



## LIMINALITAS PADA PEREMPUAN ETNIS JAWA BERSTATUS JANDA DI DESA SAMBIREJO TIMUR KABUPATEN DELI SERDANG

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### Abstract

*This research is a field research that tries to explain the community's view of Javanese ethnic women who are widows, analyze the stages of liminality and analyze the impact of liminality experienced by Javanese women who are widows in Sambirejo Timur Village, Deli Serdang Regency. This study used a qualitative research method with an ethnographic approach. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out by participant observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. The analysis technique used in this study is the 5 (five) stages of ethnographic writing. The results showed that the community's views on Javanese ethnic women with widow status varied, some gave positive and negative views, while the causes of society still gave negative views of widows due to cultural factors, historical factors, educational factors, and age factors. The Liminality Stage experienced by Javanese ethnic women is in the status of the separation stage, namely the stage of separation of the subject from society. The liminal stage which is full of confusion and the reaggregation stage is the stage where the subject returns to its original state back to the family, society and the general public. The impact of liminality experienced by Javanese ethnic women in the village of East Sambirejo, the negative impact is the temptation of nose men, lack of confidence in running life, and the psychological impact of depression, while the positive impact felt by widows with liminality they consider themselves to be women tough and independent.*

**Keywords:** *Liminality, Women, Javanese Ethnicity, Widows, Impact*

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan yang mencoba menjelaskan pandangan masyarakat tentang perempuan etnis Jawa yang berstatus janda, menganalisis tahapan terjadinya liminalitas dan menganalisis dampak liminalitas yang dialami perempuan etnis Jawa berstatus janda di Desa Sambirejo Timur Kabupaten Deli Serdang. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini dilakukan dengan observasi partisipan, wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi. Teknik analisis yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu teknik analisis 5 (lima) tahapan menulis etnografi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pandangan masyarakat terhadap perempuan etnis Jawa berstatus janda berbeda-beda ada yang memberikan pandangan positif dan negatif, adapun faktor penyebab masyarakat masih memberikan pandangan negatif kepada janda karena adanya faktor budaya, faktor historis, faktor pendidikan, dan faktor usia. Tahapan Liminalitas yang dialami perempuan etnis Jawa berstatus tahapan separasi yaitu tahapan

pemisahan subjek dari masyarakat. Tahapan liminal yang penuh akan kebingungan dan tahapan *reaggregation* tahapan dimana subjek kembali pada keadaan semula kembali pada keluarga masyarakat dan khalayak umum. Dampak liminalitas yang dialami perempuan etnis Jawa di desa Sambirejo Timur, dampak negatifnya yaitu Godaan laki-laki hidung, tidak percaya diri dalam menajalankan kehidupan, dan dampak psikologi berupa depresi, sedangkan dampak positif yang di rasakan janda dengan adanya liminalitas mereka menganggap dirinya menjadi sosok perempuan yang tangguh dan mandiri.

**Kata Kunci:** *Liminalitas, Perempuan, Etnis Jawa, Janda, Dampak*

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## A. Introduction

The level of education greatly influences a person when they finish their studies and want to find work in society. People who have a high level of education will get a job more quickly than those with a low level of education such as secondary and elementary school levels (Ball 2014). However, the level of education is not always the key for someone to find a job. This is due to the community's perception that people who have graduated with a bachelor's degree are capable and ready to be employed. Because during his education, he has learned many things and has become a professional in his field (Pobas 2022; Werdi Saraswati dan Hendry Cahyono 2014). Being unemployed means not having a secure or basic job. Factors that cause a person to become unemployed are due to lack of skills, the availability of jobs being less than the number of job seekers, low education, having higher education but not having job opportunities due to lack of access, so there is the potential for not getting a job. The number of scholars increases every year, while employment does not increase (Anin 2023; Ishak and Sy 2018; Julyyanti et al. 2022).

Lack of jobs because of the increasing number of graduates every year. Most graduates are willing to work anything to meet their needs, be it working as farmers, ranchers, construction workers, or working in restaurants (Julyyanti et al. 2022; Parsa 2017). The things that cause scholars to work inappropriately due to the field of job is changing and developing so fast along with the development of science and technology. While educational institutions do not provide training, students do not get skills that can be directly applied to the world of work (Cheng and Jacob 2008). Previous research conducted by Widyastuti (2012) shows that in Indonesia today, higher education institutions are more profile-oriented but without being followed by the provision of adequate and quality facilities and infrastructure, resulting in

graduates who are unskilled and lacking in skills. That's why the need for productive labour is limited, there is a gap between supply and demand for educated labour which causes educated unemployment to be relatively high.

