Women’s Empowerment Through Training in National Program For Community Empowerment in Rural Areas

Authors
Bambang Sugiri¹, Joko Nurkamto², Dewi Rochsantiningsih³, Sarah Rum Handayani⁴

¹ Doctoral student at Development Counseling / Community’s Empowerment, Main Interest Training/ Non-formal Education. Postgraduate Program of Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta
² Dissertation Promoteur: Lecturer at Development Counseling/ Community’s Empowerment, Main Interest Training/ Non-formal Education. Postgraduate Program of Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta
³ Email- pramhadi999@gmail.com
⁴ Dissertation Promoteur: Lecturer at Development Counseling/ Community’s Empowerment, Main Interest Training/ Non-formal Education. Postgraduate Program of Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta

ABSTRACT
The objectives of the research are to describe and analyze: 1) the entrepreneurship training management; 2) the results and effects of the entrepreneurship training program; 3) the supporting and inhibiting factors of the entrepreneurship training program; and 4) describe the entrepreneurship training model proposed in National Program for Community Empowerment in Rural Areas at Bendosari Sub District of Sukoharjo.

The research is a qualitative research using naturalistic design. The data analysis technique was done using interactive model covering three main components, namely: 1) data reduction; 2) data display; and 3) verification. Based on the analysis, the research concludes that: 1) the entrepreneurship training management in general covered 4 (four) activities, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and monitoring and evaluation; 2) The result and the effect of entrepreneurship training program can be demonstrated with the improvement of the user groups and the fund revolved and the change in women’s behavior of the participants; 3) the supporting factors of entrepreneurship training program can be classified into two types, namely internal and external factors. The inhibiting factors cover: a) the lack of social relationship; b) the traditional attitudes of the community; c) the high dependence; d) the high self confidence lackness; e) the regression and insecurity feeling; f) the critics on helpers provider; g) human resources factor; and 4) the entrepreneurship training model recommended cover the entrepreneurship training models in the field of productive micro-economic activities and micro-finance management activities.

Keywords: training, entrepreneurship skills, women’s empowerment, National Program for Community Empowerment in Rural Areas, Women’s Savings and Loans

INTRODUCTION
Women’s empowerment, especially in developing countries, becomes one of the important issues in development programs. Empowerment of women is a necessity since it enhances both the quality and the quantity of human resources available for the development. Moreover, in the male dominated societies,
women confront various discrimination in all aspects of life, starting from family, social, economic, and political life. The women’s empowerment is linked to the effort of poverty alleviation, which is one of the Millinum Development Goals (MDGs) attempts declared on 2010. Attempts to eradicate poverty and extreme hunger as the first goal of the MDGs. Whereas the women’s empowerment linked to the third goal, namely gender equality and women’s empowerment. Based from the facts above, various attempts have been done to promote women empowerment, especially in rural areas. The attempts have been done both by government and non government organization. One of the attempts is done through microfinance intervention. It is stated by Meenu, et al., (2011) that stated “…various efforts have been made by many Government and Non-Government organizations to promote women empowerment especially in rural areas and one such effort is the microfinance intervention”.

Women’s empowerment itself, is defined by Kabeer (1999) as quoted by Swain (2007) as “a process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability”. Based on the definition stated by Kabeer, empowerment means a process by which those who have not ability to make a strategic life choices are empowered so that they have the ability to do so.

Targetting women as the subject of empowerment is stated by the World Bank (2011) as quoted by Rehman, Moazzam & Ansari (2015), that stated:

“Putting resources into poor women’s hands while promoting gender equality in the household and in society results in large development payoffs. Expanding women’s opportunities in public works, agriculture, finance, and other sectors accelerate economic growth, helping to mitigate the effects of current and future financial crises”.

The similar statement is made by Sen (2000) and UN DESA (2009). Sen (2000) stated that “when women participate in economic activities the society as a whole benefits”. Whereas UN DESA, in the report stated that “women’s access to resources has a stronger impact on child survival, welfare and education, than when men have access to similar resources.”

