



Research Article

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## Empowering Former Women Migrant Workers: Enhancing Socio-Economic Opportunities and Inclusion for Sustainable Development

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### Abstract

*This research aims to design and implement participatory empowerment programs for former migrant workers, with a focus on non-formal socio-economic initiatives. Utilizing the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) method in Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia, the study collected data through observations, dialogues, and Participatory Decision-Making (PDM). Purposive sampling involved selecting subjects from the village government, community leaders, and former women migrant workers belonging to entrepreneurial groups. The participatory analysis approach was used to identify, categorize, and prioritize essential and strategic initiatives. The research findings led to the development of non-formal education programs for former women migrant workers, aimed at fostering creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship, administrative management, digital accounting, product quality improvement, product innovation, labeling and packaging, and promotion management with digital marketing. Collaborative efforts between village and district governments, academics, and the community of former women migrant workers were emphasized in planning and implementing these creative socio-economic non-formal education programs. The programs were tailored to address the unique problems, needs, and local resources of the community of former women migrant workers, providing them with the knowledge, motivation, and skills to independently operate economic ventures and improve the well-being of their families.*

**Keywords:** Empowerment; Education; Entrepreneurs; Migrant Workers; Welfare

## 1. Introduction

Many rural communities in Indonesia continue to prioritize the profession of being a migrant worker because they believe it offers a faster path to higher income, enabling them to support their families, build homes, and save for entrepreneurship. According to data from the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency for the years 2021-2022, the total number of officially registered migrant workers in Indonesia was 16.5 million, with 44% (7.2 million) working in the formal sector and 56% (9.3 million) in the non-formal sector. Among them, 72% (11.9 million) were women, and 28% (4.6 million) were men.

Educational backgrounds of migrant workers varied, with 40.1% (6.7 million) having completed junior high school, 34.6% (5.7 million) having completed senior high school, 22.5% (3.7 million) having completed elementary school, 1.3% (202 thousand) holding diplomas, and 0.7% (115 thousand) being undergraduates. The primary occupations for most migrant workers were domestic work (34.5%, 5.7 million) and caregiving (21%, 3.5 million). Among the countries where migrant workers were employed, Taiwan had the highest number with 66.7% (11 million), followed by Hong Kong (30%, 4.9 million), Malaysia, and Singapore (each with 25%, 4 million), Saudi Arabia (2%, 325 thousand), and Brunei Darussalam (1.7%, 283 thousand). Other countries in the Middle East also hosted migrant workers. A significant number of these workers originated from East Java province (26%, 4.3 million), followed by Central Java province (22.4%, 3.7 million), West Java province (21%, 3.5 million), Lampung province (17%, 2.8 million), and West Nusa Tenggara province (9.7%, 1.6 million). Cilacap Regency ranked sixth in Indonesia and first in Central Java Province, sending 693 thousand migrant workers on average for three years (2018-2020), with approximately 72% being women who faced higher risks during their migration. Some migrant workers from Cilacap Regency found employment in countries such as Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Saudi Arabia.

Based on research conducted in 2021-2022 and several other studies, it has been observed that certain village governments endorse and permit their residents to become migrant workers. Some of these governments lack the authority to suppress the public's desire to pursue migrant work, especially for those without specialized skills, such as housemaids. The issue of women migrant workers has been a continuous source of controversy, beginning from the departure process and persisting throughout their time as migrant workers until they return home. Incidents encompass administrative falsification, undocumented worker status, challenges with remittances, falling prey to fraud, coercion, rape, torture, legal complications, and even fatalities.

