

# CLASS, INCOME, AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS OF LABOR FISHERS

Rilus A. Kinseng<sup>1\*</sup>, Sofyan Sja<sup>1</sup>, and Martua Sihaloho<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Communication and Community Development Science, Faculty of Human Ecology, Bogor Agricultural University*

*\*Corresponding Author. E-mail: rilus\_kinseng@hotmail.com*

*Received: 19th March 2014; Accepted: 15th May 2014*

---

## ABSTRACT

There have been debates on the role of class in “influencing” income inequality in contemporary societies. Some argue that class position is no longer relevant in determining one’s income, while others argue that class still counts. Therefore, it is very interesting to investigate relations between class structure and income among fishers in Indonesia. Furthermore, Marxian argued that class position will determine class consciousness. Therefore, it is interesting to study the class consciousness of labor fishers in Indonesia. Analyzing relations between class structure and income as well as class consciousness of labor fishers in Indonesia is especially very interesting and important since fishers have a very typical patron-client relationships. Moreover, study of this subject in Indonesia is still limited. This study has three main objectives: first to investigate the class structure of fishers and how this structure has been formed, second to analyse the income of fishers in different class locations, and third to analyze class consciousness of labor fishers. This study uses combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The study was conducted in Indramayu, West Java in 2013. Our analysis shows that the class structure of fishers consists of four main classes, namely large-scale, medium-scale, small-scale, and labor classes. These classes have been formed through complex and long processes, including the so-called “modernization” programmes promoted by the government. In term of income, the study shows that there are significant differences of income among fishers in different class locations. The Gini Ratio is very high, that is 0.88. Thus, class structure does influence fishers’ income significantly. Furthermore, this study finds that class consciousness of labor fishers has not fully developed yet. Labor class is a class in itself, but not class for itself. © 2014 Journal of Rural Indonesia [JoRI] IPB. All rights reserved.

Keywords: *fishers, class structure, income, class consciousness*

---

## Introduction

One of the long debates in sociology is the role of social structure in human behaviors. The ‘structuralists’ emphasize the important role of structure, while the ‘nonstructuralists’ emphasize the autonomous and creative nature of human (agency). At present, it is generally acknowledged that both aspects are equally important in determining human behaviors. In this case, Giddens viewed that every action contained the elements of agency and structure, and so both could not be separated. Giddens’ view is known as the concept of duality.

Sibeon (2004) considered that structure and agency must be viewed as two separate aspects and each influenced one another, which is known as the term dualism. Similar with Sibeon, Nicos Mouzelis (2008) contended that there were cases where structure and agency were two separate things. Although there are differences of opinions, it is obvious that, at present, sociologists generally still agree that social structure is very important because it influences social actions.

Actually, social structure does not only relate with daily human behaviors or social actions, but it can even determine, what Max Weber called as, ‘life chances’ (‘fate’) of an individual or a group of people (Weber, 1958 *in* Gerth and Mills, 1958).

One very important form of social structure is social class, which is a very important concept in theories of sociology, particularly in the perspective of theory of conflict. According to Hamilton and Hirszowicz, the concept of class was popularized by Karl Marx. They said: “*It was Karl Marx, of course, who was largely responsible for introducing and giving currency to the notion of class in sociological theory*” (Hamilton and Hirszowicz, 1987:5). For Marx, social class is determined by relation to the means of production (see Dahrendorf, 1963; Hamilton and Hirszowicz, 1987; Wallace and Wolf, 2006). His understanding was that there were only two classes in capitalist society that were important: capitalist class, those who own means of production, and labor class, those who have no

means of production, but have only manpower to work. However, later on some of Marx’s followers, such as Erik Olin Wright, modified this class concept slightly so that class was not solely determined by ownership of means of production. For example, Wright (1987) divided social class into four categories. These were *bourgeois*, small employer, petty *bourgeois* (very small employer), and wage earner or labor.

For Karl Marx, this social class has a very important role in the development of society. In fact, he even said that the long history of society is determined by the history of class struggles. Marx’s very famous statement is “*The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles*” (Marx and Engels, 1948/1991). Marx and his followers observed that people who were in the same class tended to act together as a group (Wallace and Wolf, 2006). Furthermore, the Marxists also viewed that people who were in different class positions had contradictory or opposing interests. The contradictory classes gave rise to class conflict, which in turn, had brought about social change.

