

Reconstruction Of Nationalism Awareness Through Education In The Border Territory: The Case In The Sebatik Island-Indonesia

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Abstract— This paper discusses the reconstruction of nationalism awareness through education in the border region. The reconstruction process was not easy because the target community is a group of Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMW) living in the neighboring country, i.e. Malaysia. The main problem formulation of this research is how are strategies used by the Management of Sekolah Tapal Batas (STB) to reconstruct nationalism awareness through education? The research represents a case study, whose method is qualitative. Data are gathered through interviews, documentation, and observation. The result shows that the reconstruction of nationalism awareness through education for the community of IMW in the border region must pay attention to the dominance of interests which makes them feel hard to send their children to school. One obstacle why they find it hard to send their children to school is economic factors. Therefore, in the reconstruction of nationalism awareness, the Management of STB must be able to offer negotiations that are acceptable to IMW. The strategy of negotiation is an education service policy that eases their economic finances. The success of attracting children of IMW to study at STB is a form of reconstruction of nationalism awareness through education for parents who work as IMW and their children.

Keywords — Nationalism Awareness, Education, STB, and IMW.

1 INTRODUCTION

Sebatik is an island owned by two countries. The northern part belongs to Malaysia, while the southern one belongs to Indonesia. As an island owned by two countries, Indonesian citizens who work as migrant workers in Sebatik Territory of Malaysia have the challenge of maintaining Indonesian nationalism. One factor that has become an obstacle for them to express their nationalism is economic demands. Economic problems are often factors that trigger them to ignore nationalism awareness. This is experienced by Indonesian Sebatik residents who become Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMW) in Sebatik Territory of Malaysia. In the Sebatik Territory of Malaysia, there are several villages where IMW build basecamps. Among the villages are Bernyoko and Bergosong. In the villages, they work as oil palm plantation workers. The company as plantation owner provides basecamps for IMW to feel comfortable living and working in the village. The existence of residence for IMW and their families is intended to facilitate them in order not to return to the Sebatik Territory of Indonesia every day.[1]

This scheme seems to benefit them. However, when pondered more deeply, this pattern harms them and their children. The most prominent disadvantage is the problem of education for their children. The village does not provide educational institutions. This condition causes some of them to choose not to send their children to school. In fact, in some parents, there is no thought to send their children to school because they already intend to educate their children to become

garden workers since childhood.[2] This condition is certainly very dangerous for the cultivation of nationalism of their children. Without the opportunity to go to school, it is very difficult to foster nationalism for them. What happened to the IMW family was a dual-threat to Indonesian nationalism. The potential fading of nationalism is not only in the awareness of their children but also in the parents. By only teaching their children as oil palm gardeners from childhood, this means that the parents as IMW are the same as leaving their children vulnerable to losing knowledge and pride in the Indonesian state. In this challenge, there is an educational institution that contributes to unraveling this problem. It is Sekolah Tapal Batas (STB) Sebatik. The term 'Sekolah Tapal Batas' refers to its position not far from the Indonesia-Malaysia borderline. This school is under the auspices of the Ar-Rasyid Foundation. The legal name of the School is Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Furqon. This school is located in Sub-Village of Berjoko, Village of Sungai Limau, Sub-District of Sebatik Tengah, Sebatik Island, District of Nunukan, Province of North Kalimantan, and the State of Indonesia. The route to get to this school is not easy because there is no public transportation directly to the school. The easiest route is from the Port of Sungai Nyamuk. To get to the location, the choice of transportation must use its rental from the port. The position of the school is in the middle of an expanse of oil palm plantations. The Sub-Village as the location of STB has not yet received electricity from the Indonesian State Electricity Company (PLN). The operations of the school utilize electricity from solar panels. This school is under the auspices of the Ar-Rasyid Foundation. Although its location is in the isolated rural area and far from the center of the crowd on Sebatik Island, this school has a strategic role and a real contribution in reconstructing the awareness of Indonesian nationalism. At the beginning of the establishment of this school, getting students from IMW families who had settled in Sebatik of Malaysia Region was a difficulty. But over time, the

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perseverance of the school management succeed to soften the hearts of their parents as IMW to send their children to STB. [3] It is not easy to encourage the parents to release their children for school. This is because these children are also assets of parents to help their work. For this reason, this paper will reveal how the challenges faced by the management of STB to reconstruct the awareness of Indonesian nationalism through education for IMW families? And how the strategy of STB to convince IMW families to send their children to STB as a manifestation of the reconstruction of Indonesian nationalism awareness?