Another concern is that many individuals, particularly women migrant workers, opt not to pursue higher education beyond high school because they see employment as housemaids as a means to earn a significant income over at least three years. Consequently, rural communities become targets of both legal and illegal labor brokers who easily convince people to work as migrant laborers. This trend leads to the underutilization of the village's economic, social, cultural, and environmental resources, as people leave for urban areas to become migrant workers (Galata, 2022; Miles et al., 2019; Segrave & Tan, 2021; Tan & Shahrullah, 2017; Hossain, 2022). Many former migrant workers continue to face challenges upon returning to their hometowns. They lack the necessary skills for local employment, and economic ventures become difficult due to domestic issues and a culture of consumerism. Moreover, remittances received from their time as migrant workers often cannot be utilized for productive business activities due to the absence of sustainable economic empowerment and support programs tailored to the interests and opportunities of former migrant workers.

Former women migrant workers in Cilacap Regency are already engaged in businesses selling bananas, mushroom chips, sea fish pickles, organic brown sugar, and woven handicrafts made from fabric waste. However, they still face several challenges. They are not yet members of large economic business groups, and they struggle to attract the interest of the younger generation in entrepreneurship. These economic business groups have not improved the quality of their products, packaging, labeling, promotion, or marketing. They continue to operate manually, without digital innovations, and have not met good quality standards. Administrative and financial management of economic enterprises, including cooperative institutions, are still recorded manually. These

cooperatives, owned by the Cilacap Migrant Workers Citizens Forum, lack the capacity to unite all economic business groups into business units and do not possess legal entity status. Nonetheless, the migrant worker cooperative in Cilacap has significant opportunities to manage the remittances and savings of migrant workers and provide capital loans to economic business groups that can simultaneously serve as managers and members of the cooperative. Additionally, the financial products offered by the group of former migrant workers have substantial potential for development into medium-scale businesses. The market demand for these products is relatively high and can create employment opportunities for rural communities, particularly the younger generation, thereby improving the economic well-being of the community.

Hence, there is a need for an empowerment program focused on non-formal socio-economic education to initiate a shift in mindset and mental attitudes, fostering increased motivation, knowledge, skills, institutional development, productivity, adoption of innovation, cooperative networks, and economic partnerships. Empowerment and education are essential strategies for fostering sustainable development by leveraging local resources to create prosperity (Beek, 2022; Ebonine, 2022; Gill et al., 2019; Prabandari, 2022; Saigal, 2022; Zhang & Perkins, 2023; Wahyuni & Huda, 2021). Non-formal education, coupled with socio-economic empowerment, serves as a powerful approach to enhancing the quality of human resources, especially in rural communities, without being constrained by age, employment status, or social strata. In the digital era, non-formal education transcends barriers of distance, space, and time, enabling learning anytime and anywhere through communication technologies like social media. The underlying philosophy and spirit of education elevate the quality of human resources by encouraging the pursuit, application, and development of lifelong knowledge and skills, ultimately promoting physical and mental well-being. Empowerment has the potential to foster participatory, egalitarian, dialogical, and collective action within communities (Anggadwita et al., 2021; Boateng, 2021; de Almagro & Ryan, 2019; Mayombe, 2017; Mor et al., 2020). The primary objective of this study is to create and implement participatory empowerment initiatives tailored to the needs of former migrant workers, emphasizing non-formal socio-economic development in Cilacap, Indonesia. The research questions in this study are:

1. How can participatory empowerment programs be effectively designed and implemented for former women migrant workers in Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia?
2. Furthermore, what collaborative strategies can be established between stakeholders and the community of former women migrant workers to ensure the successful planning and implementation of these creative socio-economic non-formal education programs?

In analyzing the research question, the research adopts the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) method in Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia, and gathers data through observation, dialogue, and Participatory Decision-Making (PDM).

## 2. Research Methods

The research spanned multiple stages from 2018 to 2022. The initial phase, conducted in 2018-2019, focused on identifying and analyzing the issues, opportunities, and requirements of former women migrant workers in Cilacap. Subsequently, during 2020-2021, strategic models and socio-economic empowerment programs were designed and implemented as non-formal educational initiatives. The study's participants were selected through purposive sampling, involving the village government, community leaders, empowerment activists, candidates, and former women migrant workers who were part of the economic business group and the Migrant Workers Citizens Forum Cooperative in Nusawungu District, Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province.

