

Evaluation of the Community Empowerment Program of Okmakot Village

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Abstract - This research evaluates community empowerment programs conducted in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Bintang Mountains Regency from October 2024 to January 2025. Employing a qualitative approach, data was collected through surveys and interviews, with subsequent analysis performed qualitatively. The findings reveal several key points: *first*, The Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village is effectively implemented, bolstered by strong support from both the district and village governments as well as active community involvement. *Second*, Six supporting and three inhibiting factors influence the program's effectiveness. Supporting factors include self-awareness, motivation, community conditions and needs, community support, government support, and cooperation. In contrast, the inhibiting factors consist of low human resource quality, limited participation from community members, and budget allocations being diverted to activities outside the empowerment program. These findings underscore the importance of collaborative efforts and resource management in enhancing the effectiveness of community empowerment initiatives.

Keywords: Empowerment, Community Empowerment, Community, Okmakot Village, Oksibil District

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1. Introduction

Evaluation of community empowerment programs in Okmakot Village is very important to ensure that every activity carried out is truly effective and provides maximum benefits to the community. One method that can be used in this evaluation is a participatory approach, where the community is involved in the evaluation process to provide input and feedback on program implementation. In this way, the community can express their opinions and expectations of the program that has been implemented, as well as provide information on the successes and challenges faced.

In this context, it is important to identify appropriate indicators of success, such as improved access to infrastructure, increased community income, and increased community participation in economic activities. The data obtained from the evaluation can be used to formulate recommendations for future program improvement and development. In addition, the evaluation can also help in identifying constraints that may be faced during program implementation, such as lack of community participation, limited resources, or lack of coordination between stakeholders. With this information, the parties involved can take strategic steps to address existing problems and improve the effectiveness of the community empowerment program (Suparno et al, 2020; Tri Widodo, 2004; Ita et al, 2020; Faizurrahman, 2020).

Overall, the evaluation of the community empowerment program in Okmakot Village aims not only to assess the achievements of the program, but also to provide a foundation for better decision-making in the future, as well as to ensure that the resources allocated can be used optimally to improve community welfare. Systematic and participatory evaluation will create transparency and accountability, and build trust between the community and the government in implementing development programs that are implemented using funds sourced from the APBN and DAU. Although the empowerment program has been implemented, there are still many factors that become obstacles in its

implementation. Problems in the community empowerment program of Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency have not gone well because in its implementation there are several factors / obstacles. In this study, it is important to identify the factors that influence the implementation of community empowerment programs in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency. The following are some of the supporting and inhibiting factors that may be identified in this study:

Supporting Factors

- 1) Community Involvement: The level of participation and support of local communities in empowerment programs can strengthen program implementation.
- 2) Human Resources: Availability of competent and experienced educators or facilitators in community empowerment.
- 3) Government Support: The existence of government policies and programs that support community empowerment, as well as adequate budget allocations.
- 4) Access to Resources: Availability of natural and economic resources that can be utilized by the community to improve welfare.
- 5) Networks and Partnerships: Cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donor agencies, and the private sector that can provide technical and financial support.

Inhibiting Factors

- 1) Limited Access to Information: Lack of information about the program and its benefits can be a barrier to community participation.
- 2) Culture and Tradition: The existence of cultural norms and values that may conflict with the proposed empowerment program.
- 3) Limited Resources: Limited funds, facilities, and infrastructure that support program implementation.
- 4) Geographical Challenges: Remote and hard-to-reach locations may hinder access to assistance and resources.
- 5) Community Resistance: Community distrust or dissatisfaction with the program, perhaps due to past bad experiences.

By identifying these factors, the research is expected to provide a clearer picture of the challenges and opportunities in implementing community empowerment programs in Okmakot Village. This research can also provide recommendations to improve the effectiveness of future empowerment programs.

2. Research Methods

The approach used in this research is qualitative, with survey and interview methods as data collection tools. Data analysis is carried out with a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the program. The research location is Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency, between October 2024 and December 2024.

3. Results and Discussion

Factors that support and hinder community participation in development are elements that make it easier for people to get involved in an activity. These factors include expectations, self-awareness, opportunity, ability, and willingness. According to Conyers (Solihah, 2020: 35), community participation is very important because it serves as a means of gathering information about the conditions, needs, and attitudes of the local community. Without this participation, development programs and projects are at risk of failure, so communities need to be involved from the planning to evaluation stages (Antonius, 2024; Enny, 2014; Miranda et al, 2024; Mochammad & Susilo, 2023; Valentina et al, 2019; Wanda et al, 2023; Yusuf et al, 2025).

