

COMMUNITY LEARNING IN EMPOWERING HOUSEWIVES THROUGH HOME INDUSTRY IN CISAIT VILLAGE

Faiz Salam¹, Indra Sudrajat²

¹Department of Non-Formal Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Banten-Indonesia

²Department of Early Childhood Education Teacher Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Banten-Indonesia

email correspondence: 2221220004@untirta.ac.id , indra.sudrajat@untirta.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Empowering housewives through home industries in Cisait Village is a step towards improving the welfare of housewives. This research aims to understand the effects of community learning in empowering housewives through home industries in Cisait Village. The research method used is a case study using Participatory Action Research with a qualitative approach, involving interviews and observations. The research results show that community learning plays an important role in improving the skills and knowledge of housewives in managing home industries. Through training and mentoring, housewives can develop flagship products with high market value, such as snacks. Empowering housewives also has a positive impact on the local economy and increases the participation of housewives in decision-making at the village level. Overall, community learning in empowering housewives through home industries in Cisait Village contributes positively to improving the welfare of housewives and the local community. Continuous support from various parties is needed to ensure the sustainability of this program and promote inclusive and sustainable local economic growth.

Keywords: *Empowerment of Housewives; Home Industries; Welfare*

INTRODUCTION

The issue of women's empowerment has become an important thing in the sustainable development agenda (Sustainable Development Goals). One of the targets of sustainable development is to achieve gender equality and empower all women. Gender equality aims to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls. In development, women have significant potential to determine the direction of success. They have equal rights to access, participate, and control development, (Munasaroh, 2022).

Presidential Instruction (INPRES) Number 9 of 2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) emphasizes the importance of national development that pays attention to a gender perspective. One of the efforts to achieve this is to encourage women's empowerment. The program, called 'End Barriers to Economic Justice', is one of the steps to end economic inequality and realize economic justice for women. (Alfirdaus, 2022). In a gender perspective, there is an emphasis on equality of position and opportunity between men and women.

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Therefore, women are expected to have equal access to resources. Women's economic empowerment is considered important because it can improve welfare, and women have great potential in managing the household economy. (Komalasari & Sitorus, 2021).

In assembling the concept of women's empowerment, there are three important aspects: first, creating a supportive environment to develop women's potential; second, strengthening women's social capital to improve their quality of life; Third, preventing and protecting women and eliminating injustice and marginalization in various aspects of life. (Kuswanti, 2022). According to Swift & Levin, empowerment is described as an attempt to shift power through restructuring social structures. In this approach, power is not seen as the dominance of one sex over another, but as a power relationship in which men and women are given equal opportunities in decision-making. Women's empowerment involves building capacity for participation, monitoring, and decision-making, with the aim of achieving gender balance in economic development and family well-being. This means providing a balanced role for men and women in joint efforts to build and improve the economy and family welfare. (Dade, 2020).

In community development, the concept involves the integration of community potential and efforts to improve economic conditions. The home industry is a form of women's economic empowerment that contributes to the development of women's economic potential and independence. Home industry involves families or family members in carrying out economic activities at home, often by involving several people from around where they live as employees. The existence of the home industry can create new jobs and develop women's potential as a driver of economic growth that has an impact on family welfare. (Sukarnoto et al., 2024).

In the current era of globalization, with rapid technological advancements, it is important to keep pace with the growth and improvement of the quality of Human Resources (HR). Now, HR is not only oriented towards finding a job, but rather on how these HR can create their own jobs. In creating jobs, it is important to pay attention to market needs, have skills in certain business fields, and understand the economic capabilities of the surrounding community. Currently, more and more people are involved in various forms of entrepreneurship in various regions, which is an important need for human resources in Indonesia. (Andanika et al., 2020).

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, the empowerment of village communities is explained in Article 1 number 8, which states that village development aims to improve the quality of life and life so that village communities achieve maximum welfare. Then, in Article 1 number 12, village community empowerment is defined as an effort to increase their independence and welfare by increasing knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors, awareness, and utilizing resources in accordance with the priority needs of the village community. (Erowati, 2021).

The Directorate General of Community and Village Empowerment (Ditjen PMD) of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has developed the concept of a village database, which includes the collection of Basic Family Data, Village Potential, and Village Development. Each village is expected to collect various forms related to village regulations every year. Every year, it is expected that there will be registration of around 78 thousand villages throughout Indonesia. Therefore, the more reports received from villages in Indonesia, especially related to the level of community welfare, the more important it is for community empowerment. (Laoli, 2022).

