



Socially and Economically Vulnerable Women: Building Strategies to Move Out of Poverty

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Abstract

This research aims to identify strategies that can help socially and economically vulnerable women to escape poverty. Through a qualitative approach, with a descriptive method to analyze vulnerable social and economic conditions. This research uses qualitative methods through literature study. The stages of this research were carried out by gathering literary sources obtained from various books, journals, program documents, activity reports, thesis and dissertation research results, as well as online news sources from the internet which were considered relevant and credible to become the source of data in this research. Data analysis technique use the content analysis method. The research results show that there are several effective strategies in helping vulnerable women escape poverty, such as building skills and education, strengthening social networks, and utilizing available local resources. However, this study also found several obstacles in implementing this strategy, such as a lack of access to resources and difficulties in accessing social services. This research makes an important contribution to efforts to improve the welfare of women who are socially and economically vulnerable, as well as provide recommendations for policies that are more inclusive and pro-vulnerable.

Keywords: Vulnerable Women, Social, Economy, Poverty

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of poverty is a serious problem because it is feared that it will cause pockets of chronic poverty and then cause various social problems beyond the control or ability of the city government to handle and supervise them (Rahman et al., 2019). Poverty is a social problem in Indonesia that is not easy to overcome. Various efforts and programs have been made to overcome them, but we still encounter many poor people in every corner of the area accompanied by disorder in social life (Amalia, 2015).

Poverty is currently an obstacle in society or in a wider scope. 0020 Many people currently interpret poverty as the root cause of social and economic problems (Solikatur et al., 2014). Now poverty becomes a social problem when stratification in society has created levels or dividing lines, so that there are awkwardness or boundaries in interaction or communication between people who are at levels below and above. Poverty also greatly affects the environment which will eventually damage the environment itself (Prawoto, 2008).

Apart from being housewives, women are also able to become strategic actors in society, especially in socio-economic development. Development is not only in villages and cities, but also development nationally which can change the lives of Indonesian people for the better and prosperous (Tane & Fatmariza, 2020). Women's contribution to socio-economic development is sufficient (Tuwu, 2018). However, social attributes place women in

a certain position. For example, women are considered physically weak, so they are labeled as submissive, not independent, weak and so on. Conversely, a man is considered manly, tough and hardworking. On the basis of this social construction, the social roles of men and women in a family and society are distinguished. Women carry out social roles within the home, while men work in the public sector or outside the household.

According to Septiawan & Wijaya (2021) from year to year, various problems that become obstacles for women in obtaining access to work in the public sphere are the family's economic situation due to limited human resources and women's productive economic skills compared to men. Indonesian women's labor force participation rate (TPAK) has always been lower than that of men, the gap is actually very large, and has never been more prominent. Still according to Septiawan and Wijaya (2021) that the higher the average school year for women, the wages for female workers, the number of workers in manufacturing, the number of workers in agriculture, can increase the TPAK of Indonesian women.

However, women are often a socially and economically vulnerable group in various countries in the world, including in Indonesia. They often face discrimination and difficulties in obtaining the same rights as men, such as access to education, employment, health, and mastery of resources (Krisnalita, 2018). This problem is exacerbated by vulnerable social and economic conditions which make it easier for women to be trapped in poverty. As a result, women often experience limitations in achieving welfare and face a higher risk of various social and health problems (Wulandari & Wicaksono, 2014)

Improving the welfare of women who are socially and economically vulnerable is important to achieve social justice and sustainable development. In the last few decades, the Indonesian government has made various efforts to reduce poverty and improve the welfare of its people (Pudjianto & Syawie, 2015). However, data shows that women are still the most vulnerable group to poverty. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), in 2020, the percentage of poor people (*Head Count Index*) of women is 9.96 percent. This means that 9.96 percent of the entire female population in Indonesia is poor. This figure has increased compared to 2019 conditions (9.63 percent). It is also higher than the male poverty rate which reaches 9.59 percent. This shows that there are still gaps in efforts to reduce poverty which affect women disproportionately (BPS, 2020). Therefore, an effective strategy is needed to help vulnerable women escape poverty and improve their quality of life (Bhinadi, 2017). Various strategies have been implemented by the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help vulnerable women, such as skills training and economic empowerment programs.

This research is also important because socially and economically vulnerable women are often overlooked in existing economic empowerment policies and programs. This is caused by a lack of understanding of the role of women in the family and society as well as gender injustice that still occurs in various aspects of life (Siregar & Wibowo, 2019).

