



## EMPOWERMENT OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY DURING THE PANDEMIC IN THE KUTA MANDALIKA

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze forms of creative economic empowerment and analyze business sustainability during the pandemic in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone, Kuta Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency. The approach used is a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques in this study used the methods of observation, interviews and documentation. The technique of checking the validity of the data used is the triangulation technique. The data analysis method used is data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The results of this study found that forms of community economic empowerment through a sustainable creative economy include Entrepreneurship Training for Making Seaweed Dodol, Crackers and Sticks, Training for Makeup and Hair and Training and Distribution of Screen Printing Tools. Meanwhile, training in the cultivation and processing of Oyster Mushrooms is not sustainable. Empowerment activities have an impact on increasing the skills of participants so that they are given business capital in the form of equipment and equipment so that they obtain business income.

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**Keywords:** Empowerment Creative Economy, Pandemic.

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the developing countries with satisfactory economic growth followed by an increase in the world's 10th largest population. Indonesia's economic growth at the beginning of 2020 experienced a crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulted in Indonesia not being able to achieve the requirements to become an upper middle income country (Bank Indonesia: 2021).

The province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), which is one of the provinces in Indonesia, experienced economic growth in the first quarter of 2021, which contracted by 1.13%, improving compared to the previous quarter, which contracted by 3.03%. From the expenditure side, the main improvement stems from improvements in household consumption performance in line with

increased mobility, although on a limited scale (Bank Indonesia: 2021).

Judging from the population aspect, West Nusa Tenggara Province definitively in 2021 has ten regencies/cities. Central Lombok Regency is one of Indonesia's 10 priority tourist destinations. And in the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 52 of 2014 concerning Special Economic Zones also stipulates the Mandalika Area as a strategic area for tourism development. The tourism potential is various forms of tourism resources that can be managed and developed as a tourist attraction in an area. One of the potentials of this tourism potential is the potential of the creative economy.

The results of Yusril I Mahendra's research in 2020 stated that the Mandalika SEZ development plan from the map, the

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Mandalika SEZ will have an impact in several villages, such as Kuta, Sengkol, Mertak and Sukadana villages. The four villages are administratively affected areas for the development of the Mandalika SEZ.

In 2019, the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy has set policy directions to support the creative economy and tourism including, (a) Developing quality and value-added tourist destinations and creative economy products (b) Promotion of tourism and creative economy based on strategic partnerships (strategic partnership), (c) Development of the tourism industry and the integrated creative economy, (d) Management of human resources and tourism and creative economy institutions in realizing superior and competitive human resources, (e) Realizing the creativity of the nation's children with orientation to the people's economy movement, (f) Encouraging research, innovation, adoption of technology, as well as quality tourism and creative economy policies, and (g) Creating a professional Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy bureaucracy.

The Covid-19 pandemic has become an epidemic that hit globally at the end of 2019 including Kuta Village as a tourist village also feeling the impact of this pandemic. Various policies have been set by the government in an effort to minimize the spread and transmission of Covid-19. These policies not only have an impact on people's behavior but threaten the economy of the community including the small and medium industrial sector in the Special Economic Zone of Kuta Mandalika (Sarmigi, 2020). The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the creative industry sector and MSMEs in the Kuta Mandalika Special Economic Zone, Central Lombok, which is still visible today, is in the food sector and the service sector, namely the decline in business activities and operations, even many of which have closed business stalls and are not operating. back (Amri, 2020).

With various resources owned by the village of Kuta, the community strives to maintain survival during the Covid-19 pandemic. The application of the creative economy has not touched the entire community of Kuta village. Based on this

identification, creative economy empowerment becomes an alternative. In this study, it is important to examine community empowerment through the creative economy during the COVID-19 period in the Mandalika SEZ, Kuta Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok. The expected objective of this research is to analyze the form of creative economic empowerment and its sustainability during the pandemic in the Mandalik Special Economic Zone, Kuta Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency..

## LITERATURE RIVIEW

According to Merriam Webster and the Oxford English Dictionary in Manuscript No. 20, June-July 2000 written by Mardi Yatmo Hutomo on Community Empowerment in the Economic Sector: Theoretical Review and Implementation, states that the word empower contains two meanings, namely: (1) to give power or authority to or to give power, to transfer power or to delegate authority to other parties; (2) to give ability to or enable or attempt to give ability or deception.

According to Prijono, S. Onny and Pranarka, A. M.W (1996) empowerment is a process of strengthening individuals or communities so that they are empowered. Encourage or inspire them to have skills in life. Empowerment can be said as a process and a goal. As an empowerment process, it is a series of activities to strengthen the power of weak groups in society. Meanwhile, as a goal, empowerment to realize social change is to make communities or groups and individuals strong enough to participate in fulfilling their physical, economic and social needs (Soeharto, 2008).

