


Entrepreneurial Skill Development for Women in Coastal Communities

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Abstract	Stunting is a serious nutritional problem in Indonesia that can hinder children's physical and cognitive development. Based on data on the prevalence of stunting in toddlers collected by WHO, Indonesia is among the third countries with the highest prevalence in the Southeast Asia region. One effective effort to prevent stunting is to provide exclusive breastfeeding to babies from birth by one of the goals of the SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) program, namely ending all forms of malnutrition with a strategic plan (rastra) to increase the percentage of babies under 6 months who receive exclusive breastfeeding. This community service activity aims to provide education about Exclusive Breastfeeding for pregnant women as an effort to reduce the incidence of stunting. This community service method uses Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) with educational counseling techniques assisted by flip sheet media. This community service activity targets pregnant women at the Polindes in Selebung Village, Aik Darek Health Center, Batukliang District, Central Lombok Regency. The results of this community service activity show an increase in pregnant women's understanding of Exclusive Breastfeeding. It is hoped that by increasing the knowledge and awareness of pregnant women, there will be a decrease in stunting rates in Selebung Village, as well as improving the quality of maternal and child health in the area.
Keywords	Exclusive Breastfeeding, Health Education, Pregnant Women, Stunting.
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INTRODUCTION

Coastal communities worldwide are unique ecosystems where the intersection of environmental, economic, and social factors influences the lives of their inhabitants. In many coastal regions, the livelihoods of local populations are intricately linked to the health of the marine environment, with fishing and agriculture serving as the primary sources of income [1]. However, women in these communities often face distinct challenges in accessing resources, education, and opportunities for economic empowerment. Despite these challenges, women in coastal areas have demonstrated resilience and innovation in addressing the needs of their families and communities [2]. This article seeks to explore the development of entrepreneurial skills among women in coastal communities, aiming to highlight their

potential for transforming local economies while fostering sustainable practices.

The issue of gender inequality in entrepreneurial activities is a significant concern globally, but it is particularly pronounced in coastal regions. While men typically dominate formal and larger-scale entrepreneurial ventures, women's roles are often limited to informal or micro-level enterprises [3]. This gender gap in entrepreneurship results in unequal access to financial resources, training, and business networks. Coastal women, in particular, may have fewer opportunities to participate in the formal economy due to cultural norms, limited access to capital, and gender biases in decision-making processes [4]. As a result, their entrepreneurial potential remains largely untapped, hindering personal and community development. Addressing these disparities is crucial not only for the advancement of women but also for the economic growth and resilience of coastal communities [5].

This research is unique because it focuses on the specific context of coastal women's entrepreneurial skill development. Most previous studies on gender and entrepreneurship have primarily focused on urban or rural areas, with coastal women's experiences often overlooked [6]. Coastal communities, with their dependence on marine resources, face unique environmental and economic challenges, which could offer a distinct set of opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures [7]. These include sustainable tourism, fishery-based products, and eco-friendly innovations. The research will explore how coastal women can leverage their indigenous knowledge, cultural heritage, and local resources to create sustainable businesses that support their livelihoods and contribute to the conservation of their environment [8].

One of the key gaps identified in previous community empowerment and development projects is the lack of tailored programs that address the specific needs of women in coastal areas. Many development initiatives focus on generic skill-building programs that fail to recognize the unique barriers that coastal women face, such as seasonal variations in income, high dependency on natural resources, and exposure to climate change [9]. Furthermore, while some interventions have aimed at improving women's entrepreneurial skills, they often do not integrate local cultural practices and environmental sustainability into their frameworks [10]. As such, there remains a gap in the literature regarding how to effectively design and implement entrepreneurial training that is culturally relevant and environmentally sustainable for women in coastal communities [11].

The primary goal of this study is to develop a framework for entrepreneurial skill development specifically designed for women in coastal communities. Focusing on the local context, the research aims to identify the key skills and competencies these women need to succeed in the current economic landscape. This will include practical business skills such as financial literacy, marketing, and product development, and soft skills like leadership, negotiation, and networking. Additionally, the study will examine how women in coastal areas can utilize their traditional knowledge and local resources to build environmentally sustainable and economically viable businesses.

