

# ICRACOS

*by* Ali Imron

---

**Submission date:** 30-Aug-2021 05:59PM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 1638190101

**File name:** 651\_Icracos\_Ali\_Imron\_REVISI.doc (102.5K)

**Word count:** 4083

**Character count:** 21777

# The Practice of Identity Politics Carried Out By Ex-Lepers

Ali Imron  
Social Science Education  
University State of Surabaya  
Surabaya, Indonesia  
aliimron@unesa.ac.id

Siti Maizul Habibah  
Pancasila and Civic Education  
University State of Surabaya  
Surabaya, Indonesia  
sitihabibah@unesa.ac.id

Putri Indatus  
Mojokerto, Indonesia  
putriindatus@gmail.com

**Abstract**—Negative stigma on ex-lepers appears also with the constructed stigma in a society that considers leprosy is contagious, incurable, hereditary disease, curse of God, unclean, and cause disability. This constructed stigma affects to ex-lepers to gain access to public services, such as health, education, and employment. Low accessibility to public services makes the ex-lepers as subaltern groups in the social structure. Subaltern groups characterized by oppression and discrimination to be the marginalized. Subaltern closely related to power of relations and politics, where the minority would be marginalized from the strong influence of society. These conditions affect them to have a turning point to fight in order to seek their obsession to be recognized and equalized through identity politics. Identity politics has a tendency to put the interests of the members of the group in the front because they have the same identity or characteristics. Various forms of identity politics practice is realized through morality resistance and radical resistance. Subaltern utilizes speaking for as a representative and liaison for the group aspirations. The practice of identity politics is carried out by ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet as tangible evidence in order to create equality of social representation.

**Keywords**—*identity politics, subaltern, speaking for, resistance, equality*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The majority of infectious diseases occurred in developing countries that have a low socio-economic conditions, one of which is leprosy. Leprosy is still feared by the people and even by some health workers. This is due to a lack of knowledge, understanding, and the erroneous belief toward leprosy and disabilities caused. Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae*. In East Java, 30% populations suffer from this disease which spread in 38 districts / cities with prevalence above 1.43 per 10,000 population (East Java Health Office, 2011: 2-3). Nationally, East Java was ranked first in the number of lepers enrolled (MOH, 2011: 5). While at the world level, Indonesia has become the third state contributor lepers for 17,012 lepers, after India for 126,800 lepers, and Brazil for 34,894 lepers (WHO, 2012: 20).

After undergoing a long process of treatment and taking a long time, ex-lepers become disabled, because they are considered as disabled dysfunctional organs. Negative stigma on ex-lepers that considers leprosy is contagious, incurable, hereditary diseases, curse of God, unclean, and cause disability.

As the case in Makassar, a leadership workshop for ex-lepers at Hotel Valentino on Dr. Sutomo Street, Makassar, South Sulawesi, was disbanded by the hotel management because it was considered disturbing the comfort of other guests. The hotel claimed to get complaints from other guests because of the ex-lepers who were on the sixth floor of the hotel. From the observation at the hotel, a hotel employee did

fumigation (fogging) on the sixth floor where the workshops took place, and the reporters were not allowed to cover or take pictures [1].

Ex-lepers also often have difficulty in getting public services which include health, education, and public sector employment. One of them in terms of getting a job, which in Act No. 4 of 1997 on Persons with Disabilities, explained that from the total number of employees in a company, 1% should come from people with disabilities. However, in fact the company is actually reluctant to accept disabled people, including ex-lepers as employees because the company argued that ex-lepers cannot work optimally. These conditions affect the ex-lepers do not get a decent job opportunities. Ex-leper is also a citizen of the Republic of Indonesia in the Act of 1945 Article 28, is guaranteed to have the status, rights, obligations and roles which equal to other citizens. These conditions make the ex-lepers as subaltern groups in the social structure, the lower classes which experience oppression and discrimination to be the marginalized.

In an effort to assert and maintain identity as a subaltern groups, ex-lepers have the ability to acquire, expand and maintain the identity as a real evidence in the social representation so that they can be recognized and can put off the "clothes" minority. Therefore, subaltern is closely related to the power of relations and politics. The position of the ex-lepers which are minority and marginalized affects them to have a turning point to fight in order to seek their obsessions to be recognized and equalized through identity politics.

