

How can the Enabling, Empowering and Protecting Approach be convincing? Observation of Economic Empowerment of Poor Village Communities in Pidie Regency

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Abstract:- The economic empowerment of village communities, which seems to have failed to show its existence, is the inspiration for this research. Powerless communities are the beneficiaries who must be prioritized in every community empowerment program. The empowerment approach through enabling, empowering and protecting needs to be pursued effectively and optimally to achieve the goals of community empowerment. This research uses qualitative methodology to analyze data sourced from primary data and secondary data. This qualitative approach provides an in-depth and contextual dimension to the article, combines existing literature with primary data from relevant sources, and produces a more comprehensive understanding of the topic being researched. The results of the research show that the enabling, empowering and protecting approach in the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency has not been implemented effectively and optimally, so that the seriousness of the village government and participation from the community is needed to achieve an independent and prosperous society.

Keywords:- Empowerment; Community; Enabling; Empowering; Protecting.

I. INTRODUCTION

The use of the concept of community empowerment as a solution to overcome various problems that arise in people's lives, especially problems related to the limited capacity of individuals and community groups, especially those living in rural areas, has become the main approach, especially in Indonesia (Akhyar et al., 2020; Hutomo, 2000; Nardin, 2019; Saifuddin et al., 2015; Yunus et al., 2015). However, the impression of economic empowerment of village communities is not working even though the emphasis on this continues to be echoed both through policies and large budgets as stated in Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages (UU-6, 2014). This has an impact on human development, which is an issue that will always be discussed by people

throughout the world. Human development is a concept that has developed rapidly which focuses on people and development (Mardikanto & Soebianto, 2019).

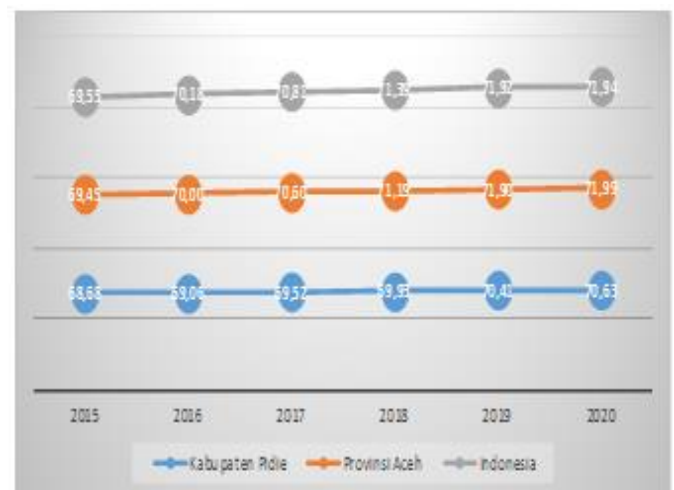


Fig 1:- Human Development Index in Indonesia
Source: BPS RI, 2023

At the same time, the concept of human development is much broader than that of economic development, which emphasizes economic growth, basic needs, community welfare, or human resource development. Human development can also be considered as the utilization of human abilities through increasing knowledge, health, and skills, as well as the development (formation) of human abilities through increasing the level of knowledge, health, and skills (Sumodiningrat & Wulandari, 2016). The human development index (figure 1) of Pidie Regency which is still low compared to the national average is proof of this lack of success.

Understanding the importance of the idea of community empowerment to increase the power of the weak or disadvantaged people, which in turn leads to village communities becoming independent. To achieve success in

economic empowerment of village communities, a strategy or approach is needed in the process of community economic empowerment, namely enabling, empowering and protecting (Kartasasmita, 2003; Mardikanto & Soebianto, 2019; Suharto, 2017).

Table 1. Poverty, Income, Unemployment in Pidie District

No	Year	Income per Capita (million rp)	Poverty Rate (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)
1	2015	18.5	21,18	10,25
2	2016	19.7	21,25	9,24
3	2017	21.2	21,43	7,64
4	2018	22.5	20,47	7,23
5	2019	23.8	19,46	6,89
6	2020	24.7	19,23	6,45

Source: BPS Pidie, 2023

Apart from that, to achieve the goal of economic empowerment of village communities in creating prosperity for the community, there is community participation to participate and be together with the village government in the process of implementing village community economic empowerment. So that the target of the noble SDGs goals, namely ending poverty, achieving equality and overcoming climate change by 2030, is achieved.

