

Participatory and Compassionate Communication Strategy in Empowering Persons with Disabilities at Rumah Kinasih Foundation Blitar

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Abstract

To carry out empowerment for groups with disabilities, the communication process is the central point of achieving success. To do empowerment itself is not an easy thing, it takes a certain strategy or approach and a sustainable process, one of which is empowerment communication. Communication for empowering people with disabilities is an effective strategy to change the general public's view of people with disabilities who consider their limitations as incapable of being independent. This research try to find the communication strategy to empower persons with disabilities in Rumah Kinasih Foundation Blitar. This study uses a qualitative approach, case study method and data collection by means of interviews. The Result show that to empower the disabled people, communication should use participative, persuasive, and compassion way. Communication with them use more effort and carefulness. In Rumah Kinasih, they also use reward to make disabled people more productive.

Keywords: *Empowerment, communication, Disability.*

PENDAHULUAN

Community empowerment is expected to provide equal opportunities to groups of people with disabilities, regenerate the spirits that are almost broken because of the discriminatory stigma associated with people with disabilities. The empowerment process will not achieve its goals if it is not supported by participatory communication. In this case, active participation from people with disabilities is needed to realize the

desired goals and can be proof that people with disabilities also have equal opportunities, both in the standard of living and in the workplace.

Empowerment communication for people with disabilities as an effective strategy to change the general public's view of people with disabilities who think of their limitations as not being able to be independent. With this empowerment communication, it is hoped that people with disabilities can be given skills so that people with disabilities can have the same abilities as people with non-disabilities (Siregar and Purbantara 2020)

To carry out empowerment for groups with disabilities, the communication process is the central point of achieving success. Through several studies, several characters of empowerment communication strategies for disabilities were found. First, Empowering communication with disabilities is a process that requires more effort. Her research on empowering people with disabilities as waitresses at the Sunyi house of coffee and Hope. The communication process that occurs between owners and employees with disabilities, as well as employees with disabilities and consumers has limitations. The owner uses sign language as much as he understands as well as consumers who come using sign language that he understands. Continuous communication so that the messages conveyed both from owners, employees with disabilities, and consumers can be understood (Muthia and Chatamallah 2020)

This extra effort on communication was also found research on Batik Ciprat Blitar SMEs. Owners and managers of MSMEs, make a harder effort than communicating with normal people. Sign language is very important and needed in communicating with people with disabilities so managers must try to understand. In addition, communication in groups with disabilities must also have a motivational value. Providing motivation for employees with disabilities to continue to be enthusiastic, work diligently and be able to save money, how to be polite, live in harmony with friends so that good character is created and become a self-concept for employees with disabilities. This motivation is needed so that employees with disabilities have a good self-concept. Finally, communication is not limited to conveying messages but also transferring motivation. (Andiwi Meifilina 2022)

Furthermore, several studies show that communication in disability empowerment must be carried out in a participatory paradigm. A research at the Self-Help Group (KSM) Connect Roso Simbatan, Magetan Regency show majority of communication used from the pre-empowerment to the evaluation stage always emphasizes the participatory communication model. Where all sectors, both facilitators, families, community leaders, and local government are related and support each other in the process of delivering empowerment messages by looking at their communication needs. The communication process does not only aim to spread the message but also pays attention to the recipient's point of view. This method is expected to be able to maximize community participation and promote dialogue or two-way communication (Didin Putra Pradana 2019)

By paying attention to the recipient's point of view, one important principle that needs to be contained in communication is the use of communication aspects related to the audience. A research on advocacy for programs to empower workers with disabilities see the selection of communicators as an important aspect. Selection of communicators who come from persons with disabilities who have work experience and from the

perspective of job providers can provide a detailed description of the training participants. In addition, selecting the right communicator can build a harmonious relationship on each side during the implementation of the activity. For this reason, the selection of communicators must be able to communicate effectively and openly, which in the end can overcome all the problems that exist in each individual (Rahmi, Hafiar, and Bakti 2022).

