

## THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC WOMEN SOCIETY GROUP IN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Khumaidi Sajuri

Republic of Indonesia Home Affairs Ministry Big Hall for Rural Community

Empowerment In Malang

Email: khumaidisajuri@yahoo.com

### Article History

Submitted:

08-07-2009

Reviewed:

18-12-2009

Approved:

20-12-2009

### Abstrak:

*Tulisan ini untuk menunjukkan bagaimana kelompok masyarakat (pokmas) perempuan Keagamaan keterkaitannya menggunakan modal sosial dapat memberi keuntungan ekonomi bagi penjual sayur keliling dalam bahasa setempat di Kota Malang dengan sebutan "Mlijo". Modal sosial yang menampilkan hubungan sosial informal juga berkontribusi dalam proses bagaimana pokmas saling membantu khususnya bagi pokmas perempuan penjual sayur keliling dalam menambah modal usahanya.*

**Kata kunci:** *pokmas; modal sosial; ekonomi; perempuan; penjual sayur keliling*

### INTRODUCTION

Social living consists of individual, family dan community correlates to regulation, and norms. Orders covers regulations and norms refer to individuals and community turn into certain commitment of social group behaviour simultantly. The behaviour is as togetherness among community members in work togetherness, helpness and activities led by social habitual, culture and other traditional activities. The tied informal social interaction is as social capital is run on local development problems. (Tonkiss, 2000:71) including in alleviating poverty, those are simpler to reach and to minimize cost if social capital takes big roles (see: Narayan dan Pritchett 1997:85, Grooaert dan Van Bastelaer 2001:45).

Society groups formed dan led naturally exist of social aggrement and their commitments as a tool where they get together in community called social institution.

(Norman UpHoff, 1984:78). Further those social institutions form society group as individual efforts in groups in increasing family living welfare dan community, and social capital also give economical benefit to community's entrepreneurship. Social capital in term of social net and informal social interrelationship has a role to determine in solving business fund rising.

In contex, social religious living, especially Indonesian Islamic Community as majority, in their living progress many society groups based Islam grows up. Example proselytized chamber of Tahlil, Yasin, Mosque chamber, praying chamber and the like. Those religious groups, are usually formed as interrelationship among moslems for spiritual beneficiaries. In real fact, those groups are divided into some categories, as: Firstly, based on sex, proselytized religious chamber, praying chamber. Qur'an verses chamber and the others especially only for women or men. Secondly, based on age, there are religious groups only for youth./teenagers. Thirdly, based on ideology site, there are religious groups based on organization of Muhammadiyahisme and Nahdatul Ulamaisme and et ce tera.

Starting of those catagories mention above, in this learning focus on Islamic religious Society groups. The reality is interesting learnt by asumptions, firstly, in fact, Islamic women religious society groups also grow and develop in Indonesian community living dinamicly as well as Islamic men religious Society groups; Secondly, many Islamic women religious society groups do not only focus on worship and faith for members but they also do social good activities by using community empowerment, especially for women economic empowerment as the marginalized side. So the beneficiries of Islamic women Religious Society groups can be felt not only internally among members but also for all communities ( Imam Setianto, 2000:4). This case is implementation of Islam spirit values as blessed universe religion; thirdly, with the limitations and vulnerability of this group of women actually have the potential to develop the knowledge and experience when the women presented as a way to appreciate the humanity of women through groups respectively. This is in line with the ideas of socialist feminists, which women who know the needs of women themselves. So when the reality of women's communities, they are not economically empowered, then the most effective is to empower women themselves

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. Community Empowerment: A strengtening**

Empowerment is the process of growing strength and capabilities of the poor / vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed. The process of, by and for the community, where people assisted / facilitated in making decisions and becoming more independent initiatives in developing the quality of life. Putting the community and its institutions as a basis for increasing economic strength, political, social, and cultural. Attempting to remove the various forms of cultural domination, political pressure, economic exploitation, which hinder community efforts to determine ways of life and to improve the quality of life (Ahmad Mahmudi, 2003:8).

