

Strategies Of Housewives in Strengthening the Economy Through Environmental Utilization for Family Education

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Article history: Received: November 23, 2024 | Revised: Februari 12, 2025 |
Available Online: April 18, 2025

Abstrak

This study explores strategies employed by homemakers in four sub-districts of Jember Regency, Sumberbaru, Tanggul, Rambipuji, and Ledokombo, to strengthen the family economy through environmental resource utilization. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. Source and method triangulation ensured the validity of findings. The results indicate that utilizing yard land for household agriculture, circular economy-based waste management, and environment-based small business development significantly enhance family income, environmental sustainability, and family education. Home gardening improves food security and provides additional income, while household waste management, including recycling and composting, generates economic value and mitigates environmental impact. Moreover, small businesses utilizing natural products foster entrepreneurship while promoting sustainability. This study contributes to the literature on household economy, circular economy, and sustainability-based entrepreneurship within rural Indonesia. The findings highlight the necessity of a holistic approach in family economic planning, integrating economic, social, and educational dimensions. These insights have practical implications for policies supporting sustainable rural development, emphasizing economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and family education.

Keywords: family economic strategy; natural resource utilisation; circular economy; family education.

Introduction

The family is the smallest unit in society that has a vital role in shaping its members' character, values, and well-being. Economic stability is a crucial aspect of family life, impacting children's well-being and education. Kahn Hossain said that family economic stability is a determining factor in improving children's quality of life and education.¹ In this context, homemakers have a strategic role not only as caregivers and educators in the family, but also as economic agents who can support strengthening the family economy through utilizing resources in the surrounding environment. Oki Sapitri stated that community group activities can act as agents of change in the family economy by managing local resources more efficiently and productively.²

Utilising the environment as a family economic strategy is increasingly relevant in the face of complex financial challenges. For example, homemakers can utilise yard space to grow organic vegetables for self-consumption or sale, recycle plastic waste into crafts with monetary value, and use rainwater for household needs to save money. Initiatives like these increase family income and introduce the concept of sustainability in the household economy.³ Previous research has highlighted the importance of neighbourhood-based innovations in helping families cope with the economic crisis, whether through household farming or neighbourhood-based small businesses.⁴

From the perspective of family education, this neighbourhood-based economic strategy not only impacts economic welfare but also has the potential to be an educational tool for children to understand financial concepts from an early age. Children who grow up in an environment that optimizes resource utilization will be more accustomed to a creative and independent mindset. Research by Hossain & Barman shows that families who apply sustainability principles and economic independence daily help their children develop critical and innovative thinking skills.⁵ Children's involvement in the family's

¹ ABMA Hossain and A Siddiqua, "Empowering Hilsa Heroines: Unveiling Gender, Socioeconomic Dynamics, and Environmental Influence in Bangladesh's Hilsa Fisherwomen Community," *Sustainable Aquatic Research* 3, no. 2 (2024): 91–106.

² Oki Sapitri Menghayati Oki and M Iqbal, "Analisis Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Masyarakat Berbasis Masjid Di Desa Sapa Empat Lawang," *Equity: Jurnal Ekonomi* 10, no. 2 (2022): 92–101.

³ Sarah Bracking, "Financialization and the Environmental Frontier," in *The Routledge International Handbook of Financialization* (Routledge, 2020), 213–23.

⁴ Kurniati Karim et al., "Ekonomi Hijau Dan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan:: Membangun Model Manajemen Yang Efektif," *Indonesian Research Journal on Education* 4, no. 4 (2024): 3053–60.

⁵ Hossain and Siddiqua, "Empowering Hilsa Heroines: Unveiling Gender, Socioeconomic Dynamics, and Environmental Influence in Bangladesh's Hilsa Fisherwomen Community."

economic activities can raise their awareness of the importance of hard work, responsibility, and wise management of resources.⁶

The issues raised in this study are how homemakers utilise environmental resources to strengthen the family economy and how this practice impacts family education, particularly in shaping children's mindset and character. While several studies have addressed the neighbourhood-based economy, there is limited specific focus on homemakers as economic agents at the family level.

