



Social capital analysis in sustainability of Batik Tulis Lasem and community empowerment in Rembang

Eni Winarti^{1✉}, Sucihatningsih Dian Wisika Prajanti², Nugroho Trisnu Brata²

¹SMP IT AL Fikri Semarang

²Universitas Negeri Semarang

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Abstract

This writing aims to empower the community with a social-humanities perspective. The development of local economic potential in the community is a form of community empowerment that can increase job opportunities. In addition to providing employment opportunities for the economic development community, researchers use qualitative methods that produce qualitative descriptive data through observation techniques and in-depth interviews to explore data on community empowerment based on social capital in Lasem batik business actors to increase community empowerment and identify the sustainability of Lasem's batik business in Rembang Regency. The results showed that: social capital has a very important role in the community, especially in the sustainability of the Lasem batik writing business, the business continuity of Lasem batik business owners in Rembang Regency includes capital sustainability, human resource sustainability, production sustainability, distribution sustainability, and consumption sustainability, obstacles and support for the sustainability of the Lasem batik writing industry in order to Business continuity and community empowerment can run well.

✉ Correspondence address:

Jl. Kyai Muhammad Rifai, Sambiroto, Kec. Tembalang,

Kota Semarang Prov. Jawa Tengah.

E-mail: eniwinarti137@students.unnes.ac.id

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of high poverty is one of the problems that has become a concern in several regions in Indonesia. Poverty is a problem that needs to be solved and a way out is sought so that it does not develop further in the community. Poverty can be caused by the high number of people who occur because human resources are more than the absorption of existing labor. Therefore, poverty alleviation caused by high unemployment must be overcome by utilizing the economic potential that exists in a region in order to meet the needs of people's lives, especially to meet economic needs (Brata, 2018).

The unemployment rate in the people of Rembang Regency is 1.76%. Most of the unemployment rates that occur in women's communities, this is one of the causes of the lack of public welfare. The income arena in the family consists of only one direction, namely from the male side. Meanwhile, the dependents owned by the community are not only husband and wife, but also their children who need a more decent life. The people of Rembang Regency who lack a level of welfare according to data from the Rembang Regency Government recorded that in 2022 the poverty rate in Rembang Regency is still quite high at 94,560 people. This is one of the challenges for the Rembang Regency government in finding the best solution to overcome it. Although the local economic potential in Rembang Regency is quite adequate, the community has not been able to utilize it optimally (Maslikah, Alliyah, & Azizi, 2018). Low public education makes people lack insight and knowledge in utilizing or managing the local economic potential in the region.

Most of the people of Rembang Regency make a living as farmers and fishermen who still use traditional techniques in their processing. According to surveys conducted by researchers, many less prosperous people come from farmers and fishermen. Fertile agricultural land is not matched by advanced human resources and modern agricultural techniques. So that people still depend on the season and human labor in their agricultural processing. Many people are unemployed when the agricultural season is over. In addition, many

women do not have jobs after marriage and rely only on income from their husbands. The large number of unemployed women can be an opportunity for the community to utilize the existing local potential to be more productive and creative by practicing batik in this modern era. So that in addition to meeting the economic needs of the community, it can also carry out cultural preservation in the form of batik tulis lasem.

Based on data on the writing batik craft business in Rembang Regency, it can be seen that the writing batik crafts in Rembang Regency are quite numerous and growing. With the existence of a lasem writing batik business in the regency indirectly, it can become a job opportunity for the people of Rembang Regency. Production activities to the distribution of batik making that require batik craftsmen in writing require labor in these activities. In the production process, batik making activities require labor in the batik process activities, *namely ngetheli, mola, longan, isen-isen, nerusi, mopok, ngelir, nglorot, mbilasi and mepe*. In addition, in distribution activities, parties who work together in the batik business also get jobs, for example, the reseller who collaborates with batik owners to do marketing.