Further, to refer to the principle of empowerment is to meet the needs (Mahmudi) and to solve practical problems; the public is the main agent of change; respect the primary role of community empowerment is the way (approach) and not the solution; to start something simply and being parts of community life; to encourage participation and community control; to maximize strengths and to minimize the dependency of the community; to utilize local knowledge and traditional wisdom; to prioritize critical dialogue, not to lead, and to avoid doctrine.

Empowerment is a process which makes people become strong enough to participate in a variety of control over and to influence on the events and institutions where affect their lives. Empowerment emphasizes people acquire skills, knowledge and power sufficient to affect the lives of others who become his attention (Parros, 1994:61).

In the implementation of community empowerment strategy, there are 4 (four) categories of policies held in an integrated, namely: (1). Possible expansion of the policy (promote opportunities) related to the climate and the creation of a conducive environment in the context of poverty reduction, (2). Community empowerment policy (community empowerment) associated by attempts to strengthen community institutions and organizations to access and to engage in public policy making and planning; (3). Policy capacity (capacity building) relates to efforts which improves basic skills of the poor in increasing income by improving measures of health and education, improving business skills, capital, infrastructure, technology and market information, and; (4). Social protection policies (social protection) relate to efforts to provide

protection and security for the poor, the main groups of the poor caused by natural disasters, the negative impact of economic crisis and social conflict are directed by the ability of community groups in setting aside a portion of income through group savings mechanisms.

Community problems in accordance with the most appropriate policy should be directly lead to increase economic activities by providing a variety of target groups with venture capital and to adjust by taking into account the resources available. Therefore, it is not surprising which the approach used in this policy is called with: count, finance and distribute (count, cost and deliver) (Sjahrir, 1986:49).

In line with the concept above, empowerment doesn't only include the strengthening of individual members of society, but also institution-regulation. Inculcating the values of modern culture such as hard work, thrift, openness, and responsibility is an important part of this empowerment efforts. Similarly, the reform of social and Integrated institutions in development activities and community role. Thus, empowerment is intended to increase the power of vulnerable groups or the less fortunate (Jim Ife, 1995; 41). The most important point here is to increase public participation in their decision making and their society. Meanwhile, empowerment is a term which is often used to replace the term community development considered as a distorted interpretation of the development process undertaken by implementation and it isn't for all to be able to provide the power (strength) for more developed the public. Instead of many community groups which become more dependent and helpless. Because they aren't surprising in which programs of social policy is likely to use a charitable strategies, patronize approach, foster care (foster) and protection (Tjokrowinoto, 1996:21).

In other word, empowerment shows the allocation of power back to business through the change of social structure (Swift and Levin, 1987:78). Where empowerment is a way of directing people, organizations, and communities and of being able to control (or power over) life (Rappaport, 1984:82). Furthermore, according to Bookman and Morgen, empowerment refers to effort in encouraging a desire people to actualize himself, to upward mobility, and psychological experiences which make people feel empowered (and Rinakit Raharjo, 1996:61).

## **B. Islamic Women group society as a social institution**

In an effort to improve the standard of living and quality of life need to be explored ways of managing the most appropriate business. For example, through what is called the “conscience” collective “will be able to resist the power which accompanies the current modernization Individualism, and the spirit of cooperation could be given new functions which can improve the lives of members of the group’s Important role in the advancement of social capital may be known to the public from the core of social capital which shows “Trust” and the norms of civic cooperation is very important for society to function well and are also important for the economic advancement of the society concerned (de Mello at the Brata, 2001: 28). Without good social capital , an action which appears likely to non- cooperative and the result will be lower. Conversely high social capital has the potential to bring people in a better outcome by facilitating greater cooperation (Narayan and Pritchett in Barata, 2001:34). Thus the role of social capital to develop the human qualities of the goals of human development and quality understood as an independent and useful, productive human beings, efficient, and immoral.

