

Empowering Rural Entrepreneurship Through Motivation, Training, and Hexahelix Synergy

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ABSTRACT

This community empowerment program aims to foster rural entrepreneurship using a motivational, training and synergy approach. This program is carried out in Pabuaran village, Gunung Sindur subdistrict, Bogor district, centered in Cikoleang. Motivational approaches are carried out formally and informally throughout the program. Enhancing entrepreneurial competence is carried out by providing training such as marketing, financial management and small business bookkeeping. To evaluate participants' entrepreneurial competence, this program assigns participants to prepare a business plan of interest. The entrepreneurial foster program has effectively increased entrepreneurial competence and synergy among entrepreneurial group members. An entrepreneurial group called Tunas Cikoleang was formed as a result of program implementation. Findings during program implementation conclude the importance of social capital, namely the strength of social relationships in fostering entrepreneurship in rural areas. Synergy is one of the factors that determines the success of community empowerment programs.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Rural Area, Motivation, Training, Synergy.*



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INTRODUCTION

Background

Entrepreneurship has long played a pivotal role in the development of a country. However, there are challenges in accelerating the empowerment of entrepreneurs in Indonesia. One of the issues that slows down the entrepreneurship empowerment programs undertaken by the Indonesian government is the still very low number of

entrepreneurs in the country. In general, Indonesians prefer to work both in government and private institutions. The remaining populations mostly still belong to the micro, small, and medium enterprise groups. (Safiah, Atmajaya & Verawati, 2019; Wibowo, 2018). It is therefore crucial for Indonesia to increase the number of entrepreneurs and to empower the micro, small, and medium enterprises to move to the next level.

Many Indonesians believe that the most important factor in becoming a successful entrepreneur is access to physical capital. With such a view, people who do not have sufficient assets are inhibited from becoming entrepreneurs. They are not aware that the goal of entrepreneurship is to increase assets and eradicate poverty. In addition, many entrepreneurs start their businesses and succeed with almost no physical capital. Therefore, the most important factor in building entrepreneurship is not capital but entrepreneurial spirit. The driving force behind entrepreneurial spirit is nurturing motivation to build confidence and nurture the willingness to work hard and to learn continuously.

Entrepreneurship is a strategy that can support and sustain economic development in urban as well as rural areas. However, urban areas usually get more support to nurture entrepreneurship due to access to knowledge, funding, and networking opportunities (Chepuri, 2020). This is not the case in rural areas. With limited job opportunities and a lack of access to entrepreneurial support, rural youth search for jobs in big cities, driving massive urbanization, which can eventually bring negative impacts on the livelihood in the rural areas.

As of today, the Government has conducted numerous programs to produce entrepreneurs. The success of these programs has been hindered by the ability of the rural community to access the programs. This is due to infrastructure and geographical challenges to reach out to the rural community. Therefore, rural entrepreneurship development requires proactive initiatives from the government and other institutions that care for improving the quality of life in rural communities. Academic institutions can help address these issues by offering community empowerment programs to rural communities.

Developing rural entrepreneurship has its unique challenges, such as the lack of competence and

entrepreneurial awareness of rural communities due to the low level of education (Asuti, Kartono & Rahmadi, 2020). However, rural communities have a social capital advantage, and a high spirit of teamwork to develop rural entrepreneurship (Muryanti, 2020; Rahman, Nurlela & Rifai, 2020). The strength of social relationships and team spirit can be utilized as a strategy for entrepreneurship building by implementing a partnering model with various stakeholders (Idayu, Husni & Suhandi, 2021; Rahman, Nurlela & Rifai, 2020).

The successful implementation of the partnership model in the community development program is very much dependent on the synergies between members of the partnership program (Rinaekawati & Sadono, 2020). These synergies can be more easily achieved with the existence of social capital in the rural community. Thus, there is a need to support the development of rural entrepreneurship. This community empowerment program was conducted in Cikoleang village.

This community empowerment program entitled Developing Rural Entrepreneurship through Motivation, Training, and Synergy aims at building competent and professional rural entrepreneurs in managing their businesses. The program nurtures beneficiaries to become better able entrepreneurs benefitting from synergies capitalizing on the existence of social relationships among members of the community. This program is expected to become the pioneer in improving rural entrepreneurship in other rural areas in Indonesia with a positive impact on increasing economic welfare in Indonesia (Khamimah, W, 2020).

Problems Faced by the Beneficiaries

Cikoleang is a village in Pabuaran, Sindur district, in Bogor Regency, West Java. It is located between Bogor and South Tangerang. The city has very high religious tolerance (Iskandar et al, 2021; Ismail, 2021; Ali YF, 2017). Cikoleang is also home to

houses of worship from different beliefs. This village can be a model for the practice of Indonesian National Philosophy 'Bhineka Tunggal Ika' (Unity in Diversity).

