

Strengthening Entrepreneurship Literacy as a Strategy for Enhancing Community-Based Local Economic Potential: A Case Study in Denai Village Bird's Nest

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ABSTRACT

This case study examines the strengthening of entrepreneurial literacy as a strategy to increase the potential of community-based local economies in Denai Sarang Burung Village. Through training, mentoring, and international collaboration, female MSME actors have succeeded in increasing managerial capacity, digital marketing, and product innovation. The establishment of institutions such as the Red and White Cooperative and the Joint Business Group strengthens business networks and business sustainability. The challenge of women's dual roles and aspects of business legality are the focus of the development of advanced programs. This study recommends ongoing mentoring, practice-based training, and scientific publications as efforts to disseminate and develop academics.

INTRODUCTION

Denai Sarang Burung Village has great potential in terms of water resources, but still faces significant challenges in optimizing its use. Located in Pantai Labu District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, this region has an economy based on agriculture and small and medium industries (SMIs). Key commodities such as rice, corn, palm oil, and rubber are the backbone of the economy for most of its 1,980 residents. With a productive workforce of 70.4%, the district must have a strong work ethic to support significant economic growth.

However, the reality on the ground shows a gap between existing potential and the level of community welfare. The main factor causing this problem is the level of education, as 65% of students only attend primary school or, in some cases, do not attend school at all. This situation has a direct impact on how they manage their businesses, from planning and production to marketing. Agricultural and business practices remain traditional and hereditary, making them less able to adapt to the dynamic modern market.

Because of this, transformation through literary analysis of the enterprise becomes a *keniscayaan*. *Kewirausahaan* literacy is not just about learning how to do things; it also includes holistic understanding of healthy business management, innovative products, effective marketing strategies, and the use of digital technology. It is hoped that by utilizing this capacity, the populace will be able to turn the potential of the land into a more robust economy and be able to improve their quality of life in a meaningful way. This program was created as a response to address the multidimensionality of that issue using collaborative and data-based approaches.

Desa Denai Sarang Burung's economic potential can be described as quite high and diverse. With the dominance of commodities padi and jagung as *ketahanan pangan penopang*, as well as kelapa sawit and karet as *perkebunan* commodities with *ekspor*, the *pertanian* sector is a prime example. Despite its modest size and lack of proper organization, *Keberadaan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah (UKM)* also contributes to the creative economy of the general populace. This combination of *bumi* results and UKM products creates a local economic system with a strong sense of self-reliance.

Demographic support, with the majority of the population being of productive age, is a crucial factor that must be able to increase regional productivity. This age group is at the peak of all economic activities, from farming to analyzing research results to starting businesses in the service and trade sectors. With their significant numbers, they have the potential to create a dynamic internal market and become catalysts for innovation if their capabilities continue to develop. However, this enormous potential is based on a number of complex structural challenges. The first and most important factor is the quality of human resources. Low levels of education are directly proportional to limited managerial skills and insight. Many business owners run their operations without proper financial assessment, clear marketing strategies, or a clear understanding of how to develop their businesses in the long term. As a result, our businesses continue to stagnate and lose out compared to the economy.

The two main aspects are innovation and technology. The minimal use of technology is not only limited to the production process, but also includes marketing and post-harvest. Agricultural products are often sold in raw form without undergoing processing that could increase sales volume. In terms of marketing, access to digital platforms for assessing market conditions is still very limited. The third challenge is market isolation. Information about broader market demand, quality standards, and efficient distribution networks has meant that Denai Sarang Burung products are only available in local markets at competitive prices and with thin profit margins.

Improving entrepreneurial literacy has emerged as a strategic and fundamental solution in the context of overcoming existing challenges. Entrepreneurial literacy serves as a term that can be used to change the general public's perception of "workers" or 'farmers' to "entrepreneurs." This change in attitude is crucial for developing innovative skills, independence, and resilience in facing business challenges. The goal of this literacy program is to teach traditional business methods and statistics.

In practical terms, this literary analysis will focus on three main points. First, business management, where the general public will be familiar with the principles of simple financial management, product pricing, pricing strategies, and business planning. Second, Product Innovation encourages people to diversify their product offerings rather than just selling raw materials. For example, turning corn into popcorn in various colors or turning rubber into specific types of products will result in higher selling prices.

The third strategy that is most relevant to today's world is digital marketing. The training will emphasize the use of social media platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok) and e-commerce sites (such as Tokopedia and Shopee) to market and sell products. The ability to understand the unique features of products, handle products with care, and conduct online transactions will create a more accessible market. A data-driven and analytical approach will also be introduced to help businesses understand market trends and consumer behavior, enabling more accurate and measurable business decisions.

