



Intervention of the Cimahi City MSME Community through Collaborative and Participatory Training in Supporting Business Sustainability

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ABSTRACT	ARTICLE INFO
<p>This study aims to analyze community interventions for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cimahi City through collaborative and participatory training to support business sustainability. The focus of the study is directed at identifying structural and functional problems faced by MSMEs in the context of collaboration and participation, as well as exploring how community-based training contributes to building business capacity and resilience. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) involving MSME actors and community facilitators in Cimahi City. The results of the study showed three main findings: (1) The identification of various business problems stemming from the low intensity of collaboration and lack of active participation of MSMEs in community activities; (2) The mapping of solutions based on local needs, including through the implementation of collaborative training, strengthening business networks, and optimizing the role of the community as a shared learning space; and (3) Proven community contribution in encouraging the sustainability of MSME businesses through the process of collective learning, sharing experiences, and increasing managerial capacity and business innovation. The impact of this study shows that collaborative and participatory training approaches facilitated by the community have high effectiveness in strengthening the sustainability of MSMEs. This intervention model can be replicated in other regions as a systematic and sustainable local empowerment-based development strategy.</p>	<p>Article History: Submitted/Received 01 Juni 2025 First Revised 15 Juni 2025 Accepted 27 Juni 2025 First Available online 29 Juni 2025 Publication Date 29 Juni 2025</p> <p>Keyword: <i>Community Intervention; Cimahi City MSMEs; learning Collaborative ; Participatory; Business sustainability</i></p>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are strategic sectors in the national economy, including at the regional level such as Cimahi City (Dwijayanty, R. 2023). The role of MSMEs has been proven to be able to absorb labor, increase community income, and maintain local economic stability, especially in the midst of the challenges of the global and post-pandemic economic crisis (kumar Sahoo, S., 2025). However, the sustainability of MSMEs still faces various problems, including limited access to information, lack of business networks, weak managerial capacity, and low participation in community-based capacity building activities. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in the Indonesian economy, both in terms of job creation, income equity, and contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Cimahi City, MSMEs are the backbone of the local economy, with various sectors such as culinary, crafts, fashion, and services growing rapidly. However, the main challenge still faced by local MSMEs is the weak business sustainability due to limited access to training, business networks, innovation, and market information (Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, 2022).

Another problem that emerges is the low collaborative and participatory culture in the MSME community (Dhewanto, W. 2020). Many business actors are still individual-oriented, lack connection with the community, and do not understand the importance of collaboration as a survival strategy in dynamic market conditions. The MSME community in Cimahi has actually grown organically, but it has not been optimally functioned as a space for collective learning and strengthening business capacity. In fact, according to the theory of community empowerment, business sustainability can be achieved when business actors are actively involved in the process of learning together and exchanging knowledge (Suharto, 2009).

Previous research has shown that collaborative and participatory community-based training has been proven to increase the resilience of small businesses. For example, a study by (Nugroho, 2021) in Yogyakarta found that community-based participatory training can strengthen business networks and increase the adaptability of MSME actors to market changes. In addition, (Nurjanah, 2020) revealed that community-based interventions have a positive impact on increasing the managerial capacity of MSMEs through increasing digital literacy, marketing strategies, and production efficiency.

This condition shows the urgency to design a more structured and targeted community intervention model in Cimahi City, with a collaborative and participatory training approach tailored to local needs. This kind of intervention not only increases business capacity, but also strengthens solidarity between MSME actors, builds more inclusive networks, and creates sustainable learning spaces. Thus, MSME actors not only survive, but also develop adaptively and innovatively.

