

## Empowerment of Community Creative Economy Through the Islamic Education Assembly (*Majelis Taklim*)

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### Abstract

The activities of the Islamic Education Assembly require intervention in the form of empowerment through the strengthening of productive socio-economic capacities. In addition to focusing on its main activities in Islamic studies, the Islamic Education Assembly also organizes creative economic activities conducted by its members. However, these activities face challenges such as limited connections with external communities, dependency on others, and inadequate facilities and infrastructure that affect the effectiveness of community-based economic empowerment. This study aims to uncover the patterns and strategies of community economic empowerment used by the Islamic Education Assembly administrators and facilitators, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in the empowerment process. The research adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing fieldwork through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that the empowerment process is carried out through a bottom-up approach based on the community's own initiatives. The Mezzo-Level Strategy was effectively implemented, focusing on empowering groups through education and training. Supporting factors include (a) high community participation, (b) loyalty of the congregation and community, (c) demands from congregants and members for training, (d) strategic location, and (e) flexible timing. Conversely, the key inhibiting factors are (a) limited connections with external communities, (b) dependency on others, and (c) inadequate facilities and infrastructure. These findings suggest that fostering community participation, strengthening institutional systems, and reducing dependency are critical for achieving sustainable community empowerment. The study highlights the potential of the Islamic Education Assembly to drive socio-economic development through creative economic activities tailored to local needs, provided the challenges are addressed strategically.

**Keywords:** Creative Economy; Empowerment; Islamic Education Assembly

### Abstrak

*Kegiatan Majelis Taklim membutuhkan intervensi dalam bentuk pemberdayaan melalui penguatan kapasitas sosial ekonomi produktif. Selain fokus pada kegiatan utama dalam kajian keislaman, Majelis Taklim juga mengadakan kegiatan ekonomi kreatif yang dilakukan oleh para anggotanya. Namun, kegiatan ini menghadapi tantangan berupa kurangnya koneksi dengan komunitas luar, ketergantungan terhadap pihak lain, dan keterbatasan fasilitas serta prasarana yang memengaruhi efektivitas pemberdayaan ekonomi berbasis komunitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap pola dan strategi pemberdayaan ekonomi masyarakat yang digunakan oleh pengurus Majelis Taklim dan pemberdaya serta menemukan faktor pendukung dan penghambat dalam proses pemberdayaan tersebut. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan penelitian lapangan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses pemberdayaan dilakukan dengan pendekatan bottom-up yang didasarkan pada inisiatif masyarakat sendiri. Strategi pemberdayaan yang diterapkan menggunakan Strategi Aras Mezzo, yang berfokus pada pemberdayaan kelompok melalui pendidikan dan pelatihan. Faktor pendukung meliputi (a)*

tingginya partisipasi masyarakat, (b) loyalitas jamaah dan komunitas, (c) permintaan pelatihan dari jamaah dan anggota, (d) lokasi strategis, dan (e) waktu yang fleksibel. Sebaliknya, faktor penghambat utama adalah (a) keterbatasan koneksi dengan komunitas eksternal, (b) ketergantungan pada pihak lain, dan (c) fasilitas serta infrastruktur yang tidak memadai. Hasil Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa meningkatkan partisipasi masyarakat, memperkuat sistem kelembagaan, dan mengurangi ketergantungan merupakan langkah penting untuk mencapai pemberdayaan masyarakat yang berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menyoroti potensi Majelis Taklim dalam mendorong pengembangan sosial-ekonomi melalui kegiatan ekonomi kreatif yang disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan lokal, asalkan tantangan-tantangan tersebut dapat diatasi secara strategis.

**Kata kunci:** Ekonomi Kreatif; Pemberdayaan; Majelis Taklim

## INTRODUCTION

Individuals who are unemployed or marginalized socially and economically often require support and assistance through empowerment to improve their well-being. Empowerment generally involves three main stages: awareness, capacity building, and empowerment itself. The awareness stage provides understanding and motivation, capacity building focuses on enhancing skills and fostering innovation, and the empowerment stage centers on setting goals and providing opportunities. The success of empowerment strategies depends on addressing both internal and external factors that support or hinder the process (Rakib, 2020).