To gain in-depth insights into the community's situation and condition, the research utilized the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) method. This approach adheres to several principles: prioritizing crucial programs, employing assessments as a means of empowering the community or community workers, respecting and embracing differences, cross-checking data through observations, documentation, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and emphasizing non-

formal, results-oriented, sustainable, practical, and open orientation (Chakraborty et al., 2020; Kindon et al., 2016; Krishnan et al., 2022; Farianto, 2022).

Data for the research were collected through participatory observation, documentation analysis, dialogue, FGD, and Participatory Decision-Making (DM). The PLA data analysis process involved identifying emerging groups and issues, noting the discussion's process, content, and outcomes, clarifying the subjects discussed, representing the discussion results in diagrams, categorizing the discussion subjects, comparing similarities and differences in the discussion outcomes, and ultimately prioritizing the most crucial and strategic topics. This comprehensive approach allowed the researcher to deeply comprehend the community's challenges and opportunities, providing a foundation for designing effective empowerment programs aimed at fostering socio-economic development among former women migrant workers in Cilacap.

### 3. Results

Former migrant workers are both the subjects and beneficiaries of research that focuses on implementing empowerment through non-formal socio-economic education, aiming to create an egalitarian, participatory, and dialogical program. These former workers, along with up to 30 entrepreneurs offering financial products, are selected as prospective pioneers, activists, and empowerment cadres in rural areas. Among the former women migrant workers chosen as research subjects, 18 individuals (60%) fall into the productive age category (17-39 years), while 12 individuals (40%) are aged between 40 and 55 years. In terms of education, seven individuals (23%) completed junior high school, 17 individuals (56%) finished senior high school, and six individuals (20%) attained a diploma level of education. The economic business group mainly comprises 13 people (43%) involved in food processing, while eight people (27%) are engaged in cooperative management, six people (20%) operate food stalls, and three people (10%) are craftsmen. The former women migrant workers warmly welcomed the research team, showing high enthusiasm for engaging in participatory community empowerment activities. They expressed that through these activities, they were able to boost their motivation, find inspiration, experience a sense of togetherness, acquire knowledge, and develop their skills. However, some former migrant workers with limited education and older age face challenges in pursuing formal education further.

#### 3.1 Empowerment Model and Process as a Non-formal Education Activity

Empowerment models and programs are the outcomes of community discussions, serving as forms of action research and participatory development grounded in local resources. The implementation involves counseling, training, mentoring, comparative studies, monitoring, evaluation, and partnerships, all of which contribute to valuable non-formal educational processes that support sustainable development, enhance the quality of human resources, and promote welfare (Kurniawati, 2020; Chaudhuri & Morash, 2019; Lontoc, 2020; Manríquez, 2021). The research, conducted between 2019 and 2022, encompassed the study phase, preliminary research, and follow-up research. The selection of research locations was based on areas with a significant number of former women migrant workers in Cilacap Regency. A mixed-methods approach was employed, utilizing questionnaires, interviews, observations, and FGDs with 120 former women migrant workers from four villages.

In 2020-2021, the research took place during the Covid-19 pandemic, with strict adherence to health protocols. Both researchers and subjects underwent Covid-19 testing with negative results to ensure safety. The research employed the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method, with a focus on Danasri Village, where entrepreneurial groups and cooperatives were relatively advanced. These cooperatives played a crucial role in empowering former migrant workers, totaling 30 individuals, involved in businesses such as crackers and banana sales, organic brown sugar production, crispy mushrooms, sea fish pickles, and seafood food stalls. The research findings led to the formulation, agreement, and socialization of designs for a women's action communication forum. This forum serves as a community platform that advocates for and designs empowerment programs for former

women migrant workers. In the final research stage (2021-2022), the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) method was used to implement a digital-based empowerment model. Empowerment programs were subsequently introduced as non-formal socio-economic education for rural communities, specifically targeting former female migrant workers involved in entrepreneurial groups and cooperatives in Danasri Village. As a result of these initiatives, former migrant workers exhibited heightened motivation, inspiration, and cooperation. They embraced a more productive and creative mindset, establishing themselves as entrepreneurs. Their knowledge, skills, and cohesion in entrepreneurship improved, with active engagement in cooperatives. The quality and quantity of their products received enhancements, especially in terms of packaging standardization, labels, business promotion, product trade, and halal certification. In essence, the research succeeded in implementing participatory and practical community education models, empowering former women migrant workers, and driving socio-economic development in the region.