Fertman & Allensworth (2010) define need as the difference between the current "what is" and "what should be" in a more ideal situation. Furthermore, CHA (2013) in Sovia (2023:31) explains that community needs assessment is a systematic process that involves the community to identify and

analyze community health needs and assets. The aim is to prioritize needs, plan, and follow up on significant unmet community needs. According to Sovia (2023:31), some of the benefits of community needs assessment include the ability to prioritize problems based on community needs, plan programs and develop appropriate interventions, allocate resources more effectively and fairly, and improve communication and understanding between communities and decision makers.

Based on interviews with respondents, it was explained that in the process of planning community empowerment programs in Pegunungan Bintang District, including in Okmakot Village, programs can be structured and planned based on the conditions and needs of the community, so that the program is right on target and beneficial to them. Other respondents also emphasized the importance of considering the conditions, situations, problems, needs, and potential of community members as a whole in the empowerment process. This is so that a series of community empowerment activities based on local potential can be implemented effectively, productively and efficiently. Thus, the needs of the Okmakot Village community are the need for good road accessibility to facilitate their access to the Regency government center. Furthermore, the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of the Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency can be seen in the table below:

Tabel 1. Supporting Factors

No.	Supporting Factors	Description
1	Self-awareness	There is self-awareness from the community to have road access to and from Okmakot village.
2	Motivation	There is motivation from the community in the form of a desire to make access roads to and from Okmakot Village.
3	Community conditions and needs	Empowerment is tailored to the conditions and needs of the community with the suitability between the conditions and needs of the community. The community empowerment program in the form of labor-intensive can be easily achieved because there is a basis for overcoming the problems faced by the Okmakot village community.
4	Community support	There is full support from the community in the form of active participation in the implementation of the community empowerment program in the form of labor-intensive road access from and to Okmakot village.
5	Government Support	There is support from the government of Okmakot Village and the government of Pegunungan Bintang Regency through relevant agencies in the form of financial assistance in fully supporting the implementation of the Community Empowerment Program of Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency.
6	Cooperation	There is cooperation between the village government, district government and the community in the successful implementation of the Okmakot village community empowerment program.
No.	Inhibiting Factors	Description
1.	Human Resources (HR)	The low quality of human resources, especially in the village government structure, is an obstacle in the implementation of village government programs such as in terms of decision-making, or in implementing policies from the district government.

2.	Participation	The busyness and absence of group members in participation has hampered the success of the empowerment program.
3	Budget/Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget/fund limitations - Utilization of funds that are not in accordance with their designation.

a. Supporting Factors

Supporting factors for community empowerment are factors that support the success of community empowerment programs. These factors include Motivation, Government support, Community conditions and needs, Cooperation, Facilities, Maintenance, Communication, Resources, Disposition, Bureaucratic structure. Community empowerment is a process to provide resources, opportunities, knowledge, and skills to the community. The goal is for the community to participate in determining its own future and influencing people's lives.

When viewed in the table above, it is known that there are 6 supporting factors in the implementation of the Community Empowerment Program of Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency, which consists of 4 internal supporting factors including self-awareness, motivation, conditions and community needs and community support. While 2 external supporting factors are government support and cooperation. In relation to self-awareness and motivation from the community to have road access and in the form of a desire to make road access from and to Okmakot Village are both things that can support the successful implementation of the Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency. Regarding self-awareness, Ruzika (2021: 159-160) argues that self-awareness is a cognitive ability or knowledge of individuals in understanding themselves related to feelings (affect), behavior (behavior) and thinking (cognition). Thus, self-awareness in the Okmakot village community is an ability within themselves in their perspective, thoughts, and how to adapt to their environment so that with their self-awareness they are actively involved in supporting the implementation of the Community Empowerment Program of Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency. Furthermore, for motivation, according to Ngali (2006) cited by Nismara, Agung and Widiyanto (2024: 33) Motivation is an encouragement that comes from an individual to carry out activities in order to achieve goals. Motivation is very necessary because it can channel, cause, increase enthusiasm, and support individual behavior to be able to carry out activities enthusiastically so as to achieve the expected goals to the maximum. Thus, the people of Okmakot Village have the motivation to be actively involved in achieving their desire to get good road access to and from Okmakot Village to facilitate their activities.

