

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Cirebon City is one of the cities located in West Java known for its coastal areas as it borders directly with the Java Sea and has several beaches. The coastal area is a region located on the coast which is a transitional area or boundary between terrestrial and marine ecosystems. The coastal area is also considered a highly strategic area due to its abundant natural resources potential, so coastal communities should be able to maximize these potentials for the welfare of the people, especially for the coastal communities themselves. In utilizing natural resources, especially in coastal areas, it is necessary to pay attention to the preservation and function of the environment of these natural resources so that they can function as capital in economic growth and as a support system for life. However, the utilization of natural resources in coastal areas still leaves socio-economic problems for the communities living in those areas, especially in terms of poverty.

Reported on disbudpar.cirebonkota.go.id, the coastal area of Cirebon City is considered one of the specialties and advantages of Cirebon City. Besides being a tourist destination, the coast also serves as a fish management area. This coast is located on Sisingamangaraja Street, Panjunan Village, Lemahwungkuk District, Cirebon City, West Java. Although the coastal area is one of the advantages of Cirebon City, it does not guarantee the welfare of the people living around it, or commonly referred to as coastal communities. Coastal communities should be able to live prosperously as they can maximize the potential of marine resources. However, in reality, people living in coastal

areas still live far from prosperity. This is also the case with coastal communities living in the coastal area of Cirebon City, many of them live above the poverty line and rely solely on marine resources for their livelihoods.

The fisheries resources around the coastal areas are one of the livelihoods for fishermen. Fishermen work by searching for sea catches, such as fish and shellfish. However, fishermen also face uncertain working conditions when the weather is unpredictable. Therefore, they have uncertain incomes every day. Yet, fishermen are the mainstay in supporting their family's economy by relying on their catches from the sea, but in reality, these earnings are still insufficient to meet their daily needs. This situation has led to fishermen's economic conditions remaining inadequate and placing them in the poverty cycle. Apart from the uncertainty of sea catches, the factors contributing to fishermen still being in the poverty cycle include low levels of education and knowledge, as well as low socio-economic status, which make them heavily reliant on marine life.

Fishermen living in coastal areas will form rural communities. These fishermen communities play a role as individuals who are engaged in fishing or processing marine products, whose members are still categorized as underprivileged or poor and face several issues, thus they are still unable to develop the potential of coastal resources optimally. One study addressing fishermen communities by Darma Metusala (2005), suggests that the poverty of coastal communities is caused by the lack of a concept of development and community development in coastal areas (fishermen) as subjects in the utilization of coastal resources. In a program called the Coastal Community Economic Empowerment Program (PEMP), which is one of the programs

aimed at empowering coastal communities, especially fishermen. The reason for this program's creation is due to the observation that the average level of education among coastal communities is still low, resulting in a lack of understanding in utilizing and exploiting fisheries resources sustainably. Furthermore, the low level of education and lack of knowledge make fishermen more susceptible to exploitation, especially by some individuals who are capital owners. However, in its implementation, the program, which heavily emphasizes the participation of fishermen, tends to be neglected, resulting in the program's targets not being met. Therefore, the study suggests the need for more significant steps in improving strategies to empower coastal communities (fishermen), especially in enhancing the strengthening of fishermen community institutions, developing connections among fishermen communities with other communities, and providing protection in the form of regulations or government rules, especially in the process of "self-learning," so that coastal communities can become truly self-reliant.

In his research, Darma Metusala (2005), also revealed a general overview of the condition of coastal communities, viewed from social and economic aspects, which still show many efforts of fishermen communities in empowerment to improve their livelihoods, particularly in terms of economic conditions, which are still concerning. These conditions are also caused by several factors, such as the lack of concern from authoritative institutions such as local governments and also Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Aside from economic conditions, education also appears to be a significant hindrance to the welfare of fishermen. The level of education is an ongoing dilemma as it is considered a cause of fishermen's impoverished living

conditions. As we know, becoming a fisherman does not require a high level of education because it relies on skills; hence, most fishermen are not supported by adequate educational backgrounds. Indeed, many fishermen have not completed formal education. Many fishermen do not complete their education, with the average education level being only elementary school, or at most, incomplete secondary education. Psychologically, people living in coastal areas are considered easily satisfied with what they have obtained, such as fish catches. Thus, coastal communities are less interested in empowerment programs conducted by the government or other formal institutions. Consequently, this will have an impact on the lack of enthusiasm for the future (Kusnandi, 2003:57).

Apart from inadequate education, another factor triggering the fishermen's poverty is the cultural aspect of fishermen. Fishermen tend to live in clusters with other fishermen communities, with makeshift housing conditions located very close to the coastal areas, commonly known as coastal areas. Many dwellings in coastal areas fall into the category of inadequate housing. This can be seen from the environmental conditions where they live. Coastal areas tend to be slum areas with houses made of wood or even structures that are not suitable. The residents or fishermen living in these areas do not pay much attention to their living conditions; having a roof over their heads is often deemed sufficient. Given the dire living conditions of fishermen, there is a need for empowerment, especially for fishermen communities, whether carried out by community members themselves (the fishermen) or by external parties. This would enable the social, economic, and cultural conditions of fishermen communities to become more empowered. Socially, fishermen would no longer

be seen as low-status workers, but they would also play an important role in improving the economy. Economically, fishermen would be able to improve their livelihoods and meet their needs by enhancing their economic independence and not solely relying on daily fish catches, but rather by diversifying their livelihoods. In terms of culture or education, fishermen are expected to change their perspective on education, acknowledging the importance of education even in their line of work, thus becoming more aware of the significance of education.

