

Optimizing mompreneurs' role in promoting family economic independence through bakery businesses

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ABSTRACT

This community service program was implemented to encourage homemakers in the Mandosi Permai Housing Complex, Bekasi, to open sustainable home-based bakery businesses. Using participatory design, 22 participants attended a one-day seminar, workshop, and evaluation meeting. The seminar focused on developing a business model that aligns with women's dual roles of domestic and entrepreneurial activities (mompreneurs), while the workshop provided interactive sessions on bread-making practices and cost monitoring. Results indicated that participants improved their ability to identify business model components, gained interest and practical skills in bread-making, and built confidence in managing a micro-enterprise. The program's participatory design helped convey ownership of the entrepreneurial presentation and maintain a core value proposition consistent with consumer demands for freshness, taste, and value. The program and its research agenda illustrate how academic-community partnerships can connect theory and practice in ways that advance women's economic empowerment and family well-being. Implications and future directions for the expansion and sustainability of such programs are discussed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Even though entrepreneurship is often conceived as a gender-neutral activity, in reality it is still male-dominated and women represent only around one third of the world's entrepreneurs (Bosma et al., 2021). This gap mirrors the ceiling of gender inequality that prevails, in which entrepreneurship policies are presented as if male entrepreneurs were the normative model and opportunities for women and support systems, they provide become limited (OECD, 2021). As consequence, women still encounter structural and social barriers in conducting entrepreneurial activities (Dalimunthe et al., 2022).

However, the involvement of women in entrepreneurship is associated with substantial socio-economic gain. Prior research shows that women income will tend to spend on the child (education), family health, and food assistance (Nur Asrofi et al., 2023; Rahayuwati et al., 2023; Supadmi et al., 2024). This display of spending is a demonstration that the women entrepreneurs are an important actor in building family welfare and fostering economic growth for all (Muhammad et al., 2021). This

is why empowering women through entrepreneurship is not just an economic issue, but also a social development solution.

In terms of woman's involvement in entrepreneurship, Indonesia ranks high. It's reported that women entrepreneurs in Indonesia own about 60 percent of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which employ nearly a quarter of the country's labour force. However, they tend to run micro-enterprises and merely find themselves into entrepreneurship out of necessity-driven only. The condition indicates restricted access to skills training, capital and knowledge on business development, more so among women running their domestic roles as well.

'Mompreneurs' is a specific category of female entrepreneurs, usually referring to female housewives who start home-based businesses to accommodate both earning an income and attending to family responsibilities (Sakai & Fauzia, 2022). In line with cultural and religious traditions that prescribe a homemaker role to women, mompreneurship is particularly relevant in Indonesia (Yusoff, 2021). Despite the flexibility that mompreneurship provides, homemakers often face obstacles in business in terms of the absence of structured business models, weak cost management, and limited technical skills encumbering self-sustaining businesses.

Of the various possibilities in the home-based business arena, the bakery sector holds the most potential for mompreneurs. Home bakeries are easy to set up, require minimal equipment, and have consistent local demand (Sakai, 2022). Since past studies have shown that consumers consider taste and freshness the most important factors when buying bakery products, and these factors are the most associated with homemade and local goods (Drugova & Curtis, 2024; Emami, 2021), this makes home baking a strong contender for success when focusing on a small local market.

As promising as it may be, there are gaps in the necessary skills for mompreneurs to turn the opportunity into sustainable businesses. Some of the frequent issues identified are inadequacies in baking skills, understanding production costs, and lack of a definable business model (Arisah et al., 2025; Nursamsi et al., 2025). Mompreneurs struggle with pricing, and planning for the future in terms of efficiency, and determining how to simplify a system because of the gaps they have regarding cost structures and value propositions (Goncharuk et al., 2023). Therefore, capacity-building interventions that integrate technical skills with basic business modeling are urgently needed.

These challenges were clear in Mandosi Permai, a residential zone in Jatiasih District of Bekasi Town, which was the partner community for this community service program (CSP). Initial profiling and information from the leader of the neighborhood association revealed that although approximately 26 percent of households engaged in income-generating activities, only a small proportion ventured into food business. Additionally, there were no bakers among them, and none had been trained in bakery production or business planning. This indicates the magnitude of the disparity in entrepreneurial potential and actual capabilities.

The CSP aims to address this gap by optimizing the potential of the homemakers in Mandosi Permai with a participatory training design for bakery entrepreneurship. This initiative is anchored in the mission of community engagement in higher education to address the disparity between theoretical competencies and the practical problem by offering relevant and pragmatic solutions to the problem at hand. The program focuses on training baking skills and developing a simplified business model canvas (BMC) for micro home-based businesses (Sabila et al., 2023) and focuses on value proposition, cost, and local market.

