

## Capacity Building of Dage Craftsman Group in Ciberung Village Through Organizational Governance Training

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### Abstract

Ciberung Village is one of the villages in Ajibarang Sub-district, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, known as the center of dage production and business. The typical dage of Ciberung Village is made from copra pulp or cake. Currently, the production and marketing of dage as a village potential is still managed individually by each craftsman. Thus, dage products on the market often need to be standardized in terms of taste, quality, texture, and price. These standardization efforts then impact the uneven economic benefits felt by dage craftsmen. Therefore, this community service activity aims to increase the community's competitive advantage through mentoring and reactivating dage craftsmen groups through institutional and organizational governance training. This program consists of four main stages: analysis of partner conditions, focus group discussions, socialization and training, and evaluation. Through this activity, the understanding of the community and village government regarding the management of dage business and production in an integrated manner through groups and its benefits can increase. The program evaluation results showed that 93% of the craftsmen agreed to create a Dage Craftsmen Group. In addition, there was an increase in understanding of the organization in general to understanding the benefits of establishing dage craftsmen in terms of economic, marketing, and social aspects with an average of 92.5%.

**Keywords:** Dage, Ciberung Village, Craftsmen Group, Governance, Organization

### INTRODUCTION

Villages are the most minor units in the Indonesian government system. Even though they are in the lowest position in the government system, villages are essential as the primary foundation supporting the state (Utami et al., 2023). Ciberung Village is one of the villages in Ajibarang Sub-district, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, known as the center of *dage* business and production. *Dage* is a variant of traditional food similar to *tempe gembus* originating from Yogyakarta. The mixture of coconut materials makes dage itself. Specifically for the Banyumas area, they produce *dage* from copra pulp or cake, which is brown to grey and covered with mushrooms (Badan POM, 2022). This type of *dage* sets itself apart from what is available in other regions in Indonesia. It distinguishes the production of *dage* in Banyumas, particularly in

Ciberung Village. It has the potential to keep growing in quality and marketing reach, as it has only been sold in traditional markets. Figure 1 is an example of *dage* products produced by the Ciberung Village community.



**Figure 1.** *Dage* products produced by Ciberung community

Ciberung Village currently hosts a Mekarsari *dage* craftsmen group consisting of 110 households. Despite the long-standing establishment of this *dage* craftsmen group, production management remains under the control of each craftsman. Additionally, Ciberung Village requires the establishment of a Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) as one of the platforms aimed at supporting economic improvement and village independence, aligning with the village's potential and needs (Zulkarnaen, 2016). In this context, Ciberung Village boasts substantial potential for development, particularly in the realm of *dage* products. This is one of the efforts to increase community independence and welfare through increasing knowledge and utilizing resources, as stated in Law Number 6 of 2014 (Amran, 2022).

Lack of coordination in the business community is a problem often faced by businesses on the MSME or home industry scale (Anugrah et al., 2020). The absence of effective coordination through one organization then impacts the uneven quality and selling price of *dage* in the market, so each craftsman has a significant difference in income. In addition, Ciberung Village's *dage* is currently only sold in traditional markets and has yet to be able to enter the modern retail level due to limitations in meeting the specified retail standards, both in terms of packaging and product durability.

On the other hand, individual management often leads to variations in the quality of *dage* produced by different craftsmen, including differences in taste, aroma, and texture. This variance arises due to the need for more stringent quality standards and standardized processes in production (Latifasari et al., 2023). A lack of understanding of instructions can also cause variations and production disruptions (Aapaoja & Haapasalo, 2014). Furthermore, the absence of established standards also contributes to frequent production failures, stemming from improper production processes, inadequate production planning, challenges with raw materials, or less hygienic working environments. The disparities in product quality have consequently resulted in varying selling prices in the market. In fact, long-term advancements can be achieved by making people work towards higher standards (Rymaszewska, 2014). Figure 2 depicts the production environment of one of the *dage* craftsmen in Ciberung Village.



Figure 2. Production environment in Ciberung Village

Therefore, to solve the problems described above, the solution offered through this community service program is strengthening the institutional governance of the *dage* craftsmen group as a form of scaling up the *dage* product in Ciberung Village. The strengthening of institutional governance aims to assist and increase the active participation of the *dage* craftsman group as an organization in developing the *dage* business as a potential product for Ciberung Village residents. Through this solution, the expected target is establishing an effective *dage* product business management system that can encourage the economic independence of villagers. Strengthening institutional governance through socialization and training provides a comprehensive understanding of integrated production management to improve and homogenize the quality of *dage* produced. In addition, through this program, assistance will also be provided in product development, market share expansion, and product quality and price standardization. The expected long-term impact is the creation of *dage* products with a quality that meets the home industry licensing standards.

