

Encouraging Factors For Women's Empowerment In Community Care And Social Work

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Abstract

Women are often seen as inferior to males in the community. Their occupations are limited to domestic duties such as caring for the family and making sure that everyday necessities are met. Despite their undervalued values, women continue to play a critical role in guaranteeing the welfare of the community, the well-being of the family, and the healthy development of the children. Nowadays, many women are joining the workforce, taking on leadership positions and taking part in a variety of community activities. This demonstrates the importance of women as contributors to society and the need to develop women's potential. Therefore, the study's goal is to investigate factors facilitating women's spiritual empowerment for treating female corpses. The study is focused on women empowerment at Desa Punggul by adopting qualitative method. The data are collected through participant direct observation and facilitating team's documentation, which are collected during community service program. The collected data are analyzed by using thematic analysis method. The study finds that women spiritual empowerment at Desa Punggul are enabled by two main factors. The first factor is the contribution of women organization (PKK). The women's organization promotes women's development in three areas: cognition (improving women's skills and knowledge, learning, or participating in decision-making, collaborating, and organizing community events), affection (boosting women's self-efficacy, self-worth, and strengthening women's mentality), and social (expanding social roles, establishing wider social relationships, and gaining support from their peers). The second component is the encouragement of a welcoming, cooperative, tolerant, engaging, and inclusive environment or community.

Keywords: *Women's empowerment, women organization, inclusive environment, community social service*

I. Introduction

In the community, women are frequently viewed as less valuable than men. Their jobs are restricted to household tasks like taking care of the family and making sure that daily needs are satisfied. Despite being underappreciated, women continue to be essential to ensuring the family's health, the community's welfare, and the children's healthy growth. These days, many women are entering the employment, assuming leadership roles, and engaging in a range of community activities. This highlights the value of women as contributors to society and the necessity of maximizing their potential. As a result, the study's objective is to look at the elements that support women's empowerment, with a focus on spiritual empowerment to give women more responsibility for tending to female graves and helping the community.

Women are valuable human resources in community. They are potential individuals who can contribute to community development in various sectors. Moreover, different from men who tend to focus on their professional work socially and culturally for earning proper living for their families, women may have double roles. They are socially-culturally obliged to work in three main domains of family or domestic, community, and professional. Women are demanded to take care of their children, extended families, and contribute to neighborhood activities. These neighborhood activities may include some personal celebrations, such as wedding or life-cycle ceremonials as well as community social activities, such as funerals and community celebrations. Women's participation in these activities show their social and humanistic care, willingness to establish harmonious life, peace and strengthen community social bonds.

Despite the important roles of women in family and community domains, women frequently considered as second community members, lower than men status. Their contributions are usually improperly recognized as it is assumed that it is women's common obligations. Moreover, women frequently are left behind in education. They are demanded by actively learning informally through their daily experiences. They are expected to be creatively and actively learn from their women neighbors or women's nonformal group in their community or village. Despite their lack opportunities to learn from formal education, women are also frequently burdened by their heavy domestic load. This situation frequently prevents them from exploring or chasing opportunities to develop themselves. They are demanded to prioritize their husband, children, aging family members and extended family members. Frequently, they are also blamed when their children fail in their education or become bad children.

The study aims to explore several enabling factors which potentially determine the effectiveness of women development and participation or contribution to their community. The study is focused on observing and analyzing educational factors contributing to women's empowerment and participation in treating female's corpse in their village.

II. Theoretical Framework

Roles of Women in Community Development

Despite the traditional social conception which views women as secondary individuals to men, women play substantive roles in community. As mentioned by Olalere (2013), women are valuable human resources in community development as they can contribute to community projects' planning, issues solution and execution of project. Similarly, Bashir (2019) women's role in community development is important as their roles can minimize gender inequality, reduce discrimination, and develop community.

