

Conference Paper

Formulation of the Concept of Economic Strengthening: Optimizing the Empowerment of Women in Rural Families Islamic Perspectives in Pringsewu

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Abstract.

This qualitative research aims to describe formulations related to the concept and optimization of women’s empowerment in rural families Muslimat Nahdatul Ulama Pringsewu. Data collection is carried out through in-depth interview techniques, documentation, and observation and is interactive with data analysis. The results of this study show that several strategies were carried out. First, sustainable self-development; second, conducting education and coaching to the community, where skills drive the community’s economy. Third, namely, implementing and encouraging zakat and ink. The impact of women’s empowerment, carried out by NU Muslimat, is that there is an increase in the contribution of women in the economic sector, especially to some families in NU Muslimat congregations. Several families in NU Muslim congregations have succeeded in expanding the market and developing their businesses because they have has received intervention from other parties, local governments, and other institutions such as LAZISNU, cooperatives, and other community institutions. ”

Keywords: empowerment, women, Nahdatul Ulama Muslimat Family

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1. INTRODUCTION

”The portrait of poverty released by the Central Statistics Agency of the Republic of Indonesia shows that the percentage of the poor in March 2021 was 10.14 percent, a decrease of 0.05 percentage points from the September 2020 data.¹ Released the percentage figures of the poor by district/cities in Lampung Province in 2020. The profile of poverty in Pringsewu District is shown in Table 1. ”

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goal 1, ”no Poverty,” is closely related to the 5th goal of ”gender equality and empowering women.” Everywhere, poverty always presents a woman’s face in front. Many contemporary

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TABLE 1: Table of Poverty Rates in Pringsewu District, 2020.

Poverty Indicators	Poverty Rate
Poverty Rate (P0)	9.97
Poverty Depth Index (P1)	1.20
Poverty Severity Index (P2)	0.21
Poor People (thousand inhabitants)	40.12
Poverty Line (Rp/capita/month)	458627.00

Source: <https://pringsewukab.bps.go.id>

researchers reveal that, in low-income families, women have always been the lifeline for the family economy. The UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality recommends seven strategic priorities: strengthening post-primary education for girls while ensuring universal primary education; ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights; reducing the time burden on women and girls; guaranteeing property rights and inheritance; eliminating gender inequality in work; otoritatif women’s participation in government; and significantly reduce violence against women. Actions based on these priorities will enable countries worldwide to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment by 2015. ²

”There are at least four roles of poor women in the family. *First*, as the financial manager of the family; *secondly*, as the person in charge of the entire domestic work; *third*, as the breadwinner of the family; *fourth*, as one of the virtual nodes of social networks in terms of social transfer, especially in critical times and crises. ³ The analysis shows that the family, with associated responsibilities and norms, is a powerful institution that determines women’s business roles and behaviors. Poor entrepreneurial women depend on families to run their businesses and use businesses to sustain families. They utilize their limited resources (e.g., time, money, and skills) to meet the family’s basic needs and pay for markets such as the child’s education. This is the priority of the family rather than maximizing profits.⁴”

”Based on a presurvey conducted in Pringsewu Regency with interviews with the Regent, Regional Secretary, Head of the Office of Women’s Empowerment, Child Protection and Population Control (P3AP2KB), Head of the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and Chairman of the PC Muslimat NU Pringsewu Regency, it is known that efforts to empower women in the economic sector have been carried out by the government, although the results achieved have not been optimal. ”

”The social principles Muslims must adhere to are moderate, balanced, tolerant, and perpendicular loyalty. Similarly, of course, capital and social principles must be

developed by Muslimat NU Pringsewu Branch to empower the families of its pilgrims, especially rural women. ”

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Economic Development Indicators

”There are various alternative options to choose from in economic development. There are two poles, namely growth-oriented economic development and economic development, as interpreted by adherents of the neo-economic tradition who argue that economic growth has resulted in concentration and marginalization as well as gaps in access to various factors of production.⁵ Furthermore, Kuncoro (1997) mentioned that growth-oriented economic development is a process by which the per capita income of a country’s population increases over a long time. GNP (Gross National Product) per capita is divided by the total population.⁶”

2.2. Women's Development: Its Concept and Approach

”Empowerment and empower is a translation of the words ”empowerment” and ”*empower*” according to Webster and Oxford English Dictionary, the word empower contains the first meaning is to give power or authority which means to give power, transfer power or delegate authority to another party, while the second meaning is to give *the ability to or enable* namely as an effort to provide ability or empowerment (Pranarka and Prijono, 1996).