By implementing this program, it is expected that it can strengthen the capacity of mompreneurs in fostering family economic self-sufficiency by preparing homemakers with the skills, knowledge, and business mindset to set up sustainable bakery enterprises. The program will help diversified household

businesses through workshops and practical activities designed to advance participants' skills and strengthen their confidence in business and promote and sustain economic self-sufficiency at the household level.

This paper is structured as follows. The methods used to implement CSP are discussed in Section 2. Section 3 is about the outcomes of the program and Section 4 is the discussion. Finally, in Section 5, the paper is concluded through a summary of the findings, discussion of the limitations, and recommendations for the community engagement activities in the future.

2. METHODS

Location and Participants

The CSP program was conducted in an area called Mandosi Permai in the town of Bekasi, Jatiasih district. The area is made up of 106 households across eight blocks from the residential area. The target group of this program was homemakers, as this group normally does not get the chance to be in formal employment, but has great potential for entrepreneurial activities that can be done from home.

There were 22 homemakers that took part in the program, which is approximately 19 percent of the households in the area. This participation is regarded as sufficient for interactive training activities and participatory workshops, which is a common recommendation for community-based programs (Camozzi et al. 2015). The participant criteria were: (1) Full-time homemaker; (2) Resident of Mandosi Permai; and (3) Interest in starting or growing a business from home.

Participant Recruitment Process

The recruitment process used a direct and community-based method. The first step was to get permission from the neighborhood association leader (*Ketua RT*) and the block leaders of each residential area. Then, local briefing of the program was done through informal meetings of local homemaker groups to discuss the objectives, activities, and anticipated outcomes of the CSP.

After that, a site visit was conducted to determine the willing and available participants of the program. This strategy, to contact each community member directly, was to foster and build trust and commitment. As direct contact proved to be effective, motivation and community direct engagement was documented (Bernard, 2002; Stockdale et al., 2016). Prior to the implementation of the program, all participants signed the informed consent.

Program Design

CSP followed a participatory design approach, actively involving participants in identifying problems, developing solutions, and exploring business ideas that reflect their context (Muller & Kuhn, 1993; Muller, 2002). In this way, it was hoped the bakery business model developed during the program would align with their capabilities, resources, and household responsibilities. This approach of participatory design involved six stages, which are shown in Table 1. Each stage had the participation of academic staff with experience in entrepreneurship and culinary business development.

Program Implementation Procedures

The CSP has carried out on 1st of December 2024 from 08.00 to 17.00 and located in Mandosi Permai, Jatiasih District, Bekasi Town. All activities were carried out in a single day to facilitate domestic

responsibilities and ensure full attendance. The program was facilitated by university staff specializing in entrepreneurship and MSME development, supported by a local baking practitioner.

The CSP activities were divided into three primary sessions: a seminar, a workshop and an evaluation. During the seminar, the first four stages of the participatory design process were addressed: program overview, problem/exploration issue determination, ideas/design generation and prototyping. This class's focus is to develop your basic knowledge of bakery entrepreneurship and business planning. The seminar was held at the Village Hall which is in the heart of Mandosi Permai housing estate. This was chosen because it is accessible and appropriate for community service projects (Wodicka et al., 2012). During the session, the participants were allowed to openly speak about the challenges they faced and some of their experiences with a view to developing draft bakery ideas and sketch BMC.

Hands-on bakery production was also conducted in the program. This session was held in a home of one of the residents with a design to mimic a real-life home-based business. Participants had hands-on experience of traditional bakery items like baguettes, croissants, and bagels alongside discussions on ingredients choice, production flow and basic cost of production calculation. In this applied context, participants could immediately engage with the material delivered in seminar.

Finally, an assessment was made of the CSP as a whole and its effectiveness as implemented. The assessment was performed with paper-based questionnaires for all of the participants with closed- and open-ended response format about knowledge learned, skills gained, and overall usefulness of the program. Paper-based questionnaires were employed to generate a high participation rate and practical completion (Shih & Fan, 2009).

Like other community-based participatory programs, we provided lunch and snacks to participants as an incentive for their contributions, as well as a way ensure ongoing involvement during the all-day activity (Furman et al., 2019; Mitchell et al., 2017).

