



Empowerment of Socio-Economically Vulnerable Women (WRSE) through the Social Rehabilitation Program in South Kalimantan

Ghina Nur Rarin, Dewi Purboningsih

Lambung Mangkurat University, Indonesia

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CORRESPONDENCE

Name: Dewi Purboningsih
E-mail: dewi.purboningsih@ulm.ac.id

A B S T R A C T

The number of Women with Socioeconomic Vulnerability (WRSE) in South Kalimantan Province is still quite high, so an empowerment program was implemented by the Social Rehabilitation Center for the Disadvantaged in Social Barakat Cangkal Bacari (PRSTS BCB) aimed at increasing their independence. The purpose of this study was to analyze the WRSE empowerment process, as well as to determine the supporting and inhibiting factors in the empowerment. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews conducted with 12 informants for 4 months, and documentation. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the empowerment theory of The Three Principal Outcome-Focused Goals of Helping. The results showed that WRSE empowerment had gone well and met three empowerment indicators, namely: Life-enhancing outcomes for the client seen from socialization; selection and identification; assessment approach; and business capital assistance. Learning how to help oneself seen from skills guidance, entrepreneurship, and internship placement. Developing a prevention mentality seen from mental, social and religious guidance. The supporting factors for the program include 1) a mentality that does not give up easily, 2) professional instructors, 3) effective handling methods, 4) support from the family. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors include: 1) limited budget, 2) limited human resources, 3) minimal information at the sub-district/village level, 4) lack of self-confidence, and 5) difficulty in accessing capital. Recommendations for further research are to explore the impact of empowerment on ex-clients.

INTRODUCTION

Women with Socio-Economic Vulnerable (WRSE) is an adult woman who is married, unmarried, or widowed and does not have enough income to be able to meet basic daily needs (Hasmi et al., 2021). Regulation of the Minister of Social Affairs Number 08 of 2012 concerning Guidelines for Data Collection and Data Management of Persons with Social Welfare Problems and Potential and Sources of Social Welfare, states that the criteria for WRSE are women aged 18 - 59 years, wives whose husbands are left without clarity, become the main breadwinners of the family, and earn less or insufficient for the needs of a decent life.

A group that is included in poverty is women. In poor families, women often act as saviors of the family economy. However, women experience uncertainty in making a living for the family, this is called socio-economic vulnerability (Hasanah et al., 2022). In addition to poverty, the causes of women / women becoming socio-economic vulnerable groups are educational and mental factors. Relatively low education allows loss of common sense in meeting the needs of life which can lead to social deviance (Hasmi et al., 2021) ; (Clark, 2019).

Supported by data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2023), it was recorded that in 2022 as many as 9.65 percent of Indonesian women lived below the poverty line. This figure is higher than the percentage of men who reached 9.29 percent. So, this is in line with the statement of the Expert Staff of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA), that in poor communities, women show lower welfare indicators than men (Komariah, 2023).

Welfare for women has become a global issue so that the concept of women's empowerment is of more concern in various countries (Gressel et al., 2020), especially in developing countries. The Government of Uganda has empowered women in education, and specifically increased women's involvement in household decision-making (Bui, 2023). This study analyzed the impact of *Self-Help Groups* (SHGs) membership on women's empowerment in India, which showed positive impacts on credit access and decision-making, but limitations on asset ownership and production decisions (Kumar, 2021).

The Indonesian government has paid attention to the welfare of WRSE, by categorizing it as one of the Persons with Social Welfare Problems (PMKS) or what is now called Social Social Welfare Services (PPKS). PPKS are individuals, families, groups, and/or communities who due to an obstacle, difficulty, or disturbance, cannot carry out their social functions, so that their physical, spiritual, and social needs cannot be met adequately and reasonably (Hasmi et al., 2021). Therefore, it is a challenge for local governments to continue to strive to improve the welfare of socio-economically vulnerable women.

The distribution of the number of WRSE in South Kalimantan province is very fluid from 2022-2023. Based on the Integrated Banua Social Data of the South Kalimantan Provincial Social Service (DATU SOBAN, 2024), it is known that the number of people with WRSE in 2022 was 12,113 people. While in 2023 it decreased to 9,216 people. The following graph shows the distribution of WRSE in the South Kalimantan Province area.