”The concept of empowerment has been reviewed in various reviews. Empowerment has been defined as a process (Gutierrez, 1990), as an intervention (Solomon, 1976), and as a skill. Empowerment has also been seen as a specific strategy to empower women. (Browne, 1995).⁷ Women’s empowerment is now a primary development concern. Much of the narrative focuses on instrumental gains—what women can do for development rather than what evolution can do for women.⁸

”The strategy that women choose to maintain their existence and position in trade is to form business groups. This is to minimize competition among women and strengthen capital in the group. Women’s strategy to increase their income is to expand their marketing, reach, enter villages, and bring merchandise. The possibility of still practicing in society that results in gender inequality cannot be fully revealed because gender data is still very limited. ”

2.3. Poverty

"Poverty is a humanitarian issue, so it has the consequence of having a moral responsibility for everyone to pay attention to the lives of people living in poverty. Chambers as quoted by Soetrisno suggests that the core of the problem of poverty lies in the deprivation trap or the trap of lack. The deprivation trap consists of five unfortunate misfortunes wrapped around the lives of poor families, namely, (1) poverty itself; (2) physical weakness; (3) alienation; (4) vulnerability, and (5) helplessness.⁹"

"In a broader sense, poverty is no longer understood to be limited to economic incompetence, but also the failure to fulfill fundamental rights and differences in treatment for a person or group of people in living life with dignity.

2.4. Development within the framework of Islamic Community Development

"According to Ibn Khaldun's definition, etymologically development means fostering and improving quality. Islamic society implies a collection of human beings who are Muslims who examine the romantic relationships and interrelationships of one another. In sociological thought, Ibn Khaldun explains that man is individually given advantages, but naturally, man has shortcomings. So that excess needs to be fostered in order to develop the personal potential to be able to build.¹⁰

"The four main strategies or activities of Islamic proselytizing carried out are *bil Lisan* (with oral), *bil Qalam* (with writing), *bil Qudwah* (by example) and *bil Hal* (by action or concrete action), one of the forms of *da'wah bil Hal* is community empowerment which is proselytizing in the form of real action. Community empowerment efforts are characterized by making people, subjects, and objects of development. "Achieving the objectives of development can be regarded as indirect by rebuilding concepts on religious norms and religious values. Which is implemented through the Islamic economic system and the revitalization of traditional Islamic resource management institutions.¹¹

3. PROBLEM FORMULATION

Based on the description above and based on phenomena that occur in society in general as well as people in Lampung Province and Pringsewu Regency in particular, this research focuses on the formulation of the problem as follows":

1. How is the formulation of the concepts and strategies implemented by Muslimat NU Pringsewu in the Empowerment of Women in Rural Families in Pringsewu?”
2. What is the impact of optimizing nu Pringsewu’s Muslimat performance in empowering women in rural families in Pringsewu?”

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1. Research Approach

”This research uses a qualitative approach in research that is intended to obtain a deep and *comprehensive understanding* of the structure by using depth *interviews* through participant observation to understand the meaning of the phenomenon. The formulation of the concept of women’s empowerment and the symbolic meaning behind the existing reality. ”

4.2. Research Location

”This research was conducted at the selected district/city level, namely, Pringsewu Regency as the working area of Muslimat Nahdatul Ulama Pringsewu Regency. ”Pringsewu District has a predominantly rural character with a Muslim-majority population (92.60%) as well as a Regional Head with a Kyai background .

4.3. Data Sources

”Informants in this qualitative research were selected using *purposive sampling techniques*. Selection of informants is based on the following criteria and considerations: 1) Planners, implementers, and assistance of rural women’s empowerment programs, in this case Muslimat Nahdatul Ulama Pringsewu Regency, 2) *Stakeholders* who can influence gender perspectives in society, 3) Rural women as implementers (subjects) and targets (objects) of women’s empowerment programs.

