

Adaptation Model of Women Head of Poor Family Facing the Covid-19 Pandemic to Achieving SDGs

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Abstract

This study aimed to formulate a model and analyze the efforts of women heads of low-income families in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The real impact that occurs, especially for women heads of low-income families, is the decline in the household economy, gender vulnerabilities such as limited accessibility, the inability to maintain legal identity, especially for divorced women, a large number of dependents, and the loss of the work they have been working. The question of this research is how the models and efforts of women heads of low-income families adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. The research method uses a mixed-method, with a locus of Surakarta city, the number of informants interviewed by women heads of low-income families is 41 people, carried out by observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The results showed that most of the female heads of poor households could adapt by changing their livelihoods, strengthening and mobilizing family members, making changes to their diet, and increasing social piety. The social environment and local government also support adaptation. The gender cross-cutting approach found issues related to community empowerment, women's empowerment and child protection, and small and medium business cooperatives.

Keywords

Women; pandemic;
poor; family; gender



I. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic, which suddenly appeared, shocked the people's government. At the beginning of the Covid-19 attack in 2020, the government and society were still slow in responding. Over time, COVID-19 does not only attack but paralyzes the joints of people's lives. The spread of Covid-19 has an impact on health and has an economic impact, and in the end the population has soared. Changes in the poverty rate and the number of poor people as shown by the SMERU study, namely the projected economic growth is in the range of 4.2 and 3 percent, the poverty rate increases by 0.48 and 1.44 points, respectively. These percentages imply an additional 1.3 and 3.9 million—the poor. Meanwhile, if economic growth in 2020 is projected at 2.1, 1.2, and 1 percent, then the poverty rate will increase by 2.2, 3, and 3.1 points, respectively, which means 5.9, 8, and 8.5 million more people become poor (Suryahadi et al., 2020).

This increasing poverty condition occurs in almost all corners of the country. BPS noted that in March 2020, the percentage of poor people reached 9.78 percent, an increase of 0.56 points compared to conditions in September 2019. This data means that within six months, it is close to 1 digit. Meanwhile, the number of poor people in March 2020 was 26.42 million people, an increase of 1.63 million people for six months. In 2018 BPS recorded that 15.17 percent of household heads were led by women, meaning that women

became the head of households either due to divorce or the death of a spouse [2]. BPS shows that 42.57 percent of women heads of low-income families do not have a diploma, especially in West Nusa Tenggara, Aceh, Yogyakarta, South Sulawesi, and East Java. A total of 26.19 percent have education up to elementary school (SD), 10.69 percent have education up to junior high school (SMP), and 20.55 percent up to high school (SMA) and above ("Berita Statistik," 2020).

Several studies conducted in developing countries experienced more severe poverty experienced by women heads of households. Stephen Klasen et al. (2011), citing a study by the world bank (2007), Deeree and Leon (2003) and King et al. (2007) reveal four weaknesses of women as head of households, namely: (a) powerlessness in land tenure and inheritance; (b) low access to capital or credit; (c) weak resources and (d) accessibility in managing limited resources (Klasen et al., 2011).

Covid-19 has worsened the condition of women heads of low-income poor families. The difficulties increase, the burden spreads so that they have to deal with themselves and have to overcome the problems of their nuclear family and extended family. The government does not remain silent, but many administrative problems must be faced, such as the lack of legal identity for women heads of households who divorce. Legal identity is needed to provide a place for them to get help. The criteria for being the head of households must be completed administratively as part of the orderly provisions (Zulminarni, 2014).

The problem faced is the powerlessness of women heads of low-income families in overcoming socio-economic barriers during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aims to provide an overview of the condition of women heads of low-income families facing a pandemic, and look for economic strengthening following with their conditions and limitations. This research is in line with Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), to ensure that the cross-cutting approach can be applied through three things: the rights-based approach, gender relations, and intersectionality (Mora, 2020). The purpose of this research is the adaptation model of women heads of low-income families facing the 19 Pandemic.