In Marx’s opinion, the working class (proletarian) was exploited by the capitalist class; their wage became smaller that they became poor and suffered. Meanwhile, ownership of production tools was becoming more and more concentrated into the hands of persisting capitalists; and thus they became richer. In other words, by referring to Marx’s opinion, class position determines one’s income. A study conducted by Erik Olin Wright showed that in the United States, the average income of workers was much smaller than that of *bourgeois*. Based on the study, Wright concluded that “income inequality was polarized between the bourgeois and the working class” (Wright, 1987).

Several studies indicate different results among fishers. A study by Sarah Rohyana (2012), for example, shows that there is no significant correlation between scale of business activity and income level of fishers. Even though this study did not find a correlation between class position and fishers’ income, the data indirectly indicated a link between scale of business activity (which was, empirically, almost

the same with social class) and the income of fishers itself, considering that fishers, as heads of households, usually provided the largest contribution to family income (see Kinseng, Muflikhati and Murdianto, 2010).

Meanwhile, another study shows that profit-sharing system between employers and fisher labors indicate a great difference between income level of owners of fishing gears and that of fisher labors. For example, in Balikpapan the profit-sharing system of those using Fish Aggregating Device/FAD (*jala rumpon*) as fishing gear and two engines and nine fisher labors was as follows. After deducting operational cost, the revenue was divided into 18 parts: 3 parts for main engine, 1 part for side engine, 2 parts for boat, 2 parts for net, and 1 part each for each fisher labor and employer (Kinseng, 2007). It should be noted that in general, the engine, boat and net belong to the employer. Therefore, employers received a total of 7 parts, whereas labors received only one part.

Another study by Windi Listianingsih (2008) conducted among fishers in Muara Angke shows that for *rampus* net fishing gear, the employer (owner of fishing gear) was not categorized as poor, whereas the skipper and fisher labors (boat crew) were categorized as poor (during moderate season). This also indicates the difference in income level of employers and labor fishers.

Meanwhile, a research by Kinseng, Muflikhati and Murdianto (2010) indicates that there is a difference in the income of small scale fishers class and large scale fishers class. In their study in Indramayu and Garut, they found that there was a difference in the average income of heads of fisher households in Indramayu and in Garut. The average income of fishers in Eretan, Indramayu, was much larger than that of fishers in Garut. According to Kinseng, Muflikhati and Murdianto, this is related with the capacity of fishing armada and gears used by fishers in both locations. In general, fishers in Eretan used larger fishing armada, and some were even larger than 30 GT. This affected the scope of access to the fishing ground and the capability to catch fish. These fishers usually used purse seine

fishing gear to catch small pelagic fish, such as little tuna, mackerel, sailfish, trevally, etc. The large capacity of their boat enabled them to catch large number of fish, which would surely affect their income level. Meanwhile, fishers in Garut generally used fishing armada of smaller capacity, which made the income of small fishers (small scale class fishers) lower than that of large scale class fishers in Indramayu.

Furthermore, Marx differentiates social class into two: 'objective class' (class in itself) and class as a collectivity that has collective consciousness, interest, and objective (class for itself). According to Stavenhagen (1975), class consciousness has an important role in changing class in itself into class for itself. He said, "Class consciousness is the link that allows the transformation of a class 'in itself', a grouping with objective, 'latent' interests, into a class 'for itself', or a power group which tends to organize itself for political conflict or struggle and whose interests at some point become 'manifest'". Therefore, it is not surprising that class consciousness is an important aspect in analysis of class (Wright, 1991).

Class consciousness itself does not necessarily exist in the presence of social class. Lewis Closer (1977) said that the interest of class is formed through exposures of people who are in the same class position to certain social condition. Meanwhile, Turner (1998) explained that according to Marx, factors that fostered the emergence of collective interest encompassed:

- 1). Disturbance in the life or social condition of subordinate class due to changes caused by dominant class.
- 2). Practices conducted by dominant class that cause alienation in subordinate class.
- 3). Members of subordinate class can communicate to each other their difficulties and complaints. The communication itself is influenced by ecologic concentration of class members and expansion of educational opportunity for them.
- 4). Subordinate class can construct an ideology that unites them. This is facilitated by their

capacity to recruit or ‘create’ an ideological spokesman on the one side, and the incapability of the dominant class to arrange process of socialization and communication network in the subordinate class on the other side.

