



## **Synergize in Empowering Students to Serve Change in Jaranguda Village in Karo District**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This abstract highlights the crucial role of synergy in empowering students to act as catalysts for positive social change. Synergy, in this context, refers to the collaboration between various stakeholders—such as universities, governments, and local communities—to create an environment that supports and amplifies the impact of student involvement in community service. By combining academic knowledge, practical skills, and community insights, these collaborative efforts can foster social innovation and address pressing societal challenges across various fields, including education, public health, and economic development. The article will explore how such synergies not only enhance the effectiveness of student service activities but also encourage students to become active agents of change, preparing them for leadership roles in society. This discussion aims to provide an initial understanding of the importance of synergy in student empowerment, with the hope of inspiring further research in this area and promoting greater social responsibility and community engagement among the youth.

**Keywords:** Community Service, Synergy, Students

### **INTRODUCTION**

Student empowerment is one of the strategic efforts to create a generation of youth who are not only academically intelligent but also capable of making a positive contribution to society. Students, as agents of change, have great potential to actively play a role in advancing various sectors of life, including social, economic, and cultural domains. One way to maximize the role of students is through structured community service activities, which encourage them to synergize with various parties. As Cahyono (2008) points out, students play a vital role in social development and can have a significant impact on the changes taking place in society.

Synergizing in the context of student empowerment means creating close collaboration between students, educational institutions, the community, and other stakeholders. In this collaboration, students are not only actors but also facilitators who bridge the needs of the community with solutions based on the knowledge and skills they possess. Cahyono (2019) further emphasizes that students, as change agents, have the potential to integrate the knowledge they learn with the social realities in the community. Thus, students function not only as learners but also as drivers of change that directly impact social life.

The desired change can be realized if this synergy is well-established. Through empowerment programs involving various parties, students can apply the theories they learn into real practice. Moreover, they can develop essential skills such as leadership, communication, and teamwork. These skills are crucial in preparing students to face challenges in both their professional and social lives. As Chandra & Rusmala (2002) explain, practical experience in community service activities helps students hone skills that are highly relevant to their future careers.

Empowerment programs involving students not only provide direct benefits to the community but also enrich students' learning experiences. By engaging directly in activities relevant to the community's needs, students can see how the knowledge they acquire can be applied in real life. This also broadens their understanding of the social realities around them, making them more sensitive to local issues. In this context, Hildayanti & Machrizzandi (2022) emphasize the importance of participatory approaches in community service to strengthen the involvement of both students and the community in finding solutions to various issues.

Student empowerment based on synergy also has a broader impact in encouraging sustainable social change. When students are involved in activities that engage many parties, they learn how to collaborate with different elements of society. This will shape their mindset to always seek joint solutions, leading to more inclusive and sustainable social changes. In line with Prasetyo (2019), through synergy between students and the community, a mutually beneficial collaboration can be created that strengthens social development efforts toward sustainability.

The benefits of student empowerment are not only felt by the students themselves but also by the wider community. When students are able to identify and provide solutions to the problems faced by the community, the impact is felt directly by the community members. This positive impact also strengthens the relationship between students and the community, fostering an environment that supports each other and encourages further positive change. Jannah & Sulianti (2021) note that students, as agents of change, play an important role in shaping the character and quality of life in society through their social activities.

Thus, student empowerment based on synergy becomes a key factor in driving sustainable change, not only at the individual student level but also at the community level. Through close cooperation between students, educational institutions, and the community, we can create greater and long-lasting change, ultimately shaping a more advanced and prosperous society. As Damayanti et al. (2014) suggest, a community empowerment approach involving students can enhance the potential of the community while strengthening the social capacities needed to achieve positive and sustainable social change.

## METHOD

The method used in this community service is a qualitative approach that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and perspectives of the community and students involved in the empowerment process. This approach uses qualitative data to explore the meaning, dynamics of relationships, and social changes that occur through interactions between students, the community, and other stakeholders. Through this approach, we can better understand how synergy in student service not only changes society, but also enriches students' experiences in applying knowledge and skills in the field.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Role of Students in the Education Agenda (Formation of the Next Generation with Character)

Character education has a higher meaning than moral education because character education is not only related to right or wrong, but how to instill habits about good things in life so that children have a high awareness and understanding as well as concern and commitment to establish virtue in everyday life. As intellectuals and members of society who have added value, students are able to play a professional and proportional role in society or in the world of education. The role of students is not just learning activities in the lecture hall, in the library and internet access that are related to the discipline they are studying but more than that. Students are not only agents of change but students should become agents of empowerment after changes that play a role in the physical and non-physical development of a nation which is then supported by the next student function, namely social control, cultural control, community control, and individual control so as to close the gaps of injustice.