Considering the above conditions regarding the livelihoods of fishermen still being below the poverty line remains an unresolved issue to this day. Moreover, fishermen have the responsibility to provide for their families' needs, such as for their wives and children. This, of course, also impacts the condition of fishermen's wives, who can only rely on their husbands to meet their daily needs by waiting for uncertain sea catches. Consequently, the fate of fishermen's wives and children cannot be guaranteed. Clothing, food, and shelter are some aspects affected by the socio-economic conditions of fishermen. As a result, they are forced to consume whatever food is available, often lacking in nutrition, leading to many of them suffering from or even developing several diseases due to unhealthy eating patterns. Many of their children also suffer from stunting due to malnutrition. Additionally, their children have not yet received proper education due to limited funds to send them to school. The houses where fishermen live are also not suitable for habitation. Considering the distressing living conditions of fishermen's families, alternative livelihoods outside of fishing are needed (Metusala, 2005).

According to Kuncoro in (Marwiah, 2012), coastal women typically spend their days caring for children, managing, and selling seafood catches. The activities carried out by fishermen's wives will not change their social and family status. Consequently, these women heavily depend on their husbands for their livelihoods and can only wait without being able to engage in other jobs. Coastal women, who primarily serve as fishermen's wives and mothers to their children, cannot escape their responsibilities revolving around household affairs.

The social, economic, cultural, and psychological conditions among women living in coastal areas undoubtedly differ from those who do not reside in such areas. For instance, women living in coastal regions have a social condition closely related to the marine or coastal environment, whereas women living in urban areas are more tied to the densely populated city life. Economically, women residing in coastal areas often face the risk of poverty due to fluctuations in their access to more stable economic resources, whereas women living outside the coastal areas tend to have jobs in the industrial or commercial sectors. In terms of cultural conditions and traditional values, communities residing in coastal areas may base many of their values on marine life and a strong fishing culture, whereas urban areas are more impacted by modernization, thereby diminishing the strength of traditional values. In the psychological context, women in coastal areas tend to experience higher levels of psychological stress as they are vulnerable to natural disasters such as storms and tsunamis, whereas women in urban areas face stress related to population density or economic pressure. Given these conditions, women (fishermen's

wives) need to play a role in helping to improve their economy, one of which is through empowering women in coastal areas.

In addition to women's roles, the participation of women is also crucial in the lives of fishermen families. The involvement or participation of women in the sustainability of fishermen's livelihoods needs to be highlighted both by local communities and the government. Essentially, women living in coastal areas can only participate in side activities, such as managing seaweed, which still has very low economic value. Based on research conducted by (Suminar, 1996), the quality of women's participation in the economic activities of fishermen families in coastal areas is still very low, as seen from the low average allocation of women's time to income-generating activities or asset enhancement, which is only about 1.85 hours per day, compared to men whose time allocation reaches 6.5 hours per day. This condition is supported by the fact that nearly all production activities in the fishing sector hardly involve women's participation. Other research conducted by (Azehari, 1991) also supports how women's participation in coastal areas tends to be stagnant due to factors such as local community attitudes, lack of skills, and their status as fishermen's wives, where their duties are limited to household affairs only. Therefore, women's participation and opportunities in economic activities are very limited, further marginalizing women in actively contributing to the family's economic improvement. Hence, efforts to improve the welfare of fishermen families should focus more on women. For example, women's participation can drive economic activities in coastal communities, transforming their roles from solely being homemakers to breadwinners

because women's participation in the lives of fishermen families has not been maximized yet.

Coastal women's presence and contributions to fishermen's lives have not been recognized and considered to this day. However, coastal women are still far from empowered, so empowerment of fishermen's women is necessary. Coastal women should also play a significant role in harnessing the potential of marine resources, but this is still difficult to achieve due to several inhibiting factors such as the relatively low educational background of coastal women, the undervaluing of female labor, cultural barriers inhibiting women's roles, and the dual roles and high workload of women in the family. This is supported by the opinion of Tjiptaningsih (2018), who states that the limitations faced by women in carrying out their activities are due to lack of skills, low level of education, limited job opportunities, and also barriers in views and roles of women in the household. However, women have equal rights and obligations as men, so there should be no difference between women and men in carrying out a job (Yosmeri, 2006). One hindrance to why women find it difficult to fulfill their role in obtaining job opportunities is due to limitations in developing themselves, so they perceive themselves as not having much influence or a significant role, especially in helping to improve their family's economy (Karwati, 2017). Women's roles are only recognized when they are able to provide economic contributions and can help in the stability of economic dynamics.