Based on his study on class and conflict of fishers in Balikpapan, Kinseng (2011) explained there is a reciprocal relation among common problem, class struggle, class formation, and class consciousness. However, common problem acts as trigger to this process of dialectics.

Based on the above explanations, we can see how important it is to understand the structure of social class and its relations to income and class consciousness. Hence, it is very important and interesting to study the structure of class, income and class consciousness among fishers in Indonesia, including in Indramayu, a center of fishers in West Java.

## Objectives

There are three main objectives of this research:

- 1). To analyze the class structure of fishers in Indramayu.
- 2). To analyze the level of fishers’ income, including the discrepancy level.
- 3). To analyze the class consciousness of fishers, particularly the class of fisher labors.

## Research Methodology

This research was conducted in Indramayu District, West Java Province in July – August 2013. It used a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach was used to collect data of level of income and class consciousness of fishers. For data of level of fishers’ income, samples were selected through a “stratified-accidental sampling” method; which was to find ‘any’ fishers to interview from each social class. Meanwhile, class consciousness in this research was focused on fisher labors only. The number

of respondents was 88 fisher labors and 31 employers.

The quantitative data were collected by using structured questionnaire. Meanwhile, qualitative approach was conducted by using a method known in various terms, such as field research (Babbie, 1989; Rose, 1983) or field studies (Marshall and Rossman, 1989) or field work (Rose, 1983). Primary-qualitative data were collected using two main methods: interview and observation. Interview included in-depth interviews of informants and more loose and informal interviews of fishers and other community members.

Aside from primary data, secondary data were also collected from various relevant institutions or organizations, such as Office of *Kelurahan* (Urban Village), Subdistrict Office, District Government, Office of Fisheries and Maritime, Central Bureau of Statistics, fishers organizations, NGOs, etc.

Quantitative data of income were analyzed using analysis of Gini ratio to find out the discrepancy level of fishers’ income at various class positions. Meanwhile, quantitative data on class consciousness were analyzed using simple statistics in forms of frequency and percentage.

Qualitative data were analyzed using a method called inductive analysis and logical analysis (Marshall and Rossman, 1989:126). The procedure of qualitative data analysis consisted of two main elements: data reduction and interpretation (Marshall and Rossman, 1989: 114).

## Class Structure of Fishers in Indramayu

The history of fishers in Indramayu in the maritime map of Indonesia has occupied a strategic position from colonial times until present. Historically and sociologically, the setting of Indramayu coastal area has become the arena for a complex contestation that is very dynamic and profound. The coastal region of Indramayu is the beginning and the heart beat of development progress of the northern coastal region. This coastal area is an intermediate space among other coastal areas in the northern coastal region (coastal areas of Jakarta, Banten,

and Cirebon) and has great contribution for social spatial structure of Java Island coastal region. Indramayu coastal area has a large role as center for catching, collecting, processing, and even commercializing of maritime and fisheries resources.

This logical consequence brings about a variety of social classification among fishers in Indramayu. This study finds that there are four classes of fishers in Indramayu: 1) fisher labors; 2) small scale fishers; 3) medium scale fishers; and 4) large scale fishers.<sup>1</sup> Basically, the structure of fishers class in Indramayu is the same with that in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan, as expressed by Kinseng (Kinseng, 2011 and 2013), and that in Kanada, as explained by Clement (1986)<sup>2</sup>. The following is a more detailed description of the characteristics of each social class of fishers in Indramayu.

### Fisher Labors

Fisher labors or ship crew have no means of production. They work for owners of large ships, such as *kursin* boats (15-30 persons). Actually, not all fisher labors are the same. Among the fishers in Indramayu, fisher labors or ship crew on *kursin* ships (purse seine), for

example, consists of (1) ship captain (boat captain); (2) skipper steersman, (3) navigation specialist (navigator); (4) kitchen chief specialist (deck officer/chef); (5) radio specialist (deck officer); (6) specialist (class 1); (7) sailor cook; and sailor (class 2). Aside from working in large boats such as *purse seine*, some fisher labors also work in medium size boats (5-10 persons) and small boats (1-4 persons).

