

Research Article

Local Potential-Based Empowerment Through the Tapis Craft Center in Realizing Women's Independence in Tarahan Village, Katibung District, South Lampung Regency

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Abstract: Women are valuable assets in the community, and their empowerment can improve welfare through activities that enhance their economic, social, and cultural roles. One such empowerment initiative is the tapis craft center in Tarahan Village, where women are trained in sewing and processing tapis, fostering their independence. This research focuses on how utilizing local potential through the tapis craft center empowers women. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the study gathered data through observation, interviews, and documentation from 11 informants selected via purposive sampling. The findings indicate that the tapis craft center effectively supports women's independence by enhancing their skills and capacities. The empowerment process occurs in three stages: awareness, training, and mentoring. Awareness is raised through education about the economic and social benefits, as well as employment opportunities. In the training stage, women learn tapis making, embroidery, and marketing skills. Mentoring involves guidance from business owners, studio administrators, members, and the village head to supervise production activities. This empowerment leads to economic independence by providing additional income, social independence by boosting self-confidence, and cultural independence through the preservation of the tapis tradition across generations.

Keywords: Local Potential; Tapis Craft; Tarahan Village; Women's Empowerment; Women's Independence

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1. Introduction

Socio-economic development in Indonesia requires a strategy that is able to empower all levels of society in a sustainable manner. (Sugianto et al., 2024). Women's empowerment is an important aspect in the development process because women have a strategic role in improving the quality of life of families and communities. (Hamzah & Salsabila, 2024). Women in various regions face limited access to education, training, capital, and employment opportunities. These conditions hinder the development of economic independence necessary to improve family well-being. Efforts to increase women's capacity need to be directed at utilizing local potential so that empowerment programs are effective, sustainable, and aligned with the needs of local communities (Ardiani & Dibyorini, 2021).

Utilizing local potential is a strategic approach because each region possesses a rich cultural heritage, traditional skills, and unique resources that can be developed as a basis for the community's economy (Masrohatin & Astuti, 2023). Craft centers are one way to cultivate local potential, providing opportunities for women to earn income, channel their creativity, and preserve cultural values. Traditional craft activities not only produce products with economic value but also strengthen cultural identity (Wulandari et al., 2016). Strengthening

local potential through the creative industry can create jobs, increase household income, and expand marketing networks. This process requires good management so that craftspeople have production capabilities, innovation, and competitiveness amidst constantly changing market developments.

Tapis crafts are a unique cultural heritage of Lampung, possessing high artistic value and crafted using gold thread embroidery techniques and symbolic motifs that reflect the philosophy of the Lampung people. The existence of tapis crafts is not only a source of regional pride but also has the potential to become an economic source for the community (Puspita & Wahyudi, 2022). Women in the Lampung region have long been the main actors in tapis production, thus possessing skills passed down from generation to generation. Market opportunities for tapis are increasingly open with the development of the creative industry and the demand for products based on local culture. Utilizing tapis as a superior commodity requires a production center capable of organizing artisans, providing training facilities, and facilitating modern product marketing (Ariani, 2021).

Tapis craft centers serve as collaborative spaces connecting business owners, artisans, buyers, and other parties involved in the production chain. These centers improve production quality through technical training, design innovation, product packaging, and mastery of digital marketing technology (Tama et al., 2025). Women as artisans have the opportunity to expand their skills, manage their time flexibly, and earn an independent income without having to completely abandon their domestic roles. This increased capacity fosters women's independence, as they gain the ability to manage businesses, make economic decisions, and participate in productive activities that generate added value for their families (Safrida & Safrida, 2022).

Women's independence is the primary goal of empowerment because independent women are able to improve family welfare, strengthen household economic resilience, and contribute to local development. Women who have their own income tend to be more empowered in family financial planning, children's education, and welfare-related decision-making (Hastuti et al., 2022). Women's involvement in productive activities based on tapis crafts provides a space to build self-confidence and expand social relationships, thereby strengthening their position within the community structure. Empowerment based on local potential through tapis craft centers offers a relevant mechanism to achieve these goals (Handayani & Ardiansyah, 2025).

