

# The Urgency of Community Participation and Empowerment in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programs: A Case Study in Riau Province, Indonesia

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## Abstract

*Community empowerment is crucial for poverty alleviation, allowing communities to develop their potential and strengthen their power. However, government funding is limited, leading to the need for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. In Riau Province, Indonesia, CSR implementation is not optimal, resulting in a poverty rate of 8.42%. The research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to analyze the situation. CSR programs should focus on community empowerment and partnership, using principles like democratic, transparent, accountable, and responsive. However, issues such as involving the community in program development, focusing on community economic development, lack of community economic empowerment, lack of sustainability, lack of synergy with the government, and assistance provided hinder community empowerment.*

**Keywords:** *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR); Empowerment; Participation; Riau.*

## Introduction

The mainstream of public policy in poverty alleviation ultimately leads to *Community Empowerment (empowerment)*, where the strategy of alleviating the poor, according to (Dwiyanto, 1995), is no longer just a *welfare-oriented strategy* through *delivered development* alone, but is more focused on efforts to *empower the community*. It must be recognized that the level of dependence of the community on the government, which degrades human dignity, is not a completely positive thing. This situation will only make the government create new poverty mechanisms.

A more human-centered empowerment approach allows people to develop their potential. The creation of a climate that allows the community to create (*enabling*), efforts to strengthen the potential possessed by the community (*empowering*), and protection (Sumodiningrat, 1999); (Sumodiningrat, 1999).

The empowerment process emphasizes the process of giving power to other communities to be more empowered. Empowerment is a way of giving *power* to *powerless* people to participate in the development process as a process of actualizing existence (Pranarka & Moeljarto, 1996), an effort to spread power, through community empowerment (Suhendra, 2006), or strengthening the power of the community, especially weak groups who have powerlessness, either because of *internal* conditions (their perceptions) or because of *external* conditions (oppressed by unfair social structures) (Suharto E. , 2005).

In addition to the issue of empowerment, community participation is also urgent as it is vital and has far-reaching effects. Involving a person or group of people mentally emotionally or physically in a certain group situation, and encouraging them to support or support the achievement of the group's goals is the most important form of a policy relationship (Mubyarto, 1994). In improving community empowerment, community participation is a necessity.

To support this realization, the community cannot fully rely on government facilitation. This is because government funding is quite limited and hindered by priorities. Therefore, other funding channels are needed, especially from the private sector, one of which is accessible to the community through the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program.

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This article is based on the author's research on community participation and empowerment through CSR programs in Riau Province. Based on the results of the research, CSR programs in Riau Province have not been optimally implemented. This CSR program has not been very successful in lifting the poverty rate of the people in Riau Province. In total, there were 511.5 billion people or around 8.42% of Riau's population who were poor in 2013. This is a slight increase on the previous year which was around 476.5 billion or 8.05%.

Riau is currently one of the richest provinces in Indonesia, and its resources are dominated by natural resources, especially petroleum, natural gas, rubber, oil palm, and fiber plantations. With such potential resources, of course, the potential for CSR that can be received by the community is also large and can encourage the implementation of community empowerment and increase community participation.

For example, CSR in Riau Province is quite large based on data from local media carried out by PT Riau Andalan Pulp and Paper (RAPP) with a total fund of 4.6 million US dollars from 2011 to 2012. The form of CSR provided is economic development, education, environment, culture and houses of worship. However, based on the results of monitoring and evaluation conducted by the Riau Province government, the implementation of CSR is still not integrated with government programs. This can also be seen from the community participation that has not been very visible when formulating the form of CSR needed. This phenomenon describes that the implementation of CSR policy in Riau Province is still not optimally implemented.

These few facts illustrate that efforts to empower and increase community participation are not considered to have high urgency. Further facts will be presented on how the pattern of community empowerment and participation in Riau Province is carried out in the implementation of CSR programs. However, an important question that must be answered is how urgent is community participation and empowerment in the implementation of this CSR Program?

## Literature Review

According to ISO 2006, CSR is an organization's responsibility for the impact of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behavior, which is consistent with sustainable development and community welfare, taking into account the interests of stakeholders, by applicable law and consistent with international norms, integrated throughout the organization's activities, in this sense covering both activities, products and services (Rusdiyanto, 2013).