However, the utilization of economic potential in the surrounding area often still finds problems that occur, namely because the community is not able to make maximum use of the economic potential in the region. This happens because of the lack of knowledge about the use of these economic resources and other supports such as incomplete equipment, lack of relations to develop existing economic potential, and lack of capital owned, resulting in less than optimal level of welfare of local communities (El Hasanah, 2018). The development of local economic potential in the community is a form of community empowerment that can increase job opportunities. In addition to providing job opportunities for the community, economic development also plays a role in providing in-depth knowledge about the potential that exists in an area (Ismiyanti, Prajanti, Utomo, Handoyo, & Cahyaningtyas, 2021).

Norms have an important role in controlling forms of behavior that grow and develop in the community. Norms have an understanding that is a

collection of rules that are expected to be obeyed and implemented by society in a particular social entity. Norms tend to have social sanctions to prevent individuals from doing something that deviates from the prevailing habits in society (Imaniar & Brata, 2020).

In the implementation of community empowerment activities, the community must have a certain foundation or principles so that community empowerment activities can run well. Empowering the community is an effort to improve the dignity and dignity of the grass root layer of society, with all its limitations so that they have not been able to escape the trap of poverty, ignorance and backwardness, so that community empowerment is not only strengthening individuals but also existing social institutions in society. Community empowerment activities need to carry out modern values such as hardwork, frugality, openness, responsibility which are important parts of empowerment efforts (Uddin, Ruhadi, & Fais Maulana, 2022).

Based on the above background, it is necessary to conduct a study on the level of community welfare and business continuity in community empowerment activities of Rembang Regency. This study aims to examine the social capital activities that exist in the batik tulis lasem industry, analyze the business sustainability of batik tulis entrepreneurs in Rembang Regency, and identify obstacles and solutions to the role of social capital in the batik tulis lasem industry towards community empowerment in Rembang Regency.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative descriptive with an inductive approach through observation and interview activities so that the data obtained are more accurate. Primary data collection techniques in this study used observation, interview, and documentation techniques. While secondary data collection techniques are carried out by searching for literacy through library search. The data collected was then analyzed using qualitative descriptions with steps referring to interactive models. The analysis carried out is by data reduction activities, data presentation, triangulation and conclusions. The informants of this research

consisted of Gunung kendil batik writing business owners, Gayatri batik writing business owners, Anugrah art batik business owners, batik craftsmen, and relations of Lasem batik writing business owners to improve business continuity and community empowerment.

The location of this research is in two sub-districts, namely in Rembang District and Pancur District which meet the criteria, namely that some people work as batik craftsmen written by Lasem. To meet data needs, research has been carried out for five months starting from the preparation of research plans, to the process of compiling data and preparing research results (Wijayanto & Prajanti, 2020).

This research covers some of the people in Rembang Regency, especially Lasem's batik craftsmen. To facilitate data collection, researchers conduct sampling with observation and interview techniques so that the data found can be more complete and accurate. In accordance with the scope of research, the variables to be studied are the business sustainability of the batik industry written by Lasem and the level of community empowerment. The criteria for community empowerment of Rembang Regency are based on data on the Labor Force Participation Rate and Open Unemployment Rate of Rembang Regency as well as the Net Consolidated Data of the People of Rembang Regency in the last three years.

The validity test of the data in this study was carried out by triangulation with data validity checking techniques that utilize something other than the data for checking purposes or as a comparison of data obtained by researchers. This research uses source triangulation, namely by comparing data and information collected through informants with one another.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Existence of Social Capital in Batik Business Actors Write Lasem

The overall number of Lasem batik entrepreneurs in Rembang Regency, researchers took 3 Lasem batik writing industries that are still actively producing and marketing their own written batik, namely Gunung kendil written batik, Anugrah art writing batik, and Gayatri writing batik. The

three types of Lasem written batik already have their own characteristics and diversity so that researchers can get information about the role of social capital of Lasem written batik on business sustainability and community empowerment in Rembang Regency.

Participation in a network carried out by the owners of the Lasem batik industry is quite diverse, both formal and non-formal associations. In formal institutions there are usually provisions or rules that are specific to their members, while non-formal institutions are usually more relaxed and do not have many rules or regulations in them. The owners of Lasem's written batik business are still quite active in activities in the surrounding environment such as activities within the scope of RT and RW. The association is carried out when there are recitation activities, social gatherings, mutual assistance, visiting the sick, mourning the dead, PKK, the KABARI program, and so on. Because these activities have become a culture inherent in the community in Rembang Regency, especially in the value of social care and tolerance of mutual respect for each other between communities (Atabik, 2016).

