

From Housewife to Entrepreneur through Homemade Accessories: Challenges and Opportunities in Pandemic

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Abstract. The Covid-19 pandemic has an impact on increasing activity in the home. Changes in communication patterns and routines provide many new perspectives, especially for homemakers. The Family Welfare Program Association in the Karanganyar area, Central Java, Indonesia, mostly non-productive housewives, complained about the decline in family income due to changing activities. The increasing needs of the family have made this group want to develop their potential and increase their family income through training in making various crafts, in the form of patchwork-based accessories. This activity is carried out through community development practices, consisting of forming a team, formulating goals, analyzing needs, determining priority problem solutions, implementing, mentoring, and reviewing and evaluating. The activity results are in the form of various women's accessories and are marketed online through various kinds of social media. In the short term, this activity is intended so that all partners experience an increase in welfare. In the long term, it is hoped that this activity can initiate home industry groups in the surrounding area and further enhance Karanganyar's identity as a producer of accessories from used materials with aesthetics to improve skills in entrepreneurial accessories management and succeed in marketing.

Keywords: *Pandemic, entrepreneur, housewives, homemade art*

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the pandemic due to the Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) attack has spread throughout the world. Indonesia has confirmed its first case of this virus infection in the early first trimester of 2020, and the infection has continued. The government carried out various countermeasures to reduce the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in various sectors. The economic sector has experienced a severe impact due to the coronavirus pandemic. Restrictions on community activities affect business activities, which in turn have an impact on the national economy. The Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics has stated that Indonesia's economic growth in the second quarter of 2020 experienced minus 5.32 percent with an Open Unemployment Rate of 7.07 percent [1]. Concerning Indonesia's labor situation, this crisis impacts the number of unemployed and the post-crisis labor market. Limited economic activity causes many business actors to reduce losses efficiently; thus, many workers are laid off or even experience layoffs.

Women's activities, especially housewives in a pandemic is interesting to study for some reasons: (1) housewives have the potential to become stressed during a pandemic; (2) under normal conditions, the mental condition of housewives tends to be more prone to depression, feeling isolated, less time for themselves, especially during a pandemic; (3) many families have lost their jobs, so housewives need to think about other promising job opportunities, but still have a flexible time.

The results of a survey among a group of housewives in the Karanganyar area, Central Java, Indonesia indicate that some households experienced economic shocks due to the pandemic because the head of the household lost his job, and some had reduced income due to the quiet market. This incident makes this group of housewives worried because most of them are housewives who do not work and belong to households with a weak economy. The increasing needs of families during a pandemic make them want to develop their potential while increasing family income. The Community Service Team at Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta, Central Java, further facilitated this difficulty through training in making various crafts, in the form of patchwork-based accessories.

In addition to utilizing cloth waste, which is usually considered useless, this activity allows mothers to be creative and increase family income without reducing their families' time. Moreover, many of them have a relatively low level of education, so it is not easy to compete at work. Initial constraints faced were limited capital, tools, and skills facilitated by the Community Service Team of Sebelas Maret University by providing training, marketing assistance, and assistance with starting tools and materials. This activity aims to empower all partners to become creative, innovative, and productive mothers to produce various accessories that are valuable and competitive. In the short term, this activity aims to make all partners experience an increase in welfare. In the long term, this activity can further initiate home industry groups in the surrounding area and further enhance Karanganyar's identity as a producer of the anesthetic accessories industry from used materials, improve skills in entrepreneurial accessories management for partners, and create excellent and productive marketing strategies and practices.