CSR shows the goodwill of business actors to recognize obligations and in setting goals to pay attention to the balance with the values in society Bowen dalam (Hadi, 2011); (Ardianto & Machfudz, 2011). CSR pays attention to human resources and social and environmental issues (Urip, 2014). If implemented correctly, CSR can bring many benefits to the company, so it needs to be done sustainably (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

According to Suharto (2010), one of the impacts of CSR implementation on community development is empowerment. Success in empowerment is an indicator of the success of CSR. The goal of CSR in empowerment is to achieve a society that is empowered, has power, or has the knowledge and ability to meet the needs of both physical, economic, and social such as having self-confidence, being able to express aspirations, having a livelihood, participating in social activities, and being independent in carrying out the tasks of life.

In other words, the basic core of empowerment is an effort to improve the dignity of people who in their current condition have difficulty breaking free from the trap of poverty and backwardness (Sumodiningrat, 1999). So, who is the target for this community empowerment? According to Soeharto (2005), empowerment is aimed at: *first*, structurally weak groups, whether weak in class, gender, or ethnicity; *second*, special weak groups, such as seniors, children, and adolescents, people with disabilities, gays and lesbians, alienated communities; and *third*, personally weak groups, namely those who experience personal and or family problems.

It was agreed that empowerment is the key to poverty alleviation. However, unlocking it requires community involvement. Without the participation of the community or of those who are to be empowered, it is difficult for an empowerment program to be carried out properly. Kartasasmita (1997) explains that based on empirical studies, many development failures or developments do not reach their targets due to a lack of community participation.

Syarwani (1987) reveals that participation essentially means the participation of an entity or group of people in a collective activity organized by a larger order (development). Thus, in the context of development, participation means (Slamet, 2003): *first*, providing inputs to the development process, receiving rewards for these inputs and enjoying the results; *second*, providing inputs and enjoying the results; *third*, providing inputs and receiving rewards without directly enjoying the results of development; and *fourth*, providing inputs without receiving rewards and not enjoying the results.

## Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Research with a case study approach is used to answer these types of questions: "how" and "why" (Yin, 2004). This approach also tries to obtain a more in-depth picture, viewing the event as a whole in its context, with the main objective of understanding the meaning in it (Nasution, 1992).

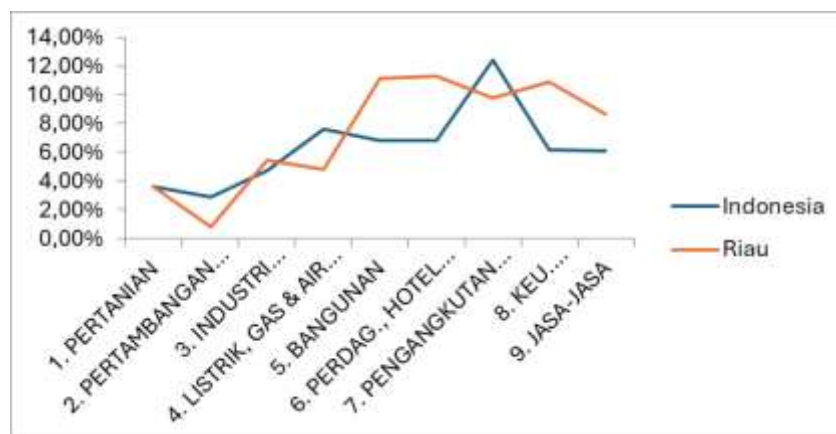
The approach used in this study fulfills the characteristics of qualitative research as stated by Lincoln and Guba, (1985); Bogdan and Biklen (1992); Creswell (1994); Nasution (1992); Danim (2002), namely, *first*, the natural situation (*natural setting*), and the researcher becomes the key instrument for data collection; *second*, in data collection, the researcher approaches the life situation in the field; and *third*, the research work process is carried out using an emic perspective, and informants are seen as equal to the researcher.

