



EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP COOPERATIVES FOR WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Women's cooperatives are one way to strengthen a person's capacity and possibilities for economic empowerment and involvement in more inclusive financial development. as a venue for enhancing the position of women both nationally and in the family economy. The purpose of this study is to get insight into the role that women's cooperatives play in social entrepreneurship initiatives for women. This paper examines the socio-cultural behavior of women engaged in the social entrepreneur field where they become part of the membership of a women's cooperative. The findings from the research study in this paper are that women have a culture that is more consistent, honest, and transparent in managing their social entrepreneurship, but is weak in terms of sustainability. Practical implications, this paper can provide input for policymakers regarding the development of women's potential in the field of social entrepreneurship. This research is still very rare because not all women are capable of engaging in social entrepreneurship. The value obtained in this research is the empowerment of women in the field of social entrepreneurship. This program prioritizes women's ability to identify problems as a source of socio-economic empowerment.

Keywords: social entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, empowerment

INTRODUCTION

Women's cooperatives can be categorized as microfinance institutions which have been proven to be an important tool in fostering financial inclusion (Ibrahim, Ahmed, & Minai, 2018). It is said this because women have easy access to financial products and services that suit women's needs. The aim is to reduce poverty and increase empowerment for women. By 2022, according to data from the Financial Services Authority (OJK), the bank ownership ratio in Indonesia has reached 76.1%. This ratio increased from 40.3% when compared to 2014. To increase financial institutions being accessible to women is by providing easy access to financial products and services, increasing financial literacy among women and regulations in the form of convenience for women as a form of support. in the financial inclusion system.

In dealing with diverse and complex social systems, management of financial systems, socio-technical systems, regional systems, as well as the ability to deal with global systems that tend to be uncertain requires conceptual and methodological tools (Burns & Devillé, 2017). And in (Bhukuth, Roumane, & Terrany, 2018), cooperatives can alleviate poverty in developing countries. In general, BPS data (2022) states that women in Indonesia work in the informal sector, namely 72.59% in 2022. The informal sector that absorbs the most female workers is the trade, hotel and restaurant sector (36.20%), agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors (24.38%), and other service sectors (10.48%). Meanwhile, women work in the formal sector, namely 27.41% in 2022. The formal sector that absorbs the most female workers is the processing industry sector (17.27%), the trade, hotel and restaurant sectors (7.13%), as well as other service sectors (2.92%). Because there are so many women who work in the informal sector, of course it can be seen that not many women have special skills so they are placed in informal areas. Women's cooperatives can play a role in improving women's ability to obtain a safe place of business and be able to encourage empowerment.

The right forum is needed to accommodate and organize women to be more empowered economically, socially and culturally. A forum that focuses on social issues. This forum is called a women's cooperative. Women's cooperatives have characteristics in the social entrepreneurship category, which aims and focuses on solving social problems such as poverty, inequality, environmental problems. Women's cooperatives are able to empower women to develop their economic potential so that their welfare increases. Women in carrying out social entrepreneurship activities require awareness of how important it is to play an active role in social entrepreneurship such as women's cooperatives. Providing financial support to women's cooperatives so that women become social entrepreneurs so that their businesses can develop. Through women's cooperatives, they receive skills training in certain fields that are in high demand, such as sewing, cooking or other informal professions. Apart from that, there is a business mentoring program so that every woman has her own business. With women's cooperatives, they can access capital programs so that the businesses they are interested in can operate well. Apart from that, the marketing program for all products produced from the results of his business is of interest to many people.

Social entrepreneurship is a business activity that originates from social problems, problems in society can arise as a result of inequality in economic development and limited government capacity. The role of various parties such as the academic world, practitioners and clergy is needed to increase involvement in finding solutions to social problems in society (Sofia, 2017). The definition of entrepreneurship in Tenrinippi, in the Decree of the Minister of Cooperatives and Small Entrepreneur Development Number 961/ KEP/M/ work, technology and new products by increasing efficiency in order to provide better service and/or obtain greater profits (Tenrinippi, 2019). Meanwhile, DBS Foundation provides an explanation of social entrepreneurship as an opportunity to form a business that can provide benefits for community empowerment. In this social business, what is obtained is not just material profit or customer satisfaction, but the results focus on a good impact on society.

