

The Meaning of Economic Empowerment Activities in Earthquake-Affected Village

Lidia Djuhardi¹, Estu Mahanani², Essy Malays³, Syarifuddin S.Gassing⁴, Sri Ekowati⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Universitas Persada Indonesia Y. A. I. Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: lidia.djuhardi@upi-yai.ac.id

Abstract

The earthquake disaster in Cianjur regency, West Java, Indonesia, measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale on November 21, 2022, caused massive damage. Therefore, the Community Self-Reliance Activity (CSRA) of the University of Persada Indonesia YAI is conducting economic empowerment activities as a strategy to recover the condition of rural communities affected by the earthquake. This research aims to describe how village communities interpret the activities conducted by the Community Self-Reliance Activity (CSRA) of the University of Persada Indonesia YAI to strengthen village communities affected by the earthquake disaster. This research uses the paradigm of interpretive phenomenology with a qualitative descriptive approach. The result of this study is that informants indicated positive behaviors in the course of activities. Informants interpreted economic empowerment as activities that benefit, educate, entertain, and motivate village communities affected by the earthquake to wake up from the downturn.

Keywords: Meaning, Economic Empowerment, Earthquake Affected Village.

A. INTRODUCTION

A problem that our country, Indonesia, has been facing more frequently lately is natural disasters. Historical facts also show that the high death toll and damage to physical infrastructure and facilities caused by disasters in Indonesia in the last thirty years (Irsyam et al., 2010). Natural disasters of any kind will only leave the impact of destruction, not only buildings, loss of life, injuries and others, which certainly leads to misery for the people who experience it. Various destruction, losses, sadness and poverty certainly require recovery that is not easy, especially for disaster victims. The victims must struggle to reorganize their lives that have been destroyed. It is certainly not an easy thing, especially to return to normal life as before the disaster.

One of the areas hit by a disaster whose devastating impact was quite precarious, was the Cianjur earthquake in November 2022. The earthquake disaster precisely occurred on Monday [21/11], at 13.21 WIB with a magnitude of 5.6 shook the Cianjur district with quite severe casualties and damage. The large number of deaths, losses, and damage to buildings shows that the impact of the earthquake requires serious recovery and handling from the government and related stakeholders.

The main problem faced by victims of post-earthquake disasters is how to rebuild their economy, how to rebuild their lives, and how to rebuild their lives, while their property has been destroyed. These problems are also the reason for us UPI YAI lecturers to carry out social activities in the form of community service (PKM) and the

Community Self-Reliance Activity (CSRA) of the University of Persada Indonesia YAI, especially empowering the economy of the Nagrak village community, the most affected village when looking at the number of victims. One sub-district affected by the earthquake with the majority of both victims and the largest number of families is in Nagrak Village (Budilaksono et al., 2022).

In order to empower the economy of the Nagrak village community, we conducted various trainings, such as counseling on the digital economy and helping community businesses by creating local products as their economic assets. In addition, various games and entertainment interspersed the counseling and training activities. The atmosphere was quite stirring, from emotion to fun. The problem is that we still receive complaints, stories of experiences during the earthquake, and certainly the sadness that is still very visible behind the faces of these affected victims, even though they occasionally smile when enjoying the event. This made us need to research more about their feelings, and how much the counseling and training was able to encourage them to bounce back from adversity.

On the sidelines of the event, until the event was over, until when we came back to conduct counseling and training activities, we continued to approach the community who participated in the training. We continue to engage with the communities that participated in the trainings and extension services, and ask them about their experiences during the various trainings and economic extension services, as an evaluation and input for us and for the government. The aim is to find out how important and useful extension and training are to them and how they interpret.

B. METHOD

The research approach used is descriptive qualitative, which is one type of method to describe, explore and understand the meaning that a number of individuals or groups of people ascribe to social or humanitarian problems, while the method is phenomenology (Creswell, 2013). Where according to Creswell again that the number of subjects to be studied is not a significant problem. Research can focus on several subjects, which can be 3 to 10 subjects. The data collected from interviews should be analyzed thematically (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The type of interview adopted for this study was a semi-structured interview, which took into account data-guided through theories behind research questions as well as the informant's personal experiences (Galletta & Cross, 2013). In this study, the informants were those who were victims (affected by the earthquake), especially those who participated in the economic empowerment program. The informants were selected based on the economic problems that were most affected after the earthquake. They are two mothers and two fathers, all of whom before the earthquake were entrepreneurs, such as trading, photocopy shops, porridge sellers and sellers of household goods. Then approached them by interviewing. According to Braun & Clarke (2013), three to six interviews is deemed sufficient to conduct a phenomenological study aiming to explore the subjects' experience, understandings, and perceptions. In accordance with

the study of experience and meaning, the theory used is the phenomenological theory of Alfred Schutz.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questions and interviews, as well as other supporting data in the field, researchers analyzed the data and found themes of experience and meaning. The four informants generally had the same answers and understanding, but of course there were some differences, given that the conditions of loss experienced by each informant were not exactly the same. However, during the interviews, the informants showed positive behavior in answering the researcher's questions. However, to maintain the privacy of the informants, the researchers agreed to disguise the names by only giving initials.