Several existing studies have identified factors that make women vulnerable, such as gender discrimination, violence against women, low-income jobs, limited access to education, care and parenting responsibilities, and limited access to economic resources. However, further research is still needed to dig deeper into this issue and design effective strategies to help vulnerable women get out of poverty. This study aims to further explore the situation of socially and economically vulnerable women and identify strategies that can strengthen welfare.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods through literature study. Sugiyono (2018) says that literature studies are related to theoretical studies through references related to values, culture, and norms that develop in the social situations studied. The stages of this research were carried out by gathering literary sources obtained from various books, journals, program documents, activity reports, thesis and dissertation research results, as well as online news

sources from the internet which were considered relevant and credible to become the source of data in this research. Furthermore, data processing and/or citing references are performed to be displayed as research findings, abstracted to obtain complete information, and interpreted to produce knowledge for drawing conclusions. Data analysis technique use the content analysis method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic Vulnerable Women

Socio-Economic Vulnerable Women (PRSE) are adult women aged more than 15 years and over, whether single, married or widowed, whose income is not enough to meet their daily needs, and the woman is the head of the household. from the education that has been taken, because education greatly influences the mindset of each individual. Heavy economic demands encourage women to earn a living for their welfare, various motivations for women to work, namely husbands do not have sufficient income resulting in low household income, while dependents are quite heavy on their families, so women will work to earn their own money to support all members his family (Purnama, 2018).

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Social Affairs No. 8 of 2012 that socio-economically vulnerable women are adult women who are married, single or widowed and do not have enough income to be able to meet their daily basic needs. Socioeconomically vulnerable women are an important focus in efforts to reduce poverty in both rural and urban areas. PRSE generally have limited skills, livelihoods are sometimes unstable, and income is insufficient to meet basic daily needs (A'yun & Faidati, 2021).

Knowing more fully socioeconomic vulnerable women (PRSE), it is necessary to know the criteria. Decree of the Minister of Social Affairs No. 8 of 2012 states that the criteria for PRSE are women aged 18 to 59 years who are the main breadwinners of the family and have less or insufficient income to meet the needs of a decent life and wives whose husbands leave them without explanation. Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (1996) describes the characteristics of socio-economic vulnerable women as follows:

- a. Adult women, married or unmarried or widows or wives who leave their husbands indefinitely.
- b. Do not have work skills or have skills but are less useful.
- c. Income does not meet basic daily needs.
- d. Women who live in social vulnerable areas.

The statement above shows that the various problems faced by socio-economically vulnerable women make it difficult for them to get decent work. On the other hand they are required to work to meet the needs of their family life. Thus causing a negative impact on himself, his family, and the environment such as: the emergence of child neglect, both in terms of education, health, and their future.

Most PRSE problems are motivated by a number of reasons, including losing a husband, not getting opportunities in the field of work, a heavy burden and responsibility to support children without proper preparation while still with their husbands, and low levels of education and skills. Special attention to PRSE is very important because the heavy burden on women is getting bigger while their abilities and opportunities given to them are still limited (Simamora et al, 2019).

If the burden is not matched by a serious increase in capacity, it will lead to new social problems such as stress, depression, neglect and malnutrition. To be clearer about the review of PRSE, the following discussion will discuss the factors that cause PRSE.

A woman who is born into the world, grows, develops and has a family does not necessarily become PRSE, if there is no cause. The Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs in Andari et al (2022) suggests that the factors causing the social problems experienced by PRSE are:

- 1) Internal factors, namely factors that cause a problem that originates from within the woman are the limitations that are owned, including physical limitations caused by a lack of physical ability to carry out activities and the average level of intelligence is still below men, there is still a sense of lack of confidence, apathy, low self-esteem and socio-cultural aspects.
- 2) External factors, namely factors that come from outside the PRSE themselves are the lack of opportunities to get a job, the distribution of income is unequal and the discrimination they experience in getting a job.

The causes of the poverty problems experienced by PRSE in general are low education, the skills possessed by women are still minimal or even have no skills at all, and discrimination in getting a job. The above has an impact on the lack of opportunities for women to work in the government and private sectors, as well as competition in the business world which requires certain educational qualifications and skills. So that they are left out in looking for work and tend to rely on physical strength.

Effective Strategies To Help Vulnerable Women Escape Poverty

Building Skills and Education

One effective strategy for helping socially and economically vulnerable women escape poverty is to build skills and education. Skills and education can strengthen individual capabilities and help them gain better access to existing economic opportunities. In addition, skills and education can also help vulnerable women build independence and increase their self-confidence (Graha, 2009).

Skills training and education programs can be designed to meet the needs and wants of vulnerable women. Skills training can focus on skills appropriate to the needs of the existing labor market, such as technical, managerial and entrepreneurial skills. In addition, training can also be focused on skills related to self-development, such as interpersonal skills, communication, and life skills.