Data were collected through several techniques, such as in-depth interviews with key informants, observation, and literature study. In collecting this data, researchers interact directly with informants in their environmental situation, listen and record words, read expressions and movements, and dive into the feelings and values contained in the words and actions of informants. After the data is collected, the data is analyzed using several processes, such as data reduction, data validation, reviewing data, and making conclusions.

## Results and Discussion

Riau Province is one of the richest regions in Indonesia, which has a variety of natural resources, especially oil and gas (mining), in addition to plantations and agriculture. In terms of regional economic growth, Riau Province's economic growth tends to fluctuate. The following is a comparison of growth in Riau and nationally.

Figure 1. Riau and National Economic Growth



Source: BPS Prov. Riau (processed data)

Based on the data, the average annual growth of business fields in Riau Province based on constant prices until 2014 was 7.00% while the national scale growth was 6.25%. The comparison of Riau and national growth for the agriculture sector was 0.18% higher and the processing industry was 0.87%. Furthermore, the Building, Trade, Hotels and Restaurants, Finance, and Services sectors were 3.43%; 3.5%; 3.91%, and 2.39% respectively.

Despite the high growth in Riau, the poverty rate in Riau is also quite significant. Below is information on the percentage of poor people in Riau Province.

**Table 1: Number and percentage of Poor People in Riau Province**

District/City	Number of Poor People (000)		Percentage of Poor Population (%)		Poverty Line	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Kuantan Singingi	31,3	34,7	10,29	11,28	371.530	400.655
Indragiri Hulu	27,7	29,6	7,17	7,50	345.423	369.210
Indragiri Hilir	53,0	54,2	7,81	7,88	272.235	282.361
Pelalawan	38,3	43,6	11,11	12,00	398.742	429.452
Siak	21,0	23,2	5,17	5,54	316.774	336.671
Kampar	61,8	68,6	8,36	9,04	320.907	336.681
Rokan Hulu	53,5	59,9	10,13	10,86	343.274	358.295
Workshop	35,3	40,1	6,76	7,57	367.743	388.671
Rokan Hilir	44,0	47,5	7,38	7,73	282.767	296.770
Meranti Islands	63,9	64,0	35,89	35,74	371.169	386.745
Pekanbaru	32,7	32,5	3,38	3,27	357.200	381.287
Dumai	14,1	13,7	5,24	4,98	311.891	328.158
Total	476,5	511,5	8,05	8,42	310.603	350.129

Source: Riau in Figures, 2014

In the implementation of CSR programs for empowerment, several areas are targeted by CSR implementation, such as education, economy, health, environment, and other activities. For example, in the environmental field, CSR is implemented by targeting the following activities.

**CSR Activities in the Environmental Sector in Riau Province**

ENVIRONMENT				
N o.	Description	Village/Kelurahan	District	Operation Area
1	Provision and planting of 1000 ketapang shade trees in Mandau Sub-district	Pematang Pudu, Petani, Duri Timur, Duri Barat, Gajah Sakti, Kesumbo Ampai, Bumbung, Batang Serosa, Balik Alam, Talang Mandi, Balai Makam, Air Jamban,	Mandau	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO) and Heavy Oil Operations (HO)

		Babussalam, Sebangar		
2	Provision and planting of fruit trees in Pinggir sub-district in the form of 2500 fruit tree seedlings	Balai Pungut, Titian Antui, Balairaja, Muara Basung, Tasik Serai, Semunai, Tengganau, Pinggir, Kuala Penaso, Beringin,	Edge	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
3	Sponsored the planting of 500 ketapang and cape flower shade trees in Pinggir Sub-district.	Edge	Edge	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
4	Provision and planting of fruit trees in Mandau Sub-district (soursop, pomegranate, kedondong, longan, star fruit and mango) as many as 1000 stems	Pematang Pudu, Petani, Duri Timur, Duri Barat, Gajah Sakti, Kesumbo Ampai, Bumbung, Batang Serosa, Balik Alam, Talang Mandi, Balai Makam, Air Jamban, Babussalam, Sebangar	Mandau	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO) and Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
5	Provision and planting of fruit trees in Kepenghuluan Rantau Bais in the form of 200 matoa tree seedlings	Rantau Bais	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
6	Provision and planting of 1000 rambutan trees in Rantau Kopar Sub-district	Rantau Kopar	Rantau Kopar	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
7	Donation of 3020 fruit tree seedlings (bangkok guava, avocado, lime, rambutan, matoa) and protectors (ketapang) in Tanah Putih Sub-district.	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
8	Provision and planting of Gaharu trees in Rantau Bais by Khazanah Indonesia Gaharu Farmer Group	Rantau Bais	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)

