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FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AS AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP HOME BUSINESS FOR RURAL'S WOMEN IN SEMARANG-INDONESIA

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Abstract

Rural's women home business is very important considering that women are often the saviors of the family economy. This study aims to describe functional literacy as an effort to develop home business for rural's women. The research method uses qualitative, in women's study groups.

Data collection uses in this study consists of documentation, observation, and in-depth interviews. Qualitative descriptive method consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The description of the results in this study shows functional literacy in learning groups can improve basic literacy and practical skills as an entrepreneurial development. The representation of women entrepreneurs is still relatively low which can be attributed to factors such as low level of education, lack of capital, and cultural. The development of effective home business is carried out continuously and simultaneously through functional literacy which has implications for improving the economy and family welfare. The application of functional literacy is to develop a woman's home business, so it will build a potential business center such as food stalls, various handicrafts, and the utilization of natural potential around. The development of women's home business in rural areas has become more prosperous and has a better livelihood. Home business Development has been conducted with various activities ranging from functional literacy activities to various skills required by poor women in rural areas.

Keywords

Functional Literacy, Home Business, Rural's Women

1. Introduction

The condition and position of women in rural areas are still far behind when compared to men in various aspects of life, including social, political, economic, educational and cultural (Kimani & Donald: 2010: 59). The above phenomenon shows that women are still marginalized so that the issue of women's empowerment has a wide range of fields. Very important literation of women and girls in development of health, social, and development in the world (Callister, 2007). One of the interesting areas to be studied is the economic empowerment of women residing in rural areas. The poverty of women in rural areas takes root in injustice or discriminatory acts in accessing resources, both economic and in other forms. The cause of poverty is also highly dependent on the form of poverty experienced by women. Poverty in women also occurs due to cultural factors that curb women and political decisions that are not impartial to women. Therefore, if we understand the problem of poverty, then we can understand the problems of poverty experienced by women and find the root of poverty. Lack of research that analyzes women's home business in ethnic groups, or studies that recognize the complex

social, cultural and religious diversity in the region and do not pay attention to specific regional experiences (Bastian, Sidani, & El Amine, 2018).

In Indonesia the presence of women who are larger than men makes empowerment approach as a strategy that sees women not only as development burden but also potential that must be utilized to support the development process. The empowerment strategies are not only meant to create women superior than men, but also identifies power not as one dominance over another, but rather in the capacity of women to increase internal independence and strength. Furthermore, Darwin (2005) argues that those fought for women's empowerment are the fulfillment of their right to make choices in life and influence the direction of change through the ability to exercise control over important material and nonmaterial resources.

The empowerment of rural women in the economic field is one indicator for increasing welfare. According to Dreze and Sen (1995), there are several ways to increase women's welfare, such as high education level, right of ownership, free to work anywhere and have independent income. The empowerment approach seeks to build a better culture and understanding, that women can be empowered, but also able to complete work related to their capacity as women (Goyal & Parkash, 2011). Women as human resources still need ways to improve their empowerment. The empowerment approach seeks to build a better culture and understanding, that women can be empowered, but also able to complete work related to their capacity as women. The data shows that women in various fields are still far behind in the development process. Indicators that show improvement in women's productivity are more positive and advanced attitudes, increased life skills, and produce work in the form of goods or services for their own, family and society. While the indicator that shows the reduction of female productivity is the high number of woman population which have low literacy.

Based on the data about basic literacy, the number of women with low literacy is higher than men. It is an evidence that the issue of women's empowerment in the field of economic still need attention. The problem of low education will affect the quality of life and it will give impact not only for women, but it also can cause a family setback. Therefore, functional literacy is expected to provide direct learning activities of reading, writing, arithmetic, listening, and speaking that are integrated with skills. In this functional literacy learning, women is not only learn to know the letters but also get life skills. Some knowledge of basic skills and additional knowledge of the business in the form of management, production process, and marketing are

given to the learners according to the potential of each group as the development of entrepreneur for the rural women. Literacy is set-up in line with poverty alleviation programs to be more systematic and sustainable using life skills (Suryadi, 2009).

