

Volume: 5
Number: 4
Page: 640 - 646

Article History:

Received: 2025-06-20
Revised: 2025-07-21
Accepted: 2025-08-28

THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF MACRAME BUSINESSES ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN LAMPEJI VILLAGE

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the role and impact of macrame business on women's economic empowerment in Lampeji Village. Economic empowerment of women in Lampeji Village. Macrame, as form of a form of handicraft that utilizes rope knotting techniques, has become an alternative source of income for women in Lampeji Village. An Alternative source of income for women in Lampeji village. The research method used was qualitative with a case study approach, involving in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies with Women macrame business actors and related stakeholders. The result of the research showed that the macrame business not only contributed to the increase in household income but also played a role in improving women's skills, confidence, and participation. Skills, confidence, and women's participation in family economic decision-making. Family economy. Overall, the macrame business has become an effective tool in empowering women economically and socially in Lamprame Village. Effective in empowering women economically and socially in Lampeji Village.

Keywords: Makrame, Economic Empowerment, Women, Lampeji Village, Handicrafts.

INTRODUCTION

Rural women are often marginalized in accessing economic resources, despite their important roles in the domestic and public spheres. The development of the agricultural sector in Java since the 1970s has impacted women as the most disadvantaged labor force, with many forced to seek low-wage employment outside the agricultural sector (Stoler, 1982; Sayogjo, 1984). Therefore, women's economic empowerment is crucial for increasing independence and social justice.

Women's economic empowerment can be achieved through the development of arts-based businesses, such as macramé. Macramé is a craft that involves knotting rope or thread to create unique and creative handicrafts. Macramé crafts can be applied to various products, such as accessories, home decor, and fashion items (Yarza & Dharma, 2021). With increasing demand and broad market potential, macramé represents a promising business opportunity (Al'azmi et al., 2024).

Macramé not only offers significant potential as a source of income but also as a medium for artistic expression (Fitriatun et al., 2024). The development of macramé crafts is also marked by innovations in materials and designs, making it increasingly popular among craft and fashion enthusiasts (Yulimarni et al., 2022). Therefore, macramé can be a solution to increase the income and well-being of rural women.

In Lampeji Village, the macrame business is one of the efforts to empower women economically. This women's economic empowerment program is designed to foster independence for women by creating jobs for poor women, school dropouts, or those with low levels of education. Through the macrame business, women in Lampeji Village can earn their income and not be dependent on their families or husbands. This program also aims to increase the income and well-being of families in Lampeji Village.



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By joining a macrame business, women can earn additional income that can help ease the family's financial burden. Before joining a macrame business like Roseli Makrame, many women were solely dependent on their families or husbands. However, with women's economic empowerment programs through macrame businesses, they can achieve economic independence and improve their families' well-being, especially for their children's needs, such as school savings.

In previous research on empowering women in supporting MSMEs in Indonesia, according to Marthalina 2018, there are differences in the latest research, in previous research focused on empowering women in the MSME sector to reduce poverty levels, while in the latest research, focused on the role of macrame businesses on women's economic empowerment. According to Muhammad Alhada Fuadilah Habib Sutopo 2024 on MSME Development in the aspect of marketing communication as a form of empowering women around the family, in previous research aimed at empowering women as regional economic development while the latest research aims to improve women's economy in macrame businesses, then according to Wahid Rahim on economic empowerment for women's empowerment strategies and their impact on economic development there are differences, namely in previous research focused on economic education as women's empowerment while in the latest research focused on the economic empowerment of village women.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with observation, interview, and documentation methods as a reference to guide the research to remain focused and in accordance with the reality in the field. This research uses a case study research strategy, namely, field research conducted by collecting data directly sourced from the research location. To explore in depth the role and impact of the macrame business on women's economic empowerment, which is carried out in Lampeji Village, Mumbulsari District, Jember Regency, East Java. Primary data, researchers conducted interviews with all women involved in the macrame business in Lampeji Village, both working independently and those who are members of business groups or Village MSMEs, which is the main focus. In addition, additional informants such as village officials, community leaders, and related parties were also involved to gain a more holistic perspective. Secondary data, such as village records, financial reports of business groups, and other supporting documents, were collected to complement the primary data.

The data collection technique was through a direct interview process with 3 female makrame employees who had direct experience in the business, and with local consumers who used makrame products to understand its impact on the local economy. Observation, direct observation was carried out regarding the makrame production process, social interactions, and the business environment in Lampeji Village. Documentation was collected in the form of text, images, sound recordings, and other forms to support the research findings. This study analyzed the data using thematic analysis methods involving data reduction, data presentation, and concluding. The validity of the data used to ensure the validity of the data; this study used source triangulation and method triangulation techniques.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Path Analysis Results. The results of this study were obtained from interviews with three informants in the macrame craft industry, using triangulation techniques: source triangulation, which included data from various informants, and method triangulation, which included interview data, observation, and documentation. Several key findings illustrate the role and impact of the macrame business on women's economic empowerment, including: motivation and the origins of



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the macrame business, economic impact, increased skills and self-confidence, social networks and community support, and challenges faced.