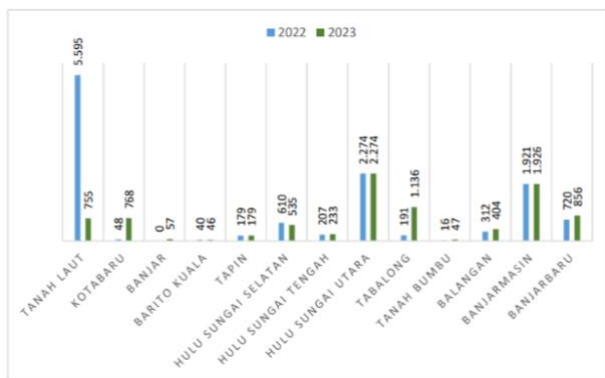


Figure 1. Distribution of WRSE in South Kalimantan Province. Source: DATU SOBAN (2024)

Figure 1 shows a graph of the distribution of the number of WRSEs in the South Kalimantan Province. During the period 2022 to 2023, there were fluctuations in the number of WRSE in different regions. Some regions experienced an increase and decrease in the number of WRSE, while in other regions, the number tended to stabilize. In 2023, the highest number of WRSE was recorded in Hulu Sungai Utara District (2,274), followed by Banjarmasin City (1,926), and Tabalong District (1,136). In contrast, the lowest number of WRSEs was in Barito Kuala District (46), followed by Tanah Bumbu District (47), and Banjar District (57). Banjar (57). This condition requires attention and handling to overcome socioeconomic insecurity. Persons with socioeconomic insecurity certainly experience obstacles in carrying out their social functions reasonably.

In response to these problems, there are efforts to implement social welfare that aim to translate the vision and mission of national development into various policies and programs (Setiawan, 2019). The effort made by the South Kalimantan provincial government is to present an institution-based social rehabilitation program which is a UPTD of the South Kalimantan Provincial Social Service which is regulated in South Kalimantan Governor Regulation Number 05 of 2022 concerning the Establishment, Organization and Work Procedures of Regional Technical Implementation Units at the Social Service.

Barakat Cangkal Bacari Social Rehabilitation Center for the Socially Impaired (PRSTS BCB) is the result of a merger of two previous institutions in 2022, namely the Melati Women's Social Development Center (PSBW) and the Social Rehabilitation Center for the Socially Impaired which handles vagrants, beggars, and women prone to socio-economic (Adelin, 2022). Activities at the orphanage last for 6 months, with 4 months carrying out skills guidance, and 2 months conducting internship program activities (Radio Abdi Persada, 2022). The empowerment program for WRSE includes physical, social and entrepreneurial skills guidance.

The BCB PRSTS program aims to deal with WRSE in the South Kalimantan Province area in order to develop themselves, increase their creativity, and foster the ability of welfare and independence (Radio Abdi Persada, 2024). As explained by (Gressel et al., 2020), community empowerment includes various aspects that can support or hinder the purpose of empowerment, these aspects include aspects of access, awareness, opportunity and mentality. As the concept of empowerment is also relevant to the theory of empowerment from Gerard Egan in the empowerment process must focus on results or goals to help (Bunasim, 2022). According to Egan (2014) the main focus of

helping is clients with unmanageable problem situations and unused resources, strengths and opportunities. In this case, the orphanage as a *helper* helps clients find more effective life goals so that learning outcomes become more meaningful and have an impact on improving the quality of life of clients (Egan, 2014)

One of the empowerment program activities at BCB PRSTB is job training that is tailored to the talents and skills of WRSE clients. In the empowerment process, the orphanage carries out several stages from pre to post empowerment activities. Therefore, the focus of this research is to analyze the WRSE empowerment process and find out the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of empowerment that has been carried out by PRSTB BCB. Through the approach of empowerment theory by Gerard Egan (2014) by looking at several aspects in this theory, namely improving the quality of life for the client (life-enhancing outcomes for the client), learning how to help oneself (learning how to help oneself), and developing a prevention mentality.

