

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE GOLDEN MELON CULTIVATION TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FARMER GROUPS IN THE KAPUDENOK ENVIRONMENT, CILEGON CITY

Islamiatul Magfiroh

Department of Non-Formal Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education  
Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University, Banten-Indonesia

Email [2221210054@untirta.ac.id](mailto:2221210054@untirta.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

This research aims to discuss the concept of community empowerment through a golden melon cultivation training program in the Kapudenok Environment, Cilegon City. The Kapudenok environment has great agricultural potential but has not been fully utilized, so this program is expected to increase the economic independence of the local community. The research method used is the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to identify, evaluate, and interpret the results of previous research related to community empowerment through golden melon cultivation training. The results of the SLR method show that similar programs have succeeded in improving the skills of farmer groups, diversifying income, and increasing agricultural productivity in various regions. This research aims to address several economic and social challenges in Kapudenok, such as high unemployment rates, limited access to resources, and lack of decent job opportunities. In this context, the community empowerment approach is implemented through training in golden melon cultivation that is adaptive to environmental changes, with support from local governments, agricultural institutions, and non-governmental organizations. Thus, the conclusion of this study is that the golden melon cultivation training program can be a solution in increasing the economic independence of the community, optimizing the use of existing agricultural land, and creating new sustainable job opportunities in the Kapudenok Environment, Cilegon City.

**Keywords:** *Community Empowerment, Training, Golden Melon*

### INTRODUCTION

Continuous community empowerment is related to various problems, such as poverty, access to adequate fulfillment of the desire for life, social inequality, institutions that have not been effective, and community independence. According to Soeharto (2005) in the journal Mustanir, A. et al. (2023), defining community empowerment is interpreted as a process of a series of activities that are useful for strengthening weak groups in society, especially individuals in society who experience poverty problems. Ife, Jim & Tesoriero, Frank (2016) in the journal Mustanir, A. et al. (2023), define community empowerment as providing resources, opportunities, knowledge, and skills to citizens to improve their ability to determine their own future and participate in efforts to influence the lives of their groups.

Cilegon City, where part of the agricultural area puts community empowerment as a strategic thing. According to Sulistyani (2004) in the journal Hamid, H (2018) said that the goal of community empowerment is the formation of free individuals and communities. This independence includes independence in thinking, acting and controlling what they do. Community empowerment through the golden melon cultivation training program is important in improving welfare and food security in the Kapudenok environment. Kapudenok is an area with considerable agricultural potential in Cilegon City but still needs further development. Through the golden melon cultivation training, it is hoped that it can improve farmers' skills in managing agricultural businesses and diversifying their sources of income. The Kapudenok environment has potential that has not been fully utilized in agriculture. There

are so many vacant lands that have not been planted at all. This is a potential that can be an important source of life for local communities to make optimal use of land.

The people of Kapudenok may face economic and social challenges such as high unemployment rates, limited access to resources, and lack of decent job opportunities. This condition can be a driving factor to find alternative livelihoods, including in the agricultural sector. Climate change and unstable environmental conditions can significantly affect agriculture. Through the training of golden melon cultivation, the community can learn plant management techniques that are more adaptive and resistant to environmental changes. The support from local governments, agricultural institutions, and non-governmental organizations in the form of training programs and technical assistance can be a catalyst for community empowerment initiatives in Kapudenok.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Research Approach

In this study, the Systematic Literature Review method is used which is abbreviated as SLR which is a literature review method that identifies, evaluates, and interprets all the results of a research topic to answer a specific research question. This method is applied systematically according to steps and protocols that help avoid subjective understanding and bias with research in the literature review process. The purpose of the Systematic Literature Review is to identify, review, evaluate, and interpret all available research with a topic area of interest in a phenomenon with a specific relevant research question. The Systematic Literature Review research method consists of 5 stages, including:

1. The first stage is formulating a problem, which is the process of identifying or finding problems why research is carried out. In this study, the researcher investigated the problem through a research journal on the results of the previous study.
2. The second stage is to search for literature or identification discussing the search for relevant journals and articles through academic databases such as Scopus, Pubmed, Crossref and Google Scholar which then make research conclusions, discuss the results of logical analysis, make conclusions or brief explanations and include answers to questions asked in the preparation of assignments and be able to understand the results of literature that has been summarized in previous research, which will be used as research plan material. The identification of the literature found contains descriptions of theories, articles and research journals taken from other sources as the basis for this discussion activity.
3. The third stage is to find appropriate literature, discussing whether the information obtained can be used as research material or not.
4. The fourth stage is about qualification requirements, discussing related to the quality of the SLR method. The researcher refers to the evaluation of the journal's real data sources using the following criteria: peer-reviewed, CiteScore-indexed, Journal Impact Factors (JIF), Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) for Elsevier Scopus, SCImago Journal Rating (SJR). This criterion can go beyond the data or articles selected for further analysis.
5. And the last stage is to make research conclusions, discuss the results of logical analysis, make conclusions or brief explanations and include answers to the questions asked in the preparation of the assignment and be able to understand the results of the literature that has been summarized.