Fisher labors in Indramayu are not paid using wage system; instead they are paid through profit sharing system. Usually, the profit sharing system is 40:60 for various fishing gears and boats. Under this system, all labors receive 40%, whereas employer 60%. Hence, the share of individual labor is far smaller than that of employer. Another profit sharing system is 50:50. After deducting operational cost, the profit is divided into two: 50% for employer and 50% for labors. The share of labors is divided evenly among all fisher labors who take part in catching fish.

### Small-Scale Fishers

In Indramayu, particularly in the areas of Karang Song and Eretan, there are still many small scale fishers. Based on the number of manpower, they work alone or have 1 – 4 fisher labors. Generally, they use simple boats and fishing gears.

Small scale or traditional fishers are the ones most often impacted by changes in policies, one of which is concerning increase in fuel price. According to Kajidin (administrator of *SNT*)<sup>3</sup>, the increase in fuel price has great impact on small scale fishers. Three existing *SPBN* can only supply enough fuel for ships larger than 20 GT, whereas ships of only 5-10 GT are not allowed to buy solar in such *SPBN*. This means traditional fishers have never bought fuel at the price stipulated by the government. They inevitably have to buy fuel at retail price (Interview, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013).

<sup>1</sup> Aside from long historical setting, the emergence of four social classes of fishers cannot be separated from political setting of coastal area in contemporary Indramayu. First, the relocation of Indramayu fisher community who originally came from Kali Adem, Jakarta in 2004. The relocation of 1,600 fisher families is a sign marking the beginning of construction of a new fishery center in Indramayu, and even in West Java. Second, the entrance of investors from Jakarta. As newcomers, these investors invest in forms of large ships and act as merchants in fish auctions in Karang Song TPI (place of fish auction] (Total turnover in TPI Karang Song reaches 78 billion rupiah per year, 800 million rupiah per day, with average amount of fish 70-100 tons/day).

<sup>2</sup> Clement (1986) said that there are four social categories of fishers in Canada: labors, small scale producers, intermediate-scale producers, and large scale producers. In terms of number of manpower, small scale producers consist of one to three persons, intermediate scale consists of four to ten persons, and large scale consists of more than ten persons.

<sup>3</sup> *SNT* is acronym of *Serikat Nelayan Tradisional* (Traditional Fishers Union).

## Medium Scale Fishers

Medium scale fishers use boats that are quite large, usually with two mitsubishi interior engines. The price of the boat can reach 60-80 million rupiah. The number of fisher crew is 5-10 persons, and the weight of boat reaches 10 GT. Eretan is quite dominated by fishers from this class, aside from small scale/traditional fishers. Meanwhile in Karang Song, it is more dominated by large scale fishers.

## Large Scale Fishers

Based on data of Marine Fishery Cooperatives “Mina Sumitra”, there are 84 cooperatives members who are also ship owners (large scale fishers). The majority of large scale fishers are migrants (fishers who moved from Kali Adem, Jakarta). These capitalist<sup>4</sup> fishers have substantial capital that they can afford to buy ships with large GT (more than 25 GT) using advanced technology.<sup>5</sup> As a result of this competition of large capitals, price escalation increases, such as cost of boat construction, prices of boat equipment and fishing gears. The impact is that small scale and medium scale fishers who have small capital are more and

more eliminated, especially those who rely only on nets or *purse*.

Generally, large scale fishers in Karangsong use gillnets. Gillnets are considered more advanced and expensive, with more fibers that enable them to catch more fish. They are very practical and not too difficult to use. The length of gillnets can reach tens of kilometers, unlike nets (*purse*) with small coverage and rely on lamp for light. Thus, it is obvious that by using gillnets, fishers can catch fish more easily and in larger amount.

As a consequence of bigger GT weight and larger amount of catch, more freezers and ice blocks are needed to keep the fish fresh and last about one month in the sea. Lately, many fishers use freezers because they are more efficient and effective compared to ice blocks. However, boats that have freezers require more diesel fuel than those that use ice blocks. Large ships with an average of 25 GT require 450 ice blocks, with unit price of Rp 12.000 – Rp 18.000. For one ship, the cost of ice can reach Rp 5,400,000 – Rp 8,100,000.