The Indonesian government issued Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages to consider the problems faced, especially in empowering communities in villages. Likewise with Pidie Regency, Aceh Province, one of the regions in Indonesia that experiences high rates of poverty, open unemployment and low per capita income. This is because the success of the economic empowerment of village communities that has been carried out is still low. Table 1 shows the poverty level, per capita income and unemployment rate in Pidie Regency in 2015-2020, with the realization of village community empowerment activities (figure 2).

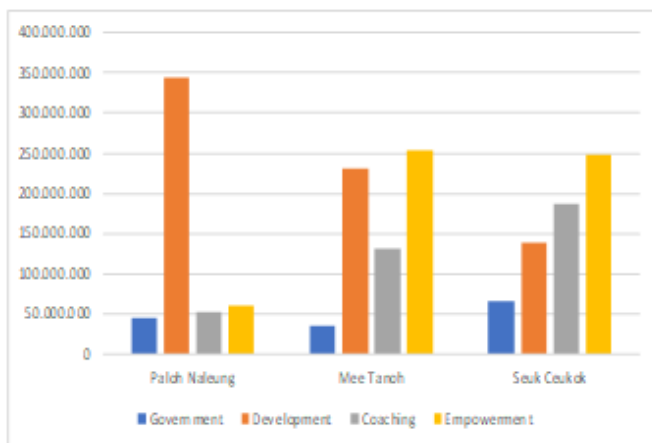


Fig 2:- Realization of Village Community Empowerment Activities

Source: DPMG Pidie, 2023

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concepts of sustainable development and sustainability are increasingly widely used in the realm of public administration. By considering intergenerational justice, long-term planning, resource conservation, and risk reduction in administrative planning, sustainability may play a particularly important role. When implementing sustainable development which involves many aspects, it reflects effectiveness, efficiency and community involvement. Sustainable development can be implemented in a wide range of public sector tasks, including the provision of social services, public housing, transportation, renewable energy and environmental protection. Ultimately, it shows the specific contribution of sustainability in the context of public administration.

The new paradigm of public administration—also known as Public Management or New Public Service—emerged as a result of theoretical and practical criticism of traditional public administration. The arguments behind the application of "development administration" as the main paradigm of public administration science include: (a) Orientation on real social results and impacts, especially on achieving development goals and community welfare; (b) The value of community involvement in policy formulation, decision-making, and active partnership in the creation and execution of public service initiatives; (c) Emphasizing flexibility and responsiveness to environmental changes and societal demands and being able to adapt to rapid dynamics; (d) The important role of the private sector and non-profit organizations in achieving development goals to increase effectiveness and efficiency; (e) Application of technology and innovation in the delivery of public services to improve efficiency and service quality; (f) Orientation towards customers or the community as rights holders in obtaining quality public services; (g) Realizing that accountability is not easy; (h) The importance of capacity development and training for civil servants so they can face increasingly complex and dynamic demands (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007).

The application of the development administration paradigm reflects efforts to overcome new challenges faced by government, while increasing effectiveness, efficiency and community welfare. This approach seeks to create better governance that is responsive to changing times. In order to achieve sustainable development goals, one of the concepts used is community empowerment. Conceptually, empowerment comes from the word 'power' (power or empowerment). Thus, the central notion of empowerment is linked to the idea of power, which is frequently seen as the capacity to compel others to act in accordance with the wishes of the ruling class, regardless of those people's preferences and interests (Alfitri, 2011). The fundamental tenet of the empowerment concept is that communities and society should lead their own development initiatives rather than becoming the targets of external initiatives (Mardikanto, 2013).