The development of the Islamic Education Assembly in Indonesia is a unique phenomenon that plays a significant role in the socio-religious landscape. Initially, the Islamic Education Assembly functioned as religious study groups, but it later expanded into the economic sector by implementing economic empowerment programs, enabling its members to improve their financial well-being (Barella *et al.*, 2024). Historically, the Islamic Education Assembly have spread across different regions of Indonesia, with regional variations tailored to local cultures and socio-economic conditions. For example, in Java and Minangkabau, the Islamic Education Assembly not only facilitate religious studies but also function as hubs for social cohesion and economic activities. As part of the socio-religious movement, the Islamic Education Assembly provide members with opportunities to improve their quality of life through Islamic values (Ridho *et al.*, 2023) The importance of effective management to optimize the role of the Islamic Education Assembly in community development is also discussed in the book by Nuraeni (2020).

The progress of the Islamic Education Assembly varies widely; some have experienced rapid growth, while others face significant challenges. This diversity is influenced by differences in management practices and the quality of human resources. Although most Islamic Education Assemblies do not implement classical education systems or formal evaluation processes, their impact is evident in the social dynamics of their communities. According to Imaduddin & Al Attas (2022), many Islamic Education Assemblies have successfully improved the economic well-being of their members' families through productive economic empowerment,

which creates a multiplier effect on their ability to meet daily needs. Community participation has brought improvements in livelihoods and economic sustainability.

However, the Islamic Education Assembly also face several challenges. Limited connections with external networks hinder their ability to expand programs and access broader markets. Many the Islamic Education Assembly remain highly dependent on government support, which constrains their autonomy and sustainability. Additionally, inadequate infrastructure and facilities impact the effectiveness of community-based economic empowerment efforts (Yunus, 2024).

Despite these challenges, some the Islamic Education Assembly demonstrate resilience and innovation. By partnering with non-governmental organizations or utilizing modern technology, they can overcome obstacles and sustain their empowerment initiatives. For instance, some groups have adopted cooperative business models or collaborated with local businesses to sustain their projects and expand their impact. These best practices offer valuable lessons for other the Islamic Education Assembly seeking to enhance their empowerment efforts and address existing challenges.

Rakib (2020) highlights that empowerment requires not only access to resources but also increased autonomy and decision-making power, which are crucial for marginalized groups. Rahayu & Hidayah (2023) adds that motivation and business networking are essential in enhancing the income and economic resilience of Islamic Education Assembly members, emphasizing the role of social capital in the empowerment process.

With the growing creative economy in Indonesia, the role of Islamic Education Assemblies is becoming increasingly relevant, especially in contributing to economic development in rural and marginalized communities. Creative industries such as fashion, culinary arts, and digital media are recognized as key sectors in supporting local economies and creating entrepreneurial opportunities based on Islamic values. This research aims to explore how the Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly, through its creative economic activities, can enhance the socio-economic capacity and well-being of its members. The study will identify the empowerment strategies implemented by the assembly and analyze the factors that support or hinder the empowerment process and economic self-reliance.

The author has chosen the Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly as the object of this study because it holds significant potential for economic empowerment based on Islamic values. In addition, the assembly actively engages in creative economic activities that contribute to improving the well-being of its members, despite facing challenges such as limited external connections and dependency on others. This study aims to explore the empowerment strategies implemented by the assembly and identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in the empowerment process, making it relevant for the development of communities based on religious values.

