

Community empowerment strategy and its impact on economic improvement in Kalipucang Wetan Village, Batang Regency

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to investigate to what extent the public economy empowerment strategies are applied by KUB Batik Tulis Rifaiyah and what are the implications of the public economy empowerment used by KUB Batik Tulis Rifaiyah.

Method – This research used the descriptive qualitative method. The study subject is community leaders, batik artisans, caretakers/communities, and related parties. The object of his research is KUB Batik Tulis Rifaiyah Kalipucang Wetan Batang. The data were analysed by using the technique of analysis and interactive model of analysis comprising data gathering, data grouping, and data display.

Result – The results of this study indicate that empowerment in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village has not been fully successful because of a lack of participation from the community.

Implication – This research was made as a material for consideration and evaluation so that community empowerment in Kalipucang Wetan Village is getting better.

Originality – The originality of this research lies in the object under study, analysis, and research location.

Keywords: local economic empowerment, craft, SMEs, batik, Central Java

Introduction

With the presence of the millennial era, the social changes that occur are very rapid, touching all aspects of human life in the hemisphere. The improvement and decline of global problems are considered as the impact or consequence of globalization. The negative impact of the economic downturn has in turn caused or exacerbated already bad poverty and unemployment in developing countries (Edi Suharto, 2014).

Community problems cannot be separated from the low level of the community's economy. This complaint is usually part of their responsibility. In 2020 there was an increase in open unemployment which was originally in 2019 amounted to 6.82 million people, in 2020 there is an increase to 6.88 million people (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). From this number, it can be seen that there is an increase in the number of unemployed in many communities and hidden unemployment (is unemployment not included in official statistics). They want to find a permanent job or just a part-time job, and want a better job (Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero, 2014). At the same time, in modern times, individuals cannot rely solely on the education they receive for work, but must have additional skills and sufficient experience.

Community empowerment and participation is a strategic process in the context of increasing economic, social and cultural transformation with great potential (Sungkono Edi Mulyono, 2011). Therefore, village empowerment plays an important role in equitable distribution of community work and improving the community's economy.

Currently, many people's economy is declining, this is experienced by the majority of people who work as laborers, farmers, drivers, workshop workers, and builders. However, in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village, Central Java, the people have other jobs, namely batik craftsmen, to increase income, One of the dominant ones is Batik Tulis Rifaiyah. Batik Tulis Rifaiyah is one of the oldest batik in Java. This batik was taught by Kyai Rifai in 1876 when he started teaching Islam. This craft can improve the economy of the community in the village.

This craft in Kalipucang Wetan Village is an effort to explore the potential of the community in increasing their creativity to

achieve independence from the community. In addition, Rifaiyyah Batik is made to practice patience in life, one form of practicing patience here is from making it yourself. This Rifaiyyah Batik takes one month for one piece of batik, Besides that, making Batik Rifaiyyah also aims to help make a living at home for women (Miftahutin, 2020).

Starting from the decline in the next generation of batik, finally, some of the batik makers formed a Joint Business Group which was filled by the batik community in the Kalipucang Wetan neighborhood. In addition, he also empowers young people as the next generation and participates in preserving Rifaiyyah Batik. The potential for the development of Rifaiyyah's batik is very large. However, this situation is not used properly so that there are obstacles in Kalipucang and hinder the process of economic empowerment. Batik, which is considered as the main economic driver of this small community, has not yet shown systematic empowerment efforts. During the observation, many factors hinder the development of batik craftsmen, such as the lack of attention of the village government in providing capital, lack of interest of the younger generation in preserving local crafts, and the lack of batik patterns that are appropriate to other social situations and problems.

From the description above, the problem formulations and research questions are compiled as follows:

1. How is the community economic empowerment strategy implemented by the Tunas Cahaya Batik Tulis Rifaiyyah Joint Business Group?
2. What is the impact of community economic empowerment by KUB Tunas Cahaya Batik Tulis Rifaiyyah?

Literature review

Alief Rakhman Setyanto, dkk, (2015). In a research journal entitled Study of MSME Empowerment Strategies in Facing Free Trade in the Asean Region, Journal of Economics. In this observation, a qualitative method was used. Interview, observation, library research, and documentation were further used to collect the data. The results showed that the development model of Batik Laweyan UMKM was to utilize social capital through innovation, product updating, and then expanding the business network.

