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## Cultural Community Life on Poverty Levels in Banten Province

Hilman Haris<sup>1</sup>, Ramadhan Pancasilawan<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Fedryansyah<sup>3</sup>, Widya Setiabudi Sumadinata<sup>4</sup>

### Abstract

*This study explores the relationship between cultural community life and poverty levels in Banten Province, focusing on the Baduy indigenous community. This indigenous community is known for its strong traditions and rejection of government assistance, such as village funds, which reflects their spirit of independence and simplicity. This study uses a qualitative approach to explore the factors causing cultural poverty, which are influenced by traditional values and limited access to education, formal employment, and health services. The findings show that culture and customs can be barriers to efforts to improve community welfare. However, a participatory approach that respects local wisdom has proven effective in empowering indigenous communities without damaging their cultural identity. The government has an important role in providing inclusive education, counseling, health services, and economic empowerment that are in line with the traditions of the Baduy community. This research is not only relevant to Indonesia, but also provides important insights for other countries with similar indigenous communities. With a comprehensive, collaborative approach that respects local traditions, poverty alleviation efforts can support cultural preservation while achieving sustainable development.*

**Keywords:** Cultural Poverty, Indigenous Peoples, Baduy Tribe.

### Introduction

Banten Province is a province included in the territory of Indonesia which is included in the West Indonesia region which is an expansion of the West Java province. Banten Province has an area of 9,662,990 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 683,144 people, based on data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2023 that Banten Province reached 82,613 people who experienced poverty problems. If expressed as a percentage, the number of people in Banten Province who experience poverty problems reaches above 15%. From these data, it shows that Banten Province is one of the provinces in Indonesia with poverty problems that are difficult to solve.

Based on BRS No. 05/01/36/Th.XVII, January 16, 2023, the increasing poverty rate in Banten Province was caused by the following factors:

1. General inflation for the period March 2022-September 2022 was 3.08 percent, higher than general inflation for the period September 2021-March 2022 of 2.70 percent.
2. Household consumption expenditure in the third quarter of 2022 grew by 6.15 percent (y-on-y), increasing compared to the first quarter of 2022 which grew by 2.92 percent.

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<sup>1</sup> Padjadjaran University; [hilman23003@mail.unpad.ac.id](mailto:hilman23003@mail.unpad.ac.id)

<sup>2</sup> Lecturer at Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Padjadjaran University, Email: [ramadhan.pancasilawan@unpad.ac.id](mailto:ramadhan.pancasilawan@unpad.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup> Lecturer at Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Padjadjaran University, Email:

[muhammad.fedryansyah@unpad.ac.id](mailto:muhammad.fedryansyah@unpad.ac.id)

<sup>4</sup> Lecturer at Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Padjadjaran University, Email: [w.setiabudi@unpad.ac.id](mailto:w.setiabudi@unpad.ac.id)



3. The Farmer Exchange Rate (NTP) in September 2022 was 99.97 , an increase compared to March 2022 which was 99.03.
4. In August 2022, the percentage of the Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) was 8.09 percent. Where in urban areas it was 8.13 percent , higher than in rural areas of 7.95 percent.
5. The nominal wage of farm laborers in September 2022 was IDR 67,910 per day, an increase of 1.43 percent compared to the nominal wage of farm laborers in March 2022 of IDR 66,952 per day.

Based on the points above, it can be understood that there are several factors that influence the increasing poverty rate in Banten Province in the socio-economic field. In the social field, human resources in Banten Province are still largely unemployed and many people still do not receive decent wages. In the economic field, Banten Province is experiencing general inflation and an increasing exchange rate which will have a negative impact on the economy of the people in Banten Province.

## **Literature Review**

The root of the problem that is a factor in increasing poverty rates in Banten Province is the socio-economic capabilities of the community. Banten Province has a cultural community group that has existed for a long time. The cultural community in Banten Province that is widely known by the Indonesian people is the Baduy tribe. Based on data obtained through news articles, it is stated that the Baduy tribe rejected government assistance in the form of village funds . This shows that the Baduy tribe's cultural community is rejecting government assistance to eradicate poverty.

This shows that the Baduy people have a culture that refers to the rejection of government assistance. The Baduy people are indigenous people who live side by side with nature. They are one of the Indonesian tribes that still maintain the core values of their culture and are currently experiencing progress (Suparmini, 2013). However, customs, culture and traditions are still deeply rooted in the lives of the Baduy people. Their daily lives have three main characteristics: a simple lifestyle, being friendly to nature, and a spirit of independence (Suryani, 2014).