Economic empowerment is strengthening the ownership of production factors, strengthening distribution and marketing control, strengthening the community to get adequate salaries/wages, and strengthening the community to obtain information, knowledge and skills, which must be carried out in multi aspects, both from the aspect of the community itself, as well as its policy aspects (Friedman: 1992)

The concepts of community economic empowerment proposed by Umidiningrat and Gunawan (1999) include the people's economy, namely the economy organized by the people;

People's economic empowerment is an effort with the aim of strengthening the economy and on a larger, modern, and highly competitive scale in the market mechanism, the need for structural changes, people's economic empowerment must be balanced with increasing productivity, providing equal business opportunities, providing initial funds as a stimulant, and guarantees for cooperation and partnerships and the policies are: (1) providing greater access to production assets (especially capital); (2) strengthening the position of people's economic transactions and business partnerships, so that people's economic actors are not just price takers; (3) education and health services; (4) strengthening small industries; (5) encourage the emergence of new entrepreneurs; and (6) spatial equity and community empowerment activities include (1) increasing access to business capital assistance; (2) increasing access to human resource development; and (3) increasing access to facilities and infrastructure that directly support the socio-economic conditions of local communities. The factors driving the empowerment of the community's economy are human resources, natural resources, capital and supporting facilities and infrastructure.

The creative economy can be defined as the creation of added value through ideas that arise from the creativity of human resources (creative people) by utilizing science and insight including cultural and technological heritage. The main resource in the creative economy is creativity which is understood as the ability to produce something unique, create a solution to a problem or do something different from the usual (Kemenparekraf: 2021).

Indonesia's creative economy sector is divided into sixteen sub-sectors that can stand alone. Among the sixteen sub-sectors are: (1) Architecture sub-sector; (2) Interior Design Subsector, (3) Visual Communication Design Subsector, (4) Product Design Subsector, (5) Film, Animation, and Video Subsector, (6) Photography Subsector, (7) Crafts Subsector, (8) Culinary Subsector, (9) Music Sub-sector, (10) Fashion Sub-sector, (11) Application and Game Developer Sub-sector, (12) Publishing Sub-sector, (13) Advertising Sub-sector, (14) Television and Radio Sub-sector, (15)

Performing Arts Sub-sector and (16) Fine Arts Sub-sector.

The tourism sector and the creative economy are two things that are closely related. Mandalika is a special economic tourism area covering an area of 1,035 hectares with an area that is included in the Kuta Village area, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. This Mandalika beach area has been named a Special Economic Zone since 2017 through Government Regulation Number 52 of 2014 to become a Tourism SEZ. The most potential potential to be developed in this SEZ is the creative economy because it has cultural diversity including culinary, regional clothing, crafts, music, and performing arts, the diversity of sources of raw materials for craft and culinary materials, the dominance of the productive age population, and the large number of middle class. above as consumers of creative economy products.

## METHODS

In this study, the research will use a qualitative approach to the method of descriptive analysis or naturalistic inquiry. Sources of data in this study are primary data and secondary data. This study took the research location in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone, Kuta Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency for the following reasons:

1. Kuta Mandalika is a thriving village.
2. Kuta Mandalika is a super priority Special Economic Zone in Indonesia.
3. Kuta Mandalika is a tourism village that applies the concept of a creative economy.

Data collection procedures in this study include: Observation, Interview and Documentation Techniques. Qualitative data analysis that will be used by researchers, as follows; Data Reduction, Data Presentation and Data Verification.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The focus of the study in this research is community economic empowerment activities through the creative economy during the Covid-19 pandemic in the Mandalika SEZ, Kuta Village, Pujut District. As for the determination of the occurrence of this pandemic period by researchers, it was determined by following the start of the

global pandemic period, which began in December 2019.

The results of interviews with the main informant, namely the Head of Kuta Village, General Welfare Section, it is known that the Kuta Village government has never organized community economic empowerment activities through the creative economy during the pandemic on the grounds that the village fund budget is allocated for Covid-19 disaster management both for health facilities and in direct cash assistance. However, empowerment activities for rural communities have been carried out by the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (Persero) in collaboration with PT Penjamin Infrastruktur Indonesia (Persero) to carry out community empowerment programs in the Six Supporting Villages of the Mandalika SEZ namely Kuta, Mertak, Sukadana, Sengkol, Prabu, and Rembitan. This program is an implementation of the Corporate Social Responsibility program in the environmental and social fields for ITDC operational areas. Besides that, community empowerment through the creative economy is also carried out by Bank Indonesia in collaboration with the NTB Province CSR Forum in realizing Bank Indonesia's social programs for youth in the Mandalika Circle, specifically for residents of Kuta Village and Sengkol Village.