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. It is intended to produce descriptive data –borrowing the term of SJ Taylor and R Bogdan– which will reveal the attitude of the research subject's behavior [4], which in this case is the management of STB, students, and their parents as IMW. This research uses a case study approach. The choice of this approach is intended to obtain data on the reconstruction of nationalism awareness intensively and deeply.[5]

The data used in this research were divided into two, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data is derived from data directly taken through field research activities such as observation and in-depth interviews with competent parties, such as the management of STB and parents as IMW. Whereas secondary data was obtained by documenting narrative information and images such as mass media reporting on portraits of teaching and learning activities at STB.

The retrieval of data in this study is through documentation, observation, and in-depth interviews. The documentation uses the information of parties who have narrative and picture information related to education services in STB, both data issued by the management of STB and other parties such as the government, NGOs and mass media. Meanwhile, the implementation of observation is not just a simple way, but a systematic and comprehensive way.[6] Data collection has been carried out from July 21 to July 26, 2019, by visiting STB in Sebatik Island and talking with their parents. The in-depth interview method is used as a means of retrieving information from the management of STB and the related community. The selection of informants in this research was carried out purposively where the determination of informants would be chosen based on certain considerations and objectives [7]. This research uses qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis that will be carried out by researchers includes three stages, namely data reduction, presentation, and conclusion [8].

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Contestation in Reviving Nationalism

The effort to attract the hearts of the parents as IMW to send their children to STB is not easy. Even though it is difficult, the management of STB continues to fight for it because the fulfillment of education for children of IMW is one of the concrete steps to revive nationalism. To realize these targets, first of all, the management of school must calculate the factors that become contestants in inhibiting these targets. The

contestant that becomes the obstacle for the target is not the presence of other schools, but the internal and external factors of the IMW community. The management must be able to find out the reasons that made the Indonesian Sebatik residents become IMW who chose to live in Sebatik Territory of Malaysia. To begin the steps to convince the parents as IMW to send their children to school, there are several challenges faced by STB.

The first challenge is the economic aspect. One of the biggest challenges in raising education is economic needs. As IMW, the parents live in Sebatik Territory of Malaysia. They are Indonesian Sebatik residents. However, they chose to move to the Sebatik territory of Malaysia to work in oil palm plantations. The reason is simple, namely the salary as a gardener in Malaysia is higher than in Indonesia. In daily life, the parents spend time to plant oil palm. Every day, the parents start working at five in the morning and return home at five in the afternoon. Most of them live in the Bergosong and Bernyoko areas which are Sebatik territory of Malaysia. The two villages do not provide schools for Indonesian children. As a result, the parents as BMI and their children know and memorize Malaysian anthem, culture, and languages better.[9] With these conditions, the willingness to send children to school is a rare awareness. For them, the important thing is that their children can be taught how to plant oil palm. At that time, they still thought that employing children was more beneficial than sending children to school. Economic tightness is often used as an excuse for some families not to send their children to school. In this case, if nationalism is interpreted as an attitude of loyalty to the nation and state[10], the choice of IMW not sending children to Indonesia is a choice that is counterproductive to the sense of Indonesian nationalism. It shows an attitude of disloyalty to the state. In the Indonesian constitution, education is one of the media for citizens to express and fight for nationalism.[11] Lack of awareness to send children to school is a threat to Indonesian nationalism commitment. That is why the management of STB realizes the need to break the domination of wrong thinking. In the context of nationalism, the error thinking is shown by the dominance of the thinking of parents as IMW who tend to prioritize economic issues over their children's education.

The second challenge is geographical. The distance from the villages of Bergosong and Bernyoko to STB is 10 KM. The geographical challenge for schooling is not only distance but also in the form of transportation and road infrastructure. Speaking of infrastructure, public transportation cannot be found along the route they take. Regarding bicycles, the price is too expensive. That is why their choice is to walk. [12] In terms of infrastructure, the existing road is still not good. The road is still a path that can only be passed by two-wheeled vehicles. The terrain goes up and down and the soil texture is soft. There is even one route that requires them to cross the river because there is no bridge. When the rainy season arrives, these children find it very difficult to get through this road. The road became slippery and the river flow turned very heavy. [13] The challenge contours of the road are added to the threat of wild animals along the road. Considering that along the traveled route was a stretch of oil palm plantations, there were still often wild animals that could attack humans. Among those that can still be found are wild boar and snakes. [14] This geographical factor adds to their challenge of sending their children to school

to strengthen their nationalism.