Numerous existing studies identify women's roles in several areas. They investigate women's roles in domestic areas which cannot be replaced by men. Women contribute significantly to manage their family by ensuring that their family domestic life runs smoothly. As mentioned by Razavi and Miller (1995, p. 8), women occupy productive roles in supporting their family's basic needs. They have main responsibilities in rearing children and managing family resources (Boateng, 2016). Women are the primary children's caregivers and elders (Gran, 2019). Socially and culturally, women are usually demanded to raise children, treat their family members, and finish their domestic tasks (Simatupang, 2022). Besides nurturing their children and treating their families, women help their families to adapt to community changes and facilitating family changes (Gran, 2019).

Other studies emphasize women's roles outside the home or non-domestic responsibilities. As mentioned by Onu (1988, cited in Nwakaego, 2013, p. 3), women contribute inside and outside homes. Numerous researchers identify the important roles of women in community changes and development. For instance, women can be leaders in community and successfully acquire skills and competences to bring about changes in targeted communities (Bashir, 2019; Ihem-Avoaja, 2013). Women also play central role in developing not only rural economic activities (particularly rural women) (Abdullahi et al., 2015), even they are recognized as contributing to global economy since a long years ago (Boateng, 2016).

Many studies cite women's multiple responsibilities within domestic and across different outside areas. Rural women, for instance, are responsible for farming and agricultural production (IFAD, 2011). They, even, must do triple works, including reproduction, production and community management work and balance these works simultaneously (Olifant, 1996). Meanwhile, other studies highlight the bridging roles of women in connecting their family to community. As mentioned by Vixathep (2011), women are central individuals who carry domestic responsibilities (such as housekeeping, caretaking and supporting family livelihood), contribute to decision making and participating in social activities, such as neighbor's wedding ceremonies. Moreover, women contribute to prepare their family to be meaningful community's social and human's resources assets. As identified by Gran (2019), women are responsible in laying the foundation for their children to enable their smooth educational transition from pre-literate to literate phases. Women are also formal and informal labors who foster community transformation and global volunteers who strengthen children and community sustained health and development (Gran, 2019).

Barriers towards Women Empowerment or Development

Despite their contributing and productive functions in family and community, frequently, women are still underappreciated. They are often considered as secondary to men. Women are still mostly undervalued despite their multiple roles (Olifant, 1996). How women are still obstructed to develop themselves despite their significant and wide roles are investigated by existing studies. Njoku and Mbah (2021) voice the problem of female roles in community development which is still under-researched despite female large number in rural work force. Female empowerment is obstructed by many barriers, such as discrimination in gender, social norm and unsupportive regulation or policy (Njoku & Mbah, 2021). Consistently, Crawley and O'Meara (2002) also identify some factors obstructing women's development, including social exclusion, lack of data on women's contribution and analysis of women's roles, limited chances for women's involvement in decision making, male culture dominance and limited employment (Crawley & O'Meara, 2002). The other barrier is development access. Women frequently have no access to resources, and this makes them less productive (IFAD, 2011). Women also suffer from male-dominated culture, patriarchal system, and traditional values (Murty, 2017). Frequently, women's roles are perceived lower than men, especially in decision making (Surjono et al., 2015). This is supported by Nwakaego (2013), who mentions that traditional cultural norm makes men occupy more comfortable position and maintain men's status quo.

At global scale, women and girls face serious risk of poverty, abuse, and violence, more malnourished and less educated than men (Richardson, 2017). Women are also stereotyped as fragile and consequently, they are given lower status than men despite their important role for community betterment (Ihem-Avoaja, 2013).

These obstructions tend to impact on women's less capacities or less competences, motivation, or willingness and access to participate in community development. As mentioned by Vixathep (2011), some barriers to women participation are cultural values, education, domestic workload, health problems, low self-esteem, resettlement, poverty and approach in community contribution, structure in village administration, fewer chances to development programs and restricted access and control to assets. Consistently, IFAD (2011) identifies that women's barriers to contribute to community development tend to be multifactor, such as women's lack of education, limited access to resources, women's time consuming and intensive work activities. This is reinforced by FAO et al. (2010) by confirming that women cannot contribute to community because of gender-related biases in education, restrictions in economic, social, and cultural condition as well as lower employment status.