## Factors Forming a New Class

The development of abovementioned new class is formed by massive development in fisheries sector, both in Eretan and Karang Song. The development is supported by several factors: (1) modernization of fishing gear; (2) modernization of auction system; (3) development of boat industry; (4) complexity of work division among fishers; and (5) particularly in Karang Song, the relocation of Jakarta Kali Adem fishers becomes an important factor in forming social class among fishers in Indramayu. These five factors mark the changes in the map of economy in Indramayu. At this point, Indramayu becomes a center of fisheries in West Java – Indonesia and is in the cycle of global capitalism.

## Class and Income

The results of this research show that the average income of boat crew is Rp 814,473 per trip and the largest income is Rp 4,000,000.

<sup>4</sup> According to Jeudi (Head of Karang Song Village), the entrance of large scale fishers and the construction of docks for large boats have brought about changes in the ecosystem. First, the destruction of ecosystems of mangrove and fishpond. Second, the extinction of habitat of shrimps/crabs. In 2004 fish farmers used to be able to catch 3 kg shrimps/crabs per day. Third, the shift in occupation, from fish farmers to fisher labors (crew) of large ships.

<sup>5</sup> *Gross Tonnage* or formerly termed as *Gross Register Tonnage* is the number of chambers under the tonnage deck and closed chambers above them, subtracted by certain chambers, which are light and wind chambers, wheelhouse, kitchen, stairs, toilets, hatchways of more than ½ % of gross tonnage and chambers that according to regulations are open (such as open shelter deck). The GRT is to obtain ship registration, ship measurement certificate. The meaning of ton here is volume or registered ton. One (1) ton equals to 100 *cubicfeet* or 2.83 M3 (1 M3 = 35.3165 cf).

Meanwhile, the average income of boat owners is Rp 118,921,429 per trip and the largest is Rp 1.2 billion. Furthermore, the data show that the Kuznets ratio or comparison between average income of fishers (boat crew and boat owners) of the 20% largest income group is Rp 5,857,142.86 and average income of fishers of the 40% smallest income group is Rp. 528,160. The fishers in the 20% largest income group are mainly boat owners (employers) who also own the fishing gear. On the contrary, fishers in the 40% group who receive the average lowest income are boat crew.

The discrepancy among classes is more emphasized by looking at the comparison of average income per trip. Result of calculation of Gini index of fishers in research location shows the value of Gini index as 0.878. This means in average the income level among fisher classes is relatively unequal. The inequality is caused by differences in ownership of means of production (ship, technology, manpower and capital). Compared to class of boat crew who have manpower only, class of boat owners have production equipment, and thus they are able to accumulate more income.

Table 1. Average Income and Percentage of Fishers Based on Income Group

Income Group	Average Income of Fishers (Rp/Trip)	Percentage of Fishers (%)
Rp. 29,000 – Rp. 299,000	113,285.71	20.39
RP. 300,000 – Rp. 719,900	528,160.00	24.27
Rp. 720,000 – Rp.	1,338,500.00	24.27

Table 2. Inequality of Income According to World Bank Standard

Income Group	Fishers' Average Income (Rp/Trip)	Percentage (%)		Inequality
		Income	Fishers	
Rp. 29.000 – Rp. 299.000	113,286	0.04	20.39	High
RP. 300.000 – Rp. 719.900	528,160	0.18	24.27	High
Rp. 720.000 – Rp. 2.000.000	1.338,500	0.45	24.27	High
Rp. 2.100.000 – Rp. 40.000.000	5.897,143	1.96	20.39	High
> Rp. 40.000.000	292,545,455	97.38	10.68	Low
<b>Total</b>	<b>300,422,543</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

Therefore, results of measurement of inequality level of fishers' income based on social class in research location, both using measurement of

2,000,000		
Rp. 2,100,000 – Rp. 40,000,000	5,897,142.86	20.39
> Rp. 40,000,000	292,545,454.55	10.68
<b>Average/Amount</b>	<b>32,921,218</b>	<b>100</b>

Similar with the result shown through measurement of Gini index, World Bank standard also shows inequality in distribution of fishers' income in research location. Out of more than 40% of fishers in research location show the percentage of income received by class of boat crew fishers is less than 12%. This means there is inequality among fisher classes, wherein 89.32% fishers receive only 2.62% of total income. On the contrary, 10.68% boat owner fisher class controls 97.38% of total income.