Earthquake-Affected Communities' Experiences

Experience is understood as something that has been experienced, lived or felt, either long ago or recently (Suparwati, 2012). In this case, when informants were asked about their experiences of being a victim and participating in training, they tended to start the story from when they experienced the earthquake disaster, so researchers can conclude that they find it difficult to let go of the memories of the earthquake, which for them was an unforgettable experience. However, when entering the story about the present, where now many visitors who entertain them and provide them with training, including the one conducted by the researcher, they smile and say they are happy, which for them is also unforgettable. And this was answered similarly by the four informants, Mr. M; Mr. E, Ms. Y and Ms. T, namely, An unforgettable experience, as Mr. E said, "... Although yesterday we had a bad experience, now we have a pleasant experience, because we were given training that benefits us, anyway, an unforgettable experience".

The results of the interview with Mr. E seemed to represent the other three informants, because what Mr. E said included what the other informants said, they said what had been experienced and what was being experienced was an unforgettable experience. In the phenomenological method, experience is the peculiarity of mandatory questions. Alfred Schutz, Sartre and de Beauviou agree that the Phenomenological tradition is used to analyze everyday life experiences, both subjectively and intersubjectively. An unforgettable shared experience for the four informants is an intersubjective experience.

The Meaning of Community Economic Empowermen

Based on the experiences that the informants felt and expressed, when asked about the meaning of economic empowerment carried out by researchers and friends from UPI Yai University, the informants enthusiastically seemed to agree that the meaning of the economic empowerment they participated in was interpreted as useful, educational, entertaining and motivating them to get back on their feet, as expressed by Mrs. T, the oldest informant who was most excited about the event, "...

we interpret this training event as a very useful event, said Mrs. T, added by Mr. M, "Certainly educates those of us who are still clueless ...".

Meanwhile, Mr. E revealed that empowerment events that are full of education are certainly very motivating "... as well as entertaining, understandably we have experienced a terrible incident," said Mrs. Y.

According to Schutz, meaning has two types, namely subjective meaning and objective meaning. Subjective meaning is a person's construction in defining the components of reality that are meaningful to him. Meanwhile, objective meaning is a set of meanings that exist in life within the framework of an overall culture that is mutually understood (Haryanto, 2012).

D. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the research, it can be concluded that the downturn of the Nagrak village community, Cianjur after being hit by the earthquake disaster, can be rebuilt if we care, and the empowerment carried out by Upi Yai university lecturers, in fact, is considered an unforgettable experience. Even the empowerment event carried out by the community is interpreted as a benefit, educational, entertaining and certainly motivating event.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Although we realize that the burden of grief of the victims affected by the Cianjur earthquake may not be immediately eliminated by various assistance, economic empowerment, training, counseling, but at least we hope that everything that is done can ease their burden. We are also very grateful for being well received by the people of Cianjur who, despite being affected by the earthquake, are still able to be friendly and eager to help organize empowerment events, including helping with research, especially the people of Nagrak village as informants who are so appreciative by always readily helping to provide time for interviews and discussions.

REFERENCES

- Irsyam, M., Sengara, W., Aldimar, F., Widiyantoro, S., Triyoso, W., Natawidjaja, D. H., ... & Ridwan, M. (2010). Summary of Study: Development of Seismic Hazard Maps of Indonesia for Revision of Hazard Map in SNI 03-1726-2002. *Bandung: Technical Committee on Building Construction Material and civil Engineering, Ministry of Public Works of Republic of Indonesia.*
- Budilaksono, S., Kabul, I. E. R., & Djuhardi, L. (2022). *Kegiatan Membangun Kemandirian Masyarakat Pasca Gempa Cianjur*. Perkumpulan Rumah Cemerlang Indonesia.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Sage.
- Galletta, A. & Cross, W. E. (2013). *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond*. NYU Press.

- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. SAGE.
- Saparwati, M. (2012). *Studi Fenomenologi: Pengalaman Kepala Ruang dalam Mengelola Ruang Rawat di RSUD Ambarawa (Tesis Magister Ilmu Keperawatan Universitas Indonesia)*.
- Haryanto. (2012). *Spektrum Teori Sosial: Dari Klasik Hingga Post Modern*. Yogyakarta: Ar_Ruzz Media.