These complex roots of women's obstructions exist in various forms, such as women's limited capacity in local language, cultural norms stating that women can do just certain jobs and they should not be included in many activities, family or domestic burdens, lack of appropriate education, and health issues (Htun, 2019), poverty, female health problems, education, gender relations and positions, marital status, lack of status and rights, work restrictions and domestic responsibilities (Wallace, n.d.), unfairness, lack of participation, lack of government and community support, lack of women empowerment responsibilities and backwardness (Purnamawati & Utama, 2019). Similarly, Ilhem-Avoaja (2013) mentions that women are often obstructed to develop because of some factors, such as socio-cultural factors, gender bias in values that tied women to the domestic domain and not allowed them to be equally in the same domain with men as well as women's domestic workload. Meanwhile, other studies identify single dominant factors in women's barriers to participation, such as women's lower status and unequal access to resources (Aruma, 2015) and the institutional obstacles (Shah, 2016, cited in Ndambiri, 2017, p. 1), access to nature and social organization (Nwakaego, 2013). Similarly, FAO et al. (2010) highlight education as the dominant factor by suggesting that lack of education and training restrict women participation in some areas, such as productive and remunerative work, leadership positions and full participation in community development.

Women Participation in Community Development

It is widely observed that women's roles in community can bring about community's well-being in many sectors. However, not all women are able to contribute to community development. In most circumstances, women still must fight against structures that create gender inequalities (Alzubaidi, 2021). Previous studies have examined some factors that influenced women's participation in community development. Olalere (2013), for instance, finds that women participation in community development is dependent on their marital status, age, education, and organizational memberships. Similarly, Ndambiri (2017) finds that women participation in community development is influenced by their educational factors (technical skills, educational levels, and opportunities), political factors (including gender rules and male dominance), media (such as women advocacy and capacity building) and socio-cultural practices (such as beliefs in community, religious beliefs). Meanwhile, other studies identify the internal factors which affect women's participation. Ikpi (2016) mentions that women's participation is influenced by their level of literacy, women's occupation, and income level.

Some other existing studies emphasize on the need for women to be actively increase their own capacities, instead of accusing external factors, such as culture, male dominance

limited access and constructed gender inequality. They argue that women need to build strength inside their own selves. As mentioned by Mojumder (2020), women should generate their awareness on the importance of skills and abilities as they may allow the women to minimize obstacles which they face during their performing roles. Women's active efforts to increase their abilities, instead of depending on changes of external gender inequality causes, generate ideas to equip women with skills and competencies to fight against their gender inequality and acquire power to change through the empowerment process. This is confirmed by Simatupang (2022) who argues that the bottom-up strategy of women empowerment enables women to free themselves from subordination and put them as the center subject by involving them in discussion and decision on what they need to grow faster.

Some existing studies argue that women participation is determined by multi-factors. For instance, Jaenudin et al. (2017) mention that women participation is determined by the supporting factors, such as women awareness, participation chances and invitation as well as socialization to involve and resisting factors, which include inflexible time of event, multiple roles of women, lack of invitation, and lack of education. Besides managing women's internal capacities, Vixathep (2011) suggests that women's participation barriers can be minimized by providing support and acceptance from men and other community members. Meanwhile, Ikpi (2016) recommends more emphasis on external supports for women by mobilizing communities to advocate victims of violence, provide forums for female girls to voice and to be heard, provide mentoring with incentives and grants from government and non-government organizations.