By analyzing these three pillars, it is believed that business capacity growth is not only driven by an increase in individual income, but also by improvements in the overall economic structure of the region. The emergence of a more innovative, healthy, and connected business ecosystem will ultimately lead to more inclusive and diverse economic growth.

The success of public health programs cannot be entirely attributed to isolated approaches. The gender-based entrepreneurship program in Denai Sarang Burung Village was implemented in a spirit of cooperation, involving strategic actors from all levels. As an international institution, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) is not just a symbol; it also represents concrete values. USM's track record and expertise in gender-based entrepreneurship empowerment is one of the most important perspectives for ensuring that this program is inclusive and can benefit all members of the community, including women who often act as SME ambassadors but have not yet received support.

In addition, support from the village government plays a key role in the program. The village government acts as a facilitator, facilitating programs with the general public, ensuring smooth socialization, and providing assistance in creating an environment conducive to new business development. This collaboration between the community, the district government, and the university (USM) has resulted in a comprehensive and highly effective educational paradigm.

Through data-driven analysis and business management, this program is not only charitable but also scientific and measurable. Each achievement and its impact will be evaluated and analyzed, so that it not only benefits the community of Denai Sarang Burung Village but also contributes to the development of knowledge about business operations management and ensures the welfare of the community at the grassroots level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the digital era, entrepreneurial development, especially in the MSME sector, is highly dependent on adaptability to technology and digital marketing strategies. Hendrawan, Kusnandar, & Ramadhan (2022) emphasized that digital marketing strategies are a key factor in increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs in an increasingly competitive market. Rahayu & Day (2017) and Setiawan & Hapsari (2021) added that the adoption of e-commerce and digital transformation provides a great opportunity for MSMEs to expand market reach and improve operational efficiency.

However, Rahman, Yuliana, & Fadhilah (2021) identified various challenges faced by MSMEs in digitalization, such as limited resources and technological knowledge. Therefore, entrepreneurial literacy that includes understanding business management, business model innovation, and technology utilization is very important. Foss & Saebi (2017) highlight the importance of business model innovation as a strategy to maintain a competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment.

Troise & Tani (2021) also emphasizes the characteristics and motivations of entrepreneurs in the context of social media, which is increasingly relevant in modern business development. The analytical approach in entrepreneurial management allows for the measurement of the impact of business strategies and data-driven decision-making, which is critical for the development of the local economy.

In addition, collaboration between academics and business practitioners, as outlined by Bringle & Hatcher (2002), as well as international partnerships, can strengthen entrepreneurial capacity through knowledge and technology transfer. The Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs of the Republic of Indonesia (2023) also emphasized that strengthening entrepreneurial literacy and digitizing MSMEs is a national priority to encourage inclusive economic growth.

Thus, the development of entrepreneurial literacy supported by business analytics and digital technology can significantly increase the local economic potential, especially in Denai Sarang Burung.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts an applied research design with a systematic approach that integrates entrepreneurship training, marketing digitalization, and data-based business mentoring. The research stage begins with an analysis of training needs through coordination with academics, business practitioners, and international partners from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). The training curriculum that includes business management, digital marketing, and business innovation is designed to increase the entrepreneurial capacity of the community. Training and workshops are carried out to improve business management competence and product quality. Furthermore, the formation of cooperatives and the development of digital websites as marketing platforms and online transactions are carried out to expand market reach. Sustainable business mentoring involves students, lecturers, and international partners to support professional business management and the preparation of a structured business plan. Monitoring and evaluation are carried out periodically using performance indicators to measure the impact of the program, as well as documentation of activity results as evidence-based decision-making material. Data is collected through quantitative and qualitative methods, then analyzed to support the development of effective and sustainable entrepreneurial strategies.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Needs Analysis and Formulation of Entrepreneurial Literacy Strategy

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) identified the main obstacles for MSME actors in Denai Sarang Burung, namely limited market access, lack of understanding of digital technology, and product legality challenges. Based on these findings, the training curriculum is designed to strengthen entrepreneurial literacy which includes business management, digital marketing, product innovation, and legality aspects.

This approach is in line with the theory of business model innovation (Foss & Saebi, 2017) which emphasizes the importance of adaptation and innovation in maintaining business competitiveness. The training provided succeeded in increasing the capacity of business actors in managing their business professionally and adaptively to technological developments.