Empowerment is part of the development process, empowerment has the aim of exploring the potential of the community which is then developed or processed to improve the welfare of the community itself (Soetomo, 2018). Empowerment does not always talk about output in improving the community's economy, but also changes in people's attitudes, thought patterns and mentality for the better.

In Indonesian village policy, "village community empowerment" refers to an endeavor to foster community welfare and independence by enhancing knowledge, attitudes, skills, behavior, and awareness as well as making use of resources by creating policies, programs, activities, and support that are tailored to the main issues and pressing needs of village communities (Permendesda-21, 2015).

The success of village community development cannot be separated from the economic empowerment of village communities. Decentralization and village autonomy essentially means making communities and villages independent, aimed at creating effectiveness and efficiency in development financing in accordance with village conditions and needs, generating trust and responsibility for communities and villages to take the initiative to utilize village potential to achieve prosperity (Kolopaking, 2011). People-centered development is an approach to development that prioritizes community creativity as the primary resource and the material and spiritual well-being of the community as the primary objective to be achieved during the development process. Therefore, the development carried out should be community-centered by respecting and considering local initiatives and differences (Korten, 1984).

Empowerment is part of the development process, empowerment has the aim of exploring the potential of the community which is then developed or processed to improve the welfare of the community itself. Empowerment does not always talk about output in improving the community's economy, but also changes in people's attitudes, mindset and mentality towards the better. (Chambers, 1988). Shardlow (1998) said that talking about how people, groups, or communities attempt to take charge of their own lives and endeavor to influence the future in accordance with their wishes is the heart of empowerment.

In order to prepare the community to be empowered through local issues, empowerment indirectly stresses the autonomy of decision-making for a community group based on the application of democratic characteristics and participation with an emphasis on localization. (Bebbington, 2000). Efforts to empower the community can be seen from three sides according to Mardikanto & Soebianto (2019), namely: (1) First, fostering an environment or climate that supports the development of society's potential (enabling). Realizing that every person and every community has potential that can be realized is the first step. Building that power through inspiration, motivation, and bringing attention to one's own potential and efforts to enhance it is known as empowerment; (2) Secondly, enhancing the community's potential or strength (empowering). This strengthening entails taking proactive measures, supplying a range of inputs, and

granting access to a range of opportunities that will empower society; (3) Third, empowering also means protecting. It is important to keep the weak from getting weaker in the empowerment process since they lack the ability to confront the powerful. Therefore, a key component of the idea of communal empowerment is standing up for and protecting the vulnerable.

A term that has the same meaning as development and empowerment, namely the term social change. The difference is that the term development usually uses a top down strategy, which means the community is only the object and target of development, while empowerment often uses a bottom up strategy. This indicates that community involvement occurs at every stage of the development process, from initial planning to final implementation and upkeep (Aziz, 2011). Thus, community empowerment can be defined as an endeavor undertaken by individuals, groups, and communities to take charge of their lives and enhance the circumstances of people's lives going forward. It is closely associated with community involvement and the capacity to assume accountability for the collaborative efforts that have been made by all parties involved.

III. PAPER OBJECTIVE

This article discusses the economic empowerment of disabled communities to achieve village community independence in Pidie Regency by exploring empowerment strategies, namely enabling, empowering and protecting so that it will be known whether the process of economic empowerment of village communities can be implemented optimally. The original author wrote this article, which has never been published before.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was used in writing this article, with data from previous research as the main source in the literature review. Apart from that, primary data analysis was also carried out, utilizing information obtained from primary data and documents available at the Pidie Regency *Gampong* Community Empowerment Service. The data analysis process involves data triangulation techniques, an approach developed by Miles-Huberman (Miles et al., 2014), which allows integration and validation of data from various sources. This method creates a solid foundation for investigating and understanding observed phenomena. By detailing the use of secondary data sources and applying triangulation techniques, this research ensures the reliability and validity of the findings. Involving analysis of primary data sourced from the Pidie Regency *Gampong* Community Empowerment Service also provides deeper insight into the local situation and specific context that may influence the research results. Thus, this qualitative approach provides an in-depth and contextual dimension to the article, combines existing literature with primary data from relevant sources, and produces a more comprehensive understanding of the topic being researched.