Empowerment plays a role as a platform and means for communities to meet their needs to learn new knowledge and develop their skills so that their lives can be better and more prosperous. In relation to the issue of women's

empowerment, there are certainly many things that can be done to create empowered women. According to Tjiptaningsih, women's empowerment plays a crucial role in the survival of their families because women are the main pillars in nurturing the morals of their children and are one of the drivers in fulfilling the family's economy. In connection with this, it can be said that women have involvement and play an active role in economic fulfillment (Tjiptaningsih, 2017). In realizing women's empowerment, it can be through entrepreneurial training or skills training. Activities that support women's empowerment will ultimately have a positive impact on improving their welfare. In addition to training, one way of empowering women can be through education. As explained above, one of the inhibiting factors to fishermen's welfare is the lack of education. Therefore, formal education can be one of the ways pursued by fishermen and women in coastal areas to improve their standard of living, for example, through counseling and training. The function of counseling and training is to equip women with enough knowledge to develop marine resources potentials so that they can have a higher selling price. Coastal women not only sell their catch for free, but if they have enough knowledge gained through counseling and training, they can develop their catch with more attractive processing or products. Thus, with the empowerment of women in coastal areas, women can contribute to processing more attractive catches, creating businesses from marine resource production, establishing communities of marine product artisans and developing them more creatively, and enhancing the welfare of fishermen's families and the environment.

From the existing and forthcoming programs by the Cirebon City Government, none recognize the potential of fishermen's wives, although they

actually have potential if empowered. Considering the current reality, which is the lack of productivity among fishermen's wives, the Cirebon City Government should attempt to create programs that aim to maximize this available human resource potential to improve the economy of fishermen's families and enhance their welfare. Observing the gap between the potential of coastal women and the lack of attention from the government, especially regarding the participation of coastal women, the government needs to delve deeper into these issues to eventually serve as considerations for finding solutions. Building upon these issues, this research will examine the Programs of the Cirebon City Government that can effectively empower coastal women to achieve the welfare of fishermen's families.

1.2 Formulation of The Problem

Based on the background above, there are several questions based on the gap issues between the potential of coastal women and the lack of government attention to the empowerment of coastal women. Therefore, problem formulations can be drawn, including:

1. How is the socio-economic condition of women's lives in the coastal areas of Cirebon City?
2. How is the participation of women in women's empowerment programs in the coastal areas of Cirebon City?

1.3 Research Purposes

This research is aimed at achieving main objectives and specific objectives as follows:

- The main objective of this research is to assist women living in coastal areas in participating and enhancing their potential as well as their surrounding environment in helping to improve the economic situation of fishing families.
- The specific objectives of this research are:
 - 1) To examine the social conditions in the coastal areas of Cirebon City related to the implementation of women's empowerment programs that have been or will be carried out.
 - 2) To determine the level of women's participation in women's empowerment programs in the coastal areas of Cirebon City.
 - 3) To identify the inhibiting and supporting factors of women's participation in women's empowerment programs in the coastal areas of Cirebon City.
 - 4) To evaluate government policies in implementing women's empowerment programs in the coastal areas of Cirebon City to improve the economic situation of fishing families.

1.4 Benefits of Research

This research is expected to provide benefits and contribute ideas for both researchers and readers in empowering and increasing the participation of women in coastal areas, as follows:

- a. For the women's communities in coastal areas, the research results will serve as a guide for them to develop their potential and increase the participation of coastal women to actively participate in social, economic, and development activities.
- b. Benefits for Cirebon City's Local Government, the research offers insightful information that helps the local government develop policies that are

appropriate for the requirements of women living in coastal regions, evaluate and enhance existing empowerment initiatives, and manage resources effectively. It encourages women to participate more actively in local decision-making, which improves their engagement in community development and governance.

- c. Benefits for the West Java Provincial Government, the research provides a framework for the creation of long-term plans to empower women in coastal communities, enabling the province to replicate successful initiatives. It ensures consistent approaches to women's empowerment by assisting in the alignment of municipal and provincial policies and encourages cooperation amongst stakeholders in order to successfully support these programs.
- d. For the officials of the Department of Marine Affairs, Fisheries, Livestock, and Agriculture of Cirebon City to optimize the implementation of development and expansion of marine affairs, fisheries, livestock, and agriculture in Cirebon City.
- e. For the officials of the Department of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control, and Family Planning to be used as input in determining empowerment programs for women, especially those in coastal areas, to participate in improving their livelihoods.

1.5 Literature Review

Previous research conducted by Fadliyanti, L., Diswandi, D., Sutanto, H., & Wijimulawiani, B. S. (2021), which examined the influence of economic empowerment and environmental empowerment of tourism village development through women's participation, suggests that economic

empowerment and environmental empowerment do not significantly affect the development of tourism villages but directly affect tourism development. This study indicates the interconnectedness between the topic to be studied, namely women's participation in empowerment programs for the development of a village, and the variables studied are also both related to women's participation. However, the previous study focused more on the influence of economic empowerment and environmental empowerment, while the upcoming study will focus on women's empowerment and their participation in helping to improve the economy. The previous research will serve as a foundation or basis for the author to further explore how the participation and empowerment of women can impact coastal areas.

Another study conducted by Rinawati (2017) aimed to explain how women interpret women's empowerment. Additionally, this research focused on describing the communication actions taken by women in the women's empowerment process, as well as the inhibiting factors and solutions that can be provided. The results of this study indicate that women can construct the empowerment process according to their subjective views. Therefore, they will have different levels of involvement in the women's empowerment process. This research will serve as a basis and consideration for the author to identify solutions that can be provided to overcome barriers in the women's empowerment process, thus enabling the empowerment process to be carried out smoothly.

