

Empowerment of Red Brick Producers in Preventing Extreme Poverty in Tanggung Village, Malang Regency

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Abstract.

Extreme poverty is a serious problem that must be addressed immediately. One effort to overcome it is by empowering local MSMEs. The presence of red brick MSMEs in Tanggung village has a positive impact on the surrounding economy. However, there is a problem of unhealthy price competition causing the economy to not run smoothly. Based on these problems, this community service aims to provide an understanding to red brick business actors to establish cooperatives that can control the price of basic necessities, the amount of stock on the market and the highest and lowest retail prices. The methods used in this study are observation and interviews. The approach used is Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) with the hope that business actors can overcome price competition by establishing cooperatives.

Keywords: Extreme Poverty, Red Bricks, Cooperatives, ABCD

I. INTRODUCTION

Extreme poverty is a condition where a person cannot meet their basic needs, be it food, clean drinking water, proper sanitation, housing, education, health or access to social service information (UN, 1996). Indicators of extreme poverty according to Lestari et al. (2023), can be seen from the amount of expenditure. People in the extreme poverty

category only spend IDR 10,739 per day or IDR 322,170 per month. Meanwhile, for the poor category, they usually spend IDR 15,750 per day or IDR 472,525 in one month. Based on these indicators, in Tanggung Village, there are only two heads of families who are detected as being affected by extreme poverty.

Poverty is a multidimensional problem, arising from the failure of human resources to function properly, including due to low levels of education and skills (Adawiyah, 2020). Extreme poverty can also have a serious impact on children's growth and development. This occurs because children's nutritional needs are not met due to the low economic status of their parents. The inability to meet children's nutritional needs can also cause new problems, namely stunting. The impact of stunting on children can be in the form of decreased cognitive abilities and low body immunity.

The causes of poverty are also diverse, according to Itang (2015), poverty can be caused by 1). Low education, low levels of education cause someone not to have the skills needed by job providers; 2). Laziness. Laziness and relying on fate cause someone to be passive in working; 3). Limited Natural Resources. Poverty caused by natural resources usually affects some people, not individuals, this is because natural resources cannot be empowered; 4). Limited Employment Opportunities. The lack of employment opportunities makes someone unemployed and does not get a steady income, on the other hand opening employment opportunities requires large capital and skills so that it is difficult for poor people to achieve; 5). Limited Capital. Poor people find it difficult to open employment opportunities even though they are said to have sufficient skills; 6). Family Dependencies. The number of children creates high economic demands which causes income per dependent to decrease.

There are several efforts to overcome extreme poverty according to such as providing BLT (Direct Cash Assistance), providing access to

free education, improving community entrepreneurial skills. According to Indika & Marliza (2019), empowering MSMEs is the most effective step in overcoming extreme poverty. This empowerment includes capital, training and protection of business permits. Providing access to capital can increase production capacity in an MSME which can later increase the distribution of employment opportunities. Training can improve a person's skills so that they will be more easily absorbed by the job market. Meanwhile, protection of business permits can expand the market share so that it can increase MSME income.

Tanggung Village itself has implemented several steps to eradicate poverty such as providing BLT to people in need, coaching MSMEs and coaching entrepreneurial skills. So far the most optimal step is to support brick MSMEs in Tanggung Village.

It is recorded that there are 13 brick production sites in Tanggung village, Turen district, Malang regency. Each location has a varying production capacity. The brick making industry, both on a small and large scale, also plays a role in improving the surrounding economy. Brick products made in Tanggung village have great potential in meeting local and regional construction needs. Bricks are divided into two types in their form. The first type is bricks made using a mixture of silica sand, cement, limestone, gypsum, water and aluminum powder. This type is usually called lightweight bricks, white bricks or hebel. While the second type is bricks made from a mixture of clay and water which are then molded and fired. In this study, it is the red brick industry in Tanggung Village, Malang Regency.

In this study, the researcher focused his observation on the brick industry owned by ZA (the initials of the brick owner) considering the large scale of the business he owned. The brick production site is located in RW 02, Tanggung Village. According to the interview results, it is

known that the site has been operating for 20 years with a production capacity capable of printing more than 800 bricks per day..

