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The Role Of The Batu Social Service In Increasing The Capacity Of Socio-Economic Vulnerable Women

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Abstract

This article examines the role of the Batu City Social Service in increasing the capacity of socio-economically vulnerable women (PRSE) through empowerment programs that include business capital assistance, motivational guidance, social, entrepreneurship, as well as mentoring and monitoring. The research aims to describe the implementation of the program, the process of determining beneficiaries, the form of assistance, and the obstacles faced in the empowerment of PRSE. The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a location in Batu City. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews with Social Service workers who handle the PRSE program and observation of the implementation of activities. The results of the study show that the Social Service plays a role in identifying potential recipients, assessing needs, preparing Cost Budget Plans, disbursing assistance, assisting in the use of funds, and monitoring. The capital assistance began to touch the PRSE target in October 2024 and is planned to be implemented in December 2024, with assistance of IDR 10 million for 16 recipients. The main obstacles are limited data and inaccuracy of citizen information. The program requires data verification, coordination, and adaptive management so that empowerment is on target and sustainable.

Keywords: poverty, women's empowerment, social service, economic independence

1. Introduction

Poverty is one of the fundamental and complex social problems in Indonesia. Despite the government's implementation of various poverty alleviation programs, vulnerable groups, including socioeconomically vulnerable women, still face limitations in meeting basic needs and gaining access to education, health, decent work, and social protection. Based on the Regulation of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2012 as referred to by Simamora et al. (2019), socioeconomically vulnerable women are women aged 18 to 59 years who are the main breadwinners of the family, but their income is insufficient to meet basic needs. Susenas data in 2021 also shows that female-headed households reached 14.38% (Apriliandra et al., 2022).

Women living in poverty face a dual risk of economic limitations and gender inequality. Limited education and skills can narrow access to the job market and productive business opportunities so that women can more easily survive in low-income informal jobs. Therefore, women's empowerment is an important part of poverty alleviation strategies. Empowerment is understood as a process to improve the quality of human resources to be more independent, have a work network, and be able to adapt to the times (Lamaya & Kiwang, 2021).

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Socio-Economic Vulnerable Women (PRSE) are included in the group of People with Social Welfare Problems (MSMEs). This group includes individuals, families, or community groups who experience obstacles or difficulties so that they are unable to carry out social functions properly and their living needs are not adequately met (Fajarwati et al., 2017). In the context of empowerment, mentoring is important because social workers not only function as service providers, but also as liaison, facilitators, and encouragers so that beneficiaries can develop their potential (Andari, 2020; Apriliandra et al., 2022).

A number of studies show that PRSE empowerment programs can be carried out through skills training, mentoring, and capital support. Previous research on the Batu City Social Service showed that there were empowerment efforts through skills training and economic assistance (Agatha et al., 2022). Other research shows that training can increase the empowerment of PRSE (Hardiansyah et al., 2023), while capital support and strengthening social capital can help women's business development (Widiyanti et al., 2018). Studies on PRSE in other areas have also emphasized the importance of skills, access to productive resources, mentoring, and sustainable program support (A'yun & Faidati, 2021; Arifin et al., 2019; Lubis, 2019; Rahayu et al., 2024). Thus, a study on the implementation of capital assistance and assistance in Batu City is important to show how the program is carried out at the local level.

The Batu City Social Service has a series of programs directed at increasing the capacity of women in socio-economic vulnerable situations. One of the programs that is the focus of this study is capital assistance which is not only aimed at meeting economic needs, but also encouraging women to maintain or develop businesses. This article discusses the role of the Batu City Social Service, the implementation of the capital assistance program, the process of collecting data and identifying recipients, the mechanism of disbursement and assistance, and the obstacles that arise during implementation. This study is expected to provide an overview of the importance of institutional support and data management in realizing the empowerment of PRSE that is on target and sustainable.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the role of the Batu City Social Service in increasing the capacity of socio-economically vulnerable women. A qualitative descriptive approach is used to describe and interpret the meaning of the collected data by paying attention to various aspects of the situation being studied (Krisyantono in Akhmad, 2015).

The research is located in Batu City with the target of women who are included in the group of People with Social Welfare Problems and are involved in programs organized by the Social Service. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with Batu City Social Service workers who handle the Socio-Economic Vulnerable Women (PRSE) program to obtain the perspectives of those directly involved in the implementation of the program. In addition, observations were made of program activities to see the implementation process directly.

The data was analyzed descriptively by linking information from interviews and observations regarding the form of the program, the process of determining recipients, mentoring, monitoring, and implementation obstacles. Thus, the results of the study are focused on the overview of the role of the Social Service in each stage of the PRSE empowerment program.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Role of the Batu City Social Service in the Empowerment of Socio-Economic Vulnerable Women

The Social Service has an active role in increasing the capacity of socio-economically vulnerable women through empowerment programs. These forms of roles include business capital assistance as well as motivational, social, and entrepreneurial guidance. Capital assistance is directed so that women can open their own businesses or increase their existing businesses so that they can support the family economy. The program not only places the recipient as a party receiving assistance, but also as a business actor who needs to be directed and accompanied in the use of assistance.

3.2 Implementation of Capital Assistance Program for Socio-Economicall Vulnerable Women

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it is known that the Batu City Social Service has only begun to touch the target of the capital assistance program for Socio-Economic Vulnerable Women (PRSE) in October 2024, with implementation scheduled for December 2024. The capital assistance provided amounted to 10 million rupiah, which was received by 16 people classified as PRSE in Batu City. The requirements for recipients of this assistance include businesses that have been running for at least two years, submission of proposals, as well as people classified as PRSE, both widows and women who still have husbands but cannot meet their daily needs.

3.3 Data Collection and Identification Process of Prospective Aid Recipients

Before the disbursement of funds is carried out, the process of collecting data taken from the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) and the Family Hope Program (PKH) is carried out. After the data is synchronized, a direct survey process is carried out to prospective recipients. In addition, observations were carried out to find out the type of business owned, as well as conducting interviews to find out the needs of potential recipients. After the interview is completed and the needs of the prospective recipient have been identified, the next step is the preparation of a clear and detailed Cost Budget Plan (RAB).

3.4 Disbursement, Mentoring, and Program Monitoring Process

After the identification process, a Decree (SK) is made of a determination submitted for the disbursement of funds to the recipient's personal account, which cannot be represented by another party. The assistance process from the Social Service is also carried out by helping to direct the recipients in purchasing goods that support their business and ensuring that all transactions run correctly, including the obligation to keep proof of purchase receipt as a form of accountability. This survey and mentoring process lasts approximately 1 month, and the monitoring process to the recipients lasts for 3 months so that each step can be carried out systematically and transparently, to support the success of the program as a whole.

4. Conclusion

The role of the Batu City Social Service in empowering socio-economically vulnerable women is important in increasing the capacity and economic independence of beneficiaries. The programs studied include business capital assistance, motivational, social, and entrepreneurial guidance, as well as mentoring and monitoring. The implementation of the program involves the data collection process through DTKS and PKH, surveys, observations, interviews, preparation of RAB, determination of recipients, disbursement of assistance, assistance in the use of funds, and monitoring. Capital assistance of IDR 10 million was given to 16 recipients with certain conditions. The main obstacles to the program are limited data and inaccuracies in citizen information that can affect the accuracy of the target. Therefore, more systematic data verification, coordination between parties, consistent mentoring, and innovation in data management and program implementation are needed. The strengthening of these aspects is expected to support the sustainability of the program and have a long-term impact on socio-economically vulnerable women in Batu City.

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