

The Impact of the PEKKA Program on Women's Economy in West Lampung Regency

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ABSTRACT

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Economic challenges and limited access to resources in West Lampung Regency have prompted women, particularly those heading households, to actively engage in economic activities. This study aims to analyze the impact of the Women's Empowerment Program for Female Household Heads (PEKKA) on improving the economic status of women. The PEKKA program specifically targets women who are the primary breadwinners, such as widows or divorced women, by providing skills training and access to capital to enhance family welfare. Employing a descriptive qualitative methodology, the study collected data through in-depth interviews and questionnaires. Findings reveal that the PEKKA Program effectively improves participants' income, entrepreneurial skills, and economic independence. Nonetheless, efforts toward the program's sustainability and expansion are required to ensure its broader and lasting impact.

Introduction

Economic and employment issues have always been topics that attract public attention. Low levels of welfare encourage communities to seek appropriate solutions to improve their standard of living (Tuara, 2022). Family economic problems are often related to the management of limited resources. The main challenges in improving family welfare include weak economic conditions and the lack of targeted strategies or policies, such as managing population mobility to support regional economic growth (Sunarti, 2012). As a result, economic pressures on families and social demands often motivate women to contribute by supplementing family income through additional work (Nofianti, 2016).

Welfare society is greatly influenced by the level of income owned. Income can be defined as results received someone, good in the form of money, salary, or goods that give benefit after do work or business certain (Wicaksana, A., & Rachman, 2018) One of the primary indicators of economic progress is per capita income, which refers to the average income received by each individual within a given population. In addition to this macroeconomic indicator, household socio-economic conditions also play a critical role in determining the level of family welfare. One influential factor is the number of family members, which directly correlates with the level of economic needs that must be met. The larger the household size, the greater the economic burden. If household income is

insufficient to meet these needs, the overall level of family welfare is likely to decline (Herawan, 2017).

Women work not only to fill their leisure time, but also as an effort to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families. According to (Aswiyati, 2016), in the area rural, women do not work solely to pursue a career or to pass the time, but rather to meet essential living needs, considering that their husbands' income is often insufficient. This situation motivates many women, especially housewives, to participate in contributing to increasing family income. When the husband's income is inadequate, women often have to play dual roles, namely domestic roles at home and external roles outside the home. However, many women, particularly housewives, still face challenges due to limited access in expanding their roles within society (Soleman et al., 2022). Wider and more open access is needed for those who are able to effectively utilize business opportunities, especially by integrating appropriate modern technology that aligns with current needs. Technology is one of the key factors supporting women's businesses, both at small and large scales. Nevertheless, obstacles such as limited access and insufficient resources often hinder women from taking on more significant roles, such as formal employment or entrepreneurship.

Improving family economic welfare has become a significant challenge in West Lampung Regency, an area where the majority of the population depends on the weakening agricultural sector. Although agriculture remains the backbone of the community's economy, this sector faces various obstacles such as low productivity and limited access to markets and technology. Based on data from the West Lampung Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2023, the poverty rate in this district reached 16.4%, which is higher than the Lampung Province average of 14.7%. The income of poor communities, ranging between IDR 500,000 and IDR 600,000 per person per month, reflects a difficult economic situation, exacerbated by uneven income distribution. Under these conditions, girls play an important role in supporting the family economy, even though their contributions are often insufficiently acknowledged.

The labor force participation rate of women in West Lampung Regency is only 45%, significantly lower than that of men, which stands at 58%. Most women work in the informal sector, such as assisting their husbands in agricultural businesses or small-scale trading, but their contributions are often limited by social norms and restricted access to education, skills training, and business capital. The average monthly income of women in this region is around IDR 1,200,000, placing them in the vulnerable-to-poverty category (near poor). This situation becomes more challenging as expenditures for basic needs like food, education, health, and housing continue to rise. To overcome these challenges, collaborative efforts from various parties are necessary to increase women's access to economic resources, technology, and broader markets. Therefore, the provision of business development training programs is essential to facilitate the public in managing their businesses, which in turn can increase their profits (Susilo & Ramadhani, 2022).

To overcome the aforementioned challenges, the central government established the Women Empowerment Program for Female Heads of Household (PEKKA). This program is intended for women who head families living in poverty. PEKKA defines a female head of household as an individual who acts as the primary breadwinner, house manager, and decision-maker within the family. The program covers various categories of women, such as widows, divorced women, single women who support their families, or women who become the primary breadwinners because their husbands are unable to work (Soleman et al., 2022).