Numerous studies explore the benefits of women contribution at any scales and sectors. Despite their significant roles in family and community sectors, they still receive minor value. This is as mentioned by Olifant (1996, p. 16) who voices that only productive works of women are appreciated, meanwhile women's community and reproductive works are undervalued as the works are seen as natural and non-productive roles. However, many previous studies identify the significant roles of women which deserve to be worthily valued. As mentioned by Bashir (2019), women participation in community may bring about benefits for not only women, but also their children. Women empowerment enhances families and communities' health and well-being (Njoku & Mbah, 2021). Other studies identify broader roles of women such as in supporting community development through economic sectors (Abdullahi et al., 2015; Mayoux, 2002). Besides bringing about economic contribution, women participation can enhance other (domestic) areas of development (Nwakaego, 2013; UN, 2018). This is confirmed by IFAD (2011), who finds that women empowerment and equal chances for women impact on poverty reduction, hunger minimization and malnutrition reduction. Similarly, IFC (2018) finds that women can support social license (community acceptability) for certain company or corporation to operate, distribute benefits for community and stimulate positive impacts for company bottom lines. Thus, women can be community mediators in facilitating not only community development, but also community well-being.

The women's roles in self, family and community domains entail an awareness that women should be positioned equally to men. They can be men's partners. As noted by Rubin (2010), today, there is a new indication that the target of development is no longer men only, but also all people in community. This is confirmed by Nwadi (2015, cited in Monday, 2021, p. 241) by mentioning that men and women can contribute to community development though involvement in various associations which can facilitate family growth. Other study, such as Alzubaidi (2021) who finds that in developing countries, reducing gender disparity can

be significant for reducing poverty and boosting literacy, primary, secondary, and higher education to sustain development.

To improve women's productivity in community development, numerous studies recommend women empowerment efforts for enhancing women's capacity. As noted by Mojumder (2020), it is significant to empower women to be productive in various roles of domestic and economic. One of the development agendas is empowering women because by ensuring women and girl's rights and inclusion, environment can be sustained, and the future generation growth can be achieved (Alzubaidi, 2021). Thus, many studies suggest and examine the practices of women empowerment in community. As mentioned by Purnamawati and Utama (2019), women empowerment can be viewed and executed in various perspectives and fields, such as economic, social, and politic. From the perspective of economy, women empowerment is an effort to strengthen women's control and ownership on economic and non-economic resources (Purnamawati & Utama, 2019). From the social perspective, women empowerment covers actions to enable women to participate in not only economic activities, but also politic, social, security and transparency (Sen, 1999, cited in Purnamawati & Utama, 2019, p. 121). From the political perspective, women empowerment enables power decision capacity for women, including decision making in household, credit access, participation, mobility, voicing and leadership (Purnamawati & Utama, 2019).

III. Research Method

To explore some factors supporting women empowerment through education at Desa Punggul, Gedangan, Sidoarjo, the authors adopt a qualitative methodology research. The research is extracted from community service activity, conducted by the authors (the team of community service), who play a role as community services facilitators. The team main responsibility is empowering women at Desa Punggul, Gedangan, Sidoarjo by educating them how to treat women corpse appropriately by following Islamic religious principles. Thus, the study aims to explore the issues within its natural context. As mentioned by Hancock et al. (2009), qualitative research relates to exploring issues in the real life-context. The study observes the women empowerment in its' real context. As mentioned by Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 2, cited in Aspers & Corte, 2019, p. 142), qualitative research has multidimensional focus which includes naturalistic and interpretative approach.

The data are collected through direct participant observation during the activities. The community service team gathers two main forms of data: observation notes (written description) and pictures captured during the activities. As mentioned by Hancock et al (2009, p. 19), the researcher may record the people activities, environment, and situation by describing through observational writing. Participant observation enables researchers to collect data from participants by observing as well as participating in the observed activities (Australian Aid, 2019). The analysis is performed inductively after the facilitating team executes the program and the observation data are collected. The inductive analysis is performed by reflecting the direct observation data (the written and visual data) and data in form of document (activities or program reports). The data reflection is combined with literature studies.

IV. Findings and Discussions

The data emerge two main themes which will be analyzed. The first theme is the functions of the women organization. The second aspect is the role of external environment.

