

# Changing Society's Mind Set in Managing Rural Development: A Way of Educators in Balancing Prosperity of Cities and Rural Areas

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## Abstract

Living a prosperous life is a right of every nation. In order to have this prosperity, government's assistance is badly needed. The assistance varies in various aspects of life for citizens and villagers. One of this is having skills in managing their way of life, which varies in done and involved with the very sophisticated high technology, the combination of high technology operation helps and manual and simply using manual tools. In Indonesian setting especially in rural areas of such all regencies around *Toba Lake (Tapanuli Utara, Humbang Hasundutan, Samosir, Dairi, Karo, Simalungun and Tobasa)* village inhabitants are still conducting their living in manual, no matter big part of their inhabitants particularly at the capital city, living prosperous life. With this situation, every university's graduation who previously come from those villages are reluctant to come back and helping their own villages to increase their quality of life.

**Keywords:** *changing society's mind set, managing rural development, prosperity*

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## Introduction

*Huta ni damang hatubuan, ndang marimbar tano hamatean* (One's birth place is certain but nobody knows where he/she will die) is the very strong encouragement given by parents to their children whenever these children get permission to go out far away from their birth places. Usually it is done for the sake of getting good and higher education for Bataknese believe that education is the mother of prosperous life. It is proven by a song entitled *Anakkon hi do hamoraon di au* (My children are my wealth). It has been conducted and practiced for a long time and it still goes on. It is very effective since everybody who comes out of his rural area gets successful life.

By the time goes by, the accumulation of leaving rural areas impacts badly to the quality of life of left ones. It is said so due to the fact that at last those who are living in these places usually the elderly and youngsters who are indicated not smart enough. When such a condition happens on and on it affects very much to the poverty condition. It is shown by the old houses, unmanaged farming, ignored plantation, empty stall, empty and destroyed land and untidy surroundings.

This bad condition is happening now in the region where this international conference takes place, the area of North Tapanuli Region (*Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara*) and its surrounding such as *Humbang Hasundutan, Samosir, Dairi, Karo, Simalungun and Tobasa*.

Indeed, there are seven regencies now such the names of regencies above. They belong to North Sumatera Province. When critical analysis is made to know the real condition of those seven regencies, it is easy to find out that those who are living there and having prosperous life are the new comers, outsiders, and they make their living mostly as civil servants, traders and living in towns of regencies while the real inhabitants, the origin of the rural areas of those seven regencies are still living in poverty from time to time. They cultivate plantation but they cannot control the price of their cultivation such as vegetables, chilies, potatoes and the like. In one time they could sell their chilies cultivation with the very high price, almost IDR. 150,000, - (one hundred fifty thousand) for a kilogram but in other days they could not sell their vegetables due to the very low prices. It happens lately, for a big sack of *sawi putih* (Chinese cabbage – vegetables usually used by Chinese as the major ingredients of fried noodle), it is sold only for IDR. 20,000, -- (twenty thousand). How bad is their condition! How could they be helped, who will help them and how?

The awareness of helping their own places should be boosted and of course it should be implemented by giving university students the combination of major and minor skills. The major skills are based on their interest

such as *Pendidikan Agama Kristen* (PAK) study program, *Theology* study program, *Pastoral Counseling* study program and so on and the minor ones will be mastered by providing various life skills to these university students, and it will be based on their personal choice. This personal chosen skill will be noted in a special certificate named *Surat Keterangan Pendamping Ijazah* (SKPI). All of these efforts will be effective and manageable when lecturers in general hand in hand help the government in doing so. Educators through their teaching ways are expected to be skillful enough in changing these university graduations' mind set who prefer to keep living in cities rather than coming back and helping their villages. They fond of living in cities even big cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan and so on. However, this condition should be handled down by every agent of Indonesia government including educators.

## Discussion

### 1. The Effect of People's Motto of Life Toward the Development of Rural Areas

Around 32 years ago in 1987, Raja Inal Siregar the late governor of North Sumatera Province declared a motto *Marsipature Hutana be* (Improve your own village) means it is your responsibility to make your village be in prosperous condition. It was done on purpose. Related to language and power (see Thomas, 2004; Dijk, 2009), he influenced the society. He examined that most of children of North Sumatera citizens, continued their higher education at Java island at the very popular universities such as *Institut Teknologi Bandung*, *Universitas Indonesia*, *Institut Pertanian Bogor*, *Universitas Gajah Mada*, *Universitas Brawijaya*, *Universitas Atmajaya* and so on but never came back when they finished studying. They prefer to stay where they studied before, married with the native of the region, worked there and never think of returning and building their villages, the places where they come from.

Whereas the governor found out that even though the same condition happened to the children of Javanese the result is different. The time they finished their study from the above universities, they came home, living there and helping the government to conduct the effort of making prosperous life to the inhabitants where the come from before. He also noticed that persons who worked abroad such *TKI* and *TKW*, when they came back, they took along their money, built their houses at their home villages no matter they stopped working abroad or continued it. People believed it is affected by the Javanese motto of life *Mangan ora mangan sing penting ngumpul* (No matter you are full or hungry, you should come back to your home village).