Identity politics is a "political action to place the importance of the members of the group as priority because it has the same identity or characteristics, whether based on class, ethnicity, gender, or religion" [2]. Identity politics is another formulation of political differences. This is because the identity is also about everything that makes a group of people to be different with others. Identity politics refers to political mechanisms of organizing the identity (both political identity and social identity) as a resource and political means".

The emergence of identity politics is a response to the implementation of human rights which are often implemented unfairly. Disabled people of ex-lepers are one of the parties who become victims of injustice because people have classified that ex-lepers are not "normal". This prejudice is reflected also in social and cultural life of society so that disabled people of ex-lepers are seen in disgust, horror, and joblessness.

The same conditions occurred in the Sumberglagah hamlet, the village which is called as leprosy village. They are ex-lepers who have been declared cured by Leprosy Hospital in Sumberglagah hamlet. After experiencing the process of treatment at the hospital and has been declared

cured by doctors, the ex-lepers do not want to go back home to his hometown because of their disabilities. These disabilities make them feel insecure and excluded from the family and society, and as a result they settled in Sumberglagah leprosy hamlet.

Since its founding, Sumberglagah hamlet is a reservoir of the ex-leper which is formed by the Social Service. Initially, there were only about 25 families, and then continued to grow. Most of the ex-lepers who live in Sumberglagah leprosy hamlet are the lepers who spread around Surabaya and Mojokerto Street. In addition, there are also ex-lepers of Hospital Sumberglagah who are no longer accepted by the family and relatives. Then they chose to live in the Sumberglagah hamlet with other ex-lepers because they felt free and got closer to control their treatment.

Ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet are a heterogeneous community, complex, and multi-identity. Identity variations of ex-lepers include the identity of region or origin, culture, and employment. The complexity of ex-leper's identity is faced to the lack of recognition of identity which is equivalent to a normal person. Meanwhile, in the perspective of the public society, the ex-lepers are still considered to have a peculiar identity and still difficult to be aligned with each other. The society still consider that ex-lepers are still categorized as people with disabilities identity, disgusting, and contagious. Ex-lepers also struggle to obtain the rights and recognition of their identities and try to eliminate the stigma that exist in the society.

Dealing with research conducted by I Gusti Putu Bachelor of "Society Treatment and Rehabilitation of Lepers and Ex-lepers in the village of Tegal Mengkeb, Abiansemal, and Lod Tunduh, Bali: An Anthropological Study of Health about Leprosy". Wrong belief and divergent cultural knowledge influence the society treatment to ex-lepers for instance, the ex-lepers are scorned and even ostracized and isolated from the social environment, including a ban following the customary and religious activities. Similar treatment was also subjected to the ex-lepers who are disabled.

Society treatment to lepers and ex-lepers lead them prefer living in their own environment. It can be shown from the fact that many people with leprosy were declared cured medically but they still chose to reside in a leprosy environment, Yeh Putek. However, wherever lepers and ex-lepers reside, they always feel stress and depression. This condition is the result of the accumulation of the various sources of stress and depression such as knowledge and belief, customary and religious pressure, family and community treatments, the disease level and the following characteristics. Meanwhile, As for the ex-lepers it was compounded by the presence of various old age diseases. Social rehabilitation cannot help much to reduce the stress (Bachelor, 2005: 89-95). Therefore, this study aims to identify the practice of identity politics carried out by ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet, Mojokerto..

## II. METODELOGI

This study used a qualitative method using a phenomenological approach of Alfred Schutz. This study took place in the Sumberglagah hamlet, Tanjung Kenongo, District Pacet, Mojokerto. Sumberglagah hamlet is a place to treat and rehabilitate ex-lepers and lepers through the

Leprosy Hospital which were established there. About 60% population of Sumberglagah hamlet ever had leprosy therefore Sumberglagah hamlet is called by leprosy village. Subjects were lepers who were elected through snowball sampling.

This study used two data collection techniques, primary data collection and secondary data collection. The primary data were obtained through participating observation and interview. While secondary data collections were obtained by searching books, articles, newspapers, and journals. This study uses inductive data analysis techniques and includes data reduction, display or data presentation, conclusions, and verification.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Ex-leper Sumberglagah as subaltern groups

Suffering from leprosy and then become ex-lepers, the citizens of Sumberglagah hamlet initially feel very embarrassed. Some of them even wanted to end their life as soon as possible and they also abandoned by their families because they feel embarrassed to have the family of a leper. As experienced by Misdi, an ex-leper who works as a beggar.