Source: Author's Process (2015)

Meanwhile, for the economic sector, the implementation of CSR programs in Riau Province targets the following:

**Table 3. CSR Activities in the Economic Sector in Riau Province**

<b>ECONOMICS</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Village/Kelurahan</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Operation Area</b>
1	Vocational Training and Business Start Up First Year to 80 youths who dropped out of school in Bengkalis Regency. The training provided is in the form of sewing, cooking, welding and motorcycle repair shop.	All Villages in Mandau and Pinggir	Mandau, Pinggir, Bantan, Siak Kecil, Bengkalis, Bukit Batu	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO) and Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
2	Development of Sakai Integrated Agriculture consisting of the development of fish, ducks, chickens and secondary crops in Pematang Pudu Village.	Pematang Pudu	Mandau	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
3	Development of Pond Fish Farming at DTA Jannatul Ma'wa, Balai Makam	Tomb Hall	Mandau	Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
4	Freshwater fish farming assistance to the Joint Business Group of Sukojadi Hamlet, Harapan Baru Village	New Hope	Mandau	Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
5	Development of tilapia aquaculture in Belading Hamlet, Petani Village, Mandau Sub-district in the form of fish feed and tilapia seeds.	Farmers	Mandau	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
6	Fish seed and feed assistance for the Arjuna Fish Group in Duri Timur Village, Mandau in the form of tilapia seeds and feed.	Duri Timur	Mandau	Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
7	Socialization of non-B3 household waste and organic waste to community groups of youth and housewives in Mandau sub-district in collaboration with the Kumala Foundation.	Mandau	Mandau	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO) and Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
8	Field Assistance Activities for UP2K groups in Mandau and Pinggir Sub-districts to support MSMEs in the field of food sales in collaboration with the LaPAK MSME Foundation.	Mandau and Pinggir	Mandau and Pinggir	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO) and Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
9	Development of laying ducks farming in Sidorejo sub-village, Harapan Baru village, Mandau sub-district.	New Hope	Mandau	Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
10	Development of Laying Duck Farming Group Cipta Alam Lestari Kec. Mandau Bengkalis	Farmers	Mandau	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)



11	Cattle Farming by the Sakai Community in Kesumbo Ampai Village	Kesumbo Ampai	Mandau	Heavy Oil Operations (HO)
12	Development of native chicken and fish farming by the Sakai community in Pinggir	Beringin, Muara Basung, Pinggir	Edge	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
13	Assistance with fish seedlings in Rantau Kopar Sub-district in collaboration with the Riau Provincial Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Office.	Rantau Kopar, Sikapas	Rantau Kopar	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
14	Assistance with fishing gear for Rantau Kopar Sub-district	Rantau Kopar	Rantau Kopar	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
15	Development of freshwater fish farming in Kepenghuluan Melayu Besar Tanah Putih Tanjung Melawan District in the form of pumps, fish seeds, nets, fish food	Melayu Besar	Tanah Putih Tanjung Melawan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
16	Development of fish cattle business of Bono Rokan Fishermen, Kepenghuluan Melayu Besar, Tanjung Melawan District in the form of fishing boats and engines	Melayu Besar	Tanah Putih Tanjung Melawan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
17	Organizing training on pineapple chips production and entrepreneurship for the Rantau Bais Independent Women's Cooperative as well as assistance with production support equipment	Rantau Bais	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
18	Development of laying hens in Kepenghuluan Bagan Cempedak	Bagan Cempedak	Rantau Kopar	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
19	Construction of 1 unit of a traditional market building of 60 lots along with supporting infrastructure	Sintong Pusaka	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
20	Development of layer chicken farming for Kepenghuluan Sintong Makmur, Sintong, Sintong Pusaka and Sintong Bakti as many as 4000 along with feed and medicines	Sintong Pusaka, Sintong, Sintong Makmur, Sintong Bakti	Tanah Putih Sedinginan	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)
21	Development of egg-laying duck cultivation in the kepenghuluan Bangko Bakti, Bangko Pusaka in the form of cage construction, provision of seeds and feeds	Bangko Bakti	Bangko Pusako	Sumatra Light Operations (SLO)