## METHOD

The method of implementing community service comprises activities to address governance and institutional management issues within the *dage* craftsmen group of Ciberung Village. These issues encompass matters concerning the role of the *dage* craftsmen group in developing a distinctive *dage* business in Ciberung Village. The Mekarsari Dage Craftsmen Group attended the community service initiative, consisting of 20 family heads, and this group operates within RW 04 of Ciberung Village. The duration of this activity spanned three months in total. This community service activity applies a participatory method which aims to make the *dage* craftsmen group the leading centre in a series of exercises to increase the ability to adapt to the proposed changes later, from the planning stage to implementation (Kusumawijaya & Astuti, 2023; Octafani Rempe et al., 2023).

Activities were conducted through socialization and mentoring for *dage* craftsmen concerning the integrated management of *dage* products through organizational channels. Socialization is an effort to persuade someone to want to follow something, such as habits and behaviours that are expected to be practised (Laksito, 2021). This socialization and mentoring initiative comprised several meetings, commencing with analysing partner conditions to identify the primary issues. It then progressed to a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and dissemination of a proposed strategy for enhancing the institutional governance of the Ciberung Village Dage Craftsmen Group.

The initial stage of this community service series encompassed surveys and interviews. The survey entailed on-site visits to multiple *dage* production sites to assess the actual production environment, the challenges faced by craftsmen, and anticipated enhancements, particularly regarding the role of craftsmen groups in enhancing craftsmanship quality and economic viability. Simultaneously, interviews were conducted with the Chairperson of the Mekarsari Dage Craftsmen Group and several Dage craftsmen to gather insights into the current management conditions within the craftsmen group. This stage is an integral part of community service to determine the level of participation and cooperation of all stakeholders so that the proposed program is based on local needs and resources (Windiasih et al., 2023).

The findings from these surveys and interviews will subsequently serve as input for the upcoming Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and socialization stages. The FGD and socialization activities employ presentation and discussion techniques involving lecturers and students from various study programs, including Industrial Engineering, Digital Business, and Food Technology at Institut Teknologi Telkom Purwokerto. The material presented and discussed encompasses the initial survey results, aspects of institutional and organizational governance, the advantages of integrated village potential management, and endeavours to enhance the managerial, production quality, and economic aspects of *dage* craftsmen group. In a broader context, the phases of this community service initiative are illustrated in Figure 3.

