

Community Empowerment Program for Business Actors Affected by Natural and Non-Natural Disasters in Palu City

Roslinawati¹, Pricyilia Chintya Dewi Buntuang²

^{1,2}Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia
roslinawatiap@gmail.com, pricyliabuntuang@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the empowerment of business communities affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. This study used a quantitative approach. The population of this study was business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. The population of this study was 110 business actors. The sample was determined using the census technique. Thus, the entire population was involved as samples. Data were collected by observation, questionnaires, and documentation. Data were analyzed statistically using a t-test. The results of this study indicate that there are differences in community empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. The differences are caused by the different responses to natural and non-natural disasters as the characteristics of disasters are indeed different so the treatment is also different. Based on the results of this study, knowledge, and skills are needed in facing a natural disaster, while the ability to evaluate is more important during the non-natural disaster condition.

Keywords

Community; empowerment; business actors; disaster



I. Introduction

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector is a pillar of the national economy (Budiarto et al., 2018). Thus, it is important for the government, both the central and local governments in Indonesia to consider MSMEs. The local government's concern for business actors or MSMEs can be seen in the empowerment provided to business actors, especially in Palu City. Empowerment is important, especially for business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters. Natural disasters or earthquakes that occurred in Palu City and non-natural disasters, namely the COVID-19 pandemic have affected business actors or MSMEs. Therefore, the government needs to pay special attention so that business actors can survive and develop. The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum et al, 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020).

Vulnerability and powerlessness need special attention (Suyanto, 2001). Community empowerment in Indonesia has been carried out by the nation's components for a long time, but not all of them have been successful (Hamid, 2018). The process of community empowerment is indeed useful in developing community potential, but its implementation is difficult and this has been proven (Laverack, 2006b). Poverty in Indonesia is getting worse. Inequality and poverty have occurred in this country for years (Disemadi & Roisah, 2019).

Poverty alleviation by developing MSMEs has a quite good potential as the MSME sector has a large contribution to employment by absorbing more than 99.45% of the workforce and contributes to GDP of around 30% (Supriyanto, 2006). Moreover, efforts to advance and develop the MSME sector will help absorb more workforce and finally improve the welfare of the workers and reduce the unemployment rate.

Community empowerment is an important process that needs attention from various components of the nation including the government, the private sector, and the community (Maryani & Nainggolan, 2019). It is because empowerment does not only focus on empowering actors, but also on those who are empowered. This study focuses on empowering business actors in Palu City. To increase the empowerment of lower-middle-income communities and MSMEs, support from financial institutions is urgently needed (Disemadi & Roisah, 2019). It is because both natural and non-natural disasters greatly affect the capital needs of business actors. Lutfi, Buntuang, Kornelius, Erdiyansyah, & Hasanuddin (2020) explained that non-natural disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for business actors to access capital, decreased business income, even no business income.

One of the problems faced by the community is access to capital (Harahap, 2012). Poor people and MSMEs have problems with funding access to banking institutions (Baskara, 2013). The government and the community have a significant role in realizing community welfare through community empowerment based on the existing policies (Disemadi & Roisah, 2019). Based on the explanation above, this study aims to analyze the empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City.

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Community empowerment

The terms empowerment and community empowerment have been widely known along with the increasing poverty rate in Indonesia, which not only affects people in rural areas but also in urban areas (Hamid, 2018). Indeed, the government and other organizations have initiated many empowerment programs to alleviate poverty, but not all of them work successfully.

Empowerment is included in multidisciplinary studies, but many interpret it based on discipline (Coy, Malekpour, Saeri, & Dargaville, 2021). Empowerment is a formulation that links the community and the government (Coy, Malekpour, & Saeri, 2022). Community empowerment is also an activity that emphasizes power related to different individuals and groups in society (Laverack, 2006a). Activities in empowerment are largely determined by social and organizational impacts (Laverack & Wallerstein, 2001). This empowerment process is marked by the community's ability to create problem analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation of an empowerment program (Widjajanti, 2011).

Empowerment can be interpreted as an effort made so that the object becomes empowered or has power (Maryani & Nainggolan, 2019). Community empowerment is a concept of economic development that encapsulates community values to build a new paradigm in people-centered, participatory development (Noor, 2011). Community empowerment is an effort to restore or increase the empowerment of a community so that they can act according to their dignity in carrying out their rights and responsibilities as human communities and citizens (Harahap, 2012). The main goals of empowerment are to strengthen community power, especially in weak groups who are powerless, either because

of internal conditions (their perceptions) or external conditions (oppressed by unfair social structures) (Hamid, 2018). The ultimate goal of community empowerment according to Harahap (2012) is the restoration of human values according to their dignity as a unique, free, and independent people.

