

# Religiosity and Local Wisdom: Economic Security Strategy of Women of Indigenous Community

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## Keywords

Religiosity; Local wisdom;  
Keamanan ekonomi and  
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## ABSTRACT

*This article highlights the meaning of ecclesiastical teachings based on the Bible as the Word of God in an effort to meet the needs of the poor in the Negeri (village) Booi congregation through the tradition or local wisdom of "nutmeg collecting". This study employs Max Weber's point of view on social action, where for every social activity carried out, there is always an internal motivation (Vertehen). This study was done in a qualitative manner with an ethnographic approach conducted in April 2022 – December 2022. The data was collected through in-depth interviews, observation and documentation. The data was analyzed following the stages proposed by Chariri with source triangulation as a strategy in examining the data validity. The results show that the local wisdom of "nutmeg collecting" could be used as a strategy in overcoming poverty problems, especially related to income inequality experienced by women. In the mainstream (classical/neoclassical) economic views, the behavior of this indigenous community was certainly very detrimental, as it was related to efforts to maximize income for oneself. However, on the contrary, this local wisdom also emphasized the needs of others which were supported by the religious teachings they believed in.*

## INTRODUCTION

Women have always been considered as a subordinated group in accessing livelihood sources. In fact, a study by (Savitha, 2020) found that 70% the world's poor were women. Moreover, many of these women depend on the natural resources available around their settlements for their livelihood. Suganda, (2020) and Maria, et al (2020) stated that factors causing women experiencing limited access to assets include patriarchal structure, feminism, social and cultural structure. However, in certain traditional communities, women actually have a place to maintain their livelihood through local wisdoms and inclusion of religious teachings. Meanwhile, there have been numerous studies on women in Maluku, yet they are limited to the efforts to maintain the household livelihoods by utilizing the potential of natural resources available around settlements, as well as the limited involvement of women in the development and application of gender equality in the Maluku Protestant Church (Gereja Protestan Maluku-GPM) (Papilaya, et al., 2020; Joseph & Arie, 2011; Lebetubun, 2022; Tupamahu, 2020).

This present study is part of the development of several previous studies that have been conducted by the authors over the past six years. The previous related studies consist of Ali, et al (2021);

Fibryano, et al (2022); Hendri, et al (2019); Kakerissa & Hahury (2017); Kakerissa & Hahury (2018) and Muhammad & Hahury (2022). Meanwhile, studies on women in Indonesia have been carried out from various perspectives, including from the business empowerment perspective, social perspective (Rosdiana, et al., 2019; Siti, 2019), law enforcement perspective (Deassy & Salamor, 2019; Josefhin, 2016; Syaifuddin & Belida, 2019), health perspective (Cholik & Laili, 2014; Desak, et al., 2013; Yuliani, 2013), eco-feminist perspective (Daniel & Kodir, 2016) and economic perspective (Herien, et al., 2019; Vidya, et al., 2020). The focus of the studies above are limited on the issues of improving women's economy. In fact, women's problems in meeting their (economic) needs are in the effort to maintain the sustainability of their livelihood.

Therefore, the issue of women's livelihood as a subordinated group is not only related to the level of income that women can earn, but the guarantees for the availability of access to the assets, so that women's livelihoods can continue to be sustainable from time to time. Ratih (2015), explained that women play a crucial role in the development through empowerment, although it has the potential to lower self-esteem. Women have a vital role in organizing and managing natural resources and the environment. Factors of women's participation are important in order to continue to build their self-capacity and self-esteem. Nevertheless, every decision related to the sustainability of household livelihoods will not always take women's perspectives into account, particularly when establishing the sources of household income through the exploitation of natural resources (Rieko, 2020).

This present study offers a new perspective approach. Previously, women were considered as a group vulnerable to loss of income due to various conditions and tended to become subordinated. This present study attempts to prove that there is a convention in the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community in Central Maluku as a strategy to secure the livelihoods of less fortunate people (poor women, widows and orphans) from "an unsafe condition" to "a safer condition". This convention refers to the mechanism for applying the local wisdom supported by the inclusion of divine religious teachings (Protestant Christianity) into the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community. In other words, with the local wisdom being supported by internalization and interpretation of Christian teachings, women as a group vulnerable to loss of income can actually have the opportunity to be able to access the livelihood sources through informal guarantees (local wisdom or religious traditions and teachings) as a direction of behavior in the community.