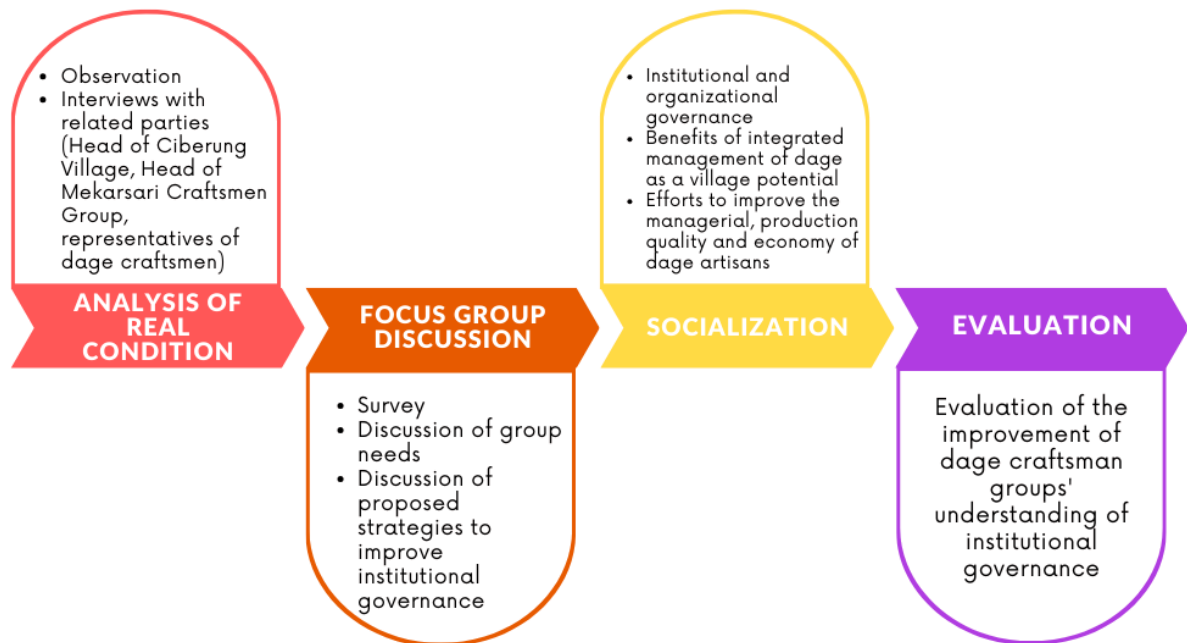


Figure 3. Community services phases

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Analysis of Real Condition

This community service activity was carried out for three months, consisting of four main stages, as seen in Figure 3. The first stage is a partner condition analysis, which aims to get an overview of the conditions of the community and *dage* craftsmen of Ciberung Village, especially those who are members of the Mekarsari Dage Craftsmen Group. At this stage of partner condition analysis, surveys and direct observations were carried out to determine the process and environment of *dage* production. In addition, at this stage, interviews were also conducted with several craftsmen. Figure 4 and Figure 5 are documentation of the partner condition analysis activities carried out.



Figure 4. Documentation of survey and observation of the *dage* production in Ciberung Village



**Figure 5.** Documentation of interview with the *dage* craftsmen group of Ciberung Village

At this stage, it was observed that the *dage* craftsmen in Ciberung Village had essentially joined a craftsmen group known as the Mekarsari Dage Craftsmen Group. However, in the actual field conditions, the group is not very active and needs to operate according to its intended function. Consequently, the management of *dage*, from the procurement of raw materials to sales, is still handled individually by each craftsman. This situation is believed to impact the uneven distribution of *dage* quality within Ciberung Village, resulting in varying selling prices and unequal economic benefits for each craftsman. Moreover, this disparity in quality also hampers the ability of Ciberung Village's distinctive *dage* products to access a broader and more modern market. Currently, Ciberung Village *dage* products are exclusively available at local traditional markets.

### Focus Group Discussion

The second stage in this series of community service activities involves conducting a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with relevant stakeholders to investigate further the issues identified in the previous stage. FGDs are utilized to gather data, information, and justifications that incorporate social interactions and insights from multiple individuals (Afiyanti, 2008). Based on the community service activities that have been carried out, the FGD provided an overview of the activities that need to be carried out and alternative strategies if the initial goal is unsuccessful (Syamsi & Heriyanti, 2022). During this stage, discussions and effective communication occurred with several stakeholders considered capable of providing input for generating potential solutions. Figure 6 documents the FGD activities held with the Village Head and *dage* craftsmen of Ciberung Village.



**Figure 6.** Documentation of Focus Group Discussion

Based on the results of the FGDs that have been conducted, it is found that the main problem faced by the *dage* craftsmen of Ciberung Village is the need for more knowledge regarding managing *dage* production in an optimal and integrated manner. In addition, in managing *dage*, the craftsmen still need a Standard Operational Procedure (SOP), so the production process still depends on each craftsman. The lack of availability of this SOP will further impact the non-uniformity of the quality of production results, including the taste, texture, size, or packaging. This lack of uniformity in quality is one of the main barriers for the Village Government and the *dage* craftsmen of Ciberung Village to expand the market.

Therefore, one of the efforts that can be made to ensure the fulfilment of quality standards by Ciberung Village *dage* craftsmen is integrated management through the reactivation of the Craftsmen Group and the role of the Village Government in developing *dage* as one of the village's potentials. The government plays a vital role in achieving community service goals because it has total influence in supporting economic improvement for its citizens (Maulida et al., 2023). Forming an institution as a group or community is believed to provide broad benefits, individually and in groups (Nikoyan et al., 2020). The existence of an organization that is managed effectively increases the business and economic levels of its members. Integration and coordination through an organization are believed to develop village potential successfully (Utaminingsih et al., 2022).

Before implementation, a survey was conducted to determine the community's condition and understanding regarding current institutional governance. The questionnaire was distributed to *dage* craftsmen and consisted of six questions. The questions on the questionnaire were related to knowledge about the organization's benefits in general. The six statements listed on the questionnaire are as follows.