The people in this village mostly belong to the bottom of the economic pyramid. They generally depend on income from informal business sectors, such as tending cattle or labor force earning daily wages. The remaining run micro-businesses, like selling simple home-cooked food, processed in a very simple way because of the lack of knowledge of how to manage their business. Another challenge faced by the community in Cikoleang is the villagers' low level of education. The highest level of education is high-school level. There are even several people who are still illiterate.

The low level of education of the villagers results in a low level of motivation and confidence to press on to succeed. They believe that they are destined to be at their current economic level. Thus, it is not easy for them to change their livelihood. On the other hand, various previous studies found that motivation is an important factor in the success of individuals and societies (Magis-Weinberg et al., 2021; Steinmayr et al., 2019). The low level of Cikoleang's multiplier effect makes the livelihood in the village stagnant. Entrepreneurship building entrepreneurship can be the most possible effort to improve the economic level of the villagers.

Solution

After conducting a thorough analysis of the issues faced by the village of Cikoleang, the community empowerment team from Universitas Pelita Harapan (CET-UPH) designed a program to empower rural entrepreneurship as an effective solution to level up the economic level of Cikoleang. Conducting training and development programs to empower bottom-of-the-pyramid rural entrepreneurs with a lower level of education poses unique challenges. Previous studies uncover the link between motivation and

success (Kornelia Kawaitou, Agustinus & Thane, 2020). Education helps improve the awareness to achieve goals in life. People with low levels of education tend to have low levels of confidence to achieve success and thus are less motivated to do so. This community empowerment program saw an urgent need to provide motivation training as part of the rural entrepreneurship empowerment program in Cikoleang.

One of the characteristics of the village that becomes the strength in conducting this entrepreneurship development program is the social capital, which is the social relationship and good cooperation of the villagers (Robin, Bianda & Kristansi, 2020). Such positive qualities facilitate the development of synergy to accelerate the achievement of the program goal (entrepreneurship building). The social capital of the village of Cikoleang will be utilized in entrepreneurship building. This leads to two solutions offered by the program. The first is to provide motivation and entrepreneurship training which includes: marketing training, business finance management skills training, and small business accounting training. The second is forming entrepreneurship groups that become the beneficiaries of the program organized by UPH Community Empowerment Team and building synergy among them (Yulianti, 2020). The forming of the entrepreneurship groups aims for network building using the existing social capital. The synergy is expected to eventually empower the businesses of the members.

METHOD

To provide solutions to the problems faced by the beneficiaries, there are several approaches taken.

Entrepreneurship Motivation

The motivation of the prospective entrepreneurs was intended to create enthusiasm in the program participants to be willing to do their best and to take risks to succeed. The motivational approach was designed to build and strengthen the

entrepreneurial spirit of the participants. One character trait to be formed was self-confidence in achieving success which is the fruit of their persistent and unwavering efforts. The participants were also provided with the requirements to be a good entrepreneur, including the importance of networking and building it in running a business.

The motivational method was implemented early on so that the participants could develop independence in their entrepreneurship venture. The motivational method was conducted using formal and informal approaches. The motivation session was conducted by inviting spiritual leaders and successful businessmen who have succeeded in going against the odds. The UPH team was also involved in giving a motivation session to encourage the Tunas Cikoleang community to be willing to embrace life-long learning. The informal session was implemented to improve the survival spirit of the community of Tunas Cikoleang by conducting an informal Coffee talk (see photo 1).



Photo 1. Coffee time with members of the community of Tunas Cikoleang

Entrepreneurship Competence Improvement

Entrepreneurship Competence Improvement was conducted by giving a series of entrepreneurship training, including marketing, financial management, and accounting. This segment of training was expected to equip program participants with entrepreneurial competence and

mindset. The training program was conducted by the UPH Team, who are all professors of the faculty of economics and business, majoring in management, marketing, entrepreneurship, finance, and accounting (See photo 2). The training program was conducted onsite to build good interactions between the UPH Team and the program participants and to build social unity among program participants.



Photo 2. Entrepreneurial Competence Building

Forming the Entrepreneurship Group and Synergy among group members

The forming of the entrepreneurship group was conducted through the selection from early on. The selection was based on the consistency and seriousness of the participants to be entrepreneurs. These prospective participants were selected based on the evaluation of their active participation, full attendance, and their business plan assignments after participating in three formal entrepreneurial training sessions and informal meeting sessions.