Analysis of Partner Problems

For women who do not work or are purely housewives, their income only relies on their husbands. Meanwhile, the daily needs for education, health, and others are certainly not small. Therefore, it is necessary to hold entrepreneurial skills training to increase family income, which can be done at home to pay attention to the family still. Making handicraft accessories from patchwork materials and cheap materials easy to obtain also makes it easy to do it at home. Analysis of partner problems can be summarized as follows:

1. Motivation to do business is high but lack of capital; the solution is entrepreneurship with raw materials that are cheap but easy to find, for example, patchwork
2. Lack of entrepreneurial skills both in creating accessories products, as well as management in managing accessories production and marketing
3. The basics of marketing knowledge are limited; the solutions are assistance for product packaging and marketing methods, such as Instagram or Facebook.

Solutions to Partner Problems

The summary of solutions to problems faced by partners can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Problems and solutions for community service partners

No	Problems	Solutions
1	Less entrepreneurial capital	Utilization of patchwork waste
2	Skills lacking	Skills training to make accessories from patchwork, cobblestones, and wire
3	Lack of mastery in entrepreneurial management and marketing	Entrepreneurial skills training and management of accessories product management and marketing
4	They have not known yet where to market and using what market platform.	Introduction of online shops through social media such as Instagram and Facebook

Purpose of the study

1. To initiate home entrepreneurship that housewives can do during a pandemic through training in making various accessories from used materials.
2. To investigate the motivation, business opportunities, constraints, and alternative solutions to problems of housewives' experience while making and marketing accessories products.



METHOD

This activity is carried out through community development practices, consisting of forming a team, formulating goals, analyzing needs, determining priority problem solutions, implementing, mentoring, and reviewing and evaluating[2].

Participants

The participants are the Family Welfare Program Association in the Karanganyar area, Central Java, Indonesia, consist of 62 women, mostly non-productive housewives, who complained about the decline in family income due to changing activities. Based on the age range, participants are dominated by ages 25-45 years and based on their employment status, 12.90% already have a permanent job, 22.58% are unemployed, and 64.52% are temporary workers. Meanwhile, based on the family's economic level, it was found that 17.74% was in the weak economic category, and 40.32% was in a moderate economy.

Procedures

The workflow for this community service activity adapts the steps of "Community development identification of problems with service partners, community service objectives are formulated, then needs analysis is carried out based on market conditions and needs. The priority of the problem to be carried out refers to the partners' conditions and the available market. Furthermore, at the implementation stage, socialization, training, and assistance are carried out to partners. Evaluation of the implementation of activities is carried out after partners complete training and make products and market them.

Data Analysis

Community service activities are systematically documented, and the data obtained is analyzed descriptively to get an overview of the distribution of the partners, according to the motivation, business opportunities, and constraints.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Training in entrepreneurial skills for making handicraft accessories from patchwork was carried out in July 2020. Partners were very enthusiastic during the training because it was something new that had never been obtained. They showed perseverance and enthusiasm to make handicrafts during the training and did not hesitate to ask questions if something was not understood. Besides providing training in craftsmanship skills, women are also equipped with management skills to record capital and sales and profits to be obtained.

Some documentation of the activities and examples of the resulting products are presented below:



Figure 1. Training activities for making various handicrafts from patchwork



Figure 2. Several examples of the resulting work

Several participants have marketed the products they made through digital marketing platforms and several well-known e-commerce in Indonesia. From 62 participants, it was found that 8 of them had opened an online shop to market their products. The images below show some examples of products that are traded online:

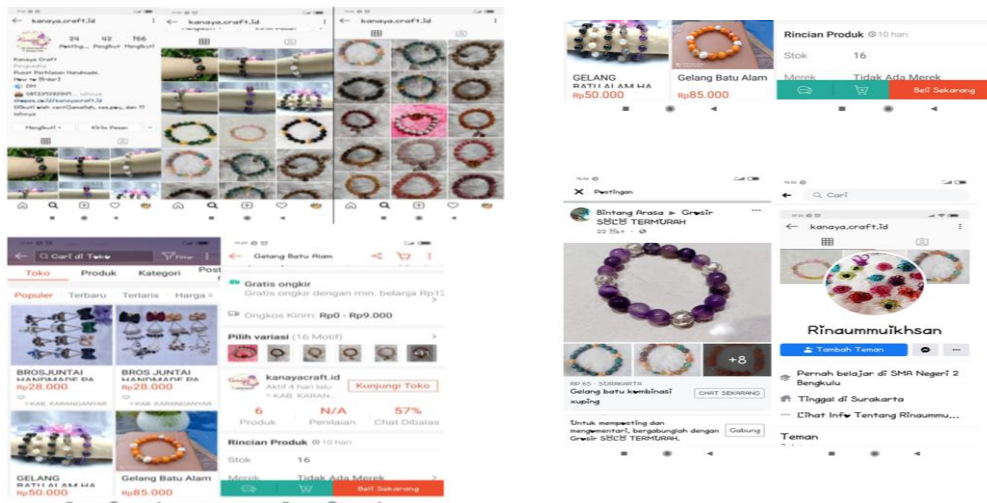


Figure 3. Handicraft products traded on e-commerce

In addition to providing training, the service team also conducted surveys and interviews with participants to obtain data regarding motivation for entrepreneurship, business opportunities (social network and marketing skills) that participants had, and any constraints they experienced or were concerned about. The data is recorded below:

Table 1. Partner description based on motivation, business opportunities, and obstacles

No	Parameter		Category	
1	Motivation	51% high	36% medium	13% low
2	Business opportunity (social network and marketing skills)	23% high	45% medium	19% low
3	Constraints	53 % about IT skills	23% about the time	24% about ideas and creativity



Table 1 above shows that although most of the participants had high enough motivation to start becoming entrepreneurs when faced with demands for mastery of social network and marketing skills, it turned out that many participants felt they had limitations. Further interviews indicated participants' concerns regarding time management to play housewives' and entrepreneurs' roles. Some felt that they were not creative in producing ideas for making innovative and exciting products. The choice to make a business field is sometimes considered an unsafe career choice because of the working conditions marked by uncertainty, obstacles, unsuccessfulness, and stress associated with the business's initiation [3]. However, it is explained that a person's desire to obtain a better social identity is one of the main factors influencing entrepreneurial motivation formation [4]. Presumably, this is what happened to the group of housewives who were partners of this service. The compelling conditions eventually made those who initially could not have to try to master the manufacture products until, finally, they could produce merchandise that could be sold to increase family income.

The fear of these housewives is very reasonable because changing the mindset from housewives to becoming entrepreneurs will undoubtedly have many positive or negative impacts. Motivation to participate contributes to economic income in the family plays a crucial role. The psychological impact of a pandemic is heavily for housewives. In addition to carrying out their daily activities, they must escort their children in independent online learning, especially when the household head experiences a reduction in income [5]. If traced, participants who opened online stores in e-commerce were on average housewives whose husbands lost their jobs due to the pandemic. This reality certainly gives them a more decisive business impetus. Seeing their potential, women can play an essential role in the massive entrepreneurial phenomenon [6]. The interviews indicated that the main concern faced by partners was the emergence of conflicts between work and family as a result of the distribution of time as housewives. This problem seems to be a common problem in almost all women who are starting their business [7].

Further investigation shows the limited skills possessed by partners so that this service will then be directed at: (1) intensification of training related to IT skills, (2) introduction of various types of social media that can be used to create online stores, and (3) introduction to book sources, websites and sharing experiences with other successful entrepreneurs. These skills are essential and must be mastered because most of the processes are always related to finding ideas and information [8]. Through this skill improvement, partners are expected to become more capable and have a strategy to understand product manufacturing and produce products that can compete in the market so that the main goal of increasing family income can be achieved, both during a pandemic or not.

CONCLUSION

In the long term, it is hoped that this activity can initiate home industry groups in the surrounding area and further enhance Karanganyar's identity as a producer of accessories from used materials with aesthetics to improve entrepreneurial accessories management skills and succeed in marketing.

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