

Resistance of Traditional Traderson Market Relocation Policy in Aksara Market, Medan, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to explain the form of resistance from traditional traders after the fire against the relocation policy established by the Medan City Government, Indonesia. In-depth interviews were conducted with 6 informants who are traditional traders at Aksara Market and 1 informant as a representative from the Medan city government. This data was collected to find out the opinion and perspective of the community towards the relocation policy and reasons for the Medan city government to relocate Aksara traders to other places. The results indicate that traders in the Aksara market disagree with the relocation policy determined by the Medan City Government. Therefore, people represented their resistance by selling along the sidewalks of the Aksara market which had burned and caused traffic jams. Moreover, they established a group of fire victim traders called PK2PTAM (Representative of Fire Victims Traditional Traders of Aksara Market Medan) to struggle with the revitalization of Aksara Market. The main reason for the Medan City government in issuing this relocation policy was the flyover construction project which affects the location of Aksara market.

Keywords

relocation policy; resistance; traditional traders; traditional markets



I. Introduction

A market is defined as a place for interaction between buyers and sellers to carry out buying and selling transactions of goods or services to fulfill life necessities. Buyers and sellers are two interactions between members of the market community. In daily activities, the market is not only acting as a place to sell various types of goods and services but also as a medium of information and socialization for consumers (Rudito, 2015). On the other hand, the market has another potential, which is as a source of regional income (APBD) (Dewi, 2015). Nowadays, technology development is followed by changes and developments in every aspect. One of them is the development of modern markets such as malls, minimarkets. Modern markets are growing rapidly and impact the decline in consumers of traditional markets (Mokoginta, Gosal, & Supardjo, 2015). Other reason for the declining interest from consumers in traditional markets is due to the condition which is muddy, dirty, smelly, and messy, which leads people to feel uncomfortable to shop. This difference was mentioned by Natawidjaja in her research which showed that the increment of sales by 15% per year in modern markets, while traditional markets decreased by 2% per year (Tanuwidjaja & Wirawan, 2015) (Arinda, Zuska, & Lubis, 2019).

Based on the situation of a traditional market, Mustafa revealed that activities in the informal sector (markets) hinder the efficiency of economic development and disrupt the order and cleanliness of the city (Hanifah & Mussadun, 2014). Therefore, it needs to be revitalization and followed by moving to a new location which is considered appropriate

by the government for the construction according to relocation policy (Armi, 2016). This traditional market management and empowerment activity carried out by the government aim to (a) create an arranged, safe, clean, and healthy traditional market (b) improve services for the community (c) create traditional markets as a stimulant to improve the regional economy (d) create competitive traditional markets towards modern markets (Soelistiyono, Ardianto, & Kurniawati, 2018). In the current state of the modern economy, conditions have changed, the emergence of competition in the business world is unavoidable. With competition, business people must be more observant in reading opportunities and threats. A business can be successful if it successfully pays attention, retains and grows customers (Marlizar *et al*, 2020). Londhe in Kusumadewi (2019) stated that marketing association was referred to an instrument for marketing and deemed to have a positive impact upon the enhancement on the customer value.

One of the markets that must be revitalized was Aksara Market, which was burned in 2016 and located in Medan city. Apart from the fire, it was expected by the Medan city government that through this revitalization, the building physical and traders would not lose competitiveness with the modern market. However, this plan was not actualized and was replaced by market relocation. The relocation policy suggested by the Medan city government was rejected by traders. The rationale for this refusal was due to the traders had been trading in this market for a long time and had regular customers, and certainly, they did not wish to lose this economic resource. Thus, traditional traders remain in their original places and selling in surrounding the former burned-out Aksara Market. Some traders were still scattered seek a temporary place for selling to survive until getting certainty from the government. The ambiguity of this situation triggers a defensive attitude to remain to sell in this place and ultimately leads an extreme action to resist not to be moved.

II. Review of Literature

The concept of resistance as described by James Scott, resistance must often be muffled and indirect, messages conveyed symbolically, each configuration of resistance has a meaning that can only be understood by following the parties who carry out resistance. According to Scott, it emphasizes the morale of farmers. One of the characteristics is farmers who cultivate crops attempt to avoid failure that will destroy their lives rather than manage to obtain high profits by taking risks (Scott, 1990). Scott (Alisjahbana, 2005) defined resistance as all actions of members of the lower classes of society with the intention to soften or reject the demands imposed on the upper classes or put forward their own demands against the superior classes. Scott distinguished resistance into 2 categories, namely resistance caused by direct causes and indirect causes. Community resistance due to direct causes includes oppression, threats, pressure, coercion, government, capital owners, or other parties. Meanwhile. Indirect resistance is carried out through clandestine resistance (Komorina, 2017). According to Siahaan in Alisjahbana, the underprivileged communities are resistant did not due to the desire to riot, but because of the limited alternative that were able to express their opinion and pressure toward changes.