Triangulation Process. In this study, a triangulation process was conducted to strengthen the validity of the data obtained. The researchers applied a triangulation approach to sources and methods, combining in-depth interviews, field observations, and document reviews related to macrame entrepreneurs and other involved parties.

Source Triangulation. Source triangulation in this study was conducted by comparing and matching data obtained from three key informants who have different roles in the macrame business. These informants include:

- 1) Roseli, the owner and founder of Roseli Makrame;
- 2) Sarifah, a housewife who has been active as a macrame craftsman since 2017;
- 3) Jumalia, also a housewife who began participating in the macrame production business in the same year, 2017.

Although the three women have different educational backgrounds and ages – Sarifah and Jumalia only completed elementary school – the information they share demonstrates a consistent and mutually supportive pattern. These similarities are evident in several key aspects, including:

- a. Their primary reason for joining the macrame business was the desire to earn additional income, thus eliminating their complete economic dependence on their husbands.
- b. Positive changes in their family's economic situation, as they experienced increased well-being after actively engaging in macrame production, including the ability to save, purchase household necessities, and even send their children to school.
- c. The ability to continue fulfilling their responsibilities as housewives, thanks to the flexible work system implemented in the macrame business, which allows them to work from home and at their own pace.

Overall data from these three sources shows that although they come from different social contexts and experiences, the narratives they construct complement and strengthen each other, thus providing a complete and valid picture of the impact of the macrame business on women's economic empowerment in Lampeji Village.

Triangulation Method. Data collection techniques in this study were conducted through several approaches, namely:

- a. In-depth interviews with informants to gain firsthand insight into their subjective experiences regarding the impact of the macrame business on women's economic and social roles.
- b. Field observations, conducted to observe the actual production process, work patterns, and social relationships among workers within the business environment, reflect a spirit of togetherness, independence, and skill in macrame processing.
- c. Documentary data collection, including training archives, product documentation, and business activity reports, was used as additional evidence to strengthen the data from the interviews.

The application of this triangulation method aims to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data obtained. Each piece of information from the interviews was re-examined through observational findings and available documents. For example, statements about the availability of knotting technique training and the implementation of flexible work systems were verified through direct observation of production activities and supporting documents, which showed that workers truly had the flexibility to manage their time and work from home.

Background and Motivation for the Business. Roseli, a 35-year-old macrame business owner, founded her business in 2015. She initially worked in Bali in 2003. She developed her talent in



macrame crafts and then brought it to the island of Java, specifically to Jember, where she lives in Lampeji Village. She was motivated by the desire to help homemakers. She said in an interview, "I want to encourage mothers here who work in the mountains to work from home and join my macrame business." (Roseli, interview, 1:33 AM)

Sarifah, a 30-year-old employee working in the macrame business, has only graduated from elementary school and is a wife/housewife. She witnessed the process of weaving macrame firsthand and was then invited by her sister, who made her interested in working. She said in an interview: "I have been with Roseli Macrame for a long time, since 2017, and I get a pretty good salary, and it really helps my family's economy too." (Safira, interview, 00:33)

Jumalia is a 38-year-old macrame employee who graduated from elementary school and is a wife/housewife. She joined Roseli Macrame in 2017. In an interview, she said, "I joined this macrame business because I wanted to help my family's economy so that I would not depend on my husband." (Jumalia, interview, 00:57).

Impact on Gender Roles. This work is not a barrier for homemakers because it can be done at any time and is supported by family and the surrounding community. "This work does not affect our activities as housewives or wives" (Roseli, interview, 9:13 AM). This work significantly contributes to the family economy and helps women become more financially independent, less dependent on their husbands, and the daily work time required is only three hours. "Joining Makrame has really helped my finances, and I can save from the wages I earn" (Sarifah, interview, 2:52 AM).

Income from macrame is very helpful for housewives who are elementary school graduates because finding work nowadays is not easy with wages received in just 10 days can reach 500,000 to millions depending on the product produced "with wages from macrame I can buy gold and save with the results of my work without asking my husband" (Jumalia, interview, 02:55).

Obstacles and Challenges. Roseli stated in her interview: "So far, there have been no obstacles in this business, whether it is capital, materials, or tools" (Roseli, interview, 11:04). The only challenge for macramé artisans is their dedication and perseverance to achieve perfect results.

According to Sarifah and Jumalia, "I have had no challenges while working here because the work can be done anytime and in my free time, and I have to prioritize my role as a housewife" (interview, 06:12).

