

Community Empowerment in Business Learning Group Program in Community Learning Center

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Abstract: The Business Learning Group Program (KBU) is one of the non-formal education programs that is expected to improve community welfare while reducing poverty. Basically, business learning groups focus on skill education and business training for low-educated and poor citizens. In the village of Lauwону in Tilango, Gorontalo Regency, there is a business learning group (KBU) which is fostered by Community Learning Center (PKBM) Harapan Indah. The survey results explained that the business learning group (KBU) did not work as it should be. On the other hand, the potential of residents in Lauwону village is quite supportive. This study aims to obtain an overview of: (1) the implementation of business learning group programs (KBU); and (2) efforts to empower citizens to optimize business learning groups (KBU). The method used is a qualitative method with steps that include: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. The technique used to check the validity of the data in this study is Triangulation. The results obtained are expected to improve the implementation of business learning group programs (KBU) as well as empowering citizens to optimize the program. The results showed that the implementation of business learning groups principally included three aspects: the profile of this KBU, the motivation of the community to join KBU, and learning activity in KBU. Furthermore, community empowerment in the context of optimizing KBU includes: community skill development, behavior change, and organizing.

Keywords: community empowerment, business learning group, community learning center

I. INTRODUCTION

Non-formal education as one of the pathways of education in addition to school education (as formal education) and family education (as informal education), ratified according to Indonesia Regulation (UU) Number 20 of 2003 about the National Education System, has a significant role in connecting theoretical education and the world of work. It is commonly acknowledgeable that formal education of "school" rarely guarantees work proficiency even with educational certificate qualification. In reality, training and guiding is additionally necessary to obtain the expected result of work, which are exceptionally developed in non-formal education.

The Business Learning Group (*Bahasa Indonesia: Kelompok Belajar Usaha, later on mentioned as KBU*) is a program in non-formal education that focused on skills education and business training for low-educated and poor citizens. Kamil (2011) mentioned that "a business learning group is an activity that teaches citizens to catch up in the field of business, by working, learning and trying, in order to obtain a livelihood as a source of decent income". As non-formal education, it is expected to be an alternative to improving people's welfare and reducing unemployment and poverty.

Many KBUs have not gotten the expectation as mentioned in National Regulation on Education System Standard, which the condition of KBUs have not yet triggered independency and empowerment to the community. One of them is KBU carried out by Harapan Indah Community Learning Center (*Bahasa Indonesia: Pusat Kelompok Belajar Masyarakat, later on mentioned as PKBM*) in Lauwону village, Tilango, Gorontalo Regency. Several notation obstacles in achieving the expectation are the usual dependence on the government, the laziness habit, and lack of creativity, which mostly still adorn the lives of the Indonesia community including in

Gorontalo. This affects the delay of capital return in KBU funding, impacts the limitation of production due to the finite fund. This is further aggravated by lack of initiative towards entrepreneurship; business capital is used for daily living. In addition, disorganized financial management and negligent administration system are also contributed to the inhibition of KBU program.

Interviewing the managers and tutors of Harapan Indah PKBM in Lauwону village, the main problem in implementing the KBU program is its unorganized service that hasn't covered the whole community. In fact, some residents of the Lauwону Village do not recognize this program. Some people are unable creating sellable thing. Some have difficulties in marketing. Others have difficulties in starting personal company. In general, KBU in PKBM Harapan Indah in Lauwону Village is inadequate in management, facilities and infrastructures, and the most importantly the educators. This program existence and sustainability need to be organized and developed through the Community Development Study.

In addition to the problems discussed previously, community empowerment has been a goal in applying KBU program. Community empowerment can be interpreted straightforwardly as a process that builds people or society through developing community capabilities, changing community behavior, and organizing communities. Therefore, there are three main objectives in community empowerment: developing community capacity, changing people's behavior, and organizing the community, which will be discussed in this study

II. METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach with case study methods and triangulation analysis techniques. The research on the implementation of KBU program in

Gorontalo Regency known as KBU in PKBM Harapan Indah in Lauwunu village.

Data obtained conceptually is developed by empowerment system analysis which includes the aspects of input, processes, results, and impacts and the factors that influence the success. Each aspect is developed more specifically into research question. Validation is made by group discussions of experts who are acknowledged to be able to describe comprehensively the profile of organizing Business Learning Groups and profiles of community empowerment.

The profile of organizing and empowering KBU, especially regarding the strength, weakness, opportunity, result and impact and the recommended model are reviewed based on theoretical analysis and empirical data. The technique of collecting data is focused through observation, interview, and document review.

Observation is systematic observation and recording of the type to be studied. Observation method is used to obtain more complete and detailed information data. The author actively participates and observe the progress of the implementation of KBU program: to obtain information related to the location and condition of learning activity in KBU program, to monitor interaction between educators and students and/or interaction between each student in learning process, to evaluate both educators and students' activity in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of learning process during the whole program. Data obtained through this observation is then formed into a paper.

To obtain a more detailed data and information, observation is carried out by active participation particularly when the students and educators are gathering outside or during the learning process, where the author does not change the situation and condition of the educators and the students' activities. Data is shaped into the location and condition of research, vision and mission, organizational structure, condition of management, teaching staffs, and students, funding, forms of program skills, program implementation activities, activities to strengthen business independence of students, as well as supporting factors and obstacles to the development of entrepreneurship for students.