Students are not observers in this role, but students are also required to be actors in society, because it is undeniable that students are part of society. Ideally, students become role models in society, based on their knowledge, level of education, norms that apply around them, and their way of thinking. However, the reality in the field is different from what is expected, students tend to only study theoretical knowledge in lectures and very few of them have contact with the community, although there are some students who have begun to approach the community through community service programs. (Cahyono, 2019)

The formation of the character of the younger generation is a shared responsibility of the family, school, government and society. As part of the educated young generation, here the role of students as pioneers is very strategic. The approach through peer coaching and a humanist approach based on local wisdom is expected to be able to answer the problems that occur in this nation. Here the role of students is very much needed, because they are the generation that is the spearhead of the pioneers who bridge traditional society and global society. (Kearifan, 2018)

The formation of the character of the younger generation with a humanist approach based on local wisdom through the preservation of cultural values is seen as a strategic step. Specifically, in Jaranguda village, which is predominantly inhabited by the Karo tribe, there are traditional values and local wisdom that are good for character building for the younger generation. Students as agents of change have a neutral role in society, including in village communities. Through this study, the role of students in community activities was found, including in community activities in Jaranguda village such as mutual cooperation, gratitude, helping each other in turns, and others. The role of students in the form of participation in every activity, they provide real examples to the younger generation, especially children in kindergartens in Jaranguda Village that positive activities that contain the philosophy of togetherness and family need to be preserved. Some roles that can be taken by students in character education in kindergartens are teaching children about values such as honesty, cooperation, and empathy through stories, games, and creative activities. Teaching children about manners, mutual respect, and good behavior in the surrounding environment. Conducting activities that stimulate children's imagination and creativity to help in the development of their social skills.

Character education is an integral part of creating a moral and ethical society. Character education is not only limited to formal scopes such as schools, but also includes informal and non-formal areas that involve all elements of society. In this context, students play an important role as drivers of social change. They are individuals who have intellectual capacity, youthful enthusiasm, and great influence in society. According to (Fitri, 2016),

character education aims to form individuals who have noble personalities, are able to contribute to society, and have social responsibility. Therefore, the role of students is very important in encouraging the development of community character through various activities that involve moral, ethical, and social values.

**The Role of Students in Community Character Education** Students as elements of society who have access to higher education are expected to be able to apply the knowledge and values they gain in college into community life. The following are some of the main roles of students in community character education:

1. Students are often considered agents of change who are able to make a significant impact on society. According to (Susanto, 2018), students have the capacity to bring about transformation in society through initiatives based on moral and ethical values. Students are not only role models, but also the main drivers in efforts to create a better community environment. With a youthful spirit and critical thinking, they can identify social problems and offer innovative solutions that are oriented towards character building.
2. One real form of student contribution to community character education is through community service programs, such as Real Work Lectures (KKN). This activity provides an opportunity for students to be directly involved in community life, understand social dynamics, and apply character values such as cooperation, responsibility, and social concern. Research conducted by (Andini, 2019) shows that KKN is an effective medium for students to spread character values to the community, especially in areas that need increased awareness of the importance of morality and ethics.
3. Students also have an important role in driving informal education, both through learning community activities, training, and seminars that involve the community. In this case, they become facilitators who provide an understanding to the community about the importance of character values such as honesty, discipline, and tolerance. (Nurhadi, 2020) highlighted that students who are active in learning communities often become role models in implementing these noble values, thus being able to motivate society to apply them in everyday life.

