

Education and Discourse Modernization of the Samin Indigenous Community (Sedulur Sikep) In a Citizenship Perspective

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Abstract

The Samin people have their own concerns in the field of formal education who think that through formal education, their children or grandchildren will learn a new culture. This concern will result in the fading of their identity thereby reducing the purity of the teachings of Sedulur Sikep. This study aims to determine the meaning of education for the Samin community in Klopoduwur Village in relation to the current modernization. The research method used is descriptive-qualitative with data analysis techniques through four paths, namely the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of this study indicate that the Samin people have adapted to the new culture and no longer have concerns in the field of education. In ancient times, traditional elders in the Samin community, especially in Klopoduwur Village, forbade their descendants from knowing formal education for fear of political influence from the Dutch. In conclusion, the Samin people have received education with the view that education can be a bridge to connect bonds of brotherhood, but in this case it is still necessary to develop the quality of schools and human resources.

Keywords: *Samin; Education; Sedulur Sikep.*

Introduction

Indonesia is a diverse country. This diversity is shown by differences in ethnicity, language, religion and language. Each ethnic group that inhabits Indonesia has its own characteristics. One of these tribes is the Samin tribe. This group is also called the Samin community. This association of Samin people was founded by a figure named Samin Surosentiko. This association was initially oriented towards spreading teachings to fight colonial culture and the colonial government system during the colonial era. Around 1905, the Samin tribe began to become uncooperative, where they began to withdraw from public life in their village (Puspitasari, 2017).

The consequences of this give rise to the view that Samin culture or Saminism (the beliefs of the Samin people) does not provide opportunities for the growth of new cultures in the communities that own them (Widyatwati, 2017). The reason is that their consistent non-cooperative nature has actually caused the Samin community to become part of a remote community that is far from being touched by

technology or education. In the midst of the rapid flow of the industrial revolution 4.0 with all the commotion of social and cultural changes that are taking place quickly and involving the basic basics of people's lives, it turns out that the Samin people have their own way of protecting and preserving their natural environment and the teachings they adhere to. Even in the field of education, the Samin people adhere to their belief in not sending their children or grandchildren to formal education.

The Samin community has its own concerns in the field of formal education. They assume that through formal education, their children or grandchildren will learn a new culture. This worry will result in the erosion of their identity, thereby reducing the purity of *Sedulur Sikep's teachings*. Sri Agung Wahyuni's research entitled *The Meaning of Formal Schools for Samin Tribe Women (Study in Japanese Hamlet, Margomulyo Village, Margomulyo District, Bojonegoro Regency)* states that the education carried out by the Samin community is an educational model that emphasizes the educational process in the family (informal education). It can also be said that parents in the Samin tribe have full

responsibility for the education of their offspring (Wahyuni, 2020).

Formal education is the initial foundation for every individual to be able to make the desired changes. Good change will be everyone's desire so that they can get a good education. Therefore, educated people in the future will have a better life to improve their quality of life. However, not all regions in Indonesia have a high level of education. One area that has a fairly low level of education is Blora Regency, which is located in Central Java Province.

Based on data from the Central Java Province Susenas in 2021, the district/city with the lowest literacy percentage is Blora Regency, 88.49%. Meanwhile, the percentage of male and female population aged 15 years and over according to Regency/City and the highest level of education completed in Blora Regency who have never been to school is 7.90%, who have not completed elementary school is 14.68%, who has not completed elementary school is 27.84%, graduates SMP/MTS 21.38%, and college graduates 5.24% (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2021)

In fact, in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Article 31 mandates that every citizen has the right to receive instruction and is obliged to attend basic education and the government is obliged to pay for it. On the basis of these regulations, the government is also responsible for the basic education of the Samin community. Apart from that, if a solution is not immediately sought for the above conditions, it will be the same as violating the right to education for Samin's children which was violated by their own parents. Meanwhile, modernization in this case can be interpreted as a form of social change. Abdulsyani views that modernization is a process of transforming traditional things into new, more advanced ways to improve human welfare. The factors that trigger social change include, for example, contact with other cultures, the formal education system, the desire to progress, an attitude of appreciating the work of others, tolerance for deviant acts, a system of openness in society, a heterogeneous population, public dissatisfaction with certain things, and orientation to the future. Discussions regarding this matter are often overlooked in existing studies on the modernization of the Samin Klopoduwur tribe. On the one hand, the

discussion will be able to provide an insight into the influence of this modernization discourse on people's lives.