Empowerment is a process to be efficient to change the community for a better condition of life (Endah, 2020). Widjajanti (2011) reveals that the empowerment process requires physical and human capital. This indicates that a pandemic situation requires humans (MSME actors) to develop physical capital (MSME products). The study also shows that human capital, in this case, MSME actors who play an important role in the decision-making process, need to stick with the initial product by utilizing the digital market or switch to other products needed in the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

Vulnerability and powerlessness need to get more attention (Suyanto, 2001). Community empowerment is having the power, strength, or ability to identify potential problems and determine alternative solutions independently. Community empowerment is measured through three aspects (Widjajanti, 2011):

a. Ability in decision-making

An empowered community can be realized, besides being determined by the ability to evaluate and plan, it is also determined by the ability to interact with each other (Widjajanti, 2011). Openness between communities facilitates access to important information in making innovations that are different from others to create excellence. The need to appreciate innovation and new ideas in society becomes the motivating factor to dare to take risks to increase excellence in the business sector.

Empowerment is an effort to help clients gain power in making decisions and determining actions regarding themselves, including avoiding the effects of personal and social barriers to taking action. This is done by increasing the ability and confidence to use the possessed power, including the transfer of power from the environment (Maryani & Nainggolan, 2019).

b. Independence

Through community empowerment activity, the target beneficiaries can improve their standard of living and welfare by participating in counseling, training and other forms of activity in which they are intended to release them from powerlessness, isolation and backwardness. Besides, through community empowerment activities, clients are expected to be able to work independently so that their basic needs can be met (Haris, 2014).

As a processing activity, community empowerment programs/activities are expected to improve the people's welfare as the target group, empower them, or have the strength to fulfill their basic needs which ultimately create independence in society. Independence is not only seen from the economic aspect, but also from social and cultural aspects, as well as the right to voice/express opinion and even political rights (Hamid, 2018).

Community independence is a condition in which people can think, decide, and carry out something useful to solve problems through the ability and strength of the community (Endah, 2020).

c. Ability to utilize business for future

The role of the empowerment actors will be effective in increasing community empowerment (Widjajanti, 2011). The role of actors needs to be improved in terms of knowledge and skills to provide support for the success of empowerment and increase sustainable community independence. Improving the quality of human resources becomes

a prerequisite for success in empowerment. Besides, it also requires capturing information (Slamet, 2003).

2.2 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia have been an important part of the economic system in Indonesia. It is because the number of MSMEs is higher than large-scale enterprises and has the advantage of absorbing more workforce as well as able to accelerate the process of equitable development. MSMEs' weaknesses in improving business capabilities are complex and include various interrelated indicators such as lack of capital both in quantity and source, lack of managerial ability and operating skills in organizing, and limited marketing (Suci, 2017). In terms of the national economy, MSMEs have an important and strategic role as their existence is quite dominant in the Indonesian economy (Sarfiyah, Atmaja, & Verawati, 2019). The strategic role of the MSME sector is the ability of this sector to become the main pillar of the Indonesian economy (Supriyanto, 2006) as MSMEs can survive during the economic crisis and have also been proven to absorb a larger workforce (Sarfiyah et al. al., 2019).

In Indonesia, the development of MSMEs faces various problems resulting in low competitiveness against imported products. The main problems faced by MSMEs are limited infrastructure and access to licensing and bureaucracy as well as the high level of levies (Sudaryanto & Wijayanti, 2013). The ability of MSMEs to face global competition needs to be considered further to survive for the sake of the stability of the Indonesian economy. Besides, the human resource factor also plays its role. The strategy for developing MSMEs to survive can be carried by increasing competitiveness and developing human resources so that they have value and can survive the ACFTA market, for example by providing loans (KUR), access to marketing information, training microfinance institutions through capacity building, and development of information technology (IT).

2.3 Disaster

Natural disasters are a consequence of natural activities including physical events, such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, landslides, and human activities (Khambali, 2017). Disasters are caused by natural phenomena. Disasters can be divided into some types (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 24 of 2007, 2007). First, natural disasters are disasters caused by natural events, for example, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, floods, droughts, hurricanes, and landslides. Second, non-natural disasters are caused by non-natural events, for example, technological failures, failed modernization, epidemics, and disease outbreaks. Third, social disasters are disasters caused by humans, for example, social conflicts between groups or between communities, and terror. This study focuses on natural and non-natural disasters.

2.3 Research Model and Hypothesis

This study concerns the topic of community empowerment of business actors focusing on business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. Community empowerment is seen from the empowered community. An empowered community means that the business actors have been empowered. The empowered community can be seen from (1) ability in decision making; independence; and the ability to utilize the business for the future.