Source: Processed by Researchers (2015)

Related to the implementation of CSR itself in Riau Province has been regulated based on Riau Province Regional Regulation No. 6 of 2012 concerning the Implementation of CSR, and it also regulates the form and mechanism of CSR programs. It is stated that CSR programs can take the form of community empowerment and/or partnerships and environmental development and/or investment and/or donations, and/or promotion.

It is undeniable that the presence of companies in the community causes a lot of friction and excesses. One of the uniqueness of CSR policy implementers in Riau Province is the dominance of CSR policy implementers from companies that manage Industrial Forest Plantations (HTI). However, the negative excess of HTI dominance in Riau Province is the conflict between the company and the community. The reason is the lack of company contribution to community interests through CSR programs.

One study noted that between 2007 and 2013 there were 359 conflicts in the forestry sector. The largest conflict occurred in the area of Business License Holders for Utilization of Timber Forest Products for Industrial Plantations, which amounted to 39% of all conflicts that occurred. While 34% of conflicts occurred in conservation areas, 27% occurred in Forest Concession Areas. The problem of conflict can develop more widely, considering that there are currently around 10 million poor people living around the forest area. Environmental problems arising from HTI are caused by the lack of CSR programs.

Most companies have Corporate Social Responsibility programs, but they are still considered suboptimal and undirected, such as overlapping in their implementation and no continuity in the programs. Lack of control over program implementation and lack of corporate transparency are also other issues.

The focus of the CSR program is on community empowerment with the principle of partnership that serves as a *prime mover* in the economic development of the people to improve the welfare of the community sustainably.

Therefore, what can be done to make the implementation of CSR programs for community empowerment and through wider community participation work? In the researcher's mind, the most likely effort to make CSR programs in Riau Province more visible is to include CSR programs in the scope of regional development program planning in a synergistic regional development planning system. CSR programs can also be used as a source of funding for regional or sectoral development in the region, in addition to the funding sources that have been used from the APBD, APBN, DAU, DAK and other sources of financing in the region.

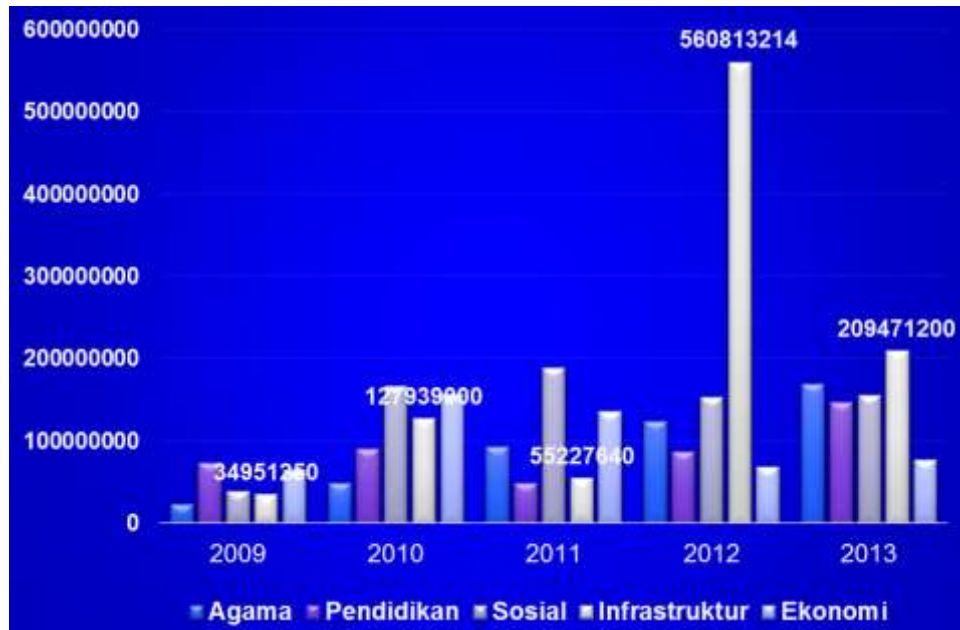
Companies and local governments (Province/Regency/City) can create community development plans following community needs (not community desires). Various development programs that have been registered are then identified according to the needs of the community, which are truly community empowerment programs according to the potential of the village. The development programs that have been made by involving the community (in this case community leaders and village government) will be offered to the company to get the company's contribution to fund some of the village development programs through the CSR program.