Based on the discussion above, this article will discuss education and modernization discourse for the Samin Klopoduwur community. Therefore, this article will focus on the meaning of education for the Samin community in Klopoduwur Village in relation to the modernization that is currently occurring.

Method

This research is descriptive-qualitative research where qualitative descriptive research is research designed to describe social conditions as they are without looking at existing relationships (Abdussamad & SIK, 2021). The subject of study (material object) in this research is the view of the Samin community in Klopoduwur Village. Meanwhile, the formal object is the modernization of education. This research was carried out for four months (February-May), which included a series of research preparations, data collection processes, data analysis, and preparation of scientific articles.

Data and Data Collection Techniques in this research consist of two categories, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is in the form of information obtained directly from predetermined informants. These informants included traditional leaders, village officials and the general public. The secondary data used is in the form of discourse about modernity, educational concepts and the life of the Samin people. This research data was collected using interview techniques, observation, documentation, literature study. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique is carried out in four stages, namely the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing.

Result and Discussion

Discussions related to views on education and discourse on modernity among the Samin community in Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency, Central Java have been discussed previously in many recent studies. Rizqi & Rini revealed that the Samin Klopoduwur community used to be anti-formal education (education in public schools), but now the consequences of teachings that require

them to do this have begun to be abandoned due to changes in their outlook on life (Rizqi & Rini, 2015). Another study by Purnomo, Munandar, & Setiajid stated that the factors causing their acceptance of formal education were their own desires and the environment (PURNOMO et al., 2016). Nurhasanah, Purnomo, & Kurniawan explained that in the 2000s the Samin community had begun to receive education at formal schools. (Nurkasanah, 2020)

The studies above can be said to have been able to record the attitude of the Samin Klopoduwur community in facing the challenges of modernization in the educational aspect, but have not positioned the form of modernization as the cause of this change in views. There is a study related to this, namely Hanifah who stated that changes in the views of the Samin Bojonegoro tribe on all aspects of life in the current modern era, including education, there are many factors that can influence this, which is closely related to their desire to realize social solidarity (Hanifah, 2019). However, this latest study was aimed at the Samin community in the Bojonegoro area, not at Samin Klopoduwur. The problem is that each different region will be able to give rise to different views in its society, which gives rise to diversity (Syamaun, 2019). Therefore, studying social change in this regard will certainly produce different results.

John Locke's theory of empiricism which states that a person is born like a blank sheet of paper that has not been written on, so education is what he will write on, a person's development depends 99% on the influence of the environment on the experiences gained in his life. So education plays a very important role (Vera, 2021). Based on this empiricist theory, it can be seen that children's way of thinking can be influenced by environmental and educational factors. So it can be said that now there needs to be a change in the field of education.

In current developments, the indigenous people of the Samin tribe or more commonly known as *sedulur sikep* are willing to accept new changes, especially in the field of education and in fact many people are currently attending school. Even though most of Samin's children have gone to school, they still adhere to the values of the *sedukur sikep* teachings.



Figure 1. Access to Kampoeng Samin

Education is divided into two types, namely formal and informal education. Formal education can be achieved through education at school. Meanwhile, informal education usually comes from the family and community environment. In the past, the Samin tribe only allowed their descendants to pursue informal education. So parents have a big responsibility for the education of their offspring. However, current developments have made them also take the formal education route at school. In the view of *Sedulur Sikep's teachings*, highly knowledgeable people are people who can carry out the good teachings of *Sedulur Sikep*, equipped with formal education (Rizqi & Rini, 2015).