Additionally, the study will explore how creative economic activities, within the context of Islamic Education Assemblies, can serve as a bridge for marginalized individuals to enter the broader economy. By emphasizing local knowledge, skills, and resources, these creative industries promote economic development while preserving cultural identity. Through community-based initiatives such as entrepreneurship training, product innovation, and market access, these groups can enhance both individual and group economic well-being. The study will also identify constraints, such as limited external connections and dependency, that need to be addressed to foster sustainable growth.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Creative Economy**

The creative economy is a sector based on creativity and knowledge to produce value-added products and services. Chusumastuti *et al.* (2024) stated that the creative economy covers various fields such as arts, design, information technology, and media. In the context of community empowerment, the creative economy plays a crucial role in improving the welfare of the community by creating jobs and new sources of income (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, 2018). Programs based on the creative economy, such as skills and entrepreneurship training, can encourage the creation of new opportunities for individuals or groups, especially in underdeveloped areas (Suharto, 2022).

### **Community Empowerment**

Community empowerment is a process aimed at enhancing the capacity of individuals and groups to control resources and make decisions that affect their lives (Wibowo *et al.*, 2024). Empowerment through education and life skills plays an important role in improving economic independence and enhancing the quality of life of the community. Skills-based training, such as entrepreneurship and resource management, can provide long-term benefits for community members (Amri *et al.*, 2024). Community empowerment can be optimized through creative economy-based approaches that teach innovative skills to improve social and economic competitiveness.

### **The Islamic Education Assembly**

The Islamic Education Assembly plays an important role in strengthening communities through religious education and economic empowerment. As a community-based organization, The Islamic Education Assembly not only focuses on religious education but also develops the social and economic capacities of its members. Nikmatullah *et al.* (2023) showed that The Islamic Education Assembly in remote areas contribute to empowering women and children by providing access to education that was previously unavailable. Entrepreneurship and skills training programs can strengthen the economic capacity of communities involved in The Islamic Education Assembly.

### **Resource Gap and Estimation of Empowerment Potentials of The Islamic Education Assembly**

The Islamic Education Assembly often faces a resource gap that extends beyond financial limitations. One significant aspect of this gap is the lack of managerial and administrative skills among the leaders of The Islamic Education Assembly, which often limits the effectiveness of the organization in running empowerment programs (Aziz *et al.*, 2023). Although The Islamic Education Assembly has the potential to mobilize social resources, such as community networks, the lack of organizational management skills can limit their capacity for sustainable development. Therefore, training for capacity building is essential to enhance the organization's ability to implement impactful programs.

Furthermore, The Islamic Education Assembly also faces infrastructure challenges, such as limited meeting spaces and a lack of facilities supporting educational activities. Research by Nikmatullah *et al.* (2023) revealed that many The Islamic Education Assembly in rural areas lack access to facilities that could support better educational and skills programs. In this context, improving infrastructure and supporting facilities is vital to address this resource gap. Innovations in utilizing available community spaces, including the use of digital technology, can open up opportunities for The Islamic Education Assembly to expand their reach and improve the quality of the programs they offer.

### **Education in Empowering The Islamic Education Assembly**

Education in The Islamic Education Assembly not only aims to enhance religious understanding but also to provide practical skills that can be applied in daily life. In the context of community empowerment, education provided through The Islamic Education Assembly may include economic skills such as entrepreneurship and technical skills relevant to local needs. Amri *et al.* (2024) showed that The Islamic Education Assembly in remote areas contribute to empowering women and children by providing educational access that was previously unavailable. Research by Nikmatullah *et al.* (2023) also revealed that it is important for The Islamic Education Assembly to integrate social education and life skills into their programs to make them more relevant to the community's needs.

Education in The Islamic Education Assembly also functions to strengthen social cohesion within the community. By providing space for community members to discuss and learn together, The Islamic Education Assembly can reduce social tensions and strengthen mutual trust among community members. Suryahadi *et al.* (2024) explained that social education provided in community contexts like The Islamic Education Assembly can enrich social capital networks and trust that are crucial for driving social change. By leveraging this social capital, The Islamic Education Assembly can more effectively advocate for the community's interests and improve the quality of life for its members.