Women's Organization

The data implicitly show that women educative empowerment towards spiritual community service or empowerment is enabled by the contribution of PKK (women's local organization aims to coordinate women for family and community development). As mentioned by Hoesein and Surjadi (2004), one of women empowerment objectives in Indonesia is increasing women's self-development through women organization as well as ensuring the progressing development of women organization. Furthermore, PKK (family welfare empowerment), a women's organization can be a medium for women empowerment through various sectors, including health, family welfare, education, family resilience and living needs (Hasdiani et al., 2022). Furthermore, Hasdiani et al. (2022) mention that PKK empowers women through various activities, such as *posyandu*, cooking, sewing skills, training, and business capacity building. Thus, women can be empowered through PKK (Zain et al., 2020). This indicates that women are not only valuable workforces, great assets in organizations and leaders (Mehta & Sharma, 2014) as well as meaningful community members. Women are potential leaders, agents in making changes and community entrepreneurs (Niño-Torres, 2019).

In enabling women's empowerment at Desa Punggul, Gedangan, Sidoarjo, PKK plays some significant roles. The researchers classify the roles into two main functions: the social and educative-developmental roles.



Figure 1. The participants are listening to the information given and practices their new knowledge.

The above figure shows some activities during the empowerment program. It implicitly reflects PKK functions for women to meet, build social relations with their peers, break their domestic works, feel the ingroup and sense of social identity with other women. As women organization, PKK is not only functioning a space for women for doing other jobs (non-domestic jobs), but also a medium for women at Desa Punggul to fulfil their social needs. They need to meet other women, establish social relationship, even strong bond for articulating their emotions, family issues or sharing moments. It also provides a platform for women to share their social or family anxieties and gain support from their peers. This relates to the benefits of collectives in boosting not only economic development, but also social strengths (CARE, 2017). Furthermore, CARE (2017) mentions that collectives and collective actions are potentials for boosting social accountability and managing community issues. The social aspect is one of women empowerment indicators together with other aspects of human capital development and projects for solving social issues. This also shows that PKK allows women to build broader informal relationships. As mentioned by ADB (2014), community-based organization allows women to extend their relationships beyond family, expand their physical actions, develop, and practice their community leadership functions. The other

functions of the women organization are organizing, leading, and servicing community. This is as shown from the document data (activities progress report).

Table 1. The extracted functions of PKK

No	Document extracts
1	"The third agenda is the opening. A PKK member opens the event and invite the head of village and the leader of facilitating team. One of PKK member plays a role as MC (Master of Ceremony). Other members are coordinate the activities by welcoming the participants and preparing the place...."
2	"...all PKK members and participants pray together, sing Indonesia Raya and Mars of PKK..."
3	"It is expected that the educative empowerment brings about some implications. The first is the expansion of PKK 's volunteering programs by expanding activities from treating young children and family to contributing to treating female corpse. The second is increasing PKK members' self-efficacy to contribute to community development or empowerment programs. The third is shaping PKK members' caring character."

The second function is elevating women's knowledge and skills. PKK enables the women to be collectively organized for the spiritual empowerment. Moreover, PKK members are not passive participations. Instead, they are involved in decision making related to the execution of the programs, such as the deciding the time/date of the events, helping in organizing consumptions, place, instruments or tools, socializations, and invitations. This is as shown in the first data extract. The facilitating team focuses on empowerment material preparation, meanwhile PKK Desa Punggul performs field preparation. Thus, collaboration is emerging between women at PKK Desa Punggul and the facilitating team. This indicates that women empowerment can be run by not only involving women passively involved as targeted event participant, but also actively organizing the events. As stated by Pradhan et al. (2023), women tend to feel being empowered when they are involved in community actions or programs. This also means that women can be mobilized to change through their participation in certain (community-based) organization and community activities (Hasdiani et al., 2022; Norvadewi & Zaroni, 2022). Furthermore, this indicates that women can be empowered by involving them in economic and socio-cultural activities. Women's involvement in organizing the program may emerge sense of self-worth, meaningful, contributing, and motivated. This implies that women empowerment is not only executed for providing targeted knowledge, but also boosting the character and mental strengths (affective functions). As mentioned by Sumodiningrat (n.d., cited in Zain et al., 2020, p. 77), the aims of women empowerment are building women's existence, motivating women to acquire capacities to gain rights to choose based on their autonomy and raising consciousness in women about equality and their positions in domestic and public spheres.