The steps in conducting *a Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) are:

1. Definition of Research Questions is the formulation of a clear research question or hypothesis that will be answered by SLR.
2. Protocol Development is the preparation of a protocol that includes criteria and methods for selecting studies including inclusion and exclusion criteria.
3. A literature search is a thorough literature search in databases, journals, and other sources to find relevant studies.
4. Study Selection is to filter the literature found based on predetermined criteria to select studies that are relevant to the research question.
5. Data Extraction is the systematic pulling of relevant data from the selected study
6. The Quality Assessment is to evaluate the quality and reliability of the selected study.
7. Data Synthesis is analyzing and synthesizing data to draw conclusions about research questions.

8. Results reporting is to present findings in a structured format, often including a summary of the evidence, limitations and implications for future research.

### **Research Venue**

The research site that will be carried out by the researcher is located in the Kapudenok Akil Village, Lebak Denok Village, Citangkil District, Cilegon City, Banten Province

### **Research Time**

Research on Community Empowerment Through the Golden Melon Cultivation Training Program for Farmer Groups in the Kapudenok Environment will be carried out from April 2024 to June 2024. Researchers will begin making initial observations about the problems to be studied in April 2024. The next activity, from May 2024 to June 2024, research will be carried out on agricultural land in the Kapudenok environment, to then analyze the data and complete the preparation of research results.

### **Research Objectives**

The target of this study is stakeholders in the Kapudenok Environment and villagers in the Kapudenok Environment who are members of farmer groups who will be guided by training facilitators.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection techniques are procedures or methods used by researchers to obtain data in the field. In this study, the data collection techniques used are as follows:

1. Observation Guidelines

The information that can be obtained from the results of observation is the place, the perpetrator, the activity, the object, the deed, the occurrence or event, the time and the feeling. Observation is carried out with the aim of presenting a realistic picture of behavior or events that occur in the field, to answer questions. This observation guideline is used to supplement the data in CHAPTER IV.

Patton in Ahmadi (2014: 161) states that the purpose of observation is to describe the observed scene, the activities that take place in that setting, the people who participate in the activities, the meaning of the setting, and their participation in the people. The author's reason is in the observation method, so that the author can know firsthand the situation or reality in the field.

2. Interview Guidelines

Sugiyono (2010:157) said that interviews are used as a data collection technique if the researcher wants to conduct a preliminary study to find the problem to be researched, and also if the researcher wants to know things from the respondents in more depth and the number of respondents is small or small.

There are several things that need to be considered by researchers when conducting interviews, namely speed in speaking, voice intonation, grammar, question sensitivity and nonverbal sensitivity fibers.

In general, interview guidelines are used to dig deeper into data according to what is happening in the field, as well as to obtain data or information that researchers cannot find in other sources.

3. Documentation Studies

Guba and Lincoln (in Moleong, 2006: 216) propose that the study of documentation is any written material or documentary film. This documentation study was carried out to collect data in the form of documents, archives, photos, videos, and voice recordings that support the research process to support the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers. In this study, the researcher analyzed the documents collected at the time of the study.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

In this study, the techniques and data analysis used are inductive data analysis. Inductive data analysis is a drawing of conclusions departing from specific facts, which will later draw a general conclusion. Data analysis techniques are the process of searching for data, systematically compiling data obtained from the results of interviews, field notes, and documentation, by organizing data into categories, describing them into units, synthesizing, compiling them into patterns of choosing which ones are important and what will be studied, and making conclusions so that they are easily understood by yourself and others.

The steps to analyze the data in this study are as follows:

1. Data Reduction

Sugiyono (2014: 338) defines data reduction as an effort to summarize and select things that are essential, focus on things that are considered important, look for themes and patterns, and discard things that are considered unnecessary. Thus the reduced data will provide a clearer picture, and make it easier for researchers to collect further data and search for it if necessary.

## 2. Data Presentation

Amailles and Huberman (in Sugiyono, 2014: 341) argue that the most commonly used to present qualitative research data is to use text and narrative. At this stage, the researcher presents information through presentation in the form of narrative text in order to obtain a complete presentation of data from the results of data collection that has been carried out.