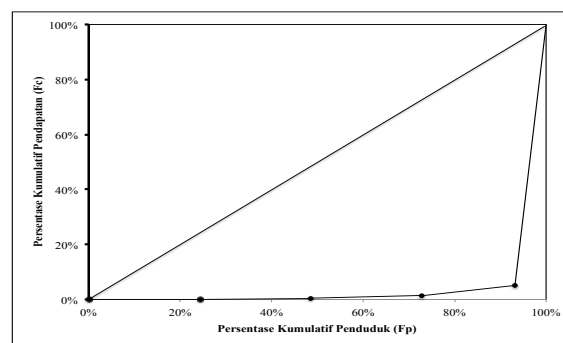


Figure 1. Curve of Distribution of Fishers' Income (Lorenz Curve) in Indramayu

Gini index and World Bank, clearly show the inequality of income between class of employer fishers and class of fisher labors (boat crew).

### Class Consciousness of Labor Fishers

One important form of class consciousness is the feeling of having the same fate and burden among people in the same class. This research shows that 97.8% fisher labor respondents feel they have the same fate and burden as other fisher labors. This shows that from viewpoint of feeling of having the same fate and burden, class consciousness of fisher labors has spread to most fisher labors.

Actually, from the viewpoint of consciousness of the importance in striving for mutual interest, most fishers (59.6%) think fisher labors need to unite in striving for mutual interest. It is also important to note that many fisher labors (40.4%) feel that such unity is unnecessary, and in reality most fisher labors (84.3%) do not become members of existing fisher groups.

One aspect that is of great concern in analysis of class, particularly from the Marxian perspective, is the issue of exploitation. In connection with this issue, this research found that most fisher labors, or 87.6%, feel that their wage or the profit sharing system is fair. It is not surprising that most fisher labors (62.9%) have never protested the current profit sharing/wage system that has

prevailed all this time<sup>6</sup>. In line with this, most fisher labors, or 87.6%, do not feel that the results of their hard work are 'being taken excessively' by their employers. In other words, most fisher labors do not feel that they are being 'exploited' by employers. On the contrary, they think that their employers and the wage/profit sharing system are fair.

This research shows that the feeling of having the same sense of fate and burden and the consciousness of the importance of unity in striving for common interest can in fact be said to have 'ended' there. It is not followed by

efforts to organize the labor/working class to strive for their interest. In other words, the class of fisher labors in Indramayu has reached the stage of *class in itself* only, not yet a *class for itself*. This phenomenon is the same as that found in the class of fisher labors in Balikpapan (Kinseng, 2011).

### Factors that inhibit the formation of 'class for itself' and class conflict

In his study on fishers in Balikpapan, Kinseng (2011) stated several factors that inhibit the formation of class or 'class for itself' among fisher labors are, among others, fragmentation, class permeability, reliance on employers, and absence of leaders. It seems that the same phenomenon is found also among fisher labors in Indramayu.

Symptom of fragmentation of fisher labors is implicitly seen in the data, which show only 76.4% fisher labors feel they have the same fate and burden as other fishers who are from different classes (in this case the modern/large scale class and the traditional/small scale class). Meanwhile, as shown above, 97.8% fisher labor respondents feel they have the same fate and burden as other fisher labors. This means, the feeling of sharing the same fate and burden is, in fact, mainly found in fisher labors of the same class and who work for employers of the same class, for example, fellow small scale fisher labors or medium scale fishers. This certainly also inhibits their consciousness and effort in building the 'power' of fisher labor class as a whole.

The next factor is related with class permeability. In this case, there is an interesting phenomenon that seems commonly found among fisher labors, which is, the feeling of having the same fate and burden with employers where they work. In this research, 73.0 percent labor fishers feel the same fate and burden with employers. This is understandable, among others, because most or 74.2% of employers also set off together with the fisher labors to sea. Employer respondents who set off to sea are also many, 58.1%.

<sup>6</sup> However, it should be noted that actually quite many fisher labors (37.1%) admitted to have protested the prevailing profit sharing/wage system. This shows that there is a latent conflict between fisher labors and employers.