This research is here to answer this need by examining in depth how community intervention through collaborative and participatory training can support the sustainability of MSME businesses in Cimahi City. The focus of the research includes identifying collaborative and participatory problems faced by MSMEs, mapping relevant solutions, and analyzing the

impact of community learning on business resilience. Through a qualitative and participatory approach, it is hoped that a complete picture of the effectiveness of the community intervention model as a contextual empowerment strategy will be obtained. Thus, this study not only has a theoretical contribution in enriching the literature on MSME community empowerment, but also practical benefits in designing adaptive and sustainable policies and training programs. The findings of this study can be replicated in other regions facing similar problems, as part of national efforts to strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs and accelerate community-based economic recovery.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the form, process, and impact of community intervention on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) actors in Cimahi City, especially through collaborative and participatory training in supporting business sustainability. This approach is considered appropriate because it allows researchers to understand social phenomena in a complete and contextual way through direct interaction with the research subjects (Creswell, 2016). This research model also refers to the view of (Moleong, 2019) who states that qualitative approaches are very effective in exploring meanings, experiences, and processes that cannot be explained quantitatively.

The research location is focused on several active MSME communities in the Cimahi City area that have carried out community-based training or empowerment activities. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, which is a technique to deliberately determine informants based on certain criteria that are relevant to the purpose of the research, as explained by (Sugiyono, 2017). The main informants consist of MSME actors, community facilitators, and companions from government or private institutions who are directly involved in the training and empowerment process.

The data collection technique is carried out through three main methods. First, participatory observation is used to capture the dynamics of activities in the community directly. Second, in-depth interviews are applied to explore the perceptions, experiences, and strategies of MSME actors related to collaborative training and participatory practices. Third, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used to obtain collective views from MSME groups related to obstacles and solutions to business sustainability through the community (Nasution, 2003).

The data analysis process is carried out inductively through thematic analysis, with the stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawn. This technique refers to the qualitative analysis guidelines of (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014), which emphasize the importance of clarity in the grouping of themes and consistency in interpretation. In addition, the validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods to ensure the consistency of information from various points of view (Patton, 2002).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Identifying Business Problems

Based on the results of the FGD, observations and in-depth interviews with MSME actors and community facilitators in Cimahi City, it was found that the low intensity of collaboration between business actors is the dominant problem that hinders business development and sustainability. Most MSME actors stated that they prefer to run their businesses independently because they feel that they have not received concrete benefits from collaborating with fellow actors. They tend to compete in tight market spaces, instead of sharing strategies or supporting each other in terms of production and marketing. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of a structured collaborative forum that actively facilitates cooperation between MSMEs at the local level. In addition, active participation in MSME community activities is also very low. Some business actors admitted that they did not know the schedule of training activities or community meetings, while others stated that they had been invited but felt that the activities held were not relevant to their needs. This shows that there is a gap between community program planning and the real condition of MSME actors in the field. Many actors feel that community activities are only a formality or routine with no direct impact on the development of their business.

Furthermore, it was also found that this lack of participation has an impact on the inability of MSME actors to access important information, such as market trends, cooperation opportunities, or access to financing. Some informants admitted that they only got business information personally from social media or word of mouth, not through community networks. When asked about the experience of participating in the training, many admitted that they had participated once or twice, but did not continue because they felt that there was no follow-up after the activity was over. In some cases, MSME actors feel not confident to join because they think that the community is only followed by business actors who are already established or have strong connections.

This phenomenon indicates that weak collaboration and lack of active participation are not only due to the unwillingness of MSME actors, but also because of the lack of an inclusive, communicative, and oriented community system oriented to the real needs of business actors. This is one of the main challenges in encouraging business sustainability through a community-based approach. Therefore, interventions that are not only informative but also build a sense of ownership, mutual trust, and collective motivation among MSME actors to be actively involved in a productive community ecosystem.

From the perspective of social capital theory, horizontal relationships such as beliefs, norms, and social networks are important foundations in building cooperation between local economic actors. When MSME actors do not have trust or feel socially disconnected from the community, collaboration tends to be minimal and collective potential is not optimally managed. This is in line with the view of (Putnam, 2000) who states that social capital plays an important role in improving the efficiency of social organizations through coordination and mutually beneficial cooperation. In the context of Cimahi MSMEs, the weak social connection

between actors shows that social capital has not been formed strongly, thus hindering the creation of productive collaboration.