Previous studies have examined the relationship between environmental utilisation and family economic strengthening. Dewi Cahyani Puspitasari's research shows that homemakers who utilise natural resources can increase family income while introducing children to the concepts of entrepreneurship and sustainability.⁷ In addition, research by Wahida Rahim emphasises the importance of understanding sustainability and entrepreneurship in family education, which contributes to improving family economic independence.⁸

This study aims to analyse the strategies applied by homemakers to strengthen the family economy through environmental utilisation. It will also explore the impact of these strategies on family education, particularly in shaping children's mindset and character. By understanding the practices implemented and the challenges faced, it is hoped that the results of this study can provide valuable insights for the community in developing similar strategies that can sustainably improve family welfare.

Through this approach, this research not only contributes to the study of family economics but also to family education that is oriented towards independence and sustainability. Therefore, exploring homemakers' strategies in utilising the environment to support the family economy is an important aspect that needs to be studied to provide applicable solutions for the wider community.

⁶ Marilyn Kristina and Ruly Nadian Sari, "Pengaruh Edukasi Stimulasi Terhadap Perkembangan Kognitif Anak Usia Dini," *Journal Of Dehasen Educational Review* 2, no. 01 (2021): 1–5.

⁷ Dewi Cahyani Puspitasari, "Modal Sosial Perempuan Dalam Peran Penguatan Ekonomi Keluarga," *Jurnal Pemikiran Sosiologi* 1, no. 2 (2012): 69–80.

⁸ Wahida Rahim, "Pendidikan Ekonomi Untuk Pemberdayaan Perempuan: Strategi Dan Dampaknya Pada Pembangunan Ekonomi," *Jurnal Pendidikan Kreatif* 5, no. 1 (2024).

Research Methodology

This study utilises a qualitative approach.⁹ The aim is to understand homemakers' strategies in strengthening the economy through utilizing the environment in the context of family education. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the phenomena that occur and obtains a more comprehensive understanding of homemakers' practices to improve the family economy.

This research was conducted in four kecamatan in Kabupaten Jember: Sumberbaru, Tanggul, Rambipuji, and Ledokombo. It is known that Kabupaten Jember has at least 31 kecamatan (Bappeda Provinsi Jatim). Jember is one of the regency cities in East Java, and it was chosen due to the characteristics of the people who are active in utilising the environment to support the family economy. The research subjects included homemakers involved in various environment-based economic activities, such as home farming, waste management, and environment-based small businesses.

This study collected data through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with homemakers, who were the subjects of the study, to explore information about the strategies they apply to manage the family economy through environmental utilisation. Participatory observation was conducted by directly observing environment-based economic activities to understand the processes and challenges faced by homemakers. Meanwhile, documentation was used to collect various documents, photos, or notes that could support data analysis.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using qualitative methods that included three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was done by categorising the data based on the main themes relevant to the research. The data that had been reduced was then arranged in narrative form to facilitate understanding of the relationship between variables. From the presentation of the data, researchers concluded that homemakers' strategies in utilising the environment to strengthen the economy and their impact on family education.¹⁰

⁹ John.W Creswell, *Penelitian Kualitatif & Desain Riset Memilih Di Antara Lima Pendekatan*, (Edisi ke-Pustaka Pelajar, 2005).

¹⁰ B Miles Matthew, A Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, "Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook" (Sage Publications, 2014).

To ensure data validity, this study applied source and method triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data from various research subjects. In contrast, method triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure the consistency and reliability of research findings. With this designed research method, it is expected that a deeper understanding of homemakers' strategies in strengthening the family economy through environmental utilisation and its implications for family education can be obtained.

Family Economic Strategy Based on Utilisation of Natural Resources and Environment

This study aims to explore and analyse the strategies applied by homemakers in 4 sub-districts in Jember Regency, namely Sumberbaru sub-district, Tanggul sub-district, Rambipuji sub-district, and Ledokombo sub-district, in improving the family economy through the use of natural resources and the surrounding environment. In this context, the primary focus is on using yard land, household waste management, and developing environment-based small businesses. As one of the rural areas with unique challenges and potential, Rambigundam Village illustrates how families adapt to limited economic resources through an environment-based approach.

The main findings of this study show that these strategies contribute to the increase of family economic income and significantly impact family education, especially in the development of children's character. This research contributes to the development of literature on household economy, circular economy, neighbourhood-based entrepreneurship, and family education in the context of rural communities. The findings presented in this study will enrich existing theories and offer new perspectives in applying these theories in the Indonesian context, particularly in rural areas.

