains that acculturation or culture contact is a social process that develops when a group of people with a particular culture are exposed to elements of a foreign culture in a way that allows the elements to gradually be accepted and processed into their own culture without impairing the personality of the original culture [14].

Hashim added that acculturation is the blending of the two cultures and takes place in a peaceful and harmonious environment [15]. Acculturation can be defined as the joining of two or more civilizations to create

a new culture without erasing the components of the previous culture. According to the Organization for Migration, acculturation is the process by which an individual, community, or class of people gradually adapts to aspects of a foreign culture (ideas, words, values, norms, behavior) [16].

As soon as a transient person immerses themselves in the community's culture, the acculturation process begins. As long as transmigrant individuals maintain direct touch with the regional sociocultural system, the acculturation process will continue. Although potential acculturation may not proceed smoothly, all the acculturative forces of persona and social communication, communication environment, and potential acculturation will move in the direction of assimilation, which is ideal assimilation in theory.

Based on the definitions of acculturation above we can identify several key elements such as:

- a. It necessitates ongoing cross-cultural contact or engagement.
- b. The outcome is a modest alteration in the cultural or psychological phenomenon among those interacting individuals, which typically continues in the coming generation.
- c. The presence of dynamic activity during and after contact, as well as the presence of long-term results of relatively stable processes, allow us to distinguish between process and stage. The end result may include both changes to already-existing phenomena as well as the emergence of brand-new phenomena as a result of the process of cultural interaction.

Based on some of the definitions of acculturation above, it can be concluded that acculturation is a way that is carried out from the first time of contact in order to adapt to the new culture. The above conceptual elements of acculturation will be used as a tool for analyzing the peaceful cultural acculturation of the indigenous Javanese people and the indigenous people of Riau in Riau Province.

#### **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **A. History of Transmigration in Riau Province.**

In the context of political policy, transmigration was first carried out after Indonesia became independent, on December 12, 1950. This date was later commemorated as Bhakti Transmigration Day (HBT) in Indonesia [17]. However, in the broader historical context, transmigration has actually been going on since centuries ago in both trade and trade missions [18].

When plans were being made for the expansion of the transmigration program in the Five-Year Development Plan (Repelita) Third, Riau Province, with 1.4 percent of Indonesia's total population and a population density of 13 people per square kilometers, offered the potential for agricultural development (1979-1984). The Riau Provincial Government provided land for habitation in the Pasir Pangarayan region, anticipating that transmigrant cultivation of arable crops will increase the supply of rice and secondary foodstuffs for urban areas in eastern Riau, where the exploitation of oil resources has long dominated Riau's economy. Since the majority of the locals made their living from shifting agriculture and income from wild rubber, no claims to the land were made [19].

Two acres of farmland, food crop seeds, a few farm implements, and 18 months' worth of food were distributed to each family. In accordance with the transmigration service's strategy, settlers were given two hectares in three sections, the first of which was a 0.25-ha yard in ready-to-plant condition with complete permission to construct residences there. The third part (LahanII) is made up of 0.75 ha of unopened land that will eventually be utilized for tree crops, while the second part (LahanI) is made up of one hectare of cleared land for the production of food crops [19].

##### **B. Acculturation of Peaceful Cultural Values of Indigenous Malays and Javanese Transmigrants in Riau Province.**

According to Puji Hartati's research on transmigrant settlements in North Luwu, Sulawesi, those who migrated from Java Island had a higher level of social capital than those who stayed in the area. This social capital develops from a sense of equality that ultimately translates into the norms, networks, and mutual trust that are essential components of social capital. Social capital even played a 13.4% role in the growth of villages

with a history of transmigration. It further promotes the closeness of social relationships between transmigrant groups by preserving local knowledge and the tradition of reciprocal cooperation brought from the place of origin. One of the leading researchers on rural communities Scott (1976) in Subejo has categorized rural Javanese communities as one of the most powerful rural communities in the world that has the [strongest communitariantradition.

