

Community Empowerment Strategies in Waste Management Based on Pancasila Values for Achieving the SDGs

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Abstract: Waste remains a serious problem in Indonesia as it directly affects the environment, public health, and the quality of life. This study aims to formulate community empowerment strategies in waste management based on Pancasila values to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The research uses a qualitative descriptive method through literature studies and an analysis of Pancasila values as an ethical foundation for environmental management. The results show that effective waste management requires not only government involvement but also active community participation. The value of Divinity fosters moral awareness to protect God's creation through environmentally friendly behavior. The value of Humanity encourages collective responsibility to create a healthy environment. The value of Unity strengthens the spirit of mutual cooperation in local waste management. The value of Democracy provides space for communities to participate in determining solutions that meet their needs. The value of Justice ensures an equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities in waste management. Based on these findings, community empowerment strategies grounded in Pancasila values are relevant and effective in achieving sustainable waste management and supporting the SDGs.

Keywords: Pancasila, Community Empowerment, Waste Management, Social Values

Abstrak: Sampah masih menjadi permasalahan serius di Indonesia karena berdampak langsung terhadap lingkungan, kesehatan masyarakat, dan kualitas hidup. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merumuskan strategi pemberdayaan masyarakat dalam pengelolaan sampah yang berbasis nilai-nilai Pancasila guna mendukung pencapaian Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif melalui studi literatur serta analisis nilai-nilai Pancasila sebagai landasan etika dalam pengelolaan lingkungan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengelolaan sampah yang efektif tidak hanya memerlukan keterlibatan pemerintah, tetapi juga partisipasi aktif masyarakat. Nilai Ketuhanan menumbuhkan kesadaran moral untuk menjaga ciptaan Tuhan melalui perilaku ramah lingkungan. Nilai Kemanusiaan mendorong tanggung jawab bersama dalam menciptakan lingkungan yang sehat. Nilai Persatuan memperkuat semangat gotong royong dalam pengelolaan sampah di tingkat lokal. Nilai Kerakyatan memberikan ruang bagi masyarakat untuk berpartisipasi dalam menentukan solusi yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan mereka. Nilai Keadilan menjamin pemerataan manfaat dan tanggung jawab dalam pengelolaan sampah. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, strategi pemberdayaan masyarakat yang berlandaskan nilai-nilai Pancasila relevan dan efektif dalam mewujudkan pengelolaan sampah yang berkelanjutan serta mendukung pencapaian SDGs.

Kata kunci: Pancasila, Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, Pengelolaan Sampah, Nilai Sosial

Introduction

The issue of waste has become one of the most pressing environmental and social challenges facing Indonesia in the modern era. Data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK, 2023) indicates that national waste generation continues to increase annually, driven by population growth and increasingly consumptive lifestyle changes. This crisis is exacerbated by the fact that Indonesia is a major contributor to marine plastic debris (Jambeck et al., 2015), a condition that threatens the sustainability of marine ecosystems and global human health. Conventional waste management approaches relying on the linear "collect-transport-dispose" paradigm have proven to be no longer adequate. This model merely shifts the problem to Landfills (TPA), which have increasingly limited capacity and cause negative long-term ecological impacts, such as soil and water pollution, as well as methane gas emissions (Hoorweg & Bhada-Tata, 2012). Consequently, there is a high urgency to identify and implement alternative waste management models that are more sustainable and participatory.

One alternative solution that has been widely studied and developed is the community-based solid waste management model. This approach views the community not as an object, but as a subject or the primary actor in the waste management cycle, ranging from sorting at the household level to processing waste into economically valuable products (Zurbrugg et al., 2012). Various studies indicate that active citizen involvement through programs such as waste banks or collective composting can significantly reduce the volume of waste transported to landfills (Suryani et al., 2020; Damanhuri & Padmi, 2019). However, the implementation of community empowerment programs often faces sustainability challenges due to the lack of a strong value foundation and social capital to bind citizen participation in the long term (Putnam, 2000). To address these challenges, the proposed solution must be rooted in local wisdom and the Indonesian philosophy of life. Pancasila, as the state foundation and view of life, provides a set of fundamental values highly relevant for building a robust collective movement (Kaelan, 2018).

The values of *Gotong Royong* (mutual cooperation, implied in the third precept), deliberation for consensus (fourth precept), and social justice (fifth precept) constitute essential social capital for driving sustainable public participation (Latif, 2011). Integrating these values into empowerment strategies will not only increase the community's sense of ownership regarding the program but also ensure that its implementation aligns with the nation's cultural character. The synergy between this value-based empowerment approach is also globally relevant as it contributes directly to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) (United Nations, 2015). Although the concept of community empowerment has been widely discussed and Pancasila is recognized as the national ideology, there has not been

an in-depth study formulating a strategic model that systematically and operationally integrates Pancasila values into waste management empowerment programs to accelerate SDG achievement. Based on this gap, this research is crucial. This study aims to formulate a community empowerment strategy model in waste management grounded in Pancasila values to support the achievement of the SDGs. Operationally, this strategy is defined as a series of approaches, methods, and participatory activity stages where every element is inspired by the values of Divinity, Humanity, Unity, Democracy, and Social Justice.