The reciprocity that is often done by batik industry players writes Lasem is by helping each other if someone needs it, donating when someone is doing a celebration, mourning when someone dies, visiting the sick, rewang when someone is doing a celebration or thanksgiving and other helping activities that lead each other.

There is trust between each other in every social relationship that is built, so that with this trust their relationship will be more durable and long-lasting. The trust possessed is considered from the track record and trust and about who the trusted person is (Azis, Risfaisal, & Rosa, 2022).

Social norms contained in the lives of batik business owners written by Lasem in Rembang Regency are the application of mutual respect, mutual respect, not offending each other, not doing unhealthy competition, doing tolong help activities, doing good among others, and other mutually beneficial activities. These social norms are strongly influenced by religious norms held by batik business owners, Lasem wrote.

Value is an idea or thought for generations that is considered true and important by members of

most societies. Values have an important role in the social life of one's community. In a culture, it usually has certain values that can dominate ideas or thoughts that develop. A strong social capital cannot be separated from the influence of values created in the community (Oktaviyanti, Sutarto, & Atmaja, 2019).

The value in the role of social capital in the batik industry, Lasem wrote, on business sustainability and community empowerment is very diverse. The view of society in living life has a fairly noble goal, namely by worshiping Allah SWT so that it is always given convenience and benefit to others. The teachings of philosophy or admonition in daily life are applied as much as possible by the people of Rembang Regency in order to live a peaceful, safe, and peaceful life.

The rules that exist in the social association of individuals in the community can be referred to as a social norm. The existing rules are neither mandatory nor a necessity for batik business owners written by Lasem, but because there is a sense of sensitivity or discomfort with others, they carry out the existing rules. In the associations they participate in, it is hoped that all members can gather, but sometimes there are still those who cannot participate in gathering due to certain obstacles. An association that does not have special rules often its members are less active in participating in the association because of the lack of strict rules in the association.

Social norms found in the lives of batik business owners written by Lasem in Rembang Regency are the implementation of mutual respect, mutual respect, not offending each other, not doing unhealthy competition, doing gorong royong activities, and always doing good to each other. Normal social activities in the community are strongly influenced by religious norms that are adopted and upheld by batik business owners, writes Lasem (Inayah, Trinugraha, & Nurhadi, 2023).

While the values that exist in the social life of the people of Rembang Regency are the value of honesty, obedience, mutual assistance, and other important values. Proactive actions that are often taken by Lasem batik business owners are actions that arise spontaneously in themselves with the initiative to help others and are based on cultural

values that have been formed to exchange kindness. So that it causes quite good benefits, which can strengthen the brotherhood between them and expand the network of friends or friendly relations (Huwaida & Brata, 2021).

Proactive actions have social capital content that can be known from a person's actions from the simplest actions to the most extensive actions. People who are used to taking proactive actions will more often take actions that are positive and beneficial for others and for themselves. These people will carry out initiatives that are useful for life in the social environment of their community. The positive action or attitude applied is a form of action in which it contains the spirit of activeness and care (Fadli, 2020).

The proactive action taken by the owner of Lasem's written batik is shown by exchanging ideas or exchanging inspiration in order to give birth to inspiration or new thoughts that are more developed. Looking for accurate and useful information to add insight into life to make it easier to do something. Proactive action tends to begin with the activities of associations carried out by individuals. The associations carried out by the owners of Lasem written batik are quite diverse, namely associations that are personal or family, community associations in the form of celebrations and other community social activities, and associations that aim at developing Lasem's written batik business. Some of these associations are carried out in accordance with their initiatives spontaneously, such as associations if there are people sick, dead, or people who are in need of help (Tungkagi & Adlin Sila, 2022).