Furthermore, the conditions and needs of the community are also a supporting factor in the successful implementation of the Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency, therefore the conditions and needs of the community need to be considered in community empowerment. This is done so that community empowerment can run effectively, productively, and efficiently. According to Sujarwo (2023: 3) several things that need to be considered in community empowerment include: Community conditions which include the situation, problems, and potential of the community; Community needs include basic needs, education, health, and the environment; Community readiness to change mindset and work together and Community potential that can be developed, both individually and in groups (Suharsimi, 2016; Ayu et al, 2023; Simon et al, 2022).

As previously explained that the conditions and needs of the Okmakot Village community are supporting factors in the successful implementation of the Community Empowerment Program, related to this according to Witkin & Altschuld (1995) in Fertman & Allensworth, (2010) Community needs assessment is an important step in developing effective programs and interventions in the health sector. By understanding the difference between current conditions and ideal conditions, this assessment can

help identify the most pressing problems faced by the community. The process involves the active participation of the community, allowing them to contribute to the identification of needs and assets. This not only provides a richer perspective on the issues at hand, but also increases community ownership of the program.

The benefits of community needs assessment mentioned by Sovia (2023:31) are diverse. By prioritizing problems based on identified needs, decision-makers can focus on the most significant issues. In addition, program planning based on community needs analysis ensures that interventions are relevant and in line with community expectations. More effective and equitable resource allocation is also one of the positive outcomes of the assessment, as resources can be directed to areas of greatest need. In addition, the needs assessment also plays a role in improving communication and understanding between the community and the authorities, resulting in a better and more collaborative relationship in the effort to improve the overall health of the community. Thus, the community needs assessment not only serves as a tool to identify problems, but also as a bridge to build better cooperation between the community and decision makers in an effort to achieve more ideal conditions.

Based on the results of interviews with respondents, it is explained that in the planning process, the preparation of community empowerment programs in Pegunungan Bintang district, including in Okmakot village, can be arranged and planned based on the conditions and needs of the community so that the program is right on target and useful for them. The same thing was explained by other respondents that in the process of community empowerment, it is important to conduct an in-depth analysis of various aspects that affect the condition of the community. The following are important things that need to be considered in community empowerment programs, among others:

1. Social and Economic Conditions: Understanding the social and economic background of the community will help in designing programs that are relevant and suitable to their needs.
2. Environmental Situation: Paying attention to physical environmental factors, such as natural resources, infrastructure, and accessibility, is crucial in determining the potential that can be developed.
3. Problems Faced: Identify the main problems faced by the community, such as poverty, education, health, and social injustice, so that the solutions offered can be holistic.
4. Needs and Aspirations: Involving the community in determining their own needs and aspirations will increase their sense of belonging and active participation in the empowerment program.
5. Local Potential: Identifying and utilizing local potential, such as skills, traditions, and natural resources, can be a strong foundation for sustainable development.
6. Stakeholder Involvement: Encourage the participation of various parties, including government, non-government organizations, and the private sector, to create synergistic collaboration.
7. Monitoring and Evaluation: It is important to conduct regular monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the implemented program and make improvements if needed.

With a comprehensive and participatory approach, community empowerment activities based on local potential are expected to achieve the desired goals and have a sustainable positive impact on the community. Thus the needs of the Okmakot village community are the need for good road accessibility to facilitate them in accessing the district government center, access to health service centers and access to economic centers (markets). The next supporting factor is community support, community support, especially the Okmakot village community in the community empowerment program is important to ensure the program runs smoothly and provides maximum benefits for them.

Furthermore, the external factors supporting the implementation of the Community Empowerment Program of Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency are Government Support and Cooperation. The government of Pegunungan Bintang Regency can support community empowerment programs in various ways, such as providing budgets, providing social assistance and improving facilities and infrastructure. Okmakot Village, Oksibil District is one of the villages in the district of Pegunungan Bintang Regency that received a budget/funding for the National Program for Community Empowerment. Furthermore, the community empowerment program is

continued until now with the source of funds coming from the Village Fund (DD) from the APBN and 10% of the Village Allocation Fund (ADD) from the district DAU of Rp. 4,468,692,000.

Government support in community empowerment is regulated in laws, such as the Village Law and Law No. 23 of 2014, the Government has an important role in community empowerment, including: making policies and regulations to balance the implementation of development, launching programs to increase the financial independence of the community, facilitating the community to jointly implement development, fostering community organizations.