Previous research conducted by Setyawati, E. Y., & Susanto, A. A. (2013) explained that women's participation is the most important part of social empowerment efforts, but to achieve this, there are still many challenges to

overcome and gaps to be filled in the context of women's empowerment. This study also explained several reasons behind women's involvement in women's empowerment programs, as well as factors that can contribute to or hinder women's empowerment efforts. The results obtained in this study indicate that there are other factors or motivations by women to participate in every stage of social empowerment programs, these motivations are not based on personal awareness but rather due to the obligation to fulfill the requirements set by the program managers. Thus, it can be concluded that women's involvement or participation in empowerment programs is passive, resulting in suboptimal outcomes.

Sofiani (2009), in her research, suggested that the scope of women's participation needs to be expanded, especially in the context of development. Women are often overlooked not only in the process but also in the progress of development. If this can be implemented, it will certainly impact the quality of implementation in development, especially in the context of women's empowerment and gender equality. Therefore, this step needs to be taken, not only in improving the quality of family life but also in increasing women's role in decision-making. This research greatly emphasizes the importance of women's role in development, which will contribute to national progress.

Research conducted by Goel & Ravishankar (2022), suggests that policies focused solely on women will result in gender-oriented impacts, such as in education, finance, and governance sectors. This study also discusses how women's autonomy rights within the family are still often threatened, especially in terms of expressing opinions and participating in decision-making. Regarding women's equal participation in household activities and decisions, this research

also examines the relationship between empowerment and various socio-economic indicators and public policies with women's participation. The results of this study indicate that culture and language play an important role in supporting women's participation in household decisions. Traditional and socio-cultural factors, for example, in financial inclusion efforts, will affect women's position in household power.

Previous research conducted by Elsayed, Namoro & Roushdy (2022), discussed how a program implemented in rural villages in Egypt aimed to help women overcome barriers in finding employment and starting businesses. The research findings explained that the program was able to increase women's participation in the workforce, enabling them to become more independent and gain employment. With this program in place, it will undoubtedly enhance women's motivation to start their own businesses in the future. This research provides a new perspective for the author to develop ideas in efforts to enhance women's independence.

Fadiah & Safaruddin (2022), also discussed the suboptimal participation of women in fishing families, especially in helping to improve the family's economy. One of the inhibiting factors for the suboptimal participation of women was also explained in this research because women still have dual roles, such as involvement as wives and mothers, and also involvement in earning a living. The research findings explained that women, notably living in coastal areas, certainly have significant contributions and participation in increasing the income of fishing families. The relationship between husband and wife can be based on partnership, so both can cooperate in meeting the needs of the family.

From this research, it can be concluded that women also have equal roles with men in fulfilling the family's needs or improving the family's welfare.

Previous research conducted by Kuncoro, A. (2015) in his study explained that coastal communities are sometimes neglected by development due to government policies that only focus on coastal development, thus empowerment, especially for women in those areas, is necessary. The results of the research stated that women's empowerment has a significant impact on improving the welfare of fishermen's lives, as also explained in previous studies. Coastal women can improve their welfare by producing various foods through marine processing.

The research conducted by Hormati, G., Mantiri, M., & Singkoh, F. (2019) explains that the government's development efforts in coastal areas are still positioned as peripheral sectors in national economic development. The results of this research explain that there are two main aspects in efforts to empower coastal communities, namely physical and non-physical aspects. The physical aspect can be carried out by the Central Government through the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, such as providing fishing equipment. Meanwhile, the non-physical aspect can be carried out by the Local Government, such as increasing the skills of fishermen through socialization or training.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

1.6.1 Empowerment Theory

The concept of empowerment is still not fully understood by many people. According to Yunus, S. et al. (2017) in their book "Integrated Community Empowerment Model," empowerment originates from the word "power," which

means strength or ability. The meaning of empowerment itself is the process, planning, and encouragement to provide strength or enable the weak. The term empowerment emerged due to the development of Western thought and culture, especially in European society. It began to emerge in the 1970s, and the concept has continued to evolve over time, even up to the present day. The emergence of the empowerment concept was accompanied by the emergence of other concepts and movements such as existentialism, phenomenology, personalism, Freudianism, structuralism, and critical sociology of the Frankfurt School. The concept of empowerment is one of the concepts that emerged in the 20th century known as post-modernism. On the other hand, the terminology of community empowerment began to be popular in Indonesia in the 1980s. Initially, this concept was known as empowerment programs implemented by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), but over time, the concept of empowerment has evolved into a concept aimed at reducing poverty carried out by the government.

According to Prijono, S. Onny and Pranarka, A. M.W (1996), the concept of empowerment involves the process of giving power to individuals or groups or communities so that they become empowered. Empowerment means encouraging and motivating them to have the ability and willingness or empowerment to determine their choices and well-being. The concept of empowerment is also closely related to process and purpose. In the empowerment process, it means a series of processes or activities to strengthen the weak groups in society. Meanwhile, empowerment based on its objectives means achieving social change by creating a society that is stronger in participating in meeting its needs (Soeharto, 2008).

