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Marketing Channels of Fresh Fish Products Adopted by Female Traders at Sendangbiru, Malang, East Java

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is one of the maritime countries with large coastal areas. One coastal area with a wealth of marine products is Sendangbiru in Sumbermanjing Wetan, Malang, East Java. Sendangbiru Beach is directly facing the Indian Ocean and has the potential for abundant fishing. The research aims to investigate the marketing channels adopted by six women in trading fresh fish. The data were gathered using interviews and focus group discussions involving six female traders with at least 3-year of experience selling various fish types. The findings suggested that among the four marketing channels in Sendangbiru, the first and fourth were more efficient than the others. Channel one and four were the shortest channels, causing the price difference between fishermen and consumers not to be high. Three recommendations are offered to provide better marketing channels for women, including empowerment through organizations, support from the government, and awareness of the importance of fisherwomen in social and economic structures.

KEYWORDS: *fresh fish, marketing channel, marine, Sendangbiru*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the maritime countries with large coastal areas. This condition is a major factor determining the majority of occupations and living habits of the surrounding societies. Coastal areas, according to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 27 of 2007 concerning Management of Coastal Areas and Small Islands, are transitional areas between land and

marine ecosystems affected by changes both on land and at sea.

Coastal resources comprise biological resources, non-biological resources, artificial resources, and environmental services. Biological resources include fish, coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves, and other marine biota. Meanwhile, non-biological resources include sand, seawater, and seabed minerals. Artificial resources encompass

marine infrastructure and environmental services.

Coastal communities are people living in coastal areas, practicing coastal values, and fully dependent on coastal resources. These communities are generally categorized as poor communities needing empowerment. Community empowerment for coastal communities is an effort to provide facilities, encouragement, or assistance to help them make the best choices in utilizing coastal resources sustainably.

Most people living in coastal areas are fishermen, *blantik*, and *pengambek*. A fisherman uses a ship or small boat to fish at sea to meet daily needs. Most fishermen live and work around the sea (Rindawati, 2021). Meanwhile, *blantik* is a traditional term, meaning a broker for buying and selling, and *pengambek* means provider of capital/loans.

One of the coastal areas with a wealth of marine products is Sendangbiru in Sumbermanjing Wetan, Malang, East Java. Sendangbiru directly faces the Indian Ocean, which has the potential for abundant fishing. The port in Sendangbiru has an important role in fishing activities, from catching to selling. The harbor is under Unit Pengelola Teknis Pelabuhan Perikanan Pantai (UPT PPP) [Coastal Fishing Port Technical Management Unit] Pondokdadap, one of the largest fishing harbors in Malang for tuna, mackerel, and skipjack.

Fishermen deliver or deposit their fish to *pengambek* who then sell the fish to large traders (Muda et al, 2023). The price set by *pengambek* is

a predetermined price based on the size of the catch and years of practice (Marpuah et al., 2020). Thus, there is no standard price for both fishermen and traders. *Pengambek* and fishermen make an agreement, where *pengambek* is willing to provide capital to help fishermen go to sea, buy tools, and maintain the ship, with the condition that every catch must be deposited with the *pengambek* who provide loans (Kudrati & Isdianto, 2024).

This practice has positive and negative sides for each party. The relationship initially built based on the principle of agreement and symbiosis mutualism turns into trust. It is because the agreement process lacks legality and does not have any proper documentation for both *pengambek*, who provide capital for the fishermen, and the fishermen, who have to deposit their catch. Another fact revealed is that fishermen entrust the selling price to *pengambek* as a price taker. The downside for the fishermen is that they can be disadvantaged by the price set by the *pengambek*, which is far below the market price. As for the *pengambek*, they can be bound by debt if the fishermen do not deliver their catch (Kudrati & Isdianto, 2024).

Marketing channels are a path or rule to build cooperation between producers and potential consumers. In addition, marketing involves not only producers and consumers but also intermediaries. A good marketing channel has the shortest route between the producer and the end consumer with little price difference between the two. Channel-related problems occur not only in agricultural commodities but also in fisheries commodities.

This marketing concept presupposes that the product must be customized to consumer needs. Strategic marketing emerges as a result of continuous changes in consumer tastes and needs, requiring renewal of product variety and quality. Kotler et al. (2013) suggest five terms of marketing concept: (1) needs, wants, and consumer demand; (2) market offerings of goods, services, and experiences; (3) consumer satisfaction and value; (4) exchanges and relationships; (5) markets. It means that marketing is carried out on the basis of understanding of consumers' needs and wants, market offerings that provide satisfaction and consumer value, and exchanges between consumers and sellers in different markets.