These two things are of concern to the management of STB in restoring the construction of their civil identity amid the dominance of their social identity as IMW. The choice to become IMW is a common thing in determining the choice of identity. Every community always tends to form its own identity by its values and interests. In Giddens' language, social identity is formed because of the individual's awareness as a member of a social group, which includes important values and emotions inherent in every individual. [15] However, the choice of social identity as IMW becomes a problem when the construction of its identity is more dominant departing from a feeling of more economic importance. The dominance of thinking has closed the hearts of the parents to realize the importance of education.

IMW residing in the Sebatik Territory of Malaysia has constructed their social identity as migrant workers. With this identity, borrowing the Giddens' language, they must dominate certain interests which are used as important emotions as their identity. Within the IMW community, some use the dominance of economic interests as important emotions that are inherent in themselves. For them, economic factors have become the main emotions that they have to manage dominantly. That is why children's education can not be the main emotion that they have to manage dominantly.

Every group with their social identity always has one material as the construction of its identity. The material choice is on their freedom. The building material can come from the history of their lives, geography as their place of residence, biology as a characteristic of their physical body, religious teachings as their belief, work as a livelihood and other materials that can be used as their livelihood. [16] In the case of the IMW community, they used the freedom of choice to determine economic factors as the main building material in constructing their identity. The basis for constructing his social identity is the dominance of economic interests. Therefore, if the management of STB wants to attract the hearts of the parents as IMW to send their children to STB, the management must be able to do the contestation by offering strategies that do not interfere with their economic interests. The invitation of STB to school for children of IMW will automatically fail if the invitation causes economic disruption for IMW.

In this position, it is interesting to see how the strategies adopted by the management of STB. The invitation to school for children of IMW is not just a matter of the existence of STB. This invitation has a very strategic role. This invitation has a role to remind the responsibility of maintaining the civil identity that must be carried out by the parents as IMW amid their social identity dominance. Although they currently choose an identity as IMW positions, the choice of social identity should not abort their responsibility to send their children to school as an expression of nationalism. Through an invitation to send their children to STB, the school is offering an alternative identity construction. In this case, the STB tries to make awareness of IMW; even though they are as migrant workers, this social identity should not fade the spirit of nationalism to send their children to school at STB in Sebatik territory of Indonesia. STB wants to stop the emotions of IMW who build construction to encourage their children to become gardeners like himself. Besides that, this invitation also played a role in instilling

nationalism in the parents. However, all these children are assets of the future of the nation that must have a strong awareness of Indonesian nationalism.

3.2. Welfare Approach as a Key Negotiation of STB

STB was established in 2012. In the initial year of school operation, the Management still had difficulty attracting students from the IMW's villages, Bergosong and Bernyoko as two villages in the Sebatik Territory of Malaysia. Thanks to the hard work of management and the provision of adequate facilities, starting in 2014, there were several children of IMW attending STB. Their parents still live in Bernyoko and Bergosong. Meanwhile, the children stayed at the dormitory of STB while attending teaching and learning activities at STB.

In 2019, the number of students at STB is 57 students.

Number of Students of STB Year 2019

Class	Origins	
	Local Students	Students From Indonesia Migrant Workers (IMW)
I	7	2
II	7	3
III	7	4
IV	3	5
V	3	7
VI	5	4

Source: Data from Documentation of STB, 2019

The presence of children of IMW from Bergosong and Bernyoko who attended STB showed the success of the management of STB to encourage IMW to reconstruct its nationalism awareness. The reconstruction of identity is a necessity within a group to respond to the social dynamics that occur. Giddens stated that each community must be able to shape and reshape itself to be able to deal with changes that occur in their environment.[17]

Being as IMW is not a final and rigid identity for them. As something dynamic, identity is liquid. Ernest Gellner states that the social identity of a society is liquid and can be changed to be constructed by economic, political and other interests.[18] The invitation to school by STB is a strategy to take advantage of this liquid identity. This invitation is a means to reconstruct the identity of IMW families by their origins (Indonesia). The choice of reconstruction into Indonesia again is in the context of instilling nationalism awareness for them as a representation of border communities.

The children are representations of border communities. With their attendance at STB, automatically, STB not only instills nationalism in their children but also their parents. The inculcation of nationalism in children automatically occurs during the process of teaching and learning. The existence of lessons of Civic Education, Pancasila, Indonesian Language, History, and Social Science is a means of instilling nationalism in students. Aside from learning, the cultivation of nationalism was also pursued through habituation such as national ceremony in every morning, the use of educational aids which had a nationalist tone and Indonesian state symbols [19].