Community empowerment also becomes an appropriate strategy in realizing development. Therefore, to achieve this, the participation of the community is needed, accompanied by government agencies through the process of providing knowledge to community groups (Nugroho, 2001). In addition, empowerment is also an effort to develop the existing potentials in the community to become strengths, so that they can provide value, protect, and advocate for the interests and welfare of the community. Improving the economic aspect is considered as the initial step in empowering the community. The improvement and development of the economic aspect are very useful in the self-reliance of the community (Sanit, 1988).

According to Basyid, a social and cultural approach is also the initial step in community empowerment that is expected to encourage changes in behavior, attitudes, and existing work systems in society. In supporting this change process, the government also needs to play a role, such as:

1. Providing facilities, infrastructure, and physical infrastructure that focus on meeting public needs to promote the sustainability of the economic sector.
2. Providing acceleration facilities in development, especially in remote areas such as rural areas.
3. Facilitating the creation of a conducive climate, especially in developing creativity and economic activities of the community.
4. Implementing various patterns and forms of community empowerment.

Empowerment is not just a process of empowering communities to be more empowered, but it is more than just that. Empowerment is created to realize independent communities so that they can help improve their lives and break free from the cycle of poverty. The concept of community empowerment is also a

process to provide facilities to communities and help motivate them to position themselves proportionally to become the main actors in utilizing the potential of their surrounding environment. Community empowerment is closely related to sustainable development, where community empowerment is one of the main requirements that can lead communities towards a better life through dynamic improvements in economic, social, and ecological aspects. The strategic environment refers to the production, economic, social, and ecological environments owned by the community. With this empowerment, communities are supported to have the ability to develop and maximize the utilization of their surrounding resources.

In realizing the success of community empowerment programs, it is necessary to involve the community in formulating these programs so that empowerment programs truly align with what the community needs, encourage the participation of impoverished communities to contribute to empowerment programs, consider the potential of the surrounding environment, and establish sustainable cooperation between government agencies and other institutions. The commitment of the government, both at the central and regional levels, in supporting the empowerment program process is also the key to the success of these programs. Forms of support such as funding, business capital, training, etc., also play a supporting role in the success of empowerment programs.

Based on Metusala (2005), Understanding the concept of empowerment can be summarized as follows:

- a. Providing power or strength to individuals, groups, or communities considered less empowered.

- b. The result of this empowerment enables communities to make decisions regarding their own well-being.
- c. Thus, they can determine their own destiny without the interference of others.

1.6.2 Theory of Women's Participation and Empowerment

The gender equality between women and men in Indonesia is also influenced by the impact of Indonesia's historical past. Julia Suryakusuma (1988), coined the term "state-motherism" in her 1988 examination of gender roles and state policy in Indonesia. It depicts a state ideology that frames women as the "mothers" of the country and presents the government as a paternalistic authority. This ideology upholds conventional gender roles and the state-envisioned social order by expecting women to perform their tasks primarily as mothers and caretakers. According to this paradigm, women's bodies and behaviors are under state control, and policies that prioritize women's domestic and reproductive obligations are promoted. Initiatives to control and promote women's responsibilities in the home, such as family planning programs, maternal health care, and awareness campaigns about appropriate household behavior, are examples of this paternalistic approach. State-motherism marginalizes women's responsibilities in the public and economic domains by maintaining a patriarchal social framework by defining women's fundamental identity via their capacity for reproduction and care.

The concept of State-Motherism proposed by Julia Suryakusuma (1988) is also highly relevant to current women's issues. This is also backed by the oppression during the Soeharto era. During the Soeharto regime, structural subordination of women was maintained, such as in domestic roles, so it can be said that women were still in a disadvantaged position. Moreover, the patriarchal culture that still governs the roles of

men and women also serves as a tool for social control. Thus, women have limited roles because their roles are still shaped and constructed by the State through various government organizations and other social aspects. However, with the emergence of many women's organizations and critical literature on the construction of women's images, interpretations have become more open. This is driven by the post-reform era, where the State's role in controlling the construction of women has diminished. This shift reflects a transition from the ideals of gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women during the reform era, towards an understanding that women should return to their traditional roles as homemakers and family caregivers.

In addition to the concept of State-Motherism proposed by Julia, there is another concept proposed by Ichsan Kabullah (2021) called Neo-Motherism. In essence, the concept of neo-motherism is in contrast to the concept of state-motherism. Neo-motherism emphasizes women's involvement in actively participating in the public sphere, such as in elections. In general, the concept of neo-motherism is one of the political strategies that is quite ambiguous and reflects changes in Indonesia's social and political life. Usually, female candidates will conduct complex campaigns with various strategic elements such as utilizing the influence of their husbands and leveraging gender solidarity when interacting with female voters. Thus, it can be concluded that all political actions are based on continuous personal relationships rather than being carried out by isolated individuals. However, female candidates are not candidates because of personal political ambitions or their husbands, but rather because of the considerations of political parties seeking candidates with high electability to increase their party's votes in elections.

Empowering communities with the aim of motivating them to become stronger has still not been sufficiently implemented for the welfare of the people, especially

empowerment for women. Women's participation often becomes the last option and is rarely involved in the development process and even economic sustainability. According to Zulham et al. (2020) in their book titled "Women's Empowerment and Gender Maturity of Fisheries Business Groups," women and men have equal access to participate and also have equal opportunities to use resources and authority in decision-making. To achieve this equality, it is necessary to empower women. The concept of women's empowerment means a process of helping women pursue and improve their shortcomings in various aspects of life or development. Gender equality and women's empowerment are also currently important issues to minimize poverty, reduce inequality, and protect the environment.