The statement above emphasizes the importance of effective communication between the government and the community. In this context, the government is expected to perform its duties with transparency and accountability, and involve the community in the decision-making process. This can be done through various means, such as discussion forums, public consultations, or through digital platforms. The importance of encouraging community initiatives, movements and participation is also key to creating policies that are more responsive and in line with community needs. Community involvement not only strengthens democracy, but can also increase people's sense of ownership and responsibility for development. In addition, by basing every action on applicable laws and regulations, the government maintains legitimacy and fairness in every policy taken. It also serves as a reminder that all government actions must be in accordance with agreed laws, thus minimizing the potential for abuse of power. Overall, a good relationship between government and society, based on open and participatory communication, as well as compliance with the law, is an important foundation for creating a prosperous and equitable society.

In the context of Law No. 23/2014 on Local Government, community empowerment is one of the main focuses for local governments and their apparatus. As stipulated in Article 1 point 5, government affairs that fall under regional authority do not only cover administrative aspects, but also include efforts to protect, serve, empower, and improve the welfare of the community. Hutabalian (2023:80) emphasizes the importance of the local government's role in empowering the community. This suggests that local governments must be active in identifying and exploring the potential that exists in the community to improve their welfare. One way this can be done is through labor-intensive programs, such as the construction of village access roads. Such programs not only serve to improve infrastructure, but also provide opportunities for communities to be directly involved in the development process, so that they feel ownership and responsibility for the results achieved. The regional autonomy policy stipulated in this law gives more authority to local governments to manage their own affairs according to the needs and potential of their respective regions. This requires local governments to be more responsive to community needs and innovate in designing relevant and effective programs. Thus, community empowerment must be an integral part of every policy and program implemented by the local government, so that it is expected to create synergy between the government and the community in an effort to accelerate regional development. Overall, a community empowerment-oriented approach will bring positive impacts not only for individuals, but also for broader social and economic development in the area (Arif & Mujianto, 2019).

b. Inhibiting Factors

The inhibiting factors in the process of implementing the Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency, include the following:

1. Inhibitors are defined as factors, circumstances, or causes that can hinder or block a process. In this context, inhibitors refer to things that can hinder the implementation of community empowerment programs.
2. Barriers in Community Empowerment: Obstacles can be a variety of factors that cause hindrance to the progress or achievement of the goals of the community empowerment program in Okmakot Village.
3. Quality of Human Resources (HR): The quality of human resources is very important in

determining the success of a program. Qualified human resources, which include knowledge, skills, and abilities, will be able to provide better professional services.

4. Effect of HR Quality on Productivity: According to Lonni and Tahir, good HR quality will have a positive impact on productivity. The better the quality of human capital, the higher the productivity and rate of economic growth that can be achieved.
5. Human Capital Development and Economic Growth: This text emphasizes the importance of human capital development in achieving adequate economic growth. Without proper development of human capital, economic growth will not be optimal.

The low quality of human resources, especially in the Okmakot village government structure, is also an obstacle in the implementation of village government programs such as in terms of decision-making, or in implementing policies from the Pegunungan Bintang district government, as revealed by the following informant:

"Based on our experience and observations so far on the leadership of the Okmakot village government, it is known that they are rigid in making decisions related to the preparation and implementation of village programs, this is because their level of education is only high school graduates, where the level of education affects decision making, including in terms of utilizing village financial information".

Regarding the quality of human resources, Abidin (2019) and Sedarmayanti, (2009) in Lutfi and Lailia (2024: 360) state that the quality of human resources is a skill and ability that is used as a benchmark for success in achieving the goals set using tools or power in the form of strength or power that comes from humans (menpower). Indicators that can be used in measuring human resources are physical ability, intellectual quality, and mental quality. Another inhibiting factor is participation, Participation in the community empowerment process is the involvement of the community in various stages of development. Community participation can be done in various forms, such as the participation of labor, money, thoughts, and skills. In relation to the community empowerment program carried out in Okmakot village, the participation here is participation in the form of energy. It has been explained earlier that the successful implementation of the Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency is the active participation of the community in the process of implementing road access work from and to the village. However, not all community members actively participate for various reasons, such as busyness, as expressed by the following respondent:

"The implementation of the community empowerment program in Okmakot Village, especially related to labor-intensive projects for road access. Here are some important points that can be taken from the text:

Resident Participation: *Although not all residents are involved in the program, community participation can be said to be quite good. Some residents had certain reasons, such as being busy, that prevented them from participating.*

Gotong Royong: *There is a spirit of gotong royong in the implementation of this activity, where residents contribute both individually and in groups. This shows solidarity and cooperation among the community.*

Positive Impact: *The implementation of this labor-intensive program is expected to improve road access in Okmakot Village, which in turn can have a positive impact on the lives of local people.*

Participation Challenges: *The reasons that inhibit community participation are challenges in the implementation of this program, which need to be overcome so that community development can be more equitable",*

