

# Porang as Strategic Commodity to Scale Up Community Empowerment in Sumberejo, Pasuruan

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**Abstract:** Sumberejo Village in Pasuruan Regency, East Java, is a village that has potential assets in the agricultural and tourism sectors. The agricultural potential in Sumberejo is increasing when the super strategic commodity *porang* is introduced as a new commodity to be cultivated through the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group. *Porang* cultivation aims to advance and increase the income of the agricultural sector and empower farmers in Sumberejo. Since, *porang* production requires new knowledge, the Sinar Agro Permata group is still experiencing confusion and concerns about results that are not in line with existing expectations. This scientific article is the result of research on empowering agriculture communities in Sumberejo Village. The research was conducted using a mixed-method approach presented descriptively and using in-depth interview instruments, participatory observation, focus group discussions, and literature study. The research results showed that the *porang* commodity has not been able to provide maximum leverage for community empowerment. *Porang* has become a new product for Sinar Agro Permata in Sumberejo, so it requires time and ongoing assistance. With the application of the hexa-helix approach and the behavior drivers model, the research found that there are still three of the six hexa-helix components that have been integrated in this empowerment program. Meanwhile, in the behavior drivers model, this study also found that the Sumberejo community needed driving factors to the individual level to change their mindset, both in terms of farming and as farmers. It will still take time for the empowerment of the Sumberejo community with *porang* cultivation to reach its maximum potential. Even with the role of stakeholders who are required to be collaborative and sustainable.

**Keywords:** behavior drivers model, community empowerment, farmer, hexa-helix, *porang*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The community of Sumberejo in Pasuruan Regency is a typical agrarian society in East Java which has the creative power to increase socio-economic welfare. With their domicile located at the foot of Mount Arjuno, it is relatively easy for the people of Sumberejo to form an agricultural ecosystem that can support their lives as an agrarian society. In 2021, in order to increase efforts to restore the socio-economic conditions of the people in East Java, the Sinar Agro Permata Farmers Group became a representative of a farmer group in the province to cultivate *porang* or *Amarphopallus onchopillus L* commodities, which was supported by the Regional Development Governmental Institution. The *porang* plant has been designated as Indonesia's national super strategic commodity, in addition to swiftlet nests (Purwadi, Hidayat, & Sasongko, 2021). *Porang* has also been proven suitable to be planted side by side with

many other types of productive plants. This effort certainly raises considerable expectations for agricultural conditions in general in East Java and in Indonesia nationally.

*Porang* is believed to be a productive plant that can accompany coffee plants as one of the main commodities for farmers in Sumberejo (Purwadi, Hidayat, & Sasongko, 2021). In addition to coffee, the Sumberejo community has several other crops, such as durian, *senon* wood, and bananas. Sinar Agro Permata has implemented an agroforestry/agro-forestry pattern with garden lands formed by intercropping (Purwadi, Hidayat, & Sasongko, 2021). However, rice is still the main crop in the intercropping system, accompanied by secondary crops and several other incidental crops. However, the results of coffee production from the existing land are still not considered to have a significant socio-economic impact on the Sumberejo community as a whole. Therefore, the initiation of the cultivation of the super strategic *porang* commodity by Sinar Agro Permata is one of the agricultural intensification steps taken to provide a significant boost to the socio-economic impact of the agricultural activities of the Sumberejo community. *Porang* is expected to be a productive addition to Sumberejo's mainstay agricultural products, such as rice and coffee.

The establishment of Poktan Sinar Agro Permata by making the super strategic commodity *porang* as a support for their agricultural system has its own urgency, which is not only seen from the economic dimension but also from the social aspect. The inequality of natural assets becomes the first urgency. Sumberejo has natural tourism assets, namely water rafting (Ramadhian, 2020). However, the benefits of this rafting tour cannot be felt even for the Sumberejo community as a whole. The second urgency is, as is the problem with many agricultural actors, farmers can only do much for planting and harvesting activities (Billah & Mulyani, 2019), but could not do further exploration. The exploration in question is the agricultural business sector, such as marketing and market management. So far, farmers have also focused on increasing production as the only key to increasing their agricultural output. Meanwhile an increase in production that is not accompanied by exploration of agricultural businesses will also become a one typical difficulties of agricultural production.