The economic development model for women heads of low-income families has not been widely used. The concept that has been carried out so far is still gender-biased. The research gap on the model of strengthening the economy of women heads of low-income families is strategically carried out to strengthen and open up their accessibility in developing the family economy. The model will become the basis for implementation and good practice will be a lesson for other groups. For overcoming the research gap problem, the concept of the cross-cutting approach is proposed which is a synthesis of the rights-based approach, gender and inter-sectionality concepts.

II. Research Method

This research was conducted with a mixed-method type, namely research using quantitative and qualitative approaches, focusing on processes and outcomes (Masrizal, 2011). The mixed-method model used is an explanatory design that is interactive sequential between two stages, namely the collection and analysis of quantitative data and the phase of qualitative data collection (Lincoln, 2013). Researchers collected quantitative data using a questionnaire, and the results of quantitative data processing were sharpened by in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The determination of informants was carried out purposively Based on the Integrated Database (BID) data managed by the Surakarta City Social Service.

The respondents' determination of 41 people was selected purposively in the sub-district, the highest being female heads of low-income families, namely in Banjarsari sub-district with the criteria for, vulnerable women having many family dependents and proportionally women are productive and non-productive. The focus group discussion was conducted on 5 Regional Apparatus Organizations to determine what interventions had been carried out for women heads of low-income families. In-depth interviews were conducted with the head of the neighborhood unit and the community unit as five people. Data collection was carried out from February-April 2021.

The data processing technique is done by tabulating, reducing, categorizing, displaying, and drawing conclusions. The results of the observations will be processed in the form of determining the meaning of the findings. All data processing results will be carried out in triangulation (Yeasmin & Rahman.K.F, 2012). There are four types of triangulation as follows: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation (Fusch et al., 2018). This study uses the type of methodological triangulation which is based on quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The data analysis process starts from coding, determining the theme, building data relations, arranging themes diachronically and synchronously or following the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes, drawing relationships between elements, and drawing conclusions.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1. Poverty and Gender Bias

BPS reported that in 2020 the number of poor people in Indonesia was 26.42 million people. This condition when compared to March 2019, increased by 1.28 million people. The percentage of poor people in March 2020 was 9.78 percent. This figure increased by 0.37 percentage points from the condition in March 2019 of 9.41 percent. One of the influencing factors is Covid-19. The poor are getting poorer because of their powerlessness in the face of the pandemic. This happens in almost all areas, both in rural and urban areas (BPS, 2020).

UNDP (2019) (Conceição & United Nations Development Programme, n.d.), World Bank (2019) (World Bank, n.d.), Bappenas (2018) (Yulaswati Tim Penulis et al., n.d.), and BPS (2020) (BPS, 2020) state that poverty is a condition of complete lack or inability from an economic point of view to meet basic food and non-food needs as measured from the expenditure side. Jeffrey D Sachs noted that poverty must end because the poor face structural challenges to overcome laziness and corruption and overcome geographical isolation, disease, vulnerability to climate shocks, with a system of responsibility that can overcome poverty (Sachs, 2005). Poverty is a lack of well-being. Welfare is mainly by controlling commodities so that the poor do not have sufficient income and place them below the minimum adequate threshold. The dimension of poverty can be measured directly by measuring malnutrition or literacy (Haughton & Khandker, 2009). Gender-biased poverty is formed not only from customs or social relations but also from statutory provisions or regulations. Those lead to different values in unequal life opportunities. Women in HH experience social distortions that are differentiated, and their opportunities are eliminated (Kabeer, 2003). UN Women's findings on gender bias in poverty are shown from economic inequality in the household. The assumption that the more women work, the lower the poverty rate is valid (Rense Nieuwenhuis. Tereza Munji. Jorg Neugschwender Palmisano. Heba Omar. Flaviana, 2019).