Examining these two different motto of life of two different tribes namely *Huta ni damang hatubuan, dang marimbar tano hamatean* (Bataknese) and *Mangan ora mangan sing penting ngumpul* (Javanese), a conclusion can be made that is: whenever a sentence – which is acted as an encouragement – is uttered on and on by single one, groups and tribes it becomes an attitude for a person, habit for groups for instance villagers and culture for a tribe or the very big number of people in the very huge area. It is proven then from the behavior of Bataknese and Javanese in treating their home villages. It is a habit even a culture for Javanese – wherever they are – to do *mudik* for a very special time such *Lebaran*. It is an obligation, while for Bataknese, it is not. Even, lately Samosir, the chosen island by Indonesia President, Joko Widodo as The Monaco of Asia, Bataknese are not affected, tend not to be disturbed. Rather than coming back, improving the life quality of their villages, they come home when they die, in form of corpse to be burried in Samosir island. Therefore, it can be understood when in one event, a bus driver where I went with stated such a sorrowful sentence: *So adong be bagak Samosir, huta ni begu nama i. Haliangi ma pulo i, holan inganan ni na mate nama sude*. (Samosir is not beautiful anymore. It is a place of ghost. Wherever you go, you find out tombs)

This bus driver is completely correct in saying so. Let's compare these two songs, entitled with the same title, *Pulo Samosir*. Find out the truth of them in the lyrics of the later song.

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Pulo Samosir by Nahum Situmorang composed more or less 1950

Pulo Samosir by unknown song writer in 2019

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*Pulo Samosir do haroroan hu Samosir do  
Ido asal hu sai tong ingoton hu  
saleleng ngolukku hupujih  
Ido asal hu sai tong ingoton hu  
saleleng ngolukku hupujih*

*Pulo Samosir nauli tumatangis do tondimi  
Marnida hasesega ni marnida hasesega ni  
Dagingmi*

*Disi do pusok hi pardekkean hu haumakki  
Gok disi hassang nang eme nang bawang rarat*

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*Pulo Samosir na jogi sai marsak do tondimi  
Ai ndang adong be na paturehon ho  
Na ringkot di ho*

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*do pinahan di dolok i*

*Gok disi hassang nang eme nang bawang rarat  
do pinahan di dolok i*

Reff:

*Lao pe au marhuta sada tung so pola leng  
nga mulak au*

*Diparjalangan dang sonang au sai tu Pulo  
Samosir masihol au*

*Molo malungun ho tu natinombur masihol ho*

*Dekke ni ura dohot namargota di*

*Pulo Samosir do dapot ho*

*Dekke ni ura dohot namargota di*

*Pulo Samosir do dapot ho*

*Tuak takkasan do hasiholan ku tarlobi do*

*Naeng ho marlogu di atas ni solu pasonangkon  
ngolu tusi ma ro*

*Naeng ho marlogu di atas ni solu pasonangkon  
ngolu tusi ma ro*

*Molo marujung ma muse ngolukku sai ingot ma*

*Anggo bakkeku disi tanomon mu disi udeanku  
sai ingot ma*

*Anggo bakkeku disi tanomon mu disi udeanku  
sai ingot ma*

Reff:

*Didia hassangmi nang eme i na marbuhal-  
buhai i*

*Nang pinahan i dang be rarat di dolok i*

*Gabe sai didok ma ho ulok turi-turian*

*Na so adong mangkaringkothon ho*

*Dang marsahala be ho*

*Godang do na hasea sian siubeon mi*

*Gabe lupa gabe lupa paturehon ho*

*Pos ma roham ro do hami paturehon ho*

*Asa mulak tondimi tu dagingmi*

*Di lehon Tuhan i dolok nauli i*

*Hamoraon ni bangso Batak.*

*Pulo Samosir na jogi sai marsak do tondimi*

*Ai ndang adong be na paturehon ho*

*Na ringkot di ho*

Note:

This new song about the reality of Samosir is used as back song of video of working visit to Samosir of Indonesia President, Joko Widodo

Documented by Samosir Diskominfo

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Take a look on the last verse of the old song version of *Pulo Samosir*, it is written such: *Molo marujung ma muse ...*, *Anggo bakkeku disi tanomon mu ...*, clearly proves the bus driver statement and it also proves how this fasilization encouragement of Bataknese: *Huta ni damang hatubuan, ndang marimbar tano hamatean*, gives bad effect to the mind set of Bataknese in general.

In fact, the origin of Bataknese is from *Samosir* island exactly at *Pusuk Buhit* and later on spreaded to the outer areas such as *Dolok Sanggul*, *Siborong-borong*, *Tarutung*, *Dairi*, *Simalungun* and so on, but this motto had remained in their blood, cannot be taken out anymore.

