

SOLIDARITY DYNAMICS AMONG VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES: FOSTERING RESILIENCE IN TIMES OF CRISIS**Deniz Yıldız****Celal Bayar Üniversitesi, Türkiye**

correspondence: deniz.yildiz808@gmail.com

Abstract- This study discusses the dynamics of social solidarity in vulnerable communities during socio-economic crises, focusing on the role of support networks and collective identity. In times of crisis, individuals in vulnerable communities often face significant challenges that affect their well-being. Through literature analysis, it was found that strong support networks enable community members to help each other and share resources, which in turn increases their resilience. In addition, collective identities formed from shared experiences help individuals feel more connected and motivated to contribute to collective welfare. However, challenges such as social stigma and resource constraints greatly affect the success of social solidarity. This study concludes that to build effective solidarity, it is important for stakeholders to create inclusive policies, strengthen support networks, and embrace collective identity as a tool for advocacy. These findings provide important insights for the development of more responsive social policies for vulnerable communities in the face of crises. By understanding these dynamics, it is hoped that better strategies can be developed to support vulnerable communities, enabling them to adapt and survive in challenging situations.

Keywords: social solidarity, vulnerable communities, socio-economic crises, support networks, collective identity, community resilience, inclusive policies

INTRODUCTION

When facing socio-economic crises, vulnerable communities are often the most affected groups. In these difficult circumstances, social solidarity is key to survival. Social solidarity refers to the bonds between individuals in a group that encourage them to help and support one another. In the context of vulnerable communities, these relationships are particularly important, as individuals often face challenges that require collective support. Emerging crises, whether due to natural disasters, political instability, or economic changes, force community members to adapt and depend on one another. Therefore, understanding the dynamics of social solidarity in vulnerable communities is essential to analysing how they build strength in the midst of adversity (Hekmatyar & Vonika, 2021).

Different social structures, such as differences in mobility dynamics between urban and rural communities (Amri & Khayru, 2021), also shape the conditions of vulnerability faced by a group. In such conditions, social support becomes a determining factor of resilience. As shown by Hariani et al. (2024), a supportive microenvironment (such as parenting patterns) is the foundation of an individual's psychological well-being. The logic of this support system is also relevant at the community level. Social solidarity in vulnerable communities is not only limited to economic aspects but also includes emotional and cultural dimensions. Well-connected communities can create support networks that enable their members to collaborate in facing various challenges. These networks function as protective mechanisms that help individuals overcome feelings of alienation and loss in crisis situations. In this case, social solidarity becomes the foundation for strengthening collective identity, which in turn can increase community resilience (Revilla et al., 2018).

The coping strategies used by vulnerable communities are often the result of collective experiences that have been built up over many years. When a crisis arises, individuals do not only rely on themselves, but also activate pre-existing social relationships. Through shared experiences, they build collective knowledge about how to overcome existing challenges. This process not only creates a sense of solidarity, but also strengthens group identity. In crisis situations, individuals who feel connected to their community tend to be better able to cope with difficulties, as they have social resources to rely on (Oliveira & Morais, 2019).

Furthermore, in dealing with various types of crises, it is important to understand how social solidarity influences decision-making at the individual and group levels. Members of vulnerable communities often make decisions based on collective interests, not just personal interests. This shows that social solidarity can serve as a driver for collective action, which in turn can strengthen community resilience. By understanding these dynamics, we can further explore how vulnerable groups can develop effective survival strategies in the face of socio-economic crises.

This study aims to explore in greater depth how vulnerable communities build social solidarity in crisis situations. By focusing on survival strategies, support networks, and collective identity, it is hoped that valuable insights can be provided to stakeholders in formulating policies that are more responsive to community needs. This research will

contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of social solidarity and how it can be applied in efforts to improve the resilience of vulnerable communities in the future.

Oluwatosin and Da Silva (2021) in their critical literature review emphasise how social stigma limits vulnerable groups' access to basic services, exacerbating their vulnerability and inequality. These findings reveal one aspect of the multidimensional challenges faced by vulnerable groups. On the other hand, challenges also arise from within the community itself when they have to deal with crises with very limited resources. As analysed in a different context by Vitrianingsih and Issalillah (2021), the effectiveness of policies at the macro level needs to be seen in relation to the realities at the most basic level of society. Vulnerable communities often face complex challenges in building social solidarity (Bormasa, 2023). One of the main problems that arises is the insufficiency of resources available to support networks of support among community members. In crisis situations, access to resources such as food, healthcare, and information becomes very limited. This insufficiency can trigger tensions within the community, where individuals feel pressured to meet their basic needs. In this case, social solidarity can be threatened, as individuals may focus more on personal needs than collective interests.

