

Good Practices for Strengthening the Social Capital of Village Communities by House Renovation Activities

*Sutejo K. Widodo**, and *Yurika Ayu Nestapa*

Department of History Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University

Abstract. The study examines how to strengthen the social capital among the village communities with the study case in Genuksari, South Semarang. It aims to reconstruct the community service activities by the Community Service Team of Faculty of Letters, Diponegoro University, which took place in 1989, 30 years ago. The method used was a historical-contemplative method, based on the community service report document. It was the research work in the form of writing related to the topic, supplemented by in-depth interviews with the interviewees. The results of good practices are in the form of a theoretical framework for the social capital utilization from the slum village community to become a community that is empowered and dignified on its own ability, able to change from a village that is originally hopelessly marked by drinking, gambling into a community which is able to build a residence through a social gathering system and mutual work and has successfully rehabilitated 22 housing units.

Keywords: Social Capital; Village; House Renovation Social Gathering.

1 Introduction

The results of good community empowerment by Community Service Team of Faculty of Letters, Diponegoro University approximately 30 years ago become the background in this study. It is a hidden strength of the village social community in the form of the value of local wisdom, social capital of a sense of togetherness, caring, and mutual cooperation. Most of the residents are migrants who inhabit the areas with extremely steep slopes. In that location, landslide that hit the house beneath had been occurred for several times. The hidden power has been awakened then it rose as a power to improve from within independently. Although there was only small financial assistance from the Community Service Team, it still could be used as a trigger and booster to improve the residential neighborhood together. The specific objective is to reconstruct the practice both the implementation of village community social capital into endurance and independence.

* Corresponding author: sutejokw@lecturer.undip.ac.id

This study has urgency on the local wisdom and social capital that have led to the village community independence, which fosters self-esteem and dignity in improving their environment without relying on other parties.

This study also supports the outcomes in the form of practice (except as documentation of retelling or historiography results). A wider publication can be used as a spread of valuable lessons in developing social capital of a community. This study is in line with the implementation of mental revolution, which is also stated in the stanza of Indonesia Raya song, "Build its soul, build its body..." Even building the soul is the initial essence of development as an important part that cannot be ignored.

The problem of this study is the science development effort in the form of a community social capital development model, which builds from below and within, and what is built is the human beings, and as described by Corten [1] regarding people center development, physical development is a means of achieving results. Even though the activities had taken place 30 years ago, the shared spirit and empowerment continues to develop so that this village has independently developed as a rainbow village, whose ideas, work, costs, and variety are determined by the community as Schumacher [2] said that small is beautiful.

2 Method

The study used historical research method, based on the document research reports, oral sources of research results, and contemplative. The document sources were obtained from the community service report by the Community Service Team at the Faculty of Letters, Diponegoro University, 1989. The source of the documentation then was uploaded to the internet. The report contained background, stage, discussion, and activity. The second documentation was Yurike thesis (2017), which was the result of historical research with oral sources obtained through in-depth interviews. Based on the results of the study, a contemplative historical approach was also used by recalling the events that lasted for eight years when the writers lived in this location by carrying out their joint activities. The togetherness was left more or less 26 years ago.

3 Discussion

To break the drinking habit could not be done only through words. Persuasive action in the form of lectures by several people to change the bad habits of the Genuksari community had been done a lot, but it did not bring results. The invitation to do prayer to the mosque and various advice to reduce the drunk behavior were ignored. It was very difficult to break the habits of a lifetime [3].

In the 1980s, the economic condition of Genuksari community, especially RT 04 RW 08 was still difficult; there were many uninhabitable bamboo houses, known as gedhek. Due to that condition, ideas to repair the houses emerged. The idea to renovate the urban village settlements was realized through mutual work with house renovation social gathering. With this program, the houses became habitable, the community has a comfortable place to rest, and the household activities were organized better. It aimed to provide a more conducive and organized social condition. The Community Service Team of Faculty of Letters, Diponegoro University had a program to reduce drinking habits in the community (Yurike, 2017). The team tried to change the mindset of Genuksari communities through lectures, so that they would not spend their money only for buying alcohol. It was better if their money was spent for daily needs or to think about life in the future. Therefore, the community could change their thinking not to take deviant actions that were detrimental to themselves. The idea of

house renovation social gathering got positive response from the Genuksari RT 04 RW 08 communities.