The other implication of women involvement in PKK women organization is growing or strengthening social cohesion. This is as indicated by the second data extract. PKK members pray and sing mars of PKK together at the opening. This can be a valuable moment for raising sense of social cohesion. This is also strengthened by PKK members cooperation or working together for preparing the event and ensuring that the program is successfully run. As stated by Waller (2014), one of several benefits for women in joining organization is increasing women's social cooperation (particularly in problem solving). The other advantages include

increasing women's self-efficacy, men's, and women's roles, increasing women value for being more respected by men and gaining social and economic benefits (Waller, 2014).

The other implication of women's spiritual empowerment through properly treating women's corpse is expanding women roles in community services. This roles and responsibility expansion imply some meanings of expanding women's skills, knowledges, more diverse types of participation and potentially more increasing status. The third data extracts show that by knowing how to treat women corpse well, the PKK members at Desa Punggul may contribute for wider scale of community (which is not only restricted to children and family). As mentioned by Smeer et al. (2022), women participation in community program is still restricted to women's domestic roles, such as *arisan*, *PKK*, and religious activities.

Besides contributing to broader community scale, PKK members can participate in more diverse types of community activities or programs which means they (PKK members) can be more meaningful and worth for community. This increasing sense of worthiness and meaningfulness can boost sense of group or social-self efficacy of PKK members. One of several functions of the women spiritual empowerment for women at Desa Punggul is growing and strengthening humanistic sense of PKK members. The heightened sense of humanistic and care may increase community's feeling of being cared, well treated, serviced, and peaceful. Women may contribute to create peaceful condition in community (Menon & Cueva-Beteta, 2018). Similarly, Smeer et al. (2022) state that women have significant potentials for creating world peace, which is started from family scope and can be extended to larger national and global scopes. The data also imply that women involvement in community development should be viewed from diverse perspectives, including humanistic, women's quality and dignity (Smeer et al., 2022).

The study finds that women spiritual empowerment can be enabled through the mobilization of PKK. The study shows that PKK organization can empower women holistically by building women's three main aspects (cognition, affection and social). Meanwhile, previous studies tend to identify benefits of PKK from one dimension, such as broadening women's knowledge and skills (Smeer et al., 2022), providing spaces for women to voice and perform agency across different sectors (Evans, 2013). Women are not only gaining skills and knowledge from community-based organization, but also practicing the gained skills (ADB, 2014). Furthermore, ADB (2014) confirms that membership and active participation in CBO can be an effective effort for women to be heard, particularly within the areas of livelihoods, including management of community resources, sanitation, and supply water. Different from the previous studies, World Bank (2002, cited in Sultan & Yahaya, 2018, p. 529), highlights the importance roles of women experience in community-based organization in boosting women's self-esteem and self-efficacy. Meanwhile, ADB (2014) identifies two main benefits for women from women community-based organization: elevating women's confidence and increasing women's skills.

The study also demonstrates that through PKK, the women members can increase their cognition (including their knowledge and skill), their affection (covering boosting self-confidence, sense of self-worth, heightened responsibility) and their social life (including increasing social relations, social collaboration, and chances for social interactions with others/peers, social sharing, and social empathy).

Environmental Support

The other factor which encourages women spiritual empowerment is the community support. The study finds that social environment influences the process of empowerment.

This indicates that women cannot help themselves (Nijat & Murtazashvili, 2015). The following table indicates how community support the women spiritual empowerment.

Table 2. The extracted environment supports for women empowerment.