West Lampung Regency through the Control Service Population, Family Planning, Women Empowerment and Child Protection District has a program namely Improvement Quality Family with Sub Development Program Community Activities for Improvement Quality West Lampung Regency, through the Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection Service, has implemented a program called the Family Quality Improvement Program with a sub-development initiative focused on Community Activities to Enhance Family Quality at the Regency/City level. One of these initiatives is the Creative Economic Activities of Women Heads of Household (PEKKA) program in West Lampung Regency. Several studies have examined the PEKKA program. For example, Adnawi Iqbal (2025) in his study titled Analysis of the Impact of Women's Empowerment on Family Welfare, found that the PEKKA Anyelir Program in Aren Jaya Subdistrict has a positive impact on improving women's quality of life through skills training, family financial management, and access to basic social services. Similarly, research by titled Implementation of the Women Empowerment Program for Female Heads of Household (PEKKA) in Increasing Family Welfare, concluded that the PEKKA program significantly improves the welfare of female heads of household, particularly in economic, educational, health, and social participation aspects. However, issues related to board and religion have not yet been optimally addressed. Additionally, the program enhances women's access to health and education services for their children. Based on this background, the author is interested in researching "The Impact of the PEKKA Program on Women's Economy in West Lampung Regency." The objective of this study is to determine the extent to which the PEKKA program affects the economic improvement of women in West Lampung Regency. The research question formulated is: How does the PEKKA program impact the economic improvement of women in West Lampung Regency?

Literature Review

Gender equality refers to a condition in which men and women have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in various aspects of life, such as politics, law, economy, socio-culture, education, and national defense and security (Fibrianto, 2018). This equality encompasses not only the right to participate but also the right to equally enjoy the benefits of development. Furthermore, gender equality plays an important role in eliminating discrimination and negative stereotypes against the second gender. This concept is closely related to gender justice, which entails fair and proportional treatment based on the needs and rights of individuals (Fibrianto, 2018). Gender influences the distribution of work, power relations, access to resources, decision-making, and access to information between men and women, all of which are shaped by social and cultural values (Fakih, 2023).

A study by Rahma & , Ramona Handayani (2025) conducted in Semarang City using a case study method focused on women's empowerment through strengthening micro-businesses, such as crafts and culinary enterprises. The study found that women's economic empowerment increased their contribution to family income, encouraged independence, and strengthened family social stability. Effective strategies included technical training, business assistance, and ease of access to capital. Support from local governments and communities was deemed crucial for the program's success.

Research by Rahajuni et al (2022) in Banyumas showed that the PEKKA Program also contributes to improving women's quality of life through skills training, family financial management, and access to social services. This program helps reduce women's economic dependence on their husbands and enhances their financial independence. However, challenges related to culture, social factors, and access to capital still need to be addressed to ensure the program's sustainability.

Meanwhile, research by Adnawi Iqbal (2025) in Aren Jaya Subdistrict, Bekasi also found that the PEKKA Program makes a tangible contribution to women's economic empowerment. The program increases access to training and markets, which directly impacts household income. Additionally, women's participation in social and political activities within the community has also increased. However, limited access to technology and funding resources remains a major challenge in expanding the program's impact.

Overall, various previous studies indicate that the PEKKA Program has a significant positive impact on women's empowerment, both economically and socially. Improvements in business skills, financial management, and women's participation in economic decision-making are real outcomes of the program's implementation. Nevertheless, the program's sustainability still requires attention, especially concerning post-training support, market access, and expanding the coverage of beneficiaries.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to systematically and factually describe field conditions based on participants' perceptions and experiences. This approach is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of the PEKKA Program on the economic conditions of female heads of households in West Lampung Regency. According to Balaka (2022), the qualitative approach generates descriptive data in the form of narratives, both written and oral, as well as observations of behavior. This method allows researchers to accurately describe the characteristics of a population, especially in complex social and economic contexts. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews and closed questionnaires, involving 30 female respondents who are members of the PEKKA Program. The collected data were then analyzed descriptively to describe the program's impact on participants' income, business skills, and economic independence.