- General organizational knowledge
- The current perceived role of the *dage* craftsmen group
- The need for the existence of the Craftsmen Group in Ciberung Village
- Knowledge of the financial benefits of establishing a Craftsmen Group
- Knowledge of the marketing benefits of establishing a Craftsmen Group
- Knowledge of the communication benefits of establishing a Craftsmen Group

The findings from the initial questionnaire conducted before implementing this activity indicate that the community recognizes the advantages of having a *dage* craftsmen group, particularly regarding financial, marketing, and communication benefits. Furthermore, the community's viewpoint aligns with the belief that a *dage* craftsmen group is necessary for the *dage* craftsmen of Ciberung Village. However, this result is inversely proportional to the benefits felt by *dage* craftsmen towards the Mekarsari Craftsmen Group, which currently exists, although it is not institutionally active. In addition, the community's knowledge of institutional organization and governance could be higher, which is likely why the existing artisan group has not been effective in carrying out its functions. The results of the pre-implementation questionnaire can be seen in Figure 7.

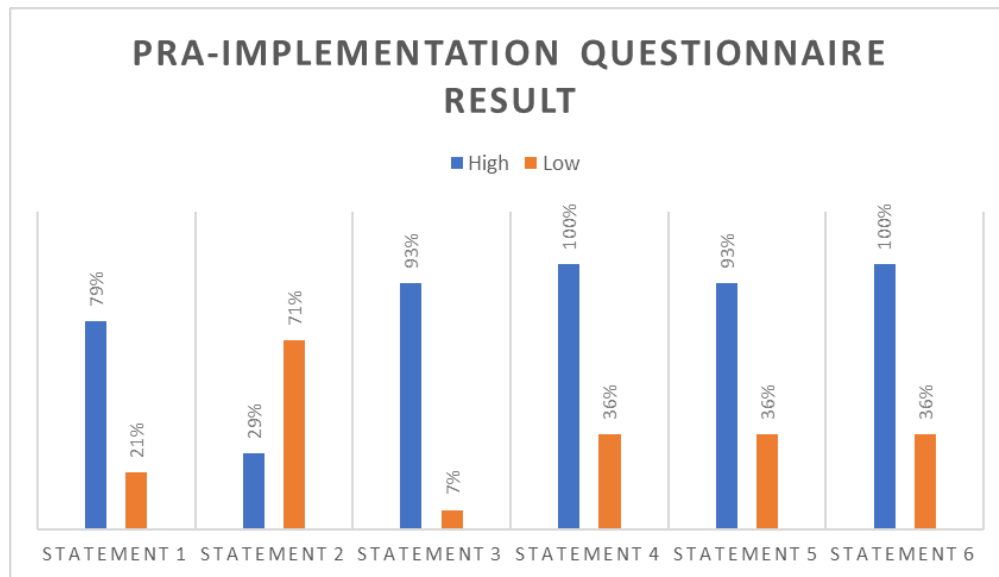


Figure 7. The results of the pre-implementation questionnaire

### Implementation

After knowing the community's needs through FGDs and preliminary surveys, one form of implementation of this program is mentoring and strengthening the understanding of institutional and organizational governance of the *dage* craftsmen group of Ciberung Village. One of the activities was socialization attended by Ciberung Village *dage* craftsmen, especially those included in the Mekarsari Dage Craftsmen Group. This socialization was conducted on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023, which was then followed by intensive assistance through discussions, both directly and indirectly. Documentation of the socialization and strengthening of the institutional governance of the Ciberung Village Dage Craftsmen Group can be seen in Figure 8.



Figure 8. Documentation of socialization of institutional and organizational governance



At the socialization, the presentation focused on discussing the organization and benefits of implementing effective governance and management of the Dage Craftsmen Group. Forming an craftsmen group can be a forum for management, production, cooperation, and learning for craftsmen to get group benefits (Suhaeb et al., 2022). Craftsmen groups provide many financial, marketing, and social benefits, including ease of communication and coordination between craftsmen. Through this group of craftsmen, a new organizational management system will be formed to provide competitive advantages for *dage* craftsmen in Ciberung Village through joint management.