Managerial Capacity Building and Marketing Digitalization

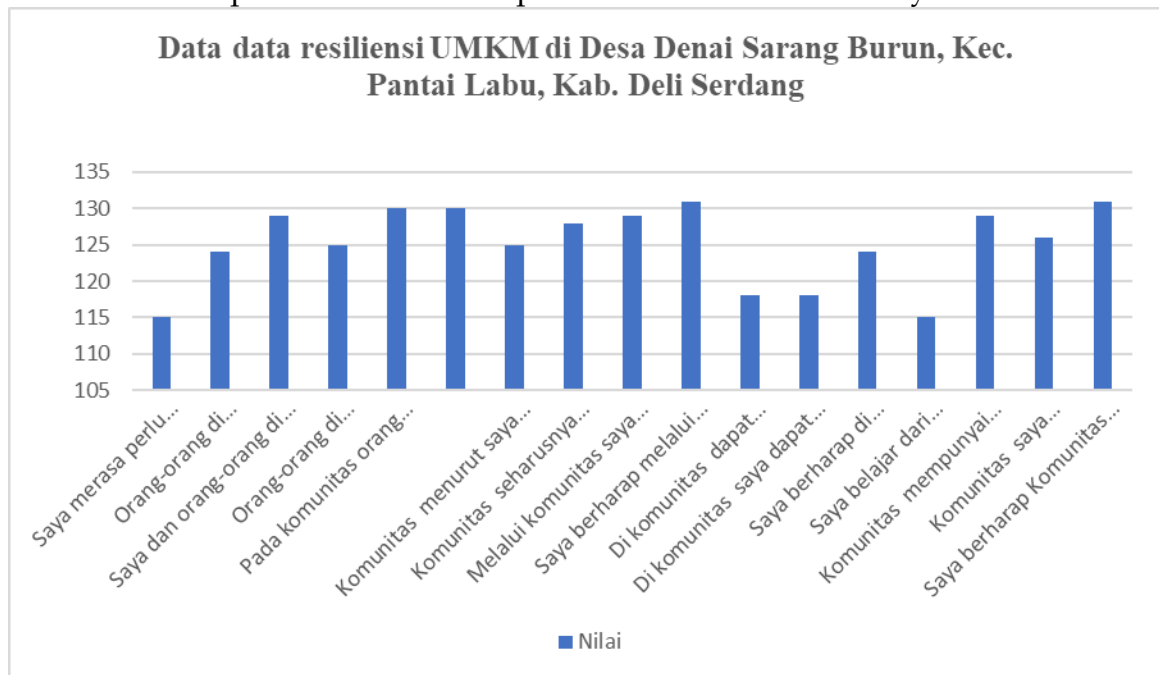
Training and workshops focused on the management of innovative products from household waste and digital marketing have a positive impact. Participants were able to apply digital marketing techniques through social media and e-commerce platforms, although they still faced obstacles in content creation and technology utilization.

The meeting with expert speakers from Telkomsel and Universiti Sains Malaysia provided practical insights on digital marketing strategies and global market networking. This increases the readiness of business actors to enter a wider and highly competitive market.

Strengthening Community Networks and Social Capital

Community perception survey data shows that strengthening entrepreneurial literacy also increases collaboration and social solidarity between business actors. The entrepreneurial community functions as a social network that supports the exchange of knowledge and resources, strengthening business resilience in the midst of market dynamics.

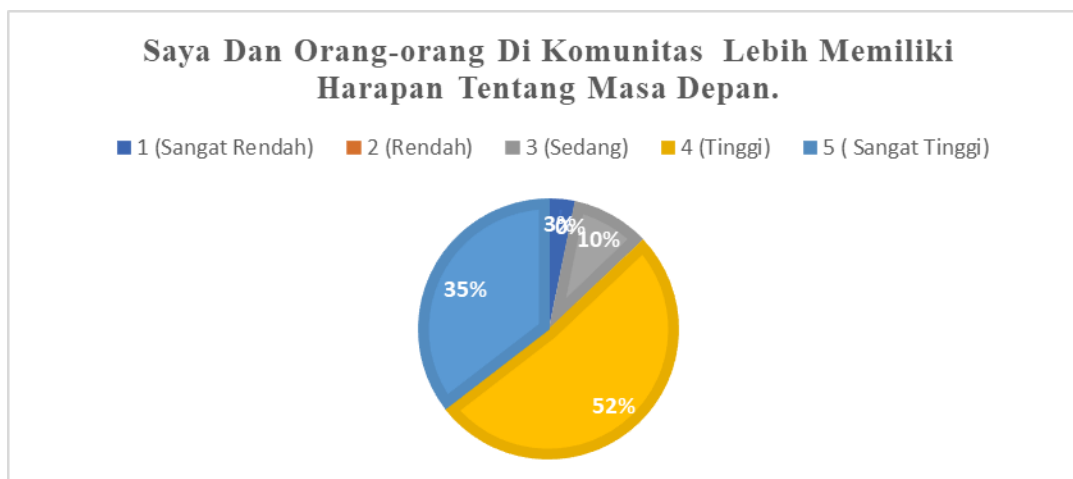
Strengthening community leadership capacity and collaborative training are effective strategies to improve business performance collectively. These findings support the theory of social capital which states that a strong social network can improve the economic performance of a community.