BPS defines family as a relationship based on marital ties, whether currently married or divorced (BPS, 2017). In the 2020 population census, BPS formulated the meaning of the Head of the Family (KK) as a person responsible for the family and is listed as the head of the family on the family card. This general definition applies to both men and women. The problem arises when women do not own the status in the family card required by the BPS definition. The Empowerment of Women Heads of Family (Pekka) criticizes the formula that does not explicitly accommodate women as heads of households because of limited statistical data, especially women KK (Zulminarni, 2014).

The percentage of the poor population of Surakarta City 2016 to 2020 tends to decrease, but the end of the year compared to 2019 increased to 9.03%. The percentage of poor people on the national average also increased by 0.56%, and the Central Java average increased by 0.83%. The number of poor people in Surakarta City in 2020 increased compared to 2019, to 47,030 people or an increase of 1,830 people. Likewise, the national average rose by 1.28 million people and the Province of Central Java, up by 301.5 thousand people.

In understanding poverty, they are divided into decile groups, namely the tithe group of low-income families, to facilitate intervention according to the conditions of each group. All households can be divided into ten deciles, but the most vulnerable are deciles 1-4 who intervened. Decile 1 is the household in the lowest 10% group, Decile 2 is the household in the lowest 10-20% group, Decile 3 is the household in the lowest 20-30% group, and Decile 4 is the household in the 30-20% group. The lowest is 40%. The number of female heads of household with the lowest 40% welfare status was 7,033 families, with the highest distribution being in Jebres (2,043 families) and Banjarsari (1,986 families) subdistricts. In the following figure:

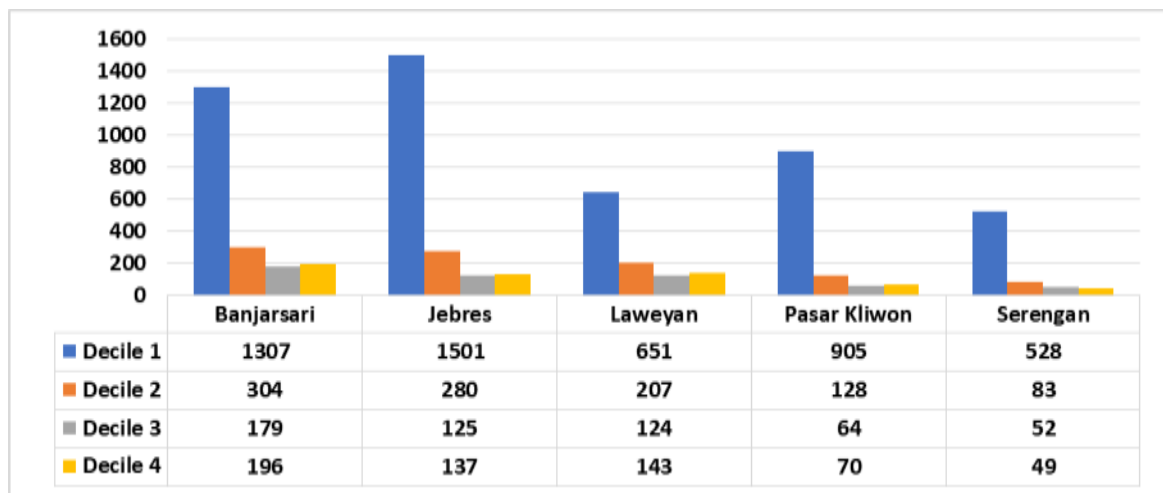


Figure 1. Number of Women KK by Welfare Status 40% and Sub-district in Surakarta City, 2020.

Based on the data above, Banjarsari District has the poorest women population (deciles 1-4), although decile 1 is lower than Jebres District. Other data shows that female heads of households are poorly based on age group; 38.36% are found in the age group under 60 years or 2,698 families, with the highest distribution in the Banjarsari and Jebres sub-districts. Although the number of female heads of poor households is more diminutive than male heads of households, the gender gap is felt by women. Research shows that gender gaps are found in the low accessibility of women to economic, social, and health resources.