V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

➤ *Enabling*

The legal basis that is the basis for implementing the economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency is Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages. Efforts to implement these regulations at the regional level were carried out through the issuance of Pidie Regent Regulation Number 13 of 2016 concerning *Gampong* Authorities Based on Origin Rights and *Gampong*-Scale Authorities in Pidie Regency (Perbup-13, 2016). In this legal framework, community empowerment is specifically regulated in Chapter III Article 4. This article provides a legal basis for village governments in implementing community empowerment, namely: *Gampong*-scale local authority includes authority that prioritizes service activities and community empowerment.

According to the Village Law, the goal of *Gampong* development must be to enhance the quality of life and welfare of the *Gampong* community while also eradicating poverty. This can be achieved by meeting basic needs, creating infrastructure and facilities for the *Gampong* community, fostering local economic growth, and making sustainable use of the environment and natural resources. What is meant by sustainable is that village development to meet current needs is carried out without sacrificing meeting the needs of future generations of village residents. To operationalize the *Gampong* development goals mandated by the Village Law, the use of Village Funds is prioritized to realize the 8 (eight) *Gampong* typologies and 18 (eighteen) *Gampong* SDGs goals (Perbup-8, 2021).

The enabling process is the first stage in the process of economic empowerment of village communities, which means creating an atmosphere or climate that allows the economic potential of village communities in Pidie Regency to develop optimally, so that they can increase their empowerment. The ability to remove structural and cultural barriers that impede or affect a community's ability to advance economically is a prerequisite for community economic empowerment. Empowerment is an effort to provide support that is integrated with efforts to provide opportunities by creating a conducive climate for carrying out socio-economic activities (enabling) (Wrihatnolo & Dwijwinoto, 2007).

Since the Village Fund Program was first implemented in Indonesia in 2015, it has given new hope to village communities by creating an atmosphere or climate that allows the economic potential of village communities to increase. Because the Village Fund program requires its implementers to prioritize the implementation of development and empowerment of village communities. On this basis, the village government has an obligation to provide encouragement or encouragement to increase work productivity among its community. This fresh air is one of the incentives for society to increase work productivity.

The basic principle of community empowerment is to encourage people's interest in improving their standard of living, especially for lower class, peripheral and rural communities who have weaknesses and deficiencies in self-sufficiency, independence, participation, social solidarity, critical attitudes, and low living standards (Mulyawan, 2016). Economic empowerment of village communities is also intended to free communities from restrictions that slow down responses and hinder community work by sorting out all unnecessary regulations, procedures, orders and so on. Thus encouraging public interest in improving their standard of living (Stewart, 1998).

The enabling approach creates an atmosphere that encourages initiative, cooperation, hard work and creativity among the fostered partners. This approach aims to create an atmosphere or climate that encourages the Citra Sari group to develop business potential by eliminating structural barriers and cultural barriers that hinder the development of the potential of Citra Sari Emping Melinjo craftsmen (Ismail et al., 2016). The encouragement to increase work productivity that has been carried out in villages in Pidie Regency according to observations and interviews in the field shows that this encouragement is only carried out verbally, namely through direct communication between village officials and the community. Apart from that, this activity is also carried out simultaneously with the village meeting or deliberation.

The results of the analysis of the enabling stages show that the encouragement to increase work productivity in the process of economic empowerment of village communities has not been implemented optimally, the encouragement carried out by the village government, community assistants, district government and by the community itself is still verbal or without further action. concrete and specific to increase the work productivity of village communities. The enabling dimension, which is an element of the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency, is not running according to what is expected to improve the welfare of village communities in Pidie Regency. This is caused by the ability of the village government and community assistants who have not been able to implement the enabling dimensions properly and correctly to achieve community independence so as to create village prosperity.