This social phenomenon necessitates a more in-depth study of how tapis craft centers play a role in realizing women's independence. This study is crucial for understanding the empowerment process, skills development patterns, the dynamics of artisan organization, and the economic and social impacts experienced by women (Ramadhani et al., 2023). An analysis of empowerment strategies, the utilization of local potential, and the obstacles and opportunities for craft center development will provide insight into the effectiveness of the implemented empowerment model. This understanding is expected to serve as the basis for strengthening women's empowerment programs in the traditional crafts sector and other creative economy sectors (Sugianto, 2023).

One of the tapis craftspeople in Tarahan Village, South Lampung, is Mrs. Rosyana, who started her business in 2018 and now employs 15-20 craftspeople and provides weekly embroidery training. Tapis crafts in Lampung continue to develop through product innovation, digital marketing, and cultural preservation, enabling them to adapt to modern commodities without abandoning their traditional values. In South Lampung, poverty data in Tarahan Village before the development of the tapis business was not directly documented. The community's economic conditions at that time were still dependent on the agricultural sector and other local commodities, resulting in economic vulnerability due to limited access to resources, education, and marketing networks. The tapis craft business then became an alternative source of income that was able to improve the economic conditions of residents, especially women involved in the production process. This development contributed to reducing poverty levels and improving the welfare of the Tarahan Village community over time.

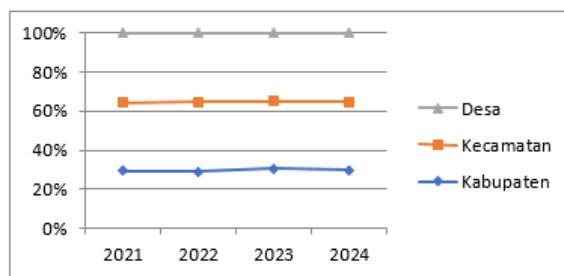


Figure 1. Population Poverty Data in Tarahan Village, Katibung District, South Lampung 2021-2024.

The community development percentage of Tarahan Village increased from 11.07% in 2021 to 13.24% in 2024. This condition indicates economic improvement, including for women who previously faced limitations in education, skills, employment opportunities, and reproductive, production, and social burdens. Empowerment that provides independence and control in decision-making can improve women's quality of life, strengthen family finances, and positively impact the community's social welfare.

The tapis cloth business is seen as capable of increasing the income of the Tarahan Village community, but still faces obstacles such as a lack of regeneration of craftsmen, minimal interest from the younger generation, and ineffective knowledge transfer between seniors and juniors. These conditions are the basis of research entitled Empowering Women Based on Local Potential Through Tapis Craft Centers in South Lampung Regency, which seeks to delve deeper into the reality on the ground, the development of the tapis industry, and forms of empowerment that can transform underprivileged women into more independent ones. The aim of this study is to analyze the process of women's empowerment based on local potential through the tapis craft center in Tarahan Village, Katibung District, South Lampung Regency, and to examine the level of women's independence that is built through their involvement in the tapis craft center.

2. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative method to examine the issue of women's empowerment based on local potential through the tapis craft center in Tarahan Village, Katibung District, South Lampung Regency (Sugiyono, 2023). The research data comes from primary data

obtained through interviews, observations, and official documents, then processed by the author (Bado, 2021). Respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique, selecting informants deemed relevant, including owners, administrators, members of the tapis craft community, housewives, and adolescents in Tarahan Village. Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation, with a focus on information related to women's empowerment through the tapis craft center. This research is descriptive and analytical, encompassing the processes of data collection, reduction, presentation, drawing conclusions, and verification. (Alexy J Moleong, 2021).

3. Results And Discussion

Tarahan Village in Katibung District, South Lampung Regency, is one of the oldest villages, having existed since the early days of independence. The name Tarahan comes from the Lampung language, meaning "boat building," referring to the activity of coastal communities who used small axe-like tools to build boats. The village's coastal location makes its residents largely dependent on fishing and farming. The development of the region later gave rise to three villages: Tarahan Village as the parent village, Karya Tunggal Village, established in 1985, and Rangai Tri Tunggal Village, established in 2000.