In view of the teachings of Christianity, the church is an organization or group of people with a religious vocation. The word 'church' derives from 'people', rather than 'buildings'. The economy is described as the rules or laws that govern the fulfillment of household requirements. In general, religious teachings drive and affect human economic priorities (global capitalism transformation), resistance to economic determination, and the notions of justice and common prosperity. Everyone will strive or work in order to obtain income, which is perceived to be the primary goals in a life. In other words, everyone will want to maximize their profit at work, and as a result, any measures will be justified. This condition requires the church's role to provide right understanding of the economics, both inside the church and in everyday life.

In a writing by Max Weber entitled "The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism", it is explained that the Protestant Christian belief teaches that working is God's calling. Similarly, the significance of respecting time, being reasonable in thinking and behaving, being future-oriented, and being modest in daily economic activities are examples of ethic completely consistent with the demands of Christian teachings. Weber perceived a specific relationship between Christian ethics and capitalism's spirit or ethos. The relevance of the concept of vocation and how it is related to Protestant beliefs is that the function of vocation is to bring everyday events under the influence of religion in all aspects. In the context of social action, Weber underlined that what someone does has an impact on others and is inseparable from the relationship with those around them (Ahmad, 2020). The 'call' is for a person to fulfill his commitments to God by acting morally in his daily life. It refers to the efforts to acquire wealth through authorized economic activities in order to avoid using this income for simply personal satisfaction. Thus, Christianity teaches moral and economic values, so that economic principles in Christianity are voluntary rather than profit-oriented. This is the foundation for the *Negeri Booi* community to internalize Christian teachings.

*Negeri Booi* is one of traditional *Negeri* (village(s)) on Saparua island, whose community still practices customs or traditions in their daily life to meet their needs. The local wisdom of nutmeg (*myristica fragrans*) collecting is a tradition specifically aimed at women in earning income. This tradition is inseparable from the ownership of a nutmeg garden passed on to sons patrilineally. As a

result of this inheritance system, women are vulnerable to losing their source of income, especially for the widows. Empirical findings show that the Negeri Booi indigenous community is a Protestant Christian community who go the Maluku Protestant Church (Gereja Protestan Maluku-GPM)). The church existence will certainly influence the behavior of the Negeri Booi indigenous community, including their behavior in exploiting natural resources and their economy.

For these reasons, this present study focuses on the utilization of local wisdom/tradition of nutmeg collecting and how the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community interprets the process of internalizing and interpreting the Protestant Christian teachings into the nutmeg picking tradition. Thus, this study aims to describe the activities of nutmeg collector women through the fallen nutmeg collecting tradition as an economic security strategy for women.

## **METHODS**

To be able to understand a religiosity process in the form of internalization and interpretation of religious teachings in the local wisdom as a strategy to secure women's livelihoods, this study was done in a qualitative manner with an ethnographic approach focusing on holistic cultural studies regarding social groups (Chariri, 2009). According to Moleong (2018) steps in ethnographic researches included identifying the culture to be studied, identifying significant variables in the culture studied, conducting a literature review, obtaining permission to enter the research settings, learning and understanding the culture, looking for informants, collecting data, analyzing the data, and describing the culture.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the internalization and interpretation of religious teachings into the local wisdom in the form of the nutmeg collecting tradition is a local community construction that takes place in a certain environmental setting. For this reason, the paradigm in this study is an interpretive paradigm, in which the authors attempt to understand the framework of the subject being studied by emphasizing the interpretation of meaning. This study was conducted in *Negeri Booi* in Saparua Island, Kabupaten Maluku Tengah, Provinsi Maluku in November 2021 - June 2022. *Negeri Booi* was chosen for several reasons, including: 1) *Negeri Booi* is known as a spice-producing area (nutmeg and cloves); 2) The main livelihood of the *Negeri Booi* community is farming, and the main source of economic income for farmer households in *Negeri Booi* is nutmeg. The data used in this study consist of primary and secondary data. The primary data of this study was obtained through field observations and interviews, while the secondary data was obtained from research reports, books, the internet and available official government documents.

In total, this study involved 11 informants. They were selected using purposive sampling method following certain criteria to meet the research objectives: first, the informants must master or understand the traditions or culture and habits of utilizing nutmeg and the *dusung* through enculturation process, so that they are not only known, but also internalized; and second, the informants must be active in cultivating the nutmeg plants and the *dusung* as a source of income for their families. In addition the informants in this study were divided into two groups: key informants and informants with particular characteristics. The key informants referred to those who were intimately involved in the social interactions being studied. They consisted of farmers (*dusung* owners), and *Negeri Booi* community (*dusung* users). Meanwhile, the informants with particular characteristics included Raja (village head), traditional leaders, and community leaders. They played a role in data triangulation which aimed to match observation with interview results, what was said publicly with the ones privately, and interview results with existing documentation.

