

## Research Article

# The Village Marketer: Problems and Prospects for Community Development

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The main objective of this research was to examine and find patterns of community empowerment through the development of marketer villages. The objective was to identify the general and specific problems, the degree of severity, and their impact on marketer development. The research was set in Tunjungmuli Village, Karang Moncol District, Purbalingga Regency, Central Java Province. The research method used in both stages was the embedded case study. The research design used qualitative and quantitative approaches. Primary data sources were all community members who use information technology. The technique of determining informants was using purposive sampling, while other primary data sources, namely key informants, were selected using the snowball technique. Secondary data was collected through content analysis techniques. All data collected were analyzed using interactive techniques, reflection tests, and simple statistics (percentage values, tabulations, mean values, and frequency distributions). The results showed that external problems were found, as many as 12 points, ranging from weak internet signal, problematic tower, only one provider, power failure, fictitious messages, and customer complaints related to products. There were no payments if marketers were not present. There is still a scarcity of human resources and skilled workers, ads blocked by customers, expensive shipping payments decreased turnover, and potential buyers giving false hope. As for the internal problems, 10 points were found, namely: starting limited credit (not enough balance), limited internet quota, isolated locations, damaged hardware technology facilities, disrupted Random Access Memory (RAM), competition for signals, product promotion time ran out, promotional product designs changed, ideas for non-creative promotions.

**Keywords:** marketer, village, community development, digital technology, the cyber community

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## 1. Introduction

The empowerment process requires several elements: human resources, natural, social, capital (economic), and technology. The focus of empowerment lies in improving the

quality of human resources. The utilization of innovation, including information technology, enhances the ability of human resources in the era of globalization, where various activities of people's lives depend on information technology. Citizens' skills in managing the functional benefits of information technology have shaped a digital society, not only in urban areas but also in rural areas. Economic activities that were initially carried out by rural communities through conventional transactions moved towards digital transactions. The use of digital technology, either directly or indirectly, makes villages connected to the outside world. As a result, the intensity of communication between regions became more intensive, and each benefited from the other. In turn, a functional relationship occurs between them. However, Giddens(1) views globalization as increasing interdependence on one another (2), (3) sees it as a process of condensing the world into one space ("the compaction of the world into one space"). Information technology penetration touches rural communities with various problems and solutions. The residents of Tunjungmuli Village are one part of the territory of Indonesia that has been affected by the diffusion of information technology, thus becoming a Marketer Village. Various socio-economic activities in the village are increasingly digitized by information technology. Preliminary surveys reveal rural communities are pursuing new livelihoods as digital marketers. This livelihood is an alternative source of income for hundreds of villagers who use information technology to conduct transactions and digital networks that are profitable globally. The Village Marketer Movement functions as one of the local community empowerment processes. Social reality shows that members of the Marketing Village community can earn between Rp. 1,000,000 to Rp. 5,000,000 (per/month). Marketing Village Development also has a strategic function to reduce unemployment and the rate of urbanization, especially for young members of the community. The existence of a Marketer Village can of course still be developed optimally to make a valuable contribution to the empowerment of the local community. In addition, the pattern of community empowerment through the development of Marketing Villages can be a role model for developing human resources in other villages. Of course, during the development of the marketer village, there is a classic problem that has not been resolved so far, namely the existence of a digital divide. There are still many villagers who are not yet digitally savvy, while there are still a few inhabitants who can apply digital technology. If the digital divide can do, the opportunities for prospects for the development of village communities will become more open. There are several reasons why this research is crucial. First, there is still little previous research that the relationship between the development of digital technology and community development. Even if there is more to the application of

digital technology (4); (5); (6) and or the development of rural communities ((7);(8);(9); (10). Second, there are still many numbers of educated unemployed and the rate of excessive urbanization, if left unchecked, will become a burden for the village community and government. The third concerns the importance of developing human resources, especially for the younger generation to increase digital literacy (11) and at the same time its application to increasing welfare. All three underlie the urgency of the importance of this research. Based on the problems of developing Marketers' Villages for community empowerment, an in-depth research is needed to increase the transformation towards a Village Digital Community. It was determined to examine the pattern of community empowerment through community development. Patterns that allow it to be compiled will be in the form of scientific capital that is useful for further empirical research. This theme is relevant to the context of contemporary society in facing globalization. This study aims to find problems and solutions for community empowerment in the Marketing Village.

## 2. Method

The research design used a case study with the embedded method to answer the research questions. This research combines qualitative and quantitative research with qualitative dominant (Creswell, 1994). The research method used is a descriptive case study. The research was conducted in the village of Tunjungmuli, the District of Karang Moncol, Purbalingga Regency, Central Java Province. The location of this study was determined by intentionally purposive sampling area with some criteria. The reason for determining the location is because it is based on the consideration that the village is the center of a Marketer Village that was developed to empower local communities. Therefore, the formulation and research objectives are relevant to the problems in the selected research locations. The types of data are primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected using in-depth interview techniques, participating observation, FGD, and google form or telephone contact. Qualitative data processing techniques were carried out through the stages: data entry, data filtering, data grouping, data categorization, conclusions, retesting, and data presentation. Meanwhile, quantitative data processing techniques are carried out through the stages of editing, coding, and data entry which are done manually. After the qualitative data was processed, it was immediately analyzed using the interactive analysis model (12).