Wijayanti (2018) explains that many university graduates are still unemployed. This is caused by a lack of jobs and a lack of capital to start a business as a solution to obtain results. This happens a lot, especially in rural communities. The long-term impact is that they finance through loan sharks (Bacotang et al. 2016; Bourdieu 2018; Paulus and Azmanajaya 2020; Strand 2014). However, the moneylender program has not met the needs of students to finance and open a business. Therefore, graduates must do anything to support their business and their life needs. This is the same as what happened in Central Malaka where there were several scholars whose jobs did not match their skills, and some became unemployed. Some of them work in gardens, in rice fields, some raise catfish, some open businesses such as kiosks, some work as village secretaries, and some work as cooperative officers. They come from various levels of education and different expertise such as fisheries, law, education, and accounting (Malaifani 2023; Rika and Nurdin 2022; Syahrul and Datuk 2020).

Based on these problems, the researcher wants to conduct research related to the relationship between education level and work. The reason for choosing this research is because in Barene Village, Central Malaka District, Malacca Regency many people work not according to their educational background. This is due to increasingly demanding living conditions and limited employment opportunities. This kind of situation encourages them to work anything to make ends meet and have an income. Therefore, it is important to conduct this research to determine the relationship between education level and employment and its impact on society.

## **B. Method**

The research method used in this study is qualitative. We chose the qualitative method because it was to understand the relationship between education level and community employment in Barene Village, Central Malacca District, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The research subjects were 8 parents and 8 children with different levels of education and jobs. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. There were several activities carried out in analysing data with the Miles and Huberman model, including data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification.

## C. Result and Discussion

### 1. Correlation Between Education Degrees and Occupation

Education and work are two important factors in determining a person's social status. People who have high educational degrees find it easy to get a job, whereas people who have a low educational degree will find it difficult to get a job. However, education is not the only determinant of someone getting a job. Profession or knowledge obtained from tertiary institutions does not fully facilitate or help someone to get a job in society. This is because job opportunities are very limited to be willing to accept various existing professions. Lack of job opportunities causes people to work not following their profession or expertise and even prefer to open their own business outside of their profession.

Based on the researcher's interview with Mikhael Seran Bria, a graduate of fisheries, said "My major is fisheries, but I prefer farming because I think farming is more practical and profitable. As farmers, we can work anytime and anywhere, not bound by time." and rules" (6 February 2023). This was corroborated by his parent, saying that "yes, he is a fisheries graduate who graduated in 2012. Farming is his own choice. As a parent, I only support whatever is best for him. Even though I used to be often teased by neighbours, that's not important to respond because the main thing is to focus on work" (6 February 2023).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations, a job based on profession or expertise is very difficult nowadays and difficult to find. Someone must be able to do anything, one of which is farming instead of having to wait and hope to work according to his profession or expertise. Choosing to work as a farmer even though the results obtained depend on effort and hard work. So do not be surprised if many choose to become unemployed because they are too lazy to apply or find work.

Bacotang et al. (2016) stated that the things that make it difficult for someone to get a job based on a profession in Indonesia are job opportunities, ability and experience. The amount of competition in the world can make it difficult for job seekers to be able to get a job according to expertise. This makes job seekers who do not pass the selection have to discourage them from getting a job. A person's ability is also a factor causing the difficulty of getting a job. If you do not have the ability to match the demand for educational background, it will make it difficult for a person to be accepted into a job. Experience also determines whether someone is worthy to work. Someone who has qualified experience makes them easy to accept.

In addition, problems regarding the relationship between education level and employment can also be known from the following interviews with researchers. Based on the interview with Bernadita Seran, who graduated from high school, said "I only graduated from high school and did not go to college because my parents have no money. Then I started a small business to sell products such as coffee, sugar, cigarettes, tobacco and others. My daily income can be up to Rp. 500,000 and the lowest is Rp. 200,000. Then I collect money to add other items. From this income, I feel that I have enough to make ends meet" (February 7, 2023).