The name Tarahan is also associated with a community agreement during the early days of Islam's arrival in Sumatra through Middle Eastern traders who brought a letter containing the two sentences of the shahada, and those who were able to read it were given the title Malin Putih (White Malin). This mutual agreement led to the region being named Tarahan. The current socio-economic conditions of the community are still dominated by the agricultural sector, followed by entrepreneurial activities, home industries, and a significant number of farm laborers. The socio-economic conditions of the Tarahan Village community can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Data on the Number of Livelihoods in Tarahan Village.

No.	Type of work	Man	Woman
1.	Farmer	1300	200
2.	Farm workers	500	100
3.	Civil Servants (PNS)	2	8
4.	Home Industry Craftsmen	-	20
5.	Traveling Merchant	10	15
6.	Breeder	80	-
7.	Private Workers	70	30
8.	Retired Civil Servants (PNS)	1	1

Data Source : Tarahan Village 2025.

The data shows that the majority of Tarahan Village's population, numbering 1,300, works as farmers. The village's vast rice fields and gardens make agriculture the dominant occupation. The number of civil servants is the lowest, at just two. This situation does not hinder increased prosperity, as the community's economy is currently experiencing improved development.

The Process of Women's Empowerment Based on Local Potential Through the Tapis Craft Center in Lampung Regency

The research was conducted in Tarahan Village, Katibung District, South Lampung Regency, where tapis crafts are the main livelihood of the community. Women's empowerment is carried out to improve their skills and capacity through tapis centers based on local potential with the aim of achieving independence and improving their welfare. Tapis business owners act as empowerment drivers by involving women as administrators, members, and training participants. Field findings indicate that the empowerment led by Mrs. Rosyana has gone through stages of awareness, training, and mentoring, in line with the concept of community empowerment that emphasizes a collaborative learning process to encourage change. Efforts to achieve women's independence through tapis centers are realized through various empowerment strategies based on local potential:

Awareness

Raising women's awareness of local potential through tapis crafts involves incorporating cultural values and traditional skills into empowerment programs aimed at increasing women's independence, well-being, and economic participation. Rosyana, the owner of the Rakata tapis business in Tarahan Village, plays a key role in educating women about the importance of having a source of income to improve their socioeconomic conditions, especially for those who are unemployed or solely dependent on agricultural products.

These efforts highlight the economic and social benefits of tapis crafts, thereby helping to strengthen family economies and elevate women's positions within the household. Awareness is also raised through education on social and economic independence and the sharing of successful examples of other women who have succeeded through craft businesses. Once this understanding is established, business owners offer employment opportunities in production activities, from manufacturing and packaging to marketing.

Data shows that tapis craft owners provide self-empowerment education so that women understand the importance of social and economic independence, namely the ability to meet financial needs, control their lives, and play an equal role in society. This awareness confirms that economic independence can improve family welfare and encourage local economic growth, while social independence is reflected in women's involvement as workers in the Rakata tapis workshop in Tarahan Village. Ibu Rosyana's awareness-raising efforts include explaining the economic and social benefits of work, including its contribution to family conditions and women's position within the household.

Offering job opportunities is another strategy by recruiting women as production workers, such as making, packaging, and marketing tapis craft products at the Rakata studio. The goal of raising awareness among women is to empower them in various aspects, from economics to cultural preservation. Economically, it can improve family well-being. By becoming a tapis craftswoman, housewives can earn additional income that can be used to cover daily needs, children's education, or family savings. Furthermore, tapis training can create business opportunities, opening the way for housewives to start or join small, home-based businesses.

Training

Tapis making training, namely sewing, embroidery and marketing tapis products, is carried out by gathering and inviting the community to gather to explain the materials and methods of making tapis, then first explaining the benefits of the training and introducing the materials and tools used in making tapis to the community and conducting direct training on how to make tapis.