Based on the explanation and data presented in the writing above, it can be understood that with the conditions and culture of the Baduy people, it shows that the government has difficulty in providing assistance to alleviate poverty, especially for the Baduy people. Even so, the government needs to respect the decision of the Baduy people, because in reality In 2001, the Lebak Regency government, Banten, issued a Regional Regulation, Number 65/2001, Series C, Lebak Regency Regional Regulation, No.32/2001, concerning the protection of the customary land of the Baduy people. So this shows that the Banten provincial government needs other efforts and efforts to alleviate poverty in the Baduy people.

This research is important to be conducted not only for Banten province or Indonesia but also for the international world. Cultural communities do not only exist in Indonesia but also in other countries in the world, especially in developing countries. So this research can be one of the references to eradicate poverty that occurs in cultural communities. In addition, this research can also be one of the means of fulfilling the objectives of the sustainable development goals that have been set by the United Nations, especially in the first point, namely without poverty.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

This research uses a qualitative research method, the determination of this method aims to reveal the underlying issues of the problem, the researcher chooses a qualitative research method to obtain various data. Qualitative approach research is carried out based on the problems studied with an explanation of the purpose of exploring or building a temporary answer or explaining the meaning behind reality. A qualitative approach is used to explore certain social phenomena carefully to answer research questions (Creswell, 2014).

### **Data Collection**

The data for this study will be collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders that involved. These interviews will provide in-depth insights. Additionally, document analysis will be conducted to examine relevant regulations, reports, and official documents that related.

### *Data Analysis*

The data collected through interviews and documents will be analyzed using thematic analysis. This method will allow for the identification of recurring themes and patterns related to Cultural Community Life on Poverty Levels in Banten Province.

## **Research and Discussion**

### *Research Result*

#### **Cultural influences and poverty**

Poverty is a phenomenon or condition in which economic suffering occurs, which refers to the unfulfilled needs of life and the lack of adequate facilities. Cultural poverty was first introduced by Oscar Lewis who saw that poverty can arise as a result of the values and culture adopted by the poor themselves (Effendi, 1992). According to Lewis, poverty is not only seen as an economic problem, namely the lack of control of sources of production and distribution of economic goods and services by the poor, nor does it see it macro, namely within the framework of the theory of inter-state dependency and does not see it as a class conflict. Lewis sees poverty as a way of life or culture and the target unit is micro, namely the family, because the family is seen as the smallest social unit and as a social institution supporting the culture of poverty (Suparlan, 1988).

The cause of poverty based on a cultural perspective is that poverty is not something that is sought, but poverty is something that is embedded in the society. So it can be understood that poverty is a problem that is rooted in humans themselves. According to Lewis, the root of a poor culture is a state of society that has the following characteristics:

- a. An economic system that is too profit-oriented
- b. High unemployment rate and 'underemployment' rate for groups without skills
- c. Low wages/salaries earned by workers
- d. The absence of social, political and economic organizations for the poor, whether established by the government or by community self-help.

- e. The presence of a bilateral family system that replaces the unilateral system
- f. The presence of a dominant social class, which emphasizes the accumulation of wealth and property, the opportunity to continue to increase in status (upward mobility).

So it can be understood that cultural poverty is a phenomenon where poverty is caused by the cultural values adopted by the community. So it shows that the culture of the Baduy tribe is the main cause that poverty alleviation, especially for the Baduy tribe, has not been optimal.

### **Culture and customs of the Baduy tribe**

The Baduy community is a group of people who strongly adhere to ancestral traditions, where the entire social system is based on their religious system, which causes the community to experience very slow change. Baduy society as a traditional society can be called a developing society, because not only is the change ongoing, but also obedience to its customs is shifting. The changes will be seen from the mindset, way of acting, ownership of goods, social organizations that were previously unknown in their lives.

It can be understood that the Baduy community is one of the cultural community groups that strongly holds the culture that comes from their ancestors. One of the cultures of the Baduy tribe is to have a job as a farmer (98.6% for husbands and 90.7% for wives). Other jobs are trading and weaving (especially for wives), because they can be done at home while taking care of children. There are not many types of jobs done by the Baduy people because their lives still rely entirely on natural resources.

The Baduy people's rice production is generally not sufficient for their needs. In addition, not all of the rice is consumed by themselves, some of it is for traditional ceremonies. Around 25% of the rice harvest is sold by residents and given to neighbors who are in need, 25% for gifts and traditional ceremonies (for parents, Jaro, and Puun), and the remaining 50% is stored in the leuit and for daily needs. Only residents who are unable to afford it use rice as a daily food source. Therefore, if the Baduy people need rice or other food, they leave their village to meet their food needs. In addition to buying food at the market, the Baduy people buy their needs at stalls or from vegetable traders who sell from village to village. The existence of stalls is actually prohibited by custom, but over time it was allowed because the community also needed additional income outside of ngahuma and farming.