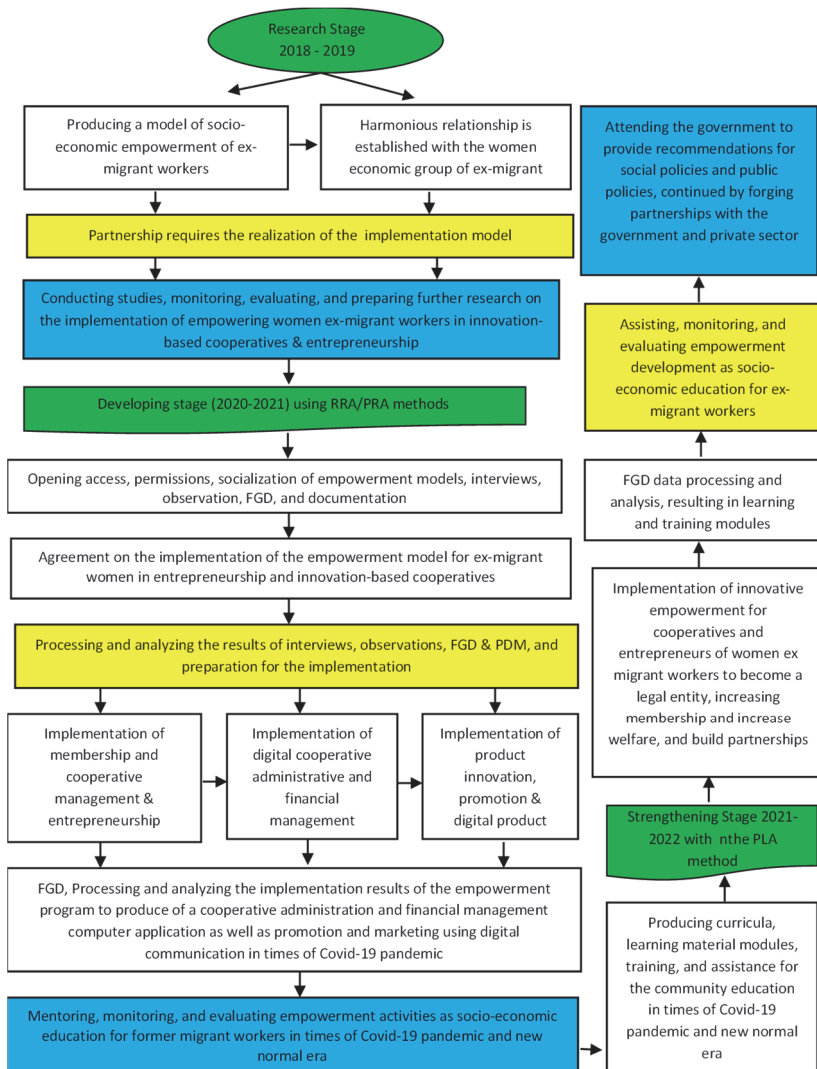


Figure 1. Empowerment Model for Former Women Migrant Workers

The community empowerment research commenced with initial and primary investigations conducted from 2018 to 2020. During this phase, the focus was on identifying and analyzing the issues, requirements, and available opportunities for former women migrant workers. The subsequent advanced and practical research phases, spanning from 2020 to 2022, led to the development and implementation of empowerment models and programs, particularly in the form of non-formal education tailored for former women migrant workers. Importantly, all activities were carried out while adhering to health protocols amid the Covid-19 pandemic. This stage represents a comprehensive and sustainable roadmap, and the research model is visually depicted in Figure 1.