Furthermore, in the implementation of a comprehensive CSR program, both the company, the government, and the community must implement the principles that are believed and held together. What are these principles? First, democratic, i.e. every choice of activities is based on deliberations that are tailored to the needs of the community; second, transparent, i.e. the management of activities is carried out openly so that it can be widely known by the community; third, accountability, i.e. program management must be technically and financially accountable; fourth, responsive, i.e. the selection of activities by the needs of the community.

The question is, how much is the allocation of CSR funds in Riau Province? The data to answer this question can be shown in the following figure.



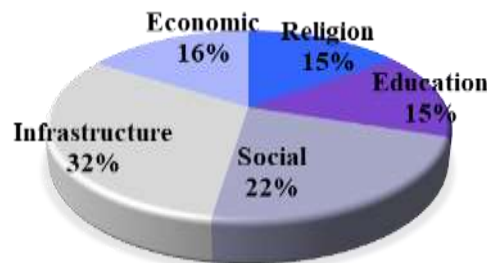
Allocation of CSR Funds in Riau Province (2009 - 2013)



Source: Bappeda Prov. Riau (2015)

Meanwhile, the distribution of the CSR budget in Riau Province can be seen in the following diagram.

Figure 3. Percentage of CSR Budget Funds in Riau Province (2013)



Source: Bappeda Prov. Riau (2015)

With these funds, it can have a positive effect on community empowerment in Riau Province. However, what is the ineffectiveness of the implementation of CSR in Indonesia in general and Riau Province in particular is that each company either alone or in its group that conducts CSR or other forms of concern for the environment is done individually according to the company's decision to do so, so it seems that there is no regulation of the distribution of the location of CSR activities carried out by entrepreneurs or industries or other companies in its implementation.

CSR programs will not support the pace of development and community empowerment if they are not communicated within the institutions directly related to the implementation of CSR programs. There is cooperation between institutions through good communication, then the CSR program will run well too. Sustainable development will not be achieved if there is no independence in the community. This means that to develop community independence in the economic field, it must strengthen the community base in

that field. However, due to the lack of communication between institutions, CSR activities still have many weaknesses such as inappropriate use of CSR funds.

In my opinion, based on the results of interviews with relevant sources, with the various limitations of the community, the CSR program must prioritize the economic empowerment of the people, one of which is by increasing the allocation of CSR funds for the field of community economic empowerment. From various studies, it is known that the tendency of CSR assistance provided so far is less empowering for the community, even though the core of the CSR program is for community empowerment, including economic empowerment. With this empowerment, it is expected that the problems of unemployment and poverty can gradually be resolved, especially in rural areas.

Therefore, in outline, the researcher considers, there are several things that need to be addressed to obtain the optimization of CSR programs in Riau Province, and provides an analysis of the urgency of empowerment and community participation.

*First*, CSR programs have been mostly determined by the company. Meanwhile, the needs of the community have not been fully understood. This is because efforts to involve the community in determining the program are not optimal. *Secondly*, the village government does not make village development plans, especially in the economic sector. This should be improved by involving the village community widely in discussions, both formal and informal, to absorb broader aspirations.

*Third*, more aid is *charity*, with little focus on improving the community's economy. As a result, the community's economy has yet to improve, and poverty continues to persist. A focus on community economic development through strong and institutionalized empowerment needs to be implemented. *Fourth*, there is a lack of community economic empowerment. This is due to the more intense focus of CSR on the social sector, causing the community's economy to miss the target, and not be managed and empowered.