### **Role of the Government in Empowering The Islamic Education Assembly**

The role of the government in empowering The Islamic Education Assembly is critical, especially in terms of providing policies that support community-based religious and social education. Government initiatives like the "Digital Pesantren" introduced by Nikmatullah *et al.* (2023) aim to expand the reach of religious education and improve the quality of education in remote areas. Through this

policy, The Islamic Education Assembly can utilize technology to support distance learning and extend educational access to a broader community. In addition to educational policies, the government can also play a role in providing financial and other resources for the development of The Islamic Education Assembly. Laraswati *et al.* (2022) stated that policies that support faith-based organizations in their contributions to social welfare can accelerate community development overall.

Collaboration between the government, The Islamic Education Assembly, and non-governmental organizations is also essential in building strong networks for community empowerment. Malta (2023) mentioned that synergy between the public and private sectors can create a more holistic system in supporting the role of The Islamic Education Assembly in social empowerment. Ani *et al.* (2017) found that cross-sector partnerships can help The Islamic Education Assembly overcome resource limitations and expand their impact on community empowerment.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach, to capture the community's experiences and the strategies used for empowerment. The study will also examine the Mezzo-Level Strategy, which focuses on group-based empowerment, to understand how the collective initiatives of the Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly can foster economic growth and self-reliance. By exploring both supportive and inhibitive factors, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the key elements that facilitate or hinder the economic empowerment of Islamic Education Assembly members.

The sampling method used in this study is purposive sampling, which selects individuals who are most helpful in understanding the field phenomenon. With this approach, the research involves a small, carefully chosen group to capture detailed insights and focus on individuals relevant to the study of community empowerment. The study includes a sample of 11 individuals based on knowledge or experience related to the research topic. These participants are community members significantly involved in empowerment activities or local leaders familiar with the socio-economic dynamics within their groups. Their perspectives are crucial for understanding the phenomenon in the field.

The research objective is the community empowerment process based on creative socio-economic factors. Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique employed a descriptive approach, involving three concurrent activities: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (verification).

Data analysis utilized observational data collected through passive participation. Tools for this observation included notes to record every event that occurred. The interview technique in this study was semi-structured. Documentation involved gathering photos and videos during activities, which were then compiled into a single folder. Validation and accuracy of the data were

achieved through member checking, ensuring that findings aligned with participants' perspectives.

The member-checking process in this study was conducted to ensure that the data authentically reflected participants' experiences (Sarfo & Ofori, 2017). First, the researcher organized preliminary findings and scheduled follow-up meetings with participants. Preliminary results were presented in an easily understandable summary or direct quotations, allowing participants to review the interpretation and provide feedback, corrections, or additional information as needed. The researcher then recorded participants' input and updated the data or analysis accordingly. If necessary, a final confirmation was conducted to ensure the research findings truly represented participants' perspectives accurately. Through this process, member checking enhances the validity and credibility of the research findings (Merriam & J.Tisdell, 2016).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Empowerment Patterns of the Community in Tamarunang Village, Somba Opu District, Gowa Regency, and The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly

Community empowerment is a process aimed at achieving community independence. According to (Astutiningsih & Sari, 2017), an economic empowerment pattern is necessary to achieve the desired goals. Initially, the empowerment pattern in Tamarunang Village involved the process of awareness-raising by encouraging the community to recognize their potential. This awareness was fostered through motivation provided by The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly management. The head of The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly is responsible for providing awareness, capacity building, and enabling the potential and opportunities for the community in Tamarunang Village, particularly for the The Islamic Education Assembly congregation.