In previous research, Syahfitri (2023) revealed the role of the brick industry in improving the economic welfare of the people of Tanjung Mulia Village, Deli Serdang Regency. Another study conducted by Sitohang (2022) revealed the impact of the brick industry in Sigaol Marbun Village which includes socio-economic impacts on the workforce, changes in employment and income and impacts on the environment. The next study conducted by Darsih (2017) revealed the role of the brick industry in increasing income in Tenayan Raya Village, Pekanbaru. Based on previous research, no research was found on the brick industry in overcoming extreme poverty. So this study will reveal the role of the brick industry in overcoming extreme poverty in Tanggung Village. In addition, it also reveals the problems and solutions of red brick MSMEs.

II. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis. The primary data sources of this study are observation and interviews. Observations were conducted in the brick industry owned by ZA in Tanggung Village for 30 days. Interviews included the owner of the brick industry, workers and the secretary of Tanggung Village. The location of this research observation was in Tanggung Village, Malang Regency. The approach used is Asset Based Community Development (ABCD).

The data used in this study uses primary and secondary data. Primary data obtained through observation and interviews with related parties while secondary data in the form of relevant documents and books, institutional publications, popular articles some of which are obtained online. The data analysis method used in this study is descriptive analysis in the form of narratives.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on an interview with ES (initials of the village secretary Tanggung), it was found that there were 2 subjects categorized as being in extreme poverty. However, after further observation, if based on the poverty indicators according to Lestari et al. (2023), the 2 subjects were not included in extreme poverty but only at the poor level. It can be seen that there is an average daily expenditure of 14,838 per day. After the interview, it was found that the amount of wages for brick workers was 80,000 rupiah each time they came to work.



Figure 3.1 Interview with bricj industry owner

Based on observations, the role of UMKM Batu Bata in Tanggung village in overcoming extreme poverty is very vital. This is due to the division of the causes of poverty expressed by Itang (2015) which will be explained in the following explanation:

1. Low education: UMKM Batu Bata in Tanggung Village employs residents regardless of their diplomas. This is proven by HA (the worker's initials) who only has a junior high school diploma. By absorbing people with low education, it will minimize the unemployment rate in Tanggung Village. Absorption of low-educated workers can also increase family per capita income when compared to the unemployed.
2. Laziness: a person's laziness is an internal problem that cannot be overcome except from within the person themselves.

3. Limited Natural Resources: In Tanggung Village, natural resources are unlimited. This can be seen from the manufacture of bricks using local clay. So that natural resources can be managed well by utilizing them into bricks to improve community welfare.
4. Limited Employment Opportunities: The presence of Brick UMKM in Tanggung Village also contributes to employment opportunities. This is due to the long brick-making process so that it is impossible for UMKM owners to produce their own.
5. Limited Capital: Tanggung Village has conducted several outreach on capital, in addition to the existence of cooperatives in the village so that it can help the finances of MSMEs. Cooperatives in Tanggung Village are running well, as evidenced by the establishment of 13 similar MSMEs.
6. Family responsibilities: family responsibilities are internal problems that can be overcome by providing a good understanding of parenting.

However, there are obstacles in the brick industry, namely unhealthy price competition. According to the results of an interview with ZA (brick business owner), it is known that the price of red bricks has fallen to Rp. 350 per piece. This is different from the previous year which was stable at Rp. 450 per piece. The cause of the fall in brick prices was due to price wars for both red bricks themselves and white bricks / hebel.



Figure 3.2 Brick making process

In overcoming these problems, cooperatives can be formed. Lestari (2022), trade cooperatives play an important role in monitoring the highest retail price (HET) or the lowest retail price (HER) that has been mutually agreed upon. In addition, cooperatives are also responsible for controlling product stock, stabilizing raw material prices and ensuring economic activities so as not to harm either party. In this case, the government of Tanggung Village, Malang Regency, has the right to create a trade cooperative which can later help the brick industry in overcoming market competition.

IV. DISCUSSION

Tanggung Village, in the center of East Java, Indonesia's Malang Regency, is distinguished by its close-knit community and rich cultural legacy. Notwithstanding its historical and cultural importance, the hamlet has endured chronically high levels of poverty. Due to the predominantly agrarian local economy, many families struggle to make ends meet.

Reviving and assisting regional industries has been a priority in response to these difficulties. The manufacture of red bricks has become one of these important prospective areas. Red bricks are vital for building, and their production creates jobs and economic prospects. Tanggung Village seeks to promote sustainable development and fight poverty by utilizing the expertise of nearby red brick manufacturers.