Social entrepreneurship can be encouraged through the academic community in educational activities oriented towards the development of social entrepreneurship. As a young generation, students in educational environments can be trained to become agents of change who can provide socio-economic change by providing new opportunities for society (Hasanah, 2019). Meanwhile, research findings among young people show indicators of moral obligation, entrepreneurial self-efficacy and social support as determining factors for social entrepreneurial intentions (Jatiningrum, S, Utami, Norawati, & Silvany, 2021). To become a social entrepreneur requires strong determination and enthusiasm as offered in the book *Dare to Become a Social Entrepreneur*. To become a social entrepreneur, you must be able to create major structural changes for society, able to influence many people to change the way of life in society (Haryanti, Hati, Wirastuti, & Susanto, 2016). Meanwhile, women's cooperatives based on community organizations have good survival capabilities, even though there is no state legality (Suharnanik and Yuliarini, 2022). Of course, this is interesting research to test and find out whether the values contained in women's cooperatives fall into the category of social entrepreneurship. Of course, this research study is needed so that women's activities can be more progressive and make women more independent in society.

Social Enterprise for Woman Cooperative

One of the aims of this book research is to develop criteria and definitions that reflect the

characteristics of social enterprise in women's cooperatives. In (Haryanti et al., 2016), there are five criteria for building a social entrepreneurship organization, including the following:

1. **Social Mission**, Cooperatives are included in the category that has a very high social mission. Because the mission of establishing this women's cooperative is to overcome poverty and increase the role of women in developing their potential in the world of entrepreneurship. The criteria for a women's cooperative must have a social mission, namely solving social problems. It can be said that this is "the reason criteria and purpose to live" or the motivation for establishing and the goal for a women's cooperative to empower women.

2. **Empowerment**, women's cooperatives also have a very high category. Socially and culturally, women have social problems that hinder them in defining difficulties and awareness in solving their own problems. This is a matter of empowerment, where women are involved in dealing with the problem, such as providing the hook, not the fish. The empowerment aspect in women's cooperatives is what differentiates them from others. Social entrepreneurs in women's cooperatives teach how to fish or catch fish so that in the future people can get their own fish, not give fish. The element of empowerment does not only lie in its social mission targets, but can also be carried out as part of the social and business activity process of a women's cooperative.

3. **Ethically Business**, cooperatives are categorized as having moderate ethics. Because ethically, there are many categories that cannot be fulfilled in running a women's cooperative, such as accountability and transparency. Because the recording still does not comply with accounting rules and there is still intervention in determining the use of incoming cash. Meanwhile, transparency is still far from the principles of openness and clarity in providing information to members.

4. In terms of **Social Impact**, women's cooperatives have a medium category. In terms of results, women's cooperative activities have not yet received a surplus/profit because they are still unable to meet their operational costs safely, sometimes even minus so they cannot be used for investment funds for the development of these activities.

5. **Sustainability**, women's cooperatives are still far from being in the appropriate category for elements of organizational sustainability and financial sustainability because

the surplus results each year are always zeroed out for distribution of remaining business results. The principle of sustainability is still not part of the management used, so there is no thought about organizational regeneration. The organization's management is also stagnant without any changes because they are considered voluntary with salaries that have not been regulated professionally.

Researchers conducted interviews with 11 social enterprise practitioners as sources who work as social enterprise practitioners. All qualitative data results obtained during the interviews were analyzed through discussions among social entrepreneurship researchers. Overall, the activities of the Women's Cooperative in Perum Sengkaling, Malang Regency are Social Entrepreneurship activities, but they still need support for improvements from several elements in the social entrepreneurship criteria, such as in terms of Organizational Sustainability, social impact and business ethics. Apart from that, support from community organizations is not optimal. This is needed for assistance in building a systematic and structured management development strategy.

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