Another problem faced by vulnerable communities is the social stigma that sometimes attaches to certain groups. In many cases, individuals from certain backgrounds or who experience economic hardship are often faced with prejudice and discrimination. This can hinder their efforts to build strong social solidarity, as they feel alienated from the wider community. This stigma has the potential to reduce trust between individuals, which is an important element in building effective support networks. Therefore, it is important to understand how this stigma affects the dynamics of social solidarity within vulnerable communities.

In the face of increasingly frequent and complex socio-ecological crises, the study of social solidarity in vulnerable communities is highly relevant. The uncertainty generated by climate change, social unrest, and global economic impacts has created new challenges for individuals and groups (Syahimin, 2023). In facing these uncertain situations, social solidarity becomes an important element that can help community members to survive. By understanding how vulnerable groups build solidarity, we can identify best practices that can be applied in future crisis situations.

In addition, the dynamics of social solidarity in vulnerable communities are very important to consider in the context of social development. Policies that ignore the role of social solidarity risk creating injustice and dissatisfaction within society (Bormasa, 2023). Therefore, this study provides insights into how policies can be formulated by considering the needs and experiences of vulnerable communities. Thus, this study contributes to the development of policies that are more inclusive and responsive to the challenges faced by vulnerable groups.

This study aims to understand the dynamics of social solidarity in vulnerable communities during socio-economic crises. By focusing on coping strategies, support networks, and collective identity, this study is expected to provide useful insights for policymakers to design more effective interventions. Furthermore, this research also contributes to the development of academic knowledge in the fields of sociology and community studies, highlighting the importance of social solidarity as a key element in community resilience.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the approach used is a qualitative literature study that focuses on thematic analysis. This method allows researchers to collect, analyse, and synthesise information from various relevant literature sources regarding the dynamics of social solidarity in vulnerable communities. This study began with a systematic search of articles, books, and research reports related to the subject under discussion. This search process involved searching various academic databases and digital libraries, using keywords that included "social solidarity," "vulnerable communities," "socio-economic crisis," and "collective support." This strategy aimed to ensure that the diverse perspectives and findings from various studies were well documented.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to select the literature to be analysed. The inclusion criteria included studies published within the last 10 years to ensure the relevance and reliability of the data obtained. In addition, only articles written in English and Indonesian were included. Exclusion criteria included literature that did not specifically discuss social solidarity, as well as research that was not relevant to the focus on vulnerable communities. In this way, the study aimed to gain a clearer and more focused understanding of the dynamics of social solidarity in the context under study.

As part of the analysis process, coding was carried out to identify key themes that emerged from the collected literature. This coding involved marking important elements related to survival strategies, support networks, and collective identity in vulnerable communities. Through systematic coding, researchers were able to better organise information and draw relevant conclusions from the findings. Quality assurance in this study was taken very seriously, with cross-verification of information obtained from various sources. This aims to ensure that the analysis is based on valid and reliable data, so that the research results can make a significant contribution to the understanding of social solidarity within vulnerable communities.

The use of gradual coding increases the accuracy of categorising interrelated themes. A neat coding structure makes it easier for researchers to trace conceptual patterns that emerge consistently. Validating findings through literature comparison strengthens the accuracy of the interpretations made. Consistency in the review process helps avoid analytical bias that could compromise the quality of the research results. Meticulousness in recording the relationships between themes enriches the breadth of information that can be evaluated. The integration of findings from various references strengthens the clarity of the theoretical construct that is built. The reliability of the analysis process increases when all coding steps are carried out with the principle of disciplined methodological transparency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Support Networks for Vulnerable Communities in Socio-Economic Crises

Faced with the dynamics of uncertainty, both organisations and communities are required to develop effective survival mechanisms. As demonstrated by Arifin and Darmawan (2022), an adaptive approach is a key strategy for organisations to manage economic uncertainty, emphasising the need for flexibility and rapid response to external changes. This logic of adaptation for survival applies not only in the context of formal organisations but is also reflected in the organic mechanisms developed by social groups at the community level. In community sociology studies, vulnerable groups are often described as social entities that face various structural limitations, including limited access to public services, economic opportunities, and institutional support. These conditions place them in a position that is easily affected by sudden socio-economic changes, requiring survival mechanisms that draw on the internal strengths of the community itself. Amidst uncertainty and a lack of external protection, vulnerable communities develop patterns of interaction that are oriented towards cooperation and positive interdependence among their members. These patterns of relationship not only serve as a support for daily life, but also as a foundation for the emergence of naturally organised support networks. These networks then develop into social capital that enables communities to develop collective and sustainable survival strategies.