3.2. Adaptation Model

One of the goals of sustainable development is poverty alleviation. In this study, it is related to the achievement of the SDGs goals, how to eradicate poverty, especially for women heads of poor families, whose number is close to 30%. So far, female heads of poor families have not received attention, even though the SDGs stated the goal of achieving gender equality and justice. SDGs for female heads of poor households are important because poverty must be gender based. Gender inequality robs women of basic rights and opportunities for well-being. Women make a significant contribution every day from bringing income to their households as breadwinners and to taking care of their families including the elderly. Gender inequality in poverty for women because she does not have equal access to development and livelihood resources (UN Women, 2020).

The approach that can be used in overcoming the problem of women in poor households is a gender mainstreaming approach or the Gender Cross-Cutting Approach. This approach views that solving the gender gap problem can be done not only on one side. The peculiarity of this approach seeks to institutionalize equality by embedding gender-sensitive practices and norms in public policy structures, processes, and environments.

The roots of gender inequality lie in gender-based discriminatory practices. Women in low-income families hampered by access to overcoming economic problems during the COVID-19 pandemic are a form of gender inequality. Mary Daily initiated a “transversal” action plan on gender equality that assumes goals and targets related to gender equality as part of an overall public policy plan. The systematic use of gender analysis tools in designing and implementing all policies is a distinctive part of this policy (Daly, 2005).

The study results show that women heads of low-income families adapt by switching livelihoods mobilizing existing resources and improving household consumption by reducing expenditures considered wasteful. This adaptation is admittedly challenging by most of the women heads of low-income families. Some of the economic adaptations that have been carried out are shifting work from services (laborers, household assistants, transportation services, tomb cleaners) to selling food, changing the habit of buying breakfast by cooking yourself. The head of the household mobilizes all family members to maintain the family economy. The social environment and local government make efforts to build social religiosity, namely developing social solidarity to help each other overcome the situation.

The rights-based approach in this context has not yet been fully realized, although it has been able to mobilize stakeholders to fulfill the rights of women heads of low-income families. A rights-based approach is a complementary framework that includes equality, non-discrimination, inviolability, responsibility, universality, dignity, one unity, but other values cannot be avoided, namely the fear of the transmission of COVID-19 (Flowers, 2000). Although irrelevant, most of the informants stated that COVID-19 had stretched social relations in the society.

Inter-sectionality analysis in this context found no discrimination in the distribution of government assistance to the poor, but administrative prerequisites limited access for women heads of low-income families. The inter-sectionality analysis reveals significant differences and similarities to overcome discrimination and place requirements for all people to fully enjoy their human rights (Olena Hankivsky, 2012). Intersectionality asserts that the multiple analytic categories that form together are operative and equally prominent in constructing institutionalized practices and life experiences. There are two variations in the claim that intersectionality satisfies the theoretical demand: the phenomenological claim and the ontological claim which theorizes about convergence, co-constitution, and imbrication, or the direction of flow (Carastathis, 2014).

programs, both direct assistance and facilitation of capacity building. The exciting thing was the increase in social piety among the society members but still in the corridor of maintaining health. Although they rarely meet face-to-face, the built kinship ties are a reinforcing factor for the rapid adaptation to be formed.

In order to accelerate and increase family resilience in the poor, local government intervention is needed, especially those dealing with poverty, namely the Social Service. Intervention efforts must be accelerated, especially in low-income family heads over 60 years old but have a double burden on the family. Interventions can be following government programs, but programs financed by the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget must exist. One of the critical efforts that must be accelerated is to ease the burden of family dependents, for example providing transportation subsidies for those who have to work far from home, electricity subsidies, non-essential food, gas subsidies, and rent and repairs to slum houses.

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