

Empowerment of Female Batik Worker on the Development of Batik Industry in Sragen : Case Study at Wisata Kliwonan Village Subdistrict Masaran

Sarah Rum Handayani Pinta

Study Program of Extension

Community Empowerment

Postgraduate Program

University of Sebelas Maret Surakarta

Central Java, Indonesia.

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative research is to analyse general condition and efforts of female batik workers to increase their working quality product and participation in batik industry, and formulate alternative model of women empowerment to meet their needs.

Despite impressive role and contributions to the batik industry development and income contributor to the family, female batik workers in Wisata Kliwonan Village have only secondary status after male workers. They generally have no opportunities in all aspects of empowerment activities. Their position and product quality in work can be improved by increasing their knowledge, productive skills, and participation in batik industry as equal partners to male batik workers.

Women empowerment based on female batik workers community through the formation of micro women enterprises can be considered as an alternative model to training facility will afford them the opportunity of having stable economic for themselves in family and batik industry.

Key Words : female batik workers, participation, empowerment, micro women enterprises

1. Introduction

The role of Indonesian women in national development is an important and interesting issue. This is why the government supports women's empowerment by issuing regulation *Inpres* No. 9/2000 of enhancing the role of women as equal to men. The *Inpres* states that development should be implemented by various approaches to solve the problems of women, who in fact are having many development fields and life aspects fallen behind. This regulation is very important for women to have equal access to various fields of development and achieve the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 regarding gender issues of Goal-3 equality and empowerment and Goal-4 eliminate gender gap in basic education (Hubeis, 2010). The local government of Sragen has included the above issue into women's empowerment program through the development of cooperation and small scale enterprises. The policy has not directed yet to provide specific activities for women, such as (1) equal access to opportunity in undertaking entrepreneurial activities, (2) equal access to have working capital, and (3) equal access to education and training of productive skills.

Wisata Kliwonan Village is identified as batik home industry, because most of women take batik jobs as their permanent side job using traditional or simple technology. They are mostly oriented toward local employers or *UKM Batik* (Small Scale Enterprises). The local *UKM Batik* to have need of female batik workers more than male batik workers, but this condition cannot guarantee to improve their position, status and role better or at least as equal to men. This condition is mostly affected by (a) women's traditional mindset that still put them shackles on routine job as batik workers, (b) limited knowledge and idea the way to develop their unexplored potential talents, (c) lack of regular assistance to guide female batik workers in productive activities, and (d) low innovation way of behaving to develop productive activities based on batik home industry. As a matter of fact that female batik workers cannot solve those problems individually. Sindu & Kustati (2003) states that the self development of women is still possible to happen as long as the framework of women's empowerment aiming at three important aspects, working capital facility, market, training in management and productive skills which shackle women.

Empowerment is a long process that addresses to all sources and structures of power. It is why an alternative empowerment model using female batik workers community as basis is introduced as innovative input to be considered for the promotion of women self development.

1.1. Problems of the Research

It has been observed that female batik workers constitute the basis of any type of local economic development. The empirical facts also indicates that they are doing both of domestic jobs and income earning activities to support their family. Majority of female batik workers play significant role and participation in batik industry development. However, the arrangement of women empowerment in practice is not fully applied due to several reasons. Therefore, the formulation of research problems will be focused to achieve the MDGs Goal-3 equality and empowerment, especially to increase female batik workers education and skills and their role as equal partners to men.

1.2. Purpose of the Research

1. To analyse general condition, status and efforts of female batik workers to increase their working quality product, and their perception regarding the importance of increasing knowledge, productive skills, and managing small scale productive activities.
2. To analyse participation of female batik workers on batik industry development at Wisata Kliwonan Village.
3. To formulate alternative model of women's empowerment that coincides with their needs in future.

1.3. Literature Study

1.3.1. Theory of Development

Theory of development is dynamically developed to respond the reality of social changes in lots of developing countries. One of them is called People Centered Development theory. Ul Haq (in Mardikanto, 2010) offers four importance components in human development use : (1) equal access to opportunity, (2) sustainability, (3) productivity, and (4) empowerment. In relation with paradigm of the this theory, Soetomo (2006) states that one of the development strategies which have been developed in human development was through Human Resource Management Based on Community. The emphasis of this strategy is to give dominant role toward local people at community level in order to manage the development process, especially controlling and productive resources management with specific characteristic : decentralisation, empowerment, social learning process, and sustainability.

