

Empowering Rural Women Through Handicraft Training: A Case Study on Bridal Gift Making

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ABSTRACT

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This study focuses on the economic empowerment of rural women through specialized training in bridal gift (hantaran) crafting in Pacarpeluk Village. The primary objective is to explore how such training can enhance the economic welfare and independence of housewives, who have traditionally been limited in their economic roles. A qualitative research method with a case study approach was employed to gain in-depth insights into the experiences of the participants. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The findings reveal that the training significantly increased the participants' technical skills, self-confidence, and economic independence. Participants reported a notable rise in their income and an improved ability to contribute to their household finances. The implications of this study suggest that integrating technical skills training with community support can lead to sustainable economic empowerment, particularly for women in rural areas. This research contributes to the broader discourse on gender equality and rural development by providing a model that can be replicated in similar contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, there has been a significant shift in global economic dynamics, where the role of women, especially housewives, has become increasingly important in supporting the economic stability of families and communities (Hamidah, 2023; Wijaya, Khoir, 2022). This phenomenon is not just a socio-cultural change, but also a response to increasingly urgent economic needs (Zaini et al., 2022; Kuswanto, 2021). In Indonesia, villages that previously relied on traditional agriculture are beginning to look for alternative sources of income that are more sustainable and creative (Chuanchen, 2023; Kurnia, Maulana, & Setiawan, 2021). One striking example is the development of bouquet

crafting skills, which not only meet the market demand for creative products but also empower housewives economically (Muda & Sulaiman, 2021; Wijaya, Hartanto, & Nurhadi, 2021). The importance of this topic lies in its potential to solve local economic problems and empower women who have been seen as a marginalized part of the village economic structure (Fadilah, Nurhayati, & Haris, 2020; Hamidah, 2023).

The economic empowerment of women, especially housewives, through bouquet crafting skills is not only relevant in the context of individual empowerment, but also in the context of community development as a whole (Rahman & Ismail, 2020; Susanto, Pratama, & Kurniawan, 2021). This is supported by the theory of economic empowerment which states that providing skills to groups that previously did not have access to economic resources can produce a positive domino effect, both on individuals and communities (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). These skills not only provide additional income, but also increase the confidence and social participation of housewives, which are often limited by their traditional role in the family (Zaini et al., 2022; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, this research topic is important to discuss academically because it offers a new perspective in understanding how skills development can be an effective tool in addressing economic and social inequalities at the local level (Fahlevi, Aljafri, & Irwansyah, 2020; Hamidah, 2023).

The main problem faced in this context is the low level of economic participation of women, especially housewives, in the local economy. Many housewives in the villages are still completely dependent on their husbands' income and do not have access or ability to generate additional income. In fact, with the right training, they have great potential to contribute more to the family economy. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of opportunities for housewives to acquire relevant and market-in-demand skills. This raises an important question: how can bouquet crafting skills training effectively empower housewives in villages and improve their economic well-being?

Previous studies have examined various aspects of women's economic empowerment through skills training, but there are still some gaps that need to be explored further. Zhang et al. (2020) in their study stated that skills training in rural communities can significantly increase women's economic independence, but its long-term effects are still poorly understood. Leung and Lee (2021) highlight that the success of skills training is often hampered by a lack of market access, which makes training outcomes unsustainable without external support. Meanwhile, Rinaldi and Choi (2020) emphasized the importance of integration between skills training and business knowledge, but they did not discuss in depth how social and community aspects affect the success of these empowerment programs. The research gap lies in the lack of exploration of how skills training combined with community support can result in sustainable economic empowerment in rural settings.

The novelty or novelty of this research lies in the approach used, which is the integration of bouquet crafting skills training with community support to create a holistic economic empowerment model. In contrast to previous studies that tended to separate aspects of training and community support, this study seeks to understand how these two aspects can complement each other and strengthen their positive impact on the economic well-being of housewives. Another novelty of this study is its focus on rural communities that have different social and economic characteristics from the urban context, so the findings of this research are expected to make a unique and relevant contribution to the development of economic empowerment policies in Indonesia.