The results of the interviews conducted showed similarities in the level of financial literacy among informants from diverse backgrounds. Some of the main factors that influence this financial literacy include education, access to financial information, and social support obtained from family and community. This finding directly answers the research question regarding the influence and impact of the macrame business on women's economic empowerment in Lampeji Village. This finding shows that individuals who have access to technology, such as the internet, tend to have a better understanding of financial concepts to improve their family's welfare. The role of women in the macrame business (homemakers, teenagers, and others) in the village in developing the village from an economic perspective is still very vulnerable, this can be seen from the low social welfare figures of the community, seen from the number of widows, which is 487 people, which means there is a surge in the number of heads of families by women, which can be interpreted that the female population should be directly proportional to the role and position of women in the family as well as in society, especially in the village. Where seen from the low education sector, almost 90% of human resources have a low education of high school or below. Heru Sunardi (2022). Women's economic empowerment refers to the process that enables women to access economic resources, make decisions that affect their lives, and actively participate in economic activities. Pilla and



Rajagopal (2019) indicate that empowering women in rural areas through community-based groups can help improve skills, access information, and strengthen social networks that are beneficial in increasing economic opportunities. In several villages in Indonesia, as revealed by Wulandari (2020), the development of micro-enterprises and women's cooperatives has shown a positive impact on family welfare. The formation of women's groups, such as Joint Business Groups (KUB), enables women to become more financially independent and reduce dependence on the formal sector. Several factors influencing women's economic success in villages include access to education and training, social support, and the role of culture and social structures in the village. Riyanto (2021) highlights that patriarchal culture is often an obstacle for women to participate in economic activities in villages. Normative norms that view women only as household managers can limit their opportunities for development. Furthermore, Herawati (2022) researched that access to business capital and market networks are also important factors in accelerating women's economic empowerment. Without adequate access to capital, women in villages often struggle to develop their businesses.

Based on in-depth interviews with three key informants—Roseli, Sarifah, and Jumalia (workers), the macrame business has proven to play a significant role in improving the standard of living for women in Lampeji village, particularly in economic, social, and psychological aspects. Roseli, the founder of Roseli Makrame, is strongly motivated by empowering women in her village. She started the business after experiencing life in Bali, hoping that homemakers who previously toiled in the mountains could transition to more flexible work. She created a licensed work system that allows employees not only to earn an income but also to receive skills training, such as macrame knotting and management. It demonstrates that the support provided is not only financial but also for self-development. Sarifah and Jumalia, as workers, experienced an improved quality of life after joining the macrame business. They revealed that the income from this business significantly helps their family finances, reduces dependence on their husbands, and allows them to meet their children's needs. Although the income is not fixed every month, it is sufficient and depends on the complexity of the order. Interestingly, the flexibility of work (an average of 3 hours per day) allows them to maintain their domestic roles without disrupting their primary responsibilities.

From the owner's perspective, Roseli emphasized the importance of enthusiasm and initiative in facing challenges, while Sarifah and Jumalia emphasized the economic and social benefits of participating in this business. They agreed that there were no major barriers related to raw materials, tools, and capital, but hoped for support from village regulations and the community for business sustainability. As noted by Wulandari (2020) and Herawati (2022), a comparison with previous literature suggests that similar patterns can help women's groups escape poverty through training, skills development, and social networking. However, the macrame business practice in Lampeji is unique due to its deep community-based approach, which creates a high level of social solidarity among business actors. This macrame business also contributes to reducing gender inequality in the village economy. Women not only play an active role as economic stakeholders but also enjoy greater social respect. It is evident in how they feel cared for and recognized by their families and communities. Thus, the macrame business in Lampeji Village is not only an economic instrument but also an agent of social and cultural transformation within the local community.

The results of this research revealed several important findings. First, the macrame business has been shown to have a significant positive impact on increasing the income and skills of women in Lampeji Village. Second, the information provided by the informants demonstrates harmony; there were no significant differences of opinion regarding changes in their social or economic conditions after joining this business. Third, the various data collection techniques used, from



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interviews and observation to documentation, complement and reinforce each other. It ensures that the overall findings in this study have a high level of accuracy and are worthy of being used as a basis for reliable analysis.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the existence of the macrame business has a significant contribution to the process of women's economic empowerment in Lampeji Village. The active participation of women, particularly homemakers, in macrame production activities has had a tangible impact, not only in the form of additional income but also in improving practical skills, self-confidence, and the ability to make decisions in household financial management. The flexible work structure in this business allows women to continue to carry out their domestic roles without having to neglect their participation in productive activities. Furthermore, involvement in the macrame business also encourages the formation of strong social networks among women, creating bonds of solidarity and collaboration that strengthen collective work at the community level.

The analysis of various data collection methods, including interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies, demonstrates a consistent information base and strengthens the evidence regarding the positive impacts experienced by business actors. The triangulation process employed in this study confirms the validity of the findings and supports the potential for community-based business models such as macrame to be developed, both through local policy interventions and collaboration between stakeholders. Thus, macrame businesses serve not only as a means of generating alternative income but also as an effective instrument of social change in sustainably enhancing women's capacity and empowerment.

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