Education is also an effective strategy to help vulnerable women increase their capabilities and gain better access to existing economic opportunities. Education can provide vulnerable women with the knowledge and skills needed to overcome the difficulties they face and improve their quality of life. In addition, education can also help vulnerable women to be more independent and take control over their lives (Yani, 2018).

In implementing skills training and education programs, it is important to pay attention to the needs and preferences of vulnerable women. Programs must be designed taking into account factors such as economic conditions, social status, and health conditions of vulnerable women. In addition, programs must be implemented in a supportive and safe environment for vulnerable women.

There are several forms of training and education that can be undertaken to help socially and economically vulnerable women improve their capabilities and gain better access to economic opportunities. The following are several forms of training and education that can be carried out for socioeconomically vulnerable women:

1. Technical skills training: Training in technical skills such as programming skills, graphic design and expertise in information and communication technology can help vulnerable women acquire the skills needed in an increasingly digital job market. This technical skills training can help vulnerable women find better jobs and earn higher incomes.
2. Managerial skills training: Training in managerial skills such as leadership, time management, and project management skills can help vulnerable women become more effective at managing their jobs. Training in these managerial skills can help vulnerable women become more productive and enhance their ability to take on greater responsibilities at work.

3. Entrepreneurship skills training: Entrepreneurship skills training can help vulnerable women to start their own businesses. This entrepreneurship skills training covers skills such as business planning, financial management, marketing, and innovation. Entrepreneurial skills training can help vulnerable women to develop small businesses that can increase their income.
4. Interpersonal skills training: Interpersonal skills training such as communication, cooperation, and negotiation skills can help vulnerable women to interact more effectively with others. Training in these interpersonal skills can help vulnerable women improve their social relationships and open up new opportunities.
5. Education programs: Education programs can help vulnerable women improve their quality of life. Educational programs that can be carried out include basic education programs, vocational education programs, and higher education programs. This education program can help vulnerable women acquire the knowledge and skills needed to overcome the difficulties they face and improve their quality of life.
6. Life skills training: Life skills training such as financial skills, parenting skills, and problem solving skills can help vulnerable women overcome challenges in their lives. This life skills training can help vulnerable women to be more independent and take control of their lives.
7. Skills training to overcome gender bias: Skills training to overcome gender bias can help vulnerable women to deal with gender discrimination in the workplace and in everyday life. This training covers skills such as understanding women's rights, understanding biased mindsets against women, and how to deal with gender discrimination. Training in these skills can help vulnerable women to become more confident and open up new opportunities in their lives.

In conducting training and education for socially and economically vulnerable women, it is important to pay attention to the social and cultural context in which they live. Training and education must be adapted to the needs of vulnerable women and the environment in which they live. In addition, support from family and community is also very important to increase the success of the training and education carried out. By conducting training and education for socially and economically vulnerable women, it is hoped that it can help them increase their capabilities and gain better access to economic opportunities. This can help vulnerable women escape poverty and achieve greater well-being.

Strengthening Social Networks

Socially and economically vulnerable women can strengthen their social networks as a strategy to help them escape poverty. In this context, social networks can be defined as networks consisting of family, friends, neighbors and communities that can provide emotional, financial and informational support to vulnerable women. Through social networks, vulnerable women can access information about job opportunities, training programs and available financial assistance. In addition, they can get financial support from their family and friends, which can help them overcome the financial challenges they face (Nasution, 2017).

Vulnerable women can also build social networks by joining local organizations with similar goals. For example, non-governmental organizations that focus on economic development and women's empowerment can be places where vulnerable women can find support and resources to develop their skills and increase their income. In addition, vulnerable women can get emotional support from their social networks. In situations of stress or financial crisis, family and friends can provide emotional support and motivate vulnerable women to keep struggling in facing challenges (Murtakhamah, 2013).

However, it should be remembered that strengthening social networks of vulnerable women is not always easy. Several factors, such as limited access to resources and conflicts within family relationships, can become barriers to building effective social networks.

Therefore, efforts are needed to facilitate the formation of social networks and improve the social skills of vulnerable women.

In this case, the government and non-governmental organizations can play an important role in strengthening the social networks of vulnerable women by providing support and assistance services. In addition, the government can also facilitate training and skills development programs that enable vulnerable women to build stronger and more effective social networks. Vulnerable women who live in remote areas or have limited access to resources may need assistance in building social networks. In such cases, local organizations can facilitate the formation of support groups or social skills training and help vulnerable women expand their social networks.

In addition, vulnerable women can also strengthen their social networks through participation in social activities and local communities. By engaging in social activities, vulnerable women can broaden their social networks, meet new people and build stronger relationships with other members of the community.