The creative economy seeks to create value-added products economically and socially, culturally, and environmentally. Therefore, the creative economy in addition to increasing competitiveness, can also improve the quality of life. The creative industry is an industry that produces output from the use of creativity, expertise, and individual talent to create added value, create jobs, and improve the quality of life.

The following are forms of community economic empowerment through the creative economy and its sustainability during the Covid-19 Pandemic in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone, Kuta Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency.

#### **Culinary Subsector**

- a. Entrepreneurship Training on Making Seaweed Dodol, Seaweed Crackers and Snack Onion Sticks in Kuta Village with community participants in six Buffer Villages with a village group system. In its implementation, the community is not only given material but also direct practice and to support business

sustainability, support equipment is provided. Until now, this creative business group is still active in producing at least once a month, showing the consistency of business continuity and the group that is successful and empowered in trying to increase its economic activities.

- b. Oyster Mushroom Cultivation Training and Mushroom Based Processed Production. This form of empowerment is training in oyster mushroom cultivation to the production stage until it becomes a ready-to-eat product. The group division system is applied to facilitate guidance. Currently this business still exists but only produces on a small scale.

#### **Crafts Subsector which is Applied Art Subsector**

In this sector, the empowerment activities carried out were facial and hair make-up training with participants from the Six Supporting Villages of the Mandalika SEZ. After the training, participants were given equipment assistance in continuing the business. However, many of the participants from Kuta Village did not continue this business due to lack of capital, the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a decrease in the demand for makeup due to almost no community activities such as begawe and nyongkolan and the absence of business initiatives from participants to continue their business even though have makeup skills.

#### **Product Design Subsector**

Empowerment activities in this sector are screen printing training for the people of the Mandalika Circle area. This training was held by Bank Indonesia in collaboration with the NTB CSR Forum in empowering to develop the creative economy so that people are able to do business to welcome the Moto GP event. This empowerment has an impact on improving the quality of human resources and the experience of participants so that they are able to operate screen printing equipment and produce screen printing clothes. This business continues because of the grant of equipment and stalls and until now this business has started to receive orders from prospective customers. This shows the existence of successful community empowerment programs to try to be better from an economic perspective.

In implementing community empowerment through the creative economy in Kuta Village and ensuring its sustainability, there are several factors that influence the progress and setbacks of the business including the quality of human resources, capital, and existing infrastructure. In terms of the quality of natural resources, information was obtained that the informants who participated in the training had new skills that could be used as business and productive provisions during the pandemic. Likewise, in post-training activities for making seaweed lunkhead, crackers and sticks, participants were given access to capital in the form of some equipment. Likewise, for the cultivation and processing of oyster mushrooms and training in cosmetology, only equipment is provided. In empowering the creative economy of screen printing, additional tools and equipment are provided, production houses and stall access during the Moto GP event. In terms of the availability of facilities and infrastructure to support creative economic activities in the Mandalika SEZ, it is very complete. Starting from road access, clean water, electricity, internet, markets, and special stalls are all available. It's just that Bumdes doesn't play much of a role in empowering the creative economy because it focuses on managing homestays.

Human resources are also one of the obstacles to the consistency of business development, especially group businesses because good group management has not yet been achieved. In addition, access to capital is also important in supporting business sustainability, so that many trainees do not continue their business because they do not have capital, especially financial capital. The available facilities and infrastructure must be accessed using a rental system, which also hinders business development due to high rental costs. This business condition is also exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic which also impacts community activities and government policies, namely in village budget allocations so that the role of the village government also does not show synergy in supporting creative economic empowerment in Kuta Village.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion that has been delivered, it can be concluded that community economic empowerment activities through the

creative economy are carried out in the culinary sub-sector in the form of Entrepreneurship Training for Making Seaweed Dodol, Seaweed Crackers and Onion Snack Sticks with a group system, and group training for Oyster Mushroom Cultivation and Production of Processed Materials. Mushroom Basics. In the Craft sub-sector, empowerment activities are carried out in the form of make-up training. In the product design sub-sector, namely in the form of training for the screen printing business group for t-shirt products. This empowerment activity is able to provide knowledge, new skills in creating products and earning income for industrial groups. All industrial group empowerment activities carried out in groups are still ongoing even though they face capital constraints, member management, lack of marketing assistance from the village government, access to expensive stall facilities, and the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. From these conclusions, the author provides the following suggestions:

1. To increase empowerment for the community through a creative economy, it should be accompanied by guidance to the community to improve the quality of human resources. So as to be able to manage the business as well as possible with the available capital and infrastructure.
2. The government should assist empowerment participants to gain access to financial capital or with guidance in submitting business capital proposals.
3. Increasing the role of the Village Government and Bumdes in helping to market creative businesses resulting from village community empowerment.
4. Easy access to supporting facilities and infrastructure, especially access to stalls as promotion and sales centers by being provided with free stalls or subsidies.

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