Associated with the development priorities for women have previously developed a variety of women’s empowerment programs, and introduced the theme of Women in Development (WID), which means mengintegrasikan women in development. After which, several times going international meetings to worry about the empowerment of women. Until around the 1980s, various studies show which equality is more important quality than quantity, the WID theme was changed to Women and Development (Wad). It becomes easier, when people were still biased and male culture assume which differences in men and women is natural and should be accepted (nature) rather than the result of social construction of culture to produce a different role (maintenance). However, gender equality and justice can only apply when people realize which gender is not natural, but the results of socio-cultural construction of society. Women’s Islamic groups in one hand, is a container of women to demonstrate their role in the environment. As Brown and Moberg (Ruwiyanto, 1988:36) reveals which the

organization is in the individual-community continuum. They both mentioned which the community is a combination of the community. Is a combination of community groups, and the group is a combination of the individual. Figure 1 shows Continuum. individual group organization community society continuum images of individual communities

As a system, an organization consisting of at least four sub-systems, namely: Taxonomy organizations, organizational structure. The process of organizations and individuals within the organization and leadership development. If a particular organization has a formal organizational characteristics, the five sub-systems or sub-systems influence each other in the movement to achieve his goal. Group as a sub system which is smaller than the organization, he started also as a particular system. The group also consists of individuals in the links with the group structure, System of taxonomic groups and the processes which occur in groups, and developed leadership in it. For example, in urban areas in Java, many women work as laborers to “scroll” cigarettes, especially in the district of Kediri, Malang, Spirit and other tobacco industry areas. So many people who have this type of activity usually will form community groups which have a particular interest or interests.

Women’s groups formed by itself without any engineering or intervention from the outside and to fight for their own sake originally is known as a social institution based on mutual commitment in the form of an agreement tied to social norms or the perceived value of the relevant community. However, there is unisex other community groups formed based on the interests of development programs. Business grouping is also intended to facilitate choosing which groups can be used as any media for community development programs, this group called the agency or institution / organization (Koentjoroningrat, 1986:76). In addition, the formation of this group is very important in the process of involving the community, will be fostered through group solidarity, cooperation, consultation, security, and believe in yourself. It can also refer to religious teachings. One effective way is to form groups through religious approach or the same interests early. In primordial groups which group members will have the same references.

By starting with a primordial group, the members will find new things, through members of the group will compile the program. With a systematic framework they will be able to feel the growth and progress as a result of their activities. This is where the role of external motivators needed for social preparation capable of directing all members of target groups are willing to do to start preparing activities to identify needs and find solutions (Karsidi, 1997:18). Admittedly forming groups of Muslim women also have the same genre of many existing community groups. Which is, they form groups or institutions or organizations which have the same interests and can only be realized if they form the same container. Bonds of solidarity groups, the social capital which has been developed by women's groups where they are. However, social capital is economically valuable if it can help other individuals or groups to access financial resources, to obtain information, to find jobs, to pioneer efforts and to minimize transaction costs (Tonkiss 2000: 43).

As a social institution, Islamic women society group grows and develop because of efforts women of moslem follow. Those society groups has function effectivelly as the comunity need especially, women in fulfilling religious living and it links to other programs like government and non government programs, in surrounding local community empowerment. Esman dan Uphoff (1984:112) state which actually, there are three emportent elements in local community, such as: local government, local politic organisation and local organisation. The term revers Linz dan Stepan (1996:82) state which in comunity there are elements: state political society, civil society, economic society and rule of law. Like other institutions, such as: youth group, social welfare empowerment, comunity empowerment institution and the like, Islamic women society group is to add other exist community institutions before and to get together in development as their needs and aspousal community creativities.