Dwi Pratiwi Kurniati, et al, (2013) have conducted a research entitled "Community Empowerment in the Sector of Economic Business (Study at the Mojokerto City Community Empowerment Agency)". The study revealed that: (a) the Mojokerto city empowerment agency, especially in the field of economic business, includes individual assistance and institutional assistance, (b) every program implementation always begins with the preparation stage as the first step in introducing the program to the community, (c) the impact of the empowerment program that has been implemented can increase economic independence, especially on the productivity and income of the people who receive assistance, but there are also negative impacts that arise in running their businesses.

Yuni Catur Wulan, et al, have conducted a research in 2019 entitled "Implementation of Poverty Reduction Policies through the Economic Empowerment Program of Joint Business Groups (Study on the Economic Empowerment Program of Joint Business Groups in Pakistaji Village, Wonoasih District, Probolinggo City, East Java)". The results of the study showed that there is assistance in the KUBE, so that the business involved can develop optimally and the welfare of its members increases. Furthermore, the factor that determines the success of the poverty alleviation program through the approach, KUBE facilitators have a strategic role as resource persons, movers, and facilitators of empowerment for poor families. There is a stalled business due to the lack of mentoring programs, limited abilities, and skills of members that hinder the implementation of the program.

Retno Endah Supeni and Maheni Ika Sari (2011) have conducted a research entitled "Efforts to Empower Women's Economics through Development of Small Business Management (Descriptive Study on Small Business Activities of Wirolegi Village Women, Jember Regency, Assisted by the Jember UM Women's Study Center)", In general, women's economic empowerment in the assisted areas of Wirolegi Village has not shown optimal results, this can be explained in each element of empowerment which shows that only about 50% of the assisted people already have businesses, their access is only limited to participating in training and coaching activities but has not been able to reach information technology and public services for business development.

Indri Septiana has conducted a research entitled “Rifa'iyah Batik in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village: Study of Sources of Ideas, Aesthetic Characteristics, Functions, and Meanings”. The idea of Rifa'iyah batik comes from the existing batik culture and tradition, then it is influenced by a belief/ religion, namely when Rifa'iyah Islam led by KH Ahmad Rifa'i entered the village through his student Kyai Ilham. Rifa'iyah batik cloth is used as a medium to spread Islamic teachings in the Kalipucang Wetan area. Therefore, the manufacturing process, aesthetic characteristics, function, and meaning of Rifa'iyah batik cloth have their own characteristics, these characteristics are adapted to Islamic teachings and become Rifa'iyah Islamic teachings.

Empowerment

Jim Ife argues that empowerment has the meaning of power, meaning that the weak people must increase their power, or in another sense, the rich give power to the weak (Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero, 2016). Rappaport in Wrihaatnolo and Dwidjowijoto (Rahman Mulyawan, 2016) states that the application of empowerment theory is interpreted as a way, a stage in which individuals, groups, and communities become proficient with the problems they face. The assumptions of empowerment theory are as follows:

1. The form of empowerment will not be the same with different people
2. The form of empowerment will not be the same if the concept itself is different.
3. Over time, empowerment will experience instability or change. One time a person will feel empowered and in other conditions will feel powerless depending on the situation they are in at one time.

Community economic empowerment strategy

(Edi Suharto, 2014) revealed that empowerment strategies can be carried out through three levels or dimensions of empowerment:

1. Aras Mikro

Empowerment is carried out on individuals through guidance, consultation, stress management, and crisis intervention. Its main purpose is to guide or train individuals to carry out their life tasks. This model is often referred to as a task-centered approach.

2. Aras Mezzo

Empowerment is carried out on a group of individuals. Empowerment is done through group intervention. Education and training, group dynamics, are often used as strategies to increase awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals so that they can solve the problems they face.

3. Aras Makro

This method is also called a large systems strategy because the purpose of the change is to target the wider system environment. Policymaking, social planning, sport, social action, lobbying, community organizing, and conflict management are some of the strategies in this approach. Large-scale systems strategy treats individuals as people who could understand their own situation and choose and determine appropriate strategies for action.