Marketing is more than just selling and promoting activities. The flow of goods from producers to consumers is referred to as marketing. Marketing institutions play a role in making producers prosperous and facilitate marketing. Its role must lead to a smooth flow of goods and services to meet consumers in a certain period of time, place, quantity, quality, and price (Soetrisno & Suwandari, 2016). The institutions involved in the distribution of goods include (1) producers, (2) middlemen or intermediaries, and (3) end consumers (Firdaus, 2009). Firdaus (2009) further explains that intermediaries can be divided into two groups: (a) a merchant middleman, an intermediary who owns all the goods he/she markets, including wholesalers and retailers, and (b) an agent middleman, an intermediary who does not take ownership of all the goods he/she

handles, including facilitating and supplemental agent.

Marketing channels can also be interpreted as a collection of interdependent organizations in the process of producing goods and services. Arbi et al. (2018) state that there are simple and complex marketing channels depending on the type and structure of the commodity market. Monopoly market systems have marketing channels that tend to be simple when compared to other market systems. Soetrisno and Suwandari (2016) divide marketing channels into simple and complex channels. Marketing institutions play an important role in determining marketing channels. Various marketing institutions distribute goods from producers to consumers. Each agricultural product has a different marketing channel. The marketing channel of an item can also change or differ depending on the circumstances, time, and technological advances available.

Kotler et al. (2013) broadly define marketing as a social and managerial process that involves individuals or organizations getting what they need or want by going through the process of creating and exchanging value with other parties. In particular, marketing is a process carried out by business organizations that involves customers, creates good relationships with customers, and builds customer value so that a business organization gets rewards. According to Shinta (2011), marketing is all activities related to the process of distributing products and services from producers to consumers.

The concept of marketing is different from sales. Marketing focuses on the needs of the buyer, while sales only focus on the needs of the seller. Marketing focuses on finding effective and efficient ways to create customer satisfaction. This relates to the product and everything done, from production, distribution, to consumers. Sales only focuses on creating products to get rewards (money) without paying attention to customer needs (Kotler et al., 2013).

The distribution of fresh fish in Sendangbiru involves a variety of marketing channels. Long chain flows can create high price disparities between farmers and traders to consumers (Lisanty et al., 2020). Widyawati (2016) states that the length of the chain of activity will increase the existing marketing margin and lower the farmer's profit. Marketing activities begin with fishermen going to sea and selling fresh fish to traders. The next activity is that traders, as one of the marketing institutions, buy and resell the fish. The transaction process also involves price bargaining between fishermen and traders.

The price offered follows the price of fresh fish in the market, but the role of price shaper is held by market prices. Traders act as price takers, so traders have more bargaining power amidst limited market access. Fishermen bring their fish to the traders as the fishermen consider the traders to know the market price of the fish. This research looks at the marketing channels of fisherwomen or fresh fish sellers in Sendang Biru.

METHODS

Research Method

This research is a qualitative study employing survey methodology. Survey research can examine either large or small populations, and the data are derived from samples drawn from the community (Sugiyono, 2013). The data in this research were gathered through Focus Group Discussions and interviews involving selected groups.

Respondents

The respondents were chosen using purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is used to carefully choose respondents based on specific requirements (Made, 2006). Based on the advice or data from earlier respondents, the snowball method was employed to gather further information on other potential respondents. In qualitative research, the snowball technique is a method that uses important respondents with a wealth of knowledge to find other possible respondents that meet the research objectives' requirements (Ilyas et al., 2021). The respondents were six female traders with at least 3-year of experience selling various fish types.

Marketing Channel

The path of a product or service from the marketing agent to the customer is known as the marketing channel. The distance between the product and the buyer, the nature of the commodity, the size of the production process, and the financial condition of the producer affect the duration of the marketing channel (Pambudi et al., 2017). Descriptive analysis was used to determine the distribution channel model. Each

marketing distribution channel was described by categorizing all existing channels. Descriptive analysis looks at the causes of a particular symptom and attempts to describe the state of things as they were at the time the research was conducted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Description of Sendangbiru, Tambakrejo

Sendangbiru is a coastal area with potential for fisheries in Tambakrejo, Sumbermanjing Wetan, Malang. The potential of fisheries in Sendangbiru is supported by the coastal fishing port called UPT PPP Pondokdadap. UPT PPP Pondokdadap is a technical implementation unit under the Capture Fishery Sector of the East Java Provincial Maritime and Fisheries Affairs Office established based on East Java Governor Regulation No. 74/2018. Fishing ports are classified into four classes or types: a. Class A Fishing Port, referred to as the Ocean Fishing Port (PPS); b. Class B Fishing Port, referred to as the Nusantara Fishing Port (PPN); c. Class C Fishing Port, referred to as the Coastal Fishing Port (PPP); and d. Class D Fishing Port, referred to as Fish Landing Base (PPI). The Fish Auction Place (TPI) hosts fishermen's fish stalls inaugurated by the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries on February 5, 2019.