Business Continuity of Batik Business Owners Tulis Lasem

The business continuity of Lasem's batik business owners in Rembang Regency includes various things, namely in the sustainability of capital, the sustainability of human resources, the sustainability of production, the sustainability of distribution, and the sustainability of consumption. In meeting the capital needs of the batik business written by Lasem, the owners of tulis Lasem batik business use capital derived from loans and capital derived from their own money. Capital from loans is usually done at the beginning of business

establishment because it requires large enough capital for business continuity. KUR capital from BRI for the beginning of business capital, but as the years progress, the business uses personal capital because it minimizes loan funds from banks. The profits obtained are rotated back by the business owner so that the business continues to run. To overcome capital bottlenecks, they usually innovate and creativity products and intensify marketing so that the goods sold can remain sold in the market and the money obtained can be used as capital again (Rahardjo, Nugroho, 2019).

Most of the Lasem batik business owners use a strategy to increase sales promotion so that the capital used can continue to rotate to develop Lasem's batik business. A wide marketing reach is expected to be able to attract consumer interest in purchasing products from marketed goods. The owners of the batik business wrote Lasem hope that there will be no erosion of capital so that the running business can be developed properly and be more advanced in the future. Capital is the main factor to determine a success in entrepreneurship, including in the batik business, Lasem wrote. The capital carried out by the batik business owner writes Lasem is used to support the operational costs of business processing, production costs, raw material purchase costs, promotional or marketing costs, the cost of paying business taxes, employee salary costs, and other operational costs (Budyastuti, 2021).

Social exchange theory assumes that social interaction is similar to economic transactions. But according to exchange theory, social exchange can not only be measured by money, because the things exchanged by a person can be real or unreal. For example, someone who works in an industry or business owned by someone else not only expects external rewards in the form of salary or wages, but they also expect internal rewards in the form of pleasure, trust, friendship, and job satisfaction. So it can be concluded that the theory of social exchange states that human social behavior can only be explained by some observable non-mentalist processes (black boxes). All theories in social exchange activities carried out by a person are influenced by perspectives that emphasize the direct

relationship between observed behavior and the social environment of society (Muttaqin, 2023).

The workforce in the batik industry, Lasem writes, is always maintained for their welfare at work. So that many ways are done by business owners to their workforce such as providing comfort, providing trust, providing holiday allowances, providing bonuses, maintaining good relations, providing assistance if needed, and providing flexible time or relaxation of working hours for them. There are parts themselves, *either editing, squeaking, nyolet, or dissolving the night or often called nglorot*. The canting process is usually carried out in each worker's home so that the work is flexible and can be concurrently with other household work activities. While those who work as *nglengkrenng or block* patterns are usually done in production houses and are more organized working hours. Although the work is both wholesale, the place of work has differences, there is work done in each house and there is also work done in Lasem's batik production house (Maghfiroh, 2020).

The raw materials needed in making this batik tulis are cloth, dyes, night or wax. Materials are obtained from suppliers from Solo and Pekalongan. The purchase mechanism applied is to arrange an agreement between the two parties, some are done temporally and some are done directly. The average production carried out is very diverse, some can produce in large quantities but some produce only in small quantities depending on the size or size of the business being run.

To increase production capacity, Lasem batik business owners strive to always make their product innovations in accordance with the trending market so that production will increase because sales in the market also increase. With the increase in production, it can increase community empowerment due to the increase in labor and the increase in working hours of Lasem's batik craftsmen. In addition, they also cooperate in production activities if one gets a large amount of production, so that they do not help each other.

Distribution or marketing activities carried out by batik business owners write Lasem, in addition to they market locally in the Rembang Regency area, they also market their products outside the city as well as in big cities in Indonesia

such as Surabaya and Jakarta. Even Lasem's written batik marketing has also entered the international realm to the Netherlands (Nindiyasari, Khotimah, & Ermawati, 2021).

The batik industry in carrying out goods production activities also carries out consumption economic activities. So that the owner of batik tulis lasem in addition to acting as a producer also acts as a consumer. To meet the needs in the production process, the owner of batik tulis lasem purchases raw goods to the distribution. Consumption activities are very important in the economic activities of the batik tulis lasem industry because with the economic activities of consumption, it can support the production activities of batik tulis lasem, assist in adjusting the amount of minimum wages for workers, as a starting and ending point for economic activities, and as an effort to reduce poverty in the community in Rembang Regency (Telaumbanua, 2018).