Methodology

The method used in its preparation uses descriptive qualitative research methods, and the researcher enters the field or social relations related to the theory (Sugiono, 2006). Qualitative analysis is a type of research that pays more attention to field research (Basrowi and Suwandi, 2008). Field qualitative research is a research that intends to understand the phenomena directly in the field about what is experienced by research subjects holistically and by way of description in the form of words and language in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Tohirin, 2012).

Primary data is obtained directly from the main source provider, then processed and classified to be relevant to the problem formulation. Primary data that is plain, as-is, and still raw requires further analysis (Mahmud, 2011). Primary data is usually in the form of individual opinions or group opinions, in this case, the opinions are obtained from community leaders, batik craftsmen, hamlet heads, and visiting tourists. Secondary data refers to data that is not obtained directly from the research subject. Researchers can obtain ready-to-use data collected by other parties through various commercial and non-commercial methods or methods. In this case, the auxiliary data was obtained from documents from the

Kalipucang village, brochures about batik and documents from related institutions.

Results and discussion

Empowerment strategy

Conceptually, the empowerment of batik can be done by empowering the batik craftsmen themselves. The success of empowerment depends on the participation of the community as a subject who participates in its development. In this case, the bottom-up method is mostly used, that planning is more pursued, and targets are carried out in a participatory manner. Identify the potential and problems of the Rifaiyah Batik Craft KUB program with the parties participating in empowerment.

In general, the establishment of the Rifaiyah Batik Craft KUB is expected to be able to develop the potentials that exist in the surrounding community. For the potential of the Kalipucang Wetan village community, there are various kinds, but the most prominent and active potential to date is the manufacture of *batik tulis* (handwritten batik). So here the potential that continues to be explored and preserved is the potential associated With Rifaiyah Batik Tulis Craft (Najmul Afad, 2020). However, this potential has recently decreased due to problems related to empowerment, these problems include:

1. There is a conflict between the Rifaiyah Batik Tulis Craft KUB and the parties related to empowerment.
2. Inconsistency between KUB and Bumdes. Lately, the KUB and Bumdes are not in line, the activities carried out by Bumdes are deviant, so this reduces the public's interest in participating.
3. The place that was supposed to be a batik gallery has now become a coffee shop for locals. Empowerment, in general, is oriented towards the wider community, but that does not mean that the place to develop their abilities is made into this kind of place, because by making batik galleries a coffee place, people who want to develop their batik skills are hampered, by having to be limited in time and place that must alternate with each other seller.

4. Development funds that are not used properly. It is undeniable that to develop a skill we need funds to support the necessary burden. However, in Kalipucang Wetan Village, development funds are not currently allocated for the development of Rifaiyah Batik, development funds.

Edi Suharto revealed that empowerment strategies can be carried out through three levels or dimensions of empowerment:

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In its implementation in this Kalipucang Wetan village, applying a micro-level strategy which in this case is in the form of guidance and training as a form of assistance in empowerment. This is done especially for people who have just joined so that they can find out the potential that exists within them. Here it is hoped that the community must be critical so that they can find out how to develop their potential in detail by consulting local elders. As expressed by one of the residents of Kalipucang Wetan Batang, a Rifaiyah batik craftsman, Mrs. Ndiroh:

“For new craftsmen, we usually collect data and then provide training, so that it is easier for us to classify which ones have good potential and which ones still need to learn more”

Aras Mezzo. Empowerment is carried out on a group of individuals. Empowerment is done through group intervention. Education and training, group dynamics, are often used as strategies to increase awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals so that they are able to solve the problems they face. After the micro-level strategy is successful, then they apply the mezzo level in which they can consult and form groups to attend training to deepen their knowledge and hone their skills in batik.

Aras Makro. This method is also called a large systems strategy because the purpose of the change is to target the wider system environment. Policymaking, social planning, sport, social action, lobbying, community organizing, and conflict management are some of the strategies in this approach. Large-scale systems strategy treats individuals as people who could understand their own situation and choose and determine appropriate strategies for action.

This macro-level is very influential in empowerment because with the implementation of the macro level, it is hoped that empowerment will be able to organize the community and manage conflicts that exist in the community. Empowerment in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village often applies this strategy when there is a conflict or difference of opinion between individuals, then other individuals take policies so that the conflict can be resolved.