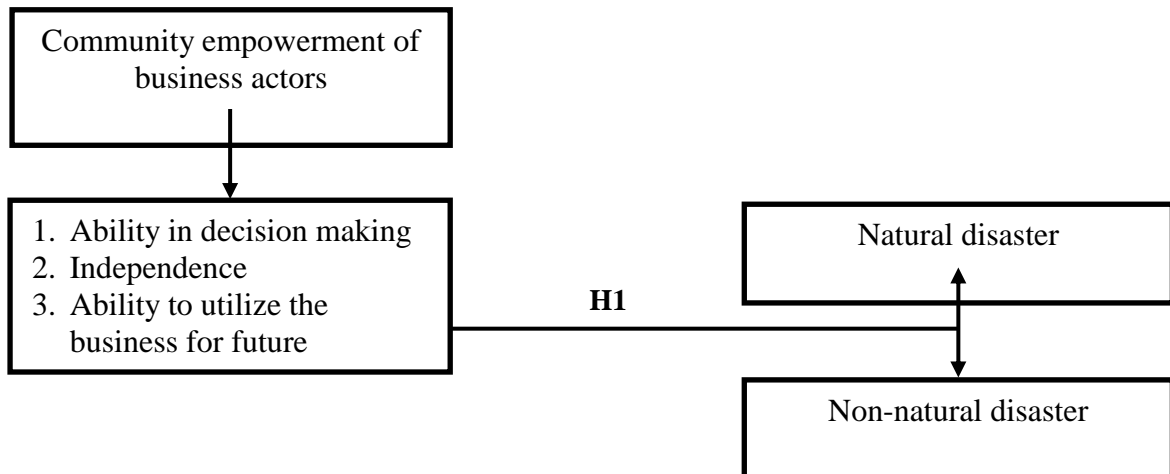


Figure 1. Research Model

The hypothesis proposed in this study are:

- H1 : H_0 = There is no difference in community empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City
 H_a = There are differences in community empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City

III. Research Method

This study used the quantitative method. This method aims to gain knowledge or solve problems carefully and systematically and collects data in the form of figures or numbers (Nasehudin & Gozali, 2013). The population of this study was business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. The population was 110 business actors. The sample determination used the census sampling technique. This means that the entire population is used as the sample. Thus, this study involved 110 respondents.

Data were collected from observation, questionnaires, and documentation. This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from respondents, namely business actors, while secondary data were obtained from written documents. Data were analyzed statistically using the t-test to compare the empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1 Results

The results of this study include test results such as validity and reliability tests, descriptive statistical tests, data normality tests, and comparison tests (t test).

a. Results of Validity and Reliability Tests

The results of validity and reliability tests can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Results of Validity and Reliability Tests

No.	Statement	Empowerment (Natural Disaster)		Empowerment (Non-Natural Disaster)	
		Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Ability to do planning	.732	.940	.634	.914
2	Ability to do an evaluation	.792		.501	
3	Ability to interact with each other	.775		.641	
4	Ability to determine actions for oneself	.692		.592	
5	Economic, social and cultural independence	.752		.338	
6	Ability to voice the right to vote/express opinion	.757		.739	
7	Community independence in determining political rights	.730		.866	
8	Ability to think	.844		.690	
9	Ability to solve problems	.853		.706	
10	Have the knowledge and skills	.593		.637	
11	Ability to improve the quality of human resources	.453		.781	
12	Ability to capture information	.806		.853	

Source: Elaborated of SPSS Results

The results of validity and reliability tests showed that all statement items in the questionnaire were valid and reliable. This is indicated by the Corrected Item-Total Correlation value higher than 0.3. In terms of reliability, the value of Cronbach's Alpha is higher than 0.7.

b. Results of Validity

The normality test used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 2. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Empowerment_Natural_Disaster	Empowerment_Natural_Non_Disaster
N		110	110
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	42.0818	40.5455
	Std. Deviation	7.23413	7.46077
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.107	.078
	Positive	.107	.077
	Negative	-.091	-.078
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.119	.813
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.164	.523

		Empowerment_Natural_Disaster	Empowerment_Natural_Non_Disaster
N		110	110
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	42.0818	40.5455
	Std. Deviation	7.23413	7.46077
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.107	.078
	Positive	.107	.077
	Negative	-.091	-.078
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.119	.813
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.164	.523

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Source: SPSS Results.

Sig. value (2-tailed) obtained in Table 2 is higher than the alpha value of 0.05. This indicates that the data are normally distributed.

c. Results of Descriptive Statistical Test

The results of the descriptive statistics test for two empowerment conditions, namely during the natural disaster and non-natural disaster conditions can be seen below.