This interview was encouraged by Yasintah Seran who said "he is right, my child only graduated from high school because he wanted to continue studying, but we lacked capital. So, I help him with sales every day. When opening a business, I feel there has been a change because it's easier to get money than before. I feel that I have more than enough to make ends meet, even though the goods sold are still lacking" (7 February 2023). The interview above is supported by the researcher's observation that there is a mini market that only provides some of the basic needs of buyers.

Based on the results of the interviews and observations, it can be seen that weak economic ability can cause a person to only be able to attend senior high school. This is due to the expensive tuition fees. The problem became the impetus and motivation for him to open a business, which became more practical efficient, and very helpful. In addition, the products provided are following the needs of buyers even though there are still many shortcomings. With erratic income, but able to meet their primary and secondary needs. Even though it is simple, fulfilling basic needs can create happiness and prosperity in life. According to Sunusi (2014), business is a value-oriented action because when choosing to become an entrepreneur, the main thing to work on is achievement. Product quality, services provided, and customer satisfaction are the main concerns. Therefore, all business activities carried out must always be evaluated and must be better than before.

Furthermore, based on an interview with Santina Namok, a Bachelor of Biology Education, said "I graduated with a degree in biology education but was asked by the principal to teach history at SMP Negeri Halioan because there are already a lot of biology teachers. I agree because history is not too difficult. The students who I teach achieve satisfactory grades because I use good learning methods. I only get paid Rp. 1,800,000 for teaching 3 months. I do it because I love education, and I have continued to serve until now" (February 8, 2023). Similarly, interview Belandina Namok, the parent of Santina Namok, said "Yes, that's true

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because my child was asked directly by the school principal to teach history lessons instead of just staying at home. His salary is only Rp. 1,800. 000 for three months. Usually, the salary is immediately given to me to buy necessities for the family" (08 February 2023).

This can be concluded that teachers majoring in biology education can teach history subjects. This is due to a shortage of history teachers at the school. However, based on the statement above, it is said that all students who were taught finished with satisfactory learning outcomes. What becomes a particular pride is when the teacher does not say and manifest his love for education. He is willing to teach and continue to serve even though the wages he receives do not match the time, energy and thoughts he sacrifices for education. This is an example for other teachers so that they are able to realize their love for education, not the other way around. According to Syahrul, Arifin, and Datuk (2021), an educator has a heart filled with compassion. This is one of the lessons and examples that both students and teachers need to emulate. Furthermore, anger in education must be avoided because being angry and emotional can be a factor in failure in building education as well as achieving the expected educational goals.

Furthermore, the researcher also interviewed Ferdinandus Bria, a person who only graduated from elementary school but has a catfish farming business, saying "I am a catfish entrepreneur, my educational background is only elementary school graduation. I am interested in becoming a fish entrepreneur because my father is a catfish entrepreneur. Apart from that, my income is also satisfying to fulfil my daily life" (9 February 2023). This interview was corroborated by Hendrikus Mali who is the father of Ferdinandus Bria who said that "he became a catfish entrepreneur because he learned from me. Although sometimes motivated him to just go to school, he refused and was more interested in becoming an entrepreneur. As for income, it depends on the crowds of buyers. With such an income, I think it is more than enough to make ends meet" (9 February 2023).

This can be seen that to become an entrepreneur you do not need a higher education. This is like the statement above, with only an elementary school (SD) education background, someone is able to open a business, namely a catfish business. Furthermore, the researcher's interview with Alosius Nahak is a law graduate but works as an officer of a Savings and Loans cooperative. In the interview, he said "I graduated with a law degree but worked as a cooperative officer because it was an opportunity to get a job. I felt that when we went to college, we

eventually needed a job. I have worked for about three years and got a monthly salary of Rp. 1.500 .000" (10 February 2023).

This was encouraged by Meliana Nahak Nahak who said "My child is a graduate and has been working at the Swastisari Savings and Loans Cooperative for about 3 years. This is because when he graduated, he received information that someone needed labour, then he decided to work at a cooperative, his salary was 1,500,000 and from the results of his savings he saved money to buy necessities for the family" (10 February 2023). A law graduate can also work as a cooperative officer. We know that a cooperative is a unit that serves capital savings and loans for those in need. This is because cooperatives are an effort of economic movement for the common people to have a business spirit and act independently without having to depend on the government. Cooperatives play a role in creating an advanced, just and prosperous society. It is for this reason that a Law graduate is needed to run the business of savings and loan cooperatives for small communities.

