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RESEARCH ARTICLE

LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES AGENCY AND MADANI BROTHERHOOD: AN INNOVATION STRATEGY FOR POVERTY REDUCTION IN KENDARI CITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper is one of topics discussed in the writer's study on Performance of *Zakat* (alms-giving) Management and Social Economic Transformation (1999) in Kendari city. In this context, the writer described the existence of Local Public Service Agency (LPSA) and Madani Brotherhood (MB) as an alternative program put forward by government of Kendari in obstructing poverty. The study used a participatory development approach through participatory action research, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as well as documentation. The results showed the successfulness of LPSA in distributing fund for poverty and MB program in uniting the rich people who initially was 69.8 percent with 30.2 percent of the poor. Now, the level of poverty in Kendari has dropped nearly 7 percent.

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INTRODUCTION

Quantitatively, according to the result of identification from Urban Poverty Reduction Program (UPRP) in Kendari (2008) from 50, 815 families, 42.09 percent were indicated as poor. In addition to the poor families have increased from the previous years, also appear differences of data between UPRP and RDPA (Regional Development Planning Agency) of Kendari. Similarly, the distinction is also noticed from distribution of the poor in each district. Abeli District looks to have the largest percentage of poor families from five other big districts, account for 14,61 percent. Mandonga District 13.28 percent, West Kendari District 13.00 percent, Kendari District 11.34 percent and Puwatu District amounted to 11.13 percent. This shows that the rate of the poor by district is almost evenly spread. However, if the distribution rate of poor is looked out over Village level, there are 5 wards categorized as major, these are Village Punggolaka by 4.18 percent, Village Bende 3.39 percent, Village Mandonga 3.18 percent, Village Kadia 2.99 percent and Village Wua Wua of 2.90 percent.

Various strategies and programs have been developed in relation to poverty alleviation, ranging from the Central Government, the Provincial Government to the Municipality Government of Kendari. *First*, the Central Government Program consists of grant assistance and social protection in

the form of Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT), RASKIN (Rice for Poor), JAMKESMAS (Public Health Assurance) and BOS (School Operational Assistance). Also, there are some Community Empowerment programs in the form of National Program for Community Empowerment (NPCE), Village Agribusiness Development (VAD), and Development of Disadvantaged Regions (DDR), Economic Empowerment of Coastal Communities (EECC), Community Empowerment and Village (CEV) and People Business Credit Program (PBCP).

*Second*, Southeast Sulawesi provincial government programs through innovative programs of Governor Nur Alam and his vice, Saleh La Sata in the form of Free Treatment in Provincial Hospitals, free education up to the level of high school and the administration of 100 million Block Grant Program for all villages in Southeast Sulawesi.

*Third*, a spectacular innovative program, namely Microcredit for older woman of street vendors in the form of Revolving Fund from LPSA dan MB Program) which become the focus of discussion in this paper. In addition, it is also provided free health care at *Puskesmas* (Community Health Center) to all citizens of Kendari and scholarship specifically to students with outstanding achievement from poor families (Peribadi and Bakri Yusuf, 1999).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Peribadi. at al., (2015) there are at least five dimensions of causes of poverty in the social and economic life of people, including in the city of Kendari. *First*, poverty in political context is often embodied because of the existence of the umbrella organizations have not been able to fight for the aspirations and needs of the poor, so that they are always in the position of inferiority which has a negative impact on a bargaining position.

*Second*, in addition to cultural is often claimed as the main cause of poverty, it also experience deculturalisation (Soetrisno, 1997). The deculturalisation as the social implications of the development process based on the idea of developmentalism over the years, led to critical analysis of the constructionism interpretive and critical postmodernism. In turn, Korten then bring to the people-centered development theory with emphasis on human welfare, equity and sustainability of development and oriented to improving the quality of human life (Baldacci, *et al.*, 2008; Peribadi, 2015)

Association with improving quality of people's life, and how to overcome the poverty, Muhammad Yunus (2003) offered the concept of Social Entrepreneurship that successfully brought a multidimensional change in poor communities, especially the woman in Bangladesh. Not only is it able to liberate the woman from poverty but also it dismantles the shackles of financial discrimination against the poor through Grameen Bank.