According to Scott, there are several forms of resistance, namely: a. Closed resistance (symbolic or ideological) such as gossip, slander, rejection of categories imposed on society, and withdrawal of respect for the authorities. b. Semi-open resistance (social protest or demonstration) c. Open resistance is an organized, systematic, and principled form of resistance. Manifestations used in resistance are violent methods such as slapping, knocking, spitting, throwing, yelling, cursing, insulting, yelling, ostracizing, glaring,

sneering, and looking full of threats. Finally, approaches to local-level research and their forms might be valuable in understanding development dynamics. Daily resistance and its forms are symptoms that occur around us, which is often forgotten that resistance or rejection of something does not have to be open since we also unconsciously quietly resist (Wahyuni, 2018).

III. Research Methods

Aksara Market is one of the markets in Medan City. Researchers prefer to choose this location because Aksara market is one of the markets often visited by the public, but it burnt in 2016. As a consequence, traders in this market should found another temporary location to sell their products before the market was renovated. However, the actual, until now there is no improvement on the Aksara market, and planned to construct a flyover in this location. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with 6 informants consisting of 5 people as traditional traders in the former Aksara Market which one of them is from PK2PTAM (Representative of Fire Victims Traditional Traders of Aksara Market Medan) and 1 person is a PD (Regional Company) Market who represent the Medan City government. Meanwhile, data was collected through observation for 18 months at the Aksara Market, Medan, Indonesia. This qualitative data was used to describe various conditions related to the Aksara Market traders, especially regarding their resistance to confront issues related to market relocation. Data obtained from observation found several forms of resistance and survival method which carried out by traders. Data collection through in-depth interviews was carried out in accordance with the interview guide that had been designed by the researcher and consisted of 2 parts. The first part concerning personal data from informants and the second part consists of 7 questions regarding the forms of resistance carried out by traditional traders related to the Medan city government's policy in dealing with the development of the Aksara market.

This article used data analysis through three streams of activities that occur simultaneously, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusion / verification. Data analysis techniques used in qualitative research include interview transcripts, data reduction, analysis, data interpretation, and triangulation. In drawing conclusions and verifying, researcher created an explanation which is a special type strategy of pattern matching which aims to analyze case study data by creating explanations about the concerned case. The explanation is explaining a phenomenon which means establishing a series of relationships about the phenomenon in narrative texts which sometimes cannot be exactly the same (Yin, 2013).

IV. Results and Discussion

Aksara Market is one of markets that is crowded with people, in which buying and selling transactions occur every day from the morning at approximately 04.00 am to the afternoon at 18.00 pm, both on a small and large scale. The majority of traders who sell in this market have started their trading activities for approximately 2 to 30 years, they are North Sumatran people who live near the Aksara Market. These traders consist of the Mandailing Batak, Toba Batak, Karo Batak, Padang, Chinese and Acehnese tribes. The fire at the Aksara Market occurred on July 12, 2016 afternoon. Hundreds of traders and thousands of workers were hysterical because they had to lose their products and jobs. Until now, there has been no real action to revitalize this market.

The activities of the traders who previously sold inside or outside the building did not stop after this accident. The traders, who are generally clothing traders, were forced to open their stalls along Aksara Street right in front of the charred Ramayana Aksara building by setting up tents and placing merchandise on the roadside. This is a survival way to fulfill their needs. This situation took place from 2016 to 2018, even this situation impacted in long traffic jams that could not be avoided. People who pass through this way must be willing that the road was used as a center for transactions between sellers and buyers. However, around October 2018 before the implementation of the national level MTQ which was held at the Multipurpose building of the Provincial Government, with the agenda President Jokowi would open the MTQ event, traditional traders who selling on the sidewalk of Aksara street had to be moved to the national terminal at the intersection of William Iskandar street.

4.1 The Resistance of Traditional Traders in Aksara Market Pasar Post Fire

All the consequences that should be encountered by traders in selling their products in an area that should not be a place to sell becomes a big challenge, that one day will be evicted again by Medan City Government. However, the demand to fulfill life is greater which emerged an attitude to survive in that place, at least enough to fulfill the traders' daily needs. According to Scott's theory, traders are at the level of a subsistence crisis, where life is very difficult to carry out, to collect capital back from the results of their selling activities after the fire. The solution given by the Medan city government regarding fire disaster was relocation. However, traditional traders tended to reject this policy. The local government repeatedly tried to get market traders who filled Aksara street to be relocated to MMTC but to no avail. Many traders are not willing to move and return to selling in their original place, namely on the sidewalk. They do this because they only have one place for selling, namely on Aksara street and some have no other place for selling and are considered to have expensive rent. Traditional traders admit that they are surrender if one day there will be regulate or eviction towards their place. However, some of them still insist that they do not want to move from the burning Aksara Market, since they feel still have the right to remain to sell.