Table 3. Results of Descriptive Statistical Test

No.	Statements	Mean	
		Empowerment (Natural Disaster)	Empowerment (Non Natural Disaster)
1	Ability to do planning	3.1909	3.6364
2	Ability to do an evaluation	3.4909	3.7455
3	Ability to interact with each other	3.4636	3.4909
4	Ability to determine actions for oneself	3.4273	3.5364
5	Economic, social and cultural independence	3.3545	2.8818
6	Ability to voice the right to vote/express opinion	3.3545	3.3091
7	Community independence in determining political rights	3.5818	3.4273
8	Ability to think	3.6818	3.4455
9	Ability to solve problems	3.6364	3.4364
10	Have the knowledge and skills	3.7455	3.1091
11	Ability to improve the quality of human resources	3.4909	3.0818
12	Ability to capture information	3.6636	3.4455

Source: Elaborated SPSS Results.

Based on the mean value presented in the table above, the empowerment of business actors during natural disasters showed that business actors had the knowledge and skills in running their businesses. Meanwhile, they could not do planning and this made it difficult for them to run their businesses. However, they were equipped with knowledge and skills so that they could survive.

Then, empowerment of business actors during non-natural disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic, business actors did not yet have economic, social and cultural independence. It can be seen from various aspects of life affected by COVID-19 making the community or business actors unable to do anything to survive. However, business actors, especially in Palu City could evaluate so that they could learn lessons for the future if current conditions or the COVID-19 pandemic reoccur.

d. Results of Comparison Test (t-test)

The research hypothesis was tested using a comparison test (t-test). The results of the test can be seen below.

Table 4. Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Empowerment_Natural_Disaster - Empowerment_Natural_Non_Disaster	1.53636	4.72098	.45013	.64422	2.42850	3.413	109	.001

Source: SPSS Output.

Sig.value (2-tailed) obtained is lower than the alpha value ($0.000 < 0.05$). Thus, there are differences in the empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. This indicates that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

4.2 Discussion

This study aims to analyze the empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. The natural disaster that occurred in Palu City on 28 September 2018 was the earthquake that caused liquefaction and a tsunami which greatly affected the business operations. Likewise, non-natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic have also occurred from the end of 2019 to the present and it has also greatly affected the business operations in this city and even throughout the world. The natural and non-natural disasters greatly affect business actors or MSMEs in Palu City which finally influences the income of business actors. Indeed, the Palu City Government responded to this condition by initiating empowerment in many aspects.

This study concerns the empowerment in decision-making abilities; independence; and the ability to utilize the business for the future. Community empowerment of business actors is not only aimed at individuals but also at groups, as part of the actualization of human existence. Therefore, the community can be used as a normative benchmark,

placing the concept of empowerment as a part of efforts to build the existence of the business community individually, in groups, and even at the national level an actualization of just and civilized humanity.

This study shows that the empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City has been carried out, but they have some differences. The empowerment of business actors during natural disasters shows that business actors have the knowledge and skills in running their businesses. Meanwhile, they cannot do the planning. This makes it difficult for business actors to run their businesses. Indeed, they are equipped with knowledge and skills so that they can survive. A community empowerment program will not run well if it is not managed properly from the planning (Hamid, 2018). In this case, planning is participatory involving all elements of the relevant business actors, especially those who will become the target group and it should include the problem identification process carried out with business actors.

Meanwhile, during non-natural disasters, business actors do not have economic, social and cultural independence yet. This can be seen from various aspects of life caused by COVID-19 so that business actors are unable to do anything to survive. However, business actors, especially in Palu City, can learn lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic if it reoccurs. The COVID-19 pandemic is the only non-natural disaster that provides valuable lessons for business actors as during the pandemic, it is very difficult for them to survive due to government policies regarding local lockdowns which affect the business operation and income. This does not only happen in Palu City, but also in all other places around the world. The results of this study can be a guide for business actors to run their businesses during natural and non-natural disaster conditions. However, in terms of limitations, this study has a narrow scope so this is an opportunity for other researchers to conduct the study on a wider scope so that the results are more valid.

V. Conclusion

The business sector is one of the most important sectors in supporting the economy of a country. The existence of business actors is important so that empowerment is needed to increase business capabilities to be able to grow especially in disaster conditions. The results of this study indicate that there are differences in community empowerment of business actors affected by natural and non-natural disasters in Palu City. The differences are caused by the different responses to natural and non-natural disasters as the characteristics of disasters are different so they require different treatment. The results of this study emphasize that in natural disaster conditions, knowledge and skills are needed, while in non-natural disaster conditions, the ability to do evaluation is more important.

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