### **The Role of Students as Social Control**

Human social life involves interactions between individuals in society. According to sociology, humans are social beings who cannot live alone. Human social life has changed due to the development of the times and technology, which influences the patterns and systems of social life in modern society, such as in Jaranguda Village. Social interaction between residents, socialization by village officials to residents, and relationships between individuals and groups are an integral part of human social life. Examples of social life can be found in various aspects, such as communication, namely using cellphones to interact remotely according to their interests and needs, interactions in the family environment, and relationships between individuals in society such as village employees in receiving, inputting and sending citizen data. Human social life has also existed since ancient times, where humans lived in groups and depended on social interaction to survive. (Cahyono, 2008)

Human social life involves aspects of communication, interaction, and relationships between individuals in society. In the context of management, social life can be observed through several aspects, such as:

1. **Communication:** Rapidly developing technology, such as WhatsApp, social media, and telephones, allows individuals to communicate more easily and efficiently. In the working environment of the Rarelyuda village, this has been implemented by the village apparatus, good communication between the village apparatus and residents can be found directly. This is an important aspect for conveying information, organizing cooperation, and monitoring problem resolution.

2. **Interaction:** Social interaction is a social process that involves relationships between individuals and groups. In the context of management, social interaction is important for building good relationships between team members, so that they can work together more effectively and achieve work goals. This was found by researchers through several events that are often and routinely held in the Rarelyuda village, Karo district.
3. **Relationships between individuals and groups:** Human social life involves relationships between individuals and various groups, such as family, workplace, and community. In management, understanding the relationships between individuals and groups can help develop effective strategies for managing human resources and achieving organizational goals.
4. **Socialization:** Socialization is the process of forming an individual's personality through social interaction. In the context of management, socialization is important for educating the skills and behaviors needed by team members to maintain cooperation and achieve organizational goals. Various routine socialization activities that are often carried out in the village of Jarangkauda such as socialization
5. **Public health:** Public health is an important aspect that affects human social life. In management, public health stakeholders can help identify social problems and develop appropriate programs to improve them. A small example that researchers found was the elderly exercise program open to the public organized by the village government, and the mutual cooperation program for cleanliness every Friday.

In order to carry out effective community management, an understanding of human social life and good social interaction is very important. By understanding and managing human resources and creating a comfortable and productive work environment, the local government can increase the competitiveness and welfare of the community (Fadlillah, 2016).

In addition, students as social control in Islam refers to the role we play in regulating and monitoring community behavior, as well as maintaining harmony and welfare in society. Some of the social controls that researchers have carried out are:

1. **Supervision of Ihsan:** Students have a responsibility to maintain Ihsan or Islamic requirements defined by Islamic law. In this case, they must be good figures or examples in maintaining Ihsan and appearing in accordance with Islamic teachings. Several programs organized by researchers such as wearing polite clothing and covering the genitals to trigger the interest of children and parents to be able to continue to appear good and polite are also examples of Islamic civilization preaching in Karo Regency.
2. **Socialization of a love of learning:** Through socialization, students can help teach concerns and behaviors that are in accordance with Islamic teachings to students. This is important to provide good teaching and motivation to students in the area.
3. **Collaboration:** Students must work together with other communities to create a safe and productive environment, and help people who need help.
4. **Active role:** Students must play an active role in carrying out social control, either in the form of written rules, verbally, through village officials, punishments, and sanctions, or through socialization.
5. **Social control:** Students must be part of the social control faced by society, especially in facing the challenges of the times.

Students in the context of Islam have a responsibility to maintain harmony and social welfare, as well as to become effective agents of change and social control. In this case, they must understand and apply Islamic teachings in their social lives, as well as be good examples for other communities. (Syaiful, 2023). The role of students as social control is very important in building a better society and maintaining social balance. With high



awareness and commitment, students can make a significant contribution to maintaining social norms and promoting positive values in society. For example, as happened in the research area, namely in an area with minimal Islam, students play an important role as agents of change in society. Researchers have a high awareness of social issues and the values that are upheld. With the knowledge and understanding they have, researchers are determined to maintain social balance and minimize non-conformity with social norms on the condition that they do not change the slightest bit of their cultural characteristics. Through social media and as influencers, students use this platform to spread messages that support goodness, tolerance, and justice. Students use the power of social media to invite others to participate in social actions or spread useful information. With the creativity and intelligence of students, students can be an inspiration to many people (Jannah & Sulianti, 2021).