The invitation to school is also a means for STB to instill nationalism for IMW parents. At least, there were several important moments during which STB invited parents to attend school. Among these important moments was the commemoration of a ceremony of the Republic of Indonesia's

Independence Day. At that moment, parents were invited to attend school to attend the Indonesian independence ceremony. Suraidah said that the parents were very appreciative. This is marked by their feelings moved to the event. This feeling made them shed tears because of a high sense of appreciation.[20] The participation and appreciation of the parents as IMW to the event showed the success of STB to foster a sense of nationalism and love for the country of Indonesia. In this way, it means that parents also feel that they have experienced a strengthening of nationalism awareness.

The success in convincing these children to study at STB cannot be denied because of the ability of STB negotiation. The media used for negotiation are facilities and infrastructure. STB has provided some dormitories as facilities to stay for children who come from the IMW families. Through the dormitory, children do not need to go home to the basecamp of their parents. The negotiations are getting stronger with the commitment of STB to eliminate all tuition and dormitory fees. In this case, the effort of STB steps to reconstruct nationalism for the border communities was greatly helped by the assistance of several national institutions. Among the institutions that have assisted in the operation of STB are Dompot Dhuafa, Pertamina EP Asset 5 Field Tarakan, Bank Negara Indonesia dan Kementerian Agama. Their assistance is in the form of providing teaching staff and educational infrastructure facilities. In addition to these two institutions, the Indonesian National Army (TNI) also sent several of its personnel to assist learning at STB.[21]

The invitation to school is an effort to integrate border communities within the framework of Indonesian nationalism. STB has succeeded in becoming the representative of the country to facilitate citizen rights and collective rights. In turn, national identity becomes an important part of the collective awareness of IMW amid the economic siege. What is done by STB is a strategy to restore nationalism in the sense of loyalty to the country. To borrow Brown's language, there are many ways for someone to express nationalism. The actualization of nationalism can be expressed in a variety of forms, such as pursuing serious work, actively pursuing education, developing knowledge that is beneficial to humans and many more ways to express nationalism. However, to measure nationalism is truly beneficial for the country, all expressions must be directed towards loyalty and love for the country. That is what Brown calls civilian nationalism, which is characteristic of nationalism shown by the attitude of loyalty to uphold the citizenship identity and by willing to do everything as a consequence of the choice of citizenship.[22]

The strategy adopted by STB management is such a strategy that tries to understand their specific individuals and collective needs. In the cultivation of nationalism, one strategy that must be considered is the understanding of the individual and collective needs of a political community.[23] Through a special policy of providing free dormitories for students of IMW, this policy is a strategy to meet their special needs. This policy is very appropriate because they need dormitories. This policy is to answer one of the obstacles they attend school, i.e: the factor of distance and unwillingness to spend money. What was done by the STB, borrowing the Kymlicka's language, is a strategy for allocating sources of political needs in recognition of identity.[24] By giving free dormitories and education to

children of IMW, management of STB has restored the strengthening of their political identity construction as Indonesian citizens without harming the choices of their parents who currently still hold their social identity as BMI in Malaysia. Such a strategy is very important because according to Irwan Abdullah, the planting of nationalism in border communities must be done by paying attention to other non-state identities that have been useful to meet their economic needs.[25]

4 CONCLUSION

Education is an appropriate means for the reconstruction of nationalism awareness for people living in the border territory. In the case of Sebatik Island, the issue of education became a strategic medium to foster nationalism awareness for IMW families living in the Sebatik territory of Malaysia. Their nationalism awareness can be nurtured by their commitment to send their children to STB (the Sebatik Territory of Indonesia). To carry out these steps, the management of STB must face the challenges of the economic compulsion that dominated their thinking about not sending children to school. In their view, the willingness to send children to school is an expensive option because they must release their children as an asset that helps them to work in oil palm plantations in the Sebatik Territory Malaysia. To attract the interest of IMW in sending their children to school, STB must implement a negotiation strategy. What can be negotiated by STB is the willingness to provide free tuition and dormitory fees. This negotiation strategy proved successful in attracting IMW to send their children to school to STB. Free tuition is the weapons of the negotiations of STB to restore the strengthening of their political identity construction as Indonesian citizens without harming the choices of their parents who currently hold social identity as IMW in Malaysia. Through this education, STB has reconstructed nationalism awareness through education for IMW families (ie parents and their children).

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