Land Utilisation as a Family Economic Strategy

Using yard land for household agricultural activities is one of the long-standing strategies in improving family welfare, especially in rural areas. Based on observations in Rambigundam Village, it was found that most housewives (18.88%) utilise their yards to grow various types of food crops and family medicine. In addition to personal consumption, the products produced are sold to increase family income. This finding aligns with Becker's theory of household economics, which explains that households

function as economic units that optimise the use of available resources to achieve maximum welfare.¹¹

The utilisation of yard land not only plays a role in food provision, but also creates significant additional income. Nurlina's research also shows that using the land in rural areas can improve food security and family income.¹² Furthermore, a study by Meyer on home-garden management in Europe and Africa states that home-garden management is an essential strategy in improving family food security and can be a form of resistance to external market dependence.¹³

In this context, this study also adds empirical evidence on home-garden management in Indonesia. It shows how these household farming practices impact the family economy and provide valuable educational experiences for children. Based on Bandura's¹⁴ According to Social learning theory, children involved in hands-on agricultural activities can learn values such as hard work, perseverance, and environmental sustainability. This creates a rich learning environment for children's character development.¹⁵

Household Waste Management for Economic Improvement and Environmental Sustainability

In addition to using yard land, household waste management is an effective alternative that homemakers in Rambigundam Village carry out. Based on the data, around 6.66% of homemakers are involved in managing plastic waste, which is converted into handicrafts, and organic waste, which is processed into compost to fertilise the yard soil. This strategy aligns with the circular economy principle promoted by Ellen

¹¹ Gary S Becker, *A Treatise on the Family: Enlarged Edition* (Harvard university press, 1993).

¹² Nurlina Nurlina, Adnan Adnan, and Safrizal Safrizal, "Pemanfaatan Lahan Pekarangan Dalam Meningkatkan Pendapatan Keluarga Pada Desa Blang Batee Kabupaten Aceh Timur," *Global Science Society: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (2019): 97–107.

¹³ Elisabeth Meyer-Renschhausen, "From Small-Scale Agriculture to Urban Agriculture: Women, Subsistence Economy, and the Question of the Commons," *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 30, no. 3 (2022): 391–404.

¹⁴ A Bandura, "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change," *Psychological Review*, 1977.

¹⁵ Razieh Tadayon Nabavi and Mohammad Bijandi, "Bandura's Social Learning Theory & Social Cognitive Learning Theory," January 1, 2012.

MacArthur, which emphasises that recycling and efficient waste management can create new economic value while reducing negative environmental impacts.¹⁶

Kirchherr's research confirms that a circular economy at the household level can reduce pollution and optimise resource utilisation.¹⁷ In addition, household waste management based on sustainability principles can create new jobs and improve the community's economic welfare. These findings add to the literature on applying the circular economy in the Indonesian rural context, where waste is considered a valuable resource.¹⁸

Furthermore, this research enriches the understanding of environmental economics, arguing that efficient waste management improves family welfare and contributes to environmental conservation.¹⁹ This sustainability-based approach provides evidence that household waste management efforts have a direct economic impact and play a role in maintaining environmental quality for future generations.

Neighbourhood-based Small Business Development: Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Another economic strategy in Rambigundam Village is the development of environmentally-based small businesses, which involve manufacturing natural products such as cassava chips, traditional herbs, and other processed products. Around 7.7% of homemakers are engaged in trading, while 6.66% participate in environmentally-based livestock enterprises. Innovations in eco-based entrepreneurship, initiated by homemakers in this village, create new economic opportunities and support environmental sustainability.

Schumpeter's entrepreneurship theory emphasises that innovation is the key to creating opportunities and developing successful small businesses.²⁰ In this case, the innovations implemented by homemakers in Rambigundam Village demonstrate how

¹⁶ Ellen MacArthur, "Towards the Circular Economy," *Journal of Industrial Ecology* 2, no. 1 (2013): 23–44.

¹⁷ Julian Kirchherr, Denise Reike, and Marko Hekkert, "Conceptualizing the Circular Economy: An Analysis of 114 Definitions," *Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 127 (2017): 221–32.

¹⁸ Juita Rahmadani Manik and Nana Trisna Mei Br Kabeakan, "Pengelolaan Sampah Rumah Tangga Dalam Peningkatan Pendapatan Pada Kelompok Ibu-Ibu Asiyah," *JURNAL PRODIKMAS Hasil Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 4, no. 1 (2019): 48–54.