Tabel 1. Steps in the participatory design-based CSP

Step	Phase	Activities
1	Program Introduction	Communicate the main objectives of the program implementation to participants.
2	Problem dissemination	Analyze the challenges faced and assess their influence on productivity levels.
3	Idea generation	Identify the local issue, review current solutions, and generate ideas for enhancements.
4	Prototyping	Develop a BMC and evaluate its feasibility.
5	Implementation	Practice making specialty bread (e.g., baguettes, croissants, and bagels), providing the necessary tools and ingredients, and estimating the total cost of production.
6	Evaluation	Refine the improvements and evaluate the overall process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Seminar outcomes: Business model understanding

The seminar session improved participants' abilities to develop a basic business plan for a home-based bakery business. Participants described the most frequent challenges that homemakers face when trying to become entrepreneurs. These challenges include a lack of time because of household responsibilities, insufficient starting capital, and difficulty managing family responsibilities with money-earning tasks.

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Tabel 2. BMC–home-based bakery business for Mompreneurs

Components	Description
Customer segments	Local homemakers School-aged children Local office workers
Value proposition	Customers with special dietary needs (gluten-free, low-sugar) Fresh homemade bread without preservatives Affordable prices Healthy bread options (whole wheat, gluten-free) Flexible ordering and home delivery service Custom orders based on customer preferences
Channels	Promotion via social media (Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook) Online ordering through Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook Home delivery Consignment sales at local kiosks/cafes
Customer relationships	Direct and friendly communication with customers (via chat or during delivery) Recording customer preferences for personalized service Discount or loyalty card programs for repeat buyers Sharing customer testimonials on social media to increase engagement
Revenue streams	Individual product sales (per piece or per package) Product bundles (e.g., special price for 5 items) Custom orders for events (birthdays, social gatherings, religious events) Additional services such as private baking classes for local mothers
Key resources	Baking equipment (oven, mixer, baking trays, etc.) Ingredients (flour, yeast, eggs, etc.) sourced from local suppliers Social media and digital tools for promotion and ordering Family support (especially for household duties during production)
Key activities	Baking knowledge and skills Bread production (baking and packaging) Ingredient and inventory management Promotion and communication via social media Order delivery Customer service and order tracking
Key partnerships	Basic financial record-keeping Local suppliers for fresh and affordable ingredients Local store/cafes for consignment sales Women's community groups or local organizations (e.g., PKK) as promotional networks
Cost structure	Online couriers or family members as delivery personnel Initial investment (equipment: oven, mixer, kitchen tools) Recurring expenses: ingredients, utilities (gas/electricity), packaging, transportation Marketing costs: mobile data, internet, promotional materials, etc. Additional costs: training, baking classes, customer incentives



Figure 1. Group photo taken following the seminar session

The facilitators then explained the BMC as a means of overcoming the challenges they had outlined. The BMC is a strategic and visual approach to help participants keep and organize all the information related to their bakery business ideas. The process is collaborative, with the facilitator guiding participants through a series of open-ended questions structured based on the BMC. These questions are designed to encourage critical thinking and help participants contextualize each element of the BMC within their own business ideas. For example, participants described their potential customers in the customer segments section as local mothers, school-aged children, and office workers. In the value proposition section, they described the competitive advantage as having an affordable and healthy option of homemade bread. For channels, participants suggested using social media and home deliveries to keep customers who are busy. For customer relationships, participants suggested personalized and customized services, as well as loyalty programs.

Regarding revenue streams, participants considered unit sales, product bundling, and even baking classes as opportunities. For key resources, baking tools, low-cost ingredients, promotional digital tools, and family support were highlighted as essential. Key activities pertained to production, management of stock, and customer service, while key partnerships concerned local suppliers, local stores, and partners for delivery. Lastly, the cost structure considered the necessary investments for equipment and recurring costs like packaging, electricity, and promotional expenses. The participants were able to formulate more actionable business models and understand how each component worked together to achieve business sustainability from the interactive mapping exercise.

After the prototype BMC (see Table 2) was initially created, the facilitators set up a reflective dialogue for revisions and contextualization of the model. The participants were encouraged to consider the aspects of the BMC to their specific situations, especially given the small scale of their businesses. The facilitators pointed out that the BMC is not a strict design, but a pliable structure that can be modified to fit the local market, this includes, for example, the adjustment of the product mix to the needs and preferences of the surrounding community as well as the availability of key ingredients.

Participants touched on some personal constraints, such as time and family support, which impact the potential for running the business. Participants viewed the BMC as a static document, but most came to see it as a roadmap for the future and a growing and changing business and the changing realities of life. Overall, the seminar helped participants make a leap from their business ideas in the air to ideas that are tangible, feasible and operational for the business models and incorporated a household dimension to the models. To close the seminar, participants and facilitators engaged in a group photo (see Figure 1).