The empowerment pattern implemented by The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly, along with field survey results, is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Community Empowerment in Tamarunang Village

| No | Aspect                  | Initial Condition  | Research Action   | Result/Change   |
|----|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1  | Economic Awareness      | Low awareness of the community towards their economic potential. | Socialization by The Islamic Education Assembly management and external parties to raise awareness. | Increased community awareness of local economic potential.            |
| 2  | Community Participation | Minimal community participation in economic activities.          | Involving community in meetings and discussions about economic potential and opportunities.         | Increased community participation in economic development activities. |
| 3  | Capacity Building       | Limited skills and knowledge in productive economy.              | Training, workshops, and consultations to improve skills in agroindustry.                           | Increased skills in agroindustry and small business.                  |

| No | Aspect                              | Initial Condition  | Research Action   | Result/Change   |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 4  | Access to Technology                | Limited access and understanding of modern technology.   | Introduction to technology such as mobile phones, laptops, and the internet for economic activities.                    | Adoption of technology in economic and social activities.   |
| 5  | Social Change                       | Dependence on external aid and low quality of life.  | Continuous support to reduce dependence and improve economic independence.  | Increased community independence and improved quality of life.                                      |
| 6  | Product Development                 | Lack of diversification in locally valuable products.  | Training in producing products like vegetable nuggets, ice cream, and egg floss.  | Diversified local products and increased economic value of products.                                |
| 7  | Social Condition Before Empowerment | Low education levels, limited human resources quality, and high dependence on external aid.  | Identifying needs and local potential through observation and interviews.   | Increased understanding of the importance of education and economic independence.                   |
| 8  | Condition During Empowerment        | Increased community knowledge from routine religious activities and ongoing empowerment activities.  | Intensive training and support in applying new skills.  | Community starts applying new skills in daily life and economic activities.                         |
| 9  | Condition After Empowerment         | Use of modern technology like mobile phones, laptops, computers, and internet by the community of Tamarunang Village. Increased knowledge in religious and empowerment skills. | Post-training evaluation to assess the impact of empowerment and continuous support to strengthen the results achieved. | The community shows increased use of technology and skills, as well as overall improved well-being. |

Source: Data processing results (2023)

At the initial stage of community empowerment, assessments of low, minimal, and limited conditions are conducted to evaluate the constraints or barriers present before the empowerment program begins. These assessments focus on foundational aspects such as resource availability, skills, community participation, and access to necessary tools and support. Table 1 provides comprehensive information combining the initial community conditions, actions taken during the research, and the results and changes arising from the empowerment process at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly.

The establishment of a strong institutional system is an essential initial step in the empowerment process. Through The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly, the community gains a platform to gather and learn together, strengthening a sense of unity and social support. A well-functioning institution also

enables effective resource management, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the empowerment program (Muniroh *et al.*, 2020).

This empowerment process involves several critical stages, from raising economic awareness to capacity building through training and support. The process involves not only the internal Islamic Education Assembly but is also supported by external parties such as universities and local government. The results of this empowerment show increased community independence, adoption of modern technology, and diversification of locally valuable products. According to Muniroh *et al.* (2020), empowerment approaches involving active community participation and external support significantly improve community well-being and capacity to address economic challenges.

The research findings show that a structured empowerment strategy significantly improved several aspects of the community in Tamarunang Village. Economic awareness increased, leading the community to identify and utilize their local potential. Community participation in economic development activities grew through inclusive meetings and discussions. Capacity-building efforts, such as training and workshops, enhanced skills in agroindustry and small businesses, enabling productive economic activities. The introduction of modern technology bridged the digital divide and supported economic and social interactions. Additionally, the diversification of local products, such as vegetable nuggets and egg floss, added economic value, while reduced dependence on external aid marked a shift toward independence and improved quality of life.

The practical implications of this research suggest that a structured empowerment model can be replicated. The integration of modern technology, skill development, and active community participation can build economic resilience and self-reliance. Stakeholders, including universities and local governments, can collaborate to design sustainable community development programs. Theoretically, this research reinforces the importance of combining awareness, participation, and technology adoption in driving socio-economic transformation. It aligns with community development and institutional capacity building theories and provides empirical evidence to refine empowerment models (Sarjiyanto *et al.*, 2024). The empowerment process in Tamarunang Village shows that a structured approach focusing on awareness, participation, and capacity building can lead to significant socio-economic transformation. These findings serve as a benchmark for developing scalable and sustainable empowerment strategies in other regions.