*Thirdly*, poverty in socio-economic context greatly gives negative impact on the needs of everyday life. This happens because of low incomes in the middle of the soaring price of basic foods. Along with that, the impact of poverty is even more bitter experienced, because in the midst of their suffering, there is a big gap; polarization of socio-economic life between "the haves" and "the have not", Meanwhile, those who are in rich category impressed not much aware of the urgency of *Zakat and Sadaqah Infaq* (ZIS) as a citizen and as a servant of God who must fulfill the obligations (Kamaluddin, 2014; Peribadi, 2015).

*Fourth*, the poverty, both of which occurred in the social-cultural scope and physical scope due to environmental factors: attitudes, behaviors and perspectives that are not oriented on sustainable development. As a result, in addition to their tendency to carry out development activities that are not based on environment, also the existence of socio-cultural environment tends to be ignored because the preference on the physical environment (Sahoo, 2015).

*Fifth*, the poverty caused by a disparity of asset ownership as the capital of their lives, including human resources, working equipments, funds, housing, and so on. This context is closely related to structural and cultural inequalities that had long been taking place in the middle of the nation and country (Yerimias, 1995; Kartasmita, 1996; Baswir, 2003)

According to the conclusions of case study of Brata (in Peribadi, 2015) which focused on the "Implementation Network of Poverty Reduction in Coordination Team of Local Poverty Reduction (CTLPR) Kendari" that some actors

involved in the network are actually setting institutional, formal and informal, and work together in shaping the behavior of public actors. Nevertheless, the case study has not demonstrated maximization and minimization of tasks, roles and responsibilities of CTLPR by its various factors yet. That is important, because as a structural organization should coordinate the implementation of poverty reduction programs as mandated in *Permendagri* (Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation) No. 42 Year 2010.

Similarly, the results of Peribadi's study (2015) in relation to organizational factors, the CTLPR of Kendari gets legal umbrella within *Perpres* (Presidential Regulation) No. 15 Year 2010 and *Permendagri* No. 42 Year 2010 and *Perda* (Local Regulation) No. 8 Year 2011 about Pronangkis (Poverty Reduction Program), tends to be dysfunctional in organizing the Pronangkis integrally in Kendari. As a result, each of Regional Work Units (RWU) looked to have sectoral ego and pragmatic ego in carrying out their Pronangkis.

Finally, according to Nuhung quoted by Personal (2015) in the book "Ideas, Thoughts and Hope of Faculty of Agriculture Alumni, Hasanuddin University (2012) that some participatory models of poverty reduction developed in several countries, namely: (1) Grameen Bank in Bangladesh founded by Muhammad Yunus in 1983; (2) Movement of Sravodaya Sramadana in Sri Lanka established by a Buddhist monk, A.T. Ariyaratna; (3) 4-H. Rural organizations in the United States as a youth organization aimed to live independently; (4) Saemul Undongas in South Korea introduced in 1970 by President Park Chung Loo as one of the rural development program in South Korea; and (5) DOI MOI Vietnam, a policy proposed by Ho Chi Minh, the founder of Communist Party of Vietnam to achieve a conducive environment of business. In this context, the Government of Kendari establishes microcredit institutions called LPSA/LPSA, inspired by the Grameen Bank.

## METHODS

The study was developed through a participatory development approach with participatory action research, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as well as documentation study (Mikkelsen, 2001). All components of society of Kendari considered feasible to provide information, it can be used as a data resource. The resources of information are classified into main and supporting resources which selected by *snow balling* technique. In this case, all residents of poor communities become the major resources. While stakeholders and government of Kendari from various agencies are the supporting one.

For that reason, the researcher conducted a strategic way to obtain interpretive data by engaging in various conversations with all parties ranging from ordinary people as the poor, public figures in general, members of LPSA and the Madani Brotherhood, members of Urban Community Learning (UCL) and the Working Group in RDPA Kendari.

After completely obtained, the data is then analyzed either during or after investigation and field study. Data analysis technique is interpretative qualitative through analysis of data,

data reduction, categorization of data, checking the validity of data and up to the interpretation of the data (Milles and Huberman 1992).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There are two Poverty Reduction Programs (PRP) as local programs proposed by the Government of Kendari under the leadership of Asrun-Musaddar which has now entered the second period (the first period from 2007 to 2012 and the second period from 2012 to 2017). The programs considered being spectacular and received high appreciation from many people, has significantly reduce poverty in Kendari. The poverty reduction, according to the RDPA Kendari (2012) has been appeared since 2006 of 30,500 people (12.51%) dropped to 27,500 (10.15%) in 2007. Later in 2008, it declined from 23,600 people (08.53%) to 23,203 (8.2%). Similarly, it continuously lowered in 2011 by 22,125 people or as much as 7.40 percent. The decreasing of the rate is significant with the presence of LPSA and PM, will be completely described in the following discussion.