Tambakrejo is one of the villages located in the coastal area, which has hilly land conditions and is inhabited by approximately 8,200 people. Most of the livelihoods are fishermen, and some are rain-fed rice farmers. People living in Tambakrejo have mixed lifestyles

and cultures. It is because Tambakrejo, especially Sendangbiru hamlet, residents come from various regions, bringing various influences and cultural patterns. However, they generally prioritize togetherness and mutual cooperation to develop their village and meet the needs of the community. Tambakrejo has a hilly topography with moderate to steep slopes at an altitude of (50-250) m above sea level. The slope is quite varied, flat with slopes (<3%), relatively gentle with slopes (3-8%), gentle with slopes (8-15%), rather steep with slopes (25-40%), and very steep with slopes (>40%).

Fresh Fish Marketing Channels in Sendangbiru

An increase in the number of fishermen generally occurs during the fish season. The fish season (peak season) is a period of time when fish stocks in the waters reach a large number with abundant catches. The fish season in Sendangbiru and other waters in Indonesia is strongly influenced by the west and east seasons, where each lasts for a certain period of time. Besides, the fish season is closely related to the changing seasons. The fish season in Sendangbiru waters can be divided into three.

- a. The peak season occurs from July to October and is characterized by large but smooth winds, currents, and sea waves moving from the east to the southeast towards the west. In this season, fishermen are actively catching and installing FADs as it is the harvesting time.
- b. The medium season occurs from April to May and November to December and is characterized

by strong winds with large waves and a rough nature (breaking waves). During this period, fishermen still carry out fishing activities but begin to decrease somewhat.

- c. The lean season occurs from January to March, characterized by large ocean currents and waves, and usually coincides with the rainy season. During this season, fishermen rest and do not actively go to the sea. Generally, during this season, local fishermen use the time to repair fishing gear and boats, while *andon* fishermen (fishermen who fish outside their home areas either permanently or not within a certain period of time) return to their homes. *Andon* fishermen carry out fishing activities outside their native areas to increase the productivity of their catches.

Pondokdadap Fish Auction Place (TPI) is intended to further increase fishermen's income and welfare through reasonable fish prices, which can protect fishermen from unhealthy competition by traders or middlemen. The open purchase of fish by means of an auction releases fishermen from buying fish using bonds from *pengambek/blantik* or middlemen that have been detrimental to fishermen. Fish auctioned at the Fish Auction Place (TPI) in 2008 decreased by 30.61% compared to 2007. The highest fish auctioned were skipjack, baby tuna, tuna, and kite. Fish auctioned at TPI every month tends to fluctuate and is generally influenced by weather factors and auction prices.

In Sendangbiru, marketing is conducted using a fleet of trucks and

only occurs when there is a demand from buyers. Sales and delivery are in the form of fresh fish. Here, the sale of processed fish is uncommon, except for smoked fish. The majority of fish sold is fresh. This is why marketing does not utilize online media; the sales system is that buyers survey directly to the TPI or can also obtain information from friends or relatives.

During the in-depth interview, a respondent expressed a desire for online marketing training to facilitate business growth. Therefore, revenue can be expected to increase, not only from fresh fish but also from the sale of processed fish, particularly smoked fish, which can serve as a distinctive feature of Sendangbiru. The population in Sendangbiru is primarily engaged in fishing and trading. It is, therefore, subject to competition between businesses, particularly in the context of auctions, which are conducted to meet the demands of consumers.

Offline marketing uses trucks with ice block shavings without plastic packaging for the fish. Trucks are filled with ice blocks on which ordered fish are placed. In this way, fresh fish products last up to two days. Besides fishermen, traders also take part in the fish auction process. Traders distribute the fish products purchased to kiosks or several places/regions. There are four marketing channels in Sendangbiru.