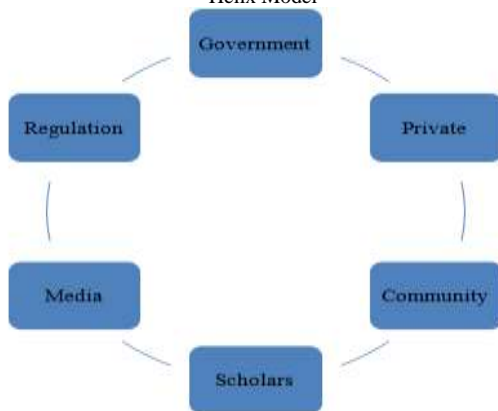
The explanation on agricultural businesses above is one of the factors are suspected to be the root of the difficulties for farmers in Sumberejo to improve their welfare. Its worth noting that agriculture is one of the sectors

in the macro economy that is the foundation of national development. The large area for cropping and the large number of farmers/farmers in Indonesia indicate that the agrarian sector must still be the focus of many people in this country. Therefore, agriculture must continue to be developed, and the farmers have to be empowered and should continue to strive to be independent in their farming business.

Empowerment is again a key concept in this article. Empowerment, which was born from the thought derived from developmentalism, is a development study by providing social and cultural elements in (Agustino, 2019). In the context of alleviating or overcoming poverty issues, empowerment has a wider scope than just fulfilling primary needs. Empowerment prioritizes human factors in development, so it is more people centered, more participatory, strengthening, and developed to be sustainable. Empowerment can also be interpreted as an effort to provide positive energy to the community to be able to overcome the problems of poverty, both because of culture and because of the structure of society (Agustino, 2019).

To give more concrete manifestations of empowerment, the author adopts the hexa helix approach which is the development of the concept from the triple helix to the penta helix. Hexa helix itself is a development concept as well as empowerment that gives roles to six components of community development, namely 1) government (central and/or regional), 2) entrepreneurship or the private/private sector, 3) community consisting of professionals and non-governmental organizations. (NGOs), 4) academics, 5) mass media, and 6) other rules and regulations (Purwadi, Hidayat, & Sasongko, 2021). This hexa helix approach is a more sophisticated approach than the previous one, thus providing greater analysis and power distribution. In the hexa helix, one component does not play a more important role than the other components, they have the same portion of urgency (Zakaria, Sophian, Muljana, Gusriani, & Zakaria, 2019).

Figure 1: Diagram SEQ Diagram \\* ARABIC 1. Six components in Hexa Helix Model

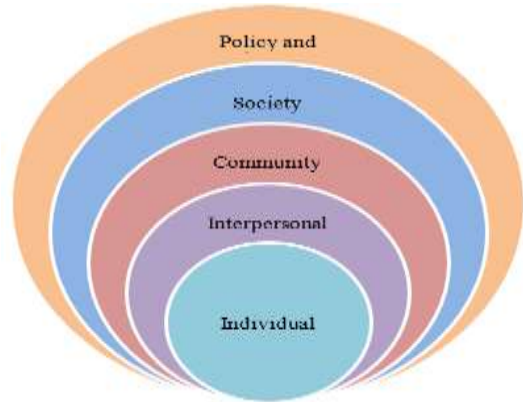


(Source: Zakaria et al., 2019)

The writing of the results of this study also provides an analysis for the behavioral driver model of empowerment. This model is a development of works that emphasizes the

importance of understanding the factors that shape human behavior from the individual stage (Petit, 2019). Broadly speaking, behavior change can be driven from individual factors (self-efficacy, attitude, interest, intent, cognitive bias, limited rationality), interpersonal factors (character influenced by socio-demographic society and existing mass-psychology), community factors (dynamics, alternative ideas, social influences), society at large (social norms, community structure, culture and community communication), and policy systems (context, governance) (Agustino, 2019). This behavioral driving approach will conceptually align with the hexa helix.

Figure 2. Diagram SEQ Diagram \\* ARABIC 2. Behavior Drivers Model



(Source: Petit, 2019)

This scientific article is the result of a literature and field study on the development of the welfare of farmers in Sumberejo, Pasuruan. The author considers that several times, farmers and farm laborers in Sumberejo, Pasuruan, have received counseling, mentoring, and other empowerment activities. However, the biggest challenge is to make the villagers aware of the importance of exploring the agricultural industry to market their agricultural products. In line with the study conducted by Billah and Mulyani in 2019, that the independence of farmers in the village must continue to be carried out with continuous program collaboration (Billah & Mulyani, 2019). However, in this study there was no exposure to theoretical concepts that could support the sustainability of empowerment and mentoring of farmers in the village. In this article, the author formulates a problem that exists in the empowerment of the Sumberejo agricultural community represented by the Sinar Agro Permata. The problem is the extent to which the *porang* commodity offers more welfare to farmers and farm laborers in the Sinar Agro Permata. So that there is an increase in the element of sustainability in an effort to empower farmers and farm laborers in Sumberejo.

