# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY-BASED EMPOWERMENT LEARNING IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING: A CASE STUDY IN SMAN 2 CIANJUR

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***Abstract:*** *The formulations of the problems and the purposes of this research were about the learning process of empowerment of local communities and the impact of learning about local community in improving critical and creative thinking of students at SMAN 2 Cianjur. Data and information collection techniques used were the interview, observation, and record of the experience. The findings of this study were: (1) The students of SMAN 2 Cianjur conducted three stages of empowerment, namely the planning stage by dividing the class into nine groups of experts along with their respective duties, the implementation stage consisting of the presentation and demonstration of the student's innovations, and the last one, that is, the assessment stage carried out by various assessors. (2) local community-based empowerment was considered to be appropriate to increase students' critical and creative thinking. Then, the publication by students was also as a concrete action that through the use of electronics we can improve the productivity and the marketing of the local communities in order to remain sustainable and adaptive in accordance with the current developments.*

***Keywords****: critical and creative thinking, empowerment, local community*

***Abstrak.*** *Rumusan masalah dan tujuan penelitian ini adalah tentang proses pembelajaran pemberdayaan masyarakat lokal dan dampak pembelajaran masyarakat lokal dalam meningkatkan berpikir kritis dan kreatif siswa SMAN 2 Cianjur. Teknik pengumpulan data dan informasi menggunakan wawancara, observasi, dan catatan pengalaman. Temuan penelitian ini adalah: (1) Siswa SMAN 2 Cianjur melaksanakan tiga tahap proses pemberdayaan masyarakat, yaitu tahap perencanaan dengan membagi kelas menjadi sembilan kelompok ahli beserta tugasnya masing-masing, tahap pelaksanaan yang terdiri dari presentasi dan demonstrasi inovasi siswa, dan yang terakhir, yaitu tahap penilaian yang dilakukan oleh berbagai penilai. (2) Pemberdayaan masyarakat berbasis lokal dianggap tepat untuk meningkatkan pemikiran kritis dan kreatif siswa. Selain itu, publikasi yang dilakukan oleh siswa juga merupakan tindakan nyata, di mana melalui penggunaan media elektronik produktivitas dan pengenalan terhadap masyarakat lokal dapat ditingkatkan untuk menjaga agar tetap lestari dan adaptif sesuai dengan perkembangan saat ini.*

***Kata Kunci:*** *berpikir kritis dan kreatif, pemberdayaan, masyarakat lokal*

## INTRODUCTION

The era of globalization makes wide impacts in many aspects of life. In this era, individuals are required to have good thinking skills in reading and analyzing the existing problems in order to obtain an appropriate action (Bachtiar Alam, 1998). One of the impacts of globalization is the impact on the educational aspect. The aspects of education required to be able to produce the high-quality Human Resources (HR), not only the students but also the educators who are experts and

professionals (Deden, 2015). Characteristics of qualified human resources are able to manage, use, and develop the thinking skills, two of which are a critical and creative thinking. Critical and creative thinking skills are the life skill needed in the 21st century or the century of globalization which is embodied in the national education goal, that is, to develop students' potentials to become a man who is obedient to God Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent and become democratic and accountable citizens. An empowerment of creative thinking in the learning process in school will internalize disposition or tendency of students to be able to think creatively (Education Law No. 22 of 2003).

The learning process in Indonesia, especially in the field of sociology, generally still based on how to understand the concepts, principles, and memorize terms in sociology. The learning process has not become a means to empower the creative thinking skill of students (Sarwinda, 2012). The results of preliminary observations made by the researcher showed that the average high school sociology teachers in Cianjur had not implemented a learning that could train the students' critical and creative thinking. This was due to the ignorance of the teachers on instructional strategies that have the potential to empower the creative thinking skill of students. Besides, the learning, which happens in the classroom, is still a teacher -centered, so that a teacher is dominant in the classroom (Sarwinda, 2012) (Solang, 2003). But actually, there are many contextual learnings in the environment that can enhance students' critical and creative thinking, for example by investigating local wisdom of each region. In this context, a society which will be established through the education of sociology is a global community that remains grounded in local wisdom. (Kawuryan, 2010). There is much local wisdom in Cianjur, especially in traditional foods, for example, *tauco*, sweets, rice *pandan wangi*, *tengteng* (Dishubkominfo, 2005) that must be preserved in the 21st century. The formulations of the problems and the purposes of this research were about the learning process of empowerment of local communities and the impact of learning about local communities in improving critical and creative thinking of students at SMAN 2 Cianjur. The benefits of this research were expected to be useful for students to improve students' critical thinking, as for teachers to provide a means of development of creative and critical thinking, and for the owners of the local communities was to improve productivity and marketing, and also for the people of Cianjur in order to preserve the existing local communities.

## METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach, because this research on the effectiveness of local community-based community empowerment learning in improving students' critical and creative thinking did not focus on the results but on the process. The researcher used the case study method to address problems in this study. The case study method is a method that examines a case in detail. Although local community-based community empowerment learning also occurred in several other schools but community empowerment by students at SMAN 2 Cianjur had unique characteristics. In addition, the researcher wanted to obtain a detailed image of the local community-based community empowerment learning. The instrument used in this qualitative research was the researcher herself.

Data collection techniques in this research were the interview, observation, the study of literature, and observation record. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews to related parties, namely, SMAN 2 Cianjur sociology teachers, students of class XII IPS

1,2,3 and 4 at SMAN 2 Cianjur, and the owners of the local communities (Cianjur traditional foods communities).

The next data collection technique was observation. Observation is a process of direct observing the subject of the research in the field. Observation conducted by the researcher in this study, as described, was conducted at SMAN 2 Cianjur. The observation was continued until the required information were met and the expected goals were achieved. The researcher also observed parties involved in the empowerment of the local communities, then adapting to them so that they could understand the problems owned by local communities. The researcher conducted the study by making a quick note observation about all things seen and heard during the trial before it was rewritten into a complete record.

The researcher used triangulation technique and member check to verify the data. The source triangulation involved various related parties ie the students of class XII IPS SMAN 2 Cianjur, each of which consisted of a class leader, activities department in communities empowerment that consisted of the chairman of the committee, secretary, fundraising team, public relation team, logistic team, presenter team, publication team, and documentation team. Furthermore, the triangulation technique was used to get information from the owners of homemade food stores in Cianjur. This was done to avoid misunderstandings that would affect the conclusion drew by the researcher.

The data analysis techniques used by the researcher were data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The data on the effectiveness of local community-based community empowerment learning in order to improve students' critical and creative thinking was obtained by the researcher using the observation, depth interview, literature review, and observation record during the study. Then, the data was selected and sorted in order to determine which were important and necessary to fulfill the research objectives in accordance with the formulations of the problems and research questions which had been formulated so that the important data would not accumulate without any clear classification. The data of this study was displayed in short, clear and detailed but overall it was easy to understand the description of the aspects studied in whole or part by part. Next, the data was presented in narrative form or report in accordance with research data obtained. The conclusion was drawn up in the form of a brief statement and easy to refer to the purposes of the research. The result of these conclusions were the result of the comprehension obtained during the research and the results of the analysis conducted by the researcher. The conclusion was a new idea or invention because previously no one had studied about it.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results.

The empowerment of local communities in SMAN 2 Cianjur was implemented in class XII IPS. The reason for the implementation conducted at class XII because, according to the sociology teacher of SMAN 2 Cianjur, the cognitive level of class XII students were able to think critically and create a solution to the problems that occurred. The teacher also wanted the students to care about the environment in the globalization era. Additionally, it was also supported by the basic competency and syllabus in curriculum 2013 about the empowerment of local communities. The empowerment of local communities is a project that should be done by the students cooperatively.

There were four classes at SMAN 2 Cianjur, namely, IPS 1, IPS 2, 3 IPS and IPS 4. Each class had a different community to be empowered. The local community for IPS 1 was *tauco* which the brand was "*beruang*"

(bear), for IPS 2 was crispy spinach, for IPS 3 was *tengteng*, and for IPS 4 was nata de coco. All these foods were traditional foods that have their respective uniqueness.

The traditional foods were chosen because based on the results of a survey conducted by teachers and students of class XII IPS SMAN 2 Cianjur these foods had already existed since many years ago, but from time to time there was no change or innovation and monotonous as well. So, there was a worry that the traditional foods would be eroded by globalization and inferior to modern food. Thus, there had to be real solutions to these problems.

The community empowerment learning process was divided into three stages namely planning, implementation and evaluation. The planning stage included the division of nine expert groups including logistics team, fundraising team, secretarial team, preparation of reports team, presentations team, cooking team, documentation team, designers team, and social media publications team. The expert groups worked on their respective duties. In the planning stage itself, the students were given time for two months to think about and try to make a real innovation from the selected specialties. Fundraising group from each class had already sold several things to raise money for empowerment so the students did not solicit funds to their parents.