## 3. Drawing conclusions

Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono, 2014: 345) define qualitative data analysis as a drawing of conclusions and verification. The initial conclusions presented are still provisional and will change if no more strong and supporting evidence is found at the next stage of data collection. The conclusion in qualitative research may be able to answer the formulation of the problem formulated from the beginning, but it may also not, because the problem and problem formulation in qualitative research are still temporary and will develop after the research in the field is carried out.

In this study, the data that has been analyzed through the steps mentioned above are then drawn critical conclusions using an inductive method that comes from all things that are specific with the aim of obtaining general conclusions that are objective. After the conclusion is drawn, verification is then carried out by looking back at the results of the reduction and presentation of the data so that the conclusion does not deviate from the focus of the problem in the research. The last is to make research conclusions, discuss the results of logical analysis, make conclusions or brief explanations and include answers to questions asked in the preparation of assignments and be able to understand the results of the literature that has been summarized

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

Empowerment is an effort to free a person from rigid control and give him the freedom to take responsibility for his thoughts, decisions and actions. Linton defines society as a group of people who cooperate with each other because they have lived together long enough to form an organization to regulate each individual in the society and make them able to independently regulate themselves and think of themselves as a social unit with certain limits.

Ife, Jim & Tesoriero, Frank (2016) define community empowerment as something that provides resources, opportunities, and knowledge and skills to the community to improve the ability of the community to determine their own future and participate in influencing the lives of their group. And as an achievement, empowerment refers to the condition that is the goal of a social change, namely an empowered society, which has the power or knowledge and ability to meet the needs of life, both physical, economic and social needs. Social needs here include self-confidence, conveying aspirations, having a livelihood, participating in social activities, and being independent in carrying out their life duties.

In the Law on Villages Number 6 of 2014 in point 12 it is said that Village Community Empowerment is an effort to develop community independence and welfare by increasing knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors, abilities, and awareness as well as utilizing resources through the determination of policies, programs and activities as well as assistance in accordance with the nature of the problem and priority needs of the village community. Mardikanto and Poerwoko (2012:111-112), elaborate on the objectives of empowerment including various improvement efforts, namely:

### 1. Better education

In an effort to improve education, empowerment must be designed as an effort to form a better education. Educational improvement carried out through empowerment is not only limited to material improvements, method improvements, improvements related to time and place, as well as the relationship between facilitators and beneficiaries, an important point that needs to be



underlined is how the improvement of non-formal education in the empowerment process is able to foster enthusiasm and desire to continue learning without time and age limits.

2. **Better accessibility**  
The need to improve accessibility to sources of information/innovation, financing/financial sources, product providers, equipment and marketing institutions, which will then grow and develop the spirit of lifelong learning over time
3. **Better action**  
Through the provision of improving education and improving accessibility with a variety of resources, both human resources, natural resources and other/better artificial resources, it is hoped that it will be able to give birth to better actions as well.
4. **Better institution**  
Through the improvement of the actions taken, it is hoped that it can improve community institutions, especially in terms of developing a network of partnerships, so that a strong bargaining position can be created in the community.
5. **Better business**  
Through improving education, improving accessibility, improving actions, and improving institutions, it is hoped that it will be able to improve the business/business that is run.
6. **Better income**  
Through the improvement of the business that is carried out, it is hoped that it can improve the income obtained, including the income of the family and the community.
7. **Better environment**  
Through income improvement, it is hoped that it can improve the environment, both the physical environment and the social environment. Because environmental damage is often caused by poverty or limited income.
8. **Better living**  
Through adequate income levels and a healthy environment, it is hoped that it can improve the living situation of every family and community.
9. **Better community**  
To achieve a better living situation and supported by a better environment, both physical and social, it is hoped that it can realize a better life for the community.

There are several principles in community empowerment, these principles include:

1. Because every society has different problems, needs, and potentials, every society has the same right to be empowered. Empowerment is carried out democratically and sincerely, without any element of coercion.
2. Community empowerment activities must be based on the needs, problems, and potentials of the target group. This can be clearly known if the identification and socialization process in the early stages takes place with the full involvement of the target group.
3. The community is the main target of empowerment, so it must position itself as a subject/actor in empowerment activities, and become the main basis in setting goals, approaches, and forms of empowerment activities.
4. Re-growing cultural values and local wisdom. These values include the spirit of mutual cooperation, young people respect older people, and older people love younger people, because this can be social capital in development.
5. It is carried out gradually and continuously, because it is a process that takes time and is carried out logically and simply towards more complex things.
6. Paying attention to the diversity of characters, cultures and habits of the community that have been rooted or lasted for a long time from generation to generation
7. Pay attention to all aspects of people's lives, especially social aspects and economic aspects.
8. There is no element of discrimination, especially against women.
9. Always implement a participatory decision-making process, such as determining time, material, activity methods and others.