Women’s empowerment in the field of economy by providing microcredit in Indonesia is manifested in the form of Women’s Saving and Loans through the National Program for Community Empowerment in Rural Areas. The objective of the program is to facilitate women’s empowerment economically. The low rate NPL in Women’s Saving and Loans unit at BendoSari is linked to the improvement provided by the Bendosari Activity Management Unit through the entrepreneurship skill program training for the debitors so that they able to develop their daily economic activities, which in turn made them pay the installments on time.

Based on the background above, the research is aimed to: (1) describe the training management; (2) analyze the results and the effects of the training programs; (3) analyze the supporting and inhibiting factors of the training program provided; and (4) analyze the training model recommended.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Women’s Empowerment

The concept of women’s empowerment as stated by UNESCO (2002) refers to “increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities”. The concept means that women’s empowerment refers to the improvement of spiritual, political, social or economic strength. The definition of women’s empowerment according to Batiwala (1995) as quoted by Gupta & Yesudian (2006) refers to “the process, and the outcome of the process, by which women gain greater control over material and intellectual resources, and challenge the ideology of patriarchy and the gender-based discrimination against women in all the institutions and structures of society.” Such a definition implies the
meaning that empowerment implies the process and outcome of the process in which the women gain greater control over resources, so that they have capabilities to challenge patriarchy ideology and discrimination in all aspects of life.

The principles of women’s empowerment according to United Nations Entity for Gender Equality (2011) consists of 7 principles. They are: 1) leadership promotes gender equality; 2) equal opportunity, inclusion and nondiscrimination; 3) health, safety and freedom from violence; 4) education and training; 5) enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices; 6) community leadership and engagement; dan 7) transparency, measuring and reporting.

The model of women’s empowerment is based on 5 stages of women’s empowerment development trajectory of the development countries formulated by UNESCO (Shroff, 2010). They cover: 1) powerlessness; 2) initiation; 3) participation; 4) adoption; dan 5) leadership.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study is a qualitative research using case study design, namely a study exploring specific problems using specific data and information sources. It also concerned with studying the phenomenon in context, so that the findings generate insight into how the phenomenon actually occurs within a given situation (Creswell, 2007). The longitudinal examination on specific occurrence or case using systematic observation is employed in the research. As a result, the researcher will come to intense understanding about the phenomenon that can be used as further research (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The grounded theory is employed since the research develop a theory linked to the women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans unit in National Program for Community Empowerment. The theory is expected to contribute in the community empowerment based development and enhance the existing theory.

**STUDY RESULTS**


Based on statistic data of 2012, Bendosari Sub District covered an area of 5.299 hectares or equal to 11.36% of the area of Sukoharjo Residency. The area of Bendosari Sub District consist of 2.569 hectares (48.48%) of farming land, and 2.730 hectares (51.52%) dry land. The population of Bendosari Sub District in 2012 covers 67,734 people. It consists of 33,677 males (49.72%) and 34,057 females (50.28%).

The economic condition in Bendosari Sub District can be depicted through the occupation of its inhabitants. Referring to the Statistic Data of Sukoharjo 2013, 35.86% of population in Bendosari Sub District are farmers. The 2nd position occupied by traders, with the proportion of 23.09%. The third is occupied by labour, both industrial and farming, with the proportion of 21.29%. The remaining is occupied by government employees with the proportion of 5.41%.

The training management in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans in National Program for Community Empowerment

The training program to empower women through Women’s Saving and Loans is based on community’s need proposed from the grass-root (bottom up). The training plan is initiated from gaining ideas about the kind of training provided. The ideas’ searching is done in the community meeting in the neighborhood level. Having been approved, the idea gained is then brought to the village level to be discussed in the community meeting in the village level, so that the form and the kind of training program needed by the community can be formulated.
The formulation of the training program is then proposed to the Unit Technical Support through the facilitation of the Village Community’s Personnel. The proposal will be competed in the sub district level and will be executed as it passed the verification process.

The verification itself is a phase that aimed to check and verify its feasibility. It is done by Verification Team formed in the sub district level and consist at least 5 expert personnel. As the verification process done, the training program can be executed when the budget available. In the case that there are no budget available, the program will be done in the following year budgetting.

The type of the training program provided for the Women’s Saving and Loans beneficiaries in 2012 can be presented in Table 1 as follows.