No	Document extracts
1	"...the reinforcement activity is cheered by Ibu Kepala Desa (wife of the head village of Desa Punggul) who gives simple quiz for PKK members (the participants). She provides challenges for them by asking them to demonstrate <i>sholat jenazah</i> (<i>sholat</i> for the corpse), which is not only demonstrating the body movement, but also reciting the wording of prayer. The quiz challenge is supported by Bapak Kepala Desa (The Head of Village) who provides prizes for the volunteers...."
2	"...Desa Punggul Head of Village welcomes, joins the event and increases participants' awareness on the significance of increasing diversities of PKK activities, roles of PKK as a means for women to learn together, giving new skills and knowledges, up-dating previous knowledge relevant to how to treat corpse, expanding PKK roles in community...."
3	"...the leader of community service team welcomes PKK members (the participants), introduce the team members, explain the purposes of the program, articulate the intention to network, and elevate PKK members' self-confidence to expand their roles from taking care children and family to treating female corpse appropriately..."
4	"...asking some representatives of <i>modin</i> to share their knowledge and practice <i>sholat jenazah</i> together...."
5	"...community cooperation in treating corpse is required..."

The study finds that women spiritual empowerment is influenced by the role and support of community leader. The first document extract mentions that the head of village and his wife participate in the program and support the event by providing prize for quiz or challenge and give the question for the quiz. The leader or head of village also increase PKK members' awareness of the significance of the increasing roles and responsibilities of PKK in community, encouraging PKK members to learn together, enthusiastically updating previous knowledge, gaining new skills and knowledges, and expanding the functions and participations of PKK members in community. The role of Head of village indicates that women empowerment needs to involve men. Supporting gender-based well-being and avoiding gender-based violence can be minimized through men and boy participation as well as through collective actions (CARE, 2017).

The data also show the significant role of other external parties in supporting women empowerment, including the other women organization, *modin* and higher education institution. They support the women empowerment through various ways, including sharing skills and information or knowledge, facilitating the empowerment program, initiating the events, and helping PKK members to coordinate and prepare the event.



Figure 2. The participation of the Head of Desa Punggul in the program

The data also show the significant role of other external parties in supporting women empowerment, including the other women organization, *modin* and higher education institution. They support the women empowerment through various ways, including sharing skills and information or knowledge, facilitating the empowerment program, initiating the events, and helping PKK members to coordinate and prepare the event. This confirms the previous studies which highlight the important contribution of environment in supporting women empowerment. Some studies emphasize on the role of inclusive environment. As mentioned by Smeer et al. (2022) that inclusive environment means environment, which is open, inclusive to all people who have different background, ability, religion, gender, and social status. Openness in social inclusion means involving all people in fulfilling their obligations and obtaining their rights (Smeer et al., 2022).

Besides inclusive environment which welcomes, tolerates diversities, and encourages all community members to contribute, the study also implies that women empowerment requires support from various community segments. Women spiritual empowerment at Desa Punggul needs collaboration of various or multiple facilitating agents outside PKK (such as higher education institution, other women organizations at Desa Punggul, leaders). The factor which enables women empowerment is not dominantly by women's own capacities. Instead, women empowerment needs the collaborative functions of women's own capacities, the environment and system which affect or govern women's choices and relationship through which women can manage their lives (CARE, 2010). Some other previous studies mention public or community participation as collective actions. Women empowerment needs collective actions in various ways, including collective decision making and co-leading process (Sultan & Yahaya, 2018), helping women by providing complementary encouragements to develop women's finance, skills in technical, management, negotiation, and advocacy for helping women in decision making and transitioning into leadership roles (ADB, 2014). Other studies highlight the benefits and roles of collective actions of community for women empowerment, such as a means for implementing social accountability and solving challenging community issues as well as an approach to promote empowerment (CARE, 2017). Different from previous studies, ADB (2014) highlights strategies to create supportive environment which enables women to express their voices and implements agency in community-based organization.