"I was homeless and abandoned by parents because they were so ashamed to have a child who suffered from leprosy. It's worst, I already considered dead and had already been prayed for 40 days. I knew about this because I met my maduresse friend when I worked as a beggar. Hearing the story made me stress. Therefore I preferably live here, I have many friends and no more mockery".

After recovering from leprosy, the ex-lepers who seek treatment in Leprosy Hospital Sumberglagah are majority reluctant to go back home. This is underlied because they feel shame within the family as well as neighbors and do not want to burden his family, so they decided to reside and settle in the Sumberglagah hamlet. According to ex-lepers, they already feel comfortable with the environment where they have the same fate and the weather is cool in mountainous areas. The skin of ex-lepers is sensitive when it exposed to the heat of the sun. Consequently Sumberglagah hamlet is full of ex-lepers and become a single entity in the leprosy village, Sumberglagah hamlet.

During the New Order, the ex-lepers received the full attention of the government. The government provided a program which provided basic needs for the ex-lepers or the lepers and the provision of a plot of land to build a home for ex-lepers who do not have any home or homeless. However, now the situation is inversely, the government seems to have no care for the ex-lepers. Help does not longer exist, the ex-lepers are struggling with themself by looking for a job as anything. Ex-lepers majority work as farmers and farm workers and they even work as beggars to earn money for their family.

Ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet experience various kinds of discrimination from the outside society. They still receive treatments that make it difficult to harmonize ex-lepers' rights with other societies, such as an experience which was experienced by Jariati.

"Poor Glagah citizens here, some citizens of neighbour village are fear with us but some of them are not, we have to

treat every people differently because each of them are different. People who already know about leprosy will be friendly with us but they do not want to eat our food. Meanwhile, people who are not familiar with leprosy, so they insult us, gossip us, denounce us, as if they invite us war. When I go shopping in the market, I should not buy on those who fear me, they fear that their customers will go, for they fear to me ".

To marry other citizens is an impossibility. People are afraid to marry their children with ex-lepers, they feel disgusted and afraid their children will have leprosy. So the ex-lepers in Sumberglagah marry their children with children of ex-lepers as well, and it can be concluded that former ex-lepers in the Sumberglagah hamlet is a whole family.

"No one wanted to marry me, I had proposed three girls from three different village, and the answer was all the same, they were afraid to marry me because they were afraid to have children who have leprosy. It really hurts me. Unexpectedly when I had a home here, I met Poniran and immediately he offered me to marry his daughter. Soon I married his daughter, Rini. She also wanted to marry me. Thank God, now I already have two children, the first is still in 5th grade, and the second is 8 months old. The majority of people here married the children from here as well. So it can be said that we have one village, one family, one unity, and one destination ".

Stigma and discrimination which are developed in the society make the ex-lepers become marginalized. The discrimination includes the difficulty in having a mate, a shame feeling of the children to have parents of ex-lepers, difficulties finding a job in a factory, and a lack of access to public facilities. Various discriminations experienced by ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet occurred because the people around who are physically healthy and free of leprosy dominate over ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet. According to Spivak, ex-lepers are classified into subaltern group, a group of people who are marginalized and executed in the public domain so that they are under pressure, particularly in the fight against the stigma of a healthy society who are dominant [3]. Although ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet in isolated conditions, this group still has a fixed identity that they defend. Besides defending their identities, the group also seeks to maintain their existence as a group of ex-lepers.

Ex-leper in Sumberglagah hamlet is weakened as a result of the dominance of the society because of the stigma, so the presence of ex-lepers cannot get a decent place for the society. As a subaltern group, ex-lepers cannot express their aspirations, they can only be silent and no ear for the elite to listen. Ex-lepers do not have space to voice his condition, so it needs the intellectuals as their "representatives" [4].

Poniran is the representatives of ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet. He is a brave figure and fight wholeheartedly and selflessly to get the rights of ex-lepers back. His fight against the stigma of the ex-lepers is seriously done in order to set them free from negative perception and stigma of society, so that there is no discrimination for ex-leper and the identity of the ex-lepers can be accepted and recognized by society. the citizens of Sumberglagah particularly ex-lepers need representatives as like Poniran that can voice the silenced voices of those who are truly oppressed, so that the ex-lepers can express the aspirations and their condition to the public. As expressed by Sadi.

"When I knew Poniran for the first time, I felt amazed to him. He's a good person, not arrogant, and he made us feel that we were one entity. We were both struggling to build the village. If there is a discrimination, Poniran always takes a role to solve it. For example, when there was a problem of electronic ID card, Mr Ran (Poniran) directly sabotaged or sealed the district. If Mr. Ran did not do it, no one wanted to hear our voices ".