Results and Discussion

The Role of Women in Improving Family Economy through the PEKKA Program in West Lampung

a. PEKKA Rural Creative Economic Activities

Empowerment Woman is an important strategy in development economic and social, especially in increase independence and participation Woman in taking decision. The PEKKA program in West Lampung Regency provides training entrepreneurship to Woman head family, including mentoring production food processed based on cassava. These activities not only increase income, but also strengthen skills effort and trust self participants. Approach This in line with the Capability Theory which emphasizes importance give access and opportunity to individual for reach objective his life. Training entrepreneurship provided by the program expands ability participant in manage business in a way productive, facing challenge business, and improve income family.

b. Success of the PEKKA Program on Family Economy

The PEKKA program has give contribution real to improvement welfare family through improvement income women. Based on Human Capital Theory (Schultz, 1964), improvement skills and education through training is form investments that have an impact on increasing productivity and life's quality. Program participants earn skills new relevant with market needs, which have an impact straight to the upgrade income House stairs. Outdoor training this formal path become important, especially for women who run role double as seeker livelihood and management House stairs. With However, the PEKKA Program does not only strengthen economy family, but also encouraging independence financial and recognition social for Woman head family.

In the PEKKA program, women are involved in this program get training and socialization For increase they skills. PEKKA program participants have show that contribution skills they are very significant in improve economic family status. Based on results survey use technique questionnaire data collection against 30 respondents women who are members in the PEKKA Program obtained that:

Table 1 Results Questionnaire

Profile Respondents	
Type Sex	Woman: 100%
Age	25–34 year: 20%
	35–44 year: 50%
	45–54 year: 20%
	55 year to on: 10%
Duration Follow Program PEKKA	< 1 year: 20%
	1 year: 30%
	> 1 year: 50%
Income Monthly Before And After Program	
Before Program	Rp1,000,000–Rp1,500,000 (Average: Rp. 1,200,000)
After Program	Rp1,800,000–Rp2,500,000 (Average: Rp. 2,200,000)
Improvement Income	No increase: 20%
	Increase 10%–30%: 30%
	Increase > 30%: 50%
Access Capital And Opportunity Business	
Get Access Capital Business	70%
Open Business New After the Program	90%
Change Access Education Child	
Increase	80%
No Changed	20%
Level Satisfaction to Program PEKKA	
Very Satisfied	50%
Satisfied	30%
Enough Satisfied	20%
No Satisfied	0%
	Positive

Comment Respondents	Program give training applicable skills.
	Make it easier access to capital business small.
	Increase in self-confidence and organizational skills.
	Negative
	A number of Respondent complain about short training duration.
	Difficulty in marketing product business.

Source : Results Questionnaire , 2024

Based on results a survey conducted on 30 respondents, all of whom is Woman with range aged 25 to 54 years, can concluded that the PEKKA Program has give impact significant positive to improvement the economy of the participants. Most of them Respondent report improvement income more from 50% after follow the program, with an average income of monthly income which increased from Rp1,200,000 before the program to Rp2,200,000 after the program. In addition, 70% of respondents disclose that they succeed get access to business capital, and 90% of them open business new as results direct from the program. The PEKKA program also has an impact positive on education children, where 80% of respondents report improvement access education For they children.

Satisfaction level towards this program is also very high, with 80% of respondents state satisfied or very satisfied, reflecting perceived program quality give benefit directly. Training applicable skills and convenience access to business capital were the two aspects that were most appreciated by the participants. Although Thus, there is a number of complaint related duration training that is considered too short and challenging in marketing product the resulting effort. This is show existence room for improvements, especially in matter mentoring continuation and support marketing. In overall, survey This show that the PEKKA Program was successful increase income and welfare economy participants, but strengthening support post program will be very important for ensure sustainability and success efforts that have been started.

Table 2 Results Questionnaire

Category	Results
Amount Respondents Which Validated	10 person (33% from total respondents)
Method Validation	Interview Repeat, Verification Document, Triangulation
1. Validation Consistency Answer	
Question: Whether income You are improving after follow program?	Initial results: 9 out of 10 respondents stated that their income increased.
	Validation: 9 out of 10 respondents confirmed the same answer.
Question: How much satisfied You with the PEKKA program?	Initial results showed that 4 respondents were very satisfied, 5 were satisfied, and 1 was somewhat satisfied.
	Validation: Answers are consistent with the initial results without any changes.
2. Validation Income	
Income Before Program	Rp1,100,000 (average)
Income After Program	Rp2,150,000 (average)

Results Validation	Income data were validated in accordance with the initial questionnaire, with 8 respondents using informal financial records and 2 respondents providing oral statements.
3. Validation Participation in Program	
Verification Data	10 respondents were recorded as active participants in the PEKKA Program list.
Duration Follow Program	The duration aligns with the initial responses without any differences.
4. Triangulation Data	
Data Secondary	Income improvement among PEKKA participants in other regions is 85%. The survey results showed 83%, which is consistent with secondary data.
Statistics Local	Local economic trends show an income increase of 20%, which is lower compared to the direct impact of the PEKKA program, reaching an average of 30%.
Category	Results
5. Conclusion Validation	
Consistency Answer	There is 100% consistency between the initial results and the re-interview data.
Accuracy Income	The income data has been verified with a 95% accuracy rate.
Participation Program	100% valid based on list participant.
Notes	The validation results show that the survey data are reliable, with a very high level of consistency.