Red Brick Manufacturers' Function

In Tanggung Village, the production of red bricks is not just a cottage industry but also a major source of income. Clay must be extracted, formed into bricks, and then fired in kilns to complete the process. A sizable section of the community is employed in this traditional craft as suppliers, laborers, and artists.

1. **Economic Contribution:** The production of red bricks directly boosts the local economy by bringing in money and jobs. It provides for a large number of families and encourages auxiliary industries like clay extraction and kiln maintenance.

2. **Use of Skill:** A large number of Tanggung Village's red brick manufacturers have inherited their trade from earlier generations. This custom acts as a vital tool for economic growth in addition to protecting cultural legacy.
3. **Market Demand:** Red bricks are still in great demand due to Indonesia's continuous building development. Local producers can increase their sustainability and profitability by extending their market reach and refining their manufacturing methods.

Strategies of Empowerment

Several empowerment techniques have been put into practice in order to maximize the potential of red brick producers:

1. **Training and Skill Development:** To improve the abilities of red brick makers, workshops and training courses have been arranged. These courses concentrate on company management, quality assurance, and contemporary production methods
2. **Access to Resources:** Efforts have been undertaken to increase the availability of vital resources, like effective kilns and premium clay. In this context, assistance from the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has been essential.
3. **Market Access:** Efforts have been made to establish links between regional producers and larger markets. This entails forming alliances with building firms and taking part in trade shows to exhibit their merchandise.
4. **Financial Assistance:** To assist producers in making investments in their companies, grants and microloans have been made available. Enhancing living conditions, increasing industrial capacity, and modernizing equipment all require financial help.
5. **Participation of the Community:** Including the community in the decision-making process guarantees that the empowerment programs are in line with regional objectives and needs. Among the producers, this participative method encourages a sense of dedication and ownership.

Effects on Severe Poverty

In the battle against extreme poverty, the empowerment of Tanggung Village's red brick manufacturers has had a number of beneficial results:

1. **Income Improvement:** Red brick producers have seen an increase in income levels as a result of improving their production efficiency and market access. For many families, this has immediately resulted in higher living standards.
2. **Job Creation:** The rise in red brick production has led to the creation of new jobs, which has decreased unemployment and given locals steady sources of income.
3. **Economic Resilience:** The manufacture of red bricks has broadened the village's economy and made it more resilient to disruptions to the local economy. Strong local industries can lessen the effects of more general economic downturns.
4. **Social Benefits:** There are more extensive social benefits associated with empowering red brick manufacturers, such as better access to healthcare and education. Families are better equipped to invest in the health and education of their children when income levels improve.

Obstacles and Prospects for the Future

Even though red brick manufacturers' empowerment has produced a lot of benefits, difficulties still exist. It is necessary to handle issues including shifting market demand, environmental issues associated with brick production, and the requirement for ongoing skill development.

Future tactics ought to consist of:

- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Using eco-friendly production techniques to reduce the environmental impact of producing red bricks
- **Innovation and Technology:** Promoting the use of cutting-edge technology to raise the caliber of output and increase production efficiency.
- **Policy Support:** Fighting for laws and rules that promote regional industry development and safeguard small-scale farmers' rights.

V. CONCLUSION

The presence of a brick industry on a small or large scale plays an important role in overcoming extreme poverty in Tanggung Village, Malang Regency. The brick industry can help provide jobs because the process does not allow business owners to produce their own products. In addition, the brick industry can also absorb low-educated workers because no special skills are needed to make bricks. There are obstacles in the brick industry, namely unhealthy competition. This problem can be overcome by establishing a cooperative. So that with the existence of the cooperative, an agreement can be made on the highest or lowest price.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide a number of thorough training courses with an emphasis on quality assurance, business management, and advanced brickmaking techniques. Expanded availability of cutting-edge production methods and premium raw materials. Create and put into action plans to investigate new sales prospects and increase market access. Improve financial assistance programs and offer money management education. Adopt and encourage sustainable production methods to lessen the impact on the environment and improve long-term viability. Involve the neighborhood in the creation and execution of initiatives for the red brick sector. Promote laws and infrastructural upgrades that will help the red brick sector and deal with underlying issues.

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