



Community Empowerment Strategy in Bangkit Bersama Cooperation (Case Study of the Waste Management and Water Hyacinth Craftsmen Empowerment Program)

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Abstract. This research is set out from the various empowerment strategies implemented in each community empowerment institution. Heterogeneous environmental conditions became a consideration in implementing empowerment strategies to the community. The empowerment strategy became the main capital to attract the attention of the community to take the empowerment program seriously. The purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of the empowerment strategies used at this institution. Cooperative is a forum for community empowerment in the economic field. This research was conducted because there was a uniqueness found in the empowerment program. This institution of empowerment did not only empower the community economically, but also socially, environmentally, and spiritually of the community. This study used qualitative methods of observation, interview, and documentation studies. The finding of this research was empowerment strategies using holistic development which in turn are able to develop community life dimensions in an integrated manner. The conclusion obtained from this study is that holistic development can create an independent, prosperous, and having the positive character.

Keywords: strategy, holistic development, family, community empowerment

INTRODUCTION ~ Poverty is a problem which has never been finished to discuss in countries in the world, including Indonesia. Therefore, in order to solve that problem, there are many efforts that have been designed by various parties to overcome poverty. Poverty as an economic problem has pushed many people both from the government sector with its leading programs to the community through efforts aimed to reduce the poverty and the welfare of the community.

According to BPS (2018), poverty is seen as an inability on the economic side to meet basic food needs as measured by the expenditure side. A population is categorized as poor or not poor based on the poverty line. Poverty line is the minimum rupiah amount needed to meet the minimum basic needs of food and non-food. During the 2014-2018 period, the

Indonesian Poverty Line especially in West Java increased every year, 291,474 Rupiah in 2014 to 367,755 Rupiah in 2018.

Poverty reduction efforts according to Law Number 25 of 2000 concerning Proenas are attained through community empowerment. The role of poverty alleviation is not carried out by the government alone, but it is comprehensive along with the activators of community empowerment. Kamil (2009: 59) stated that the output or impact of the empowerment process is to create a responsive, skill and collaborative society to improve its position in society. Similarly, according to Kindervatter (in Kamil 2009: 63) who give the meaning "empowerment as a way for people to gain understanding and social, economic and/or political control to improve their position in society". Sutoro (2002) argued that empowerment is



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the process of developing, independent, empowering and strengthening the bargaining position of the lower classes of society against suppressive forces in all fields and sectors of life.

One of the efforts made by non-formal organizations is initiating community empowerment programs based on the needs and learning resources available in the environment. The community is nurtured and trained to have knowledge, skills that can be used economically so that the community can progress and be empowered through productive economic endeavors (Vidhandika, 2006). The essence of the community empowerment program is to involve the community in the management and utilization of social resources, the natural environment, and human resources in activities to improve community welfare. There are many non-formal organizations that initiated empowerment programs and one of them is Bangkit Bersama Cooperation. Empowerment programs in this institution are manifested in the form of participation or their involvement starting from the planning, organizing, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages.

The Bangkit Bersama Cooperation's mainstay program is waste and water hyacinth management program. This program provides an opportunity for the community to practice the skills to process water hyacinth into a variety of products and knowledge about wastes and their

managements. In carrying out empowerment programs, this institution develops the overall dimension of society, namely the economic, social, spiritual, and environmental dimensions or named holistic development. According to Anwas (2013), because of the complexity of development issues or community empowerment, empowerment in the education sector is not enough to be approached by educational aspects only, but it also must be done holistically regarding various aspects related to economic, socio-cultural, religious, and other aspects.

Cooperation develops community centers which provide educational and social services to the community, facilitates the community to accommodate the results of water hyacinth and garbage processed. There also applies the system of saving and loaning which are paid by collecting rubbish, the community is given an understanding and training in order to have the ability to utilize natural potential that can be an economic value. For instance, the utilization of water hyacinth waste spread in the Saguling Reservoir and rubbish that floats on the surface of the river. An interesting finding is that the cooperation also holds regular religious studies to the community. There are not many empowerment institutions that can develop the overall dimension of community life. Based on this phenomenon, the researchers interested in conducting an in depth study of the



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holistic development strategy adopted by this cooperation.