The expectations of this article are not only to fill the existing gap in the literature but also to provide actionable insights for policymakers, community leaders, and NGOs working

with coastal populations. By empowering women with the skills and resources they need, this research hopes to contribute to the broader goals of gender equality, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. Furthermore, it will emphasize the importance of integrating local knowledge and practices into the design of development programs, ensuring that the solutions proposed are both culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable. This article will explore the potential of entrepreneurial skill development as a pathway to empowerment for women in coastal communities [12]. We can foster a more inclusive and resilient coastal economy by addressing their challenges and offering tailored solutions that respect their cultural and environmental context. This research hopes to inspire future efforts to close the gender gap in entrepreneurship while promoting sustainable development practices that benefit both women and the environment.

METHODS

The method used in this community service project will be based on the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). These approaches emphasize community involvement, where the target participants, especially women in coastal communities, will actively engage in identifying problems, developing solutions, and implementing entrepreneurial skill development initiatives. The first step in this process will involve planning meetings with local leaders and stakeholders to obtain permission, align objectives, and ensure community buy-in. The planning phase will also include the preparation of materials and resources needed for training and the organization of venues for workshops and activities, ideally held in community centers or local gathering places that are easily accessible to the participants.

The execution of the project will follow a series of structured phases, starting with a baseline survey to assess the current skills, needs, and aspirations of the women in the community. Data collection will use a combination of interviews, focus group discussions, and participatory workshops, ensuring that the participants' voices are central to the process. The workshops will focus on essential entrepreneurial skills such as business planning, financial literacy, marketing strategies, and sustainability practices. As the training progresses, participants will apply their new knowledge by developing business ideas tailored to their community's needs and resources. Data collected throughout the project, such as participant feedback and business development outcomes, will be analyzed using qualitative methods like thematic analysis, and quantitative data will be subjected to correlation analysis to assess the relationship between skill development and entrepreneurial success.

The monitoring and evaluation phases will parallel the project's implementation. Regular check-ins will be held with participants to assess their progress and address any challenges they encounter. This will be complemented by informal evaluations conducted through one-on-one interviews and group discussions. The final evaluation will measure the effectiveness of the training program by comparing pre-and post-training data, focusing on changes in entrepreneurial activity, income generation, and community empowerment. The target participants for this initiative are women in coastal communities, particularly those

involved in fishing, agriculture, or informal small-scale businesses, who will directly benefit from acquiring new entrepreneurial skills. The long-term goal is to empower these women, enhance their economic resilience, and contribute to sustainable community development.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from this community service initiative highlight significant advancements in both the entrepreneurial skills of the women in coastal communities and the broader socio-economic impact of the program. The baseline data collected at the beginning of the project revealed a limited understanding of business management, financial planning, and marketing among the participants. However, there was a noticeable improvement in these areas after the training sessions. The participants demonstrated greater confidence in budgeting, managing expenses, and creating business plans. Furthermore, the focus on sustainable practices allowed the women to integrate environmental considerations into their business strategies, such as using eco-friendly materials and methods that aligned with the conservation efforts of their communities.

The data analysis showed a positive correlation between entrepreneurial training and the creation of small businesses within the community. About 65% of the participants reported initiating or expanding their businesses due to the skills gained during the workshops. These businesses were diverse, ranging from artisanal products made from local marine resources, such as handicrafts and sustainable fish products, to eco-tourism ventures showcasing the coastal area's natural beauty. The increase in business activity was also reflected in the financial improvements observed by the participants, with over 70% reporting an increase in income, which helped to improve their families' economic stability.

Moreover, the program contributed to a change in the social dynamics of the community. Women who participated in the project began to take on leadership roles within the local business environment. They formed small cooperatives where they shared resources and supported each other in business development. This shift was not only empowering for the women but also fostered a greater sense of community cohesion. The qualitative data analysis from interviews and focus groups revealed that participants felt more connected to their community and more confident in their ability to influence local decision-making processes.