On a larger and formal scale, the empowerment communication process carried out by more formal organizations requires management that must be more structured. The empowerment of the West Java Alliance of Women with Disabilities and Elderly emphasize gradual and careful planning in carrying out communication in empowerment. The communication process is carried out from the planning stage to evaluation using a variety of strategies from face to face to mediated (Setiawan, Setiawan, and Koswara 2020). Also research about the empowerment carried out by the Nagan Raya Government even mentioned the need for a research process to understand the character of the audience to run a disability empowerment communication program. (Martin and Maulida 2022)

This research tries to look at the communication process of empowering persons with disabilities by the Rumah Kinasih Blitar Foundation. Starting from seeing his childhood friend, Edi Cahyono founded Rumah Kinasih because he was inspired to empower people with disabilities. People with disabilities who are in Rumah Kinasih range from intellectual disabilities, mental disabilities, people with mental disorders (ODGJ), sensory deaf speech, blind and physically disabled. Kinasih Rumah Empowerment invites people with disabilities to produce fashion products such as batik cloth, bags, and cloth masks. Not only working, people with disabilities at Rumah Kinasih Foundation receive food twice a day. The Rumah Kinasih Foundation also partners with the local government to provide guidance, rehabilitation, advocacy, invoicing works that have economic value and so on. thanks to the facilities and empowerment provided by the Rumah Kinasih Foundation, the Rumah Kinasih Foundation can give birth to new disabled entrepreneurs who can later take care of other people with disabilities. This can be proof that people with disabilities can also have the same opportunities in the world of work..

METODE PENELITIAN

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method that is used to explore a situation or event that can be referred to as a case by using a systematic way of collecting data, information and deeper observation. The purpose of using this research method is to present a description and description of the object under study. In this study the author will describe this research related to the empowerment of persons with disabilities at the Rumah Kinasih Foundation, Blitar Regency.

In this study, the authors used steps related to some of these research methods. To obtain data relevant to research on the empowerment of persons with disabilities at the Rumah Kinasih Foundation, Blitar Regency, several methods were used to collect relevant data. In this study, the author will find out about how the empowerment communication strategy is carried out at Rumah Kinasih. Therefore the research starts from observing the strategies used by persons with disabilities at Kinasih House, both through understanding how to communicate as well as the empowerment that is being carried out.

Therefore the authors collect relevant data through several methods, namely observation, interviews, literature studies and retrieval of premiere data sources which include interviews with the founder, Batik Ciprat business coordinator, and Rumah Kinasih facilitator. Secondary data obtained from various literature, journals, social media, print media and other study results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews and observations at the Rumah Kinasih Foundation, the following communication strategies were obtained:

1. Ensuring Acceptance and Participation of the Environment

A sense of concern from local residents is an important aspect in empowering people with disabilities. Rumah Kinasih was founded based on the experience of a friend of Edi Cahyono who has been blind since childhood so he does not have access and opportunities in education and work or education. He was sent to an orphanage or hall belonging to the East Java Government. However, after receiving training for three years, he returned to his initial condition. In fact, not getting support from parents or the environment which has an impact on not having self-confidence. Seeing this event, Edi Cahyono's determination moved to provide facilities for people with disabilities and ODGJ (People with Mental Disorders).

The Bhakti Kinasih Mandiri Foundation or better known as Rumah Kinasih, was helped as a foundation that pioneered an inclusive movement in the field of entrepreneurship as a place for the rehabilitation of friends with disabilities to increase independence, prosperity, and be competitive. Adhering to the motto "Life No One Behind", the founders wanted equality for people with disabilities and left no one behind. The philosophy taken is that humans are born with different situations and circumstances, but they all have the right to a decent life. Whoever they are can change their life circumstances for the better and elevate their own rank in society. It was formed in 2016 and started as a legal entity in 2019. At the beginning, Rumah Kinasih provided opportunities for residents in the surrounding environment, developing around Blitar district and now even outside East Java province.