The results of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this research can enrich the repository of social and environmental science regarding the application of Pancasila values within the context of sustainable development. Practically, the resulting strategic model can serve as a guideline for local governments, environmental activists, and community leaders in designing and implementing community-based waste management programs that are more effective, empowering, and sustainable. Based on these issues, this research seeks to answer the question: How can community empowerment strategies in waste management grounded in Pancasila values support the achievement of SDGs in Indonesia.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at deeply describing social phenomena related to community empowerment in waste management based on Pancasila values. A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it is capable of explaining social reality holistically through in-depth data collection (Sugiyono, 2019). Data for this study was obtained through literature review, field observation, and interviews with community figures and waste bank managers. These techniques were used to acquire comprehensive information relevant to the research focus (Moleong, 2017). Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing systematically, as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). This analysis aims to identify patterns and relationships between Pancasila values and community empowerment practices in the context of value-based waste management.

Result and Discussion

Based on an interview with the Head of the Recycling Center (PDU) in Purwokerto Kidul, Mr. Eko Sumarno (personal interview, 2025), it was found that the main waste management operations encompass three primary flows: collection from the source, sorting, and processing into three final products: Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF), waste slurry for planting media or compost, and residue.

The fundamental challenge faced by the management is the low level of awareness and participation among the community in sorting waste at the source.

The source explained that some residents assume that because they have paid a monthly fee, they no longer have an obligation to sort their waste. This finding aligns with research by Suryani, Hidayat, and Lestari (2020) as well as Damanhuri and Padmi (2019), which states that one of the main obstacles in community-based waste management systems in Indonesia is minimal community participation and weak internalization of environmental responsibility values. This condition makes the sorting process heavier and inefficient, and increases the operational burden on processing facilities (Hoornweg & Bhada-Tata, 2012).

Empowerment strategies attempted by the management include direct socialization to the community through neighborhood (RT) and *Dasawisma* meetings, as well as a planned implementation of a profit-sharing system, where 25% of the sales value of sorted waste would be given to the community and 75% used for operational costs. However, this plan has not been fully realized due to a lack of interest and commitment from the community. This situation illustrates that an empowerment approach that is solely economic in nature is insufficient without being accompanied by the development of the community's social and moral values (Mardikanto & Soebiato, 2017).

Additionally, a cross-subsidy strategy is applied, where higher fees from commercial customers, such as restaurants, are used to cover the operational costs of less affluent household customers. This strategy reflects a social approach and the principle of distributive justice, which is a vital pillar in sustainable environmental management (United Nations, 2015; Kaza et al., 2018). This step also demonstrates the implementation of Pancasila values, specifically Social Justice for All the People of Indonesia (the 5th Precept).

Field findings indicate that community empowerment strategies in waste management are heavily influenced by the application of Pancasila values at the community level. The low participation in sorting waste from the source reflects a challenge in applying the spirit of *Gotong Royong* (the 3rd Precept). The community tends to view waste management solely as the responsibility of the management, rather than a shared obligation to protect the environment.

The ideal model proposed by the interviewee—the profit-sharing system—is essentially an effort to rebuild the spirit of cooperation and collective responsibility by providing economic incentives, which aligns with the concept of community empowerment based on local values (Mardikanto & Soebiato, 2017; Kaelan, 2018). On the other hand, the cross-subsidy strategy applied by the management represents the implementation of the values of Just and Civilized Humanity (the 2nd Precept) and Social Justice (the 5th Precept). By ensuring that less affluent residents still receive services, the management strives to prevent larger environmental problems such as river pollution and illegal dumping. This practice aligns with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), as it supports the creation of an inclusive and equitable waste management system (United Nations, 2015; Latif, 2011). The

dedication of the management, which emphasizes social service over personal profit, also reflects the internalization of humanitarian values and social responsibility as emphasized in Pancasila (Kaelan, 2018; Latif, 2011).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the community empowerment strategy for waste management in Kelurahan Kober has proceeded through socialization efforts and the application of a system based on social justice values, yet it faces a fundamental challenge in the form of low active community participation. The success of this program relies heavily on the internalization of the value of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) within the community to encourage willingness to sort waste from the source. Although management practices at the facility level already reflect Pancasila values and support SDG goals, the empowerment strategy has not yet reached an optimal level due to minimal collective awareness. Therefore, the primary recommendation is to strengthen sustainable education programs and create more attractive incentive systems to drive behavioral change in the community, thereby creating a waste management ecosystem that is sustainable and truly community-based.

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