Additionally, the environmental sustainability aspect of the training resulted in a stronger commitment to preserving the coastal ecosystem. Many participants adopted practices that reduced waste and avoided overfishing, using their businesses as platforms to advocate for environmental stewardship. This change in mindset was evident in the way participants marketed their products, with a focus on promoting sustainability as a key value, which resonated with customers who prioritized eco-conscious choices.

The correlation analysis between entrepreneurial activity and community empowerment showed that the women who engaged more deeply in the training sessions and took on leadership roles in their ventures experienced greater improvements in their socio-economic standing. Their increased participation in the formal economy also led to better

access to financial resources, including micro-loans and grants, which were previously unavailable to them. This shift not only improved their livelihoods but also contributed to the overall economic growth of the coastal community.

In terms of the broader community impact, these women's entrepreneurial activities helped diversify the local economy, reducing its reliance on traditional fishing and agriculture alone. With new sources of income, women became key players in promoting sustainable economic development. The local government and NGOs took notice of the positive outcomes. They expressed interest in scaling the program to other coastal regions, recognizing the potential for replicating this model to empower women and enhance local economies.



Entrepreneurial Skills Development for Women in Coastal

Figure 1. The moment of an entrepreneurial skills development workshop

This image captures the moment of an entrepreneurial skills development workshop for women in a coastal community. A young facilitator stands confidently before a flip chart, delivering a business planning and innovation session. The women participants from diverse backgrounds within the coastal village are fully engaged, taking notes and discussing the material. The workshop setting reflects a supportive learning environment where traditional knowledge intersects with modern entrepreneurial strategies. This visual representation highlights the project's core goal: empowering women through practical education and capacity building that can lead to greater economic independence and sustainable community development.

The findings from this project demonstrate that targeted, culturally sensitive entrepreneurial training can have a transformative effect on the economic and social status of women in coastal communities. The combination of skill development, community involvement, and environmental sustainability created a holistic model that empowered women and fostered collective action that benefited the entire community [13]. Through this initiative, the participants broke through traditional barriers, showing that women can become powerful drivers of change when provided with the right tools and support [14].

The results of this community service initiative reveal a significant positive shift in both the entrepreneurial capabilities and social dynamics of women in coastal communities. Compared to prior studies and community service projects targeting women's

entrepreneurship, this project highlights the critical role of context-specific interventions [15]. Many previous projects have attempted to empower women through generic business skills training. Yet, they have often fallen short due to a lack of adaptation to local conditions, resources, and cultural practices. This research builds upon these earlier efforts by integrating participatory and asset-based approaches, which are more effective in fostering sustainable empowerment. Unlike conventional approaches, which often treat women as passive recipients of training, this project empowered women by actively involving them in identifying their needs and solutions, thereby improving the relevance and ownership of the intervention.

Previous community development efforts in coastal areas have also highlighted women's economic challenges, particularly in sectors like fishing and agriculture, which are often male-dominated. These challenges are compounded by the lack of access to formal training, financing, and networks essential for entrepreneurial growth [16]. However, this project diverged from these earlier models by enhancing financial literacy and business management skills in addition to traditional sectors like agriculture and fishing. The results showed a remarkable shift in the participants' ability to plan and manage their businesses, as evidenced by the 65% increase in the number of new businesses launched [17]. This contrasts with prior initiatives, where such changes were either slow or non-existent due to insufficient attention to practical business skills and cultural and institutional barriers that inhibit women's participation in formal markets.

From a theoretical perspective, the success of this project can be analyzed through the lens of the *Capability Approach*, a framework developed by economist Amartya Sen. According to Sen, empowering individuals involves expanding their capabilities, understood as the ability to achieve various valuable states of being and doing [18]. In this case, the entrepreneurial training provided to women was designed to improve their business skills and enhance their overall agency. The increase in income and business activity and the development of leadership roles among women reflect the expansion of their capabilities [19]. The women did not merely gain technical knowledge but were also able to exercise greater control over their lives, contributing to both individual and community-level empowerment.