### 3.2 Socio-economic Opportunities of Former Women Migrant Workers

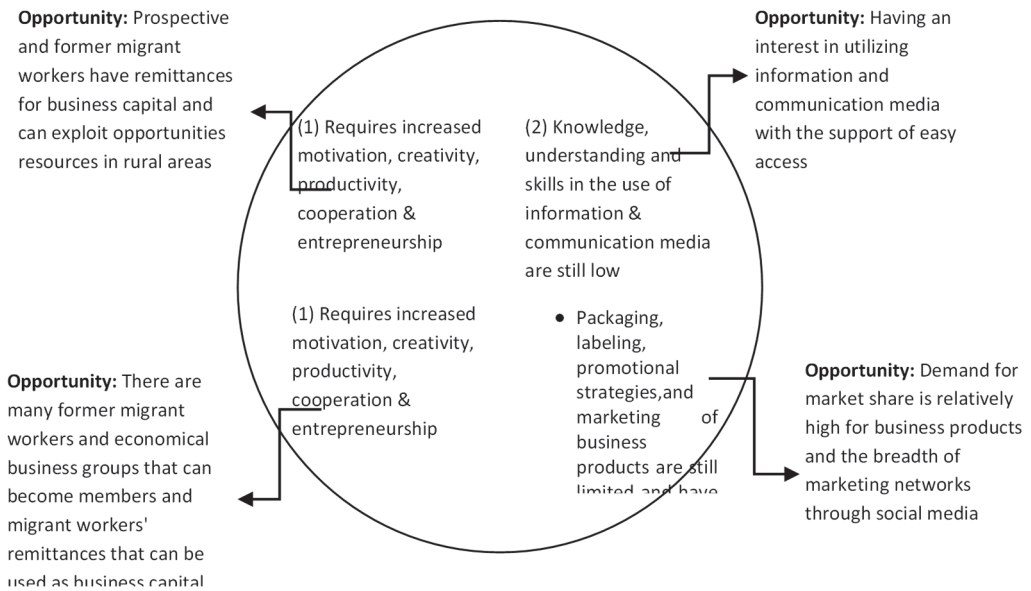
The research background delves into the prevalent issues faced by former migrant workers, particularly women in Cilacap. These issues largely stem from deep-rooted traditions that foster the belief that becoming a migrant worker leads to quick and higher income. Consequently, there is reluctance to pursue higher education, resulting in a lack of knowledge and skills required for successful entrepreneurship. Furthermore, remittances and savings earned as migrant workers are often used for consumptive purposes, missing opportunities to optimize economic, social, cultural, and environmental resources for prosperous business ventures. This situation has resulted in the absence of well-established business groups involving a large number of people and the younger generation, coupled with inadequate administrative and financial management. Moreover, there is a lack of innovation, standardization, promotion, and marketing of quality products. Despite these challenges, numerous opportunities and strategies exist to address the concerns faced by former migrant workers through empowerment programs. Non-formal socio-economic education in the tourism sector and entrepreneurship can create job opportunities that ensure a better life, comfort, and overall well-being for the community, particularly for former women migrant workers (Acharya et al., 2019; Goebel et al., 2020; Hanemann, 2019; Hlatshwayo, 2020; Parreñas, 2021).