Empowering women programs are also one of the activities in participatory development. Participatory development refers to a form of development aimed at developing the creativity of the community in a certain area. Women's empowerment is essentially a form of development of community empowerment, but the form of empowerment is more focused on women. According to Kartasamita (Hikmat, 2006:1), empowering women means providing empowerment elements to women who are considered unable and unable to rely on their own strength so that they can break free from the cycle of poverty and become independent and able to improve their lives. With women's empowerment, it is hoped to provide opportunities for women to make their own decisions as empowered individuals. Based on Sunodiningrat (2000:109) in Rini (2010), the objectives of empowerment are:

1. Increasing the income of women who are still in poverty
2. Developing women's potential in increasing productive activities
3. Developing the creativity and capabilities of women, as well as increasing the role of community institutions.

Alongside women's empowerment, the participation of women also needs to be enhanced. Building and developing women's capabilities with an emphasis on women's participation remains a top priority, especially since women's presence often faces discrimination. By involving women's participation extensively, it is hoped that the presence of women can contribute to the improvement of economic strength and welfare. According to research conducted by Fadliyanti et al. (2021), economic empowerment has a significant impact on women's participation. When economically empowered, women will have the ability to succeed and advance economically as well. It can be said that women's economic empowerment is crucial, especially in achieving women's rights and broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education, and welfare.

According to Sofiani (2009), in realizing the role and participation of women, women must take steps to catch up with men, including:

1. Enhancing women's capabilities by developing their potential optimally through education.
2. Improving women's position in occupying decision-making positions.
3. Increasing women's access in development.
4. Enhancing women's welfare through the provision of intellectual, social, and credibility capital.
5. Increasing women's independence through strengthening the existing values in society.
6. Enhancing mental and spiritual resilience.

1.6.3 Concept of Women, Participation and Empowerment of Coastal Communities

In achieving shared prosperity, community participation needs to be enhanced along with the increasing empowerment of individuals or groups. According to the book *"Pemberdayaan dan Partisipasi Masyarakat Pesisir"* by Hajar et al. (2018), in designing successful policy programs implemented by the government, the involvement of the community is also necessary. According to Isbandi (2007) in Hajar et al. (2018), participation means the involvement of the community in determining the issues within the community by participating in finding and making decisions regarding alternative solutions to address these issues. Community participation means the entire role of the community in the process of planning, implementing, evaluating, and benefiting from development while considering community self-reliance. Therefore, with community participation, the government and the community can collaborate in enhancing community welfare. One of the supporting factors of community participation is that participation is a form of the community's willingness to improve the quality of life. Some important benefits of community participation include:

1. Efforts to enhance the community's capabilities through policies or development programs.
2. Efforts to nurture communities to become more independent.
3. Efforts to instill trust in the community.

These efforts can continue through the development of community participation through community empowerment programs, especially for communities in remote areas or areas that are still very underdeveloped, such as coastal areas. Thus, community empowerment in coastal areas is carried out through training and socialization activities as efforts to achieve community welfare. Empowerment programs in coastal areas require friendly programs that can maximize the potential of each region. However, in achieving this, there are still several obstacles, such as the minimal participation of the community in

programs provided and designed by the government. In general, empowerment has two main functions, namely minimizing the cycle of poverty and the backwardness of communities by strengthening the position of communities in the economic and power structures.

Coastal community empowerment programs are expected to be able to combat poverty and run continuously, closely related to the development of coastal communities. To realize coastal community empowerment programs, all stakeholders involved, such as the government, private sector, and coastal communities themselves, need to actively participate. There are several programs expected to alleviate poverty in coastal communities, including:

- a. Social assistance and welfare programs, aimed at assisting poor communities in meeting basic needs such as food, health, and education.
- b. Community empowerment programs aimed at empowering and enabling communities, especially in development.
- c. Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) empowerment programs aimed at assisting and supporting small businesses in developing their businesses.
- d. People's programs aimed at improving various programs that have been implemented.

Empowerment of coastal communities can be done through the formation of creative coastal community groups. However, if the community is willing to empower themselves but the government is not actively involved in the empowerment process, empowerment cannot be maximized. This is because the capacity of government agencies or institutions is still not optimal in providing guidance and insight related to community empowerment. Several problems often occur in the implementation of coastal community empowerment programs, one of which is village governments that are still unable to manage village funds, so the funds planned for community empowerment cannot be

implemented properly and optimally. Thus, the government's role in the success of coastal community empowerment programs is crucial.

Furthermore, women's role in economic development, especially in coastal areas, is still very limited. However, women also play a role in the sustainability of development, and if development does not involve women's roles and participation, social inequality will occur in society. Therefore, gender equality and justice in the Maritime and Fisheries Sector development must be built and developed by considering economic, social, cultural, and political aspects. In the book *"Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Kematangan Gender Kelompok Usaha Perikanan"* by Zulham et al. (2020), it is mentioned that there was a core people's pond program in the North Coast of Java in the 1980s where the program aimed to convert mangrove forests into ponds. As a result of the program, women lost their livelihoods because mangrove forest areas were one of the areas where women searched for shellfish, crabs, and various other fisheries products.