### ***The existence of LPSA (BLUD)***

One of poverty reduction programs in Kendari is offering micro-credit loans in the form of revolving funds from the LPSA. This innovative program is specifically intended to provide capital loan services to the lower class, especially older women who selling goods in the market. The program is urged by a high level of poverty and the difficulty of small and medium enterprises accessing capital from banks, so the Kendari municipal government established the Institution of LPSA for Microcredit inspired by the Grameen Bank as a financial institution founded by the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus from Bangladesh.

Why LPSA, not BPR (Rural Bank)? *First*, the LPSA Revolving Fund is a combination of the concept of Grameen Bank and Financial Management Technical Guidelines for Local Public Service (Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 61 Year 2007). *Second*, in order to enable the Government budget of Kendari to be directly distributed in the target group. *Third*, to easily facilitate the people in obtaining working capital loans without having to follow the rules and traditions of banking that seem bureaucratic and convoluted that require collateral and proposal. Loan from Microcredit does not oblige any collateral and proposal, it is enough for the borrower only to show the identity as poor then he or she will be served with a mild installment without interest each month.

Indeed, long before the declaration of the LPSA Revolving Funds, in Kendari has been proclaimed a similar revolving fund, namely the Coastal Community Economic Empowerment (CCEE) launched since 2002 as well as the Village Community Empowerment Program (VCEP) launched since 2003. But a research of the Department of Economic and Development Studies, Economics Faculty, Haluoleo University (2007) reported that only Village Lepo Lepo in which the loan was returned in the first year of Rp.1,600,000, the second year of Rp.1,000,000 and the third year amounted to Rp. 500,000. This indicated the poor

management of revolving funds in previous program of CEV. Similarly, the revolving fund of EECC was distributed to all members of the group amounted to 800, 000, 000. But only about Rp.57.000.000 was effectively returned by members of the group. This means there is congestion amounting to Rp.743.000.000, - or as much as 92.87 percent minus the interest.

To maximize the LPSA program, then for prospective Customers are required to form a group of five people in which only three of them are served for the first time. When the group rate of return is 80%, then the following two other members are served with the Internal Control System. Next, a team of evaluator will conduct a review of feasibility of business and the amount of venture capital provided. The first loan is Rp. 500.000, - up to Rp. 1.000.000, per person and it can be further increased in accordance with the type of business.

The venture capital in LPSA microcredit is sourced from Kendari Government budget amounted to 2.25 billion rupiah with details, in the year 2008 reached 1.5 billion rupiah and as many as 750 million rupiah in 2009. The customers who have already been served in February 2009 reached 2,349 people. On the contrary, there are still unserved customer of  $\pm$  2,000 people, although the funds channeled in February 2009 has reached  $\pm$  2.15 billion.

Apparently, this latter program can be considered quite successful, compared with the previous programs, EECC and CEV. Because the level of bad credit as shown just below 1%. Instead, this LPSA program has achieved a number of services amounted to 96 million rupiah. If ZIS funds managed by LPSA and utilized properly, then of course in addition to the City of Kendari has started to show its political will to capitalized the potential of ZIS in the poverty reduction, also simultaneously it has made maximum efforts to avoid impact of the messy of the management of humanitarian funds that should be accounted for now and hereafter.

### ***The existence of the Madani Brotherhood***

Madani Brotherhood is a special program of Kendari Government that purely intended to unite the poor amounted to 30.2 percent with the rich of 69.8 percent. It was targeted that from 30.2 percent of the poor in Kendari in 2008 to be declined 16 percent in 2012. It had already achieved, as stated by the Deputy Mayor of Kendari and also as Chairman of CTLPR /TKPKD

"Socio-economic gap yawning between political elites/bureaucratic and the people in the regions of Southeast Sulawesi province referred to by Prof. Masihu Kamaluddin (2014) does not occur in Kendari. Because Madani Brotherhood has managed to eliminate the socio-economic gap "(Peribadi, 2015)