➤ *Empowering*

Empowering is the second approach in the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency. Empowering is strengthening the knowledge and abilities of the community in solving problems and meeting their needs (Suharto, 2017). According to Kartasmita (1997), Strengthening society's potential or power is what is meant by empowering. Therefore, in addition to building an environment and atmosphere, more constructive actions are required. This strengthening entails taking proactive measures, opening doors to opportunities that would empower society, and giving a variety of inputs. The availability of finance, education, and marketing facilities in rural areas contributes to this empowerment.

Table 2. Knowledge Increasing Activities in Paloh Naleung Village

No	Year	Activity
1	2018	Livestock Business Training & Comparative Study at the Langgang Jaya Pratama Aceh Besar Self-Help Rural Agricultural Training Center (P4S)
2	2018	Visit of Pidie Regency Experts for Village Economic Development
3	2020	Additional Capital for Women's SPP/Savings and Loans Group
4	2021	BUMG Management Capacity Strengthening Training
5	2021	Animal Feed Processing Activities, Sales, and Meugang Activities

Source: DPMG Pidie, 2023

The role of community economic empowerment in creating community capacity in relation to the development of community economic improvement can be measured from the provision of business capital and production facilities which are supported by technical guidance on production processes and business management, as well as the government's role in facilitating the marketing of products from community business results. In connection with infrastructure development in empowering the economy of village communities, infrastructure is needed that can support community economic activities. In this context, village infrastructure such as farmer's roads, village markets, boat moorings, village embungs, bridges, and renewable energy are types of infrastructure that are provided and developed so as to increase accessibility and support community production. In this way, community potential can be developed and in turn can improve the welfare of the community concerned.

Table 3. Knowledge Increasing Activities in Mee Tanoh Village

No	Year	Activity
1	2015	Empowerment of Farmer Groups (Procurement of Fertilizer and Seed Assistance)
2	2016	Youth Organization Empowerment and Women's Savings and Loans (Village Bank)
3	2017	Cattle Fattening and Women's Savings and Loans (Village Bank)
4	2018	Apparel and Convection Business Management (Home Business)
5	2019	L300 Goods Car Rental (BUM Desa MEE TANOH MAKMUE)
6	2021	Training on How to Process Animal Feed, Tofu Processing Training, <i>Tempe</i> Processing Training, Cracker Processing Training, UMKM (Crackers, Tofu and <i>Tempe</i> Processing), <i>Linto Baro</i> Delivery Decoration Training

Source: DPMG Pidie, 2023

The results of research on empowering conclude that empowerment of village communities is also supported by the existence of sources of economic progress, capital,

information technology, infrastructure, hard work and mutual cooperation as well as participation in decision making. Economic sources of capital are one of the determining factors for the success of developing village potential. The economy of the Parung Serab village community is supported by village funds from the central, provincial and district governments. Today's society tends to want fast and accurate information, such as through information technology that is currently developing. The potential for Parung Serab village which uses online information technology media is the potential for Muslim clothing convection and furniture potential (Mursalim, Siti Widharetno; Ramdani, 2016).

The results of the analysis of primary and secondary data show that increasing knowledge about community economic development, which is part of the empowering stage in the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency, has not been implemented optimally. This can be seen from the very few knowledge increasing activities that have been implemented and are not sustainable. as well as the output produced, which has not had a significant impact on village communities in terms of increasing knowledge in developing the village community's economy.

Likewise, it is also known that currently strengthening the ability to meet needs which is part of the empowering stage in the process of economic empowerment of village communities carried out in Pidie Regency has not been carried out optimally. The number of capacity strengthening activities implemented is still not as expected and the output produced does not significantly strengthen the community's ability to meet their needs and the activities that have been implemented are not sustainable.

Table 4. Strengthening Abilities Activities in Seuk Ceukok Village

No	Year	Activity
1	2016	Handicraft Training
2	2017	Village BUM Desa Management Training
3	2018	Sewing Training, Livestock Training, Procurement of Tourism Buses belonging to Village BUM Desa
4	2019	Agricultural Fertilizer Assistance from Village BUM Desa, Grocery shop owned by BUM Desa, One of the superior products (dish washing soap/BUM Desa)

Source: DPMG Pidie, 2023

Finally, it can be seen that currently the availability of funding and marketing institutions which are part of the empowering stage in the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency is not yet available as expected. There are no funding institutions available to meet the capital needs of village communities. Even though funding institutions are really needed by the community as a production factor to improve the community's economy. Likewise, the existence of marketing institutions is still non-existent in villages in Pidie Regency. This should be suspected as one of the causes of the lack of development of

economic efforts that have been implemented to empower the economy of village communities in Pidie Regency. It is hoped that the village government, assisted by the district government, will initiate the entry of funding institutions into the village and form marketing institutions in the village by utilizing the potential of the community itself.