Therefore, this scientific article emphasizes the importance of using the hexa helix approach and behavioral drivers that can be applied to make empowerment and assistance programs for farmers in villages more sustainable. By using the hexa helix approach and behavioral drivers, the empowerment and assistance program for farmers, especially

in Sumberejo, Pasuruan, will be carried out collaboratively by the existing stakeholders. Thus, the principle of sustainability in empowering and assisting farmers will get a longer socio-economic breath than before. In the end, the use of the super strategic commodity *porang* by farmers in Sumberejo to improve their welfare must also be supported by a hexa helix approach and behavioral drivers in order to maintain the sustainability aspect.

## II. METHOD

This research uses a combination method or commonly referred to as a mixed method. The combination method is a "third way" or "middle way" method which is an alternative to qualitative and quantitative research methods. Parjaman and Akhmad (2019) argue that the combination method is closely combined with the logic of pragmatism in research. The research pragmatism referred to here is more about the orientation of research outputs and outcomes. The combination approach can accommodate several important things in this study, including 1) the culture of the Sumberejo community, 2) the Sumberejo community's perception of agricultural development in their village and the potential of *porang* as a commodity they cultivate, 3) an assessment of the socioeconomic welfare obtained by the farmers on *porang* cultivation if the commodity is successful, and 4) the multiplier effect brought about by planting produce for *porang* so far for the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group. The process of implementing the combination is not much different from the qualitative and quantitative research methods. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), the combination method has 8 stages of implementation in general, namely 1) setting questions, 2) deciding whether the use of combination methods can be applied, 3) selecting a combination model that is in line with research, 4) collecting and collecting data, 5) analyzing data, 6) interpretation of data, 7) leveraging data again, and 8) writing research conclusions.

The scientific article of this research has determined the formulation of the problem, namely about the role of the super strategic commodity *porang* in increasing the element of sustainability for empowerment and improving the welfare of farmers and farm laborers in Sumberejo. The author believes that the combination method is a suitable method to analyze this matter. The combination method will provide verification of the impacts given by the *porang* commodity as well as provide interpretation and contextualization of these impacts. This combination method will be presented in a descriptive form. Descriptive research is research that describes a phenomenon at a time with a particular location, object, and research setting. Therefore, descriptive research does not require a hypothesis and tends to be able to change its conclusions depending on changes in the variables that exist at that time (Soendari, n.d). Furthermore, descriptive research has flexibility in using and analyzing existing variables. Descriptive research also focuses on the character possessed by the research subject by explaining or describing

the events that occurred (Mijiarto, Wahyuni, Nuryananda, & Ahzani, 2022).

Meanwhile the author used interview instruments, focus group discussions (FGD), participatory observation, and literature study for data collection. The interview is an instrument of collecting research data through the process of communication or interaction by means of question and answer between the researcher and the research subject. In essence, this interview instrument is a technique to find out in-depth information about a phenomenon or an issue carried out by research (Rahardjo, 2011). The interviews were then divided into two, namely in-depth interviews and guided interviews. The research was conducted using in-depth interviews with members of the Sinar Agro Permata Group in Sumberejo Village. In-depth interviews are qualitative data collection by interacting with groups or individuals to provide a broader view of the perspective and vision of Sinar Agro Permata and also how they build the 'reality' of their world (Picken, 2018). Meanwhile, FGD is a directed communicative interaction by researchers and groups of subjects/objects whose meetings take place by considering the proposal, size, composition, and group interview procedures. FGDs are an efficient way to collect data from the same or similar community groups (Mishra, 2016).

The author also uses a participatory observation method. Participatory observation is a method of collecting and analyzing data that provides an active role for the research team to engage and participate in the activities of the participants being studied. With the active involvement of the research team, it is hoped that the researchers will have a deep understanding of the culture, socio-political conditions, and the economy of the community being studied. Researchers are also expected to absorb more comprehensively the aspirations of the observed community (Mijiarto, Wahyuni, Nuryananda, & Ahzani, 2022). Research also requires the support of library research methods or documentation studies for secondary data. Literature study is a research method that relies on reading literature and other scientific references to conduct research. Literature studies are used to find the anchors of previous research so that the research carried out does not have overriding research values and objectives.