Traditional traders who were still selling around the sidewalks were considered an illegal activity because they occupy a prohibited trading area. Controls carried out by government officials often lead to resistance from traditional traders. The policy of carrying out enforcement actually aims to create organized and structured traditional traders. Therefore, the form of control is not always in the form of confiscation of products. If traders are in a place that has been determined to sell, control was carried out so that traders do not exceed the limits that have been determined to spread their products, while for traders who violate the provisions of PERDA (Regional Regulations) traders were disciplined by being moved to a predetermined place.

Traders have their own reason for selling on the sidewalk, which is most of them do not have a place for trading, they only have limited capital to rent an adequate place, especially because they have experienced losses in material and non-material due to the Aksara market fire. Thus, traders prefer to remain becomes a traditional traders on the sidewalks of Jl. Aksara. These traders persist because they have no other place for trading, and there are also traders who only have limited capital and stay on the sidewalks, which are considered strategic in selling their products. Some respondents' feedback regarding the condition and existence of traditional traders at Aksara Market was motivated by several things, including, the relocation site for traditional traders has not been implemented, then they sell on the sidewalk. They argued that if their place did not interfere with traffic jams,

and it was not the desire from traders that the building was burnt so that they felt neglected. Low economic level, causing them to prefer to trade on the roadside or on the sidewalk. They don't care where they are as long as the goods they sell can be sold. Another thing that has caused this resistance was an instruction from the Central Government to revitalize the Aksara Market therefore traditional traders are able to conduct their normal activities.

Traditional Traders in Aksara Market showed symbolic resistance that was carried out secretly (muffled) as mentioned by Scott as a form of resistance, by persist selling across the burning Aksara Market, which actually functions as a sidewalk. However, there were also other informants who showed an open resistance by presenting the displeasure with the Medan city government, by gathering traders to form the association PK2PTAM (Representative of Fire Victims of Traditional Market Traders in Aksara Market) which consists of 5 (five) core administrators. This association was formed with the objective to struggle the revitalization of Aksara Market through political lobbying by involving members of DPRD Medan, members of DPRD provincial, the Mayor of Medan, the Regent of Deli Serdang, and the Central Government. Considering that location of the market that has been provided by the Medan Mayor government is not strategic, deserted, and expensive. The traders insist to persist in the existing place because it is more profitable than moving to the new place. Traders are expected to give opinions in generating policymaking in the form of a regional regulation associated with traditional traders.

Until now, there is no indication of rebuilding the burned-out Aksara Market. Some of the traders began to get discouraged by the frequent meetings held by the PK2PTAM management that did not show significant results, in each meeting traders had to raise, for example, accommodation fees to the DPRD, to the mayor's office. They asked for Rp. 10,000,-. Until Rp. 15.000,- per person. The funds were used as transportation for PK2PTAM administrators in lobbying and visiting the Mayor and members of the Medan City DPRD and Provincial DPRD. Traders expected support for their uncertain condition, including the absence of temporary shelters specifically built by the Medan City Government for traders until the new location is permanent as a place for traders, and questioning the Mayor's policy which is considered inconsistent between central and regional policies.

4.2 Traditional Traders Relocation Policy by Medan City Government

The fires experienced by traders in 2016 caused resistance from traders, so this was highlighted by President Jokowi. The President as expressed in front of traditional traders in Aksara Market and in front of the PD of Aksara Market, that he supports the rebuilding of the Aksara Market in its original place. However, the actual situation was different, where the Medan city government through PD. market revealed that Aksara traders had to be relocated to MMTC or to the former RS. Martondi on Jalan Letda Sujono, there was another plan to be relocated to National Market near the Dishub terminal. Until now, the relocation has not been adequate, some traders have indeed moved to sell at the National Market, with the construction of semi-permanent stalls, which were built in 2018, after traders had to be evicted again from the Aksara sidewalk, due to the holding of a National MTQ in Medan, the opening ceremony to be attended by the President, caused Pemko had to prepare but the number of stalls is not sufficient to accommodate all traders. As stated by the Director of PD. Medan Market, in an interview, conducted 18 September 2019 as follows:

"Revitalization and relocation for the Aksara Market were not included in the Medan city government program prior to the fire occurred. The relocation of traditional

traders occurred after Aksara and Ramayana Aksara Markets were burnt out in 2016. It means that the traders did not know that the Aksara Market would be relocated, except because of the fire."