METHODS

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method (Sugiyono, 2022), to explain and analyze the empowerment process, and find out the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of the empowerment program. Data collection through observation at the Barakat Cangkal Bacari Social Rehabilitation Center (PRSTS BCB), South Kalimantan province, for four months. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with 12 informants including 1 Head of UPTD PRSTS BCB, four employees of the social rehabilitation centre (two social workers, social service analysts and guidance and counseling managers), 3 WRSE clients and four WRSE ex-clients (alumni of the social rehabilitation program) and collected various documents such as orphanage employee records, PRSTS BCB client data documents. Furthermore, the data was analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2022). The first stage of data reduction is to analyze the implementation of empowerment and find out the supporting and inhibiting factors of the empowerment program for WRSE in social rehabilitation institutions. Second, data presentation to classify various information from various primary and secondary data which is then analyzed by referring to three indicators in The Three Principal Outcome-Focused Goals of Helping empowerment theory including improving the quality of life of clients (life-enhancing outcomes for the client), learning how to live independently (learning how to help oneself), and building a prevention mentality (developing a prevention mentality).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Empowerment of Socio-Economically Vulnerable Women at the Barakat Cangkal Bacari Rehabilitation Center, South Kalimantan Province

Based on the Regulation of the Governor of South Kalimantan Province Number 05 of 2022 concerning the Establishment, Organization, and Work Procedures of the Regional Technical Implementation Unit at the Social Service, the South Kalimantan BCB PRSTS Social Home was formed with the target of Social Impaired, and WRSE. Having Socio-Economic Insecurity certainly cannot carry out its social functions reasonably, so that it can have a negative influence on aspects of life. Therefore, in dealing with this problem, the South Kalimantan Provincial Social Service carries out concrete

handling efforts through the Social Institution-Based Program system. The following is a graphical presentation of the development of WRSE client data at PRSTS BCB in 2023 - 2024 by region.

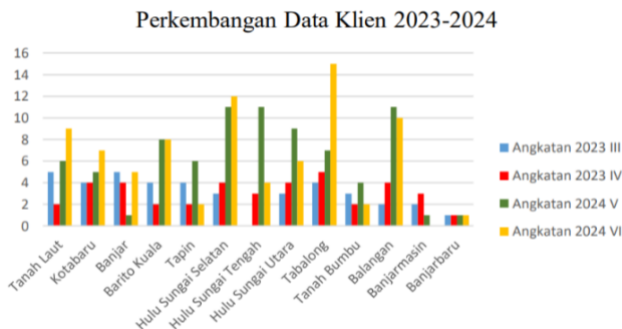


Figure 2. BCB PRSTS WRSE Data Development
Source: PRSTS BCB (2024)

Figure 2 shows the development of client data from each region for the four cohorts during 2023-2024. It can be seen that cohort V (marked by the green line) and cohort VI (marked by the yellow line), show that the average region has an increase in the number of participants compared to cohorts III and IV. Based on the results of the research, it can be seen that the number of clients in each batch is not only determined by the capacity of the center, which accommodates 85 people, but also depends on the budget allocation from the government. In this case, the fluctuating budget causes variations in the number of clients from year to year.

Another factor that influences the participation rate of each region is the interest of each community in each district/city. It was found that geographical factors and ease of access also influenced the number of clients from the least participating regions, such as Banjarbaru City and Banjarmasin City. For example, people in Banjarbaru City and Banjarmasin City are less likely to participate in programs with a dormitory system because their homes are close to the orphanage. This is contrary to the requirements of the program, which requires full attendance for 6 months. As a result, potential clients are more likely to opt for other programs such as the Vocational Training Center (BLK).

In addition, the provision of pocket money from the Social Affairs Office in some districts affects the participation rate of clients from certain areas such as Tabalong, Hulu Sungai Selatan and Hulu Sungai Utara. Differences in policy and interest mean that the client quota cannot be shared equally across all regions. This results in areas with high interest taking a larger share of the quota. The following presents data on the number of clients by education level and status.