Figure 3. Group of farmers from Sinar Agro Permata are planting *porang* as their strategic farming commodity (Source: Researcher's documentation, 2022)

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The interviews conducted in this study involved the chairman and members of the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group, which consisted of 34 farmers. Interviews were conducted separately and at different times. The first interview was conducted by using the head of the Sinar Agro Permata, Mr. "W", as a source for data mining. As the head of the farmer group, Mr. "W" explained that the cultivation of the super strategic commodity *porang* has succeeded in providing additional income than what farmers usually get at Sinar Agro Permata. This additional income really helps Sinar Agro Permata to invest in *porang* seeds. Although it is an additional income, this addition provides new insights for Sinar Agro Permata farmers about the *porang* commodity and the *porang* commodity industry.

Meanwhile, through the interview, the author obtained information that there were 20,000 *porang* commodity seeds planted by Sinar Agro Permata in one planting activity. From these planting activities, an average of 19,200 to 19,500 seedlings grew. While the remaining 800 to 500 experienced crop failure or usually grew imperfectly so that they did not produce optimally. The Sinar Agro Permata group then sold 17,200 to 17,500 *porang* seedlings to the Agro Makmur Lestari farmer group (Poktan) in Karangany Village, Barends District, Jombang Regency, at a price of IDR Rp. 1.500, - per seed. The remaining seeds from sales to other groups are then used by Sinar Agro Permata to wait for the harvest. From the sales to other poktan, Sinar Agro Permata gets a turnover of IDR Rp. 25.800.000, -, while for the purpose of selling seeds Poktan Sinar Agro Permata only costs IDR Rp. 11,352,000, -, with the largest expenditure for purchasing seeds/spores which reached IDR Rp. 6,000,000,-. So, the profit obtained by Poktan Sinar Agro Permata is approximately IDR Rp. 14,248,000, - per sale. This additional result is certainly an incentive that encourages farmers and farm laborers at Sinar Agro Permata to be more prosperous and continue to be productive, both with the super strategic commodity *porang* and other main commodities.

Mr. "W" further explained that the profits obtained from the sale of the super strategic *porang* commodity were able to bring prosperity to the members of Sinar Agro Permata, especially in the current pandemic condition. The cultivation and sale of *porang* commodities has proven to be successful in providing additional economic welfare for Poktan Sinar Agro Permata. However, the results obtained from the interview with Mr "W" are that the challenge for Sinar Agro Permata at this time is to make the scale of the agricultural industry of this *porang* commodity wider and larger. If Sinar Agro Permata is not careful in managing existing resources or profits, then profits will of course be reduced. Moreover, if Sinar Agro Permata stops innovating, both in production and distribution of products, and loses competitiveness with other farmer groups, it will definitely affect the profits obtained.

The researcher team had also conducted a focus group discussion (FGD) to obtain primary data from Sinar Agro Permata. The discussion that was held was positive and the writing team got a lot of needed research information. From the FGDs that were carried out, three findings were found that became temporary conclusions from the research carried out, namely 1) Sinar Agro Permata felt that cultivating *porang* commodities was relatively easy but required a long time, approximately 3 years, to be able to enjoy the harvest from *porang*. the; 2) Poktan Sinar Agro Permata had never previously cultivated *porang*, that's why one of the difficulties faced by farmers in Sumberejo Village was finding downstream products from the *porang* commodity; and 3) because the *porang* super strategic commodity is still new and farmers, especially Poktan Sinar Agro Permata, also have to wait a long time to enjoy the harvest, Poktan Sinar Agro Permata feels the need for continuous assistance, both from the research team/writers and from the government local area.

As previously explained, farmer groups in Sumberejo have conventional farming patterns with conventional planting commodities as well. Coffee is the only special/unique commodity on the land of Sumberejo. However, the coffee sold by Sinar Agro Permata is also still hampered by marketing which does not have as much market share as coffee in other areas in Pasuruan regency. The existence of the super strategic commodity *porang* further adds to the variety of agricultural crops in Sumberejo, especially those managed by the Sinar Agro Permata. However, this additional variation actually creates new obstacles for Sinar Agro Permata. Until this article is being written, Sinar Agro Permata still only understood and mastered the *porang* commodity cultivation technique without knowing the direction of the *porang* commodity downstream. There are still no collectors or agricultural industries that have a demand for this *porang* commodity. This is an obstacle and a challenge in an effort to maximize profits from the harvest of the *porang* commodity. Luckily, the farmers at Sinar Agro Permata still have approximately 1-1.5 years to work together to solve the problem while waiting for the *porang* commodity harvest period.