Regarding the importance of community participation in empowerment programs and village development planning. Muhammad (2022) emphasizes that an effective program must be participatory, planned, implemented, and well evaluated by the community. This shows that the success of empowerment programs depends not only on good planning, but also on the active involvement of the community in every stage of the process. On the other hand, Ismanudin (2021) identifies that although community participation in the use of village funds has gone quite well, there is still a lack of what is referred to as "pseudo-participation." This indicates that many villagers may have participated in the use of village funds. This indicates that many villagers may be nominally involved, but do not actually participate actively or have a significant influence on the decisions taken. Therefore, there is an urgent need to increase real participation, where communities are not only invited to provide input but also empowered to take responsibility in program planning and implementation.

Through this effort, it is expected that the awareness and responsibility of community members can increase, which in turn will strengthen the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating village development programs. With more active participation, the community will be more involved in the use of the village fund budget, which is important to ensure that the funds are used in the most effective way and in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the local community. In addition, the budget or funding factor is often a major obstacle in the implementation of various community empowerment programs, including in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency. This can affect various aspects, from planning, implementation, to program evaluation.

Respondents may say that limited funds cause the planned program to not be implemented optimally, or even have to be canceled. In addition, the lack of budget can also result in low community participation, as they may feel that the program will not run well without adequate financial support. In this context, it is important to find alternative solutions, such as raising funds from other sources, collaborating with the private sector, or utilizing local potential in the community. With a creative and collaborative approach, it is expected that various community empowerment programs can continue to run despite budget limitations as expressed by respondents as follows:

The community empowerment program in Okmakot Village is proposed to be financed through the Village Fund (DD) sourced from the APBN, with a significant amount of Rp. 1,117,173,000, - for the initial program. Over a three-year period (2020-2022), the total indicative ceiling for Okmakot Village is IDR 4,468,692,000, which is planned to support various community empowerment programs. Although funds have been approved and available, program implementation has not gone well. One of the problems faced is the use of some of the funds for other activities, which causes a negative impact on the success of community empowerment programs. Non-optimality in the implementation and management of funds can hinder the original objectives of the empowerment program, so the community in Okmakot Village may not get the benefits they should from this program.

From this situation, it can be seen the importance of proper supervision and fund management to ensure that community empowerment programs can be implemented properly and provide maximum benefits to the community.

The same thing was expressed by another informant as follows:

"The unsuccessful implementation of community empowerment programs in Okmakot village is caused by the use of funds that are not in accordance with their designation. For

example, there is a change in the function of funds from empowerment program activities to overcome the problem of stunting due to Covid C-19, or to finance traditional parties, payments / customary fines, or to pay salaries for village officials, causing the community empowerment program in the form of labor-intensive construction of village road access to be unsuccessfully completed. However, the program can be resubmitted for funding in the next Village Fund budget year".

In the context of Village Fund management, as stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, PDT and Transmigration, it is important to ensure that the allocated funds can be optimally utilized to improve the quality of life of the community. The community empowerment program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency, although faced with several obstacles, shows that community participation is key in the successful implementation of the program.

Enthusiastic community participation, whether through the contribution of labor, thoughts, or materials, creates a positive synergy between the village government and the community. This community involvement not only provides moral support, but also allows for more precise identification of needs and priorities that truly match the expectations of the villagers.

It is important that village heads and Village Fund managers are transparent in their financial management and involve the community in every stage of program planning, implementation and evaluation. Thus, accountability and community trust in the village government can be built, which in turn will strengthen the sustainability of the empowerment program. To support the success of the empowerment program in Okmakot village, training and capacity building are also needed for the community so that they can play an active role in resource management and local economic development. With an approach that involves the community directly, it is hoped that the programs implemented can have a significant impact on community welfare and overall village development.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that the Community Empowerment Program Implementation Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency can be carried out well, because of the collaboration between the district government, village government, and local communities and other parties that can support the implementation of community empowerment programs so that they can achieve the desired goals.

The Community Empowerment Program in Okmakot Village, Oksibil District, Pegunungan Bintang Regency, has a number of supporting and inhibiting factors that influence its implementation, among others, Supporting Factors are community awareness of the importance of empowerment and self-development to more actively participate in the programs being run. Then, Motivation from individuals and community groups to participate in empowerment programs. A good understanding of the conditions and needs of the community can help in designing the right program. A good understanding of the conditions and needs of the community can help in designing the right program. Support from the community in the form of active participation. Support from the community in the form of active participation, both in planning and implementing the program.

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