The researchers transcribed each interview after adding information such as the interview location, date, and time; and the informants' name, age, and occupation. Then, the researchers created a recap matrix of the transcripts. Then, an outline was made and the final step was to categorize the themes.

The data was analyzed by adopting the method employed by Chariri (2009), including: understanding and testing the data by comparing or matching it with observational data (social life), and then interpreting it. The following steps were involved in data interpretation: first, data reduction was done to easily interpret the data based on the research objectives. However, this did not imply squandering the data, but rather keeping 'unnecessary' data and utilizing it at the appropriate moment; and second, understanding and examining the data by comparing it to other existing data in great details. The researchers utilized the triangulation technique to the sources available, done by comparing the

observation and interview results, what was said publicly with the ones privately, and the informants' situation and perspectives with the opinions of the community from various classes (Raja, religious leaders, community leaders, and traditional leaders). The data was then examined by the researchers by comparing it to the actual life or social reality.

## RESULTS

### *Sources and potential for the livelihood of women of the Negeri Booi community*

The Negeri Booi indigenous community in Saparua island, Central Maluku district was one of the traditional customary Negeri(s) who had been practicing customary rituals and traditions to this day. One of these traditions could be found through ways / procedures to manage and utilize the dusung as a source of economic or household livelihood for the Negeri Booi community. In the perspective of Negeri Booi community, the dusung referred to a plantation land / garden and it had a different meaning for people in other places. Every dusung belonged to the Negeri Booi community was mostly planted with nutmeg plants, making it often referred to as the "dusung pala" (nutmeg dusung). Although, in fact, the dusung was also planted with other types of crops.

One of the informants stated that the dusung management procedures had been passed down for generations. He added that he only continued what had been done by the previous generation. Further, he mentioned that the planting procedures had allowed them to meet the household needs. The informant stated that:

*Procedures to plant in the dusung like this have been going on for tens or even hundreds of years. Apart from the nutmeg tree, there are clove, walnut, durian and tuber trees I planted in this dusung. If the nutmeg price "drops", I can pick the tubers, cook some for my daily meal and I sell the rest to earn extra money. (CP, 73 years old, a farmer).*

Furthermore, the informant revealed that for the Negeri Booi community, the nutmeg tree had a deep meaning and was not just a source of livelihood. The meaning was expressed through a phrase explaining that "pala itu harta kekal orang Booi" ("the nutmeg is the eternal treasure of the Negeri Booi community"). This explained that the nutmeg was not only related to meeting the dusung owners' household needs, but also the needs of other people (fellow Negeri Booi indigenous community members). This happened because not all members of the Negeri Booi community had dusung pala. For them, those who did not have dusung were usually referred to as poor people. This phenomenon was also inseparable from the dusung ownership system adopted by the Negeri Booi indigenous community. The dusung ownership followed the patrilinealistic system.

In the Negeri Booi indigenous community, daughters also had the same rights in inheriting the dusung. However, these rights would disappear when they got married. The daughters' dusung rights were returned to her extended family. This particular reason was the background which led to the awareness about the existence of less fortunate people (those who did not have dusung) within the Negeri Booi indigenous community. Therefore, in a discussion about nutmeg, there was also an issue of fulfilling the needs of the less fortunate people who made the nutmeg as their source of income.

Empirical findings describing the phenomenon of nutmeg utilization by the less fortunate people could be seen through the fallen nutmeg collecting activity. This activity was known as tradisi perempuan memungut biji pala (the tradition of women collecting the nutmeg). For the Negeri Booi indigenous community, the nutmeg that was still on the tree was the dusung owners'; while the nutmeg fallen on the ground belonged to other people's. This nutmeg collecting tradition was only specifically aimed for widows, poor women and orphans, and did not apply to outsiders of the Negeri Booi indigenous community.