Source: Processed 2025 Devotion Data

Figure 1. Level of Resilience of MSMEs in Denai Bird's Nest Village, Pantai Labu Sub-District, Deli Serdang Regency

According to the data in Graphic 1, social resources for building a business in Desa Denai Sarang Burung are evidently already rather strong, as seen by the high level of cooperation and teamwork. Programs for literate kewirausahaan that are implemented successfully analyze and transform this collection's potential into a more structured action. Pelatihan and pendampingan berkelanjutan berperan in transforming passive solidarity into active collaboration that harmonizes with the expansion of business and pemasaran management.



Source: Processed 2025 Devotion Data

Figure 2. Graph of Community Expectations about the Future

Grafik 2 confirms that increasing technical proficiency through business literacy is also a result of changing one's mindset. Positive harapan and keyakinan akan dukungan (between 52 and 48%) indicate that this intervention was successful in creating "psychological capital." A positive outlook and a calm demeanor in a community are psychological traits that contribute to the sustainability of a business. Not only is the business owner more resilient, but they are also more mentally tough when dealing with market fluctuations since they have a backup plan in place.

Product Legality and Business Professionalization

Assistance related to product legality, such as halal certification, NIB, and P-IRT, provides a new understanding for business actors about the importance of legal aspects in increasing consumer trust and market access. Simulation of document management and product packaging evaluation encourages business actors to increase professionalism and product competitiveness.

Strategic Implications and Challenges

One of the most important tactics in optimizing the economic potential of the Denai Sarang Burung community-based economy is the development of entrepreneurial literacy. The success of this program in creating a more collaborative, professional, and technology-supported business environment highlights a crucial strategic implication: building a resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem rather than relying solely on technical training to achieve sustainable economic development. Strong social capital, shared optimism, and the group's ability to innovate are characteristics of this ecosystem that enable the community to adapt to market changes and drive endogenous growth.

However, there are important obstacles that must be overcome strategically in order to maintain this positive momentum. The full implementation of new skills is hampered by ongoing problems, including the digital divide, lack of technological devices, and time constraints faced by entrepreneurs, especially women who have to divide their time between household responsibilities.

Furthermore, as companies grow, it becomes clear that they require more sophisticated support in areas such as market expansion and financial management. To ensure that the foundation of entrepreneurial literacy can be transformed into sustainable and scalable economic resilience, it is essential to conduct continuous and adaptive monitoring and evaluation to measure impact and create responsive follow-up interventions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This case study concludes that strengthening entrepreneurial literacy is an effective strategy in increasing the potential of community-based local economies in Denai Sarang Burung. Training and mentoring programs that integrate digitalization of marketing, business management, and product innovation have succeeded in increasing the capacity of female MSME actors. Collaborations with international partners expand market insights and access, while the establishment of institutions such as the Red and White Cooperative and Joint Business Groups (KUB) strengthen business networks and business sustainability. The challenges faced, especially related to the dual role of women and aspects of business legality, became the focus of the development of advanced programs. Sustainability recommendations include ongoing mentoring, practice-based digital literacy improvement, and scientific publications as a form of academic dissemination and contribution.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future advanced research can focus on developing a comprehensive model of entrepreneurial literacy empowerment that integrates gender-sensitive approaches, digital transformation, and socioeconomic sustainability in rural communities. This study could employ a mixed-methods design to measure not only the quantitative impact of entrepreneurial literacy training on business performance but also the qualitative dimensions of women's empowerment, social capital, and community resilience. Moreover, further exploration is needed to analyze how institutional partnerships, such as cooperatives and joint business groups, mediate the relationship between digital literacy and economic independence. Incorporating longitudinal data will allow researchers to evaluate the long-term sustainability and scalability of the empowerment programs, particularly in addressing structural barriers like legal formalization and access to financial resources.

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