Finally, vulnerable women need to remember that strengthening social networks is a process that requires time and effort. Need to build trust with the people around us, as well as expand social networks gradually by joining groups that have the same interests. In the process, vulnerable women need to pay attention to the quality of the relationships they build with their social networks, so they can receive effective and beneficial support.

Strengthening social networks can be an effective strategy in helping vulnerable women escape poverty. In this context, government, non-governmental organizations and local community groups can play an important role in facilitating the formation of social networks and providing support to improve the social skills of vulnerable women. By strengthening social networks, vulnerable women can access resources and support that can help them escape poverty and achieve financial independence.

Utilizing Local Resources

Utilizing available local resources is an effective strategy in helping vulnerable women escape poverty. Local resources in question can be in the form of natural resources, human resources, and cultural resources in the surrounding environment. By leveraging local resources, vulnerable women can gain access to the resources needed to start businesses or improve their skills (Apriliandra et al, 2022).

For example, in rural areas, vulnerable women can utilize natural resources around them, such as land, water and plants to produce agricultural products or handicrafts that can be sold. Governments or local organizations can provide training and capital assistance to help vulnerable women start their businesses, as well as gain access to wider markets through local or online distribution networks.

In addition, human resources can also be used to help vulnerable women improve their skills. In urban areas, there are many education and training institutions that can help vulnerable women acquire the skills needed to enter the wider labor market. In addition, in many areas there are naturally formed and skill-based communities, such as artisans' groups or cattle breeders' groups, which can help vulnerable women acquire new skills and broaden their social networks.

In addition, vulnerable women can also take advantage of cultural resources in their surroundings to build businesses or improve their skills. For example, in tourist areas, vulnerable women can take advantage of local arts and culture to produce handicraft items that are sold to tourists. In this way, vulnerable women can earn additional income and promote cultural heritage in their surroundings.

Leveraging available local resources can be an effective strategy in helping vulnerable women escape poverty. By gaining access to needed resources, vulnerable women can build sustainable businesses or upgrade their skills to enter the wider labor market. In this context,

governments, non-governmental organizations and local communities can play an important role in providing support and assistance to make effective use of local resources.

However, women who are socio-economically vulnerable often face obstacles in accessing the resources needed to improve their welfare. These obstacles can be in the form of limited access to educational facilities, skills training, financial resources, access to the labor market, and limited social networks and available support.

One way to overcome this obstacle is to strengthen programs that support women's inclusion and participation in various sectors. Such programs may include easily accessible training and education for vulnerable women, such as training in basic skills needed to work in the formal or informal sector.

In addition, programs can also provide financial support or access to business capital for women who wish to start micro-enterprises. The government or non-governmental organizations can provide access to financial resources through venture capital assistance or low interest credit programs for socioeconomically vulnerable women.

In addition, collaboration with local communities is also important in strengthening access to resources and support for socioeconomically vulnerable women. Local communities can play an important role in providing support in the form of social networks, skills development, or providing information about job and business opportunities in their neighbourhood.

Therefore, strengthening women's inclusion and participation in various sectors and building collaboration with local communities can be an effective way of overcoming constraints on access to resources faced by socio-economic vulnerable women. In this way, socio-economically vulnerable women can have wider access to the resources needed to improve their economic conditions and keep away from poverty.

CONCLUSION

Women are socially and economically vulnerable and need effective strategies to keep themselves away from poverty. Such an effective strategy can cover three main things, namely building skills and education, strengthening social networks, and utilizing available local resources. In building skills and education, there is a need for training programs that are easily accessible and in line with the needs of socioeconomically vulnerable women. Such programs can include training in the basic skills needed to work in the formal or informal sector, as well as financial support or access to business capital for women who wish to start micro-enterprises. In strengthening social networks, there is a need for support and collaboration with local communities in providing support in the form of social networks, skills development, or providing information about job and business opportunities in the surrounding environment. Finally, utilizing available local resources can be an effective strategy in helping socio-economically vulnerable women. In this case, there is a need for collaboration with local communities to provide access to resources and support for women who are socioeconomically vulnerable. By implementing these strategies, it is hoped that it can help socially and economically vulnerable women to distance themselves from poverty and improve their welfare. However, keep in mind that these strategies must be adapted to the conditions and needs of each socio-economically vulnerable woman, and must be carried out on an ongoing basis to achieve optimal results.

RECOMMENDATION

The results of this study provide recommendations including the need for new breakthroughs from the government to increase access to appropriate and strategic education and training for vulnerable women, fight for gender equality and reduce gender discrimination, increase access to decent and sufficient income jobs, and strengthen vulnerable women's access to economic resources and social support so they can live in prosperity.

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