



State And Civil Society Relations: The Struggle of Johar Market Traders in Revitalizing Traditional Markets

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Abstract. The relationship between the state and civil society often reflects tension, especially when policies impact marginalized groups. This study examines the dynamics between the state and Johar Market traders during the revitalization of the traditional market in Semarang. While the revitalization aimed to improve market infrastructure and designate the market as a cultural heritage site, it failed to benefit the traders economically. Traders resisted the policy, highlighting the conflict between their economic survival and the government's development agenda. Through a qualitative case study approach, this research explores the responses of traders, revealing that political dynamics influenced both the government's decisions and the traders' actions. Despite forming groups to reclaim their longstanding rights, traders faced challenges due to the government's coercive power and political interests, reflecting the unequal power distribution between the state and civil society.

Keywords: Civil Society, Local Politics, Urban Policy, Democracy, Market Revitalization

1 Introduction

The revitalization of Johar Market in Semarang is an example of an urban policy that highlights the power relations between the government and civil society, especially market traders. This policy aims to improve market conditions and support economic goals, but on the other hand, it raises resistance from traders due to their minimal participation in the decision-making process. In this context, the distribution of power between the government (state) and traders (civil society) becomes important to analyze.

The civil society theory proposed by Alexis de Tocqueville and Robert Putnam provides a relevant conceptual framework in examining the interaction between society and the state. De Tocqueville emphasized the importance of community participation in public life as a counterbalance to state power, while Putnam highlighted the role of social capital in building democracy and government effectiveness. In the case of Johar Market, government power appears more dominant than civil society participation which should be involved in city development.

In practice, the top-down model is more visible with evidence that Semarang City Government expects traders to follow the rules and policies that have been made by the

Government. However, in this case, the development of Johar Market was not in accordance with the needs and characteristics of Johar Market traders. So the government worked hard so that traders could adjust to the policies made by the government.

2 Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the distribution of power between the government and traders in the Johar Market revitalization policy. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with market traders, government officials, and community organizations involved. Analysis of policy documents such as the Cultural Heritage Law and Semarang City Regional Regulations were also used to understand the legal basis for this policy.

This method was chosen to understand the dynamics of power that occur between the two groups, as well as how traders as part of civil society respond to state domination. The focus of the research is directed at the relationship between state power manifested in policy, and the capacity of civil society in defending their interests.

3 Results and Discussion

Johar Market Semarang is one of the markets that has been on the revitalization agenda of the Semarang City government since 2013. Beginning with the enactment of Regional Regulation No. 9/2013 on the regulation of Traditional Markets, revitalization is considered the best way to improve the condition of traditional markets that are considered rundown, dirty and uncomfortable for buying and selling transactions. So this market requires physical improvement and arrangement.

Efforts to revitalize and relocate Johar Market have been made by the Trade Office since 2013. However, this relocation did not succeed until the Johar Market fire in 2015. This fire triggered various issues among traders that the burning of Pasar Johar was done intentionally. However, this issue has never been proven. There were 6,398 traders who were directly affected by the fire. They are divided into several areas (See Table 1.)

Table 1. Number of Traders in Johar Semarang Market Area in 2015

Market	Number of Traders
Johar Induk Market (North, South Central)	2.986 traders
Yaik Baru Market	805 traders
Yaik Permai Market	1.392 traders
Kanjengan / Pungkuran Market	1.215 traders
Total	6.398 traders

The fires had a direct impact on the income of the traders and some even went out of business. For those traders who could still survive with their businesses, they were relocated to the Central Java Grand Mosque. At least 1,206 merchants were

successfully relocated. The traders complained that as a result of this case and being relocated to MAJT, their income decreased by 50-70% (see table 2).

Table 2. Income Data of Traders in MAJT Relocation. Source : Ismiyatun, 2018

Merchandise Type	Before (Rupiah)	After (Rupiah)
Groceries	1.000.000	500.000
Fruit	15.000.000	10.000.000
Vegetable	300.000	500.000
Household appliances	350.000	150.000
Clothing	750.000	250.000
Books	500.000	100.000
Snack	10.000.000	5.000.000
Cardboard	5.000.000	1.000.000
Clock	2.000.000	500.000

The impact of this decline is a consequence that must be experienced by the traders because Pasar Johar must be revitalized immediately. The Head of the Trade Office who served at that time confirmed that the market had to be revitalized even though it was not on fire. Damaged electrical conditions, short electricity currents and very inadequate infrastructure trigger the market to catch fire easily.

After the construction of Pasar Johar was completed, the condition of the stalls inside the market has changed with a limited area and number of locations. Before revitalization, the majority of stalls were filled by wholesalers, with one trader able to have more than one stall. However, after the revitalization, traders can only have one stall with a limited area. The Trade Office built a 1.5x2 m los, 1x2 m base, and 2x3 m kiosk. This is certainly a new obstacle for wholesale traders, because they need more space to sell.

1. Civil Society and Government Relations

Based on data analysis, the Semarang City Government holds dominant control in decision-making related to the revitalization of Johar Market. Since the beginning of the process, policy decisions have been taken in a top-down manner, with minimal consultation or involvement of traders as the main stakeholders. The distribution of power carried out by the government in the Revitalization of Johar Market involves several actors who play very significant roles. This policy involves the government from the center to the city which have different duties and responsibilities.

The main focus in implementing the revitalization of Johar Market is the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing (PUPR) as the implementer of development. The PUPR Ministry coordinates the revitalization program as part of the community's economic recovery program. This is in accordance with President Jokowi's political promise to implement the government's priority program by revitalizing traditional markets. This revitalization was built using the APBN budget.