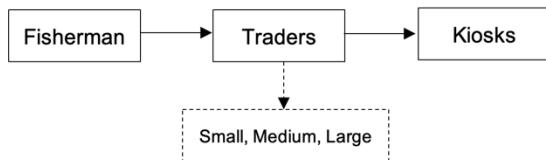
1) Marketing Channel 1



Fishermen bring their catches to *blantik* for processing. The *blantik* then prepare or package the fish and manage its distribution to various

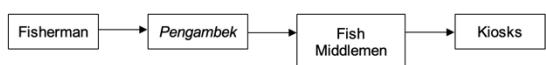
retail locations or kiosks. At the kiosks, the fish is sold to consumers. This marketing channel connects the primary producer (fishermen) to the end consumer through a series of intermediaries that add value at each stage. Coordination between fishermen, *blantik*, and kiosks is essential to maintain supply chain efficiency and ensure timely delivery to consumers.

2) Marketing Channel 2



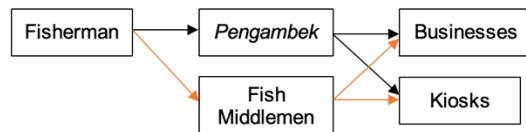
Fishermen sell their catches to small, medium, or large traders. Most traders in Sendangbiru are small and medium traders. Small traders deal with local distribution, while medium traders manage a broader distribution to various retail outlets in other cities. In the end, the fish is distributed to kiosks, where it is sold directly to consumers. In this case, each stage of the channel prioritizes maintaining the freshness of the fish. Efficient logistics are essential, especially as the fish distribution through trader to retail uses trucks with shaved ice to prevent fish from spoiling.

3) Marketing Channel 3



This marketing channel has a long path from fishermen to kiosks to consumers. This long channel makes a significant gap in price between each channel. It starts with the fishermen depositing their catches with the *pengambek*. After that, the *pengambek* sell them to small or large fish middlemen, who then distribute them to each kiosk.

4) Marketing Channel 4



The fourth channel is similar to the previous one but shorter. Fishermen can bring their fish to *pengambek* or fish middlemen, usually medium-sized fish middlemen, who then sell the fish to kiosks or businesses. Businesspersons in Sendangbiru mostly sell smoked fish to visitors or tourists.

Agent Description

a. Fisherman

Fishers are at the beginning of the supply chain, capturing fish from aquatic environments such as seas, rivers, or lakes. Fishers use various techniques and equipment, such as nets or fishing rods, depending on the type of targeted fish and fishing conditions. Fishermen provide raw products, the freshly caught fish. This role is particularly important as the quality and type of fish caught form the basis for other channels.

b. *Blantik*

Blantik refers to an intermediary that can be a processing facility, a distributor, or a combination of both. This entity plays an important role in handling fish after it is harvested. *Blantik* is responsible for processing, packaging, and ensuring the fish is ready to market to various sales outlets, including retail locations like kiosks.

c. Kiosks

A kiosk represents the retail end of the channel where consumers can purchase the fish. It is typically a

small stand or shop that sells directly to the public. Kiosks are often found in markets, street corners, or other high-traffic areas where convenience and accessibility are key. Kiosks display and showcase the fish to attract customers, make it available for purchase, and handle customers' transactions. The kiosk plays a vital role in engaging with consumers, offering them a direct way to purchase fresh fish and potentially influencing their buying decisions.

d. Traders

Traders are intermediaries that facilitate the transport of fish from fishers to retail outlets such as kiosks. Traders can range in size, scope, and involvement in adding multiple layers of distribution and sales. Traders are categorized into small, medium, and large based on scale and operations. Small traders are typically local or regional and operate on a smaller scale. They may buy fresh fish directly from fishermen or local auctions. Meanwhile, medium traders operate on a larger scale and in broader areas. They often manage a more substantial volume of fresh fish and have better storage capabilities. Furthermore, large traders are major players in fish distribution. They typically handle large volumes of fish and have contracts with multiple fishermen.

e. *Pengambek*

Pengambek refers to intermediaries or local agents who operate between the fisherman and the next distribution. In Sendangbiru, *pengambek* buy fish directly from fishermen or at auctions. They also sort and grade the fish based on quality, type, and size. Other than that, *pengambek*

provide capital or loans to fishermen who will return the loans using the fish catches. They also manage the fish's transportation, especially out-of-town shipping, to buyers/consumers.

f. Fish Middleman

A fish middleman acts as an intermediary between *pengambek* and the final retail outlets, such as kiosks. In Sendangbiru, the middleman is usually a small-scale distributor and a local wholesaler.

g. Businesses

The business or entrepreneur represents the final stage in the marketing channel before the product reaches the end consumer. In Sendangbiru, many entrepreneurs are engaged in fish processing but are only limited to processed, smoked fish, a superior product or food specialty of Malang. The business sells smoked fish products to tourists or visitors.