Government of Indonesia has created functional literacy programs in line with poverty alleviation programs. Functional literacy is a program to improve the empowerment of illiterate people aged 15 years and over through the improvement of knowledge, attitude, skills, and strive independently (Direktorat Pendidikan Masyarakat, 2009). In this program, women are given various skills to develop their life skills and experience. By following clear and measurable standards of literacy, this can provide benefits to community's productivity and it also can empower women in rural area (Suryadi, 2009). However, the facts shows that rural women are still difficult to get out of ignorance, poverty, under-development, and helplessness. Therefore, every women who obtain functional literacy need to have the opportunity to maintain and develop their ability in improving their quality of life.

In the process of learning activities, the development of women entrepreneurs in rural areas emphasizes skills which appropriate to their business, interests and potentials. Functional literacy using participative learning method is used as a learning model for eradicating and strengthening rural women's literacy by combining the main content of reading, writing, and arithmetic with functional skills materials which based on interests, needs and market opportunities. The strategy for developing women entrepreneur include recognize the potential of the environment and exploit self-potential, so that it can be used to improve the economics condition. Based on the above matters, the research is guided by the following research objectives:

- How is the implementation of functional literacy in learning groups in rural area?,
- How is the development of women home business in rural area through functional literacy?
- What are the impacts of developing home business for rural women through functional literacy?.

2. Methods

Qualitative descriptive research method is used to analyzes the data. Data was taken from primary and secondary sources. The subjects of the study were the functional literacy learning

group which all of them were women in Semarang district, Central Java province. The primary data was include documentation, observation, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The secondary data relates to the data about the number of people studying and the previous research related to the topics. The technique used in this research is snowball method. Through this techniques, the researchers can get enough data from hard-to-reach respondents. It is a convenience research method to collect data because respondents can help to collect data from their acquaintances. Since then, it has been used by many scholars and researchers in the field of sociology (Farquharson, 2007); literacy education (Vlieghe *et al*, 2014; Gao et al, 2012); so forth so on. Triangulation is used to ensure the validity of data sources. Interactive analysis model is used to analyses data. It has three components namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Miles & Huberman, 1985).

After collecting the data from interviews, FGDs and secondary data transcribed in report form, then data is reduced and selected the most dominant. Data reduction is a process of selection, focusing, simplification, and abstraction of rough data contained in field notes. In terms of data presentation, the results of research are qualitatively described and conclusion is drawn appropriately. This research was conducted on functional literacy as an effort to develop home businesses for rural women's in Semarang, Central Java.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Implementation of Functional Literacy for Rural Women

This research analyzes functional literacy for women in rural area in Semarang district, Central Java. The process of engagement through communication and interaction is very important because the majority of women in rural areas is a farmers, vegetable traders, household assistants, food vendors, and housewives. This conditions cause the learners to become passive in joining the functional literacy learning course. Hunter (2008: 142) states that literacy skills are related to basic skills that are very useful for various activities of everyday life. Functional literacy is a refinement of approaches to illiteracy eradication programs that focus on the process of, by, and for learners by implemented the educational strategies through speaking, listening, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Functional literacy emphasizes the ability of learners to overcome the new conditions created by the community environment, so that learners can have functional ability for themselves and the community.

According to UNESCO (2006), literacy can assist people to get access to knowledge and information. For instance, information literacy can assist people to get access to use variety of information to solve the problems. The planning process is done through group discussion and brainstorming. The planning activities include identification of learning needs, learning resources and setting the learning programs. For instance, information literacy can assist people to get access to use variety of information to solve the problems. tend to change their mind towards more social practice (Hunter, 1998; Freire & Macedo, 2005).

The process of identification of learning needs and learning resources is done with following steps:

- the organizers and tutors explain to the learners about the purpose of identifying the learning needs,
- the tutors and the learners discuss together about the learning materials, learning resources, and learning media.