In this case, the Semarang City Government is under the authority of the Trade Office, acting as the technical implementer and manager in the revitalization of the market, although the main control remains with the PUPR Ministry. The Trade Office is responsible for relocating traders and arranging stall zoning. This means that there will be a direct relationship between the trade office as a representative of the state and traders at Johar Market. In an effort to convey their aspirations, traders at Johar Market are represented by a group of traders' unions called the Johar Traders and Market Services Association (PPJP) which later became a representative of civil society.

During the revitalization process, the relationship built between the Trade Office and PPJP was full of dynamics. The relationship between PPJP and the government began with good collaboration. The Semarang City Government and PPJP initially worked together in drafting Regional Regulation No. 9 of 2013 concerning the Regulation of Traditional Markets. This shows the government's commitment to collaborating with traders through the PPJP organization.

However, over time, this relationship has experienced a rift. The actions of the local government which were seen as prioritizing their political economic interests caused dissatisfaction among traders. The determination of Johar Market as a cultural heritage in 2015 resulted in a reduction in the arrangement of the area and number of stalls that could be accommodated in the market. This then caused a dispute between the Trade Office and market traders, because the traders wanted everything to return to the way it was before. After the revitalization construction was completed, only around 2,300 traders could be accommodated again at Johar Market from the previous 6,398 traders. The remaining traders who could not be accommodated were transferred to other traditional markets. The City Government also built a new market building, namely Kanjengan Market. However, traders considered the Kanjengan Market building to be unfriendly to local people and the elderly.

PPJP, as an organization representing traders, voiced their objections to several policies that were considered detrimental to traders, especially regarding the distribution of stalls after revitalization. Several traders felt that the E-Pandawa application lottery system was unfair. These rejections had an impact on the revitalization process which became more difficult and delayed. As a result of the PPJP trader group's attitude which tended to be resistant to the government, the government then acted as if it was severing relations with PPJP.

In the civil society theory of Alexis de Tocqueville, it becomes relevant. De Tocqueville emphasized the importance of a strong civil society to maintain the balance of power with the state. However, in the case of Johar Market, the resistance of traders has not been able to produce significant policy changes. As an extension of the traders, the regional head actually created a new trade union group called PPJCB (Paguyuban Pedagang Johar Cagar Budaya), to support government decisions and policies. The selected traders were asked to be more accommodating and accept all decisions of the Semarang City Government regarding the division of stalls. The imbalance of power between the state and civil society is clearly visible, with the dominance of the state in determining policy, the government is able to determine and choose civil society

organizations. This causes divisions among traders, and gives rise to pros and cons among traders.

According to Robert Putnam, civil society that has strong social ties and social capital can influence the quality of democracy and public policy making. In Johar Market, although traders have strong solidarity, this social capital is not enough to balance the power of the state which is supported by greater economic interests. The relationship between the government and traders is not cooperative, but antagonistic, which ultimately harms both parties.

2. Pros and Cons

The pros and cons of traders in the revitalization of Johar Market occurred because they were influenced by various interests and conditions. The parties who are pro this revitalization are firstly market traders who are strong in terms of capital. Those who are able to survive the fire and are able to compete in terms of capital in maintaining their stalls in the lottery certainly support revitalization. With the revitalization of the market, improvements in infrastructure and changes to the market to be more modern are certainly beneficial for them. The second party who benefits is the new traders, one of which is the new traders in the culinary area. After the revitalization, the Semarang City Government designated several areas around Johar Market as culinary tourism spots. This culinary market stand is open to the public for culinary UMKM business actors. In addition, new traders who initially never had a stall at Johar Market, with the revitalization and lottery of stalls, they can get a stall to sell.

Traders who are against the revitalization of this market are small traders who were unable to survive because they were victims of the Johar market fire. All their goods were burned down so they were unable to sell again. In addition, old traders who obtained stalls did not match the zoning. Some of them felt marginalized due to the unfair lottery system, especially traders who were not active in the community or who lacked information. They became marginalized and had to find another place to sell. Traders who protested the reduction in stall capacity and were moved to another place were also parties who opposed the policy. This reduction caused thousands of traders to be moved, so many opposed the government's policy because it was considered not in favor of small traders. This is because traders lost customers and experienced a significant decrease in income.

Preservation of cultural heritage in the revitalization of Johar Market to improve market facilities such as a more organized space for traders and visitors. Johar Market is now equipped with safer, more comfortable, and more environmentally friendly facilities. With the return of traders to Johar Market, it is hoped that the economy around the market will also increase because the existence of a more modern market attracts more visitors and tourists. This means that traders who return to Johar market are those who are able to follow various modern developments in traditional markets. So that many new traders replace old traders who have been selling in the market for years but are unable to follow the changes so that they are trapped in traditional conditions.

4 Conclusion

This study shows that in the revitalization policy of Johar Market, the distribution of power between the government and civil society is very unequal, with the government holding dominant control in the decision-making process. Traders as part of civil society are only slightly involved, so that the policies implemented do not fully reflect their needs and interests. Although traders try to respond to state domination through resistance, their social power has not been able to change policies significantly.

The civil society theory of de Tocqueville and Putnam shows the importance of participation and social capital in balancing state power. In the context of the revitalization of Johar Market, the weak involvement of civil society results in policies that are not inclusive, and ultimately, unable to achieve the desired development goals. Revitalization can be said to be successful in organizing the city, but revitalization also destroys old traders who are thick with local and traditional values.

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