Furthermore, low participation in the community can also be explained through (Arnstein's, 1969) approach to participation theory, which divides participation into several levels ranging from manipulation to citizen control. In this context, the participation of MSMEs in Cimahi is at a level that is still passive, where their involvement is more symbolic or even does not occur at all. Community activities that are not based on the real needs of business actors have the potential to create boredom and alienation. Therefore, improving the sustainability of MSMEs through community training must be based on active participation that is dialogical, where business actors have a role in designing, implementing, and evaluating programs. This is in line with the empowerment approach that emphasizes the importance of community involvement as a subject in the development process (Suharto, 2009).

b. Solutions to Collaboration and Participation Problems

The results of research in the field show that the solution to the problem of low collaboration and active participation of MSMEs in Cimahi City can be pursued through three main approaches: the implementation of collaborative training, the strengthening of business networks, and the optimization of the role of the community as a shared learning space. First, collaborative training has proven effective in opening up a space for dialogue between MSME actors and building awareness of the importance of cooperation. The training involving various sectors, such as business actors, community facilitators, academics, and local governments, is a forum for sharing experiences, building joint strategies, and developing concrete follow-up plans. Several trainings facilitated by local communities have proven to be able to encourage the emergence of cooperation initiatives, such as sharing raw materials, joint promotion on social media, and collaboration in exhibitions or bazaars. MSME actors, who were initially passive, began to show enthusiasm after feeling appreciated as part of the learning process, not just as recipients of information.

Second, strengthening business networks is a strategic step that is starting to see results in certain MSME communities. Some groups have established regular communication forums and digital groups to accelerate the flow of information between members. Through this network, MSME actors can quickly get information about training, capital assistance, or market opportunities. The existence of networks also strengthens solidarity and accelerates the adaptation process in facing market challenges. Third, the role of the community as a shared learning space is being optimized through activities such as mentoring, open discussions, and sharing of good practices between business actors. A community not only becomes a gathering place, but also transforms into a center of shared growth, where its members grow through a process of reflection, evaluation, and innovation carried out collectively.

These three approaches are in line with the basic principles in social learning theory put forward by (Bandura, 1977), which states that effective learning occurs through social interaction, observation, and shared experience. In this context, collaborative training does not only function as a one-way knowledge transfer, but also as a learning by interaction

process that allows MSME actors to exchange knowledge, strengthen solidarity, and form a collective entrepreneurial mindset.

Furthermore, strengthening business networks and communities that function as spaces for continuous learning is also in line with the *community of practice* approach from (Wenger, 1998), which emphasizes the importance of active participation in communities that have common practices, experiences, and goals. In such a community, the learning process is not formal and structured, but occurs naturally through regular interactions, discussions, and reflections on the real experiences faced by business actors. This concept is very relevant to the findings in the field, where the MSME community that is active in holding mentoring, discussions, and sharing forums has proven to be able to encourage more sustainable joint growth. In other words, the sustainability of MSMEs is not only determined by capital and technical skills, but also by the ability to build social networks, actively participate and learn in a supportive community context.

c. Community contribution in encouraging the sustainability of MSME businesses through the collective learning process, sharing experiences, and increasing managerial capacity and business innovation

Based on the results of research in the field, the MSME community in Cimahi City has been proven to make a significant contribution to the sustainability of the business of its members, especially through collective learning practices and sharing of experiences between business actors. In various group discussion sessions and community activities, MSME actors revealed that involvement in the community gives them space to learn not only from formal speakers, but also from real experiences of fellow business actors. Many performers say they gain relevant practical knowledge such as how to manage stock, develop digital marketing strategies, and face challenges when market demand declines through stories and good practices shared by other members.