Based on the data obtained, the training activities were in the form of gathering and inviting women to gather to explain the materials and methods of making tapis, then first explaining the training materials and introducing the materials and tools used in making tapis to the community, especially women in Tarahan Village, as well as conducting direct training on how to make tapis using materials such as tapis cloth, thread, and tools needed to make derivative products (e.g. sewing machines, scissors, patterns).

The training provided by Ms. Rosyana introduced the materials used to make tapis and the tools used, such as sewing machines, needles, scissors, and other supporting equipment. Ms. Rosyana not only introduced the materials and tools but also taught how to make tapis using new motifs and how to market it to increase income. Furthermore, marketing is one of the training activities required to develop tapis products.



Figure 2. Tapis Motif Sewing Training.

Source: processed by researchers 2025

The training conducted by Ms. Rosyana not only focused on tapis making but also on marketing. During the marketing training, other parties were involved, including speakers from the government, UNILA, and PLN. These parties not only collaborated with Ms. Rosyana on how to market tapis but also assisted with her digital marketing operations, enabling her to become a marketing manager at the Rakata Tapis Studio.

The training participants included tapis craft owners and members, as well as women in Tarahan Village, including teenagers and housewives. One of the keys to the success of tapis craft in Tarahan Village is the network and collaboration between the Rakata tapis craft studio owners and other relevant parties. This collaboration is crucial for creating a conducive environment for the Tarahan community, including in the distribution, marketing, and development of tapis craft products.

The target group for this activity is the general public, primarily women in Tarahan Village, including teenagers and housewives, totaling 10-15 people interested in traditional crafts and wishing to improve their skills and the economic value of tapis products. This training is typically conducted informally or within a family setting, rather than as a structured program held regularly. There is no set schedule or measurable number of training sessions, as the process is more natural and needs-based, rather than a formal educational program with a set frequency.

The training aims to develop businesses, improve product quality, and empower artisans and the community in Tarahan Village, particularly teenagers and housewives. The goal of empowering artisans and the community is to improve their welfare through skills enhancement, enabling them to produce products with higher sales value, thus directly increasing their income and well-being. Furthermore, the training fosters independence, encouraging artisans to be more independent, bold in their work, and fostering creativity and innovation in producing various tapis products.

Mentoring

A mentoring program for tapis-making was held in Tarahan Village by the administrators and members of the Tarahan Village Rakata Tapis Studio. The participants were women, accompanied by the Tarahan Village Head and tapis craft owners. This mentoring program aimed to train the women in tapis-making, including sewing, embroidery, and marketing.

Based on data obtained from the community mentoring activities, the community was given tasks and groups to make tapis, create tapis motifs, and market tapis products. The tasks included tapis making, including sewing and embroidery, creating derivative products, and packaging. Each member had the appropriate materials for tapis production. Each group consisted of five people, each with their own specific responsibilities.

Several people attended the tapis-making process. The management and members of the Rakata Tapis Studio assisted the teenagers and housewives to prevent errors. The women involved in tapis-making possess the knowledge and skills they gained during the training, which they will further develop during the mentoring sessions.

During the tapis-making process in Tarahan Village, teenagers and housewives never encountered any difficulties or obstacles. If anyone was still confused about the tapis-making process, the tapis administrators provided guidance. The village head and the owner of the Rakata Tapis Studio provided guidance by monitoring the women's commitment to tapis-making. Housewives and teenage girls were enthusiastic about tapis-making because they worked together, ensuring all women understood the steps from start to finish.

The purpose of mentoring in tapis-making is to educate women about the benefits of tapis crafts, enabling them to supplement their income by developing them at home. If the tapis crafts or decorations they create are highly beneficial, the people of Tarahan Village can start businesses based on their tapis crafts. Success in tapis-making also positively impacts the tapis administrators and the village government.

Women's Independence in the Tapis Craft Center in Tarahan Village, Katibung District South Lampung Regency

Women's independence refers to their ability to manage and control their lives independently, financially, emotionally, and intellectually, including making decisions, taking responsibility, and being confident in achieving life goals. In Tarahan Village, this independence is reflected through empowerment based on the tapis craft center, which contributes to women's economic, social, and cultural progress. Tapis crafts, traditionally made by women, from housewives to young women, have now developed into a source of income and a regional cultural identity. The emerging forms of independence encompass economic, social, cultural, and self-development aspects.