Qualitatively, it can not be denied that most of people in this nation have not enjoyed yet the fruits of development equitably. However, quantitatively the level of poverty has decreased quite significantly. Although the level of poverty discourse percentage tends to decrease, and implicitly ignores portrait of social inequality. However, the construction of our

thinking as it is, so it must be recognized that the poor in Kendari in recent years appear to have decreased, and even in 2011 continued to decline until it reaches by 22,125 people or by as much as 7.40 percent (Bappeda Kota Kendari, 2012)

The brotherhood program is inspired by QS. Al Maa'un verses 1-3 that "we are all liars of religion, when we do not recommend to feed the poor". It is executed with the operational concepts and methods "One Help One" which means that one rich family helping one poor family which was agreed through the signing of the letter of agreement between them.

There are at least two fundamental considerations of the presence of the Brotherhood program in Kendari. *First*, as an effort to eradicate poverty and to build awareness of "social worship" among the citizens, then it needs an alternative empowering pattern to the people to form better quality of personality in the context of mutual compassion and caring. *Second*, the pattern of empowerment is based on the concept of plenary social life sourced from the translation of religious values and sociologically the people always live in groups and have mutual need each other, so as to create an integral social life, independent and harmonious and institutionalized in a Brotherhood Program which later crystallized into a culture (Elaboration of the Regulations of Kendari Mayor, No. 17 Year 2008).

Truly amazing, since 2008 had as many as 156 citizens of Kendari, the poor and the rich, been successfully united in the Madani Brotherhood program. According to the information obtaining from the Community Empowering and the Village Government Agency (BPM-PK) Kendari that until now thousands of residents have joined the program.

It is a great expectation in the view of some informant that if the program is well run and completely crystallized, then in the shortest possible time, the number of poor people Kendari will continue to decrease. Apparently, this exposure indeed obsessed municipal government of Kendari under the leadership of Asrun-Musaddar.

Although the contrary, unfortunately also by some informants from the government of Kendari itself that in addition to the poverty reduction program has not been packaged into an integrated program with other existing programs, it is also recognized that in the process of brotherhood likely occurred a doctrinal factor by the leaders to subordinates. In this context, according to Ir. Musaddar, Deputy Mayor of Kendari that the Brotherhood program only revolved around the government bureaucracy of Kendari. The motion should have been crystallized to all citizens, to create genuineness and sincerity among citizens who have been fraternized (Peribadi and Bakri Yusuf, 2009).

Phenomenally, there are some informants who claim false the program, because when a person is no longer an officer or moreover has been ousted from his position, then his brother is directly neglected and the relation be severed. From the standpoint of dramaturgical theory, it is viewed as hypocritical social action. Nevertheless, the presence of such religious program has described a spiritual intelligence of a leader who intend to improve the quality of life and welfare.

However, according to one of NPCE former coordinators and now is a consultant of management of Southeast Sulawesi, that:

"One of the weaknesses of this program is *top-down* in the form of appointment of the Head of Department to seek civil brother respectively. In addition, some main targets of the Brotherhood program have been embodied in the concept of *Tri Daya* (three empowerments) of NPCE. Conversely, some targets of NPCE are not found in the program. Therefore, the strengths and weaknesses in all kinds of poverty reduction in Kendari should be integrated under the umbrella of CTLPR. But very unfortunate, it seems very difficult to be realized, because of the lack of political will" (Peribadi, 2015).

In addition, the views of religious leaders are also growing and seemingly agreed that "the existence of Madani Brotherhood Program to empower the lower social groups is actually a religious duty that has been carried out by the Institute of *Amil Zakat* during this time". In this context, the presence of Madani Brotherhood indirectly has taken over the task of *Amil Zakat* and *Sadaqah Infaq*. Nonetheless, there is no harm if it evolves humanitarian accessories that can accelerate poverty reduction. However, it should not be neglected the efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of *Amil Zakat* and even very important to be developed" (Peribadi, 2015).

Similarly, according to Dr. La Ode Maghreb, Head of Research and Development of RDPA Kendari, the presence of Madani Brotherhood is expected to be able to meet the target rate of poverty decline by 5 percent each year, as set out in the Medium Term Development Plan of Kendari Government. Unfortunately, due to the innovative program is not integrated with other poverty reduction programs, each program run by its own way. This happens because CTLPR not working properly. While internal context of the program itself is required a legal umbrella within the framework of structuring fraternity program, so that among those who had been boned to be brother can understand each social relationship (Peribadi and Bakri Yusuf, 2009).