1.3.2. Participation

Moeliono (in Suhendar,.....) states that participation can be broadly defined as the reality of involvement, active and readily participation of society because of internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) reasons in activities process. In terms of the implementation of community development, participation is a form of awareness, attention, and responsibility of community toward the importance of development which is directed to improve the quality of their life. Principally the purpose of development is to get community well prepared and ready to participate actively in all development activities to improve their life condition. Slamet (in Mardikanto, 2010) states that the growth and development of community participation are determined by three major substances : (a) to give opportunity to community to participate, (b) willingness of community to participate, and (c) capability of community to participate. Opportunity is a kind of promoter factor the growth and capability that are determined by community participation.

1.3.3. Empowerment

Mardikanto (2005) defines empowerment as an effort to give opportunity and capability toward community groups to have voice and choice. This confirms that empowerment of community is a cycle, participative process to encourage community taking mutual actions either in formal or informal groups to share their knowledge and achieve their purpose together.

Empowerment as a changing process is not an instant process to make things changed directly. As a process, Wrihatnolo dan Dwidjowijoto (2007) suggest that empowerment can be achieved through three steps :

process of making aware, capacity building, and empowering. In another word empowerment is not just about training in income gerating and advocation. Sumadyo (in Mardikanto, 2010) formulate three major efforts at any empowerment step so called *Tribina*, they are Human Capacity Building, Management Capacity Building, Environment Capacity Building. In regards to this, Mardikanto (2010) add another important of Institution Capacity Building. The main direction of women's empowerment is to improve the status and role of women in development as well as improve the quality of women's role and independent women's organization. Hubeis (2004) focusing into three important factors that can affect to women's behaviour : self concept of women, gender and role of women, and working distribution.

1.4. Hypotheses

Base assumption of this research is to have a look at the reality commitment of female batik workers towards batik industry sector activities, particularly the activities that affect to four fields in work : characteristic of women, working opportunity, relationship between productive and reproductive activities, and cultural factors including working culture and working distribution between male and female batik workers which are in fact supported to each other.

2. Methodology of Research

2.1. Location and Time of Research

The research takes place at Kliwonan Village Masaran Subdistrict Sragen Regency, one of the three biggest batik clusters in Sragen Regency. The research is carried out in six months.

2.2. Type of Research

This is a qualitative reseach using descriptive format. Strategy of the research applies a case study of which the results more emphise to its purpose rather than generalization to find out interactive relationship pattern to compose description or to describe indepth reality towards women's empowerment case in batik industry in Wisata Kliwonan Village.

2.3. Procedure of Data Collection and Determining of Analysis Unit

Data collection or sampling technique used by this research is Non-probability Sampling, that is a sampling technique which not giving any chance/same opportunity to each unit/population selected to be sample (Sugiono (2005)). Two of six techniques that applied to this research are :

1. *Purposive Sampling*, a sampling technique that takes key informant understanding into consideration. The informant include staff Department of Industry Sragen Regency, Planning Manager of Wisata Batik Kliwonan Village, Consultant of Batik Community, Village headman, and UKM Batik owners who can explain various things are related to social condition and development of batik industry sector.
2. *Snowball Sampling*, firstly sampling collection is limited to the above informant. Secondly, sampling collection is broaden to some UKM Batik owners, female and male batik workers due to limited and unsatisfactory data gathered from first key informant.

Unit analysis is basically information that will be gathered and based on each variable of research including policy, women's delopment opportunity, institutional support, motivation, participation of women, and outputs of empowerment.

2.4. Source of Data and Data Collection Technique, Instrument of Research

Primary data is collected through indepth interview with key informant in Wisata Kliwonan Village to get general picture of female batik workers condition, efforts of women's empowerment. Carry out data reduction firstly gathered from first step to focus on women's empowerment. Data collection is carried out by using observation, interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and documentation.