Support networks in vulnerable communities serve as crucial protection mechanisms in the face of socio-economic crises. The existence of these networks allows individuals to share resources, information, and emotional support (Bormasa, 2023). In difficult situations, individuals in vulnerable communities often cannot rely on outside help, so they must rely on each other. These support networks are built through strong interpersonal relationships, where trust and solidarity are the main foundations. When a crisis strikes, individuals are more likely to seek help from those closest to them, such as family, friends, and neighbours. This process creates closer bonds within the community, where members feel a responsibility to help one another. The social ties formed from these interactions strengthen the collective structure that supports the community's sustainability. This mutual assistance mechanism also forms a resilient system that encourages the community to withstand external pressures.

Vitrianingsih et al. (2022) in their research examined the administrative framework needed to manage health systems and respond to crises, emphasising the importance of clear structures, protocols, and coordination from authorities. However, the effectiveness of this formal framework is highly dependent on the existence and strength of social support networks at the grassroots level. This social support can take various forms, ranging from material support, such as food and shelter, to emotional support that helps reduce stress and anxiety. In many cases, individuals involved in these support networks experience improved mental well-being, as they feel they are not alone in facing challenges. In addition, these support networks also enable community members to share information about available resources, such as health services, social assistance, and skills training. In this way, individuals in vulnerable communities can help each other find solutions to the problems they face, which in turn increases their resilience (Hanafi, 2023). Access to accurate information expands the adaptive capacity of community members. Collaboration based on actual needs also strengthens the effectiveness of social responses in the face of changing conditions.

However, there are challenges faced by vulnerable communities in building effective support networks. One of the main challenges is social stigma, which often prevents individuals from seeking help. Some community members may feel ashamed or reluctant to ask for help for fear of being perceived as weak or incapable. This can reduce the effectiveness of support networks, as some individuals may feel alienated and unable to contribute to helping others (Achmad, 2023). Therefore, it is important for communities to create an inclusive and supportive environment where all members feel valued and accepted, regardless of their background or situation. Strengthening inclusive norms encourages more open and supportive social interactions. A stigma-free environment also increases trust among members so that support networks can function more effectively.

Limited resources are also an obstacle to the development of support networks. In crisis situations, resources such as food, shelter and healthcare are often in short supply. This lack of resources can trigger competition among community members, which can ultimately undermine the solidarity that has been built. Therefore, it is important to create fair and transparent distribution mechanisms so that all community members can benefit from the existing support network. In this way, support networks in vulnerable communities can function optimally during times of crisis (Simangunsong & Sihotang, 2023). Transparency in resource distribution strengthens the legitimacy of social structures

within communities. Fair mechanisms also maintain collective trust so that collaboration remains stable amid the pressures of crisis.

The development of clear distribution guidelines increases consistency in the distribution of aid when external pressures increase. Strengthening the organisational capacity of communities provides space for more orderly resource management. A structured distribution system reduces the potential for horizontal conflicts that can arise due to perceptions of inequality. Member participation in distribution oversight builds shared accountability that strengthens social cohesion. The sustainability of support networks is further ensured when the distribution process is conducted through the principle of information transparency. Community readiness in identifying the most vulnerable groups ensures that aid reaches its targets effectively. Aligning distribution flows with actual field needs creates a stronger foundation for coordination during times of crisis.

Collective Identity Strategies in Vulnerable Communities

The formation of a group's identity is inseparable from how that group is viewed by the surrounding community. Hardyansah et al. (2021) analysed how social perceptions and stigma create barriers to the realisation of an inclusive and equal society, highlighting the negative impact of labelling on certain groups. However, behind these often detrimental external perceptions, stigmatised communities often develop strong internal mechanisms for survival. The core mechanism is the formation of collective identity. In contemporary sociological studies, collective identity is seen as an important component that shapes the social resilience of communities that are vulnerable to socio-economic change. This identity does not emerge instantly, but is formed through historical processes, repeated interactions, and shared perceptions of the challenges faced by the group. In vulnerable communities, collective identity becomes the main foundation for interpreting daily life experiences, building internal solidarity, and developing patterns of adaptation to environmental pressures. This process creates space for community members to understand themselves not only as individuals, but as part of a broader social structure. Thus, collective identity becomes the starting point for various forms of social support, collaboration, and resistance to conditions that threaten the group's welfare.