One of the villages that the author thinks is interesting to study is Cisait Village. This village is located in the western part of Kragilan District, Serang Regency, Banten Province, Indonesia. This village is bordered by Kaserangan Village to the north, Silebu and Pematang to the south, Walantaka District to the west, and Sentul Village to the east. Located at an altitude of 37 meters above sea level, Cisait Village has an area of 355.18 Ha or 3.55 km² from the total area of Kragilan District which is 36.33 km². Land use in this village includes settlements and housing (95 Ha), offices (0.25 Ha), agriculture (239 Ha), livestock (5 Ha), public facilities (5.5 Ha), and others (10 Ha). The current head of Cisait Village is Ajurum, who served from 2007 to 2025 in three terms. (Cisait Village, 2021)

Referring to the village website, there are 10,703 total residents in this village, of which 5487 are male, the remaining 5116 are female. The village, which is still in the area of Serang Regency, Banten, is still facing the

problem of high poverty. Where according to the unemployment rate in August 2023, Serang Regency obtained a figure of 9.94%, down from 10.61% in 2022. The poverty rate also decreased from 4.96% in 2022 to 4.85% in 2023. Despite the decline, further efforts are still needed to overcome poverty, especially by maximizing the role of housewives. Economic empowerment through skills training and small business support can be a solution to increase family income and welfare. (Cisait Village, 2021)

In order to carry out the order of Village Community Empowerment according to Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, the author is interested in holding a Community Learning program in the Empowerment of Housewives through Home Industry in Cisait Village. This program aims to improve the skills and income of housewives, so that they can contribute to reducing the poverty level in the village.

According to the author's initial study, in Cisait Village there is a pastry home industry. However, several obstacles were found that hindered the development of this industry. These obstacles include the lack of skills and knowledge of housewives in managing their businesses, limited access to business capital, and the lack of marketing networks to reach a wider market. Then, inconsistent product quality and lack of innovation in product variety are also challenges. Therefore, the author wants to hold an empowerment program that includes skills training, access to capital, and marketing strategies, which is expected so that the pastry home industry in Cisait Village can develop better and contribute to improving the welfare of the village community.

Through skills training such as handicrafts, culinary, and making local products, housewives are expected to start a sustainable home-based business. The program will also provide access to business capital, product marketing, and business networking. In this way, it is hoped that housewives can play a role in supporting the family economy, and help in the overall development of the village economy. This effort is expected to bring positive changes and improve the welfare of the people of Cisait Village.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method which is equipped with interviews and observations. Participatory Action (PAR) research, quoted from Putrie et al. (2023), is a research approach that involves the active participation of participants in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating actions to achieve social change. PAR emphasizes the active participation of the community, especially housewives, in the entire research process. The planning stage begins with focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews to identify needs, potentials, and obstacles in developing the pastry home industry. The results of the FGD and interviews will be used to design a training program that covers production, marketing, and business management skills

The implementation stage involves intensive training and mentoring and provides access to business capital. Observations were made during the training and mentoring to directly monitor the development of participants' skills and efforts. Periodic evaluations will be conducted to assess progress and identify obstacles, followed by reflection with trainees to measure the impact of the program on family well-being. Follow-up includes the development of marketing networks and product quality improvement through continuous training. Using the PAR method equipped with interviews and observations, this study aims not only to observe but also to empower housewives in Cisait Village, bring positive changes and improve the welfare of the village community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the study using the Participatory Action Research method equipped with interviews and observations, several points of community learning results in the empowerment of housewives through home industry in Cisait Village were found, which consisted of several stages, including:

1. Identify Needs and Potential

In the preparation stage of this program, in-depth interviews are conducted to understand the needs and potential of the community. Through direct interaction with housewives, especially those interested in the pastry home industry, various challenges and desires are revealed. One of the problems that often arises is the lack of technical skills in pastry making. For example, Ibu Siti revealed, "I want to make pastries, but I don't know how to make them delicious."

His comments reflect the need for adequate training in production skills. It should be emphasized that by improving production skills, housewives can produce high-quality products, increasing the competitiveness of their products in the local and regional markets. Then, access to capital is the main obstacle, as stated by Mrs. Ani, that "Capital is the main problem. I don't have enough money to buy raw materials." This shows the importance of financial assistance or affordable loan schemes. Financial support can help housewives to purchase the necessary equipment and raw materials to start or grow their business.

Challenges in marketing were also identified, as expressed by Ibu Dewi, "I have difficulty selling pastry products because I don't know how to market them well." This emphasizes the need for training in effective marketing strategies. By improving their knowledge and skills in marketing, housewives can be more effective in marketing their products, reaching more customers, and increasing sales.

From these results, the importance of training programs that include production skills, access to capital, and marketing strategies to empower housewives in the pastry home industry in Cisait Village can be underlined. The existence of these needs and problems, the next step can be to design an effective program to support their business development and improve the welfare of the village community.

2. Training and Mentoring

At this stage, the goal is to conduct training to improve the technical and managerial skills of housewives in running a pastry home industry business.