Processing of data is performed by comparing data from all key informants with the results of observation, interview, and other documents regarding women's empowerment in order to keep the validity of data. The instrument of research using observation list, application form of Focus Group Discussion, structured/unstructured interview, camera, voice recorder.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis using interactive and theme analysis techniques that include three main components, they are data reduction, data display, and data conclusion/verification (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The three analysis component are carried out at the same time with data collection. Data analysis is started with composing field notes in order, reducing data, developing temporary data display so that interactive data analysis of each component can be tested. Theme analysis is carried out after data collection process finish, then making theme classification oriented toward potential, problems, productive skills and needs of female batik workers.

3. Result and Discussion

The development of batik industry cannot be parted from the performance of male and female batik workers who used to work with batik employers in Solo for about 10 – 15 years. The formation of *UKM Batik* is one of the performances of empowerment program implemented by Cooperation and UMKM Sragen Regency through training support in batik processing and entrepreneurship for some male and female batik workers. The existence of *UKM Batik* can absorb local manpower, mostly women about 360-920 who work as piece batik workers.

3.1. General condition of female batik worker in improving their product quality and status in work field

Generally the age of female batik workers in Wisata Kliwonan Village are about 20 to above of 50 years old having domestic and public roles. Most of women give same reason for their choice to carry out these double roles, that is because of family economic problem, norm and values followed by local society. Most of husbands give moral support to their wives who are able to keep time allocation for both roles in balance. Women in general taking productive works to earn money, such as farmhand workers, piece batik workers, and entrepreneur. They learn batik from their parents or social environment for generations. The level of production knowledge (to do batik work, copying batik motif pattern, know-how about *isen-isen* or filling ornament motif, and colouring by brush) is good. This working area is mostly dominated by women that bring them into very important structural position who determine the performance life of batik industry. This condition indicates there is gender equality effort addressed to strengthen active involvement of women in their working area through specific activity for women (Hubeis, 2010).

Although women in position of determining the performance life of batik industry, they in fact have never directly involved in the empowerment program implemented by the local government and private institution which often involve *UKM Batik* owners. This unequal condition does not decrease the awareness and will of female batik workers to improve their product quality in work by making their experience in use as feedback to adjust themselves to developing batik industry.

3.2. Women perception to importance of knowledge improvement and working distribution

Most of female batik workers have perception that working distribution for male and female has equitable defined by their employers. The working distribution is defined in accordance with male and female expertise and biological difference, such as male workers more demand to physical works. The working distribution is well accepted by female workers who never think set apart from male working area. Most women feel safe in their work because batik works are always available at any time.

Chambers (in Soetomo, 2006) states that knowledge and wisdom are part of people knowledge, including concept, belief, perception, process of acquiring, increment, and distributing. Self concept and perception of female batik workers can be acquired from the local people knowledge system for generations. Although the local government policy has not addressed to meet women needs yet, learning process never stop them to make efforts to acquire knowledge improvement. This learning process shows that local batik knowledge is not a static and stagnant factor, but it always developed according to their capability.

The strong will of female batik workers to get developed reflect their perception toward importance of improving their knowledge and skills which can support them in work or newly business. The existing women empowerment tend to be implemented by local government or other stakeholders by sector, which means that most of training materials do not targeted to meet the need of improving female batik workers knowledge, but only stakeholders needs. This kind of partial training process will hardly encourage female batik workers to have creative and innovative behaviour. Therefore, the existing women empowerment is subject to be improved in line with female batik workers needs.

3.3. Participation of Female Batik Workers

Sastropetro (in Suhendar,) states that participation is spontaneous involvement of which awareness and responsibility stand as base toward groups concern to achieve their goals. Awareness of hope to improve life for better condition bring female batik workers motivation and will out into view to achieve it. Their strong will is supported with capability to participate in making their skills in use toward working opportunity and developing their skills to be *lantaran* worker (mediator). There is still possibility to improve the quality participation of female batik workers through establishment of alternative social organization basis on female batik worker community. This organization aims to provide a place for female batik workers to carry out mutual actions in achieving their needs.