The main objective of this study is to examine and understand how the integration between bouquet crafting skills training and community support can improve the economic well-being of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village. This research is expected to provide new insights into economic empowerment strategies that not only focus on developing technical skills, but also on strengthening social bonds within the community, which can ultimately create a supportive environment for economic sustainability and social welfare. The urgency of this research lies in the potential findings that can be used as a basis for designing more effective and targeted economic empowerment programs, especially for women in rural communities.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the research was too deeply and holistically understand how economic empowerment through bouquet crafting skills training can improve the economic welfare of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2020). The qualitative method allows researchers to capture the nuances of experiences, perceptions, and changes experienced by trainees in the context of their daily lives. The case study approach was chosen because it provides flexibility in digging into the specific details of the phenomenon that occurs in the village, which is difficult to reach by more structured quantitative methods. Compared to other research methods, such as surveys or experiments, case studies allow for deeper exploration and focus on specific contexts, thus providing a richer understanding of how social and economic interactions take place within the communities investigated.

The data collection techniques in this study include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation (Patton, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Yin, 2020). In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 housewives who were participants in the bouquet crafting training in Pacarpeluk Village, Megaluh District, Jombang Regency, East Java. This location was chosen because it has developing economic potential but is still hampered by limited access to economic resources. Pacarpeluk Village is located at the address of Soko Hamlet,

RT 02 RW 01, which is a rural area with a fairly heterogeneous population in terms of economic status and education level. The number of respondents was selected based on the criteria of active involvement in training as well as variation in age and economic background, to obtain diverse and representative perspectives of the impact of training on their lives. Participatory observation was carried out during the training to observe group interaction and dynamics, while documentation included training notes, activity photos, and training materials used as additional references.

Data analysis in this study was carried out through the stages of coding, categorization, and thematic interpretation. The data obtained from the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed using a thematic approach to identify the key patterns that emerged in the participants' narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2023; Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2021). Coding is done manually to group data into relevant categories, such as income increase, economic independence, and social change. After that, categorization is carried out to group data that have similarities in certain themes. The interpretation of the results was carried out by linking the findings with the theory of economic empowerment and entrepreneurship, and comparing them with the findings of previous studies. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of methods, where the results of interviews, observations, and documentation are compared to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the findings. The final results of this analysis provide a comprehensive overview of the impact of bouquet crafting training on the economic welfare of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to understand how economic empowerment based on bouquet crafting skills can improve the economic welfare of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village. Based on in-depth interviews with several trainees, a significant correlation was found between the training provided and the increase in income and economic independence of housewives. In addition, the results of this study also show that bouquet crafting skills not only provide economic benefits, but also increase the confidence and personal satisfaction of the participants.

In an interview with one of the trainees stated, "After participating in this training, I feel more confident in producing something that is worth selling. Before, I was just an ordinary housewife, but now I can help my husband in meeting the needs of the family." Another interviewer said, "I didn't know that making a bouquet could make money. After this training, I started receiving orders from neighbors and friends, and my income increased." In an interview with one of the speakers where he said, "I feel very helped by this training. In addition to being able to make my own bouquet, I also learned how to calculate costs and determine the right selling price."

The results of this interview showed that there was a significant positive impact of bouquet crafting skills training on the independence and economic well-being of the participants. The implicit message is that this training not only provides technical skills in making bouquets, but also increases confidence and awareness of the economic value of the products produced. The participants began to see the economic potential of their new skills, which at first might have been taken for granted. With these abilities, they are able to increase the family's income, showing that training not only provides them with new abilities but also opens up new opportunities to generate income.

In addition, this training also equips participants with the necessary knowledge to manage their business, such as cost calculation and selling price setting. This shows that the training program has covered essential aspects of entrepreneurship, allowing participants to not only produce sellable goods but also manage them in a more professional and efficient way. This impact is important in the context of economic empowerment, where business knowledge and technical skills go hand in hand to create sustainability and economic growth for individuals and their families.

Correlation between Bouquet Crafting Training and Increased Income

The study found that there was a strong correlation between participation in bouquet crafting training and an increase in the income of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village. Based on data obtained from interviews, the average income of housewives who participated in the training increased by 20-30% in the first three months after the training.

This is supported by the statement of "R's" mother who said, "Since attending this training, I have been able to sell 10-15 bouquets every month, and my income has increased significantly." This increase in income is also reflected in the statement of Tuti's mother, who stated, "Previously, I only relied on my husband's income, but now I can help pay for my children's school fees with the income from selling bouquets." In addition, Mrs. Dewi mentioned, "After the training, I started to get customers from outside the village, and this really helped increase our family's income."