Table 1: Number of Clients by Education Level and Status

BATCH III & IV YEAR 2023				BATCH V & VI YEAR 2024			
Education		Status		Education		Status	
SD	3	Marry	0	SD	4	Marry	2
SMP	6	Unmarried	77	SMP	8	Unmarried	156
MTS	8	Widow	3	MTs	3	Widow	4
HIGH SCHOOL	20			HIGH SCHOOL	70		
MA/MAN	29			MA/MAN	25		
Ponpes	9			Ponpes	35		
Package A	0			Package A	1		
Package B	2			Package B	2		
Package C	3			Package C	14		
TOTAL	80		80	TOTAL	162		162

Source: PRSTS BCB (2024)

Table 1 presents data on the number of WRSE clients by education level and marital status in BCB PRSTS for cohorts III & IV in 2023, and cohorts V & VI in 2024. The participation of WRSE with higher levels of social and economic vulnerability, such as primary and secondary school graduates or those who are married and widowed, is expected to be a priority in this program. However, the majority of clients are from lower vulnerability groups, such as high school and MA/MAN graduates, and unmarried.

Based on the results of the research, the highest priority was given to prospective clients who had dropped out of school because they did not have a certificate to find a job, as well as to those from economically vulnerable families. In addition, age was also taken into consideration, with higher priority given to older clients. It was further explained that the reason for the greater participation of unmarried clients was that they did not need permission from their husbands. Meanwhile, for married clients, the husband's consent is often an obstacle to participating in the center's programs. This resulted in some married clients having to return because they did not get permission from their spouses. This is reinforced by the interview results from the head of the orphanage, as follows:

"Why are the unmarried more, because the unmarried are free. If you are married, you have your husband's permission. We demand husband's permission. There are also those who have entered, but their husbands don't want them to, so they return. Those who are not married have their parents' permission, and their parents allow them." (Interview, 02/09/2024).

The WRSE empowerment process that has been carried out by the orphanage requires several stages of treatment, and during this activity, clients must be willing to live in the orphanage for 6 months. Through the empowerment program, the researcher conducted an analysis with the theory of The Three Principal Outcome-Focused Goals of Helping by Gerard Egan (2014), because this theory focuses on helping clients find more quality life goals. According to Egan (2014) the main focus of helping is clients with unmanaged problem situations and/or unused resources, strengths and opportunities. In this case, the orphanage as a helper helps clients find more effective life goals so

that learning outcomes become more meaningful and have an impact on improving the quality of life of clients.

The social rehabilitation centre employees helps clients to utilize their potential by providing them with the knowledge and skills to be independent. Not only that, clients are helped to create conditions to develop optimally and prevent a defeatist mentality. WRSE clients are taught to focus on proactive measures that ensure their well-being in the long run. This can be done by providing social, religious and psychological mental guidance. Therefore, the theory is very relevant to analyze the process of assistance that takes place in these homes. Some aspects of this model are designed as follows:

1. Life-enhancing outcomes for the client

The process of assisting clients to improve their quality of life through empowerment is able to help people realize the need to address specific problems and develop resources and opportunities that have not been utilized more effectively (Egan, 2014). In this case helping the client overcome problems and manage his life more effectively, creating constructive changes leading to outcomes that improve the client's life.

Improving the quality of life in the empowerment program in social institutions for WRSE clients includes: a) Socialization as a form of awareness of the importance of the program to overcome socio-economic insecurity. The orphanage conducts socialization to the Regency / City to attract prospective WRSE clients. However, limited budget and human resources mean that socialization can only be carried out in 4 districts/cities out of a total of 13 each year. As stated by the Head of the Orphanage:

"The first client acceptance process starts with socialization ... but we have limited budget so that in one year it cannot be carried out in 13 cities/districts. Then there are limitations on human resources as well...So in one year between 4-5 socializations" (Interview, 02/09/2024).

This is confirmed by Mr. Rifky Aditya Pratama as Social Service Analysis Staff, he explained:

"We usually have a socialization team. That's why we are the ones who play a role in coming to the City District, taking turns in 13 City Districts. Usually there are 4 districts a year." (Interview, 07/09/2024).