Furthermore, this study also shows that there are still quite many fisher labors (29.2%) who have special relationship with employers. The forms of special relationship may be as family, having the same place of origin or the same ethnic group. This shows that class permeability between fisher labor class and employer is quite high. This finding is the same with the finding by Kinseng (2011) among the fishers in Balikpapan. Furthermore, 90.3 % employer respondents also feel they have the same fate and burden as fisher labors, and 96.8% deem that the labors are not their 'opponents' in the business of catching fish.

This phenomenon certainly affects the social relation between labor class and employer class. It explains the reason conflicts seldom occur between fisher labor class and employer class. This study finds almost all respondents (98.9%) state that they never have conflict with boat owners. The feeling of having the same fate and burden inhibits, and even more eliminates, conflicts between these two classes.

Another factor that plays a role in reducing conflict potential between fisher labors and employers is the fact that most fisher labors (77.5%) consider employers have merit on them. Furthermore, many fisher labors (49.4%) admit they owe money to employers. Many fisher labors (36%) also admit that they usually receive bonus and other supports from employers. These debts surely make fisher labors feel there is a 'bond' between them and employers, as shown by data, in which 49.4% fisher labors admit they have a bond with the owners. Therefore, it is not surprising that most fisher labors (53.9%) feel indebted to employers.

Of course another very important factor is fishers' opinion that is related with sense of justice. As described above, most fishers feel that the prevailing profit sharing/wage system is fair. Moreover, most of them feel the result of their hard work is not 'taken away excessively' by employers. In other words, they do not feel they are exploited by owners; whereas the feelings of injustice and being exploited are very important factors in the process of change from *class in itself* to *class for itself*. Therefore, in the absence of

feeling of injustice and being exploited, it is not surprising that the fisher labor class in Indramayu is still a *class in itself*.

This type of phenomenon is indeed not typical of fishers in Indonesia. In Canada, for example, Muszynski stated that fishers are more difficult to organize compared to workers in fishery industry. "*It proved easier to organize shoreworkers than to bring all fishers into one union*", said Muszynski (Muszynski, 1986:100).

It seems there are no mutual problems or 'enemies' that are perceived only by fisher labors. Meanwhile, Kinseng (2007, 2011) said that mutual problems or 'enemies' are triggers for class struggle. Furthermore, fishers involvement in class struggle itself, in turn, will instigate class formation. As stated by Fairley in his analysis on class formation among fishers community in Newfoundland, Canada, "*...class formation and social development are seen as effects of the struggles of concrete actors...*" (Fairley, 1990:177). (Fairley, 1990:177).

## Conclusions

Based on the results of this research, several conclusions are made:

1. The structure of fisher class in Indramayu comprises fisher labor class, small scale fishers, medium scale fishers, and large scale fishers. The formation of these classes takes a long period, driven by various factors, such as modernization program by the Indonesian Government and relocation of fishers from Kali Adem, Jakarta.
2. There is a substantial inequality of income between employers and labor fishers. This is shown by the value of fishers' Gini Index in the study location, which is classified as very large, 0.878. Inequality is also evident when using the World Bank standard, wherein 89.32% fishers receive only 2.62% of total income. On the contrary, 10.68% of boat owner fisher class controls 97.38% of total income.
3. Class consciousness of labor fishers has spread widely, but only on the level of

feeling of 'having the same fate and burden'; whereas 'critical consciousness' has not yet emerged. Hence, fisher labor class in Indramayu is still limited to '*class in itself*', not yet developed into '*class for itself*'.

### Suggestions

1. There is a need for serious efforts from various parties to decrease discrepancy of income between employers and fisher labors in Indramayu.
2. There is a need to encourage fisher labors to establish an organization as means for struggling for common interest..
3. There is a need to conduct similar research in various locations in Indonesia to obtain an overall picture about class, income, and class consciousness among fishers in Indonesia.

### Acknowledgments

We would like to thank IPB and DIKTI (Directorate General of Higher Education) who provided the fund needed for this research through the 2013 BOPIN scheme. We would also like to thank Ahmad Tarmiji and Tri Budiarto who supported the implementation of this research so that it was well conducted.