These principles and experiences regarding environmental participation are key to the development of Rumah Kinasih. For this reason, communication is carried out to embrace the surrounding environment which facilitates various processes starting with all permits and maintaining stability. Edi came and visited village officials from RT, RW, Kelurahan to Sub-Districts to communicate as a family. This process is important as the first step for the comfort of all activities in Rumah Kinasih. By maintaining this environment, Rumah Kinasih will officially receive support from the surrounding environment.

With permission and environmental support, Rumah Kinasih can provide services to persons with disabilities, starting from housing, food, education, treatment and cleaning which are always regulated and supervised by the management. This is done to make them comfortable and safe to continue living with equal rights. If someone needs treatment, the Management also routinely takes them to the doctor and is always under supervision. Persons with disabilities can eat twice a day. The Rumah Kinasih

Foundation also partners with the local government to provide guidance, rehabilitation, advocacy, invoicing works that have economic value and so on.

Rumah Kinasih organizes general and religious education regularly and is mandatory for persons with disabilities. Teachers are recruited in the spirit of social work for a modest fee. The lessons given are still adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities. Some of them have gone to school and some have even diploma graduated, but there are also those who cannot calculate the nominal amount of money at all, so the lessons given to each person will be different.

Striving for environmental acceptance is the initial goal of Rumah Kinasih's communication strategy. Acceptance is also followed by an understanding of the importance of care and concern for persons with disabilities. It is important to explain to the surrounding community about the purpose of empowerment itself to develop someone's ideals, potential, talents so that they can improve their quality of life. Empowerment is expected to be able to provide equal opportunities to groups with disabilities, regenerate the spirits that are almost broken because of the discriminatory stigma associated with people with disabilities. The empowerment process will not achieve its goals if it is not supported by participatory communication.

2. Persuasive and *Welas Asih* (Compassionate) Communication

After providing housing, food and education facilities, Rumah Kinasih wants people with disabilities to be able to work productively. Therefore, Empowerment is done by inviting them to learn to make various works. This foundation produces fashion products such as batik clothes, bags, and masks. The results are getting better. Within a month, Rumah Kinasih can produce 200 – 500 pieces of batik cloth with splattered motifs. The turnover obtained is also quite a lot, reaching 40-50 million rupiahs. Popularity and orders have reached consumers from abroad. The strength of Rumah Kinasih's products is Batik Ciprat, which is not the same as one another. This makes the batik cloth motif a limited edition.

To invite people with disabilities to be more productive begins with persuasive communication. Its main purpose is to influence the opinions and attitudes of the recipient. In this process, persuasion can be rational or emotional. Rationally, a person's cognitive component can be influenced. Cognitively they are given an idea of having sustainable activities and also when they have the desire it can be bought by hard work making splashed batik besides that they will also be given an understanding that there is a house, food, medical treatment that is covered.

This process attracted their interest to follow and join Rumah Kinasih. Persuasion is done emotionally and usually involves feelings. It has to do with one's emotional life. All aspects of a person's compassion called *welas asih* and empathy are mobilized so that a pleasant process occurs during persuasion. At the beginning there is a pre-assessment stage for some time to adapt to the patient. They will be lured into telling stories about what happened before joining Rumah Kinasih. In the end, when answers have been given, it will facilitate execution in educating and teaching. Communication of persuasion goes deeper into the core of every person with disabilities and avoids what they hate.

The disabled, according to the instructor's confession, felt happy because they met friends who could understand their condition as well as there was no difference between one and the other. This comfortable condition has made more and more people join Rumah Kinasih and never want to come back. Some of the reasons given in the emotional aspect are because there are friends, they get paid, their activities are always interesting and regular. The care provided by the management also treats them like family so if at first they feel they don't get love or don't have friends after joining the Kinasih house they feel they get what they want which creates a comfortable and calm attitude in socializing normally.