3.4. Alternative Model of Women Empowerment in Future

To date, less number of batik employers pay attention to carry out the individual capacity building in work for female batik workers. Although most of batik employers have defined equal working distribution between male and female batik workers according to their psychological and biological difference, the status and role of women still remains lower than male workers. To be empowered, female batik workers cannot overcome their powerless individually. In this case, formation of women social organization having female batik workers as a base is very important, because when groups of women together, they able to identify their own problems and priorities, even frame strategy to be used to struggle for change in gender relation at home and in the society. The alternative women empowerment model will refer to empowerment base through (1) mutual working process between client and facilitator which have mutual benefit, (2) empowerment process will take client system as part of component and capability that bring along to income generating and give more opportunities (Dubois dan Miley, dalam Wrihatnolo dan Dwidjowijoto, 2007).

3.4.1. Purpose of empowerment

The purpose of alternative women empowerment model based on female batik worker community will be focused to make female batik workers of Wisata Kliwonan Village become capable and stand alone by giving equal access to have better knowledge, skills and power to influence themselves and other people. Achievement of these purposes will be coincide with women profile, working condition, knowledge, motivation and unavailability of other productive works.

3.4.2. Scope of Activities

In accordance with the above purpose, the process of female batik worker empowerment will cover three major efforts that formulated by Sumadyo (in Mardikanto, 2010) : Human Capacity Building, Business Capacity Building, Environment Capacity Building, and additional field formulated by Mardikanto (2010), that is Institutional Capacity Building.

3.4.3. Phase of Empowerment

Wilson (in Mardikanto, 2010) states that empowerment activity for each personnel in organization is part of activity cycles that include : (1) willingness to change, (2) readiness and daring to change, (3) willingness to participate, (4) improvement of participation, (5) growth of new motivation to change, (6) improvement of effective and efficient empowerment, and (7) growth of competence to change. In relation to the above cycles, empowerment that will be based on female batik community will firstly be implemented by following preparation phases.

1. First phase is process of making aware. Target of this phase is to make female batik worker aware of their existence, problems of their role in development, lack of knowledge and productive skills as well as showing the importance of making things changed or improved starting from themselves.
2. Second phase is capacity building to grow female batik worker's self-supporting and courage to release from fit feeling of existing work and or life obstacles as their decision making base to change and participate to empowerment program.
3. Third phase is empowerment process, that is to implement empowerment program so called capacity building for female batik workers through making aware process and improving knowledge and skills process base on the scope of empowerment activities.

3.4.4. Empowerment Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the alternative empowerment model based on female batik worker community include : (a) main agent will be female batik workers and their families, (b) decision makers consist of planner, implementer, and leader who holds development policy, (c) social organization basing on female batik worker community, and (d) networking system consist of stakeholders who support the implementation of female batik worker empowerment.

3.4.5. Approach and Strategy of Empowerment

The empowerment will be implemented gradually, starting from the level of individual, family, groups, community to institution. The alternative empowerment model choose to use group approach as an empowerment media by taking following reasons into consideration : (a) group approach having adopting process in excess because of interactive among the group members who support each other, (b) group is a social capital that can be relied as a social strength, and (c) group reflects organizational life of community which perform collective actions to solve their problems

3.4.6. Method of Empowerment

Kang and Song (in Mardikanto, 2010) states that there is no methods which can be applied to many community empowerment cases effectively all the time. The alternative empowerment model basing on female batik worker community uses various methods, they are (a) a face-to-face encounter through direct conversation/dialogue, meeting, talk, discussion, participative training targetted to individual and group, (b) demonstration by using teaching manner method and result demonstration method, and the combination of those two methods targetted to group, and (c) printing materials, such as pictures, photos, posters targetted to individual and group

3.4.7. Material of Empowerment

Miller (in Mardikanto, 2010) states that material scope of community empowerment program have to encompass to all aspects relating to improvement efforts of production, income, and welfare of empowerment beneficiaries. Refer to this statement, female batik worker empowerment will include following materials.