This activity was held alternately, the most uninhabitable house came first to get the renovation. As a result, the number of people who had drinking habit decreased. This occurred because the house owners as the participants felt responsible to all the social gathering participants. For that reason, they were obliged to pay the social gathering dues. Like a regular social gathering in general, the person who gets a turn receives a certain amount of money collected from all members' deposits. On the house renovation social gathering in the village of Genuksari RT 04 RW 08, there was no routine turn to hold the social gathering. This social gathering was made as flexible as possible, considering that the participants were from the lower economic class. To ease the burden, the amount of dues were agreed and paid, and when enough money was collected then it was used to buy building materials. Although the price of building materials at that time was still relatively cheap, the amount of money was not able to finish the renovation of all the house parts so that only certain parts were built. If someone wanted the complete a house renovation, automatically the organizers would choose to postpone the construction turn while collecting the money to build another part of their house. Moreover, there were certain difficulties specifically in the money collection process. Both the money in the social gathering contribution and the personal money would be used to add the development costs. The uncertain economic life of the community made the money collection took a long time, in this context, there were also parties who gave loan in the form of money. Mr. Tejo and Mr. Kusnun Sunarto did not want the community to lose the spirit to participate in this house renovation social gathering (Yurike, 2017). Various contributions had been made, like Mr. Tejo who came up with the social gathering idea, and Kusnun Sunarto who provided help in its management. These aimed to keep the spirit of the community. In addition, it was held so that the community had priority in the realization of house renovation.

The house renovation social gathering was the main priority among the participants. The community started to understand their condition since they thought that it was better if they could live in a better place particularly when there was a program that facilitated this needs. In the end, they distributed half of their income to this program rather than spent it for gambling, drinking or other less useful things. The need for the dues raised the community spirit to work harder than before. The success of this program had encouraged the change in the community orientation.

As a neighbor who lived side by side in a residential area and had social contact with each other, the community kept greeting one another, working together, helping each other, even sometimes they had a sense of shared fate and continuity. Humans are basically individual as well as social organisms, therefore humans have distinctive characteristics that distinguish themselves from others and always live in groups with others. It means that humans have abilities, needs, and habits, to communicate and interact with other humans. Group life of humans is motivated by the limited ability to fulfill their life needs, while human needs are always changing and developing. Therefore, the pattern of human group life is dynamic. Driven by the needs that cannot be fulfilled alone and assisted by the mind that they have, humans form a social group. By creating social groups, it will provide many benefits from the cooperation in groups [4]. The interests of the group then establishes the relationship of one group with other group that help each other or work together. Gotong-royong (community work) comes from Javanese word, where the word "gotong" can be described as to lift or raise. While the word "royong" can be described as together, so the word "gotong royong" simply means to lift things together or it is also can be interpreted as doing things together.

Through the house renovation social gathering, some changes, such as the enthusiasm of the Genuksari community in working together, was began to see. It could be seen in the

implementation of mutual work, in which how the Genuksari community carried out house renovation social gathering activities, completed the work, and enjoyed the results of the work together. When working, it was clear that the Genuksari community showed their mutual work characteristics by helping each other. This described the testimony of the Genuksari village residents, who were holding a bucket filled with cement during the construction at Sukarno's house. Most of the people who did mutual work were still in productive age. The young men helped the neighbors whose houses were under renovation at night with a reasonable reason. In general, the communities had their own work during the day. Night was the only time when they could help others and work together voluntarily while building the spirit of brotherhood. This explained the change in the behavior of the Genuksari community, where in the end they had new habits to replace the old ones that were sometimes harmful. With the cooperation, the circumstances and burdens of life which were previously difficult to bear personally had been alleviated, and with the house renovation gathering, the Genuksari community could think how the future life would be for their future generations.

Slowly, the social condition of the Genuksari community, especially RT 04 RW 08 was starting to improve and it could be seen that the Genuksari community was recovering from their dark times. Even the former heavy drunk addicts could recover with this program so that the Genuksari communities could think about their future. After the completion of this program, the inner bond of kinship of one another became very close. As a new village that was born from its downturn, the Genuksari community began to organize their lives for a better future. Over time, the Genuksari community also began to pay attention to the welfare of children as the next generation. The Genuksari children were directed to education and there was an awareness that education was very important for advancement. The parents also participated in illiteracy eradication activities, so that more parents could read and be aware of the importance of education for their children. Every night, they gathered to learn reading while their children studied at home during their curfew. The life patterns of children and adolescents in Genuksari had experienced speedy progress. The Genuksari community was directed to hold night activities in order to keep the children from wandering around which might cause them doing negative things. All children in Genuksari started to be discipline because they had to study and were prohibited to watch TV during the curfew. The parents wanted their children to study more diligently so that they could change the fate of life in the future.