In addition to giving participants motivation, the series of training programs also equipped the participants with the steps to develop a business plan. The success of participants in completing the business plan on time becomes one of the assessment items to see if they can proceed to be included in entrepreneurial groups to be further empowered. In developing their business plans, the participants were given mentoring and guidance to overcome the problems with business literacy and insights.

Improving synergy among participants was intended to form and widen the social network among them. This was done through informal sharing sessions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results of Motivation and Entrepreneurship Training Programs

The formal motivation and entrepreneurship training programs were conducted three times: December 2, 2023; January 27, 2024; and March 2, 2024. The Motivation Training Session was not just conducted by the UPH team, but also by external parties. From the UPH Team, Dr. Kim Sung Suk from Korea gave examples of how Korea, which does not have rich resources, can become one of the richest countries in the world. He also added that financial capital was not the most important factor to have. Hard work, seriousness, consistent efforts to achieve the goals, and a continuous learning process to improve entrepreneurial skills were keys to success. Participants were also encouraged not to give up easily when facing failures or challenges. When stumbling down, participants needed to get back up and move forward. To become successful entrepreneurs, participants needed to build a network of friendships by joining various social communities or clubs. An external motivator, Valen, was also involved in the motivation training session. She made the participants aware of the importance of forming a web-like social network and expanding the network externally. Another external motivator, Humala, AK, MSI, owner of a tax consultant, was also invited to give motivation to the participants. He underscored started from the ground up when starting his tax consultancy. He stated that when a person tries hard and works hard, God will make a way.

The UPH team evaluated the results of the motivation training program based on the responses of the participants who were very enthusiastic following the program. In the third session, the participants even reported to the UPH

team in a letter that the motivation session had given them the spirit to keep moving forward in their businesses. This is evidence that the motivational segment of the series of training programs was successful in empowering the spirit of entrepreneurship in the participants.

The formal entrepreneurial skills training was also conducted three times. This segment of training focused on training materials needed to start a business. Participants learned how to seek business opportunities, design marketing strategies, manage finances, and prepare accounting reports for the newly established business.

Participants were enthusiastic in asking questions which made the training sessions go beyond the scheduled time. In the accounting session, for example, they could identify their mistakes in making accounting reports. The trainer, Prof. Golrida Karyawati, explained that one of the measurements of success in micro businesses was the seriousness in conducting accounting reports correctly. Having accurate accounting reports, micro-businesses could capture opportunities for getting funding from the government and other financial institutions to expand their businesses. Prospective entrepreneurs should also think strategically to move forward and anticipate opportunities for improving their businesses, including preparing good accounting reports. The participants made commitments to start preparing better accounting reports.

After the training sessions, the UPH Team evaluated the entrepreneurship competence gained by the participants after receiving three training programs. The teams assigned participants to prepare a good business plan using a template provided to make it easier for the participants who were mostly high-school graduates. The template was designed in the form of simple questions to answer. The UPH Team also

offered mentoring and guidance in answering the questions related to a business plan that they plan to propose. The participants could also help one another when writing their business plans. The UPH Team evaluated the business plans and gave them feedback. In addition, the UPH team assisted in the implementation of the business plans.

The UPH team also invited participants to share their business plans and the progress of writing their business plans. The sharing session aimed to help the participants finish the business plan at least 50% or more before they were asked to complete their business plan independently.

Tunas Cikoleang Community

Ten participants (6 men and 4 women) were selected to potentially get assistance and mentoring to start their business. These ten participants were selected because they consistently participated in the three cycles of training programs. They also attended all the informal sharing sessions. The ten participants were included as members of the Tunas Cikoleang community.

The vision of Tunas Cikoleang is “to become successful entrepreneurs with hard work, and synergy among the members to improve Cikoleang economic condition and Indonesia.” The members share similar economic backgrounds: they come

from economically challenged families. They belong to the productive age who are struggling to improve their levels of livelihood. They also have the dream of helping improve the economic level of the Cikoleang village.

The mission of Tunas Cikoleang is “to strife, synergize and develop networks”, starting from ten members to become successful entrepreneurs who can change the economic condition of Cikoleang and Indonesia for the better. Most of the members work in informal sectors, such as household helpers, or low-wage workers in offices. Some of them have had the experience of starting their small business, but experienced failure. One member is in the duck farming business, but because of her lack of business and marketing knowledge and skills, her business barely gained profit. In addition, she hasn’t been able to repay her loan because of a lack of working capital. There is also a member who has a drawing talent using a computer and has started to sell his work online. But this member doesn’t have the money to buy a proper computer or laptop to support his venture, nor does he have the proper marketing skills to market his work online. Another member has been quite successful in running a small business, but the member still needs entrepreneurial skills like finance management and accounting skills. Table 1 lists of the members of Tunas Cikoleang.