When discussing collective identity strategies in vulnerable communities, it is important to consider how individuals form their identities in a broader social context. In many cases, collective identity is formed through shared experiences faced by the community, including challenges encountered during socio-economic crises (Qian & Xu, 2011). Community members tend to feel connected through narratives built on shared experiences, creating a strong sense of belonging. This collective identity provides individuals with additional strength to support and collaborate with one another in the face of adversity. This strengthening of belonging creates a more stable social structure for marginalised groups. A collectively formed identity allows communities to build a more solid orientation for action in the face of external pressures.

Collective identity strategies also involve strengthening the shared values embraced by community members. These values can include principles such as mutual respect, cooperation, and solidarity. When individuals feel that they share these values, they are more likely to engage in activities that support the welfare of the community. For example, in a crisis situation, individuals can organise fundraising activities or provide practical assistance to those in need. In this way, collective identity serves as a driver for collective action that can increase community resilience (Bakarbessy, 2024). These shared values reinforce the legitimacy of collective action in communities experiencing social pressure. Shared values also create a moral foundation that ensures the sustainability of support among members.

Findings on the crucial role of social support at the family level provide a basis for understanding the importance of the broader social climate. However, at the community and societal levels, challenges arise when collective identity is threatened by discrimination or social stigma. In some cases, vulnerable community members may face prejudice that makes them feel alienated from the wider society. This can reduce their confidence and motivation to contribute to social solidarity (Mustofa, 2023). Therefore, it is important to create an inclusive environment where all members feel valued and accepted. Activities related to strengthening collective identity, such as cultural celebrations or community events, can be effective ways to build solidarity among members. Efforts to eliminate stigma expand the space for social participation for vulnerable groups. These inclusion-based interventions also strengthen the psychosocial structures that support group cohesion.

These inspiring and motivating leadership principles are not limited to formal team or organisational environments, but have strong relevance in the context of community leadership, especially in building social resilience (Rojak & Khayru, 2022). In addition, the role of community leaders in building collective identity is also crucial. Leaders who are able to inspire and motivate community members to unite can create positive change. They can help create a shared vision that encourages active participation from all members (Sumitro et al., 2024). With an inclusive approach, leaders can ensure that every member's voice is heard and valued. This, in turn, can strengthen collective identity and encourage individuals to contribute to existing support networks. Responsive leadership creates a social climate that supports sustainable collective participation. This type of leadership also builds internal legitimacy, which strengthens members' level of trust in their community.

On the other hand, collective identity also serves as a tool for advocacy. When community members unite to fight for their rights and interests, they can be more effective in demanding necessary social change (Alfadhl et al., 2018). By identifying themselves as part of a larger group, individuals can overcome the challenges they face and raise awareness about issues affecting the community. This is an important step in creating long-term resilience and promoting social justice in a broader context. This collective advocacy strengthens the bargaining position of the community in the face of unequal social structures. A unified identity also becomes political capital that can drive institutional change.

Collective identity strategies in vulnerable communities are essential for supporting effective support networks. Collective identity helps individuals feel connected and motivated to contribute to the common good (McNamara et al., 2013). However, challenges such as social stigma and discrimination need to be addressed for solidarity to flourish. Further research is needed to explore how vulnerable communities can apply these collective identity strategies to increase their resilience in the face of socio-economic crises. In-depth empirical studies will help to understand the varying dynamics of identity among different vulnerable groups. This further analysis is also necessary to formulate more effective social interventions to strengthen community resilience.

CONCLUSIONS

The dynamics of social solidarity in vulnerable communities during socio-economic crises are greatly influenced by support networks and collective identity. Strong support networks enable individuals to help each other and share resources, thereby increasing community resilience. In addition, collective identity formed through shared experiences motivates members to contribute to collective welfare. However, challenges such as social stigma and resource constraints need to be overcome in order for social solidarity to flourish. Therefore, a deeper understanding of how vulnerable communities build social solidarity is essential for formulating more responsive and inclusive policies.

The implications of this study suggest that the development of policies that support social solidarity in vulnerable communities must take into account factors that influence support networks and collective identity. Policies designed to improve access to basic resources, such as food, health, and education, will help strengthen existing support networks. In addition, it is important to create an inclusive environment for all community members, where they feel valued and accepted. Thus, policies can be more effective in increasing community resilience during crises.

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that stakeholders, including the government and non-governmental organisations, collaborate with vulnerable communities to formulate programmes that support social solidarity. Activities that involve community members in decision-making will encourage active participation and strengthen ownership of the programmes being implemented. In addition, further research is needed to explore best practices in building social solidarity in various contexts, so that they can be widely implemented in efforts to improve community resilience.

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