### **C. The role of Islamic Women group society in Economic Community Empowerment: a Case Image**

Islamic women society group has a strategy position in economic community empowerment efforts. In fact, it is happened because they are . grass root group who knows their needs and problems in community especially for women. Islamic women

society group with their wisdom, have run economic empowerment activities in micro entrepreneurship sectors. In real facts, if they are recieved full of aspousal to face devolopment programs. The capacity of absorbing human sources and force work is believable by ratio comparring 10 % of every work force wants and has capable to be entrepreneur and their developed efforts, for example the effort absorbs 2 person so unemployed problems can be (Abdullah, 2004:12).

Existing social networks and is useful in getting aid or informal loans. This is very reasonable because the administrative procedures regiditas government assistance programs which help lead to difficult to access by the poor layers. To follow up these efforts, the efforts made by the empowerment of groups of Muslim women to women green vendor, as one alternative which is the study of women in member contributions in supporting the development of micro and small businesses. Kuncoro (2000:43) also mentions which small businesses and business households in Indonesia have played an important role in absorbing labor, increasing the number of business units and support household income.

As an illustration will be presented about the activities which have been made by the routine of Sunday Morning Prolytising Chamber or it is called by MPAP. Pengajian Sunday Morning Assembly is a forum Hospitality Muslim women, was first established on March 24, 2000, in Sub-District Cemorokandang - Malang, East Java. These groups were established with the purpose as a vehicle for women between Muslims Hospitality. Developing a vision is “Building a brotherhood, cleanse the liver and the development of thought”. While this mission was developed: “Improving the resilience and awareness ukhuwah, Self Actualization and Faith continuously and the development of science and community empowerment.

#### **D. What is it strategy?**

To achieve the vision and mission Sunday Morning Prolytising Chamber, (MPAP) was developed strategies include: actualize belief and faith through Prolytising Chamber, Developing a network of partnerships among the program members, sympathizers and Muslim communities and develop science and research centers and community empowerment.

This is in line with the empowerment strategy Sumodiningrat (1995:29) in Sulistyani (2004:16), among others: First, continue to provide the opportunity for the traditional sector and a modern society can keep moving forward and, second, to support people who are less strong for The main attention.

**E. What is it effort?**

Religious groups have a close correlation with the values and norms prevailing in society. Where the institution as a system of norms for achieving the activities which are considered important by society, or formal set of habits and behaviors which range order on the basis of human activity (Horton and Hunt, 1998 at Setianto, 2000:19). Sunday Morning Assembly Pengajian frequency activity with 4 (four) times a month, as well as media propaganda, is also intended as a forum to facilitate Hospitality fundraising through donations remain Pengajian Sunday Morning Assembly anggota voluntary managed by the Institute of Charity, Zakat, and Gift (Lazis) formation MPAP group with the following steps:

*Firstly*, collecting funds from donors remains. The process of fund-raising event conducted every study conducted, first by explaining the goals, objectives and intended use of funds, including the number of members of Women “Mlijo” which provided a revolving fund (revolving fund). In addition, contributions in the form of funds provided by the citizens of donor countries remains a study compiled by the Economic Development Division-MPAP People.

*Secondly*, to empower women’s Gren Vendor Society Groups. Women Green Vendor Society Group around the woman or the so-called “Mlijo” ‘is a women green vendor who normally sells vegetables in the surrounding environment, people who live in the township and the general public. The seller is actually mlijo have long interacted in the marketing of merchandise. They generally are a family or families who have homes near each other.

By quoting Coleman, Fukuyama said, which social capital refers to the set of resources inherent in family relationships and in community social organization. Cooperation is possible in the family because of biological factors which are not natural and only accelerate and facilitate various other social activities. So proximity and the level of their communication is very easy to do. This is evident from their activities

daily, including: when they took the merchandise (wholesale) in a vegetable market from the manufacturer or dealer, and when they market their wares in the rotation is always performed together with areas which have been defined according to their *kesepakatan* together. Women's groups are groups of Green Vendor for any reason, including disadvantaged communities, was marked by mupun educational level of their living standards are still low, namely the absence of matter or a party to a number of people compared with the general standard of living prevailing in the society concerned (Levitan in Suyanto, 1992:43 in Sunatiningsih, 2004:17).