The nutmeg collecting activity done by women started from "buka siang" (referring to 5 a.m. local time) by first preparing for the needs of their family members, such as "minum teh pagi" (drinking morning tea), and arranging for their children's school needs. After everything was completed, then women began to collect the nutmeg. Based on the authors' observation, this activity was not well organized. However, when they started heading to the dusung pala, they had a separate place to wait for their friends (fellow nutmeg collector women). Usually, each group consisted of 4-6 women. It took 40 to 60 minutes to the dusung pala on foot. Sometimes, they informed each other about the selling nutmeg price and buyers who gave "good" prices (better price than the previous one), prices. In carrying out the nutmeg collecting activity, they only needed a knife and a bag for the nutmeg. The bag could be a plastic bag or the one made of woven bamboo. Occasionally, it seemed that each woman looked and "scratched"

(looking for the nutmeg fell on the ground by scavenging dry leaves) the dry leaves just to make sure whether there were nutmegs around the path they were walking on.

This nutmeg collecting activity done by women was not limited to certain specific dusung (for example, having a family relationship with the dusung owner). In fact, the nutmeg fallen in all dusung in the "petuanan" (customary area) of Negeri Booi could be collected without any prohibition from the dusung owner. They were free to enter every dusung existed. Sometimes, they met the dusung pala owners, greeted each other and even talked to each other for a moment, starting from simply asking how they had been, to giving each other information regarding the presence of "orang dagang" (people from outside the customary community of Negeri Booi) in the dusung a few days earlier. There was no objection from the dusung owner to the existence of women who collected the nutmeg. The activity of collecting the nutmeg fallen on the ground was such a habit (tradition) among fellow "anak Negeri" (a term for the indigeneous people of Negeri Booi, both inside or outside of Negeri Booi), as explained by an informant as follows:

*I can always collect the nutmeg in any dusung. The dusung owner never forbids me. This is our tradition, and it may not be applicable in other dusung. I have to maintain the dusung owner's trust by never taking the nutmeg that is still on the tree, even if the nutmeg has been "split" (a term for ripe nutmeg, so that the seeds and mace (flowers) can be seen from the outside). It is not mine. I can only collect the nutmeg that has fallen to the ground. (AP, 68 years old, a nutmeg collector woman).*

The informant explained that there was trust and respect for other people's property (the tree that belonged to the dusung owner). This behavior was a guarantee for them to be able to collect the nutmeg again in the future. Mutual trust between the dusung owners and users was founded not just on Christian teachings, but also on the kinship among fellow anak (members [of]) Negeri Booi community. Furthermore, this kinship had been formed as a result of the long-running process of marriage system within the Negeri Booi community. Therefore, if the family lineage was drawn, every member of the Negeri Booi community could have had a kinship among themselves. Meanwhile, the incorporation of Christian teachings into the lives of the Negeri Booi community did not only provide the foundation for, but also reinforced, this particular tradition or local wisdom. Over time, this behavior crystallized and mutual trust was developed between the dusung owners and users (the community).

The length of time needed to collect the nutmeg depended on each woman. For them, the longer they stayed in the dusung pala, the greater the opportunity to collect the nutmeg. Usually, the average time they needed was around 2-3 hours per day and it could be done 2 times a day. Sometimes, they could go to the dusung to collect the nutmeg up to 3 times a day. In relation to the nutmeg collecting activity, an informant mentioned that in each nutmeg tree, there were 6 nutmegs fallen on the ground and if she was careful enough in looking for the nutmeg among the dry leaves, then she could get as many as 11 nutmeg seeds. The yield of nutmeg obtained by these women is also very dependent on the nutmeg season. In the Negeri Booi indigenous community, the nutmeg harvest season was known as "musim pala babua banya". When it happened, it was such a blessing for their lives. In one day, the informant revealed that she could collect between 250-300 nutmegs. However, if the nutmeg was not in the season, they would only get less than 100 nutmegs a day.



Figure 1. The nutmeg collecting activity done by women  
Source: Research results, 2022

Further, an informant explained that the amount of nutmeg harvest for each woman was fluctuative. Sometimes, there were collectors who collected many nutmegs, but there were also those who only got few nutmegs. In this case, if they saw that their friends' nutmeg harvest was not much, and they collected the nutmeg in the same dusung pala, they would leave the dusung and move to the other dusung. These women did not hesitate to show the nutmeg location that they intentionally left for their friends.

Working was how people maintained their daily lives. Everyone would do their best to maximize profit or usage for themselves economically. This was due to the behavior of thinking rationality, as seen in the neoclassical or classical economic theories. Daily life needs tended to increase and vary from time to time, forcing everyone to look for new sources of income to ensure the sustainability of the household livelihoods. However, the daily activities of the Negeri Booi community were also influenced by the Christian teachings, which advised them to work in order to acquire blessings (wages) so that their household livelihood might continue. However, the Christian teachings were fairly clear in providing guidelines for how to behave in order to meet these life needs.