4.4. Data Collection Techniques

”One of the data collection techniques is carried out with in-depth interviews, conducted in an unstructured and semistructured manner and *focus group discussions*. In addition,

observations are also made on the interpretation and behavior of the community as well as reviewing documents related to policies, programs, and activities that are running. ”

4.5. Data Analysis

”Data analysis in this study is an *interactive model* of analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1992), which consists of three components of analysis: Data Reduction (data *reduction*), Data presentation (data *display*)—concluding drawing.¹²”

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. RESULT

”Pringsewu Regency is one of the districts in Lampung Province with an area of Pringsewu Regency of about 625 km² or 62,500 m², pthere is the beginning of formation, the administrative area of Pringsewu Regency consists of 8 subdistricts, 96 pekon/villages and 5 villages. Furthermore, in 2013, the number of sub-districts and pekon/villages has been expanded to 9 subdistricts, 126 pekon/villages and 5 kelurahan. ”

The population composition of Pringsewu Regency in 2020 based on the religion adhered to, namely, Islam 370,756 people (92.60%), Protestants 2,873 people (0.72%), Catholics 10,385 people (2.59%), Hindus 11,165 people (2.79%) and Buddhists 5,215 people (1.30%). Based on BPS population data, the total population of Pringsewu in 2010 was 365,369 and in 2020 it was 403,115 people, within 10 (ten) years, there was an additional population of more than 37 thousand people.

5.2. Overview of the Research Subjects

”This study tries to look at the economic activities of Islamic women within the scope of the organization. The scope of the organization that was used as the object of research was the NU Muslimat in Pringsewu Regency. Muslimat NU i is a social, religious organization and is one of the independent board of *Jam'iyah* NU. It was founded on 26 Rabiul Akhir to coincide with the date of March 29, 1946, in Purwokerto.¹³

”Nu’s Muslimat vision is the realization of a prosperous society imbued with the teachings of Islam *Ahlusunnah wal Jamaah* in the Unitary State of the Republic of

Indonesia with prosperity and justice which Allah SWT knows in line with the contents of Muslimat as follows:”

1. We are realizing Indonesian society, especially women, who are aware of religion, community, nation, and state.
2. Realizing Indonesian society, especially women, who are qualified, independent, and devoted to Allah SWT.
3. They are realizing Indonesian society, especially women, who are aware of their obligations and rights according to Islamic teachings as individuals and as members of community.
4. We are carrying out the objectives of Jam’iyyah NU so that the realization of a just and prosperous society that is equitable and recognized by Allah SWT.

From the explanation contained in the vision and mission, it can be concluded that Muslimat NU strongly encourages Muslim women to understand their obligations in society and then take part in realizing a just and prosperous state in that society.

5.3. Strengthening the Family Economy Muslimat NU Pringsewu

Perspective

Based on the results of interviews with several figures in Pringsewu, the following results were obtained:

In NU itself, especially in Muslimat, gender equality has entered into compulsory education that must be known to the NU body. This indicates that there is no term of restraint on women in the right to freedom in home care. Of course, whatever decision must be based on the permission of the husband.”¹⁴ NU is very glorifying, whose name is female, according to what Islam teaches. Therefore, we always socialize that a wife should be a sholehah woman, an excellent mother with her children, independent and dignified ”¹⁵

The women entrepreneurs are mostly just workers. The leaders of their business groups are men. So access to decision-making or participating in political participation does not yet exist. She also said that the women thought because they had felt enough and comfortable with the situation and the conditions they were feeling now. ¹⁶

Most women entrepreneurs in Pringsewu District are only freelancers, and informally, so they are not recorded by taxpayers. ¹⁷ Women who help the family economy play

a significant role in domestic life.¹⁸ I think a woman is a fantastic figure. She can be a housewife and sometimes help her husband become the backbone of the family.¹⁹

These women in Pringsewu are generally independent. Even those with stores are almost all women. Then, nowadays, many ministers and essential figures of the state are women, so it becomes a benchmark for the preciousness of a woman".²⁰ In line with the existing values in NU Muslimat which require independence and religion. Then independent women are obligatory, especially in terms of income."²¹ In the NU Muslimat organization, there is a charity institution, zakat, infak, and alms NU (LAZISNU). The institution houses ambulances and free medical treatment, where the condition is only to bring a LAZISNU card, and the budget is only as sincere as each month. In addition, there are also coins of heaven.