Former women migrant workers have not received comprehensive empowerment programs from the local village and district governments. While some programs initiated by NGOs exist, these efforts lack a participatory approach that considers the specific interests, needs, and opportunities of former migrant workers. Moreover, the development planning processes in the village do not provide a conducive platform for the former migrant worker community to voice their aspirations and proposals for development programs. As a result, counseling and training programs have not received sufficient support and continuity, and partnerships between various stakeholders, including the government, academics, empowerment activists, and the private sector, have not been maximized. In Cilacap Regency, there is a migrant worker community forum with an economic institution known as the Bumi Sejahtera Savings and Loans Cooperative. Despite having 550 members and an annual turnover of IDR 300 million, the cooperative faces challenges, such as 60% of its members being inactive, manual administrative management and accounting, and a lack of incorporation. In addition to being part of the cooperative, former migrant workers also engage in small businesses, particularly in the production and sale of banana chips, organic brown sugar, and sea fish pickles. These businesses demonstrate promising opportunities, with high market demand and readily available raw materials, such as bananas, coconut trees, and various types of fish from the south coast of Cilacap Regency. The abundance of marine fish resources, with an average daily catch of 3-4 quintals at IDR 45,000 per kilogram, provides an opportunity for entrepreneurship and job creation, especially for the younger generation within the community.

As a result, they travel to various regions, including the market in the Kroya area, where buyers and traders from Banyumas and Banjarnegara districts visit. Similarly, the markets, shelters, and fish scales in the Jetis area of Kebumen Regency and Banyumas Regency attract buyers and traders. However, businesses involving banana chips, organic brown sugar, and pickled fish encounter specific challenges. One major issue is the lack of promotion and marketing through information technology. Instead, they rely on intermediaries, preventing them from selling directly to the market



and consumers at prices they determine themselves. Moreover, these businesses lack Home Industry Food standards (PIRT), trade licenses, and halal certification. The Covid-19 pandemic, which began in March 2020, further exacerbated their problems. The government's implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions hindered interactions and transactions within cooperatives and economic business groups. Consequently, their turnover, product sales, and profits decreased significantly, ranging from 50% to 80%. This pandemic has emerged as a global issue affecting all countries, particularly highlighting social, economic, and labor disparities for migrant workers, women, and the younger generation. As a result, national and international stakeholders must collaborate to devise crisis resolution strategies and solutions to restore developmental progress. Government policies must prioritize supporting the rights of migrant workers, ensuring open work opportunities, legal protection, and welfare (Elliott et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2020; Mecik et al., 2022; Sabiq et al., 2020; Tambunan, 2020; van Barneveld et al., 2020; Anowara & Hossain, 2021). The opportunities and challenges faced by former migrant workers in economic enterprises are further depicted in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Socio-Economic Opportunities of Former Women Migrant Workers

#### 4. Discussion

Considering the opportunities and challenges faced by former migrant workers in economic entrepreneurship, it is essential and strategic to develop and implement socio-economic empowerment programs, particularly in the form of non-formal education, aimed at the community, especially former women migrant workers. Empowerment serves as a means to address various issues within rural communities, such as social and economic crises, including poverty, economic inequality, unemployment, marginalization, gender bias, technological gaps, urbanization, and population density in urban areas. It is a relevant strategy to enhance motivation, knowledge, skills, and opportunities for individuals to lead better lives (Chang, 2017; Hlatshwayo, 2020; Lee & León, 2019; Motte-Muñoz, 2020).

Hence, the empowerment program, as a curriculum material for non-formal socio-economic education, becomes a viable strategy to tackle the existing problems faced by former women migrant

workers, including:

1. Educational gaps for those who lack the opportunity and means to continue their education.
2. Economic disparities resulting from limited access to capital, knowledge, and skills, leading to poverty, unemployment, and migration to urban areas for unskilled work.
3. Information and technology gaps, arising from limited access to and utilization of information and communication media for educational and economic purposes.
4. Inequality in job opportunities for the younger generation in rural areas, where they possess potential as productive human resources but struggle to find better employment due to limited education and opportunities.