Preparation of learning programs were prepared together with tutors and learners. The learning program includes syllabus, lesson plans, study schedule, learning materials, media, and determining learning facilities and infrastructure.

In the process of implementation of learning, tutors and learners have different roles but they have a close relationship in the learning process. Tutor as a manager of the learning process acts as a motivator, facilitator, and partner in the learning process. Communication and interaction between tutors and learners on the implementation of learning method exist through the involvement of learners in creating a conducive climate for learning. This conducive climate includes:

- Discipline of learners characterized by regularity in attendance at each learning activity,
- Fostering the relationships among the learning community and between the learners and the tutors to create an open, intimate, directional, mutual respect, mutual aid, and mutual learning relationship,
- The interaction of learning activities between learners and tutors is done through horizontal relationships,
- The emphasis on learning activities lies in the role of learners who are more active in learning activities, not on the tutor who prefers the activities of teaching.

The evaluation of learning includes evaluation of process and learning outcomes. Evaluation of learning is done by evaluation of learning process and final evaluation of learning. The indicators of evaluation consists of

- reading,
- writing,
- numeracy,
- speaking,
- listening, and
- skills.

People who have passed the literacy skills are certified SUKMA (letter of literacy certificate). Assessment of learning outcomes of learners is used to determine changes in behavior experienced by learners after following the learning of literacy.

This developed learning helps tutors and learners through:

- placing the tutor in a position where he does not know all the learning materials,
- the tutor helps the learner in doing the learning activities,
- the tutor motivates the learner to participate in developing the learning objectives,
- the tutor puts himself in line with the learner during the learning activities,
- the tutor with the learner engages in the learning activities by exchanging thoughts on the content, process and outcome of the learning activity,
- tutors help the learner in creating a conducive situation for learning,
- the tutor develops group and individual learning activities,
- tutors encourage learners to improve the spirit of achievement,
- tutors encourage learners to develop problem-solving abilities raised from their lives.

The role of learners in learning is manifested by the activeness and participation of learners who are very dominant in participatory learning. Learners involved in the learning process should better understand the learning objectives to be achieved in accordance with the needs and able to adjust to the environment. Findings reveal that more women are becoming literate but literacy among women has gone beyond just learning speaking, reading, and writing English. Women literacy currently involves learning about social networking, business strategies, political and domestic issues (Adeniyi Egbeola, 2018).

3.2 Development of Home Business In Rural Women through Functional Literacy

The development of female home business in rural areas is realized by applying the basic literacy learning model that is integrated with various skills adapted to the abilities, interests, and potential of local learners. This method of teaching emphasizes skill practice. The skills provided is using materials derived from local sources, such as various dishes made from cassava include cassava nugget, sentiling pelangi and utilize banana as the basic ingredients to make traditional snack, for example is sale pisang.

There are several main materials taught in the practice of skills such as reading, writing, counting, speaking and listening. Learners in basic literacy learning methods are taught about reading prescription label, understanding how to measure scales, writing production cost analysis, calculating profit-loss on developed business activities. The development of reading, writing and numeracy competencies are followed by advanced reading activities, advanced writing and more complex arithmetic. This model of functional literacy with participative learning method creates a real learning atmosphere because the learning method is integrated with the real business environment. After the learners produce the goods, then they sell the goods in traditional markets near to their house. Functional literacy with participatory learning is directed at developing home business. The development of women home business in rural area is very necessary to empower women. Home business is the ability to create something new and different, or able to create something different from pre-existing (Smith *et al*, 2015). According Tambunan (2009) home business as a process of applying creativity and innovation in solving problems and find opportunities to improve life. Entrepreneurs are people who have the courage to stand on their own feet, with their own beliefs and abilities bring forth a work and effort for the advancement of oneself and his environment by remaining grounded in truth and virtue.