### 3. Results and Discussion

Community empowerment became one of the essential pillars of development after the concept of developmentalism failed to fulfil its mission. The concept of development closely related to economic development is replaced by the concept of empowerment which is considered more in favor of the grassroots (8). Empowerment has strategic value because it reduces inequality, backwardness, isolation, and ignorance ((13) ; (10). Apart from being a pillar of empowerment, it also functions as a decision-making strategy and supports productive and creative actions. As a result, self-potential capacity is strengthening to behave productively, creatively, and innovatively (14).

Along with that, the purpose of the Marketer Village is the attribute given by the public (at least netizens/internet users) that the village has a part of the population whose livelihood is as digital service vendors. Thus, digital marketers get rewards or services. The digital services in question are not solely online customer service (CS) that sells goods belonging to other people but also services for assembling offline stores into hybrid stores that can serve offline and virtually. Of course, the social transformation from offline transactions to online transactions requires the strengthening of human resources to have the capacity to master virtual technology, which requires continuous learning to become a marketer village. Empowerment through strengthening human resources in the field of information technology is a necessity. Based on the information collected in the preliminary survey, the achievement during the empowerment in the recruitment of local workers is to be able to absorb employment of up to more than 1000 people, increasing the food security of poor farmer households in rural areas of 700 people, some even resigned from a steady job (<https://jateng.idntimes.com/business/economy/bandot-arywono/resign-pns-dan-buka-700-field-kerja-bayu-diundang-ke-spanyol>). This is a fascinating fact in the midst of an unpromising job market. Of course, this becomes very promising for skilled villagers, who do not yet have a steady income and are part of a diversified livelihood (15). It is becoming more apparent that the chosen research theme is based on several previous research results, both those carried out by the research team and other experts with similar research topics.

### 3.1. The problems for community empowerment in Marketer Village

The results showed that external problems were found, as many as 12 points. It ranged from weak internet signal, problematic tower, only one provider, power failure, fictitious messages, customer complaints related to products, and no payments if marketers were not present. There was also a scarcity of human resources and skilled workers, advertisements were blocked by customers, expensive shipping payments, decreased turnover, and potential buyers gave false hope. As for the internal problems, 10 points were found, namely: limited credit (not enough balance), limited internet quota, isolated locations, damaged hardware technology facilities, disrupted Random Access Memory (RAM), competition for signals, product promotion time ran out, promotional product designs changed, ideas for non-creative promotions. Among all the general problems that exist, both internal and external, five specific problems have been found that have strategic meaning for a marketer’s business, which, if not addressed immediately, could cause the business prospects of this marketer to recede (shown in Figure 1).

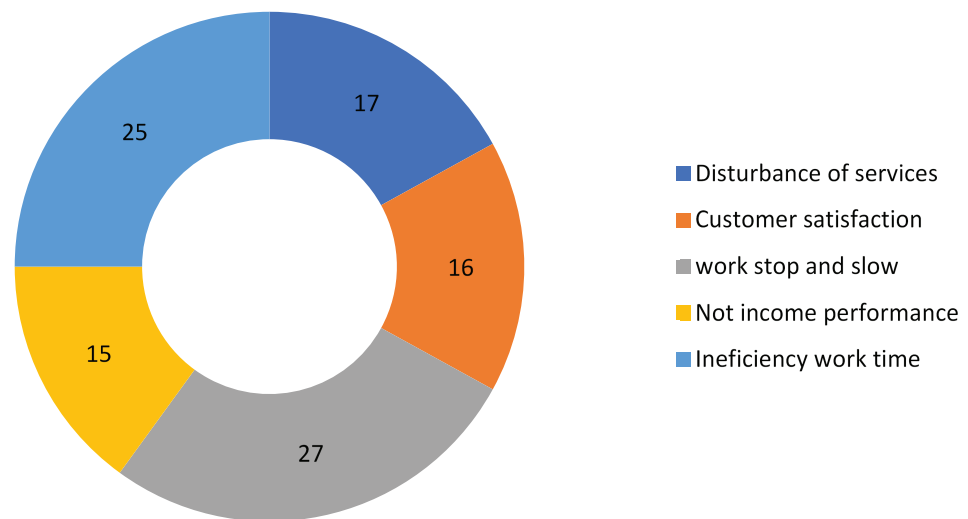


Figure 1: The specific problem for Marketer Development.