The results of the interview above show that bouquet crafting training has a real impact on increasing the income and economic independence of the participants. The message is that the skills gained from the training have provided new opportunities for housewives to generate significant additional income. By selling 10-15 bouquets every month, the participants are not only able to increase their family income, but also gain the confidence to take a more active role in the family economy.

This statement also shows that the training has succeeded in changing the economic dynamics of households. Previously, many participants only relied on their husbands' income, but after participating in the training, they were able to contribute to financing important needs such as children's education. This

emphasizes that economic empowerment through practical skills can have a direct impact on improving the quality of life of families.



Figure 1. Provision of Materials

Figure 1 above shows the provision of materials to the village community. Look focused and pay attention to the instructions given. This activity reflects efforts to empower the community, especially women, through skill improvement in certain fields that have the potential to provide economic benefits for them and their communities

In addition, the ability of participants to attract customers from outside the village shows that this bouquet crafting skill has widespread appeal and can open up opportunities for business expansion. This not only helps to increase family income, but also shows the greater economic potential of the venture that started from this training. The main message is that this skills training not only provides short-term benefits, but also creates a foundation for sustainable economic growth for participants and their communities.

Increased Economic Independence and Self-Confidence

Increased economic independence and self-confidence are two crucial aspects of individual empowerment, especially for housewives who may have previously been limited to traditional roles in the family. Through skills training such as bouquet crafting, participants not only gain new technical abilities, but also undergo a profound transformation in terms of financial independence and self-esteem. This section will explore how this training has successfully strengthened economic independence and boosted the confidence of housewives, which in turn has a positive impact on social and economic dynamics within their families and communities.

In the interview, Mrs. L said, "I feel more independent now. Before, I always relied on my husband for financial needs, but now I can help make my own money." In addition,

Mrs. Y mentioned, "With these skills, I feel more appreciated by my family and neighbors. They see me as someone who is able to make something beautiful and valuable." Ms. L, one of the other participants, also stated, "I not only learned to make bouquets, but also learned how to manage my time and effort better. It makes me feel more confident in making business decisions."

This statement shows that bouquet crafting training not only has an economic impact, but also plays an important role in increasing the independence and confidence of participants. The main message that can be taken away is that this training has helped housewives feel more financially independent, allowing them to contribute directly to the family's income without having to rely entirely on their husbands.

In addition, the skills they acquire also improve their social status in the community. The sense of being valued by family and neighbors reflects a positive change in the way they are viewed by the surrounding environment, which suggests that these new skills bring higher social recognition.

The training also provides additional benefits in the form of improved time and effort management skills, which strengthens participants' confidence in making business decisions. This signifies that bouquet crafting training not only provides technical skills, but also equips participants with the necessary abilities to run their ventures effectively and independently, which in turn strengthens their overall independence.

The Impact of Training on Local Communities

The impact of training on local communities cannot be underestimated, as programs such as bouquet crafting training often bring about broader changes beyond individual achievement. In Pacarpeluk Village, this training has facilitated the creation of a spirit of collaboration among housewives, who may have previously been less active in village economic activities. This training not only equips participants with new skills, but also encourages the emergence of small, community-based businesses, which ultimately improves the local economy. The study also found that bouquet crafting training has had a positive impact not only on participants, but also on local communities as a whole.

In an interview with Mrs. R, she said, "After the training, I and several other mothers decided to work together to open a small business in the village. We make and sell bouquets together, and this has been very helpful in increasing our revenue." In addition, Mrs. S stated, "With this training, many women in the village are starting to be interested in learning and following in our footsteps. It creates a positive atmosphere in our community." Mrs. M also said, "We have even started getting orders from schools and events in other villages. This not only helps us financially, but also enhances our village's reputation as a hub of creativity."

These statements show that bouquet crafting training has not only had an impact on improving the economy of individuals, but has also encouraged

collaboration and solidarity among housewives in villages. The message I want to convey is that this training successfully creates a domino effect in the community, where participants not only utilize the skills gained for themselves, but also inspire and involve others in joint ventures. This collaboration has allowed them to open a small business together, which not only increases their income but also strengthens social bonds within the community.