3. Empowered Through Batik Ciprat

Batik Ciprat is not only a means of empowerment for people with disabilities who are there but is also able to become an economic support for Rumah Kinasih. Efforts to meet the basic needs of the residents of Rumah Kinasih, Edi require a lot of money. At least when this research was carried out there were a total of 45 persons with disabilities and mental disorders being treated. The Ciprat Rumah Kinasih batik business unit operates on one side of the house as a Batik production site, uniquely 80% of the process is carried out by persons with disabilities. The choice of batik splashes because it is easy to implement because basically people with disabilities are sensory impaired. Even though he was opposed at first why batik splashed, Edi tried to research how batik actually had to use wax. Finally, through quality control and product supervision, it can be accepted by the national and even international markets until the Dubai Expo 2020 which is being held by the Ministry of Manpower.

For the sales process, Edi opened a shop at his house and develop online shop to reach a wider market. It is from this business that the need for social action to care for persons with disabilities is able to survive, not only to cover operational needs but to provide wages for the hard work of persons with disabilities according to the results of making splash batik. This business eventually continued until Edi teamed up with one of the creative economy entrepreneurs in Blitar, Dwi Mawadati, who from the start had an interest in splashed batik because it has a special value.

In the process of making it, Dwi was assisted by a mute person in Blitar. Tailoring and finishing are carried out in his house and the main tasks for product development and marketing are his duties. Rumah kinasih is not only business oriented, not just earning rupiah. The continuation of this business is his step to protect and care for the lives of persons with disabilities. One way that can be used to increase the motivation of persons with disabilities to remain productive and work hard is to use the reward method. This reward is everything in the form of a feeling of pleasant appreciation given to members with disabilities because of good results in their educational process with the aim of always doing good and commendable work.

After getting paid for the hard work that has been done by persons with disabilities, Edi will then give instructions and this prize will provide motivation for persons with disabilities, so that when they leave the house, the skills and discipline taught can be carried out outside the home. Kinasih. Awards can be given in various ways and according to the opportunities available.

- Praise

If there are successful members with disabilities and ODJG who successfully complete their tasks well, they need to be given praise. This praise is a positive form of reinforcement and at the same time a good motivation. Therefore, for this praise to be motivational, the gift must be appropriate. With the right praise will foster a pleasant atmosphere and heighten the passion for learning and at the same time will raise self-esteem. Edi gave praise to those who actively participated in the process of learning and making works, as YESS said! Very Good! (while giving a thumbs up), "Very good"

- Wages dan Goods

Various objects can actually be used as a means of appreciation. The things you want are the majority of smartphones and other electronic objects. In this in-kind/object reward system, Edi always gives members with disabilities and also ODGJ a salary for making his batik splashes. When they have received a salary in cash, that is the form of rewards for goods/objects in the form of a smartphone.

When people with disabilities get wages from working hard to make batik splashes with various wishes because they feel they already have the money to buy them, Edi still has to oversee how the desired items are used in the future. For example, when they want to buy a gadget, if they feel that excessive use can result in a loss of focus. The method used by managers is to provide direction explaining that the money will be more useful to buy other items. Finally, if the patient agrees to buy item A and the administrator gives permission, he will be delivered to buy it, and continue to provide restrictions and supervision on the use of the item.

KESIMPULAN

Based on the description of the results and discussion above, research on empowerment communication strategies at the Rumah Kinasih Foundation, Blitar Regency, namely:

The initial stages of communication were addressed to the environment around the Foundation. This communication is important to ensure that activities at Kinasih House get approval from the environment and support that will make the atmosphere at the Foundation conducive. Disability empowerment must be carried out in a participatory manner with the involvement of all parties.

The next stage of communication is carried out to persons with disabilities who join. Communication is carried out persuasively to convince them to want to join, stay, and do activities together in it. Communication must be carried out with the principles of compassion and empathy, and made with more effort to build mutual understanding

In the end, to provide space for expression as well as productivity for Rumah Kinasih, the manager invited people with disabilities to produce splashed batik. This social business works because people with disabilities are given rewards, both praise and wages. Appreciative communication is able to encourage to work productively.

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