**Table 1 The Training Program Proposed in Bendosari Sub District of 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Training Program Proposed</th>
<th>Proposer</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Training in Poultry Feed</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>65,991,000</td>
<td>Cabeyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Training in Tailoring</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cabeyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Integrated Service Post Training</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>54,435,000</td>
<td>Jombor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Training in Budidaya Jamur</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jombor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Prasaranas KBS</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>50,669,000</td>
<td>Manisharjo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Training in Perbengkelan</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Manisharjo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Training in Tata Boga</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>46,750,000</td>
<td>Paluhombo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Prasaranas KBS</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paluhombo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Pddkn, Meubeller TK / PAUD</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>55,795,750</td>
<td>Puhgogor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Training in Tailoring</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td>Puhgogor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Integrated Service Post Training</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>32,897,750</td>
<td>Toriyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Training in Budidaya Jamur</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Toriyo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bendosari Unit Technical Support. 2012

The results and effects of Training Program

The results and effects of training program in women’s empowerment in Bendosari Sub District of Sukoharjo during the period of 2010 – 2012 can be seen from the condition alteration of women who participate in the program. The alteration of the women’s condition is the alteration from powerless into the condition of those who are able to take initiative or able to make a decision, and then improve into the condition of participating, and then to the next level of the ability to adopt, and in some cases into a leadership among themselves.

The alteration from powerless into initiative can be seen from the women’s attempts to change their family economic condition. They strived to alter their economic condition with the positive perceptions towards the poverty alleviation program provided both by the government and non government organizations.

In the next level, as they became aware of their initiative, they started to participate in the activities provided both by the government and non government organizations. They started to participate actively in the training program formulation processes and participate in the training program actively.

The ability to adopt the training program of the SPP beneficiaries can be seen from the positive perception of 69.44% of the respondents that stated the training program provided helped them to develop their daily economic enterprises. Whereas the remaining 30.66% stated the training program provided do not help their business development.

Based on the interview with Mr. Mulyono, S.T., (the Chief of UPK Bendosari Sub District) the leadership competence of the women of the Women’s Saving and Loans beneficiaries can be seen from the emergence of new leaders among them. They are able to coordinate their members to participate actively in various activities provided by Bendosari Unit Technical Support. The emergence of new group leaders, which are fragmentations of beneficiaries groups, show that some of them have the capability as leaders among themselves.
The effects of the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans can be seen from the alteration of their family economic condition and their thinking patterns. Other effect can be seen is psychological effect happened among them.

Viewed from the thinking pattern alteration, the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans has brought significant change in their thinking patterns. The shift can be demonstrated by the emergence of initiative to change their family economic condition by participating in the program, their ability to adopt the training into their own business, and finally the emergence of new leaders among women.

Viewed from the economic condition, the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans has changed their family economic condition into better ones. Some of the women able to improve their business assets and some of them able to alter the business system from manual into semi automated system by using production machineries.

Viewed from psychological aspect, the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans has improved their selves confidence. Some of the women were able to become leaders in social organizations, both women’s organization and mixed members’ organizations.

The Supporting and inhibiting factors of training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans in Bendosari Sub District of Sukoharjo

The supporting factors of training programs in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans cover the facilitation of the UPK and local government personnels, the high motivation to improve family economic condition and dignity, the capital support from the Women’s Saving and Loans; and support from both government and non-government organizations.

The inhibiting factors of the training programs in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans comprise: 1) the less optimum social relationship, the traditional attitude of the society, the highly dependence among women, the less self confidence among women; insecurity and regression, the critics toward the donatur, and human resources factors.

The training model in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans formulation recommended

The women’s empowerment through the programs provided by National Program for Community Empowerment in Bendosari Sub District cover four fields of activities, namely infrastructure, economy, loans, and education & health. The programs are based on some empowerment theories.

One of the theories employed is empowerment stages model covering knowledge, attitudes, practice with the cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and conative aspects approach. The concept reflects new paradigm in development, namely “people centred, participatory, empowering, and sustainable” development (Chambers, 1995). The concept is developed from the attempts to find out equity as Friedman (1992) noted as alternative development, that require ‘inclusive democracy, appropriate economic growth, gender equality and intergenerational equity” (Kartasasmita, 1997).

Based on Friedman’s theory, the empowerment should cover the stages that flow from the powerless condition, improve into initiation. The empowerment, is then, should be improved into participation level, and improve toward adoption, and eventually into leadership, so that the empowerment concept can be accomplished.