On the other hand, the Malay Society is basically known as an open society. Philosophically, the word "Melayur" means "Layur, which means that the Malay community tends to be gentle [18]. This is supported by the statement of the Chairman of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago who stated that when the Javanese people set foot in the Land of Riau, they automatically became Malays [20].

The above does not fully make the process of acculturation of the two cultures run smoothly. Transmigrants in the mid-1990s experience an unpleasant situation. They are often associated with the "outcast" community from Java Island [21]. The stigma gradually faded with the economic improvement of transmigrants accompanied by a complex pattern of cultural crossing. The phenomenon of acculturation of Javanese transmigrants and Riau people was not only initiated by cultural factors such as marriages, traditional ceremonies, and others. Javanese people who are well versed in farming (food-producing) have also become agents of the agrarian system revolution in Riau in general which is characterized by food gathering [18].

The long process of cultural crossing was supported by the government that succeeded in internalizing Malay culture into politics and law in Riau Province. This is reflected in Riau governor regulation no. 46 of 2018 concerning the application of Malay cultural content in public spaces. This Governor Regulation is intended as a guideline for local governments, regency/city governments, managers, owners, employers, employees, and communities in the application of Riau Malay cultural content in public spaces as stated in Pergub Riau No. 46 of 2018 Article 2. In addition, there is a strong Customary Institutional mechanism to become a model for dispute prevention in Riau Province [21]. This was confirmed through Pekanbaru City Regional Regulation (Perda) No.1 of 2016 concerning the Riau Malay Customary Institution of Pekanbaru City.

Solid synergy at the community level, Customary Institutions, and constitutional strengthening of both through regional laws and regulations make the marriage of Javanese and Malay cultures in Riau Province tend to run well. There is no historical record of the clashes between the two cultures throughout their journey [18, 20, and 22].

However, there is a potential for conflict between Malays and other migrant residents, including Javanese migrants. This is due to the interest in land tenure that is getting bigger and bigger in Riau. In this case, the indigenous people who were the traditional heirs were infiltrated by many outsiders to trade the land this resulted in the Malays being increasingly marginalized in their own areas [22].

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The success of peaceful cultural acculturation in Riau Province is not merely the natural success of the crossover of cultures themselves, nor the strategic policies of the government that are right on target. There is a great collaboration between the two. On the one hand, as previously explained, Javanese culture which has a great bonding value, when meeting with an open Malay culture will certainly support cultural crossing.

In addition, the local government has also succeeded in integrating regional cultural values into local government policies. This kind of approach model is important to develop in Indonesia given the enormous cultural diversity in the country, to create peace to realize national security. The integration of Javanese culture and the Riau Malay community is part of the efforts of national ideals to realize Indonesia with a very diverse cultural background to be able to live in the same paradigm, namely, Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the principle of Bhineka Tunggal Ika.