In addition, the community is an effective means of increasing the managerial capacity of MSMEs (Junaidi, dkk, 2025). In community-facilitated activities, such as basic financial training, business registration, and business planning, MSME actors are beginning to build a more systematic understanding of their business operations. Some community members even help each other in compiling simple financial reports or devising promotional strategies together. This process not only strengthens the internal management of the business, but also encourages actors to be more orderly and ready to access funding or participate in government assistance programs.

In terms of business innovation, the community plays a role as a spark for new ideas that emerge from the open dialogue process. Many MSME actors admitted that they started developing product variations, trying digital marketing approaches, or establishing business partnerships after seeing successful examples from other members in the community. A supportive community environment gives rise to confidence and motivation to keep growing. With intensive interaction, the community becomes a learning ecosystem that encourages

MSME actors to continue to innovate and adapt to market changes, thereby strengthening the overall sustainability of the business.

The findings of this study show that the MSME community in Cimahi City is not only a social space, but also serves as a joint learning arena that strengthens business sustainability. This is in line with the concept of *community of practice* put forward by (Wenger, 1998), where community is understood as "a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." In the context of MSMEs, communities are a place to share experiences, challenges, and solutions, which then enrich the entrepreneurial practices of each member.

In these communities, the learning process occurs naturally and contextually, not always through formal forums, but in the form of spontaneous discussions, exchanging experiences, and direct observation of the business practices of other members. Wenger (1998) states that "learning is an integral part of our everyday lives and is deeply social in nature." This is reflected in the admission of MSME actors who stated that it is easier to absorb lessons from their peers because the language is simpler, applicable, and in accordance with the real conditions of their business. Communities provide a safe space to collectively ask, experiment, and correct mistakes.

Furthermore, the learning process that occurs in the Cimahi MSME community shows the characteristics of informal learning, namely learning that is not officially designed, but takes place in the context of daily life. (Marsick and Watkins, 2001) state that "informal learning is predominantly experiential and non-routine, embedded in work and social life." In this community, MSME actors learn through mentoring fellow members, open discussions in social media groups, and cooperation on small projects such as joint exhibitions or collective promotions. Although not labeled "training," these activities form new understandings and skills on an ongoing basis.

Informal learning in the community also plays an important role in driving business innovation. Many MSME actors have started developing new products, trying digital marketing strategies, or improving financial management after hearing about success or failure experiences from community partners. (Eraut, 2004) asserts that "most of the learning that enables people to do their jobs well is informal." Thus, the community serves as a place for fresh ideas born from real experience, not from mere theory.

Overall, the existence of the community as a consistent and open informal learning space has contributed significantly to strengthening managerial capacity, increasing innovation, and resilience of MSMEs in Cimahi City. In the perspective of empowerment, this process signals an important shift: from dependence on external interventions to local knowledge-based independence. Therefore, strengthening the community as a dynamic *community of practice* is a strategic step to build the long-term sustainability of MSMEs.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that community intervention through collaborative and participatory training plays a significant role in supporting the sustainability of MSME actors in Cimahi City. These interventions have proven to be able to answer various structural and

functional problems that have been hindering the development of MSMEs, especially those related to low collaboration between business actors and lack of active participation in community activities. The low intensity of interaction and participation leads to the interruption of information flow, limited access to capacity building, and weak business resilience to market dynamics. The main findings of this study show that a contextual and local needs-based approach is the key to the effectiveness of interventions. The implementation of collaborative training, strengthening networks between business actors, and optimizing the role of the community as a collective learning space have a real impact on increasing managerial capacity, the spirit of innovation, and solidarity between MSMEs. The learning process that occurs informally and participially in the community encourages the growth of a more adaptive, resilient, and sustainable business ecosystem. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the collaborative and participatory approach is not only effective in the Cimahi context, but also has the potential to be applied as a model of community intervention in other regions. This strategy is relevant as a framework for MSME development based on local, sustainable, and participatory empowerment. The successful implementation of this model is highly dependent on the commitment of all parties—both communities, governments, and business actors themselves to make communities the center of innovation and local economic growth.

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