Workshop outcomes: Baking skills and business costing

The workshop also successfully prepared participants to bake in a home-based (see Figures 1 and 2). It was evident that all participants took part in the bread-making process and were able to do it. The participants not only mastered bread-making skills but were also able to grasp the basics of the operational cost and the inputs that go into the process.



Figure 2. The process of mixing ingredients

Figure 3. Adding cheese and milk-based toppings after proofing

Direct and indirect raw materials, support and administrative costs, and the depreciation of operational equipment were all used to guide participants to calculate the cost of goods manufactured (COGM) on a per unit basis. As shown in Table 3, the participants figured out unit production costs and how to set selling prices while factoring in profit margins. This activity helped participants grasp the financial consequences of their pricing strategies and underscored the significance of cost minimization in micro-scale bakery businesses.

Overall, the workshop session gave participants the opportunity to gain all the valuable, practical experience in home-based bread production and baking, plus the ability to calculate costs and set prices, and the ability to cost control and develop pricing strategies. Each participant was able to virtually walk through the entire production process, including raw material preparation, dough preparation, baking, and the final production of the packaged loaves of bread. This solid workshop experience focused on the financial and economic aspects of the micro bakery as much as the product. The opportunity to calculate the COGM, which is a micro bakery economic tool, helped participants develop a better understanding of the economics of micro enterprises. With this workshop, participants gained the confidence to start their home businesses, and their workshop experience was the beginning of the journey towards micro entrepreneurship and financial autonomy for their families.

Assessment outcomes: Quantitative and qualitative findings

The evaluation results reflect the satisfaction of participants and positive learning outcomes. The results of the post-program questionnaire were further analyzed in terms of their quantitative aspect (Table 4) and it became apparent that high mean score values are consistently observed for every question. The highest rating was in relation to the utility of skills ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 0.45$), followed by relevance to home-based businesses ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 0.50$) and perceived confidence in using knowledge that had been learnt ($M = 4.41$, $SD=0.59$). The results suggest that the program was successful in improving both practical skills and entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

Table 3. Estimated cost and suggested selling price for milk and cheese bread (per batch of 60 pieces)

Description	Unit	Amount (IDR)
Material Costs		
Bread flour Row	1600 grams	35,000
All-prupose flour	400 grams	10,000
Egg	16 units	30,000
Full cream powdered milks	400 grams	25,000
Liquid milk	2 liters	40,000
Granulated sugar	400 grams	20,000
Instant dry yeast	30 grams	35,000
Milk flavoring powder	4 grams	5,000
Bread improver and iced water	4 grams & 460 milliliters	17,000
Margarine or butter	400 grams	20,000
Salt	20 grams	7,000
Grated cheese	300 grams	70,000
Sweetened condensed milk	3 cans	60,000
Whipping cream	800 grams	60,000
Subtotal Raw Materials		434,000
Overhead and Equipment		
Electricity and gas consumption Costs	Estimated per production	50,000
Equipment depreciation (oven, mixer, trays, etc.)	Estimated per batch	40,000
Packaging materials (plastic wrap, labels, etc.)	60 units @ IDR 500	30,000
Local transportation and distribution	Estimated	30,000
Miscellaneous (water, cleaning materials, contingency costs)	Estimated	40,800
Subtotal Overhead and Equipment		190,800
Total Production Cost (A + B)		724,800
Cost of Goods Manufactured (COGM) per Unit	IDR 724,800 ÷ 60 units	12,800

Note: The calculated unit cost (COGM) does not yet include a profit margin. For instance, if a profit margin of 25 percent is applied, the suggested retail price per unit would be approximately IDR 15,000. Actual production costs may vary depending on regional prices, input availability, and production efficiency, which should be regularly evaluated by micro-entrepreneurs to ensure financial sustainability.

Table 4. Summary of participant evaluation scores (N = 22)

Evaluation Item	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Understanding of business model concepts	4.27	0.63
Relevance of the material to home-based businesses	4.45	0.50
Clarity of instructions during bread-making workshop	4.36	0.66
Usefulness and applicability of acquired skills	4.73	0.45
Confidence in applying learned knowledge	4.41	0.59

Qualitative results also supported the quantitative ones. Participants also really appreciated the tactile experience of being able to participate in making bread—it made learning much more concrete. The practical demonstration and clear guidance from a facilitator were good for participants. However, a few also suggested increasing the length of the seminar in order to permit more time for discussion and more depth in examining business strategies. Other recommendations proposed were printed recipe booklets, follow-up guidance and extended courses on product packaging and marketing strategies.

In summary, the evaluation findings have demonstrated a positive participant satisfaction, efficient transfer of knowledge, and competence acquisition. Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative evidence give confidence that the program advanced its goals and provides a model for similar entrepreneurship development programs in other communities.