The activity is for the distribution of alms to the poor, the elderly, and orphans. Data collection starts from the village, the Ministry of Education provides financial donations, which are planned to be held in activity B in Latihan Kerja, where the coaching focuses on food management. These activities illustrate NU's Muslimat program in supporting economic activity.²² In the 80s, village chiefs innovated and conducted training for the tapis, where teachers taught directly from Krui. Based on the way it is made, the selection of threads, methods, and motifs has an interesting peculiarity, so Tapis Krui is notoriously expensive. However, the Pringsewu area is famous for its neatest tapis craftsmanship.²³

5.4. Women's Contribution to the Economic Sector

In this area, the average woman does work, and the women are very creative, so the majority work as entrepreneurs, and most of the productive activities of women in Pringsewu District are informal."²⁴ Women in this area have the freedom to work in the economic sector, so many have small industries, and in some of the existing subdistricts, there are clusters of business groups that have been divided by the Koperindag Office. Starting from business groups with novice clusters, then business groups with 5-year collection, then there are business groups with sets of more than five years.²⁵"

Women who play a role in the economic sector informally, there are also formal business groups with a large and wide scope of business. Some of these business groups include those that produce products, namely, bead crafts, tapis crafts from Lugasari Village, North Pagelaran District, patchwork crafts from Sukamulya Village, Banyumas District, Panda Curtain brand banana chips, Rabbani brand snacks from

Mataram Baru Village, Raffin's brand snacks, and Independent brand dodol from Podorejo Village" (Margayani, 2021b)²⁶

The women who have productive activities are farmers. So in the beginning, the wives worked / entrepreneurship in order to find additional income. But over time, the business they live in is advancing and contributing significantly to the family's income.²⁷ Business actors and pilgrims from Muslimat NU who started their entrepreneurship in the 1980s from convection then joined industrial entrepreneurship, arguing that initially it was only a sideline business. Did not expect that it can be so developed now.²⁸ With regard to the contribution of Muslim women's economic activities in Pringsewu Muslimat Regency NU has plans to open an outlet as a forum for producing artisans, hal t e debut will certainly bring or become the pride of the region.²⁹

6. DISCUSSION

6.1. Women's Empowerment Strategy According to Muslimat NU Pringsewu: Perspectives on Islamic Community Development

"The Qur'an's view of community empowerment, Islam views society as a system where individuals need each other and support each other. Between individuals, the community has an ideally mutually beneficial relationship. The gap in terms of economic income is a potential that can be utilized to foster harmony and friendship between each other. "

"Islam encourages the implementation of community empowerment by adhering to 3 main principles; the three principles are the *ukhuwwah* principle, the *ta'awun* principle, and the degree equation principle. First, the *ukhuwwah principle*. *Ukhuwwah* in Arabic means brotherhood. This principle asserts that each Muslim is brother and sister, even though there is no blood connection between them. A sense of brotherhood guarantees a sense of empathy and *glues silaturahmi* in society. *Second*, the principle of *ta'awun*. Allah Almighty encourages people to help each other. "

"According to the perspective of the Qur'an, there are several steps that can be taken in helping the success of community empowerment programs. First, namely, sustainable self-development, people who are targeted by empowerment programs are required to be able to develop themselves and work to improve their lives and destiny. Second, namely, conducting education and coaching to the community, where skills and skills are one of the factors that drive the community's economy. Third, namely, implementing and encouraging *zakat* and *infak*, two programs that are very effective in lifting people from

the poverty line. Zakat management is required to be more efficient and professional in order to realize more effective empowerment. Community empowerment is one of the important instruments in alleviating poverty. As a religion of *Rahmatan lil' alamin*, Islam encourages its people to realize social justice and welfare for all. From an Islamic perspective, community empowerment programs are very much in line with the spirit and spirit of Islam, which trains its adherents to become agents of spreading the mercy of Allah SWT. ”

”The application of Islamic principles is also used as a strategic milestone in community empowerment. This is illustrated from the results of the author’s interview with informants that the NU Muslimat of Pringsewu Regency focuses on how to revive the organization. Muslimat is not an institution but an organization so that pilgrims have awareness and can share to find a way to the afterlife by giving alms and continuing to increase knowledge so that they can increase the family income that the business group that develops is due to the intention of the business group, which is indeed active in entrepreneurship. Then it is also supported by village funds, where business groups are budgeted through women’s empowerment. Then regarding institutions that assist women or active partners, namely those who are members of PUSPA, where there are business actors, government, health, and universities.