The empowerment program not only benefits former women migrant workers but also focuses on empowering the younger generation in rural areas, who may otherwise perceive working abroad as a more promising path to earn income quickly. By harnessing the younger generation's energy, creativity, adaptability to technology, and potential for competence, they can actively participate in community education and non-formal learning. Consequently, the younger generation becomes proactive in utilizing, cultivating, and developing opportunities from local resources, fostering a sense of enthusiasm, responsibility, and commitment to their community's prosperity (Abdullah et al., 2022; Altan & Karalar, 2018; Atmojo et al., 2019; Frunzaru & Cismaru, 2021; Ibouder et al., 2022; Stănculescu & Scarlat, 2021; Statnické et al., 2019). The implementation of empowerment programs as non-formal socio-economic education for the community of former women migrant workers entails specific priorities, which include:

1. Shifting mindset and mental attitude to foster greater productivity and creativity in entrepreneurship.
2. Enhancing knowledge and skills in utilizing information media for effective promotion, marketing, and establishing entrepreneurial partnerships.
3. Developing cooperative institutions and entrepreneurial groups to foster collaboration and mutual support.
4. Enhancing the quality and standardization of financial products, including branding, packaging, and obtaining necessary business licenses.

Non-formal education materials and processes used in community socio-economic empowerment encompass various elements, such as counseling, training, mentoring, comparative studies, monitoring, evaluation, and establishing partnerships. The design of empowerment curriculum materials as non-formal socio-economic education for former women migrant workers should take into account the unique challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the new normal era. These considerations are presented in Table 1, based on the stages of participatory research and empowerment actions.

**Table 1.** Priority Problems, Program Solutions, and Outputs

Priority Issues	Program solutions for curriculum materials	Indicator	Output
Mindset and mental attitude that is consumptive and less motivated to be productive entrepreneurs by utilizing available resources	(1) Counseling and training on self-concept, motivation, and inspiring the success of entrepreneurship. (2) Successful entrepreneurial management training	(1) Having a self-concept and motivation for productive business (2) Understanding of entrepreneurial management skills (3) Able to identify and analyze problems, opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities	(1) Learning and training modules on self-concept, motivation, and productive business management (2) Has an identification format and matrix for the analysis of entrepreneurial problems, opportunities, and opportunities
Knowledge, understanding, and skills in digital media are still low because digital media is often used for communication, information, and entertainment.	(1) Counseling on the function and utilization of digital media for education and productive entrepreneurial activities (2) Training on the use of digital media for the development of cooperatives and productive, creative, and innovative entrepreneurs	(1) The benefits of digital media for cooperatives and entrepreneurial groups (2) Cooperative institutions and small business groups can determine information on social media for productive, innovative businesses. Then use social media for promotion and marketing of business products.	(1) Learning and training modules on the use of digital media in developing cooperative and entrepreneurial institutions (2) Having accounts and social media as educational media and creative entrepreneurial creations



Priority Issues	Program solutions for curriculum materials	Indicator	Output
As the head of entrepreneurial groups owned by migrant workers in administrative management and accounting, the Bumi Sejahtera Cooperative is still manually recorded.	(1) Counseling on increasing motivation and knowledge about cooperatives and entrepreneurial groups (2) Counseling and training on the use of technology in the administrative and accounting management of cooperatives and entrepreneurial groups	(1) Motivation and cohesiveness of the management and members in managing cooperatives and entrepreneurial groups (2) Increasing active cooperative members and management cadres (3) Skilled digital-based administrative and accounting management	(1) Training modules for cooperatives and digital-based entrepreneurship systems for administration and accounting systems (2) Module and application management program administration and accounting
Packaging, labeling, promotional strategies, and product marketing are still limited and have not used digital media utilization	(1) Counseling and training to improve the quality of labeling and packaging (2) Promotion and marketing education and training through digital media or social media	(1) The product has a quality label and packaging (2) The entrepreneur group has the skills to use a packaging tool based on technological innovation that is more practical and hygienic (3) Entrepreneur groups on social media for product promotion and marketing	(1) High-quality, hygienic labels and packaging, Home Industry Food standards, and halal certificates (2) Having accounts and social media for promotion and marketing can be owned and operationalized

The primary participants involved in implementing empowerment as non-formal socio-economic education for former women migrant workers, as indicated in Table 1, consist of external stakeholders who facilitate and encourage community collaboration and engagement as beneficiaries. External empowerment contributors encompass the following:

1. Academics engaged in research programs, community service, apprenticeships, and student practicum for courses related to entrepreneurship management, village community empowerment, marketing communication, counseling, village development, economic and institutional management, and product innovation.
2. Activists and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in social activities, volunteer assistance, and community support for empowerment initiatives.
3. Private companies carrying out corporate social responsibility programs by establishing and nurturing social and economic entrepreneurial groups to empower the community, foster partnerships, and promote independence.
4. Regional governments with autonomous powers, responsible for formulating and implementing budget policies and development programs that support socio-economic empowerment through non-formal education.