The purpose of women’s empowerment refers to the opinion proposed by Kartasasmita (1996) which says that the process of empowerment can be done through three processes, namely: enabling, empowering, and empowering in the sense of protecting. Thus, through the empowerment, the criteria of empowered community can be achieved. The criteria of empowered community as stated by Sumardjo (1999), comprises: (1) able to comprehend themselves and their potents, able to make a plan (anticipate future
changes), (2) able to direct themselves, (3) have power to negotiate, (4) have adequate bargaining power in conducting mutual beneficial cooperation, and (5) able to responsible for their own decisions. The results show that the training programs in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans have not fully meet the ideal concept of empowerment theory proposed by Friedman. The training programs reached only the adoption stage of the five development trajectory. It did not reach ultimate stage of the development trajectory, namely leadership. This condition caused a uncertainties of the future development sustainability when the program stopped.

Departing from such a condition, the researcher recommend training model formulation in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans so that the ideal concept of empowerment proposed by Friedman attain leadership stage. The formulation is based on empowerment field activities covering micro economic and micro finance.

The training model formulation recommended in the field of micro economic and micro finance can be formulated in the following diagram.

In order to empower women accomplish the leadership stage, it needs training on leadership. By such a training, it is expected to emerge new leaders from their own members. The new leaders are expected to drive and lead the groups so that the sustainability of the empowerment will be more optimum and the become less dependent to other.

**DISCUSSION**

The training programs management in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans is managed using bottom-up process. The training program provided are proposed by the beneficiaries groups so that the type of the training met to the needs of the beneficiaries.

The bottom-up process employed in managing the training program is in accordance to Subejo dan Suprianto (2003), that view community empowerment as intentional attempts to facilitate local community
in planning, deciding and managing local resources through collective action and networking so that they become independent.

The concept of managing the training program based on bottom-up process is also relevant to the concept proposed by Chambers (1995) who stated that community empowerment is a concept of economic development that covers social values, which is characterized by “people centered, participatory, empowering, and sustainable” (Chambers, 1995). The concept is developed from the attempts of the experts to find out what Friedman (1992) called “alternative development, yang menghendaki ‘inclusive democracy, appropriate economic growth, gender equality and intergenerational equity” (Kartasasmita, 1997).

The concept of bottom-up process used in managing the training program is linked to the goal that the outcome of the economic empowerment meet to the expectation. It is in accordance to the research undertaken by Mehra (1997), Mayoux (2010), Emran, Robano & Smith (2014), dan Rehman, et al., (2015). Based on their research, it is concluded that “In order to support enterprises and activities, SEWA facilitated the provision of financial and nonfinancial, or business development services to its members. A key component of the economic strategy was the creation of the SEWA Cooperative Bank founded in 1974.”

Training program provided to the Women’s Saving and Loans group beneficiaries is a form of non-financial support to enable the beneficiaries groups to develop their enterprises so that they become more empowered and able to occupy a parallel position with men. This finding is in accordance to Nader (2008) that concluded “microcredit has become imperative to combat poverty and to improve families’ wellbeing and the results also confirmed that microcredit is strongly linked with children’s education, income and assets. So it also provides support to the topic that microfinance plays an important role in women empowerment, especially their inclination towards family wellbeing and children education.”

The results and effects of the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans can be seen from the economic condition improvement and behavior alteration of the beneficiaries groups members. The economic condition improvement are in the form of the changing system in their business, namely from manual into semi automated system in producing their products. The behavior alteration in beneficiaries group members are the changing from powerless stage that improve into initiation, participation, adoption and in some cases into leadership stages. The alteration occured is in accordance to concept proposed by Kartasasmita (1997) who stated that the empowerment process can be done through three processes, namely: Firstly, empowerment can be done by enabling, encouraging, and build awareness. Secondly, strengthening the potentials owned by the community. Thirdly, empowering means protecting. The empowerment development stage as the effects of training in women’s empowerment is also in accordance to the five development trajectory stages in developing countries. The development trajectory as proposed by UNESCO stated that:

“From among these stages of development, the first two stages of powerlessness and Initiation are categorized to be passive, where women are not aware of the injustice they are facing, and do not speak up for their rights and needs. During these stages, women are just getting to know that they can achieve a better life for themselves and their families, what organizational interventions are about, and why they should attend the organizational interventions. Women passively interact and take part in organizational interventions during these two stages. The remaining three stages of Participation, Adoption, and Leadership, are considered to be active, where women proactively get involved and seek interaction with organizational interventions, local agents, and other active women in the community. During these stages of development, women are interested in learning how to bring an improved life to themselves and their families, where they can seek help and resources, when they can start to achieve this development, and ultimately how they can spread their positive experiences to the broader community.” (Shroff, 2010).
The behavior alteration in beneficiaries group members seen from the improvement in their self confidence and their ability to make a decision. These findings are in accordance to the researchs undertaken by Nabacwa (2001); Linos, Khawaja, & Al-Anshour (2010); Vetrivel dan Chandrakumaramangalam (2010); Dheepa & Barani (2010); Suja (2012); and Subramanian & Gowri (2013). Their researchs concluded that the training provided enabled women to enhance their self capacities, which in turn enhance their self confidence and lead them to enable in decision making process linked to their own family lives.

One of the supporting factors of the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans is the high motivation to improve family economic condition. The finding is in accordance to the researchs done by Nabacwa (2001); Mayoux and Hartl (2007); Shetty (2010); Shroff (2010); Metcalfe (2011); Jeyakodi (2012); Suja (2012); Prasad Das (2013); and Rehman, et al., (2015). Their researchs concluded that the motivation to change family economic condition become the main motivation for women to participate in empowerment programs provided by various NGO’s.

One of the he inhibiting factors of the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans covers dependence. This factor linked to the quality of the beneficiaries. It is in accordance to a statement stated by Tjokrowinoto (2001) that says ability is relevant to the quality of the actor.

The finding that dependence, traditional thoughts, and insecurity inhibit the training program success also in accordance to the research undertaken by Rehman, et al., (2015) that concluded “although increase in women’s income played a very important role in enhancing women’s economic independence but the societal discrimination still prevail that limit the ability of women to fully exercise their potential for betterment of their family.”

The formulation of training model recommended cover the abilities of: knowledge, attitudes, practice is in accordance to Bhattacharya (2010) who stated:

“In sum, empowerment has to be understood as involving both the individual and the collective, and therefore the potential for both to be actors that challenge power structures. Women recognize their self-worth through association with similar others. To be seen as part of a collective group, women had to first develop a self-identity to even relate to the group and internalize that. It involves a process of transformation of consciousness. Reformulation of identity facilitates a woman seeing herself as a worthy entity and this translates into action challenging norms that reinforce women’s subordination.”

CONCLUSION

The training programs management in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans is managed using bottom-up process. The process means that the training program provided is proposed by the group beneficiaries. The group beneficiaries proposed the type of the training based on their needs. The types of the training provided are adjusted to the needs of the group beneficiaries.

The results and the effects of the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans can be demonstrated through the improvement of the beneficiaries’ economic activities. The effects of the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans can be seen from the alteration of the thinking patterns of the beneficiaries.

The supporting factors of training programs in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans can be classified into two types, namely internal and external factors. The internal factor comprises the motivation to alter their families economic condition into better ones. Whereas the external factors cover the government and non-government organizations’ support and groups’ influence that support their members to participate actively in the program.

The inhibiting factors of training programs in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans can be classified into two types, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors comprise psychological obstacles within the women themselves. Most of them were less in self confidence and
uneducated so that they felt they can not changed their conditions. Whereas the external factors comprise the factors related to family, social, and cultural.

Theoretical implications of the research is that the training program in women’s empowerment through Women’s Saving and Loans undertaken cover four stages in the women’s empowerment development trajectory proposed by UNESCO. The four stages comprise: 1) Powerless; 2) Initiation; 3) Participation; and 4) Adoption. It is, therefore, the ultimate stage in the trajectory, namely leadership stage, has not been covered in the training program provided.

The practical implication of the study is that the study is employing a qualitative approach with a phenomenological perspective so that the research may not to judge or value a policy. It is, therefore, the results obtained in the study will only gives an overview of women's empowerment that has been done by the parties involved in the program.

REFERENCES