This explained that every effort made by the Negeri Booi community was not solely for the purpose of obtaining maximum profit or usage, thus justifying all means. This was where the Christian teachings came in to remind the Negeri Booi community that the efforts to make ends meet must be made in the proper way. Thus, they believed that what they did for the needy would be rewarded more generously by God. An informant stated that:

*When I saw that my friend's nutmeg harvest was still not enough, I would leave the dusung. I did it because I wanted her to collect more nutmegs. In addition, I also showed her the location that I intentionally leave for her to collect the nutmeg. As for me, I believe God will give His blessings another time for me. (AH, 62 years old, a nutmeg collector woman).*

The nutmeg collector women believed that what they did for the others at that time would bring blessings to their personal and household lives and even to their kids and grandchildren. This belief was based on their understanding as orang sarani (Christians). Collecting nutmeg was a job primarily designed for the women of Negeri Booi community to meet their family needs through the tradition or local wisdom. The Negeri Booi community viewed this job as the "God's calling". In his book entitled "The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism", Weber mentioned that Calvinism (a form of Protestantism) taught that working was the God's calling. Similarly, the significance of respecting time, being reasonable in thinking and behaving, being future-oriented, and being modest in daily economic activities are examples of ethic completely consistent with the demands of Christian teachings.

The significance concept of vocation and its application to Protestant belief was that the role of vocation was to bring everyday concerns under the influence of religion in all aspects. The call was for a person to fulfill his commitments to God by acting morally in his daily life. This point of view underlined the practice of collecting the fallen nutmeg explained earlier as a tradition or local wisdom of the Negeri Booi community. All members of Negeri Booi community happened to be Protestant Christians. The informants believed that if they gave things to those who needed sincerely, blessings would flow into their lives. Their religion adhered to by the Negeri Booi indigenous community could be seen from the existence of a church building in the community settlement.



Figure 2. Bethel Church, Negeri Booi.  
Maluku Protestant Church (*Gereja Protestant Maluku (GPM)*) - Central Maluku  
Source: Research results, 2022

The informant - who was also a priest in the *Negeri Booi* congregation - revealed that the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community was one of the *Negeri(s)* in Saparua island that was first baptized by missionaries from Netherland around 1600 - 1630. This was why their behavior was heavily influenced by Christian teachings, including the nutmeg collecting tradition specifically done by women. The informant stated that:

*As a priest, I have served congregations in almost all Lease islands. I observe the lives of people from various social backgrounds, customs and cultures. However, I have never found the habit of living like the Negeri Booi community. Anyone, as long as he is a member of the Negeri Booi community, is free to collect the nutmeg that has fallen to the ground. Not only in the dusung(s) that have family ties, but all dusung that are in the petuanan Negeri Booi, may be entered. (EP, 56 years old, a Congregational Pastor).*

In addition, the informant also mentioned several stories in the Bible that had similarities with the behavior of the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community in "sharing" blessings as follows:

*The dusung owners never forbid anyone from collecting the nutmeg in his dusung. In fact, they are willing to share some of the nutmeg they have just harvested with other people who happen to be collecting the nutmeg in his dusung, especially the widows, orphans and the less fortunate people. The owners' behavior reflects God's word in Deuteronomy 24:19-21, while the nutmeg collector women are reflected in the book of Ruth 2:2.*

The empirical description above showed that the nutmeg "sharing" in the nutmeg collecting tradition was a form of obedience to the Word of God, in the form of "The Law of Love". In this context, the presence of Protestant Christian religious teachings was not to hinder or even abolish the tradition, but rather to further strengthen the tradition.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Religiosity in local wisdom as an economic security strategy for women***

Women had always been identified with "bed, kitchen and well" activities. These activities were considered as the nature of women and at the same time, women lose the opportunity to earn a better livelihood (Fibryano, et al., 2022b). This situation was worsen by religion-based cultures which in fact left them with no other opportunities other than being "housekeepers" (Salma, et al., 2020). Meanwhile, men were identified as "strong people" as well as heads of households who would be responsible for all efforts to meet the household needs. However, lately, the economic activity - especially the household economy in rural communities - had shown a drastic and significant increase, both in terms of needs and diversity. As a result, men's ability to meet all the household needs was no longer optimal.