Poniran fights as speaking for for the ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet, he fights actively to defend the group of ex-lepers and voice what becomes their rights to be heard by the outside society even more by the government so that there is no longer a stigma, restrictions on citizenship rights and the loss of opportunity to express themselves.

#### **The identity politics practice of Sumberglagah ex-lepers**

In the past time, ex-lepers were active to follow the activities of Indonesia Leprosy Foundation (ILF) and the Association of Independent Leprosy (AIL), but gradually they faced a financial difficulty, and finally took the decision to try to fight for themselves. There was also the empowerment of ex-lepers, but it did not run so long, the difficulty of financial capital supply and the rarely buyers forced them to stop the empowerment activities.

The existence of discrimination from society to ex-lepers caused the ex-lepers marginalized from society. Ex-lepers form a group to fight for their rights together and fight the stigma that exists in society. Ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet have been one entity, one family, one intention, one aim, and one fate. Friendly, fair and help each other are their characteristics. Currently the citizens of Sumberglagah concentrate only within the scope of any village due to limit of funds that they have and there is not any government help anymore. They also cannot set up a foundation because no donors who help them, such as identity politics expressed by Ismail.

"Instead of making a foundation or an organization, we, as lepers, get difficulty to do everything. There are not any donors therefore we get difficulty to eat. Here we fight together as best as we could. if there is a counselling program, we are happily and enthusiastically follow it , by following such that program that there is an action or interaction then we can ask and answer with the public directly, but if there is only a seminar, we only meet the doctor and ex-lepers, if there is rarely action, we fight by ourselves ".

Ex-lepers carry out various ways to their identities. Although there is no agency or foundation support, but they themselves actively participate to defend and acquire their rights and omit the society discrimination against them. The practice of identity politics carried out by ex-lepers are as their resistance over the treatment of non-leprosy society. Resistance is shown in two forms [3] :

##### **1. Resistance Morality**

Slowly but surely the ex-lepers run several activities, including health education of lepers and ex-lepers in collaboration with health centres and Leprosy Hospital Sumberglagah, mutual cooperation in every village activities, as well as recitation and istighosah regularly every Saturday. The head of Sumberglagah hamlet, Poniran, is as representative of ex-lepers in the seminar. Poniran talked and explained much about the elimination negative stigma of

society towards ex-lepers. Through these activities the public can hear the aspirations of ex-lepers. Their struggle was not useless and it obtained good result. It could be seen that more citizens know and understand ex-lepers after having health education with health centre and Leprosy hospital.

There is not much that ex-lepers can do to set them free because their movement space is restricted. However, they are energetically trying to expand the movement space in order to be recognized and equalized with other societies. One of them is getting closer to God through regular religious activities and to socialize with other societies. Ex-lepers in Sumberglagah are trying to convince the outside society not to be rude and unfair to them because human beings basically have equal rights and there is nothing to distinguish each of them to God. Religious activities are carried out to control the emotions of ex-lepers, as it often happens anarchy demonstrations of ex-lepers to get the rights of public access.

Da'wah conducted by Mahmudin was able to make people aware of the importance of living in harmony among humans, there is no difference between them. It particularly happened to ex-lepers who fought to omit the stigma about them. Mahmudin has already trusted by people to be the speaker at religious activity or celebration. Activities carried out by ex-lepers aims to create interaction and socialization between ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet and the outside society. Not only conducting those kinds of activities, ex-lepers but also established relationships with other ex-lepers throughout Indonesia through the Indonesian Leprosy Foundation (ILF) and the Association of Independent Leprosy (AIL) that ex-lepers had ever followed actively in Sumberglagah hamlet.

The practice of identity politics carried out by the ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet is a moral resistance. Ex-lepers follow the activity by considering the norms and values in society as well as possible in order to be accepted, recognized, and equalized their existence with the other society. It is easier for them to socialize with the society, to create a harmonious and peaceful life. Through these ways, their aspirations can be heard by the public.

## 2. Radical Resistance

Not only conducting the resistance of morality, but the ex-lepers in Hamlet Sumberglagah also conduct radical resistance. They are classified as more sensitive and temperament because they are often treated unfairly. This is done as a rebuke over the stigma accepted and to make their presence noticed. As like what Poniran was done during the creation of electronic ID card, Poniran and Sumberglagah citizens sabotaged and sealed the district office. Demonstrations was done because they received injustice in the public service. Sumberglagah citizens had a taking picture schedule in the midnight. It was already clear that they received very unfair treatment and made them very angry. Another radical actions undertaken by ex-lepers, as expressed Ismail below.