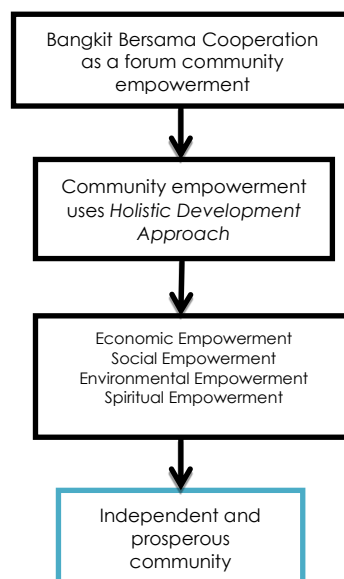
METHOD

This research was designed using qualitative methods with a case study approach. The case study approach is chosen because the issues discussed in this research only apply to this institution. The type of this research is a descriptive study. Researchers try to describe the research activities carried out on a particular object clearly and systematically. Researchers try to deepen understanding of the social meaning that arises in the environment of research objects, find patterns, and hypotheses using theory to study research objects (Sugiyono, 2011).

This research used descriptive qualitative method with purposive sampling. The participants of this study were 6 people from Bangkit Bersama Cooperation. The participants are ID as the chairman of

Bangkit Bersama Cooperation, WW as the head of waste recycling, ED as the head of water hyacinth handicraft, RK and BW as the scavengers, and HN as the water hyacinth craftsman in Bangkit Bersama Cooperation. ID, WW, and ED were used as primary data, while RK, BW and HN participation were used as secondary data.

Data was collected and extracted through interviews and observations. The data in this study were collected through several tools, namely interview guides, observation sheets, and documents, taking notes on the results of interviews, observations and document analysis results. The qualitative analysis process in this study has four important components, which are data collection, data reduction, withdrawal, and making data conclusions. To better understanding of the concepts in this study, the framework as follows:





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RESULTS

Starting from the concern due to environmental damage in the Saguling Reservoir because of a pile of plastic waste, water hyacinth weeds, and the Saguling Reservoir shallow due to the continuous sedimentation rate entering the Saguling inflow, which results in silting of the reservoir, and the social conditions of the people living around the reservoir. there are still many who are poor, so an idea was generated to build a symbiosis of mutualism between community empowerment around the reservoir with efforts to preserve the environment of the Saguling Reservoir, so that in 2009, a Cooperation called *Bangkit Bersama* Cooperation was established, where the members are from community members who are scavengers and the community poor living around the Saguling Reservoir.

Since 2009, *Bangkit Bersama* Cooperation has developed scavenger waste empowerment program in Citarum River. This program has been proven to be able to reduce the volume of waste in the Citarum River, while at the same time, it is able to create new jobs and increase community income in the Saguling Reservoir area. By building a positive correlation between the two problems, it turns out to produce a solution that has a positive effect on environmental conditions and community welfare by utilizing waste, water hyacinth weeds and critical land becomes more productive not only it can preserve the environment of

the Saguling Reservoir, but also it can prosper the people who live in around the reservoir.

Bangkit Bersama Cooperation is a community empowerment institution that has a vision of "Becoming an open and transparent community economic institution that is able to increase the dignity and life of the large community by remaining grounded in environmental preservation". As well as the mission "Become a locomotive of economic change in society, to advocate for socio-economic and environmental environment by building on existing local wisdom, to assist in efforts to preserve the environment around the Saguling Reservoir particularly and Citarum River generally.

Community empowerment in *Bangkit Bersama* Cooperation refers to environmental preservation. The principle of empowerment program in this institution is "independent community and sustainable environment" which means that every empowerment program implemented in this institution leads to community independence economically, socially, politically, and spiritually and this is juxtaposed with environmental preservation. The community must be able to maintain and take care of the environment in which they live and earn a living.

The empowerment program carried out by *Bangkit Bersama* Cooperation includes the garbage scavenger empowerment program and the women's empowerment



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program in making handicrafts made from water hyacinth waste. This waste and water hyacinth are found on the surface of the Saguling Reservoir, precisely in the Citarum River. In the garbage scavenger empowerment program, *Bangkit Bersama* Cooperation provides the community with knowledge and skills in waste management, starting from recognizing the types of waste, separation, conditioning, and waste recycling. After going through those stages, the waste will have economic value to the community. The processed waste can be collected or sold in the cooperation. The income from the sale of waste is used by scavengers to increase their income to meet their daily needs and family, as explained by ID as the *Bangkit Bersama* Cooperation chairman.

"Here, people are taught how to manage and process waste. All start from the introduction to the recycling stage. Well, they can sell the results of recycling waste to the cooperation. The cooperation collects processed products result from the community which is empowered. From the sale of waste, the scavengers can increase their income".