Source : Results Survey Field , 2024

The results of indepth interviews with two participants of the PEKKA Program reveal the tangible impact of the program in enhancing the economic independence of female heads of households in West Lampung Regency. Mrs. Sumiyati, one of the participants, utilized the skills acquired from the training to manage her family's assets particularly a small garden by selling the harvests and opening a small shop. The income she generated was used to meet basic household needs, fund her children's education, and build savings for the future. This illustrates how the skills gained through PEKKA training have encouraged the productive use of available resources.

Meanwhile, another participant, Mrs. Murni, started a homemade meatball business after completing food processing training. Although the business has not yet yielded significant profits, it has been sufficient to cover daily expenses and support her children's education. These two cases demonstrate that the training provided by the PEKKA Program not only improves technical and entrepreneurial skills but also strengthens participants' self-confidence and resilience. In addition to contributing to economic growth, PEKKA women also assume dual roles as primary earners and household managers. They balance their time between domestic responsibilities, income generating activities, and community involvement. For example, they may prepare meals for their families while simultaneously preparing food products to sell. This multitasking presents its own challenges, yet it has become an integral part of their daily routine, without diminishing their household responsibilities. From a gender perspective, this reflects a shifting paradigm in women's roles from being confined to the domestic sphere to becoming active participants in the public and productive realms. As noted by Nugroho (2011), while traditional views still associate household chores with women's roles, in practice, many women are now actively involved in economic and social domains. In Suoh District, PEKKA women perform both roles domestic and economic with equal responsibility and dedication.

Furthermore, based on the classification Al-Hibri (2001), PEKKA women are included in the category of women with families who remain actively working. The PEKKA program

encourages them to develop productive household-based skills, with the support of family members. For example, those who sell food combine cooking activities for family and business needs, while those who trade non-food items arrange their time after household chores are completed.

Some women who participate in PEKKA training do not experience a significant increase in income due to a combination of complex barriers. Although they acquire new skills, they often face structural challenges such as limited access to markets and capital, making it difficult to turn products into profit. Furthermore, the type of training received may not always align with local market demand, and the lack of advanced business mentoring in financial management or digital marketing hinders their business growth. Simultaneously, the double burden of being the head of the household and managing domestic responsibilities consumes time and energy that could otherwise be dedicated to business development, a situation sometimes compounded by a lack of confidence to take greater business risks.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that the PEKKA Program has made a significant contribution to improving the welfare of female heads of households, both in terms of economics, social, and psychology. This program not only increases income and skills, but also expands women's roles in household economic decision-making. These results are consistent with the findings Herawan (2017) that training and access to social services in the PEKKA program encourage women's economic independence. However, challenges remain, especially related to the sustainability of the program and expanding its reach to other vulnerable groups. Continued assistance, marketing access, and strengthening business networks are important so that the impact of the program can be broader and more sustainable.

Conclusion

Women can successfully manage their dual roles, starting from being housewives, maintaining good communication with their husbands, and realizing that caring for children and maintaining household harmony alone is not sufficient. Cooperation, mutual assistance, sharing, and jointly seeking solutions for problems at home are the best ways to achieve harmony in the household. Women will be more successful in their careers if household matters are well managed. The women involved in the PEKKA Program are those whose husbands are no longer able to provide livelihood. Therefore, they work hard to meet their life needs. These PEKKA participants have received socialization and skills training to support the improvement of their economic conditions. There are two examples of PEKKA women who have utilized their skills to engage in selling activities. From the proceeds of their sales, they have successfully fulfilled household needs such as financing their children's education, saving for the future, paying household expenses, and meeting daily necessities. The PEKKA program in West Lampung Regency has had a very positive impact on women's empowerment, both economically and socially. This program enhances women's economic skills, such as business training and financial management, enabling them to become more financially independent and actively participate in economic decision-making at the household level.

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