The limitation of economic access and ownership of fisheries resources will certainly impact the phenomenon of stunting in coastal areas related to these conditions. Stunting is a health problem that occurs in children as a result of chronic malnutrition. In the coastal context, limitations in women's economic access can lead to inadequate nutrition in families. When women lose their livelihoods, families will struggle to meet their nutritional needs. In addition to economic access limitations, limitations in education will also greatly affect the lack of adequate education access for women, thus negatively impacting the family's knowledge and understanding of nutrition and healthy eating habits. When families do not have enough knowledge about the importance of nutrition, the risk of stunting in children becomes higher. Thus, the limited economic and educational access for women in coastal areas will also impact the risk of stunting in those areas. Therefore, it

is important to take steps that support coastal women, such as through women's empowerment.

To help increase the role and participation of coastal women in development programs, the government has established several programs aimed at increasing women's participation in exploring their potential optimally through programs provided by the government. One of the government's chosen programs is the Family Empowerment and Welfare Program (PKK), because the family is the smallest relational group between women and men. In coastal areas today, besides the PKK organization, there are other organizations that can help women's empowerment programs, such as Joint Business Groups (KUB), Processors and Marketers Groups (Poklahsar), Fish Cultivator Groups (Pokdakan), Salt Farmers' Business Groups (KUGAR), and Coastal Community Groups (KMP). The programs provided by the government do not specifically address women's external issues, such as the injustice in the distribution of aid programs to women in coastal areas, the failure of women's business processes to access resource potentials, low wage behavior, etc. Therefore, it can be said that these organizations are formed with the aim that women in coastal areas can work productively.

However, the government-provided organizations seem to be still ineffective, so a new innovation related to the role and participation of women is needed. An approach that can be taken is the internalization approach of women's roles starting from the Women in Development approach. Women in development is an approach that studies the relationship between women and men in the development process. However, the Women in Development approach is considered to be insufficiently responsive in addressing the existing issues, leading to the emergence of a new approach called Gender and Development (GAD). GAD is an approach that positions women as agents of change rather

than passive objects. One implementation of the GAD approach is Gender Mainstreaming (GM), which is implemented to achieve gender equality.

According to the research results by Azzahra, Z., Mufrikhah, S., & Masrohatun, M. (2021), the government needs to have initial strategies in efforts to increase women's participation in empowerment programs, such as:

1. Conducting initial socialization aimed at introducing future programs to be implemented.
2. Holding discussions to obtain feedback from the community regarding the programs to be implemented.
3. Organizing activities including program formulation, implementation, and mapping the outputs of the program.
4. Participatory review aimed at participatory reviewing the implementation of empowerment programs.

In implementing coastal women empowerment and participation programs, there are certainly supporting and inhibiting factors for participation. The success of women's participation in community empowerment through empowerment training is greatly influenced by both driving and inhibiting factors. These factors can be outlined as follows:

A. Driving Factors

1. Women's awareness in building and developing their region, with this awareness, women are encouraged to advance their region by participating in women's empowerment programs.
2. Desire to help improve family economics, with increasing basic needs, women are motivated to participate in earning a living.
3. Family support, support from the family makes women feel more comfortable and free to express themselves in empowering themselves.

4. Opportunity for women's participation, women's empowerment programs in coastal areas provide an opportunity for women to directly participate.
5. Supportive environmental factors, there needs to be support from the surrounding community for women's involvement through women's empowerment programs.

B. Inhibiting Factors

1. Women carry a double burden, women participating in empowerment programs often have dual roles as homemakers and breadwinners, which can be a hindrance.
2. Timing of activities, women often face constraints related to the timing of empowerment activities because they also have dual roles.
3. Low education levels make it difficult for women participating in empowerment programs to receive information.

1.7 Research Method

1.7.1 Type of Research

The research design to be used in the study will employ a qualitative research approach. According to Rukin (2019), qualitative research is conducted by analyzing through an inductive approach. Qualitative research focuses on facts that occur in the field using existing theoretical foundations. The theoretical framework also serves as a reference in representing the research background and as material for discussing research results. Reasoning, meaning, and definitions of a situation are the main focus of qualitative research, thus it mainly investigates aspects related to life. The qualitative research design is general in nature and can change according to the situation and conditions in the field. Qualitative research employs scientific

methods systematically and systematically designed to investigate a problem and to discover new knowledge about social situations.

There are several reasons why qualitative research is highly suitable as a method in the upcoming study. This is because the research object is society with various social phenomena. Society is highly active, thus qualitative research and social research must be used to understand and explain various social phenomena and issues existing in society. Qualitative research utilizes systematic, clear, and verifiable methods and can provide the best findings for achieving true knowledge. As this research is based on knowledge and experience, it can be concluded that this is not speculative research.

The strategy used in this qualitative research is conducted through field research or case studies by directly examining the field on how women participate in community empowerment programs in the coastal areas of Cirebon City. Field research is one of the studies directly investigating the social life of the community. This research also employs a descriptive approach, where the researcher aims to understand fundamental answers about women's participation and coastal community empowerment programs. Therefore, with this qualitative research method, the researcher hopes to find answers to social issues occurring in the community, thereby providing solutions related to these issues.