Impact of community economic empowerment

Belinda explained that the economic impacts of various economic activities are grouped into three categories, namely:

1. Direct impact

The direct impact is a change in the number of sales, income, employment, and revenue on the business of the initial recipient of visitor spending. The direct economic impact can be seen from the proportion of perceived income and benefits. The direct impact can be felt by the community with the empowerment of Rifaiyyah Batik Tulis crafts, namely:

a. Increase of sales

After the empowerment of Rifaiyyah Batik Tulis crafts, production from the community increased, this was because of the relationships that helped market the product. In general, a good relationship will be profitable in the future. The empowerment in the Kalipucang Wetan village is not internal to the Kalipucang Wetan community itself, this empowerment has interference from other parties. So that this empowerment is quite helpful because this empowerment can expand their network both in terms of marketing and production.

Although sales have increased, the unstructured sales system and an overly conservative society have slowed economic growth. In today's millennial era, more people take advantage of technological sophistication, especially small business owners, they are competing to market their products on social media channels, be it through websites, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc. However, to produce Rifaiyyah Batik, neither the collectors nor the batik makers take advantage of technological sophistication, they only rely on promotions from friends to friends which they consider quite effective in the future.

b. Additional family income

Prior to the empowerment of Rifaiyyah's craft Batik Tulis, the people of Kalipucang Wetan Village only depended on primary income obtained from the work of their husbands or main jobs, with this empowerment the community received additional income from batik production.

Rifaiyyah batik suits are well known in various regions and the skills of each batik have developed, so production can also increase, can be made more quickly and effectively, if this happens, the impact felt is quite good, one of which is that the additional income of each batik family can increase.

c. New job opportunities for residents and reduced unemployment

With the empowerment of Rifaiyyah's craft Batik Tulis in Kalipucang Wetan Village, there are new jobs, so that when local people experience difficulties in finding work, they can develop their skills at home by making batik.

2. Indirect impact

The indirect impact that exists after the empowerment of Rifaiyyah Batik Tulis crafts is, namely, the progress of the mindset of the community in developing batik that has been passed down from generation to generation. After the empowerment of Rifaiyyah's Batik Handicraft, the mindset of the community is more developed, and the number of batik is now also increasing.

The skill/ability of the new craftsman does not increase. Generally, someone who has their skills must continue to hone their abilities in order to create new innovations, but these Rifaiyyah batik craftsmen are lazy to hone their skills, especially those who have just joined they don't give ideas to develop this batik craft so that batik that is marketed is monotonous only with existing models without any updates and for batik also only relies on people who are experienced or long enough to be craftsmen to meet consumer needs, this indirectly resulted in a slowdown in the increase in the production sector.

3. Induction impact

Induction impact is a change in economic activity resulting from household expenditures from income obtained directly or indirectly. The impact of induction in the empowerment of Rifaiyyah's

Batik Tulis, in the form of a follow-up impact, is obtained from other than direct impacts and indirect impacts, such as the impact obtained from daily expenses.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussion conducted by researchers regarding the strategy and impact of community empowerment in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village, it can be concluded that the empowerment strategies used in Kalipucang Wetan Batang village were done through guidance, training with group intervention, and decision making. After implementing this strategy, empowerment in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village has not been fully successful. Because it seems that there is still a lack of participation from the community, especially the younger generation, they do not want to take part in developing the Rifaiyah Batik craft.

The empowerment carried out in Kalipucang Wetan Batang Village has a direct impact, an indirect impact, and an induction impact. The direct impact can be felt by the community with the empowerment of Rifaiyyah's Handicraft Batik, namely: An increase in sales, an additional family income, the creation of new jobs for the local community, and reducing unemployment. The indirect impact that exists after the empowerment of Rifaiyyah Batik Tulis crafts is the progress of the mindset of the community in developing batik which has been passed down from generation to generation. After the empowerment of Rifaiyyah's Batik Handicraft, the mindset of the community is more developed, and the number of batik is now also increasing. And finally, the impact of induction, in empowering Rifaiyyah's Batik Tulis, in the form of further impacts obtained from other than direct impacts and indirect impacts, such as the impact obtained from daily expenses.

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