"Previously, mini buses were ever taken hostage twice by the Glagah (Sumberglagah citizens). We were angry, we were not allowed to take the bus, and we were on foot from Mojosari to here. When I bought dawet (a traditional drink from Indonesia) in markets, the seller said that dawet had ran out then I immediately stirred the pan with a hand so that no one bought dawet."

Radical resistance is carried out as ex-lepers' strategy to convince people who oppose them. Facing public response which did not appreciate even deride the ex-lepers' fight makes the ex-lepers get angry and act radically to the dominant society. This is justified by Jariati as follows.

"It makes me think what the society wants out there. There are people who have already been familiar with the programs of lepers here, but also there are people who are provoking because they dislike. People who already know can receive the ex-lepers here, but people who still do not know try to make chaos with Sumberglagah citizens. Some of them gave response but some of them did not. The people in Sumberglagah do not take it as a matter anymore. The people here do not make any trouble but we are always harassed, as a result, we are getting angry. The most important is how the ex-lepers in Sumberglagah convince that we are already healed and healthy, and do not contaminate anymore".

The struggle of ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet is a real effort to fight against the dominance of the non-lepers. Mindset and negative stigma addressed to ex-lepers have raised the awareness to change the situation through various actions. Ex-lepers assert and maintain their identities as tangible evidence in the social representation, so that they can be recognized and put off the "clothes" minority (Stephen, 2008: 23). To make easier, it is illustrated in the following chart.

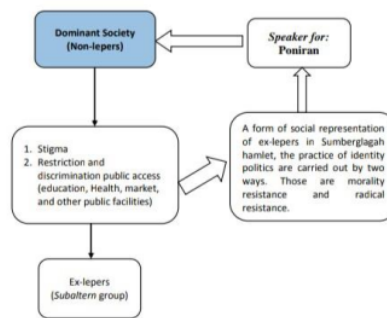


Figure 1. Chart Map Concept of Identity Politics carried out by Ex-Lepers

Source: Primary data that have been processed

## IV. CLOSING

The condition of ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet put them as a *subaltern* group, so they requires a representative to voice their aspirations that can be heard by the public, including the government. In this case, speaking for ex-lepers actively plays a role to fight the rights of ex-lepers to achieve the goal to eliminate the stigma on former ex-lepers and equalize human rights in order to create harmonious and peaceful life. Strengthening the identity of former ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet is realized through morality and radical resistance. The practice of identity politics are carried out by the ex-lepers in Sumberglagah hamlet as tangible evidence in order to create equality of social representation

#### REFERENCE

- [1] A. Aisyah, "Hotel di Makassar Larang Eks Penderita Kusta Gelar Acara.," (<http://news.okezone.com/read/2007/11/19/1/61950/hotel-di-makassar-larang-eks-penderita-kusta-gelar-acara>. Diakses 18 Maret 2013)., 2007.
- [2] I. Kirawan, "Politik Identitas Komunitas Homoseksual dalam Film Milk," *Komunikator*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2010.
- [3] L. Gandhi, *Teori Poskolonial: Upaya Meruntuhkan Hegemoni Barat* (Penerjemah: Yuwan Wahyutri dan Nur Hamidah). Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2006.
- [4] T. Widayanti, "Politik Subaltern: Pergulatan Identitas Waria," Yogyakarta, 2009.

# ICRACOS

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

4%

SIMILARITY INDEX

3%

INTERNET SOURCES

0%

PUBLICATIONS

1%

STUDENT PAPERS

## PRIMARY SOURCES

1

[prosiding.unipma.ac.id](http://prosiding.unipma.ac.id)

Internet Source

1%

2

[www.neliti.com](http://www.neliti.com)

Internet Source

1%

3

Submitted to BINUS Interanational School  
(Simprug)

Student Paper

1%

4

[ijcst.trunojoyo.ac.id](http://ijcst.trunojoyo.ac.id)

Internet Source

<1%

5

[digilib.uin-suka.ac.id](http://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id)

Internet Source

<1%

6

[www.cochranelibrary.com](http://www.cochranelibrary.com)

Internet Source

<1%

7

[mega.subhanagung.net](http://mega.subhanagung.net)

Internet Source

<1%

Exclude quotes Off

Exclude matches Off

Exclude bibliography Off