6.2. Women's Empowerment: Improving Family Access and Benefits in the Economy

”The author’s interview with the informant describes the empowerment of women in Pringsewu District that the women who are entrepreneurial are mostly just workers, the leaders of their male business groups. So regarding access to decision-making or participating in political participation does not yet exist. The women assumed they had had enough and were comfortable with the situation and conditions they were feeling now. Another informant stated that the majority of women who are entrepreneurs in Pringsewu District are only freelancers and informally, so they are not recorded by taxpayers.

”Gender analysis for development programs must be viewed and adjusted to Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2000, which focuses on four determinant aspects.³⁰. *First*, we access, according to Narayan (2002 and 2005), the assets and capabilities of low-income societies in an individual context consist of material, human, social, psychological, and political dimensions. The analysis first concentrates on how they declare

themselves to be poor and then how and in what ways low-income households can access information and funding from development programs. ”

”*Second*, participation in this economic empowerment program is dominated by women, especially in household units. The social construction pattern of Indonesian society emphasizes the importance of women’s role as regulators of household affairs and prioritizes collective interests over individuals. This understanding is interpreted by women as an effort to fully help family businesses get out of poverty”.

”*Third*, the control referred to here is how family members can provide feedback on the implementation of family economic empowerment. When viewed from the pattern of gender relations in the family, it can be concluded that the most input givers of the family economic empowerment program are women, considering the role and participation of women who are technical actors in the implementation of these economic activities. ”

”*Fourth*, benefits in the form of direct and indirect benefits, direct benefits can be seen in the increase in income or family income. In addition, there is an increase in the skills of individual women in accessing information, managing businesses, and collaborating to be able to get help. The indirect benefit is the emergence of self-confidence, poor families can do something to escape poverty and improve family welfare.

7. CONCLUSION

“Muslimat NU as an organization plays a role as a forum for members with economic activities. Originally in the business process of NU, Muslimat members was carried out with the principle of helping in terms of marketing products and services. Then in the subsequent development, there was an expansion of the exit market of NU Muslimat congregations. This development is taken as the essence of its empowerment strategy so that it has a good impact, namely, an increase in the contribution of women in the economic sector, especially in some NU Muslim congregations.”

Notes

¹lampung.bps.go.id, “Sosial Dan Kependudukan,” 2020.

²Caren Grown et al., *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women* (Earthscan London, 2005).

³Alif Basuki and Yanu Endar Prasetyo, “Memusiumkan Kemiskinan,” Surakarta: PATTIRO Surakarta, 2007.

⁴Lin Xiong, Irene Ukanwa, and Alistair R Anderson, “Institutional Influence and the Role of Family in Poor Women’s Micropreneurship,” *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 26, no. 1 (2020): 122–40.

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- ¹⁷Sulistyo Ningsih, "Perempuan Belum Berwirausaha," 2021.
- ¹⁸Nurul, *Perempuan Membantu Usaha Keluarga*, issued 2021.
- ¹⁹Binti Khoiriyah, "Perempuan Itu Multitasking," 2021.
- ²⁰Muhlina, "Perempuan Jaman Sekarang Sudah Mandiri," 2021.
- ²¹Marfuah, "Perempuan Muslimat NU Mandiri Dan Religius," 2021.
- ²²Marfuah, "LAZISNU Adalah Wujud Pemberdayaan NU Pada Umat," 2021.
- ²³Maisyaroh, "Tapis Krui Berharga Mahal," 2021.
- ²⁴Margayani, "Perempuan Pekerja Pringsewu Kreatif," 2021.
- ²⁵Sulistyo Ningsih, "Perempuan Pringsewu Mempunyai Kebebasan Dalam Bekerja Dalam Berbagai Sektor Ekonomi," 2021.
- ²⁶Margayani, "Perempuan Berperan Dalam Sektor Ekonomi Informal," 2021.
- ²⁷Sulistyo Ningsih, "Perempuan Berkontribusi Secara Signifikan Bagi Penghasilan Keluarga," 2021.
- ²⁸Nurul, "Usaha Sampingan Yang Menjanjikan," 2021.
- ²⁹Marfuah, "Usaha Sampingan Perempuan Muslimat Membanggakan Daerah," 2021.
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