The development of home business in functional literacy through learning is done through:

- a complete understanding of the tutor on the principles of adult learning,
- the right percentage of theoretical learning and the appropriate skills. In theoretical learning with basic literacy and practical learning, all the activities are conducted in a fun and interested environment. The ratio between theory and practical activities are 2% theory and 80% practice, 10% theory and 90% practice, or 40% theory and 60% practice,

- the type of functional skills taught should be in accordance with local sources and potential, the availability of materials, the learner's interests need, and all the specific skills required for the product to be sold and requested by buyer in high demand,
- the learning curriculum is contextual, thematic and flexible.

The themes and learning materials, content, forms, types, and models, take into account of the learner's needs and interests.

In this lesson, the learners also taught about how to recognize the potential of the environment, exploit the natural resources that can be used to improve their welfare. Environment is the largest source of livelihood in the countryside, that's why learners should know and understand their own environment. This participative learning method is very effective because the context of learning is very contextual, thematic and familiar with the learning community. The types and themes of learning are entirely decided by the learners. The role of tutors is more facilitators and assist the learner's to facilitate their needs. Implementing this model of literacy education as a whole can create new home business mindset for women in rural areas. All the practical skills and products that have been studied and sold to the market are the main source to the family's economic welfare. The results of this effort can empower the rural's women. Women's empowerment is refers to the women's ability to gain access and control to the resources, economy, politics, social, culture, so that women can manage their own things and increase their confidence to actively participate in solving problems, and build their ability and self-concept (Cagatay & Tanyas, 2011). The empowerment of women is a process as well as a goal that serves as an effort to overcome obstacles to achieve equality for men and women at every level of the development process. In the empowerment approach, women have control over some important material and non-material resources and redistribution of power within and between communities (Darwin, 2005).

The functional literacy in this research is based on andragogy (Knowles, 1990) and functional skills based on the availability of natural resources and market opportunities. This lesson is used as an effective media to alleviate the poverty of rural women both functionally and structurally. This functional literacy is part of non-formal education services and it always be community-based. This non-formal education service forms a dynamic and creative rural's women with more positive learning activities. Anggadireja and Djajamiharja (1993); and Lichter,

et al, (1983) identify the characteristics of entrepreneurs based on the results of their experiments. Some entrepreneurial traits include:

- possessing high energy or enthusiasm
- high confidence,
- commitment and ability to achieve goals,
- having confidence to be able to control destiny, and
- having ability to calculate risk.

The development of women home business in rural areas through functional literacy with learning is evidenced by the various business opportunities that poor women in rural areas can increase their have had after obtaining functional literacy. These business opportunities include;

- the existence of various skills acquired to be developed widely,
- the development of the business pioneered in the form of snacks or food,
- the development of various products,
- the development of working groups as business learning groups, and
- the development of a variety of traditional foods into typical food in Semarang regency, Central Java Province.

The components in empowering the economy of rural's women through functional literacy include:

- there is a support from stakeholders to conduct functional literacy programs;
- the existence of motivation in comprehensive management as an effort to empower women's economy through functional literacy.

This functional literacy can complement the knowledge of women in rural areas and provide motivation to foster awareness and the importance of empowerment for the family's economic. From the perspective of social, the activities of functional literacy can improve their familiarity among learners, making networking among learners who learn about functional literacy in pioneering businesses, forming a business group together on the basis of similarity of business, the development of creativity in creating products based on market's preference and market potential calculation, expand the business by finding investors with local entrepreneurs to strengthen business and market capital for poor rural's women. The application of a gender

perspective in viewing poverty is not to minimize the poverty of men, but to emphasize that the poverty experienced by women is specific, so special care is needed (Darwin, 2005).

There has been many efforts made to develop women home business in rural areas and to experience various obstacles in implementing the education and knowledge of rural women is relatively low and the type of business skills are still very simple. In addition, other obstacles of most rural women in the process of small business development is still focuses on the aspect of capital difficulties, thus requiring the capital providers to invest their business.