Fish from Sendangbiru has three types of quality, each with its own price. The fish quality depends on external conditions, weather and season. From the 12th to 3rd month, the supply of fish is minimal, so the price becomes expensive but with not too good quality. The fish mostly caught by fishermen are skipjack and small/baby tuna. The following are the quality and characteristics of fresh fish from Sendangbiru.

1) "Good" Quality

The eyes of the fish look bright and clear; the eyeballs tend to be black, with bright and shiny fish scales. The main thing is that it does not cause unpleasant or foul odors.

Fish with this type of quality costs IDR 15,000 - IDR 26,000 each.

2) "Semi" Quality

The eyes are bright, but the fish is limp. The fish scales are no longer bright. Although the fish is no longer fresh, with meat that has begun to adhere to the bones and skin, no rotten odor occurs. Fish with this quality costs IDR 10,000 - IDR 20,000 each.

3) "BS" Quality

This third quality is more commonly referred to as unfresh fish. The fish has a dark color with a mushy meat texture or has lost its firmness. Usually, this type of fish is turned into processed fish products and not sold fresh. It costs IDR 2,000 - IDR 3,000 each.

CONCLUSION

The marketing channel involving *pengambek* has positive and negative sides for each party. The relationship built initially based on the principle of agreement and symbiosis mutualism turns into trust. It is because the agreement process lacks legality and does not have proper documentation for both *pengambek*, who provide capital for the fishermen, and the fishermen, who have to deposit their catch. Another fact is that fishermen entrust the selling price to *pengambek* as a price taker. There are seven stakeholders: fishermen, blantik, kiosks, traders, *pengambek*, fish middlemen, and businesses. All the stakeholders distribute fresh fish from fishermen to consumers.

Fresh fish from Sendangbiru have three types of quality, each with its own price. The fish quality

depends on the weather and season. The fish mostly caught by fishermen are skipjack and small/baby tuna.

The following can be done to help women fish traders adopt more efficient marketing channels.

1. It is crucial to strengthen Kelompok Usaha Nelayan Perempuan Migran (KUPMIN) [Migrant Fisherwomen Business Group] or any fisherwomen organizations in Sendangbiru. These organizations help improve community access to information, resources, and better markets. In addition, they can serve as a platform for migrant fisherwomen and local residents to collaborate, share knowledge and experiences, and develop sustainable joint ventures. Strengthening organizations also help negotiate better prices and expand marketing networks for village fisheries products.
2. The government and relevant institutions need to provide support in the form of training, education, and access to equipment and technology needed by migrant fisherwomen to improve their skills and competitiveness for market expansion.
3. It is important to raise awareness and recognize the role and contribution of migrant fisherwomen in the social and economic structure. An inclusive approach that respects the status of migrant workers as equal members of society is needed.

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ABOUT

SALASIKA etymologically derived from Javanese language meaning 'brave woman'. SALASIKA JOURNAL (SJ) is founded in July 2019 as an international open access, scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal publishing theoretically innovative and methodologically diverse research in the fields of gender studies, sexualities and feminism. Our conception of both theory and method is broad and encompassing, and we welcome contributions from scholars around the world.

SJ is inspired by the need to put into visibility the Indonesian and South East Asian women to ensure a dissemination of knowledge to a wider general audience.

SJ selects at least several outstanding articles by scholars in the early stages of a career in academic research for each issue, thereby providing support for new voices and emerging scholarship.

AUDIENCE

SJ aims to provide academic literature which is accessible across disciplines, but also to a wider 'non-academic' audience interested and engaged with social justice, ecofeminism, human rights, policy/advocacy, gender, sexualities, concepts of equality, social change, migration and social mobilisation, inter-religious and international relations and development.

There are other journals which address those topics, but SJ approaches the broad areas of gender, sexuality and feminism in an integrated fashion. It further addresses the issue of international collaboration and inclusion as existing gaps in the area of academic publishing by (a) crossing language boundaries and creating a space for publishing and (b) providing an opportunity for innovative emerging scholars to engage in the academic dialogue with established researchers.

STRUCTURE OF THE JOURNAL

All articles will be preceded by an abstract (150-200 words), keywords, main text introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion; acknowledgments; declaration of interest statement; references; appendices (as appropriate); table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages); figures; figure captions (as a list); and a contributor biography (150 words). Word length is 4,000-10,000 words, including all previous elements.

TIMELINE AND SCHEDULE

Twice a year: February and July.

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