➤ *Protecting*

The final dimension related to the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency is protecting. Empowerment is protecting the weak. Protecting the weak is necessary due to the unequal control of productive assets between large economic powers and groups of people who do not control or own productive assets (Wrihatnolo & Dwijwinoto, 2007). And prevent the strong from oppressing the weak. Thus, efforts to take sides must pay attention to the integration between the importance of economic growth and its distribution across society.

The protective dimension involves preventing strong groups from oppressing weaker groups in society, preventing unfair rivalry between the strong and the weak, and preventing exploitation of weak groups by strong groups (Mulyawan, 2016). Nomaini (2018) Based on the results of his research, it shows that the protecting dimension in the community empowerment variable in PNPM-MP activities achieved moderate achievement. The indicators in this research are (1) providing loans with lower interest rates from the government than loans offered by entrepreneurs in the finance sector; (2) the existence of a marketing mechanism for the results of village community group businesses carried out directly by the government.

Findings in the field can be concluded that protecting weak, poor and landless communities, which is part of the protecting stage in the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency, has not been implemented well. Protection activities are only carried out based on activities that have been running so far and there are no implications from the village fund program, especially from the implementation of economic empowerment of village communities. So, with the findings of this research, the Village Government should have started to change its concept in implementing economic empowerment of village communities by prioritizing activities that protect weak, poor and landless communities.

Likewise, balanced competition to get jobs which is part of the protecting stage in the process of economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency has occurred even though in certain circumstances there is still unbalanced competition to get jobs. Thus, it is hoped that the village government can create balanced competition in getting jobs by maximizing the economic empowerment of village communities from the village fund program so that poor and weak people can get decent work and can increase their income for their welfare.



Fig 3:- Prohibiting Loan Shark Activities
Source: DPMG Pidie, 2023

Regarding the ease and relief in paying debts or credit, which is one part of the protecting stage in empowering the economy of village communities in Pidie Regency, it has not gone as expected. Because there are no funding institutions active in the village, the village community cannot make maximum use of these institutions. If we look at what has been happening in villages in Pidie Regency, the existing funds that have been lent to village communities have only come from village funds or funds from other villages, so things that are undesirable for the community have occurred regarding the management of loan funds. For example, many people do not return the funds they have borrowed, which can harm the village and other village communities.

Finally, one strategy to protect poor people from becoming increasingly powerless is to reduce dependence on moneylenders. The practice of loan sharking, which has long been rooted in people's lives, is difficult to eradicate. Especially if there is no solution that the poor people really hope for.

It is clear that reducing dependence on loan sharks, which is part of the protecting stage in the process of empowering the economy of village communities in Pidie Regency, has been carried out openly through a ban on operations, even though the practices of loan sharks still occur which are not directly known to the community because the process is closed, not like what the general public used to know. However, other measures to comprehensively reduce loan sharks have not been taken by the village government. It is hoped that the village government will maximize the use of village funds in empowering the economy of village communities, especially in providing financing to village communities.

VI. CONCLUSION

Through an optimal enabling, empowering and protecting approach, economic empowerment of village communities in Pidie Regency will run successfully. Encouragement, motivation, awareness generation and access to information must always be provided to village communities. Then increasing knowledge, strengthening capabilities and the availability of funding institutions and

marketing institutions are absolutely necessary. Apart from that, protection for people who are weak, poor and landless, balanced competition to get work, ease and relief in paying debts or credit and reducing dependence on moneylenders must always be a common thought between the village government and the community.

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