These groups encourage women to help smooth their activities MPAP to accelerate efforts to promote empowerment and independence to improve the welfare of their lives. To realize this program, MPAP Women's groups to take steps to: First, every member of the teachings which have voluntarily left the freezer with their own initiative and vegetables group entrusted would not be sold on which day to be saved in the refrigerator before you can sell back the next day by Green Vendor owners. Second, funds which had been collected from donors remains MPAP, distributed to the sellers who have formed *mlijo* form Society Groups revolving fund (revolving fund) to increase their capital.

Cemorokandang villages in this region - Malang, from the amount which is facilitated by the Executive Board MPAP they are grouped into 6 (six) in groups where each group consists of @ 15 (fifteen) persons with 1 (one) chairman and 14 (four of twelve) members. Chairman of the group responsible for the circulation of funds and withdrawal of funds every month. This grouping effort is made to more easily provide built, direction and funding arrangements other than as a means of control of their activities.

At first, a revolving fund given to each group is Rp. 450.000, - (four hundred and fifty thousand dollars) each member. With the calculation of each month they will return to the Council through the Human Development Section MPAP Rp. 30.000, - (thirty thousand dollars), the chairman of each group with a period of 15 (fifteen) months. This means which they only return the amount of Rp. 1000,- (thousand dollars) per day and no interest is charged or other services. Repayment of revolving funds from different green vendors women every month is RP. 30.000, - X 15 people

which collected money amounting to Rp. 450.000, - (four hundred and fifty thousand dollars per month. This means which every month, The People Economic Development to encourage MPAP funds for a new member of the group of women Green Vendor.

With additional capital, they can spend ternyata greater profits. This is assuming as hawking their wares on average with the purchase of capital goods amounted to Rp. 250,000 per day they can sell merchandise out for sale USD. 350.000, - per day, with profit Rp. 75.000, - per day with an average of 20 customer menjajaan. But after they got an additional Rp. 450.000, - per person, they have the capital Rp. 700,000 in merchandise sales per day to Rp. 1.000.000, - which means they could set aside the gross profit from RP. 300.000, -. They pay a net profit after depreciation Speda motor Rp. 25,000, per day, gasoline Rp. 15.000, - per day, labor costs Rp. 25.000, - per day and payment of Rp. 1000 per day with a total expenditure Rp. 66,000, - per day then the net profit they can get Rp. 239,000, - per day. With the additional capital does not end there themselves they are still There they remained open their own sales at home after selling their wares around to spend the possibility still remains. Another attempt to leave the merchandise to another store and process the remaining merchandise to sell cooked food the next day.

But the risk of failure which may occur from the capital who had received Rp. 450.000, - it is not impossible for something which is very difficult to be restored permanently assigned based installment. Then the group will also perform Guarantee by negotiating between religious communities of women as providers of capital to solve problems in which the network, the norms, and social trust which encourages social collaboration (coordinative and cooperative) to public interest. Pierre Bourdieu (1970:44) argues which social capital refers to the benefits and the opportunity to get someone in the community through its membership in a particular social entity.

James Coleman further said which social capital is a resource which is born from a particular set of social ties. He further said which unlike financial assets derived from loans, human resource asset which can be obtained from the intellect of social capital can be obtained from the relationship between theory of social behavior manusia. Di see where the behavior of the environment is the environment which affect each other

(Tibaut and Harlod John Kelley, 1959; George Homans, 1961; Ricard Emerson, 1962 and Peter Blau, 1964). This social capital also led to “social contract” and the norms applicable to the entire community (Ahmad, 2001:21).