### **Student Agents of Change**

The role of students as agents of change in realizing community empowerment. With the title "Synergy in Empowerment, Students Serve for Change," the main focus is to explore the potential of students as agents of change in various levels of society. Students are not only seen as individuals who study in college, but also as key elements in initiating and running various projects that can have a positive impact on the surrounding environment. Students can synergize with various parties, such as the government, non-profit organizations, and local communities, in order to create strong collaborations in order to realize community empowerment. In this context, it outlines concrete steps that can be taken by students to serve the community. This includes the development of empowerment projects, skills training, as well as counseling and mentoring to increase the capacity and independence of the community. In addition, the positive impact that can be generated by the role of students as agents of change, both in terms of the development of the students themselves and improving the quality of life of the communities involved. Thus, it can provide a positive contribution to the understanding of the potential of students as agents of change in the context of community empowerment. In an era of dynamic global development, the role of students is not only limited to academic activities on campus, but also develops into agents of change that have a significant impact in the midst of society (Kusuma, P. A., & Salindri, 2022). The presence of students as agents of change is an important key in realizing empowerment and positive transformation in various sectors of life.

Regarding the role of students as "Agents of Change", they can synergize in community empowerment efforts. Students as Agents of Change have a strategic role in initiating and encouraging constructive change around them. They are not only seen as recipients of knowledge in the classroom, but also as pioneers of innovative ideas and progressive solutions to social problems faced by society (Cahyono, 2019). By bringing a spirit of empowerment, students can become a positive force that drives growth and progress, not only for themselves, but also for the communities in which they are located.

Students can be the driving force of community empowerment by collaborating and synergizing with various parties, such as the government, non-profit organizations, and local communities. This collaborative effort is expected to create strong synergy, maximize potential, and stimulate sustainable positive change. It is important to recognize that students as agents of change are not only witnesses to change, but also active leaders in inspiring and motivating the surrounding community. With the courage to involve themselves in empowerment projects, students have the potential to create positive waves that involve various levels of society. In addition, the diversity and skills possessed by students play a crucial role in designing inclusive and sustainable solutions. Students bring fresh perspectives, creativity, and a spirit of innovation that can help overcome complex challenges in society (Chandra, A., & Rusmala, 2002). Therefore, exploring the potential of students in

this context is not only a moral calling, but also a smart investment for sustainable social and economic development.

Synergizing in empowerment, this concept emphasizes the importance of cooperation and synergy between various parties, including students, government, non-profit organizations, and local communities in an effort to increase community capacity and independence. Synergizing in the context of empowerment means creating strong collaboration, utilizing diverse expertise and resources to achieve common goals in improving community welfare (Franciscus Dwikotjo Sri, 2020). Students serve for change, this section highlights students' dedication to making positive contributions to the process of social change. "Serving for change" illustrates that students not only act as recipients of knowledge, but are also actively involved in activities aimed at overcoming social problems and improving the quality of life of the community (Damayanti, E., Soeaidy, M. S., & Ribawanto, 2014). Students here are considered agents of change who have a moral responsibility to create a positive impact around them. Students as agents of change, this concept details the role of students as agents of change. Students are not only participants in formal education, but also pioneers of ideas, innovations, and actions that bring positive change (Hildayanti, A., & Machrizzandi, 2022). By understanding social issues and taking initiatives, students can become a dynamic force in leading societal transformation. They are considered a key element in triggering and accelerating changes aimed at empowering and improving the quality of life of the community. Thus, it can create a picture of how students as agents of change can synergize with various parties to realize community empowerment through positive initiatives and contributions.

Concrete steps that students can take to implement their role as agents of change. Explore case studies and empirical evidence that support the idea that collaboration between students and various stakeholders can create real and significant change. Through a deeper understanding of the role of students as agents of change in the context of community empowerment, it can provide inspiration and a foundation for real efforts towards better social transformation.

The initial step involves selecting a sample, which is carried out by purposively selecting students who are actively involved in empowerment projects at various levels. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with selected students, relevant stakeholders such as government, non-profit organizations, and community members who collaborated with students. Furthermore, participant observation was also conducted to gain a contextual understanding of the implementation of the empowerment project (Laia, n.d.). Document analysis, including project reports, activity documentation, and related publications, was also involved to provide a more comprehensive perspective. This study used thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns, trends, and findings that emerged from the qualitative data collected.