*Fifth*, it lacks sustainability. This means that the implementation of CSR is more incidental based on the company's proposal and perspective. When CSR programs are implemented, the tendency is that there is no further sustainability. *Sixth*, lack of synergy with the government. This is because companies feel that they have created their own CSR programs for the community and the government does not feel the need to intervene too much in the programs and funding provided by the company. *Seventh*, the assistance provided tends not to empower the community, even though the core of the CSR program is for community empowerment.

To optimize the CSR program through community empowerment and participation, it is necessary to consider the important focus of CSR program implementation in the community. Based on the researcher's observations and analysis of the potential and social conditions of the community, the economic sector that has the potential to leverage the people's economy funded by the CSR Program is the agricultural sector.

Figure 4. Poverty in Riau Province by Business Field (2013)



The data shows: firstly, the majority of people in rural areas work in this sector; secondly, many poor people are in rural areas and the majority work in the agricultural sector; thirdly, there is a political will from the government to promote this sector, especially in regaining the title of food self-sufficiency, especially rice; fourthly, the agricultural sector has proven to be resilient in the face of the economic crisis.

From Figure 4 above, it can be seen that 63.33 percent of the poor in Riau Province are in the agricultural sector, especially the plantation subsector which reached 46.03 percent, followed by the food crops and horticulture subsector at 9.68 percent. Therefore, developing agriculture means reducing poverty. That is why in this study, the sector of the people's economy that has the potential to be developed by utilizing CSR programs is the agricultural sector in a broad sense, including the subsectors of food crops, plantations, fisheries, livestock and forestry. In other words, the poor in Riau Province are mostly experienced by people who work in plantations and agriculture. Thus, some of the above can be evidence of the need for CSR implementation in the agricultural sector.

With the presentation of the above facts, researchers see that theoretically related to empowerment and participation (in the implementation of CSR programs) in Riau Province, community empowerment and community participation are still not fully able to be optimized by both companies and the government as policymakers.

If Suhendra (2006) states that empowerment is where people are given power, to spread power, through community empowerment, organizations can control or have power over their lives for all aspects of life, then according to researchers, these conditions have not been fully achieved. This is because, as already mentioned, CSR programs are still partial. Intense only touches social areas or other fields, and still little touches the economic field which should be the core for the realization of empowerment itself.

As is known, empowerment aims to increase the strength of the community, especially weak groups who feel they are not sovereign due to internal (their perceptions) and external (unfair social structures) factors. From what researchers have seen in the field, this empowerment goal is still ongoing, even though CSR programs are continuously emphasized to companies and become an obligation as stipulated in laws and regulations.

Researchers agree that powerlessness is not only a matter of how people perceive the situation but also because of the situations and circumstances that systemically make people powerless. As Suharto (2005) states as a result of injustice and discrimination in certain aspects of life, people lose their power. However, some theorists, such as Seeman & Sayles (1985); Seligman (1972); and Learner (1986) believe that the powerlessness experienced by a group of people is the result of an internalization process resulting from their interaction with society. They perceive themselves as weak, and powerless, because society does, which Seeman termed as "alienation" (Suharto, 2005).

To bring them out of this state of alienation, an empowerment strategy is needed, which is generally done collectively. In some situations, empowerment strategies can be done individually; although in turn these strategies are still related to collectivity.

## Conclusion

Public policy in poverty alleviation emphasizes community empowerment rather than welfare-focused methods. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects in Riau Province, Indonesia, have not effectively reduced poverty. The limited government budget necessitates the importance of other funding sources such as CSR for community empowerment. CSR in Riau Province is promising, but not yet optimally integrated with government initiatives and community participation. The implementation of CSR in Riau Province is regulated by Regional Regulation No. 6 of 2012. However, tensions arise between companies managing Industrial Plantation Forests (HTI) and communities due to the lack of company contributions to community interests through CSR initiatives. The current CSR program is not optimal, lacks continuity, is less open, and lacks control in its implementation. Emphasizing community empowerment through partnership concept to encourage sustainable economic development and improve welfare.

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