10. Mobilizing community participation in various forms, both physical and non-physical. Physical form includes matter, energy, materials. While the non-physical form includes advice, time, support.
11. Empowerment agents act as facilitators who must have abilities according to the potential, needs, and problems faced by the community. And willing to cooperate with all parties and related community institutions

Economic development, according to Prof. Ir. Soedarsono Hadisaputro, is defined as a directing process to increase per capita production, and increase per capita income and increase productivity. The briefing process is passed by adding skills and increasing capital income. In this case, agricultural development is one part of economic development. With economic development, the output or wealth of a society or economy will increase. In addition, the welfare of the community will also increase because economic development has been able to increase opportunities for people to have a wider choice. Economic development also provides a freedom to choose more pleasures. In a primitive economy, people are forced to work hard just to maintain their lives and not to die. With economic development, there will be more goods to satisfy needs and also more opportunities for life, fun and long rest. Economic development also allows people to think more about the human traits, because of the more means available.

Agriculture is defined as an activity in which humans intervene in the development of plant life in order to be better able to meet their needs. Optimal use of agricultural land refers to a process or strategy that aims to optimize the use of available agricultural land in the Kapudenok Environment. It includes an understanding of tillage techniques, the selection of suitable crops, water management, and the effective use of agricultural technology. Improving farmers' skills in managing agricultural businesses, especially in the cultivation of golden melons, refers to efforts to improve the knowledge, expertise, and strategies necessary to effectively manage the cultivation of golden melons. This includes an understanding of cultivation techniques, crop management, pest and disease control, and marketing strategies. Measurement of farmers' skill level in golden melon cultivation based on their ability to apply appropriate agricultural practices, manage risks, and make smart decisions in managing agricultural businesses. This can be measured by practical skills tests, field assessments, and participatory observation during the training process.

Measurement of the optimal level of agricultural land use based on parameters such as cultivated land area, crop productivity, resource use efficiency, and environmental sustainability. This can be measured by field surveys, analysis of production data, and evaluation of agricultural techniques used by farmers in the Kapudenok Neighborhood. The increase in the amount of capital and skills is intended to increase the intervention in agricultural development. The increase in production referred to in this case is income and productivity that can last for an unlimited time. So it is not just about providing an increase in production, income and productivity in a year or a few years.

In the golden melon cultivation training program, the appropriate learning theory used is the participatory learning theory. Sudjana (2005:155) defines participatory learning as an effort by trainers to include participants in learning activities. Participatory learning activities contain the meaning of participants' participation in the learning program. Freire in Sudjan (2005:180) said that the participatory learning process is reviewed in terms of interaction between trainers and participants. Therefore, the participatory learning process in the implementation of learning has several characteristics, one of which is that the coach encourages and helps participants to develop problem-solving skills so that they are able to think and act. In terms of community empowerment through golden melon cultivation training, it is very effective using a participatory learning model. This is because participatory learning emphasizes collaboration between trainers and participants to achieve a deeper and more sustainable understanding.

Table 1  
 Results of Previous Research on Community Empowerment through the Golden Melon Training Program