If examined further, in ancient times traditional elders in the Samin community, especially in Klopoduwur Village, prohibited their descendants from entering formal education for fear of political influence from the Dutch. So, there is an opinion that Samin is bad because he rejects social and scientific change. As a result of this assumption, rumors spread that "Samin is unruly and stupid," for example Samin does not want to pay taxes to the government. However, after Indonesia became independent and the government was led by the nation itself, the Samin indigenous people began to be willing to adapt to modernization and changes in the dynamics of life which caused them to finally have a new view regarding formal education at school (Farihah, 2016).

"Actually, there is no special reason for prohibiting education at school. This prohibition only applied during the colonial period. After the Dutch had left Klopoduwur Village, the Samin tribe wanted to go to school because the teachers were not from the Dutch side." (Excerpt from Mr. Yoko's interview, 2023).

In 1980, the Samin tribe began to open up to the outside world and adapt to the world of school. An important note in this discussion is that people who are familiar with *Sedulur Sikep's* teachings usually tend to have their own views on formal education. One of the basic teachings of *Sedulur Sikep* is the assumption that everyone is the same (*sami-sami tiyang*) and is considered a brother and sister. In general, they take formal education with the view that school can strengthen ties of brotherhood. While elementary school (SD) level connects ties between village residents, junior high school level is likened to connecting bonds of brotherhood throughout the sub-district. The high school level is considered to connect ties of brotherhood throughout the district and the higher education level can be considered to connect friendship or brotherhood throughout Indonesia.

"In 1980, there was a change in thinking that it was permissible to go to school to gain experience. Schools were to connect fraternities. Elementary schools connected fraternities in one sub-district, middle schools connected fraternities in one sub-district, high schools connected fraternities in one district." (Excerpt from Mr. Lasio's interview, 2023).

In fact, in current developments, in Klopoduwur Village there are already several schools which have become a place to study for Samin tribe children. However, access between villages and schools can still be said to be quite far and takes some time. Apart from that, in the area around the Samin community village there is already an Islamic boarding school managed by one of the religious pioneers in Klopoduwur Village.

"Previously, the Samin tribe's view of religion was still empty, then they started learning the Koran and praying. "So there is an Islamic boarding school near Samin village." (Excerpt from Mr. Rusman's interview, 2023).

Even though the reality in people's lives is that they are now starting to pursue formal education in schools, there are still things that must be considered, namely the development of human resources and the quality of schools.

This aims to ensure that *the output of school graduates* there can compete in the outside world.



Figure 2. Elementary School in Klopoduwur Village

"The education in Klopoduwur for human resources (HR) is still lacking because it cannot compete with other schools. Schools in Klopoduwur Village also lack discipline and take lots of breaks." (Excerpt from Mr. Yoko's interview, 2023).

From the explanation above, the changes that occur in the Samin indigenous community (*sedulur sikep*) in the field of education are related to each other because education occurs from a community system that plays a role in it. Therefore, education is an aid that includes community service so that society can progress and develop. It can be said that education is a process of maturation and maturation of society where in the process social change occurs. This change is seen from the community's need for education to face increasingly complex problems. So education is very necessary to prepare society itself to face developments of the times (Lubis, 2018). This is also in line with the teachings of *Sedulur Sikep* that they adhere to regarding the teachings of "*wolak-walik ing era*" where something is taught by the person who teaches it and there is no special person who teaches it. So that everything that you are used to doing is not something difficult to do.

Citizenship can be interpreted as a relationship or bond between the state and citizens which then gives rise to a status. This status shows the freedom that citizens have so that they have certain rights and obligations as citizens (Jailani et al., 2022). The Samin tribe as a customary law community is of course recognized and respected by the state provided that it is in accordance with and does not conflict with the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila. In

customary law, the term legal association is known, which means an association of people in an area over a long period of time to form a culture that is rooted and becomes a characteristic or identity of that community (Puri & Arifin, 2019). From a citizenship perspective, the Samin indigenous people have a high sense of identity towards their homeland. They have an understanding where everyone is considered a brother. Their identity began to be shown through the use of the national or unitary language, namely Indonesian.