## **2. The Impact of Education Degree on Occupation**

Based on the results of the interviews described on the previous page regarding the relationship between education level and employment in Malaka District, it is stated that education level is not the only way to determine someone's success, but it is skill or intention and effort that determines it. The highest levels of education do not mean the more successful, conversely the lower the level of education does not mean that they are not able to compete with the world of work. The following are some of the results of interviews with researchers in the field regarding the impact of education level on employment.

According to Miranda Fahik, an accounting graduate, "My intention was to open my own business because it was difficult to get a job, and in the end, I just chose to work to help my parents. Finding a job was difficult and I was working to help my parents while raising capital for business" (11 February 2023). Meanwhile, Agustina Luruk said that "my child was indeed a graduate of accounting degree, his intention was to open his own business but due to funding constraints, he was forced to work temporarily while raising money for business capital. As a parent, I always support and give him enthusiasm in trying" (11 February 2023).

This shows that there is a lot of job competition, making it difficult for someone to get a job, and it makes it difficult for someone to choose any job. He chose to work as a farmer which is his real job without having to look for a job according to his profession. This choice is a consideration of itself because of the scarcity of available jobs. In the opinion of (Syahrul,

Zahrawati, and Nursaptini 2023) young people choose to work as farmers only for reasons to work as farmers. It is a noble profession, with wide opportunities, everyone needs food, useful knowledge, exercise, care for the village, food self-sufficiency, and technology-based agriculture, there are opportunities to open a business.

Interviewing with Vinsensius Nahak who only graduated from elementary school, but he is a secretary of Barane Village. He said "My educational background was only elementary school, but I was entrusted by the community to become the village secretary with my task of assisting the village head to plan work programs, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the results of implementing village officials. A monthly salary is Rp. 2,500,000 which is a very enjoyable job, although sometimes it is difficult but still carried out" (12 February 2023). Meanwhile, Martinus Nahak said that "my son served as the new village secretary. Even though in his implementation there were often deficiencies and obstacles caused by the lack of village facilities and infrastructure. Even with a mediocre salary, he was able to make ends meet in our family" (February 12, 2023).

This shows that to occupy a position in a village is not seen from a person's educational level but from his way of thinking to promote people's welfare. It is the same as the statement above, the person who serves as village secretary is someone who only graduated from elementary school. This indicates that the level of education does not affect a person's work or performance, but rather lies in the effort and intention of working hard. Effort hard work and trust are the motivating factors for someone to occupy a class in government such as the village head. Next is an interview with Yosefina Aek, a bachelor of Indonesian language and literature education who said that "When I was in college, I majored in Indonesian, but because I got a difficult job, I finally decided to just open a business. So, the business I'm running now is a small business, the important thing is that I have income rather than me having no income at all" (13 February 2023).

This was reinforced by Yolenta Hoar, the parent of Yosefian Aek, who said that "after graduation, he initially tried to find a job, but it was difficult to get one. Finally, he decided to start a business. It has been running for about 3 years now. The income is uncertain depending on the number of buyers" (13 February 2023). The interviews and observations above show that the business does not have to be big right away but can also be started by small businesses. The key is having the will to learn the bigger business. This is like what was done by Vincent Nahak above who wants to go through a business from scratch to achieve greater results. He is



also an example of young people who are able to try to learn to create their own jobs. Because of the lack of job opportunities, they choose to open their own businesses.

Small or medium enterprises or SMEs are businesses formed and managed by the community, which are not from the upper class or the rich. In general, the formation of this business comes from the idea of one person or several people in a society. In this effort, the community plays a direct role as initiator, implementer and controller. The benefits or functions of small and medium-sized businesses for someone are opening jobs, being able to increase product numbers, boosting the country's economy, and business solutions for small communities.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been carried out, regarding the relationship between education level and employment, it can be seen that those who have the highest education level do not have job opportunities that match their skills due to limited employment opportunities and a lack of capital to open a business. This is different from those who only have primary and secondary school education, who have great job and career opportunities and have high incomes. This is because they only work based on ability and business intention, and not based on specific skills or expertise in the field of education. Based on this incident, the impact on those who graduate in accounting but do not have a job, then those who graduate from Indonesian language and literature education but open a business. This is different from those who only graduated from elementary school but were elected as Village Secretaries who have an income that exceeds those with a bachelor's degree.

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