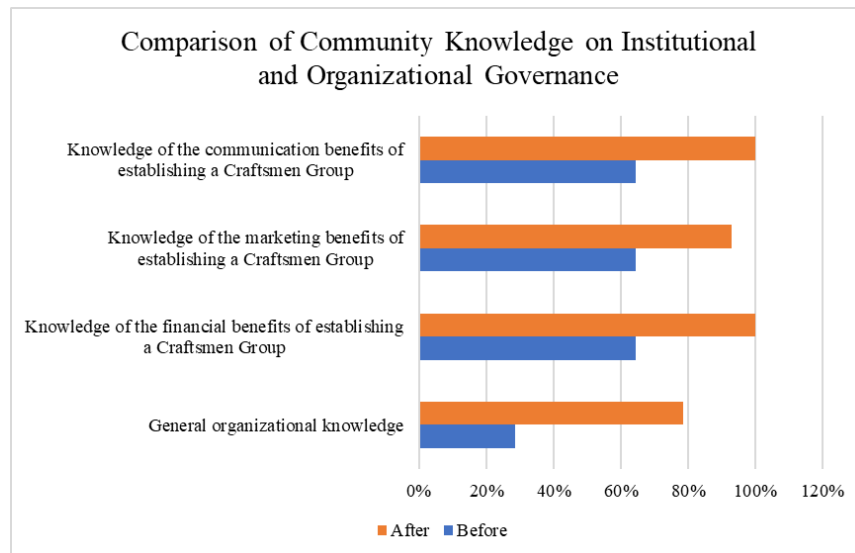
The craftsmen group can be used as a medium for organizational learning and cooperation for facilities, technical, and product marketing (Riani et al., 2021). From a social aspect, the craftsman group as an active community is a space for each craftsman to work together because it provides a function of reviving the social system in society (Nikoyan et al., 2020). The existence of artisan groups as organizations can open new opportunities in creating new relationships and partners in the supply chain (upstream to downstream), procuring raw materials that meet standards, and creating new potential customers in traditional and modern retail markets. Expanding market share can provide economic benefits for the *dage* craftsman. In addition, through this group, the craftsmen can jointly form an image and brand image of typical Ciberung *dage*, which can then be poured into promotions and packaging. Furthermore, this will also boost the economy of Ciberung Village in general.

This socialization activity encourages craftsmen to revive the Mekarsari *Dage* Craftsmen Group through governance and managerial assistance. This systematic management is believed to increase the scale of the Ciberung Village *dage* product business, impacting the economy, individuals, groups, and villages. Therefore, improving the institutional and managerial governance of the *dage* craftsmen group must align with the village government's role as the highest authority. Thus, the long-term suggestion is to strengthen the government's role in managing *dage* as a potential of Ciberung Village to introduce *dage* to a wider market.

### Evaluation

Evaluation is carried out to see whether there is an increase in participant's abilities and understanding (Asbari et al., 2022). During the activity, which began with analyzing partner conditions to the implementation of socialization, participants responded positively. Participants' participation level is quite high, and participants are very cooperative during the survey, observation, and socialization process. All stakeholders involved, from *dage* craftsmen, the village government, and the surrounding community, were actively involved during the discussion.

At the end of the service session, the participant's understanding of the organization and the benefits of institutional governance and managerial skills were measured again to measure the program's success. Questions on the same questionnaire were asked again, where the comparison between the ability of participants before and after socialization can be seen in Figure 9.



**Figure 9.** Comparison of participants' knowledge before and after socialization

The results of this evaluation showed that there was a significant improvement in the understanding of institutional governance and organization of *dage* craftsmen in Ciberung Village. The results also show that the community has understood the benefits that will be obtained if the craftsmen group can be reactivated from communication, marketing, and finance. The understanding of community organizations has also increased, so the community has a basic understanding of organizational management and managerial skills. This result is one of the positive first steps in realizing joint management through the Ciberung Village *Dage* Craftsmen Group.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This community service activity aims to realize effective institutional and organizational governance for the Ciberung Village *Dage* Craftsmen Group. The long-term implication of forming an artisan group is increased competitive advantages for craftsmen, individuals, groups, and village governments, from economic, marketing, to social aspects. Efforts to strengthen the organization's institutional governance are reflected in community service activities, starting from analyzing partner conditions, FGDs, implementation, and evaluation. Based on the evaluation results, the activities carried out have a significant positive impact on increasing the ability of craftsmen to manage groups as organizations. In addition, understanding of the benefits of integrated management through craftsmen groups has also increased. Therefore, the recommendation for further activities is to increase the role of the Ciberung Village government in managing village potential more comprehensively.

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