On the other hand, key internal actors, known as insiders, include community leaders, youth leaders, village governments, entrepreneurial groups, and development activists. These insiders take the initiative to design and execute empowerment programs based on local aspirations, needs, and opportunities, while also collaborating and forming partnerships with external stakeholders. Collaboration among stakeholders plays a crucial role in realizing the principle of collective action throughout the process of designing, agreeing upon, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating empowerment programs. Empowerment is executed in a participatory manner, focusing on the community's needs, interests, problems, and potential resources in the realms of human, social, economic, cultural, and environmental aspects owned by rural communities (Hollebeek et al., 2022; Lees-Marshment et al., 2020; MacDonald et al., 2019).

## 5. Conclusion

The research findings revealed that being a migrant worker remains a popular choice for rural communities due to the expectation of higher and quicker income. However, the lack of adequate education and skills poses challenges. Issues related to illegal migrant workers, particularly women engaged in housekeeping and agriculture without proper training, termination of employment, fraud by recruitment agencies, and human trafficking, complicate the situation. Moreover, the trend of rural-to-urban migration to become migrant workers has implications for underutilized social, economic, cultural, and environmental resources in rural areas. Remittances and savings from work

are not effectively utilized for productive economic activities, and there is a lack of knowledge and skills in entrepreneurship. Empowerment through non-formal socio-economic education is seen as a strategic solution to address the strong inclination of rural communities to migrate for work and to support the socio-economic well-being of those who return to their hometowns during the Covid-19 pandemic and the new normal era. Empowerment models and programs, designed as non-formal socio-economic education curricula, are collaboratively agreed upon and implemented in a participatory, dialogical, and egalitarian manner. The curriculum materials must be tailored to address the specific problems, opportunities, and needs of the community, and they are initiated and facilitated by key empowerment actors, including external stakeholders like academics, local government, NGOs, and the private sector, as well as internal actors from the community and the village government.

The non-formal socio-economic education curriculum of the empowerment program covers various essential aspects, such as managing self-concept and motivation, entrepreneurial management, administrative management, digital accounting, production management, product innovation, and digital marketing promotion. The implementation of this empowerment program involves counseling, training, mentoring, monitoring, evaluating, and establishing partnerships while adhering to health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic and the new normal era. The benefits of implementing such empowerment programs for the community, particularly former women migrant workers and young individuals in rural areas, encompass several aspects. Firstly, it increases motivation, cultivates a productive entrepreneurial mindset, enhances entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, aligning them with participants' interests and available opportunities. Secondly, it equips participants with proficiency in digital management, administration, and financial aspects. Thirdly, it leads to an improvement in product quality, innovation, and standardization. Fourthly, it strengthens group cooperation and the functioning of entrepreneurial institutions. Lastly, it empowers participants with knowledge and expertise in digital promotion, marketing, and expanding business partnerships. For the successful design and implementation of these empowerment programs as non-formal socio-economic education, support from various key stakeholders is essential. This includes local and village governments, which must exhibit political will, provide autonomy, enact supportive policies, and allocate development budgets. Additionally, active involvement and dedication from academics, NGOs, and private companies play a crucial role in implementing and sustaining socio-economic empowerment initiatives. Moreover, the rural communities themselves, as beneficiaries, are central to the process. Finally, it is imperative to adhere to the principles of empowerment and education, emphasizing a participatory, dialogical, egalitarian, collaborative, and collective approach.

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