From the interviews above, it can be seen that socialization is the initial stage of the program. However, socialization cannot be carried out in all 13 districts/cities of South Kalimantan Province in one year, due to limited budget and human resources. b) The selection and identification stage assesses the WRSE criteria, motivation, interest and sustainable opportunities of clients. Prospective clients are selected based on certain criteria to ensure that they are eligible and fit for the program objectives. This selection involves an in-depth interview and identification of the prospective client's economic condition, education, motivation, interest and opportunities to follow the training course provided. c) An *assessment* approach is used to identify the client's challenges, monitor their progress, and provide appropriate support. d) In addition to skills training, clients receive business capital assistance upon completion of in-house guidance and during follow-up coaching to support their economic independence upon return to the community. This is corroborated by an interview with one of the ex-clients with the initials NW as follows:

"There are so many things, from sewing machines, obras machines, scissors and other sewing tools, as well as banners for display, so that

people know that we are opening a business. Anyway, after leaving we can immediately open a business, not only the knowledge is given but directly with the tools and Alhamdulillah, yesterday we got more business capital money from the Banjar Regency Social Service (this depends on the social service of each district)." (Interview, 30/08/2024).

Based on the results of interviews with ex-clients, in line with what Mardikanto (in Patilaiya et al., 2022) stated regarding the purpose of empowerment, this program is effective in improving the quality of life through business improvement and income improvement. This is also similar to the study (Gressel et al., 2020) ; (Sen, 2019) , in the empowerment process on the aspect of access. Every person or community group needs an understanding and knowledge to influence their ability to increase their potential by utilizing opportunities in the surrounding environment.

2. Learning how to help oneself

Fostering clients' ability to help themselves. The orphanage helps clients become better at living their daily lives (Bunasim, 2022). This process is called helping and equipping clients with the knowledge and skills to be independent. This process aims to help clients become more effective agents of change in their lives. In this regard, the orphanage has provided various guidance and training to WRSE clients which include: a) Guidance on fashion, catering, and makeup skills; b) Entrepreneurship guidance that equips clients with the knowledge to start and manage businesses independently; and c) Internship placements. As shown in Figure 3, this is one of the guidance provided by the center to clients who have an interest and talent in fashion.



Figure 3. Fashion Design Room
(Source: Researcher Documentation, 2024)

The empowerment program that has been implemented by the orphanage has been effective in equipping clients with practical skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, and internship placements. As stated by Malta (2023) and (Ojediran, 2020) , education provides people with knowledge and skills to help them face challenges in their daily lives.

3. Developing a prevention mentality

Develop a prevention mentality. Prevention is far more effective and cost-effective than dealing with problems that have already occurred (Egan, 2014). It can help foster the mentality of the client not to stand idly by in the face of problems (Bunasim, 2022). This process also helps the client not to give up easily, i.e., the mentality of not giving up easily. To build the mentality of WRSE clients, the orphanage carries out various bombings that include: a) Mental guidance plays an important role in restoring the psychological condition of clients facing personal

problems, supported by individual counseling sessions with social workers and psychologists. b) Social guidance such as social independence, *morning meetings* and *sharing circles*, and c) Religious guidance to strengthen spiritual aspects. Regular spiritual guidance every evening and lecture activities on Fridays.

The empowerment process of building mentality is an important aspect for clients to have a strong mentality in facing various challenges in running business opportunities after they leave the orphanage. This is also conveyed by (Gressel et al., 2020) on the mental aspect in the empowerment process refers to the range of beliefs, norms, or values held by individuals, groups, or society as a whole, which influence their attitudes and behavior, often at a subconscious level, towards processes related to women's empowerment. The mental aspect is considered the most crucial domain, as improvement in the mental space is a necessary condition for achieving progress in empowerment.

Supporting and inhibiting factors for the empowerment of socio-economically vulnerable women at the Barakat Cangkal Bacari Rehabilitation Center, South Kalimantan Province.

Based on the implementation of empowerment for WRSE, there are several supporting factors as follows:

1) The mentality of not giving up

A never-give-up mentality is essential for clients facing social and economic challenges (Kiely, 2019). This attitude helps them to keep fighting even in difficult situations. Based on the research findings, the learning and adaptation process through BCB's PRSTS program takes time and patience, and is also an example of the importance of a never-give-up attitude in mastering skills at the center.