### **Strategies for Creative Economic Empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly**

Community empowerment aims to develop individual capacities to understand their rights and obligations, and to overcome obstacles such as lack of information access, technology, and capital (Akbar *et al.*, 2023). This effort is crucial for improving quality of life, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

The empowerment strategy includes education and training designed to enhance skills and knowledge, allowing individuals to be self-reliant and participate in development. At The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly, the empowerment strategy follows the Aras Mezzo concept, involving the use of groups as intervention media. Training programs include making nuggets, ice cream, and egg floss to improve the community's economic skills (Khoirulika *et al.*, 2025). The main goal is to equip the community with skills that enable them to live independently (Akbar *et al.*, 2023). The empowerment efforts at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly aim to enhance community capacity through various activities tailored to local potential. The steps and results of the implemented empowerment strategy can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of Data Reduction on Creative Economic Empowerment Strategies

| No | Strategy Steps            | Activities and Implementation  | Achieved Results   |
|----|---------------------------|--|--|
| 1  | Pre-Empowerment           | a) Establishing a strong institutional system with agreed-upon programs by The Islamic Education Assembly members.<br>b) Designing productive economic activities such as making nuggets, ice cream, and egg floss.<br>c) Preparing essential materials for empowerment activities.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formation of a strong institutional system and programs that enhance the performance of management and members.</li> <li>- Development of creative products such as vegetable nuggets, ice cream, and egg floss.</li> </ul> |
| 2  | During Empowerment        | a) Enhancing the quality and quantity of education through training, field practice, and internships.<br>b) Increasing the quality and frequency of extension services for additional knowledge.<br>c) Strengthening institutions through regular meetings and coordination among members.<br>d) Disseminating information about flagship products and sources of raw materials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community gains new skills in food production.</li> <li>- Increased community participation in empowerment activities and extension services.</li> <li>- Improved access to marketing information.</li> </ul>               |
| 3  | Empowerment Effectiveness | Effectiveness of the empowerment strategy is assessed from three aspects:<br>a) Cognitive: Increased community knowledge related to processing and storing products.<br>b) Affective: Positive changes in attitudes and behavior towards the empowerment   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive changes in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.</li> <li>- Increased community independence and reduced reliance on others.</li> <li>- Increased community confidence in development forums.</li> </ul>  |

| No | Strategy Steps | Activities and Implementation  | Achieved Results  |
|----|----------------|--|---|
|    |                | program.<br>c) Psychomotor: Enhanced skills in producing nuggets, ice cream, and egg floss.  |   |
| 4  | 5P Approach    | Empowerment is conducted using the 5P approach:<br>a) Enabling: Community potential develops well due to high participation.<br>b) Strengthening: Community knowledge is reinforced through socialization.<br>c) Protection: Empowerment is carried out independently by the community.<br>d) Support: Guidance and training are provided for free by The Islamic Education Assembly.<br>e) Maintenance: Equal opportunities for all participants to strive and develop. | - Equal opportunities for development and independent effort.<br>- Balanced distribution of power among various community groups.<br>- Increased visibility and development of community potential. |

Source: Data processing results (2023)

Table 2 illustrates the steps and strategies of empowerment implemented by The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly. These steps include various initiatives, from forming a strong institutional system and developing creative products to enhancing skills and community confidence. The strategies have led to significant changes in various aspects of community life, including improved economic well-being, access to technology, and participation in social and economic activities.

The formation of a strong institutional system is a crucial initial step in the empowerment process. Through The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly, the community gains a platform to gather and learn together, fostering a strong sense of togetherness and social support. A well-functioning institution also allows for effective resource management, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of the empowerment program (Muniroh *et al.*, 2020).

The development of products such as vegetable nuggets, ice cream, and egg floss represents a tangible result of the empowerment efforts. Through training and support, community members not only acquire technical skills but also improve their income. This aligns with research showing that targeted skill training can significantly enhance community economic well-being (Susilowati *et al.*, 2020).