3.4.7.1. Developing of Individual Capacity in Work

The main purpose of this activity is to improve management knowledge and productive skills that can be used to solve enexplored potential female batik workers to create newly productive works. The indepth interview with female batik workers indicates there are seven field works that can be developed as newly productive activities which have additional economic value, they are (a) development of batik motif design, (b) copying batik motif pattern, (c) development of master design on cloth, (d) brush colouring and dyeing techniques, (e) various handicraft made of batik materials (patchwork, batik lantern), (f) earthenware, and (g) batik on wood media. Those seven field works are possible to be developed as economic productive activities carried out by female batik workers

3.4.7.2. Developing of Institution Capacity

Eadge (in Kurnia,) states that capacity building is one kind of development approach of which most people have same right toward resources and become development planner for themselves.

The institution capacity building aims to improve productivity and quality of human resources in developing the concept of vision, mission, organizational structure and its management according to certain condition that idealized by community. There are three important aspects, they are immaterial resources, process of acquiring skills, management, and organization. The offered empowerment materials include facilitating process to reactualize the existing community vision, in accordance with developing dynamics, organizational management, communication, and motivation of organization.

3.4.7.3. Developing of System or Network Capacity

Suharto (in Mardikanto, 2010) states there are five important aspects that can be carried out, one of them is improvement and development of networks. The activity will be emphasised to improve the capability of organization members to build and maintain existing networks with various social system. Social networking is very important toward resources and opportunity to improve the strength of community. Developing capacity will be emphasized on efforts to build interaction of each individual within organization, interaction of organization with stakeholders within same system.

3.4.7.4. Developing of Business Capacity

Arifin (in Mardikanto, 2010) states that the involvement of women into informal economic activities and small scale enterprise give significant contribution to both economic activities in general and household economic activities. In relation to this statement, lots of female batik workers are encouraged to get into certain economic activities, such as batik workers and batik employers who are not well prepared to deal with potential risks, such as working capital, a jump of basic commodity in price, overlapping economic activities they enter. To strengthen female batik workers in business, the materials will cover (a) selection of commodity and type of business, (b) motivation of entrepreneurship, (c) production management, operation management, marketing, and (d) the use of information technology.

Motivation of entrepreneurship is a starting point that required to create motivating situation which help female batik workers to have better understanding about any economic activities that can be developed in line with their knowledge and productive skills.

3.4.5. Developing of Environmental Capacity

Developing of environmental capacity is not only deal with preservation (physic), but also social responsibility which can influence to social welfare development efforts. Material of empowerment activities will include (a) management of batik waste, (b) communication, (c) leadership that focused to maintain good manner in work (soft skills).

3.4.7.6. Developing of Institutional Capacity

Institution in this context is defined as a place for female batik workers who socially carry out mutual actions supported by local norm, standard, and value. This institution can be concentrated to community capability improvement efforts to organize the changing, environment, economic productive activities in order to achieve better community welfare condition. Empowerment materials will pay attention to all community aspects which include (a) community leaders, (b) community technology, (c) community fund, (d) community material, (e) community knowledge, (f) community decision making, and (g) community organization. First step for developing of institutional capacity is to facilitate the formation of alternative social organization having female batik worker community as a base. The formation of this social organization is required as empowerment media that will enable it to organize and implement empowerment activities for female batik workers.

4. Outcomes of Empowerment

The offered alternative empowerment model basing to female batik worker community expects to produce better empowerment activities to achieve self-supporting beneficiaries as follow

- 1.*** Formulating and forming of alternative social organization having female batik workers community as a base that able to organize group's activities continuously.

2. Formation of female pioneer business group to give significant contribution in encouraging other local female batik workers who have no access to develop themselves.
3. Creating newly appropriate productive activities that can be used as alternative side job.
4. Producing appropriate materials of empowerment in accordance with aspiration and needs of female batik workers which have additional economic value.
5. Developing of organization, networking/system that sustain persistence of female batik worker empowerment efforts.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1. Conclusion

Women need to be given opportunity to have access to empowerment activities, including education and training in productive skills from both formal and informal means. The type of women empowerment efforts given should be afford the female batik workers ample to opportunity to manage the resources for sustainable batik industry development.

5.2. Suggestion

Formulation of female batik workers empowerment strategy offered by this research has not tested and applied yet. Therefore, it is suggested to test the offered alternative empowerment model in next research.

To develop newly productive activities in order to assist female batik workers out from their routine work.

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