2) Professional Instructor

Professional instructors from both entrepreneurial and academic backgrounds play a key role in the parenting program to bring the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively guide clients.

3) Effective handling method

Accuracy in determining the handling method in empowerment activities is one of the most important things to consider in the implementation of community empowerment programs (Hamid, 2018). For this reason, this program provides technical and additional skills guidance as well as physical, mental, social, and religious guidance. Clients are also provided with entrepreneurial knowledge, internship placements, and business assistance to support self-reliance. Afterward, there is follow-up guidance and termination of client relationships.

4) There is support from the family.

According to A'yun & Faidati (2021); (Annan, 2021), family support is a supporting factor for the empowerment process. Likewise in the BCB PRSTS program. The role of family is important in supporting empowerment programs. Family involvement helps create social and emotional support, as well as providing business capital. This allows ex-clients to deepen skills and make optimal use of resources and opportunities.

As for the implementation of the BCB PRSTS program, there are several inhibiting factors, among others:

a. Limited budget

Limited budget is an obstacle for the orphanage in conducting socialization to 13 districts/cities in South Kalimantan Province to attract prospective WRSE clients in one year. Not only does this impact on the implementation of socialization activities, but it also affects the determination of

client quotas. As is known, the number of clients accepted is not only based on the capacity of the orphanage that can accommodate 85 people, but must also be adjusted to the amount of budget available. This shows that a limited budget has the potential to reduce program effectiveness and hinder efforts to optimally empower clients.

b. Limited human resources

According to Syafari (2023) facilitators play a big role in empowerment activities. So it is important to have complete human resources in this professional facilitator resource. However, in the implementation of the BCB PRSTS program, there are obstacles in the limited human resources in socialization activities and the lack of experts in the field of Social Welfare

c. Lack of information at the sub-district level

The orphanage conducts socialization through various sources of information in the community, including TKSK. However, the majority of clients and ex-clients learn about the orphanage program from friends or family. This shows that information from colleagues or family is more effectively received due to a stronger sense of trust.

d. Lack of confidence

Low self-confidence can limit ex-clients from utilizing the skills they have been taught and hinder interaction with potential customers, which is key in developing an independent business.

e. Difficulty in accessing capital

Business capital is another factor in supporting the success of the program (Bandiera, 2020). However, some ex-clients struggle to access capital despite receiving stimulant assistance from the center. Especially in the cosmetology department, inadequate capital hampers economic independence, forcing ex-clients to work elsewhere to raise capital or otherwise delay opening a business.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the effectiveness of the empowerment program for socio economically vulnerable women (WRSE) implemented by the Barakat Cangkal Bacari Social Rehabilitation Center for the Socially Disadvantaged (PRSTS BCB) in South Kalimantan. The results showed that the program succeeded in increasing the independence of WRSE through three main indicators proposed by Gerard Egan: (1) Life-enhancing outcomes for the client: The program successfully improved socialization, selection, identification, and provided business capital assistance to WRSE. This suggests that clients not only gain access to resources, but also experience improvements in social interactions that are important for building support networks; (2) Learning how to help oneself: Through skills and entrepreneurship mentorship, as well as internship placements, WRSE showed improvement in the ability to be economically independent. However, despite progress, there are still challenges in applying the skills acquired, indicating the need for continued support after training; (3) Developing a prevention mentality: The mental, social, and religious guidance provided has assisted WRSE in building self-confidence and a positive mentality. However, the effectiveness of this guidance may vary depending on the individual's background, indicating the need for a more personalized and adaptive approach. Although the program has shown positive results, there are some limitations that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, this study was conducted over a limited period of time, and thus could not capture the entire dynamics of

empowerment in depth. Secondly, only 12 informants were interviewed, which may not represent the entire WRSE population in the area. This limitation may affect the generalizability of the research results.

For future research, it is recommended that this study involves more informants from various backgrounds to get a more comprehensive perspective. In addition, future research should examine the long-term impact of the empowerment program on ex-clients, as well as examine factors that influence the success of the program in other areas. Thus, the research results can make a more significant contribution to the development of effective and sustainable empowerment models.

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