The team of researchers has made a commitment with Sinar Agro Permata to continue to provide assistance according to existing capacities and capabilities. This really needs to be done in order to support the success of the *porang* super strategic commodity cultivation in Sumberejo Village. The author realizes that cultivation is not only a matter of planting and harvesting activities, but also providing assistance for market or industrial access in order to create demand for the *porang* commodity that has been cultivated by Sinar Agro Permata farmers. This also underscores Billah and Mulyani's statement that there are indeed problems with agro-industrial understanding among farmers or farm laborers (Billah & Mulyani, 2019). Therefore, it is also important to hold integrated and sustainable assistance, both by the research team/writers and other actors to the Sinar Agro Permata as the main actor in *porang* cultivation in Sumberejo.

The team feels that all requests/demands from the Sinar Agro Permata are commonplace given the current conditions. The pandemic condition that still hampers people's mobility and economic movement has also contributed to the decline in demand for the commodity *porang*, thereby drowning out previously existing requests. Mr. "W", as the head of the Sinar Agro Permata, also advised that there is one more problem that is actually real but invisible, namely that current agricultural activities are mostly carried out by men and women who are close to the free line from the productive group. On the other hand, very few young people are engaged in agricultural activities in Sumberejo as their future goal. This is a separate note for the research team in relation to the sustainability elements that exist in the cultivation of the super strategic commodity *porang* in Sumberejo.

The research team also has the assumption that integrated and continuous assistance is absolutely necessary. As has been argued as to why this is absolutely necessary, the research/author team then put forward the hexa helix approach to be used as one of the risk mitigation efforts in the cultivation of this super strategic *porang* commodity. By involving many elements, the author feels that there will be many collaborations that will be established and one day will bring together market demand for farmers in Sinar Agro Permata, Sumberejo. The hexa helix approach is used by the author because Sumberejo also has regional tourism assets. So it is hoped that both the agricultural industry and the tourism industry can support each other and slowly improve the welfare of the Sumberejo community as a whole.

In 2021 ago, the research team collaborated with local government institutions, namely the Regional Planning and Development Agency (BAPPEDA) of East Java Province to initiate the cultivation of the super strategic commodity *porang* and provide integrated assistance. Government actors such as the BAPPEDA of East Java Province play an important role, where in fact there are many empowerment and development programs that rely on local governments, both in terms of implementation and in terms of the existing budget. What can be done more is the involvement of the private sector and the media in supporting a broad and comprehensive public education process. Both the agricultural sector and the tourism sector in Sumberejo currently have very little contribution from the private sector as well as academics who are involved and provide assistance to local communities. Therefore, there are still many opportunities and opportunities for further collaboration with a wider reach.



Picture 2. Focus group discussion by research team with Sinar Agro Permata (Source: Research team documentation, 2022)

One of the efforts to use and develop the hexa helix approach in empowering farmers and farm laborers in Sumberejo, particularly through the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group, is to collaborate with another farmer group, namely the Agro Makmur Lestari farmer group located in Jombang regency. As previously written, the Agro Makmur Lestari group in Bareng, Jombang, became an order for *porang* commodity seeds from Sinar Agro Permata. Agro Makmur Lestari can be a private component in the hexa helix framework. So that there are at least 3 components in the hexa helix that are structured in efforts to empower the agricultural community in Sumberejo, namely the government, academic, and private components. What needs to be done by the Sinar Agro Permata in Sumberejo is to continue to establish and maintain this collaboration while completing the other three components. This effort will be an element of sustainability in this effort to empower the agricultural community. However, these efforts should of course not come from the Sinar Agro Permata Poktan *per se*, but also from the government, academia, and the private sector who have been involved in this series of empowerment efforts

The academic component, in this case the research team from UPN "Veteran" Java Timur, has also attempted to include the mass media component in the hexa helix series to help the Sumberejo community. The mass media used in this study as a hexa helix lever are electronic mass media such as YouTube and article writing on web pages. By using a platform that is citizen journalism, the drawback of this effort is that the mass media used have not substantially advocated and provided assistance to the interests of community empowerment in Sumberejo, Pasuruan.

The lack of advocacy can be seen if we search the internet using the Google search engine and use the keywords "porang" and "Sumberejo" then around 11,000 searches will appear. However, of the many searches, the commodities of *porang* and "Sumberejo" are not directly associated with the commodity of *porang* and Sumberejo in Pasuruan Regency. Of course, the results of this Google algorithm indicate that visitations to news related to "porang" and "Sumberejo" in East Java, especially in Pasuruan, are still very minimal. So the search results still associate "porang" and "Sumberejo" with other areas. However, from the Google search results, there is one scientific work associated with Sumberejo, Pasuruan.