### Bibliography

- Babbie, Earl, 1989. *The Practice of Social Research* (Fifth Ed). Wadsworth Publishing Company, Belmont, California.
- Coser, Lewis A., 1977. *Masters of Sociological Thought. Ideas in Historical and Social Context* (Second Ed). Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
- Clement, Wallace, 1986. *The Struggle to Organize. Resistance in Canada's Fishery*. McClelland, & Stewart, The Canadian Publishers, Toronto, Ontario.
- Fairley, Bryant. *The Crisis, the State and Class Formation in the Newfoundland Fishery* in Fairley, Bryant, Colin Leys, and James Sacouman (eds), 1990. *Restructuring and Resistance: Perspectives from Atlantic Canada*, Garamond, Toronto.
- Gerth, H.H., & C. Wright Mills, 1958. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Hamilton, Malcolm, & Maria Hirszowicz, 1987. *Class and Inequality in Pre-Industrial, Capitalist and Communist Societies*. Wheatsheaf Books-Sussex, St. Martin's Press-New York.
- Kinseng, Rilus A, 2013. *Class Consciousness and Class Conflict in Capture Fishery in Indonesia*. *Journal of Rural Indonesia* 1(1), 57-66.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 2011. *Konflik Kelas Nelayan di Indonesia*. Tinjauan Kasus Balikpapan. IPB Press, Bogor.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 2007. *Kelas dan Konflik Kelas pada Kaum Nelayan di Indonesia (Studi Kasus di Balikpapan, Kalimantan Timur)*. Disertasi, Program Pascasarjana, Departemen Sosiologi, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Indonesia.
- Kinseng, Rilus A., Istiqlalayah Muflikhati, & Murdianto, 2010. *Kemiskinan dan Perjuangan Kaum Nelayan di Era Desentralisasi*. Laporan Penelitian, Institut Pertanian Bogor.
- Listianingsih, Windi. 2008. *Sistem Pemasaran Hasil Perikanan dan Kemiskinan Nelayan (Studi Kasus di PPI Muara Angke, Kota Jakarta Utara)*. Skripsi. Program Studi Manajemen Bisnis dan Ekonomi Perikanan-Kelautan, Fakultas Perikanan dan Ilmu Kelautan, Institut Pertanian Bogor.
- Kabupaten Cilacap, Provinsi Jawa Tengah), Skripsi, Departemen Sains Komunikasi dan Pengembangan Masyarakat, Fakultas Ekologi Manusia, Institut Pertanian Bogor.
- Marshall, Catherine, & Gretchen B. Rossman, 1989. *Designing Qualitative Research*. Sage Publication.

- Marx, Karl, & Frederick Engels, 1948/1991. *The Communist Manifesto*. International Publishers, New York.
- Sibeon, Roger, 2004. *Rethinking Social Theory*. SAGE Publications.
- Stavenhagen, Rodolfo, 1975. *Social Classes in Agrarian Societies* (trans. by Judy Alder Hellman). Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York.
- Wallace, Ruth A., & Alison Wolf, 2006. *Contemporary Sociological Theory. Expanding the Classical Tradition* (Sixth Ed). Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.
- Weber, Max, 1978. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Vol 1 and 2). Edited by Guenter Roth and Clauss Wittich. University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 1958. *Class, Status, Party* in Gerth, H.H. and C. Wright Mills, 1958. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Wright, Erik Olin, 1987. *Classes*. Verso, London-New York.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 1991. "The Conceptual Status of Class Structure in Class Analysis" in Scott G. McNall, Rhonda F. Levine, & Rick Fantasia (editors), 1991. *Bringing Class Back In. Contemporary and Historical Perspectives*. Westview Press
- Mouzelis, Nicos P, 2008. *Modern and Postmodern Social Theorizing. Bridging the Divide*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Muszynski, Alicja, 1986. "Class Formation and Class Consciousness: The Making of Shoreworkers in the BC Fishing Industry". *Studies in Political Economy* 20, Summer 1986 pp 85-116.
- Neuman, W. Lawrence, 1997. *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Third Edition). Allyn and Bacon.
- Rohyana AB, Sarah, 2012. *Tingkat Kesejahteraan dan Strategi Nafkah Nelayan (Kasus kelurahan Tegalkamulyan, Kecamatan Cilacap Selatan,*