Faced with this reality, women had the opportunity to be able to participate in helping their household's economy. However, the religious-based cultures that were misinterpreted became a barrier to these women's "good intentions" (Salma, et al., 2020). As a result, the household economic security became vulnerable and might bring an impact on other socio-economic problems, such as domestic violence (Gulati & Kelly, 2020; Semahegn, et al., 2019), prostitution (Blair et al., 2022; Foley, 2019) or divorce (Bram et al., 2020; Dimitri, 2020). In various studies, the economic security referred to the ability of individuals or communities to meet essential (basic life) needs in a sustainable and dignified manner. One of them could be obtained through the prevailing.

Local wisdom was one of the cultures emerged in the midst of civilization, particularly in rural communities. It was based on the indigeneous (local) people's knowledge. This condition might occur due to the close relationship between the indigenous people and the environment and natural resources. The process of interaction and adaptation with the environment and natural resoures enabled the local community to develop ways to sustain their livelihoods by developing value systems, lifestyles, institutional and legal systems compatible with the conditions and availability of natural resources in their immediate surroundings.

This adaptation process had been going on since ancient times, resulting in sensible understanding about natural resource management. The local community's understanding of the management system was usually passed down orally. The local community's adaptation behavior in managing the natural resources aimed to maintain their existence in the natural environment in which they lived (Sangadji, 2012). This adaptation resulted in the development of local knowledge. In the context of the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community in Saparua Island, Central Maluku, their main source of household livelihood was the nutmeg. Overall, there was a total of 13 hectares out of 31 hectares area

planted with the nutmeg traditionally with a total nutmeg production of 10.5 tons per year (Statistic of *Negeri Booi*, 2020). The nutmeg potential was so great. It was found that the nutmeg harvest was not only used to meet the household needs of the owners, but also by those who did not have any dusung. This behavior was illustrated through the nutmeg collecting tradition specifically intended for women and orphans. This tradition was supported by the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community' awareness that not all members of their community had dusung pala. This led them to share the nutmeg with each other.

Further, the reality showed that in its development, this tradition did not only show the relationship between the dusung owners and nutmeg collector women as the dusung "users". This social relationship was also reflected among fellow nutmeg collectors, creating a sense of solidarity. This behavior was clearly reflected when the nutmeg collector women decided to leave the dusung and show their friends who only had few nutmegs the location of nutmeg they intentionally left for them to collect. From the economic perspective, this attitude was contradictive to their economic interests. It was an example of a microeconomic thinking widely studied that everyone would try their best to fulfill their needs. However, for the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community, this attitude was a form of solidarity, although they were also required to be able to meet their household needs. At this level, the authors considered this solidarity act was not simply a help nor an effort to ease the burden on each other, but there was a hidden rationality underlying this attitude.

There was one hidden rationality that the *Negeri Booi* community had which was related to the belief that the good they were doing would be reaped later (blessings). According to Weber, the *Negeri Booi* community's behavior demonstrated that the social activities performed by humans were also additionally driven by an internal motivation. Individual or communal actions made by the *Negeri Booi* community had meanings and purposes for themselves (those who did) and were directed at others (Ahmad, 2020). The actions conducted by the *Negeri Booi* community could be classified as social actions, which could be carried out individually or in groups in order to have an impact on their environment. In fact, all of these social actions had internal motivations. Weber referred to this motivation as 'vertehen', which meant that actions taken always had meanings and purposes to be achieved.

The dusung and nutmeg plants were tools that the *Negeri Booi* community used to praise God in the form of helping each other. This conduct allowed them to give to God while also expressing gratitude to Him. They believed that by helping each other, God would provide all their needs, including the housing, food and drink. As a result, when they were sharing by helping each other, they would not feel poor, and instead the opposite. This way, they had been a channel of blessings for others. The blessings that God bestowed in this life were not meant to be enjoyed alone, but rather to be shared with those in need.

This empirical finding showed that this tradition had existed for a long time. This behavior was "allegedly" influenced by the arrival of Protestant Christianity (around 1600-1630) in *Negeri Booi* brought by the Dutch. This was why the entire members of *Negeri Booi* indigenous community were Protestant Christians. Therefore, the above understanding could not be separated from the influence of the church based on the Biblical teachings. Thus, this behavior could be seen as a form of obedience or religiosity for Christians (Najoan, 2020 and Satria, 2021). Various views in the empirical findings of this study indicated an understanding of the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community towards Bible-based church teachings (Johansson et al., 2009). An example was the process of nutmeg harvesting during the nutmeg season was only done once, or the nutmeg collecting activity which was intended for women (widows and orphans).