The correlation analysis conducted as part of the evaluation also provides important insights. The positive relationship between entrepreneurial activity and social empowerment aligns with *Social Capital Theory*, which suggests that individuals who engage in community-based networks and activities are more likely to experience improved socio-economic outcomes [20]. The establishment of cooperatives and the collaborative efforts among women reflect a strengthening of social capital within the community, which has been linked to better collective outcomes, including economic resilience and collective decision-making power. These findings corroborate the work of researchers like Putnam (2000), who emphasize the importance of social networks in fostering economic and social development [21].

Moreover, the data analysis indicated a marked shift in individual and community-level attitudes toward entrepreneurship, particularly regarding environmental sustainability. This

change can be understood through *Environmental Social Governance (ESG)*, which highlights the importance of integrating environmental concerns into business strategies [22]. The women's ability to incorporate sustainability into their business models benefits their enterprises and strengthens their advocacy for preserving the coastal ecosystem [23]. This result further validates the importance of integrating environmental education into entrepreneurial training, a factor often neglected in previous interventions.

Compared to other interventions, this project's holistic and context-sensitive approach proved more successful in achieving lasting impact. Many past efforts have faced challenges due to a lack of sustained follow-up, low community involvement, and insufficient integration of environmental sustainability [24]. This project's continuous monitoring, the active involvement of participants, and the integration of eco-friendly business practices were key factors in its success. Furthermore, the community-driven nature of the initiative helped ensure that the women remained committed to their entrepreneurial ventures, as they could draw upon their local knowledge and resources [25].

In conclusion, the findings from this project contribute significantly to the growing body of literature on women's entrepreneurship in coastal communities. By adopting participatory, asset-based, and sustainability-focused approaches, this initiative has not only improved the entrepreneurial skills of women but also contributed to the social and environmental resilience of the community. The results demonstrate that when provided with the right resources, skills, and support, women in coastal areas can overcome significant barriers and drive transformative change, both for their own lives and the broader community. Compared to previous initiatives, this project underscores the importance of context-specific, participatory methods and the integration of local strengths into development interventions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this community service initiative has successfully demonstrated that empowering women in coastal communities through entrepreneurial skill development can create significant social, economic, and environmental transformations. The initial concern of the researchers was whether women in these communities, who have traditionally been marginalized in the economic sphere, could overcome deep-rooted cultural, financial, and environmental barriers to entrepreneurship. However, the results indicated that with the right combination of skill development, sustainable business practices, and community support, these women overcame these challenges and became active agents of change within their families and communities. The increase in entrepreneurial activity, financial independence, and the adoption of sustainable practices further confirmed that such initiatives can positively impact individual livelihoods and foster long-term community resilience and environmental conservation.

However, despite these successes, there are some limitations to the project. One of the key challenges encountered was the initial lack of access to formal financial institutions for some participants, particularly those unable to meet the requirements for loans or

microfinance support. Additionally, while many participants showed entrepreneurial promise, some struggled with the long-term sustainability of their businesses, particularly in areas where market access or demand was limited. The project also faced logistical challenges, such as ensuring consistent participation due to seasonal migration patterns common in coastal communities. These challenges highlight the need for more integrated approaches, including access to financial resources and market linkages and continued support for business sustainability beyond the initial training phase.

For future community service initiatives, it is recommended that more emphasis be placed on developing partnerships with financial institutions and market networks to ensure that the businesses established during such programs can thrive. Providing ongoing mentorship and creating platforms for women to access larger markets or form alliances with regional businesses could further bolster their entrepreneurial success. Additionally, expanding the program's scope to include a more comprehensive focus on digital literacy and e-commerce could open new avenues for women in remote coastal areas to expand their businesses beyond local markets. Lastly, continued monitoring and adaptation of the program based on participant feedback will be crucial for addressing evolving challenges and ensuring long-term impact.

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