3.3 The Impact of Home Business Development for Rural Women through Functional Literacy

The economic empowerment of rural's women through functional education of literacy education helps women in improving literacy through reading, writing, and arithmetic, listening, and speaking with the integration of women's various skills. Poor rural's women in general is only rely on income from the husband or head of the family in meeting the needs of everyday life. The existence of social pressure from the economic side of the household encourages women from poor families to earn additional income. Women play a very vital role in the family economy. This role is related to the complete range of socioeconomic activities. Rural women are not only users of basic services, bearers and promoters of children and house-keepers, they also represent potential products, which are not fully absorbed (Ben Chuks, 2004).

Rural's women are generally very closed minded, so the implementation of learning requires patience and an intensive and informal approach through personal or group. The involvement of women in rural areas with functional literacy in family's economic empowerment shows that women have a central position in the family's economic. The continuity of home business development give huge impact on the number of start-up business in the village. It caused by the number of learners who learn about functional literacy. In the countryside, there is a growing number of business centers that become the business node. The emergence of business centers have a positive impact, such as

- increasing the welfare of the community,
- encouraging the independence and resilience of the village,
- encouraging the formation of culinary tourism,
- increasing the existence of the functional literacy program itself.

The impact of home business development for rural's women is to create increase the level of women empowerment through:

- the quality of business to improve their job skills especially training for the learners,
- rural's women have proven to be able to give enough contribution to their family income, so it is expected that local government will pay more attention to the women's learning group in the form of providing low-interest capital assistance to home business
- Promote productive sectors and assist them in learning about product marketing by providing training marketing management as well as the government's role in the marketing net.

Women's empowerment gives meaning to the training process that encourages women to improve their quality and have a career.(Margarita & Sujarwo, 2019).

The implementation of education of functional literacy in Semarang regency are able to increase the economic condition of women gradually. This is because the skills that have been possessed can be used as an access to increase empowerment. Samwel (2010) argues that women's empowerment is an approach that needs attention in overcoming poverty. Given those who usually manage and know the family's financial condition. Furthermore, the expectation of the quality of life of poor women in rural areas is also increases. Four important steps to be taken into account in the development of home business and rural women's economic activities include;

- assist and encourage rural women to build and develop their knowledge and self-competence through various skills training programs,
- Assist rural women in business strategy and product marketing,
- Provide understanding on government regulations and regulations related to the legality of the business world,
- Encourage and assist women to be able to use information and communication technology optimally, and
- Creating a micro business network of women with business training forum.

4. Conclusion

One factors that causing poverty in rural area is low level of education which affects the level of literacy. Women with illiteracy in rural area are mostly due to the low quality of their human resources, indirectly affecting their skills and livelihoods. Rural's women in various fields lag far behind their participation in the development process. The increase in productivity can be seen among others: a more positive attitude change, increased ability of life skills, as well as good work in the form of goods or services for the purposes of self, family, and society. In functional literacy, there are two types of poverty: poverty knowledge and functional poverty. Poverty of knowledge in the form of basic literacy and functional poverty with no skills that can be used as a tool to seek livelihood or economic improvement.

The implementation of functional literacy is to develop women home business, so that it will build potential business centers such as food stalls, various handicrafts, and utilization of natural potential around. The development of women home business in rural area have become more prosperous and have better livelihoods. The development of home business has been done with various activities starting from functional literacy activities to various skills needed by poor women in rural areas. The skills include improving women's access to knowledge and skills on literacy, business skills in food industry, expenditure management, market needs information, venture capital, establishment of business groups, income and business improvements, women's organizing in groups, reducing workloads and increasing women's active participation in planning and implementation of economic activities. From these various activities, the economic empowerment of poor rural's women through optimal functional literacy is conducted by utilized local rural resources. However, the obstacles of most poor women in the small business development process still focus on the aspect of capital difficulties, thus requiring the capital providers to invest their business.

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