¹⁹ David W Pearce and R Kerry Turner, *Economics of Natural Resources and the Environment* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

²⁰ Joseph A Schumpeter, "The Theory of Economic Development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard," *SchumpeterThe Theory of Economic Development* 1934, 1934.

sustainability-based entrepreneurship can strengthen the family economy while positively impacting environmental sustainability. Research by Rustya on environment-based entrepreneurship shows that innovations in products based on natural ingredients are increasingly in demand by the market, which is increasingly aware of the importance of environmentally friendly and healthy consumption.²¹

The findings also contribute to rural entrepreneurship research, where homemakers utilise natural resources efficiently and actively market the products produced, creating a more environmentally conscious market. This study enriches the literature on sustainability-based entrepreneurship that can serve as a model for enhancing rural economic resilience.

Impact on Family Education: Shaping Children's Character through Economic Activities

The significant impact of the economic strategies implemented by homemakers in Rambigundam Village focuses on improving the family economy and the development of family education, particularly in the character building of children. The research shows that children's involvement in environment-based economic activities, such as agriculture and household waste management, contributes significantly to their life skills development. Children learn values such as independence, creativity, responsibility, and environmental care.²²

This research confirms Ruja Wati's findings, which state that the family environment plays a central role in children's character development. Furthermore, this finding aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, which explains that children learn through direct observation and experience within their social environment. Thus, neighbourhood-based economic activities that involve children are an effective means for character development and essential life skills for the future.

In general, this research provides in-depth empirical evidence on how natural resource and environment-based economic strategies can strengthen family economies in

²¹ Dian Rustya, "Pengembangan Kewirausahaan Berkelanjutan Dalam Pendidikan: Pendekatan Berdasarkan Prinsip-Prinsip Ekonomi Islam," *Journal Islamic Banking* 3, no. 2 (2023): 61–75.

²² Ruja Wati, "Perkembangan Sosial Emosional Anak Usia Dasar Di Lingkungan Keluarga," *Palapa* 8, no. 2 (2020): 369–82.

rural communities, while supporting children's education.²³ The findings from Rambigundam Village add to the understanding of the application of home economics, circular economy, neighbourhood-based entrepreneurship, and family education in rural Indonesia.

The main contribution of this research is to show that neighbourhood-based practices not only improve economic welfare but also positively impact the character building of children who are independent, creative, and care for the environment. Therefore, efforts to strengthen the family economy must involve a holistic approach that focuses on purely economic aspects and considers broader social, cultural, and educational dimensions.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Increased support for household farming programmes and neighbourhood-based entrepreneurship at the local level to strengthen family economic resilience.
2. Develop policies that support neighbourhood-based education that involve children in household economic activities as part of their character development.
3. Strengthening circular economy literacy at the rural level through training and education programmes to improve waste management skills and increase family income.

This research emphasises that economic, social, and environmental sustainability can only be achieved if there is synergy between the three aspects in rural development based on holistic sustainability principles.

Conclusion

This research explores and analyzes the strategies that homemakers in Rambigundam Village, Rambipuji Sub-district, Jember Regency, use natural resources and the surrounding environment to improve the family economy. The results showed that using yard land, household waste management, and the development of environment-based small businesses have significantly contributed to increased family income, environmental sustainability, and family education, especially in developing children's character.

²³ Siti Nurhayati, "Pengaruh Kondisi Ekonomi Terhadap Tingkat Pendidikan Anak Di Desa Sinar Tebudak Kecamatan Tujuh Belas," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Khatulistiwa (JPPK)* 6, no. 7 (2017).

Using yard land has proven effective in improving family food security and creating additional income by cultivating food and medicinal plants. This finding supports household economic theory, which emphasizes optimizing resources to achieve welfare. In addition, household waste management based on circular economy principles shows how waste can be processed into valuable products, such as handicrafts and compost, improving the family economy and maintaining environmental sustainability.

Through natural product innovation, the development of environment-based small businesses in Rambigundam Village demonstrates that sustainability-based entrepreneurship can open up new economic opportunities while supporting nature conservation. It also contributes to family education, with children engaging in financial activities that teach important values such as self-reliance, creativity, and care for the environment.

Overall, this study enriches the literature on household economy, circular economy, environment-based entrepreneurship, and family education in rural Indonesia. The findings emphasise the importance of a holistic approach in improving the family economy, focusing on the economic and social, cultural, and educational aspects. Efforts to strengthen family economies through natural resource- and environment-based strategies can create far-reaching positive impacts, both economically and socially, and provide a strong foundation for sustainable rural development.

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