Therefore, Raja Inal Siregar, the late governor of North Sumatera declared the motto: *Marsipature Hutana be (Martabe)* with a hope it can change Bataknese mind set, then did their best to come back to their home village and improve the quality of life of people of rural areas since only with this way the Bataknese wish to keep living at towns can be reduced. In fact, he failed. Batak people mind set almost cannot be changed. If people find out the incredible movement happens in Toba Lake areas, it is not done by the villagers, the origin of the inhabitants of the rural areas of Batak land. They are outsiders, the new comers who put their money there by erecting hotels, restaurants, shop even *keramba jaring apung* (floating net cages). It is found that the owner of this fish farming is the Swiss investor. The owner of hotels and restaurant are rich people out of this area, the origin still conduct their usual life, go to their paddie fields manage them traditionally and of course the harvest is just so so. And the last result, they cannot send their children to the best universities at Java island anymore. What their children do now is to be the workers at the places mentioned above.

## 2. Changing People's Mind Set in Helping Rural Areas: The Educators Responsibility

The same thing namely trying to change people's mind set to get ready to help people of rural areas was done by *Minangkabau* important figures such as Azwar Anas, Awaluddin Djamin, Emil Salim and many more by implementing a motto: *Gebu Minang*. It is an acronym of *Gerakan Ekonomi Dan Budaya Minang*. It was started in December 24, 1989, 2 years after *Marsipature Hutana be* declared by Raja Inal Siregar. Its aim was to help Minang villagers building and improving their villagers' quality of life. It works up to now. The question is why is this Minangnese motto effective, while the Bataknese motto is not? The answer is because *Gebu Minang* is done by taking the involvement of important figures and in turn these figures worked hand in hand to succeed this movement. The failure of Bataknese doing so because it was done only by the government's agents

namely civil servants to speak out about *Marsipature Hutana be* without trying to show the way of doing it. Moreover, there is none of involvement of Batak society itself who live out of Batak rural areas.

However, the action of changing people's mind set in helping rural areas getting their prosperity is still can be done of course by involving the participation and action of educators. Educators actually is ranging from formal to nonformal ones, from teachers to lecturers, priests, councilors even doctors and nurses. In part of lecturers it can be done through involving their students to the fact of Batak land nowadays which is depicted clearly by almost lyrics of the new version song of *Pulo Samosir* especially in the action of eliminating the stigma through the phrase *Gabe sai didok ma ho ulok turi-turian*.

What should teachers and lecturers do? Firstly, they should show the reality of Batak land, particularly Samosir island and its surrounding. In deed at the same time the video of developing and ruining of this area should be shown to the students (see the video of Mr. Wilmar interviewed by TV announcer of Jakarta, telling about scattered garbage, disposal and illegal logging just at the edge of Toba Lake, massive building of floating nets of fish, nonstop building hotel and restaurants without caring about the effect to the Toba Lake itself and the origin inhabitants of Toba Lake). Afterwards, see and find out their reaction.

Secondly, give the students the awareness that what they see from the video is only one of example of how rural areas are ruined. There are many other destroyed rural areas including their home villages, but there is no video yet made by those who care about environmental cares. Then, see about their reaction, wait for their comments.

Thirdly, penetrate them with the idea that they should love their home villages above everything. When they go out from their home villages it is simply for the sake of getting good education since university is not found in rural areas. The time they finish their study they should come back and giving their help to their home villages. It is believed that it will work for students of *IAKN Tarutung* since the majority of students are from rural areas and dominated by children of poor family.

Fourthly, it is the action of lecturers and campus authority as the decision maker of making the new policy of helping these students taking out their villagers from poverty which in turn their wish to live in towns rather than in villages can be reduced. In this part, campus policy in giving life skill such it has been explained on the previous pages can come true. In fact, they study their own interest such following lectures at *Pendidikan Agama Kristen (PAK), Teologi, Pariwisata Budaya dan Keagamaan, Sosiologi* and so on but to assist them to get betterment of life after finishing their study they are given a chance to choose and select various life skills provided by campus management. It is in line with Cartelli (2006) and Huddleston & Unwin (2007) as the way to teach the society. The choice can be started from the very easiest one to the very difficult skills such as helping self and family do self-provided for daily needs up to helping villages out of their income problems (see the videos to be played before you: *Cinta Bumi Kebun Sayur* and *Cara membuat pot dari bekas botol air mineral*). About helping villagers to come out from proverty can be tutored by Mr. Mangatur Napitupulu – the expert of *IAKN Tarutung* in making creative economic.

Lately, lecturers together with all civitas academica of *IAKN Tarutung* will hand in hand wait and find the result.

## Conclusions

It is stated at the fifth number of *Pancasila: Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia*, means that those citizens who are living in towns and villages deserve to have prosperous life. This can be gained only by eliminating the gap between cities and villages. Whenever the ease of life can be gotten at cities it is also available at villages. This is also the very big actions of our president Joko Widodo, in making cities and villages getting the richness equally. He marks this works by building and improving the rural areas as the priority. His very monumental works is by providing *Tol Langit, Tol Laut, Tol Darat* at the same time.

*IAKN Tarutung* also does its best by giving the students life skills which later on will be marked on special certificate: *Surat Keterangan Pendamping Ijazah (SKPI)* and this will be acted as their real skill in helping the surroundings especially the inhabitants of rural areas. Hopefully.

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