No.	Tittle, Research, and Year of Research	Research Results
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1	Toiba, H., Putritamara, J. A., Suyadi, S., Rahman, M. S., Bushron, R., Aziz, A. L., & Fattah, M. (2023). Application and Assistance of Greenhouse Melon and Hydroponic Pepper Businesses as an Effort to Empower Victims of the Mount Semeru Eruption Disaster. <i>Journal of Community Service Dynamics (JDP)</i> , 8(2).	The results of this research are to emerge farmers' innovations in agricultural cultivation in the modern era, especially after the eruption of Mount Semeru, supporting the downstream of superior agricultural products that can become new value for people affected by disasters. Community service activities prioritize a multifunctional perspective where each element in the triple helix relationship, namely the government, partners and universities, has partial and simultaneous functionality which ultimately the function is more optimal if carried out together. For example, a greenhouse is an addition to a variety of hydroponic plant functions that utilize existing and relatively affordable land. Especially implicated in areas that are vulnerable to disasters. This program includes an agenda in restoring the economy through the agricultural sector as the main daily livelihood of the Lumajang community.
2	Rosadi, N. A., Novida, S., Syuhriatin, S., & Juniawan, A. (2023). Training on Making Melon Chips Products Using Dehydrator Devices for the Unizar Technology Business Incubator (ITe) MSME Group. <i>Journal of Undikma Community Service</i> , 4(3), 572-580.	The results of the research obtained in this community service activity are that with the training activities for making melon chips, MSME groups can improve their skills and knowledge about technological tools such as Dehydrators to increase the production of melon chips. As well as packaging melon chips that are durable and durable.
3	Prayoga, P. N. D., Esterilita, M., & Kasofi, A. (2023, January). Empowerment of the Scavenger Community through the Development of Hydroponic Agriculture Business in a Narrow Urban Area Swara Hijau Farm. In <i>Proceedings of the University Research Colloquium</i> (pp. 327-339).	The results of this study show that after the intervention, Swara Hijau Farm has changed for the better. The final condition obtained at the time of termination was an increase in the number of products with the addition of a new green house, the managerial ability of the management business has improved in terms of Knowledge and Skills of Business Management, identification and assessment, work planning, expansion of work networks, recording and reporting, fundraising skills, and the involvement of the surrounding scavenger community as workers in the Swara Hijau Farm business. The results obtained from the Scavenger Community side that they have alternative jobs and additional income by hydroponic farming with Swara Hijau Farm.
4	Fitriani, F. (2023). <i>Community economic empowerment through the culinary business of Golden Melon Tourism (Kebon Ayu Village, Gerung District, West Lombok Regency)</i> (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Mataram).	The result of this research is a form of community economic empowerment through the golden melon tourism culinary business in Kebon Ayu Village, namely discussions through collaboration between the village government and the people of Kebon Ayu Village, tourism-based training for the people of Kebon Ayu Village, and providing assistance to the people of Kebon Ayu Village.
5	Wibowo, T. J., Supriyadi, S., & Gerry, A. D. P. (2017). Strategy to improve the performance of the apollo melon agribusiness supply chain in Cilegon City. <i>Proceedings of Semnastek</i> .	The results of this study show that the supply chain structure in Cilegon City is still very simple. Most of the farmers' harvest is directly taken by fruit distributors. This still simple structure occurs because Cilegon farmers no longer have a well-established agricultural institutional system. To overcome this problem, through SWOT analysis, 12 alternative

		strategies were identified to improve the performance of the melon supply chain in Cilegon City with three priority alternative strategies, namely 1) expansion of planting area and increasing productivity to increase melon harvest production, 2) expansion of market share that is able to absorb melon harvest and 3) development of partnerships by increasing the role of the government in providing direct and indirect assistance to farmers, farmer groups and farmer group associations. The model of improving supply chain performance in Cilegon City includes four main perspectives of the balanced scorecard, namely farmer finance, customers, cultivation process and farmer learning.
6	Herdhiansyah, D., & Asriani, A. (2023, October). PKM Hydroponic Melon Plant Cultivation Technology in Greenhouse at Griya Melon Kendari MSMEs. In <i>Proceedings of the National Seminar on Community Service LPPM UMJ</i> (Vol. 1, No. 1).	The results of this study show that the Community Service (PKM) activities of Hydroponic Melon Plant Cultivation Technology in Greenhouse at Griya Melon Kendari MSMEs have been running well by 95%. In addition to increasing the knowledge and skills of the target audience, it also increases yard land use and business income.

### Discussion

Of the several literature that is the source of reference for researchers, most of the discussions are related to community empowerment regarding trainings that aim to empower the community by utilizing existing resources. It also discusses innovations in agricultural cultivation such as hydroponics which can increase productivity and quality of agricultural products, and can also increase the income of the surrounding community. The results of research from several literatures confirm the importance of developing technology and skills in improving economic and agricultural sustainability in various regions, especially those that are vulnerable to natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions. Collaboration between various parties and the implementation of the right strategies can be the key to success in building a more economically independent society through the agricultural sector.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions, it can be concluded that the concept of community empowerment through golden melon cultivation training aims to increase the economic independence of the community, judging from the agricultural land in the Kapudenok Environment which has great agricultural potential but has not been fully utilized, by conducting golden melon cultivation training, it is hoped that local communities can increase the productivity of existing agricultural land and maximizing the sustainable use of natural resources. This golden melon cultivation training program not only aims to increase agricultural yields, but also to diversify people's income. Thus, this program is expected to help reduce the unemployment rate, increase access to resources, and create new sustainable job opportunities.

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