In addition, in the Regulation of the Minister of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia Number 16/PER/M.KUKM/XII/2016 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of People's Market Revitalization Through Co-administration Funds for the 2017 Fiscal Year, the central government program to revitalize traditional markets is regional Humbang Hasundutan and North Nias, not include Medan City. According to the DPRD Commission C, the most important thing that should be conducted by Pemko at this time was to record the number of authorized traders. This action is to avoid the entry of 'stowaways' during relocation so that the number does not increase which caused official traders to do not obtain stalls. Referring to the condition of the building which has the potential to collapse, experience cracks and the structure of the building is no longer strong, which will lead to unsafety conditions.

The mayor was planned to relocate traditional traders to a location not far from the old location, on land that had been built with a capacity of more than 400 stalls, which near to the Bengkok Market, for traders who were in the Buana Plaza building, were asked to commit to the developer towards their action and the place, while the traditional traders in the Aksara Market, the government had found a solution and only has to make an agreement between the traders. Before the fire, the existence of the Aksara Market was highly strategic, but after the fire, it became a source of congestion in the middle and on the sidewalk. This market is still needed by the community because it is considered affordable for the middle to lower class community, previously Aksara market was located opposite the Irian Market which was also a smaller scale supermarket than the Ramayana, the customers were crowded, therefore some traditional traders who experience the accident, they considered an alternative to the sidewalk or stayed in front of the former Aksara market which was still considered crowded, so that it could become a source of income for traditional traders, more or less a mutualism symbiosis for traditional traders, consumers who shop at Irian Market can stop by or shop at the stalls on the sidewalk.

This market relocation policy actually provides benefits for the former traders of the Aksara Market and the residents around the market itself. One of the complaints from traders was about the unstrategic location of the new market. While the policy is willing to change the conditions in society. The change is to reorganize the traditional market which has been deemed inappropriate. The relocation policy of Aksara Market is the center official, namely the Medan Mayor government. The Mayor Government of Medan is the decision-maker in all the implementation of relocation policy for Aksara Market, both in the form of procedures and mechanisms for implementing market relocation. Furthermore, regarding the program implementers in this Aksara Market relocation policy, it is the Aksara Market Official. The policy is unseparated from the resources used to implement the policy itself. In this Aksara Market relocation policy, the resources were in the form of place that had been provided by the Medan Mayor government which deemed a suitable place for the Aksara Market traders.

The interests of Medan Mayor's government were to organized the traders in the Aksara Market so as not to disturb public facilities and infrastructure for mutual comfort and their current place for trading is no longer feasible. Along with arranging traders in the Aksara Market itself, another interest is controlling street vendors along Jalan Aksara which are considered to have disrupted road access. If all of them have been relocated, the government plans to build a frontage road and organize a better spatial and regional

arrangement. With the relocation policy of Aksara Market, traders can be concentrated in one place so that they can be managed properly and get a more suitable place to sell. So with this interest, the Medan government in this case is the market official to create a relocation policy for Aksara Market.

The strategy applied to implement relocation policy was by socializing the relocation policy to all Aksara Market traders so that they are willing to be relocated and registering all traders for placement in the new Aksara Market as an alternative at MMTC Medan. Regarding the characteristics of the institutions and regimes that are currently in charge, in terms of the relocation policy of Aksara Market, was the Medan Mayor's Government and carried out by the Aksara Market Official. Initially, the Aksara Market Official aligned with the Medan Mayor government itself, this can be seen from the efforts made by the Market Officials to relocate Aksara Market traders to other places that had been provided. Specifically, they also coordinated with Aksara Market, besides took several approaches to traders by registering all traders in the Aksara Market. This can be seen from their trick in manipulating the price of the new store at MMTC Medan. In this case, the Market Official responded well to the Medan Mayor's desire to relocate Aksara Market and tried to comply with the objectives of Aksara Market relocation policy, which is to reorganize the existing traders to another place which is more comfortable and appropriate and lists all traders. However, in actuality, the compliance was shown improperly, there were many issues caused by the Market Official itself which cause the ineffectiveness of the Market relocation policy.

V. Conclusion

The revitalization and relocation plan in the Aksara market was caused by fire. The initial plan mentioned by the City Government for this problem is to revitalize the market. However, this plan was not implemented and resulted in a new policy related to relocating traders. This relocation policy was due to the assumption from the City Government that the burned market building was no longer suitable for use. Besides that, the location of the market is a cross-regional area which causes the government prefer to build flyovers. However, this decision emerged the anger of traders which led to resistance by insists selling in the burnt Aksara market area. This actually leads to chaotic markets and traffic jams. This study was conducted to discuss that the tension between the city government and traditional traders was caused by ineffective communication. The existence of directed and clear communication between the two parties might assist to gain a mutual agreement. The City Government must conduct clearly socialization to traditional traders regarding the market relocation policy that will be carried out. The relocation policy must also consider the situation of traders, both in social and economic aspects after the relocation.

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