From the explanation above, it can be said that the transmigration program of Javanese and Malay communities in Riau tends to be successful at the cultural level. However, researchers recommend ongoing conflict mitigation to prevent possible friction between the two cultures.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Yulisetyaningtyas, B. (2008). *Evaluasi Pelaksanaan Program Transmigrasi melalui Model Kerjasama Antar Daerah (Studi Kasus di Kabupaten Temanggung Provinsi Jawa Tengah)* (Doctoral dissertation, program Pascasarjana Universitas Diponegoro).
- [2] Linton, R. (1984). *Anthropology; an Inquiry into Man*. London: Jemmars.
- [3] Pahlevi, R. (2021). "The Lowest Number of Deaths Due to Conflict in Indonesia in 2020". *Katadata*. December 20, 2021. <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2021/12/20/jumlah-kematian-akibat-konflik-di-indonesia-terendah-pada-2020>. Retrieved January 25, 2022.
- [4] Adryamarthanino, Verelladevanka. 2021. "The 1999 Sambas Riots: Causes, Chronology, and Impact." *Compass*. August 6, 2021. <https://www.kompas.com/stori/read/2021/08/06/150000479/kerusuhan-sambas-1999-penyebab-kronologi-dan-dampak?page=all>. Retrieved January 22, 2022.
- [5] Van Klinken, G. (2007). *Communal violence and democratization in Indonesia: Small town wars*. Routledge.
- [6] Aninsi, Niken. 2021. "10 Lists of Social Conflicts in Indonesia." *Katadata*. December 14, 2021. <https://katadata.co.id/intan/berita/61b8c94075b19/10-daftar-konflik-sosial-di-indonesia>. Retrieved January 22, 2022.
- [7] Rustiadi, Ernan, et al (2012). "Development of Transmigration Implementation in the Era of Daeah Autonomy: A Special Study of the Interaction of Transmigration Settlements with Surrounding Villages". *Journal of Public Vision*. 9 (1): 522-536
- [8] Tirtosudarmo, R. (2021). The Central–Regional Contexts of Transmigration: Riau and South Kalimantan. In *From Colonization to Nation-State* (pp. 49-73). Springer, Singapore.
- [9] Sadad, Abdul. 2016. "Social Conflict Management and Its Resolution Efforts". *Journal of Development Administration*. 4(2): 87-156.
- [10] Sumirat, Lismar, 2012. "Surviving Seven Months in Barracks, Seven Months Attacked by Malaria: Siabu, the First Transmigration Village in Riau." *Riau Post*. 25 November 2012. <https://riaupos.jawapos.com/feature/25/11/2012/20037/siabu-kampung-transmigrasi-pertama-di-riau.html#>. Retrieved January 22, 2022.
- [11] Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2014). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage publications.
- [12] Sugiyono. 2016. *Quantitative, Qualitative Pnelitian Methods*. Bandung: IKAPI.
- [13] Rumondor, Alex H. 2015. *Intercultural Communication*. Jakarta: Open University Publishing Center.
- [14] Miswardi, M., Joni, Y., & Nasfi, N. (2021). An Acculturation of Islamic Teachings and Traditional Minang Kabau Locality in Economic Practices. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL, POLICY AND LAW*, 2(1), 27-36.
- [15] Abi-Hashem, N. (2008). Arab Americans: Understanding their challenges, needs, and struggles. In *Ethnocultural perspectives on disaster and trauma* (pp. 115-173). Springer, New York, NY.
- [16] Berry, J. W., & Sam, D. L. (1997). Acculturation and adaptation. *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology*, 3(2), 291-326.

- [17] Voi, Editor, (2019). "Sejarah Indonesia's Transmigration Program that Has Failed a Lot". *VOI*. December 12, 2019. <https://voi.id/memori/767/riwayat-program-transmigrasi-indonesia-yang-banyak-gagalnya> Retrieved 22 January 2022
- [18] Yusuf, J. (2022). "Optimization (Resolutive) of Conflict in Riau for the Sake of a Form of Positive Peace (National Security)". *Domestic Work Lecture, Faculty of National Defense, Indonesian Defense University*. February 9, 2022.
- [19] Hardjono, Johan. 2013. "Ethnic Identity and Land Utilization: A Case Study in Riau, Indonesia." *Indonesian society*. 39(2): 417-438.
- [20] Subayang, Efri. 2022. "Indigenous Peoples and Customary Land Conflicts in Riau Province". *Domestic Work Lecture, Faculty of National Defense, Indonesian Defense University*. February 8, 2022.
- [21] Gratitude, M. (2016), "The Story of Transmigrants Was Once Considered An Outcast". *Coverage 6*. September 30, 2016. <https://www.liputan6.com/regional/read/2614351/kisah-transmigran-semptat-dianggap-orang-buangan>. Retrieved February 25, 2022.
- [22] Ginting, S. Jenri. 2022. "The Role of Kesbangpol in Conflict Management in Riau Province." *Domestic Work Lecture, Faculty of National Defense, Indonesian Defense University*. February 7, 2022.