The second stage of the local communities empowerment was implementation. In this stage, the students visited local communities, presented and introduced the results of their innovations. The results of students' innovation were the new modern flavors and attractive packaging which was environmentally friendly. In addition, students also created social media accounts via instagram, twitter, and facebook, so the modification of their traditional foods could be known by the public. The responses from the owners of the local communities were good. They agreed with the empowerment, so that their sales are increasingly in demand, and not inferior to modern products.

Then, the last stage was the evaluation. The evaluation of the empowerment of local communities here made to all parties, that is, by using the self-assessment of each group of experts, the assessment of other expert groups, the assessment of the coordinator, and even the assessment of the teachers. At this stage, the further communities empowerment implementation was decided as well after the owners agreed to the innovation of students. Many difficulties and problems faced by students during this empowerment. However, the students felt many benefits of which they could be independent, saw business opportunities, became entrepreneurs, and got involved in the preservation of local communities in Cianjur.

**Discussion.**

Based on the results, the empowerment of local communities covered traditional foods of Cianjur. The local communities were formed as the excellence of local culture and geographical conditions in the broad sense as the traditional foods of Cianjur in this empowerment learning. The local community is a product of the past culture that should continuously become a lifeline (Kawuryan, 2010). Although local in values but the values lie within one of the basic local functions are to establish identity. By this way, the global changes that penetrate various sectors of students' lives will not deprive local values that have been living in a social environment in which students live (Kawuryan, 2010) it is considered very universal. The local community is part of the local wisdom. Some of the functions of local knowledge (Amyrin, 2012) are as follows: 1. Serve to the conservation and preservation of natural resources. 2. Serve to human resources development. 3. Serve to the development of culture and science

Teachers in the learning strived to exploit the values of local wisdom as a source of learning for learners (Wuri Wuryandani, 2010). One of the empowerment strategies is a generation that acts as a facilitator of people movement (Priyatna, 2007). The role of this generation is helping to keep people to be able to organize themselves, identify local needs, and mobilize the resources available to them. This generation must not only influence the formulation of policy but expect changes in the implementation. One of the positive impacts of empowerment is the increased output and job performance. A community empowerment was also conducted in order to maintain the typical characteristics in the development of civilization in the 21st century. In doing this empowering, students were trained to think critically. Every individual has a creative potential that must be established and developed (Solang, 2003) teachers are expected to be able to realize the learning that activates and develops critical and creative thinking skill of students. (Yoni Sunaryo, 2014). By this empowerment, it was proven that students could create new innovations and some variants of modern taste and attractive packaging.

The students also demonstrated the innovation of flavors and attractive packaging to the owners and workers of local communities. The results of the research were in accordance with the opinion (Priyatna, 2007) which stated that the empowerment gives everyone the opportunity to receive and accept an additional skill and responsibility. Some training and development are required when a person wished to master certain skills. In addition to flavors and packaging innovation, the students also publicized their activities and products through social media so the innovation would be known more effectively and reach the wider community. The students' action was in accordance with (Cheng, 2002) that social media plays an important role in preserving local wisdom.

The assessment stage to all aspects of the empowerment stage in this study was in accordance with the concept of authentic assessment. As for authentic assessment, (H.M Zainudin, Hadi Mustafa, 2014) stated that it is an assessment process which assess not only results but also the process. Here, each individual was able to assesses the advantages and disadvantages of himself in learning.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### Conclusions

Based on the results presented, it could be concluded that the participant of the learning about empowerment of local communities in this research was class XII students of SMAN 2 Cianjur and there were three stages of empowerment, namely, the planning stage by dividing the class into nine groups of experts along with their respective duties, the implementation stage consisted of the presentation and demonstration of the innovation of the students, and the last one was the assessment stage carried out by various parties.

Furthermore, local community-based empowerment was considered to be appropriate to increase students' critical and creative thinking. This was proven by the results of the students' innovations themselves after a few tries and discussions. Even the students could be independent and entrepreneurial with their funds and marketing efforts of the local communities. Then, the publication by students was also as a concrete action that through the use of electronics in the 21st century we can improve the productivity and the marketing of local communities in order to remain sustainable and adaptive in accordance with the current developments.

### Suggestions

Based on the conclusions described above, this study recommended several issues

related to the empowerment of local communities, as follows; First, everyone needs to aware of the importance of preserving the local communities of each region. Second, the owners of the local communities should not isolate themselves from the current developments. Third, the government can pay attention to the local communities and make efforts in communities empowerment.

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