It is understandable that one of the Baduy people's cultures that causes them to reject government financial assistance is their dependence on the natural environment. This refers to cultural poverty that needs to be addressed by the government.

### **The Role of Government in Eradicating Poverty in the Baduy Tribe**

The income of the Muslim Baduy community is Rp 199,468 ± Rp 248,600, as well as their expenditure, which is Rp 227,265 ± Rp 107,255. More than half of the expenditure (74.2%) is used for food (Rp 168,179 ± Rp 84,534) and 25.8% is used for non-food (Rp 168,179 ± Rp 84,534). The household expenditure of the Baduy people (both for Outer Baduy, Inner Baduy and Muslim Baduy) is always greater than their income. To meet their daily needs, the Baduy people often rely on natural resources around them. The characteristic of the economically weak community is that most of their expenditure is for food while other expenditures are considered secondary expenditures that are not too prioritized.

Based on these problems, the government's role is needed in eradicating cultural poverty in the Baduy tribe. Here are some of the government's roles in eradicating cultural poverty in the Baduy tribe:

- a. Government provides Education and Counseling : The government can provide inclusive education that respects and incorporates the cultural values of the Baduy Tribe. Educational programs can be designed to not only provide basic knowledge but also respect their traditions and customs. Counseling and training programs for the Baduy community are important to provide knowledge about health, sustainable agriculture, and life skills that can improve their quality of life without disrupting local wisdom.
- b. Health service delivery by the Government: The government can provide mobile health services that can reach remote areas where the Baduy people live. These services must be designed to respect their traditional beliefs and practices.
- c. Economic empowerment of the Baduy tribe: The government can provide assistance and capital assistance for micro-enterprises that are in accordance with the traditions and capabilities of the Baduy tribe. For example, developing handicrafts, organic farming, and local products that can be marketed with unique ethnic labels.
- d. Development of adequate facilities and infrastructure: Improving basic infrastructure such as roads, bridges and other public facilities that can increase the Baduy Tribe's access to basic services without disrupting their traditional life.
- e. Increasing Baduy community participation: The government must work with traditional leaders and community figures in every step of program planning and implementation. This involvement ensures that the programs implemented are in accordance with the needs and values of the Baduy community.

## **Discussion**

Cultural poverty is a phenomenon where poverty is caused by the cultural values adopted by the community. So that it shows that the culture of the Baduy tribe is the main cause that poverty alleviation, especially for the Baduy tribe, has not been optimal. The Baduy community is a group of people who strongly hold ancestral traditions where the entire social system is based on their religious system, which causes the community to experience very slow changes.

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The income of the Muslim Baduy community is Rp 199,468 ± Rp 248,600, as well as their expenditure, which is Rp 227,265 ± Rp 107,255. More than half of the expenditure (74.2%) is used for food (Rp 168,179 ± Rp 84,534) and 25.8% is used for non-food (Rp 168,179 ± Rp 84,534). The household expenditure of the Baduy people (both for Outer Baduy, Inner Baduy and Muslim Baduy) is always greater than their income.

The government's role in eradicating cultural poverty among the Baduy Tribe requires a comprehensive, sensitive, and participatory approach. Through ongoing dialogue, active community involvement, and programs designed with respect for local traditions and wisdom,

the government can help improve the quality of life of the Baduy people without sacrificing their cultural identity. The challenges faced in implementing this program can be overcome with the right strategy and strong partnerships between the government, the community, and various related parties.

## **Conclusion**

Based on this study, it can be understood that the study found that the life of cultural communities, especially in indigenous communities such as the Baduy Tribe, has a significant influence on poverty levels. Strict customs and traditions often limit people's access to education, formal employment, and health services. This study highlights the importance of the government's role in alleviating poverty among indigenous communities. Programs designed by involving indigenous communities in planning and implementation are more likely to be successful. This participatory approach ensures that the programs implemented are in accordance with the needs and values of the local community. The life of cultural communities has a complex impact on poverty levels in Banten Province. Although cultural practices can be a barrier to access to economic and educational opportunities, with the right approach, local wisdom can also be utilized for sustainable economic empowerment. The government and related institutions need to develop comprehensive and participatory policies to ensure that poverty alleviation efforts also support the preservation of culture and the holistic welfare of indigenous communities.

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