Table 1. List of Members of Tunas Cikoleang

1	DENNY AGUSTINUS	31	Kp. Sarimulya RT.04 RW.01 Desa Setu Kec. Setu Kota Tangerang Selatan 15314
2	STEVE VEY ANDERSON	19	Griya Serpong asri Blok BC 5 No.3 Cisauk
3	FERIH	37	Kp. Cikoleang RT.01 RW.02 Desa Pabuaran Kec. Gunung Sindur Kab. Bogor 16340
4	MAIYA	35	Kp. Cikoleang RT.01 RW.02 Desa Pabuaran Kec. Gunung Sindur Kab. Bogor 16340
5	CALVIN CHRISTIAN	23	Jl. Platina III Rt.004/007 Curug Kec. Gunung sindur Kab. Bogor Jawa Barat
6	YANIH	39	Kp. Sarimulya RT.04 RW.01 Desa Setu Kec. Setu Kota Tangerang Selatan 15314
7	MARIO WIJAYA	33	Kp. Cikoleang RT.01 RW.02 Desa Pabuaran Kec. Gunung Sindur Kab. Bogor 16340
8	DEWI BUDI WIJAYA	31	Kp. Prumpung RT.02 RW.03 Desa Gunung Sindur Kec. Gunung Sindur Kab. Bogor 16340
9	DAVID SAPUTRA	40	Perumahan Mulia Residence One Pengasinan, blok E4 no 8, desa pengasinan kec. Gunung sindur
10	LITA ARISTA	39	Perumahan Mulia Residence One Pengasinan, blok E4 no 8, desa pengasinan kec. Gunung sindur

Group Sinergy

To form synergy among members of Tunas Cikoleang, the UPH Team helped organize an informal coffee time gathering where participants were asked to share their business ideas. This sharing session was conducted in a simple coffee shop in Cisadane, which has a back-to-nature atmosphere. The coffee time was also attended by Valen, an educator, and observer of social issues. While enjoying their coffee the Tunas Cikoleang members were asked to share their business ideas.

The coffee time revealed a synergy that has been formed among members of the Tunas Cikoleang. The motivation and entrepreneurship training sessions, which were completed with the assignment to develop a business plan, had grown in the members' awareness of the importance of building teamwork to help one another. Some members with similar ideas were willing to collaborate in setting up a business, thus together they developed their business plan.

Another interesting finding from the coffee time was the forming of the network involving the 10 members. Dewi, a member of the club, shared her duck farming business plan. She also shared that once helped her relative traditionally run a duck-farming business. She now plans to run her own duck-farming business. However, she was still struggling to get the funding to get the business up the ground. The other members contributed ideas to improve Dewi's business, like selling duck meat ready to consumers rather than selling live ducks. Other members also offered to be resellers of the duck meat to their channel of customers. This business plan received positive support enveloped with the spirit of collaboration.

This informal meeting is proof that synergy has been formed among the ten members of Tunas Cikoleang. Synergy could overcome issues related to competence and self-confidence. The members come from various levels of education. A member

with a higher level of education (Bachelor's degree holder) was willing to work together with those belonging to a lower level of education. This resulted in positive teamwork where the members could support one another by covering each other's weaknesses. This also resulted in members being more motivated to successfully become entrepreneurs.

The UPH Team, together with the social observer and educator, Valen, frequently reminded the members that they had to form a web-based network if they would grow stronger. They were also encouraged to periodically conduct sharing sessions to exchange ideas and to help one another. The Tunas Cikoleang was expected to sustain its existence. New members could be added. The more successful members could assist the other members to be successful.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Empowerment program that has been conducted since October 2023, confirmed the effective implementation of combined methods of training involving motivation, entrepreneurship, and social networking building. The series of programs have successfully formed Tunas Cikoleang, a group of entrepreneurs, which have developed synergy among members. The findings resulting from the implementation of the series of training programs have led to the conclusion of the importance of social capital in guiding entrepreneurs, especially those coming from a low level of education. Group synergy should be given primary attention by community empowerment teams in future programs.

Below are the recommendations for future similar community empowerment programs:

1. A social support group like Tunas Cikoleang needs to be formed to nurture the synergy among members to sustain their businesses. Such a group can be established in the form of cooperatives as an alternative solution for

- those who need funding to start their businesses.
2. A follow-up to the business plan developed by the training participants is needed. Establishing cooperatives or finding angel investors to financially support the implementation of the business plans.
 3. Supporting the programs to develop new entrepreneurs need to be implemented in other villages by growing the spirit of entrepreneurship and developing rural entrepreneurship to improve the economic condition of the rural community, which eventually can improve the economic condition in the national level.

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