Economic Indicators

Tapis craft training can help women achieve economic independence. Women who participate in tapis craft training undoubtedly benefit from increased independence, including economic growth. This economic independence allows tapis crafts to become a source of additional or primary income. Skilled tapis embroidery and sewing enable women, including housewives, to generate income for their families.

After several training sessions on tapis crafts conducted by Mrs. Rosyana, the women experienced an impact, namely that the crafts they made could be used as income. The results of the training in tapis sewing by creating tapis motifs on household items such as tablecloths which are usually only sold at a cheaper price, but since the tapis motif was created, many people are interested, especially mothers because the tablecloths with tapis motifs have a superior appeal that can attract attention. Sales of tablecloths are marketed on existing social media, namely Facebook and WhatsApp, so that they can increase economic income in households.

Women also gain independence through training in tapis-making, such as sewing or creating motifs. This includes economic independence, which can increase their income. Additional income is generated from tapis-making and selling the products. Products that were once sold, and are still being produced today, include household items like tissue holders, tablecloths, and party dresses.

Social Indicators

Women's social independence has led to an increase in their social status and role. Women as housewives have gained recognition because their skills in embroidery and tapis weaving, which were once considered solely domestic work, are now recognized as skills with economic and cultural value. This enhances their self-esteem and social standing in the eyes of their families and communities. Furthermore, women participate in decision-making through the economic contribution of tapis crafts. Women often have a stronger voice in family decisions, including financial matters and children's education.

Cultural Indicators

The independence of women from the cultural aspect can adapt culture and gain innovation even though it is deeply rooted in tradition, female craftsmen also show independence by adapting Tapis into more modern and diverse products (such as wallets, Muslim clothing, and wall hangings), ensuring that this culture remains relevant in the current era).

Self-Development Indicators

Women's independence in self-development can improve technical skills in weaving/embroidering tapis and non-technical skills such as small business management, financial records, and entrepreneurship. Mastery of advanced embroidery techniques where women can delve into more complex embroidery techniques or other special motifs of Lampung Tapis, such as ship motifs, bamboo shoots, or flora and fauna, each of which has a deep symbolic meaning. In addition, women can also understand the raw materials of various types of threads (gold, silver, silk, cotton) and lining fabrics used, as well as how to care for them properly so that the product is durable and the color does not fade. Then women can develop the ability to design their own Tapis motifs, both traditional and modified, to create

unique products and in accordance with market demand, while still preserving local cultural values.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research on Women's Empowerment Based on Local Potential Through the Tapis Craft Center in Realizing Women's Independence in Tarahan Village, Katibung District , South Lampung Regency, it can be concluded that:

Women's empowerment based on local potential through the tapis craft center in realizing women's independence in Tarahan Village, Katibung District , South Lampung is carried out in several ways, namely awareness, training and mentoring. Awareness is carried out by the owner of the Rakata tapis studio by providing self-empowerment education, emphasizing economic and social benefits and offering jobs. Training activities in this study are the administrators of the Rakata tapis studio gathering and inviting women to explain about tapis making, embroidering and marketing tapis products. Furthermore, mentoring activities are carried out by the tapis owner, the administrators of the Rakata tapis studio, members in Tarahan Village and the Head of Tarahan Village to supervise women in making tapis and train women's abilities by giving them tasks and groups in tapis making, embroidering and marketing.

Women's Independence in the Tapis Craft Center in Tarahan Village, Katibung District South Lampung Regency has three forms, namely economic independence, social independence, and cultural independence. Women's economic independence in the tapis craft center can provide additional sources of income, especially housewives can have their own income from tapis embroidery skills, sewing, embroidery and marketing tapis products without having to leave the house or family responsibilities. Women's social independence can increase self-confidence because they have skills in making high-value products. Then, women's cultural independence can preserve tapis products by continuing traditions from generation to generation.

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