1.7.2 Research Objects, Subjects and Locations

a. Research Objects and Subjects

In this research, the object of study will be the level of women's participation in coastal community empowerment programs in the city of Cirebon. Meanwhile, the subjects of this study are the institutions or parties related to this issue, capable

of providing information regarding the research to be conducted. Several parties related to this research are as follows:

1. Cirebon City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (Aan, as the Head of the Women's Empowerment Division)
2. Cirebon City Maritime and Fisheries Office (Yudi, as the Head of the Maritime and Fisheries Division)
3. Cirebon City Cooperative, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Office (Hadi, as the Head of the Empowerment and Business Actors Section)
4. Regional Planning and Development Agency (BAPPEDA) of Cirebon City (Rezky, as the P3M, Planning, Governance, and Human Development Planning Division)
5. Secretary of the Cirebon City (SEKDA) (Giri, as the Sub-coordinator of Regional Administration of the Secretary of the Region)
6. Chairman of RW 07 Coastal Cirebon City (Dedi, 57 years old, Profession as RW Chairman)
7. Coastal Fishermen Representative of Cirebon City (Sukisno, 59 years old, Profession as Fisherman)
8. Coastal Women of Cirebon City
 - Kuriah, 52 years old, Profession as fish trader
 - Soniah, 47 years old, Profession as housewife
 - Rohyati, 52 years old, Profession as housewife
 - Lusi, 34 years old, Profession as housewife
 - Neneng, 49 years old, Profession as housewife
 - Ros, 28 years old, Profession as a merchant
 - Novita, 39 years old, Profession as housewife

- Nemi, 36 years old, Profession as housewife
- Ella, 43 years old, Profession as housewife
- Halimah, 60 years old, Profession as salted fish trader

b. Research Location

The location for the research will be in Coastal Cirebon City located on Sisingamangaraja Street, Panjunan Village, Lemahwungkuk Subdistrict, Cirebon City, West Java. This location was chosen considering it as an appropriate place where many people work as fishermen and women (fishermen's wives) participate in helping to earn a living by processing marine products. However, on the other hand, there are still many women in the area who are marginalized and do not actively participate in women's empowerment programs.

1.7.3 Data Sources

In this research, both primary and secondary data will be used.

a. Primary Data

Primary data refers to data obtained directly by the researcher, without intermediaries. This data is collected specifically to address the research questions. Primary data can be gathered through survey methods or observation methods. Survey methods involve directly questioning relevant parties, such as women's empowerment agencies, fisheries departments, fishermen's associations, and coastal women's groups, either orally or in writing. Observation methods entail collecting primary data by observing and documenting the issues on-site. Researchers will visit observation locations to gather information firsthand.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to information obtained indirectly by the researcher through intermediaries. It includes records, scholarly articles, journals, books, historical reports archived in repositories, or documentary data that aids in data collection and research information gathering.

1.7.4 Technique and Data Collection

To conduct research, it is necessary to have data as the final outcome and valid source for a study. To obtain valid data sources, researchers will employ several data collection techniques, as follows:

1. **Observation:** In this technique, researchers will directly observe the research location, namely The Cirebon City Coastal area, by observing the participation of women in the coastal community empowerment program. Observation involves placing the researcher in a position to observe the phenomenon being studied, and observations are conducted directly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the research focus.
2. **Interviews:** In the interview technique, researchers will conduct direct interviews with relevant parties, such as women's empowerment agencies, fisheries departments, fishermen's associations, and coastal women's groups, so that these parties can provide answers to the questions posed. The interview results will be summarized, including explanations of personal identities, situational descriptions, problem identification, and data descriptions.

i. Data Analysis Technique

In analyzing data for a study, one of the processes is to arrange the sequence of data, organize it, categorize it according to sequence, and formulate a hypothesis.

Data analysis is also carried out continuously from the beginning to the end of the research. As proposed by Miles and Huberman (1992) regarding data analysis techniques, they include:

- a. **Data Reduction:** This is done by making generalizations from all the data obtained through field research notes, interview results, observations, and document analysis. Data reduction can be seen as a form of data analysis that involves categorizing, sharpening, discarding unnecessary information, organizing data systematically, and highlighting important aspects, ultimately leading to clear conclusions. Thus, the collected data will be selected, grouped, and summarized without losing the meaning of the data.
- b. **Data Presentation:** This involves organizing information neatly to draw conclusions for taking action. According to Sugiono (2008), the process of presenting data will explain the overall picture of the data set obtained, making it easier to understand and read. Additionally, narrative data presentation is commonly used in qualitative research.
- c. **Conclusion and Verification:** The systematically arranged data will then be summarized to derive meaning from the data according to the research problem formulation.

ii. Data Validation Techniques

Data validation techniques aim to ensure that the data obtained align with the facts in the field, and that the events indeed occurred. To ensure and guarantee the validity of the data, researchers employ triangulation techniques. Triangulation is carried out by comparing one source with another. This is also supported by

Moleong's opinion, stating that triangulation is a technique for examining the validity of data by utilizing something outside of the data itself.

The benefits of triangulation technique include:

1. Comparing observational data with interview data. By comparing these data, checks can be performed to ensure the validity of the data.
2. Comparing interview data with another data source related to the research problem. Through comparing and checking both sets of data, valid data can be obtained.