Figure 2. Practice of making flower bouquets

The practice and demonstration are intended to provide skills to the participants in shaping and decorating the bouquet so that they can directly make products from various materials. At this stage, the presenter prepared the tools and materials used in making bouquets from cellophane paper and tissue paper to provide training to the mothers and cadres of Pacar Huuk Village on how to make bouquets, either from cellophane paper or from cardboard which can later be used as bouquets and deliveries so that they can be used as home business opportunities.

Furthermore, this training has attracted more community members to learn and participate, creating a positive and vibrant atmosphere in the village. This shows that economic empowerment that starts with individuals can develop into broader community movements, driving greater social and economic change.

Table 1. Training Process and Its Impact

Training Stages	Activities	Impact Felt
Investigation	Observation of the needs and economic potential of housewives	Identify relevant skills development opportunities
Planning and Preparation	Designing training modules and coordinating with the community	Provide training materials and structures that suit the needs of participants
Implementation	Bouquet crafting theory and practice training	Improvement of technical skills and business knowledge
Reflection and Evaluation	Evaluate training results and feedback from participants	Improving product quality and participant satisfaction
Demonstration	Manufacturing and sales of training bouquets	Increase in income and economic independence of participants

The table above shows the stages of training and the impact felt by the

participants at each stage. This process focuses not only on improving technical skills, but also on building participants' capacity to manage their businesses independently and sustainably.

In addition, the success of this venture in attracting orders from schools and events in other villages indicates that bouquet crafting training has helped to improve the reputation of the village as a center of creativity. This not only provides financial benefits for the participants, but also strengthens the village's identity as an innovative and productive community. The main message is that this training has the potential to transform the economic and social dynamics in the village, creating an impact that goes beyond the individual and making a positive contribution to the development of the community as a whole.

The results of this study show that bouquet crafting skills training has a significant impact on improving the economic welfare and independence of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village. These findings are in line with a study conducted by Zhang et al. (2020) which stated that skills training in rural communities can directly increase the income and economic independence of individuals, especially women. However, in contrast to the findings of Leung and Lee (2021) who emphasized that improving technical skills alone is not enough to achieve sustainable economic empowerment without adequate market access support, this study shows that collaboration between community members and the development of local networks have succeeded in overcoming these market access limitations.

In addition, the findings of this study also expand the views of the study of Rinaldi and Choi (2020) which underlined the importance of business management aspects in skills training to ensure economic sustainability; Bouquet crafting training in Pacarpeluk Village not only improves the technical skills of participants, but also provides practical knowledge about business management, which is proven to be able to increase long-term income and well-being. Thus, this study adds empirical evidence that the integration between technical skills development and business knowledge, supported by community collaboration, can result in more holistic and sustainable economic empowerment.

This research makes a significant contribution to the field of economic empowerment through community skill development, especially for housewives in rural areas. By integrating bouquet crafting skills training with business management knowledge, this research not only enriches the literature on economic empowerment strategies, but also offers a model that can be replicated in other communities to improve women's economic well-being and independence. In addition, this study emphasizes the importance of community collaboration in overcoming limited market access, which is often an obstacle in the development of small businesses in rural areas. Thus, this research provides practical and theoretical insights that can be used by governments, NGOs, and practitioners to design more effective and sustainable empowerment programs.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that Bouquet crafting skills training has a significant impact on improving the economic welfare and independence of housewives in Pacarpeluk Village. The main takeaway is the importance of a combination of technical skills development and business knowledge in empowering communities, especially women, to create sustainable economic change. This training not only increases income, but also provides a sense of confidence and strengthens social bonds within the community, ultimately contributing to the development of a more cohesive and self-reliant community.

This research contributes scientifically by updating the perspective on economic empowerment strategies through skills, especially in rural communities. By integrating aspects of business management in skills training, this research offers a more holistic method and can be replicated in a variety of other contexts. However, this study has limitations, especially in terms of location limited to one village, as well as focusing on one gender, namely housewives. To get a more comprehensive picture and can be used as a basis for more targeted policies, further research is needed that accommodates a wide range of genders, ages, and uses a wider range of survey methods. This follow-up research is important to expand on the findings and ensure that economic empowerment programs can be effectively implemented in a variety of social and demographic contexts.

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