The *Negeri Booi* indigenous community's behavior in the nutmeg collecting tradition reflected their "obedience" shown by sharing the nutmeg with others in an effort to meet their household needs. The social solidarity shown by the *Negeri Booi* community was a genuine effort to help fellow community members transitioning from unsafe to safer conditions. This behavior was certainly a result of the long-standing kinship. The incorporation of Christian teachings actually strengthened this solidarity behavior, where one of Christian teachings was love, manifested by the *Negeri Booi* community through caring and solidarity with those in need.

Based on the Christian teachings, the *Negeri Booi* community's solidarity was a manifestation of faith in Jesus Christ, who had become the vital breath and pattern of Christian life. Consequences of this Christian way of life must become the basis for living together in the society. Faith was more than only living, praying, and growing spiritually; it should also motivate Christians to have an open view of harmonious human relations. This harmony was created, certainly, through communication and



relationships that could provide new perspectives so as to be able to respect others, including respecting the property of rights of others. In other words, the *Negeri Booi* community's solidarity served as the foundation for living a life and service of love and friendships. *Amor praeferentialis pro pauperibus*, or love that prioritized the less fortunate people, was resulted from this solidarity. This emphasis was based on the Christian teaching that man was made in the image of God.

This indirectly showed the "look" of obedience of the Israelites at its appearance. The book of Deuteronomy shows this as the basic of the life of the ancient Israelites. The book of Deuteronomy mentions that there were four exhortations of Moses to Israel. This book aims to encourage Israel to obey the law. The exhortation to obey is at the core of Deuteronomy's teachings, as seen in Deut. 29:1.

These exhortations were transformed into a covenant between God and Israel. The ancient customs and laws governing the mutual relations between nations served as proof of their obedience to God. For Deuteronomy, knowing and loving God means loving others and treating others fairly. This is also found in the New Testament for example; Mark 12:29-31 and I John 4:7-12 which provide a new value and importance of obedience. The book of Deuteronomy is very concerned about the lives of the poor. In Deut. 24:19-21, it clearly shows the concern for the poor. This concern seems to be a law for the life of the people at that time. ***"If you are reaping in your field, then you forget a sheaf in the field, then do not go back to get it. It is to be left for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands."***

This law was addressed to those who owned affluent dusung and asked them not to be too stingy in the nutmeg harvesting process. This would enable the poor to survive without asking them to accept mercy. They should work to support themselves. The book of Deuteronomy reminds the rich that the Israelites would have had the status of slaves if they had not shown mercy to them. This law provides an opportunity for the poor not to receive help or mercy from other people, but they should work to get results by choosing what was not taken by the dusung owner.

The Deut. 24:19-21 wants to declare the God of Israel, the God of Yahweh that is always in solidarity with the poor. This revelation of God clearly gave orders to anyone who wanted to carry out the harvest to continue to give the rights of widows, poor people and foreigners. This indicated that these people were classified as weak people in the society who needed help. This law or order was also carried out for generations by the Israelites who wanted to do the harvest, because in addition to this commandment, God also provides a guarantee of blessing, that is, God would bless those who do His will as well as their work. On the basis of the gift of God's blessing and the obedience of the Israelites to God, this way of life was maintained by the Israelites. Every time there was a harvest, the dusung owner always paid attention to the rights of the poor, widows and foreigners as commanded by God. It was this act of obedience that brought blessings to them in every harvest season.

This law in the book of Deuteronomy is a reference for the actions taken by Ruth. Ruth was a Moabite woman during the time of the Israelite judges. Ruth married Mahlon (Ruth 4:10), the eldest son of Elimelech and Naomi of Bethlehem-Judah, who had come to Moab because of a famine. The danger of famine was God's punishment for the Israelites. When Naomi became a widow, Ruth determined to be with him, and decided to worship God. After returning to Bethlehem (rumah roti), Ruth asked permission from Naomi to go into the fields to pick up barley heads to Boaz's land (Ruth 2:2), because it was then the time for the barley (Barley was swon in Palestine in abundance, and it was harvested in the spring; an offering of barley, the first produce of the earth, opening the celebration of the Passover Sabbath. It is less expensive than the wheat, and was used by poor families as a bread ingredient) harvest. Naomi and Ruth were poor people, and they had no means of livelihood. Ruth wanted to go out into the fields and follow behind to pluck the barley, looking for grains that had escaped the hands of the poets. Such conduct was permitted by the law (cf. Lev. 19:9; 23:22; Deut. 24:19).