Furthermore, for interviews, the form of interviews in qualitative research is interviewing respondents using interview guidelines; making notes about the points to be asked in accordance with the objectives of the study with open, non-rigid, flexible and informal questions so that the direction of the interview focuses on the role of the educator in the development of students' entrepreneurship. This method of interview is to provide opportunities for respondents to always freely express their opinions or answer questions raised by author. Although the above has been mentioned that in this study using planned interviews but, in its implementation, remains flexible, open, relaxed, and full of family. This is intended so that the respondent really can express things that are known, experienced without any sense of coercion from the author. Interviews were conducted intensively.

The last technique of data collection with documentation is how to collect data by studying archives or documents, namely each written material both internally and externally related to the problems that will be

discussed in this study. From this document a study of its contents is carried out so that understanding through business is obtained to obtain the message characteristics (Moleong, 2011). The documentation method is an assistive method in an effort to obtain data. Certain events or events that can be used or used to explain the conditions documented by the author, in this case the author uses the previous documentation, for example in the form of photos of activities, activity records and various information that can be used as supporting research results. The function of this method is to obtain written data which includes: institutional identity, programs in PKBM institutions, infrastructure, funding source data, preparation, implementation and evaluation of business learning group programs and educator activities in facilitating students. In addition to knowing the agendas that are often carried out such as monthly meetings and evaluations.

Data analysis is a process of structuring and compiling transcript work of interviews, kite notes, and other data sources that have been collected in order to understand it and to be displayed or presented to others the process begins with a verbal transcript of each interview recorded through oral forms.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A model is developed to obtain a proper result of KBU based on National Regulation about National Education System Standard, which focused on active KBU in PKBM Harapan Indah in Lauwunu Village, Tilango, Gorontalo Regency. The model developed following an approach system of Output-Input-Process. This approach principally follows management stages including input, process, output, and outcome. This approach identifies the problem of KBU thus creates the solution.

The students of the KBU obviously have varied backgrounds. Their educational background is classified into elementary-primary-secondary school students including the uneducated (those who have never been in formal school) and the dropped out (those who didn't finish their level of education). It concludes a strategy of different approach for each education level. Moreover, The students' social economy background is varied from jobless to the employment with types of profession such as merchant, farmer, even civil servant and army, which defines their time flexibility. Therefore, to obtain an optimal result, the author separates the students into cluster. The students' appreciation of the program is excellent, which motivates them to participate in the program. It is concluded from the students' willingness to gradually develop their skill in creating sellable thing, in addition to their willingness to get a new livelihood income.

The qualification of technical interviewees is based on their educational background from at least secondary school level, aged from 30 to 50 years old. Some of them are even passed the bachelor degree. The program of this research is designed to target economy productivity, with 80% of the whole program is practical, compared to the 20% of theoretical lesson. It concludes a strategy of different approach for each education level. The duration of activity is 90 minutes.

The method used in learning activity is a combination of group and individual learning method, classified based

on the students' clustered group. Group learning method is effectively focused on interaction of the students to share information and knowledge among themselves, problem-solving discussion based on each other experiences, and facilitated with technical interviewee. Individual learning method is to deepen students' personal skill, and only given when the group learning method is not feasible.

The assessment of students is specified to the process and result of creation in a form of observational evaluation and product test. The assessment on process is done in every stage of learning process of the program in each clustered group: learning preparation, process, and post production of the creation.

The empowerment of community in to optimize KBU program implementation refers to three aspects: (1) to upgrade the community skill, (2) to improve the community behavior, and (3) to form an organized society. Community empowerment is presented due to the low social-economy of a community, affecting their low productivity. Strategy of the empowerment is by upgrading community skill. There are so many skills that improvable to create a better society, reliant to the type and condition of the society. Entrepreneurship skill is just one of the developable skills, feasible to be applied in Lauwou Village through KBU program in PKBM Harapan Indah. Little or much "upgrade" is additionally necessary to mend the blackness of the existence program. The upgrading community skill is done in both cognitive competence and creativity. Cognitive skill development targets the students' logic and understanding the substance of problem, built by education and training, technical guiding, and Focus Discussion Group.

Hereinafter, as human is built with strength and weakness, an improvement is done to develop the "strength" (in this context the "skill") and to lessen the weakness (one of it is due to the human behavior). Theoretically as some weakness is communal (influences or influenced by the tradition of community), the improvement is summarized by governmental program or even NGO program of empowerment. Socialization as well providing medias such as motivation books and documentary films helps to build awareness. Yet since personal behavior is arduous to change, patience as the core of non-formal education is the most feasible solution. Gradual education and building awareness will eventually result the expectation.

Hereinafter, an organized society is described as a form of productive society which they are involved in decision-making of activity planning, execution, protection, and preservation. This gives them chance to learn more. A Guide may be needed in the first parts of activity: giving guidance and explanation even demonstration. As the activity continues, a Guide gives the students chances to explore by themselves and gradually

uninvolved him/herself. This forms students' independency.

IV. CONCLUSION

A Business Learning Group (KBU) program of Community Learning Center (PKBM) named Harapan Indah in Lauwou Village, Tilango, Gorontalo Regency has been held improperly as it doesn't meet the expectation of National Regulation on Educational System Standard. Problems and obstacles are discussed in this paper, to find an effective solution.

As KBU program targets community productivity, community empowerment is "brought up" to overcome common social issues such as poverty and unemployment. The community empowerment specifies into three aspects: to upgrade the community skill, (ii) to improve the community behavior, and (iii) to form an organized society, and expectedly to be reached through KBU program implementation.

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