Method

- Intensive training:
 - a. Pastry making technique
 - b. Attractive packaging
 - c. Marketing strategy
 - d. Small business financial management
- Assistance:
 - a. Ensure the adoption of new skills in the business
 - b. Observation and monitoring of progress

Activity Schedule:

Day	Topic	Activities
1	Introduction and motivation	Opening and welcome Explain the purpose and benefits of the training Motivation and icebreaking
2	Pastry making technique	Pastry making demonstration Pastry making practice

		Discussion and Q&A
3	Attractive packaging	Effective packaging techniques Packaging design and selection Pastry packaging practices
4	Marketing strategy	Market analysis and target customers Pricing strategy Promotion and sales techniques
5	Small business financial management	Financial records Profit and loss calculation Preparation of business capital
6	Assistance and evaluation	Visits to home businesses Observation and monitoring of progress Discussion and evaluation Preparation of follow-up plans

Through intensive training that includes pastry making techniques, attractive packaging, marketing strategies, and small business financial management, as well as mentoring that ensures the application of new skills in business, significant development has occurred. The structured schedule of activities allows participants to gain an in-depth understanding and hands-on practice in every aspect of business.

Observations during the training showed an improvement in the quality of pastry products and attractive packaging capabilities. The participating mothers were also able to implement effective marketing strategies to increase sales of their products. The training succeeded in improving the ability of participants to manage business finances properly and efficiently. It can be reflected that this training and mentoring has a positive impact in increasing the economic independence of housewives and improving the welfare of the Cisait Village community as a whole.

3. Improving Skills and Effort

After the training and mentoring, follow-up observations and post-training interviews showed that most of the participants, especially the women of Cisait Village, succeeded in starting or increasing their pastry business. Mothers report significant improvements in product quality and sales.

A participant named Ibu Ani stated, "After participating in the training, I became more confident in making pastries, and this is reflected in my increased sales."

This indicates that the training has succeeded in improving the technical skills of participants in pastry production. In addition, participants also reported improvements in marketing strategies, as one of Irma's mothers revealed, "I started using social media to promote my products, and the results were very satisfying. I now have new customers from outside the village." It shows that participants have been able to effectively implement the marketing strategies taught during the training.

Some participants have even started selling their products to a wider market through social media and cooperation with local stores. A participant named Ibu Dewi stated, "I am now working with a store in a neighboring city to sell my products, and this helps increase my sales significantly."

Cooperation with local stores is one of the effective strategies implemented by participants to reach a wider market. This shows that the training not only improves technical skills, but also helps participants in understanding effective marketing and distribution strategies.

It can be understood that the results of post-training observations and interviews confirm that the training and mentoring program has succeeded in having a positive impact on improving the skills and businesses of housewives in Cisait Village. The success of participants in starting or upgrading their pastry business and increasing product sales is a clear proof of the effectiveness of this program in empowering local communities economically.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study using the Participatory Action Research method showed that the housewife empowerment program through the pastry home industry in Cisait Village was successful. Identification of community needs reveals challenges in technical skills, access to capital, and marketing strategies. Through intensive training and mentoring, participants successfully improve their production, marketing, and financial management skills. Post-training, there was a significant improvement in product quality, sales, and the implementation of effective marketing strategies. The impact can be seen in increasing the income and economic independence of housewives, as well as improving the quality of life of families. This program reflects the effectiveness in empowering the local community economically and socially in Cisait Village.

4. Economic and Social Impact

The results of the impact evaluation show that economic empowerment through home industry, especially in pastry production, has made a significant positive contribution to the welfare of families in Cisait Village. The training provided succeeded in improving the technical and managerial skills of the participants, as revealed by one of the participants named Mrs. Novi explained that, "Previously, I did not have enough technical skills to make good quality pastries. But now, after taking the training, I feel more confident and able to make pastries that appeal to my customers."

Other mothers also reported an improvement in managerial skills, such as marketing strategies and business financial management. A participant named Mrs. Novi stated that, "The training not only helped me improve the quality of my products, but also gave me a better understanding of how to market my products effectively. Now, I can manage my business finances better, which can later increase my family's income."

The impact of this economic empowerment is not only limited to increasing income, confidence and independence are also increasing. One participant revealed, "Previously, I felt that I had no other choice but to rely on my husband for income. But now, with this home-based business, I feel more independent and have control over our financial lives."

On the other hand, the evaluation also reflects the improvement of the family's quality of life. A participant named Mrs. Rita, said that "This knowledge will increase my income by trying to sell these cookies and make our family able to continue to live, children's allowance can increase, and household needs are gradually helped."

From there, it can be seen that economic empowerment through the pastry home industry has had a significant impact on improving family welfare, both in terms of economy and social. The success of participants in improving their skills and income, as well as increasing their confidence and independence, is a clear proof of the effectiveness of this program in empowering the people of Cisait Village.

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