Obstacles and Solutions to the Role of Social Capital of the Batik Tulis Lasem Industry towards Community Empowerment

The obstacle to the role of social capital in the batik industry, Lasem wrote, to community empowerment in Rembang Regency is the lack of capital to develop their business to become a larger business and include in the international realm, until the Covid19 pandemic is still felt because events such as exhibitions and fashion shows are starting to decrease even though they have now begun to rise again, a maximal marketing strategy, and lack of public interest in regenerating pengdiligently batik write at this time and in the future (Prasetyo & Disarifianti, 2021).

The Rembang Regency Government participates in actively participating to develop MSMEs in Rembang Regency in various ways such as conducting exhibitions, providing cash assistance, providing business facilities, and providing training facilities. This is so that MSMEs in Rembang Regency can progress and develop rapidly. With the progress of MSMEs in Rembang Regency, it can certainly improve the welfare of the community both for the business owner and for the workers in the business. Parties related to advanced MSME businesses will have a positive impact on

improving economic welfare (Kusumawati, Rusdarti, Setyowati, & Handoyo, 2022).

BUMN houses play an important role in improving the quality of MSMEs in Rembang Regency, one of which is batik MSMEs, Lasem wrote. The programs carried out have a good impact on the development of Lasem's batik business. In the training program, Rumah BUMN provides various kinds of training such as training including improving product quality, packaging, branding, basic financial management, bookkeeping, marketing, to the use of digitalization using e-commerce for market expansion. In addition, it also carries out branding and digital marketing support by providing assistance to Lasem's batik business (Hetty, Muniroh, 2022).

The training and coaching carried out provide knowledge to MSME business owners, especially batik business owners written by Lasem to develop their products. In addition, Rumah BUMN also distributes Lasem batik products at exhibitions, if the product is sold, the money earned is 100% given to the owner of the Lasem batik writing business. So that through the income from the sale of products, capital can be used for batik owners, Lasem writes, and develops product innovations and increases production. So that Lasem batik workers or craftsmen can still work on Lasem batik products and can indirectly increase income and community empowerment. This is in accordance with one of the strategic development programs that has become a global concern, namely the achievement of sustainable development goals which have 17 achievement targets, one of which is gender equality (Yulia Ayu, 2023).

The KABARI (Kartini Bangun Negeri) program is one of the socio-economic programs running in Rembang Regency under the auspices of Bank Indonesia. The KABARI (Kartini Bangun Negeri) program is a Bank Indonesia group mentoring program that will continue for 4 years in Rembang Regency. This program has been running since 2022 which will continue to accompany people who have businesses and become members until 2025. The purpose of the establishment of the KABARI (Kartini Bangun Negeri) program is for economic and financial development based on subsistency. This program is one of the economic

and financial development programs based on KPVBI subsistency of Central Java Province. With this program, it is hoped that business owners, especially Lasem's batik business, can develop their socio-economic potential for business continuity and community empowerment in Rembang Regency (Cahyani, 2024).

The KABARI (Kartini Bangun Negeri) program has 5 5C mottos consisting of Creative, Collaborative, Community, Circular economy, and Culture. In accordance with the purpose of the establishment of the KABARI (Kartini Bangun Negeri) program, namely for subsistency-based economic and financial development, groups that join as members of KABARI are not only focused on subsystems, but must also become a collaborating group (Prajanti & Susilowati, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The lack of welfare level and the high unemployment rate in the people of Rembang Regency can be said that the condition of the community is still in a cycle of poverty. The existence of social capital in the batik industry players written by Lasem in Rembang Regency is able to increase the empowerment of the surrounding community. The lasem writing batik craftsmen have spread throughout the Rembang Regency area so that people can easily get to know the variety of cultures in Rembang Regency and can learn batik easily. Looking at the condition of the batik tulis business in Rembang Regency, it can be concluded that the location of the batik tulis lasem business is strategic so that it can open up employment opportunities for the surrounding community. This is shown by the role of the community who participate in becoming workers in the batik industry, Lasem wrote.

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