The social life also experienced significant progress. It was proved when the development started to show the results as it was carried out well. Even some accompanying positive activities was carried out, such as recitation of each week on Friday night. The activity was filled with Yasinan (reciting the verse of Yasin together) and Tahlilan (reciting dhikr together especially in specific events such as birth, death, and thanksgiving to Allah). These activities aimed to get close to God and it was also used to change the old activities with useful activities. With the spiritual activities, the Genuksari community could protect themselves from useless actions. Even if in the past the community lacked social sensitivity such as ignoring the grieving neighbors, the kinship had begun to show its influence by visiting and paying contributions to the bereaved family. Through Yasinan and Tahlilan activities started after the village's condition improved, the Genuksari community also began to show their willingness to contribute to social activities. Their good will was shown when they had idea to form a village organization, which later would be used as a forum for former addicts to carry out positive activities. Finally, in 1993 Love Bond Association (PETA) was established of which the members consisted of Genuksari community, especially former alcoholics, and in its development many members joined from other villages. Their motive to join was to minimize negative activities and wanted to improve themselves. PETA activities in the end were more involved in village security and community social activities, such as organizing

mutual work activities and organizing assistance for community members who were experiencing difficulties [5].

Indonesia which is rich in culture starting from language, dance, house building style, customs and so on has been united by Unity in Diversity. Therefore, many ethnic groups with diverse cultures have united. Genuksari community also has the similar condition. It has different cultural roots because it consists of many citizens who come from various places. That is why the community needs for entertainment as well as cultural preservation, raise the ideas to shape cultural activities. In Genuksari, people watched together an event or show called Ketoprak that was held every three months. This event was used to unite the migrant cultures respectively. As a result, people could merge into one another and enjoy the entertainment together. The entertainment activities of Genuksari RT 04 RW08 communities preserved the cultures, united differences and strengthened the togetherness. (Source: private collection of Kusnun Sunarto 1993). The photos showed an activity in Genuksari to merge the community into one, which was realized by watching ketoprak together

The event was not only held once every three months, sometimes it was also held every time whenever there was a big event, such as the commemoration of Indonesian Independence Day, commemoration of the Prophet's Birthday, village head election, and so on. Through this activity, the Genuksari community could blend into one. In addition, this activity was also able to increase the community awareness to preserve the culture and establish kinship with each other. The Genuksari RT 04 RW 08 community that began to be known to uphold the values of mutual work, both in a state of joy and sorrow, was truly proven here [7].

The inner sense in kinship was so binding on one another in the social life in Genuksari. One of the mutual work activities that was still remembered by the people of Genuksari RT 04 RW 08 was when Mr. Tejo moved house in 1993, precisely after Genuksari's environmental condition had really improved, even recovering from a downturn in its dark days, Sutejo and his family moved to Ungaran. At that time, as a form of gratitude from the Genuksari communities towards Sutejo for the positive change they experienced, they happily helped Sutejo relocated the house without any complaint. From the young to the old people, all gathered to help Sutejo move to Ungaran without being asked. It was said that the new Sutejo's house was not able to accommodate them and the Tegalsari communities due to the large number of people there. From this event, it can be concluded that the family ties between the Genuksari communities are made undoubtedly.

4 Conclusion

The spirit to make the environment beautiful which is called rainbow village is also happening in RT 4 RW 8 Genuksari Tegalsari Urban Village, South Semarang Subdistrict. The characteristics of rainbow village in RT 4 RW 8 are as follows: it is their own initiative, self-financed, and carried out by the residents themselves. This spirit of togetherness is one of the results of the community service by Faculty of Letters, Diponegoro University around 30 years ago, in 1989.

The Community Service Team had successfully carried out a house renovation social gathering activity in the village by renovating as many as 22 houses, with all residents participating in helping in the form of labor. The good practice of the study on community service is the record of success that changes the bad habit of drinking by some residents to the house renovation social gathering activities. Drinking habit was caused by the inability to deal with severe life problems. Drinking as an escape, only entertained for a moment. Consequently, the houses were neglected, damaged, poorly maintained and would be in slum condition.

The support of the Community Service Team has successfully changed the unfavorable habits to the real responsibility for environmental improvement. Building the courage to carry out house renovation social gathering with responsibility and self-empowerment takes time. A success story can foster a passion for the spirit of "we can". One of the success story was when Darno's shabby house was finally able to stand properly, due to the renovation. The spirit continued with the establishment of Love Bond Association (PETA), which accommodated ex-thugs, cultural group activities, and religious study groups. In short, the support from the campus academics has laid the foundation of a burning passion to the community. In the future, this note needs to be recorded as documentation of good community service experience.

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