#### **F. Benefits for mlijo**

Just for the record, is a local term and the surrounding Mlijo Malang and East Java in general for the sellers of fresh vegetables with bearings, *menyunggi*, holding, carrying, carrying with push carts, bicycles and motorcycles, and even with an open car around to go the consumer, especially the mothers of households in the villages, residential complexes or residential alleys of the population. Women green vendor consist of the “independent”, “semi-independent” and “non-self ” women green vendor. Independent women green vendor if they have a vehicle, their own merchandise and also receive vegetables, beverages and food deposits. Semi-independent women green vendor is if they have a vehicle but only to sell goods to others. non-independent women green vendor if they use the vehicle and sell merchandise other people who hired him.

The reason they come in groups which had received loans from the informal groups of religious women is to increase the family income. Efforts to increase revenue is important because the actual economic crisis has eroded their purchasing power. Kinship network or friends have been profitable for them to gain business opportunities. Revolving fund the construction of not only dominated by groups which have obtained funds, but can be given to new members who want to develop their business. While the benefits for sellers “mlijo” among other things: (1). Can enhance social ties more intense with the same goal and how which was built with women green vendor; (2). Accustomed to discuss together what the interests and needs; (3). After identifying the container interests and their needs together; (4). Experience and understand the mechanisms of collective decision-making based on shared interests and needs; (5). Learning resolution experiences in a conflict which may accompany the process and outcome of decision-making; (6). Benefit from the existence of cooperation networks in the fulfillment of common needs and; (7). Feel the benefits for the existence of “Sunday Morning Study Chamber” as a religious Islamic group of women who are able interests and needs.

## **CONCLUSION**

Islamic women society groups is a religious social institutions which have a strategic position in the economic empowerment of the community. They can be a pioneer or an agent of social change in terms of economic development. Primodialisme, which in this case is religious piety and social piety awakened, and the area of individual consciousness of each group, just to be driving social change, which in this context is community empowerment. This is the way to make improvements to MPAP provide to access capital in productive economic activities around the fruit and vegetable group or in local terms with the seller called “ women green vendor “. So they are more independent and have the empowerment to improve and develop their businesses.

## **REFERENCE**

- Basri, M.C. 2002. Wajah Murung Ketenagakerjaan Kita, Kompas, 25 November.
- Coleman, J.S. 1988. Social Capital in the Creation Of Human Capital’ American Journal of Sociologi 94 (Supple- ment): S95-S120.
- Diskusi Periodik di PSPP Lemlit UNS. Surakarta 21 Oktober 1989.
- Erlangga, Jakarta.
- Karsidi, Ravik. 1997. Persiapan Sosial, Makalah Pelatihan Pendampingan Pengusaha Usaha Mikro, Malang: Bank Indonesia.
- Kuncoro, Mudrajad, 2004. Otonomi dan Pembangunan Daerah. Reformasi. Perencanaan, Strategi, dan Peluang.
- Mubyarto. 1991. Strategi Pembangunan Pedesaan, Yogyakarta: P3PK UGM.
- Raharjo, M. Dawam. 1989. Metode Pelibatan Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pembangunan Pedesaan. makalah
- Ruwiyanto, Wahyudi. 1988. Pengaruh faktor-faktor Dinamika Organisasi Lembaga Pendidikan Karya Terhadap Manfaat Sosio Ekonomi Warga Belajar. Disertasi S3. Bogor: Fak. Pasca Sarjana IPB.
- Setianto. Imam. 2000. Analisis Fungsi-fungsi Manajemen Lembaga Lokal di Desa Cemorokandang, Kecamatan Kedung Kandang Dati II Malang.

- Sunatiningsih, Agnes. 2004. Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Desa: Melalui Institusi Lokal. Gajahmada. Yagyakarta. Suryahadi, A.W. Widyanti, D. Perwira, S. Sumarto. “Minimum Wage Policy and Its Impact on Employment in the Urban Formal Sector”, dalam Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies Vol 39 No 1, 29 –50.
- Tonkiss, F. 2000. “Does Social Capital and Economy,” dalam F. Tonkiss dan A. Pasey (eds.) Trust and Civil Society. New York:St. Martin’s