This was also added by WW as the head of the waste recycling sector.

"Previously, the scavengers were given skills in processing waste; their garbage is bought cheaply by the agents. *Alhamdulillah*, after the community was given an understanding on how to recognize waste until it was recycled, the waste was bought at a relatively high price".

The same thing also applied to the women's empowerment program in the Saguling Reservoir, which is through the

processing of water hyacinth weeds. Housewives are given skills in processing water hyacinth weeds into various forms of crafts, such as bags of various variants, vases, tissue boxes, calligraphy, furniture, and so on. The results of this craft are accommodated by cooperation and other cooperation which have domestic and/or international market, as explained by ED as the head of the water hyacinth handicraft field.

"The housewives are trained to process water hyacinth into various kinds of handicrafts such as bags, furniture, and others. After completion, we will help with the marketing."

The statement was completed by the water hyacinth craftsman.

"The results of selling water hyacinth to cooperation can add money to buy rice that is given by the husband"

Economic empowerment in this institution provides positive contributions to people's lives. This institution also implements a system of "savings and loans paid rubbish". The community is helped by the current system.

The social empowerment carried out by this institution to the surrounding community is in the form of boat provision and community center activation. This boat is given to scavengers who work in this field. Actually, this boat was given to the initial capital for the community to search for garbage on the surface of Citarum River. There, the people who collect garbage from the river are provided with a boat to get garbage by



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this empowerment agency. This was confirmed by ID as the chairman of Bangkit Bersama Cooperation.

"To collect rubbish in the river, we provide the boat to the community. After collecting the garbage, we help to recycle it in the cooperation".

Other than that, Bangkit Bersama Cooperation also provides a Community center that opens and can be shared by the surrounding community. According to Iffe (2008), the community center has always been an important component in community development. Bangkit Bersama Cooperation utilizes it for meetings with scavengers/artisans, counseling to the community, training and development skills, giving the necessary information, group discussions, and so forth, as said by ID as the chairman of Bangkit Bersama Cooperation.

"This hall is open for 24 hours. During the day, we use it for skills training, seminars, discussions, meetings and other activities. At night, there are people who sleep here. So, this room is never quite, there is always many people to enliven."

Social development carried out by this institution provides enormous benefits for the surrounding community. Likewise with the development/empowerment of the environment carried out by this institution is to spark the principle of "independent community and sustainable environment" and Citarum Harum program". This institution has a big contribution in reducing the volume of waste and water hyacinth weeds that cover the Citarum River that is contained in Saguling

Reservoir. Citarum which used to spread the stench because of the piles of garbage is slowly disappearing now because people turn the waste into a blessing, which can be of economic value.

Spiritual development of community carried out by this institution was to hold routine recitation for empowered people who are members of the Cooperative and the general public around these empowerment institutions. Routine recitation is colossal lecture given by an *Ustadz* who was deliberately invited to give religious knowledge to the community, as explained by ID as Bangkit Bersama Cooperative chairman.

"Beside in improving the community's economy, we also strive to provide understanding and strengthening of religious and spiritual knowledge to the community. This routine recitation is carried out every Saturday night, once a week.

This was also added by HN as a water hyacinth craftsman.

"Here, we also study religion, as the balance after one week busy looking for livelihood. *Alhamdulillah*, every Saturday at night we are given a spiritual splash, it feels calmer and more eager to fight another day".

The empowerment that has been done by Bangkit Bersama Cooperation reflects the holistic development of the community. Holistic development that is applied to the community has been seen directly so that it can improve people's life. The empowerment program carried out at the empowerment agency is accepted by the community, because this empowerment



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program does not only rely on one point/dimension of life, but rather presents a whole dimension of life. So, the holistic development developed by Bangkit Bersama Cooperation is empowering economically, socially, environmentally, and spiritually.

DISCUSSION

According to Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2008), dimensions in community empowerment which are economic development, social development, environmental development, and spiritual development. This is in line with what is done by Bangkit Bersama Cooperation. Community development is not enough on the economic dimension, but it must touch other dimensions which involve in people lives as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the construction of community empowerment carried out in Bangkit Bersama Cooperation is through Holistic Development. Community development is not stagnant in one dimension of life, but rather develops an integrated dimension of community life through a family approach. The developed dimensions are the economic, social, environmental, and spiritual dimensions of the community both

as members of the cooperation and the general public living around the institution.

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