Furthermore, the increase in community skills and confidence is an indicator of successful empowerment. The previously passive and dependent community members are now able to innovate and take initiatives to improve their living

standards. This increase in confidence is important as it influences their ability to participate in social and economic development in their area (Khoirulika *et al.*, 2025).

The findings at the pre-empowerment stage highlight the importance of establishing a strong institutional system for the sustainability of empowerment programs. Strengthening community institutions provides a solid foundation for effective resource management, which is crucial for the success of the empowerment process. During the empowerment stage, education and training activities contribute significantly to the development of skills, market access, and increased community participation. This emphasizes the importance of technical training and socio-economic connectivity among community members. Finally, at the empowerment effectiveness stage, positive changes in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects reflect the success of a more holistic empowerment process. These improvements result in greater community independence and higher self-confidence, making empowerment more sustainable in the long term.

The application of the 5P approach has led to equal development opportunities, balanced power distribution, and increased community potential. Policy recommendations emphasize the need for inclusive, participatory empowerment policies that ensure fair development opportunities for all community members.

### Factors Influencing Economic Empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly

The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly is an educational institution that plays a significant role in studying, teaching, and preaching. The institution also contributes to environmental protection and management according to the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. Its presence as a significant educational institution in the community is crucial (Wella *et al.*, 2022).

Respondents provided varying responses regarding the empowerment programs at The Islamic Education Assembly. The factors affecting empowerment are detailed in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Results of Data Reduction on Factors Affecting Economic Empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly

| No | Question   | Informant Response   | Empowerment Factor                              |
|----|--|--|---|
| 1  | How does community participation in The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly activities affect the success of the economic empowerment program? | The community has been enthusiastic since the establishment of The Islamic Education Assembly and continues to actively participate in various activities. | Supporting Factor: High Community Participation |
| 2  | How does the loyalty of the congregation and community   | Loyalty is reflected in their sharing of sales results and   | Supporting Factor: Loyalty of                   |

| No | Question   | Informant Response  | Empowerment Factor  |
|----|--|---|---|
|    | to The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly affect the sustainability of the empowerment program?   | maintaining relationships among members, which strengthens connections and increases the number of The Islamic Education Assembly members.                    | Congregation and Community                                      |
| 3  | How do the demands for training from the congregation and members of the creative economic empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly influence the program? | High community desire to learn and develop economic skills, such as agro-industrial product making, drives economic growth at The Islamic Education Assembly. | Supporting Factor: Demand for Empowerment Training              |
| 4  | How does the strategic location of The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly affect accessibility and community participation in the empowerment program?                  | Located in Tamarunang Village, Somba Opu District, it facilitates easy access for the community without disrupting their main jobs.                           | Supporting Factor: Strategic Location                           |
| 5  | How does support from local government affect the implementation and success of the economic empowerment program at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly?             | Government support in the form of financial aid helps smooth the implementation of empowerment activities at The Islamic Education Assembly.                  | Supporting Factor: Support from Local Government                |
| 6  | How does interaction with external communities affect the development of knowledge and technology among The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly members?                 | The local community tends to interact less with outsiders, resulting in slow development of knowledge and technology despite the presence of social media.    | Hindering Factor: Lack of Interaction with External Communities |
| 7  | How does community dependence on others affect economic empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly?  | Dependence on others hampers the process of achieving independence, although training is expected to foster self-confidence.                                  | Hindering Factor: Dependence                                    |
| 8  | How do the facilities and infrastructure used in empowerment activities at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly affect the program?                                   | The lack of a permanent building for The Islamic Education Assembly activities often hampers activities that are currently held at the chairman's house.      | Hindering Factor: Facilities and Infrastructure                 |

Source: Data processing results (2023)

Economic empowerment activities at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly indicate that the success of the program is supported by community participation, congregation loyalty, training demand, strategic location, and support from local government. Empowerment is carried out with a bottom-up approach, consistent with Empowerment Theory, which emphasizes the importance of enhancing individual and group capacities to achieve their goals (Yustikasari *et al.*,

2021). Active participation and congregation loyalty at The Islamic Education Assembly reflect Social Capital Theory, which strengthens cooperation and coordination in the community (Suyatna *et al.*, 2024). However, hindering factors such as dependence on social facilitators and limited facilities reflect challenges in achieving independence, aligning with Dependency Theory, which shows how dependence can impede development (Kay, 2020).