What Ruth did illustrates how the Israelites still adhere to God's law and statutes in the process of a harvest. The dusung owner still paid attention to what was the right of widows, poor, foreigners and the surrounding community. The dusung owners never take the crops from their dusung until they were all gone. They still provided the rights of the poor as Allah had commanded them. It was such an obedience in giving in the harvest that kept God blessing their work. The Israelites with true awareness and obedience to God believe that by doing the will (tradition) commanded by God, God will bless their every effort. This tradition in the Old Testament has become a fulfillment in the New Testament and the pattern of Jesus' ministry as contained in the Law of Love (Mark 12:30-31) "Love the Lord your God with

all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. And the second law is: love your neighbor as yourself." God teaches Christians how to love God, that is by loving others.

Giving to the poor, foreigners, and widows, certainly would not make the giver experience loss or deprivation, but in their obedience to God, they would live in abundance and blessing, not lacking, but sufficient. The sufficiency in question is a noun, whereas it can explain a sufficient state in everything that is noun. The word sufficiency (*autarkeia*) in the New Testament is used only in 1 Timothy 6:6 (but Paul uses the adjective form for himself in Philippians 4:11). This word, used by the Stoics, describes "the state of perfect life in which no help or support is needed anymore." The word ability (*hikanotes*) in II Corinthians 3:5 refers to "the ability to do something". These two terms are not the same; a person may have one without having the other.

One of the concepts of being sufficient in the Bible can be seen in 2 Cor. 9:8 "And God is able to abound all grace upon you, so that you may always be sufficient in all things and even exceed in various virtues". In 2 Cor. 9:5-15, Paul provides a theological and Biblical basis for his requests in financial matters. Generosity had its own value. Everyone who gave sincerely would benefit from the same gift. Paul reflects on Jesus' teachings regarding the use of talents and the measure, with which a believer is asked to share. God is not limited in giving gifts. The task of believers is to reflect God's mercy in caring for the poor while acting as servants of God. This form of justice requires faith in God's unlimited resources. All these acts of sharing were driven by the desire to proclaim God's name and express due gratitude to God.

From the above biblical basis, it could be concluded that God is not limited in giving blessings and gifts to His people. Therefore, every blessing received from God must also be shared with others in need and it would not make the giver experienced lacking, or the other people to have excess. By giving or sharing to people in need, God would always provide for all needs. In this context, the sufficiency referred to neither excess nor lack. Understanding the concept of sufficiency would make humans more grateful and continue to share, because by giving, the giver was blessed, and those who got help were not lacking but sufficient.

## CONCLUSION

The *Negeri Booi* community's behavior in utilizing the natural resources for the continuation of household life through the tradition or local wisdom was not only aimed at themselves, but also for other people (fellow members of the *Negeri Booi* community). This behavior was a type of social action followed by individual and communal motivation. The social behavior reflected by the tradition or local wisdom of collecting the nutmeg was a harmonious blend of rational and irrational values, and these two elements found and supported each other. The rural communities' local wisdom could be used as a way out or strategy in overcoming the poverty problems, especially the ones experienced by women. The *Negeri Booi* indigenous community's local wisdom was also strengthened by the Protestant Christian teachings. In the mainstream (classical / neoclassical) economic views, the behavior of this indigenous community was certainly very detrimental, as it was related to the efforts to maximize their income. However, on the contrary, in the context of belief or religiosity and obedience, this community believed that if they sincerely gave things to the less fortunate people, they would receive much greater blessings than what they gave previously. This behavior was a form of interpretation and internalization of Protestant Christian teachings which they believed in, namely "love".

Furthermore, the local wisdom supported by the religious teachings had given direction to the community's behavior. Therefore, they could go through the limitations in meeting their daily needs together. This behavior could be seen as an informal guarantee of the sustainability of women's livelihoods. In addition, the empirical findings of this study suggested that the local wisdom of a community might differ between communities. This difference could occur as a result of differences in resource ownership and geographical location, so that the behavior of the *Negeri Booi* indigenous community was certainly different from the communities in other places.

Therefore, the local wisdom and traditions owned by the community were not an 'obstacle' to economic progress, but rather a 'buffer' for regional economic development. The local wisdom and traditions in the society could be viewed as a hidden rationality that was difficult to explain verbally, but could be practiced, and simultaneously encouraged the social interaction among the community as well as an informal guarantee for the sustainability of the community's livelihoods. Contains conclusions and suggestions. Conclusions include answers to research questions. Suggestions refer to the results of

the study and take the form of practical actions, mention to whom and for what advice is intended. Written in essay form, not numerical form.

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