Figure 1 shows that stalled and slow-paced work is a significant problem. Furthermore, work time inefficiency and service interruptions rank second. In third place, customer satisfaction can be found, and the most important thing for marketers in rural areas is not revenue performance. From this explanation, it appears that the characteristics of workers in rural areas still indicate that survival is considered the most important. They are not only about wages and salaries but the continuity of their business can run. Regardless of not coming to the office, they expect to be paid. Their enthusiasm

to become a marketer annually shows a significant increase. Many of them broke away and set up their own marketing business.

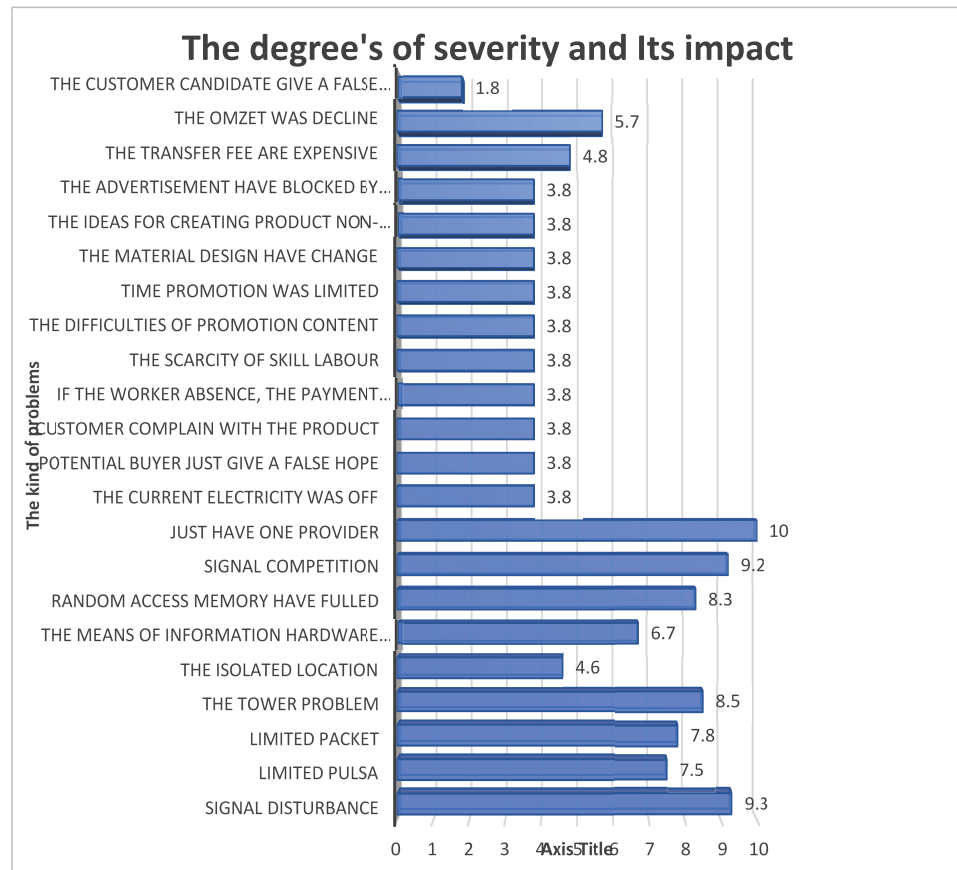
### 3.2. The degree of severity and its impact

According to marketers, each problem encountered raises a different level of severity. Based on the informant's information, it was revealed that marketers demand to have more than one provider so that their business efforts are not disrupted. Another serious problem for Tunjungmuli Village, Karang Moncol District, Purbalingga Regency, the signal is not strong and can be said to be weak and often experiences interference. In terms of use for Marketers and other communities, it can be stated that these Marketers have entered into a cyber community or digital society (5). Even though the geographical location is far from urban areas, the government still has the political will to replace IT companies and invest in them, building the installation that enables an antenna amplifier to stand. Tower with adequate reinforcement is an appropriate requirement. Figure 2 illustrates the severity of the conditions caused by the various problems found. Another thing that also stands out is that there are many users and only one provider among the Marketers, and there is also a struggle for signals which results in inadequate internet speed. Details on the severity and impact on the marketer's business can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Another interesting and important one is that they do not care about potential customers who give false hopes. According to them, it is commonplace in the digital world and should take seriously. The prospect for community development can see from some indicators, such as (1) the Rate of Human Resources on Marketer tends to increase annually, (2) the Rate of Village Income, (3) the rate of reduction of urbanization rate.

## 4. Conclusion and Suggestions

Marketers demand more than one provider, so their business efforts are not disrupted. Another serious problem in Tunjungmuli Village is the weak internet signal which often experiences interference. In terms of use for Marketers and other communities, it can be stated that these Marketers have entered a cyber community. Meanwhile, the problems marketers face is not only the digital gap but also the limited technological infrastructure facilities. Suggestions that can be given are the importance of the equitable distribution



Resources : Primary Data 2022 (to be analysed)

Figure 2: Resources : Primary Data 2022 (to be analysed).

of digital technology infrastructure and the need to increase digital literacy at the rural level.

### Conflict of Interest

The author’s team declared that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article.

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