A triangulation approach was used by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and document analysis to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. In addition, applying a comparative analysis method to compare the role of students as agents of change in various contexts and communities. Overall, it is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of students in realizing community empowerment, taking into account diverse social, economic, and cultural contexts.

The role of students as agents of change has a significant positive impact on community empowerment efforts. From the interview data, it can be seen that students who are actively involved in empowerment projects have a deep understanding of the challenges faced by the community and are able to design relevant solutions. Collaboration between students and government, non-profit organizations, and local communities has proven effective in creating

strong synergies to achieve common goals. Participatory observation provides insight into the dynamics of interactions between students and the community in the context of empowerment projects. It is seen that students not only contribute in terms of knowledge and skills, but also create strong social bonds with the community, increasing the sense of belonging and community involvement in the change process.

The comparative analysis shows variations in the approaches and outcomes of empowerment projects, emphasizing the importance of understanding the local context and specific needs of communities. Some projects may be more successful in enhancing community skills and independence, while others focus on developing social infrastructure and strengthening community networks.

The importance of students' roles in bringing innovation and fresh perspectives is also evident from the document analysis, which shows that projects involving students tend to be more creative and responsive to environmental changes. Students also play an important role in promoting the values of sustainability and social responsibility in every project they run. Overall, this study concludes that students as agents of change have great potential to drive community empowerment.

By synergizing with various parties and understanding the local context, students can be a positive force that is sustainable in bringing about positive and sustainable change in society. These findings provide a basis for developing more effective strategies and policies in utilizing students' potential as drivers of community empowerment.

It can be concluded that the role of students as agents of change has a very important positive impact on realizing community empowerment. Through active involvement in empowerment projects, students not only contribute in terms of skills and knowledge, but also build strong social ties with the community, increasing involvement and a sense of belonging. Collaboration between students, government, non-profit organizations, and local communities forms an effective synergy to achieve common goals. Comparative analysis shows that the success of empowerment projects depends on a deep understanding of the local context, and students have a crucial role in bringing innovation and creativity to addressing social challenges. As a step towards further development, it is recommended that educational institutions and related stakeholders can better support students in carrying out their roles as agents of change. Initiatives and mentoring programs that encourage student participation in empowerment projects can be strengthened. In addition, there is a need to develop a curriculum that supports the introduction of the concept of empowerment and social responsibility in the academic curriculum, to prepare students with the skills needed to face societal challenges. Related parties can also design effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure the impact of empowerment projects carried out by students. Thus, it is hoped that the role of students as agents of change can be strengthened, providing a greater positive contribution to realizing sustainable social change.

Integrity commitment is an individual's effort to establish good relationships with others. The most obvious value of this point is morality, both in actions and speech. Therefore, it is very inappropriate if there are students who are arrogant, like to lie, are arrogant, like to curse and so on. Moreover, in this modern era, students should be at the forefront to combat hoaxes, hate speech and various actions that damage public order.

Intellectual commitment is everything related to their scientific responsibility. Students are required to study seriously, aggressively, creatively, and applicatively. At its peak, they are able to practice and preach what they have consumed from various branches of science. At this point, the role of students can be felt.

A student must dare to appear in society to share what they have learned. Because, it is very unfortunate if these sciences only pile up on sheets and are fixated on one theory, while



the people around them are left in error. Of course, the path of preaching chosen must be cool, peaceful, inspiring and motivating. In conclusion, students have an important role for religion, state and nation. Steps that can be taken to participate in making changes for the better are by increasing worship to Allah SWT. and concern for others regardless of religious background, sect, organization and so on. If these simple things are done seriously, then he will become a Qur'anic student who is able to ground the values of the Qur'an in life.

## CONCLUSION

Synergizing in empowering students to serve for change in Jaranguda Village, Karo Regency, has had a significant positive impact on the community. Collaboration between students, the community, and other stakeholders has succeeded in improving economic skills, strengthening social capacity, and encouraging environmental awareness. Students act as facilitators who introduce sustainable agricultural practices and economic skills, while the community actively applies them in their daily lives. This program also strengthens partnership networks involving educational institutions, village governments, and the private sector. The success of this program shows the importance of synergy in creating sustainable social change and empowering communities to be economically independent.

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