Rules and regulations regarding *porang* cultivation and their relation to the empowerment of the Sumberejo community also do not yet exist. This is because *porang* cultivation is still new to the Sinar Agro Permata in Sumberejo, Pasuruan. So that both the village scale and the higher local government scales have not yet prepared regulations for the *porang* commodity. Likewise with the industrial dimensions of *porang* products and processed *porang* products, there are still no significant developments. The absence of the other three supporting components (community/organization, mass media, and regulation) makes

*porang* cultivation and agricultural community empowerment in Sumberejo still not optimal and requires greater impetus.

Research through FGDs and observations made by the author's team also provide conventional findings or insights in a study on agricultural community empowerment. In the FGDs and observations made and linking them to a behavioral drivers approach, Sinar Agro Permata is a conventional East Java community that still has the typical mindset of most farmers and farm laborers. From the perspective of individual drivers, the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group is an association of individuals from lower-middle socio-economic circles, which causes cognitive bias and rational boundaries to remain high. So that a typical agrarian society like this will want an increase quickly and benefit many parties if possible. This type of behavior certainly affects the drivers of their behavior at the interpersonal and community levels and even in society. Farmers and farm laborers in Sumberejo tend to fulfill their needs only in terms of "survival" and make conventional investments in education and savings. This has been and will continue for a long time because the factors driving behavior at the community and community level also have the same pattern and type. The surrounding community also tends to have the same assumptions about change.

If this is the case, then there are things that need to be done to encourage multidimensional changes in the patterns of driving their behavior from the lowest level but have the longest timeframe impact, namely the individual level. The role of government, community organizations, mass media, academics, private sector, and regulations must be able to change the mindset of farmers and farm workers, especially at Sinar Agro Permata, so that they can then expand their rationality and objectivity in responding to something. Stakeholders need to introduce and create programs for farmers and farm laborers in Sumberejo to new processed *porang* commodities, inviting them to actively participate in the expansion of the *porang* industry and processed *porang* products. Thus, the factors driving the behavior of each individual farmer and farm laborer in Sinar Agro Permata will be more and more large.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The introduction of the super strategic commodity cultivation of *porang* is the first step for the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group to start empowerment efforts. *Porang* commodities can not only be enjoyed by the harvest, but also the *porang* seeds are sold so that it is profitable for farmers and farm workers. However, the introduction of the *porang* super strategic commodity is not enough. The farmers and farm laborers at the Sinar Agro Permata are still struggling and confused about the continuation of their *porang* cultivation. The difficulties and confusion were explained from the cultivation of *porang* which is a new habit for them, the long waiting period for harvest, and the concern about the loss of assistance for Sinar Agro Permata before *porang* cultivation was optimally successful.

According to the hexa helix approach and also the behavior drivers, all of these obstacles are conventional challenges that occur in agrarian or agricultural societies which also have conventional characteristics with the contours of East Java society. Moreover, the community in Sumberejo is a community whose majority has a lower-middle socio-economic structure which indeed demands the sustainability of the efforts of the six stakeholders described by the hexa helix, namely the government, private sector, community, academics, mass media and regulations. The first three components have been successfully involved, but their role must be maintained until the optimization of *porang* cultivation in Sumberejo is realized. Meanwhile, the last three components in the hexa helix cannot be optimized in the Sinar Agro Permata farmer group, Sumberejo. More than the issue of the involvement of the six components, the application of the behavior drivers model approach in this study temporarily concludes that Sinar Agro Permata in particular and the people of Sumberejo in general need a community empowerment program that is able to change their mindset to the individual stage. This is because the agricultural community in Sumberejo still does not have extensive and in-depth knowledge about the downstreaming of the agricultural industry, especially for the *porang* commodity.

Empowerment of agrarian communities in Sumberejo still needs to be pursued and requires collaboration that is multi-stakeholder as described by the hexa helix approach and the behavior drivers model used in the research and writing of this article. The author predicts that community empowerment through *porang* commodities in Sumberejo will require at least 9 years, or 3 times the harvest period of *porang* commodities, to be able to measure the optimality of the empowerment program. Commodities are indeed promising and have high potential for use and selling, but all of them will be difficult to optimize if there is no comprehensive and sustainable assistance from the stakeholders concerned.

#### APPRECIATION NOTE

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