The efforts of the Samin indigenous people in their efforts to maintain their traditions and identity as *Sedulur Sikep* in the era of modernization is an interesting social phenomenon to study further (Pangestuti, 2022). On the one hand, the Samin people are aware that they need to adopt the values of modernity for the future of their descendants. But on the other hand, they must maintain the basis of their culture through their local wisdom values (Rosyid, 2014). Based on research results, Khoirul Huda stated that the Samin indigenous community has experienced a transition from traditional to modern society which is manifested in the form of dissociative and associative interactions (Huda & Wibowo, 2013). There is a conflict of misunderstanding in the form of social jealousy when there is assistance from the central government, which gives rise to feelings of envy. These problems are evidence of a dissociative form of interaction (Sadiran & Rifa'i, 2023). In fact, in the life beliefs of the Samin indigenous people, according to the teachings of *Sedulur Sikep*, they have basic ethical principles in the form of taboos, including: *drengki* (making slander), *srei* (greed), *panesten* (easily offended), *dawen* (accusing without evidence), *kemeren* (envy) . liver/envy), *nyio-nyio marang sepada* (acting disgracefully to others).

Furthermore, the characteristics of citizens are also related to the fulfillment of rights and obligations. In accordance with this discussion, in the field of education in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Article 31 mandates that every citizen has the right to receive instruction and is obliged to attend basic education and the government is obliged to pay for it. On the basis of these regulations, the government is also responsible for the basic education of the Samin community (Ristna, 2019). Currently there is no prohibition

on formal education for the Samin community in Klopoduwur Village, however the graduate level is still limited to junior high school level with the important assumption being that they already know how to read and write. According to interview data, Samin tribe children are still inferior to school graduates in other areas. Therefore, there is still a need to improve the quality of education in Klopoduwur Village as an effort to improve the quality of life in the area. Facilities and infrastructure still need to be improved, the quality of teaching staff and discipline must be taken seriously.

According to Cogan & Derricott in Ahmad Ari Fatullah, et al, one of the characteristics of citizens is the ability to see and approach problems as a member of global society (*the ability to look at and approach problems as a member of global society*). In this case it can be interpreted as the community's ability to be involved in public issues (Fatullah, 2022). The Samin community can be said to have been involved in public issues related to the environmental sector. The Samin people adhere to the teachings of basic rights that they believe that the environment has the right to be planted, cultivated properly, guarded, preserved and utilized sufficiently. This is in accordance with the regulations in Law no. 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management and Law No. 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation as a form of obligation of every citizen towards their environment (Imansyah et al., 2017).

In their involvement in public issues in the environmental sector, they use the principle that natural wealth depends on how humans respond to it, namely in the form of an attitude to preserve it or vice versa by destroying nature. The Samin people, who are still simple, are guided by the principle that they live just enough and do not need to exploit the environment because they consider that nature is the *mother* (mother) who provides a source of life, such as the land that is planted to produce basic materials that can be a bridge that connects life. So traditionally the Samin indigenous people have participated in preserving the environment (*conservation*) in terms of managing natural resources. So it can be said that the teachings of Saminism (*Sedulur Sikep*) which are referred to as Samin customary law do not conflict with the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and

Pancasila so that their existence as indigenous peoples can be legally recognized and respected by the state.

So, in discussions related to the field of education and modernization discourse, it can be concluded that community actions in receiving formal education are classified as instrumental rational actions. They have real tools and goals to achieve their goals as a contemporary society. Even though it is in its development, the learning culture among *Sikep brothers* is still at a low level (Hikmawati, 2020). From a citizenship perspective, the Samin indigenous people can be legally recognized and respected by the state because they do not conflict with the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila.

Conclusion

The reason for the ban on the Samin tribe from attending school was based on fear of political influence from the Dutch, so that the Samin indigenous people in the period before Indonesian independence tended to close themselves off from outside culture. Parents are largely responsible for the informal education of their offspring. In 1980 the Samin indigenous people began to accept new changes in the paradigm of life, especially in the field of education and began to receive formal education at school. However, in reality they have a unique perspective on education. So, the advice that can be given is that special attention is still needed in developing the quality of human resources and the quality of schools in the Samin tribal community, especially in Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency.

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