The Madani Brotherhood as an integral part of application of *Zakat, Infaq dan Sadaqah* (ZIS) which, when functioning optimally as it should, it is probably able to be a so spectacular poverty reduction program and managed to overcome the poverty of Muslims in Kendari and the surroundings. For that reason, it is very necessary to have evaluation studies to see the harmonization of brotherhood between the poor and the rich, especially the benefits gained by each social group by examining the indicators of change namely socio-economic progress, and including changes in the context of worship practicing. For example, before joining the program, one does not pray 5 times a day, then he/she does it during and after the program took place. Thus, the benefit is not only in social and economic fields, but also the change on behavior into obedience and personal piety to comply with the teachings of religion.

Although there any indication that sounds negative, however, the people in general admit that the Madani Brotherhood is a media of kinship between the poor families and the reach families conducted on greater social awareness to uplift the

life of those who are in lower class through an unlimited empowerment and coaching to realize a harmonious social order of life and blessed by God Almighty.

Finally, recent information on the existence of the Madani Brotherhood may be understood from the statement of a post-graduate student of University of Indonesia who conducted a research on Madani Brotherhood in Kendari. He stated that:

"Over the years, until early 2016, Madani Brotherhood program has been growing rapidly, not only in terms of the number of participants, but also the scope and range of the program. In 2008, when the Brotherhood program was first run in the first period of Asrun-Musadar administration (2007-2012), the approach of the program tends to be *top-down* because the target is the poor who bonded with officials, Echelon II and III and civil servants within the scope of the government of Kendari.

But in their second period (2012-2017), the program outreach broader targets, not only government officials and civil servants but also business and enterprise communities, and the wider community. In this period, the program used *bottom-up* approach because the initiative of the program completely derived from the business community, enterprise, and common society. In addition, the participants in the second period of Asrun-Musadar come from inter-sectoral, inter-religious, cross-ethnic, cross-cultural and cross-profession. Even since 2013, the government of Kendari has expanded the program by targeting school students ranging from Elementary School, Junior High School and High School by bonding the brotherhood between the rich students and the poor students. The obligation of the rich students is providing assistance to the poor students to support their success for example by giving exercise books, school uniforms, shoes, bags, etc. (Darmin Tuwu, Wawancara Kamis, 25 Februari 2016).

Surprisingly, after the program run for approximately eight years (2008-2016), on February 23, 2016, Government of Bandung through the Mayor Ridwan Kamil trigger a program "Family Help Family". This program is substantially similar to the Madani Brotherhood program. The point is to help others to overcome poverty; the rich families helping the poor families. The forms of assistance that could be rendered are venture capital, education fee, health care cost, and so on.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGESTION**

It is a great hope for the city of Kendari to be able to tackle poverty because the increasing number of programs that are accessible to the poor who are still present in 10 districts of Kendari. Inevitably, if ZIS can be managed optimally by Board of Amil Zakat, it will greatly help the poverty alleviating in Kendari.

Innovative Program of Kendari Government which intended to provide working capital loans to the community is pushed by a high level of poverty and the difficulty of small and medium enterprises to access venture capital. On that reason, the Government of Kendari established microcredit institution

inspired by the Grameen Bank as a financial institution founded by the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

Furthermore, the Madani Brotherhood program is a specific program intended to unite the poor as much as 30.2 percent with the rich amounted to 69.8 percent. It was targeted that from 30.2 percent of the poor in Kendari in 2008 to be declined 16 percent in 2012. And it was already accomplished by the Government of Kendari.

Empowerment pattern in question is based on the concept of social life plenary and sourced from the translation of religious values. Sociologically that people always live in groups and mutual need between each other, so as to create a social life system that is integral, interdependent and harmonious and institutionalized in a Fraternity Program Madani which later crystallized into a culture".

The pattern of empowerment is based on the concept of plenary social life sourced from the translation of religious values and sociologically the people always live in groups and have mutual need each other, so as to create an integral social life, independent and harmonious and institutionalized in a Brotherhood Program which later crystallized into a culture. That is the substance of the concept of empowerment: "help people to help them-selves".

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