The main findings based on the data collected in each section of the study on the factors influencing economic empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly, the success of the economic empowerment program is driven by community participation and congregation loyalty, which are seen as supporting factors. The active participation of the community and their loyalty to the assembly foster a sense of solidarity and strengthen interpersonal ties, making it easier to carry out empowerment activities. These results have practical implications, especially in enhancing community engagement strategies for similar empowerment programs, suggesting that fostering a sense of belonging and commitment can lead to greater program sustainability.

Another important factor is the demand for training, which plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth at the assembly. This shows that when there is a high desire for skill development, particularly in areas like agro-industrial product creation, the community becomes more engaged in the empowerment process. This finding underscores the importance of providing relevant and practical training that aligns with the community's aspirations and needs, contributing both to their economic well-being and self-reliance.

Furthermore, the strategic location of The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly is a crucial enabling factor. Its accessibility allows community members to participate in empowerment activities without interrupting their primary occupations. This highlights the significance of considering geographic and logistical factors when designing empowerment programs, as ease of access can greatly enhance participation and program success.

Support from the local government also emerges as a critical factor, with financial aid helping to smooth the implementation of empowerment activities. This emphasizes the importance of securing governmental support, which can provide essential resources for the continuity and expansion of such programs.

On the other hand, there are some hindering factors. For example, the lack of interaction with external communities and community dependence limit the development of new knowledge, technology, and independence within the assembly. These issues highlight the need for greater external collaboration and reducing dependency on facilitators, which could encourage more self-sufficient growth. Additionally, the lack of permanent facilities for activities hinders the efficient delivery of programs, indicating that investment in infrastructure is necessary to ensure smooth and uninterrupted empowerment activities.

In summary, the findings of this study contribute to both practical and theoretical aspects of empowerment. Practically, the results suggest the need for strong community participation, loyalty, training, and infrastructure, along with external support to ensure program success. Theoretically, these findings align with Empowerment Theory, Social Capital Theory, and Dependency Theory, offering a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the effectiveness of economic empowerment programs. Based on these findings, policy recommendations include increasing support for local institutions, fostering more interaction with external communities, and improving the availability of facilities and resources for empowerment activities.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that the empowerment pattern carried out by the community through the The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly involves economic awareness building and capacity strengthening. The bottom-up approach used is based on the community's own initiatives, with a focus on socialization to build awareness and motivation. Capacity strengthening is achieved through training and mentoring by the council's management. The applied empowerment strategy is the Mezzo-Level Strategy, which involves empowering a group of people through education and training, as well as strengthening institutional systems and designing productive economic activities. Supporting factors for economic empowerment at The Ummu Salamah Islamic Education Assembly include: (a) High community participation, (b) Loyalty of congregation and community, (c) Requests from congregants for training that supports empowerment activities, (d) Strategic location of the The Islamic Education Assembly, and (e) Conducive timing for carrying out activities. The hindering factors are: (a) Lack of connection with the outside community that slows the development of knowledge and technology, (b) Community dependence on others that slows the process of independence, and (c) Insufficient facilities and infrastructure. Criticisms of the findings include: first, the bottom-up approach places too much emphasis on community initiatives, overlooking the role of external support from the government or other organizations. Second, while supporting factors are mentioned, the long-term impact on community well-being is not clearly assessed. Third, these factors are overly general and lack context-specific analysis. Fourth, despite mentioning barriers such as infrastructure and dependence, there is no clear strategy to address them. Fifth, there is insufficient attention to the social and cultural factors influencing the empowerment process. Lastly, the use of a qualitative approach limits the ability to draw broader and more applicable conclusions.

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