The study shows that the community service team (facilitating team) provides autonomy for the empowerment participants to manage the events, particularly managing the field preparation. This indicates women empowerment encouragement through providing self-determination. This also implies that the essence of women empowerment is not only related to the substantive skills or knowledges, but also the process in which the

women is involved and empowered through the process. As mentioned by British Council (2017), effective women empowerment requires the activation of several aspects, including agency and awareness, equal access to resources, collaborative actions, supportive policy, and changes in discriminatory social norms.

The study also indicates that supporting environment is not only indicated by an open environment. Instead, it is characterized by welcoming, collaborative, providing sense of self-determination, respecting equality and is ready to change well-established social norms which put women in inferior position from men. This confirms Blanchard (n.d., cited in Mehta & Sharma, 2014, p. 6), who highlight the most four significant aspects in women empowerment: knowledge, internal motivation, experience, and condition enabling women to release power and giving them autonomy. The participation of The Head of Village at Desa Punggul both in facilitating and enabling the events (by building open, friendly, and familial interaction with the team of community service, providing legal permission, arranging welcoming ceremonies, preparing places for events, coordinating staff and PKK members as well as contributing to quiz) also indicates the need of government, particularly at the local scope, to support women empowerment. As stated by Hoesein and Surjadi (2004), women empowerment requires the collaboration of government and women organization to create favourable environment. Similarly, World Bank (2002, cited in Sultan & Yahaya, 2018, p. 529) emphasizes the collaborative roles of government in establishing policy and accountability and willingness of local organization to mobilize resources altogether with the availability of information access and community participation. Other studies also confirm the integrative aspects of policy, networks, and advocacies (OECD, 2020).

In general, the study demonstrates that women empowerment at Desa Punggul requires collaborative support of all community elements, including leaders, local government, men, other women organization, other institutions (including education) to facilitate empowerment. This is consistent with several previous studies which explore role of various community aspects enabling women's development, such as the role of companies' initiatives to empower women to be successful in the workplaces (BOI Research Services, 2018), support from other community-based and civil society organization (World Vision, 2021), is involved in decision making and implementation of community development projects or programs (Steffen, 2014) and global acceptance on women through human right convention ensuring women access to participation and leadership positions (Oxfam, 2008). Furthermore, effective encouragement for women's development requires gender-inclusive approaches, review leadership concepts, support women mobility and strong political passion (Nijat & Murtazashvili, 2015).

V. Conclusion

Women are often considered inferior to males, especially those living in rural areas. Typically, their tasks are limited to household duties. Socio-culturally, they must take care of their family, support their husband, ensure the daily need of their family is fulfilled, ensure the well growth and success of their children. In practice, today's women occupy more diverse roles and harder roles in many living sectors, including leadership roles. This indicates women are invaluable community members. They can help both family and community to be healthy, well-educated, and well-cared. Thus, it is significant to empower women since it can enable women to increase their self-quality, improve family condition and contribute to community development. The study finds that women spiritual empowerment at Desa Punggul is enabled by two main factors. The first factor is women organization (PKK). Women organization

empowers women by enabling women to fulfil their social, cognition and affection needs. Socially, the women can establish social relationship, discuss their social and family issues, share their social and family anxieties and burden, gain support from their peers, give social strengths, extend their relationship beyond family, expand their social roles in community. Cognitively, PKK members get access and chance for boosting their knowledge and skills, learning leadership skill, participating in decision making process, collaboration skills and skills for organizing community programs or events.

Besides boosting the women's social and cognitive capacities, PKK allows the members to elevate their personal qualities, which include increase women's self-efficacy, self-worth or meaningfulness and strengthen their mentality. The study also finds that besides women organization (PKK), the spiritual women empowerment is enabled by community support. This support is provided within open, collaborative, welcoming, stimulating, and inclusive environment. The study shows the analysis of the enabling factors for women empowerment. However, it does not reveal aspects which inhibit women to participate in community activities. Thus, factors affecting women participation in community need to be addressed by further studies. An additional area of knowledge that need more investigation is a problem that is arising in women's organisations and might prevent its members from making meaningful contributions to the community.

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