Discussion

The objective of the CSP program was to increase economic independence of homemaker in Mandosi Permai by providing them with cognitive and psychomotor knowledge, skill, and practice that enable community people to start their own home-based bakery. Instead of being concerned only with theoretical contributions, the conversation focuses on what parts of the program worked well, why those things worked in this local area and lessons that can be learned for future community-based entrepreneurship projects. One of the key strengths of the CSP was its congruence with participants' daily existence as housewives. They encountered continuous barriers related to childcare, domestic duties, lack of capital, and low levels of mobility, obstacles that have been widely reported in the women entrepreneurship literature (Hallward-Driemeier, 2013; Jean & Forbes, 2012). With an emphasis on home-based bakery businesses, the CSP offered a means of small business creation without making participants leave their domestic provider role or invest large sums in start-up costs.

Seminar and workshop formats enabled participants to progress from awareness raising to action. The seminar allowed people to articulate problems and opportunities that had been experienced as personal constraints, with the workshop operationalizing those insights. This construction facilitated the reduction of mental barriers for entrepreneurial actions and to convert vague intentions into viable business ideas. The evaluation results show that their participants had a strong understanding and perceived relevance of the new materials (see Table 4), indicating that this iterative system design approach has successfully met the target users' goal. The CSP found success mainly because the participants became co-creators and not passive participants. Through participatory design the participants were asked to reflect on experiences, collectively identify constraints and co-develop business models. This process created a feeling of ownership and mutual learning, crucial for empowerment-oriented projects (Buvinic et al., 2013; Gaventa, 1988).

The role of the community was equally important. Involving the community, working at the Village Hall and a member's house, provided a comfortable and less threatening space for the learning sessions. Their closeness also built trust for the participants and the facilitators, which influenced participants to be more vocal. Casual communication during group tasks helped participants to identify common problems as well as possibilities for working together, which aided the creation of first social and business networks among the homemakers.

Numerous individuals indicated a desire to work together following the program to exchange some raw materials, engage in joint marketing, and plan production schedules. This demonstrates that, in addition to fostering individual development, the CSP encouraged horizontal partnerships, which is crucial for sustaining micro-enterprises at the community level (Melissa et al., 2015).

Of the many lessons learned from this CSP, perhaps the most important thing is that change in mindset is equally important as change in skill. Entrepreneurship, in the eyes of many participants before the program, was a risky, resource-demanding, and incompatible with their domestic roles. Through facilitated discussions and some practical experience, participants started to consider bakery businesses as realistic, manageable and scalable in the context of a household. Participants exhibiting extreme

self-doubt before the program demonstrated a significant shift toward self-belief in entrepreneurship, which was confirmed by high scores associated with confidence and perceived usefulness of the skills ($M = 4.41$ and $M = 4.73$, respectively). Such a shift is a core requirement for sustained entrepreneurship, particularly for women with little exposure to formal business training (World Bank, 2016). Staying with the theme of business simplification, participants appreciated the practical and easy-to-use tools. Concepts of the BMC and elementary cost calculation fostered a less complicated and overwhelming approach to their businesses.

The CSP demonstrates that short, well-designed community programs can generate meaningful impacts, particularly when they prioritize relevance, participation, and practical outcomes. Empowering homemakers to initiate income-generating activities contributes not only to individual economic independence but also to household welfare and community resilience (Glick & Sahn, 2000; Nur Asrofi et al., 2023). However, the program also revealed limitations. Participants expressed a strong interest in follow-up activities, particularly mentoring in marketing, packaging, and digital promotion. This suggests that while a one-day intervention is effective for initiating change, sustained impact requires continued support mechanisms, such as peer groups, mentoring schemes, or partnerships with local cooperatives and microfinance institutions (Hallward-Driemeier, 2013). Future CSP initiatives could therefore adopt a phased approach, beginning with capacity building and followed by periodic mentoring and networking sessions. Such an approach would strengthen long-term outcomes and ensure that initial gains in confidence and skills translate into sustainable business practices.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This CSP aimed to strengthen the economic independence of homemakers in Mandosi Permai by equipping them with practical entrepreneurial knowledge and skills through a participatory design approach. The program successfully enabled participants to identify business challenges, develop feasible home-based bakery business models, and acquire hands-on skills in bread production and basic cost management. The results indicate that entrepreneurship training aligned with women's domestic realities can enhance business understanding, technical competence, and entrepreneurial confidence, while fostering mindset change and initial community-based networking. Overall, this CSP demonstrates that context-sensitive, participatory, and practice-oriented interventions can effectively support mompreneurs in initiating sustainable micro-enterprises and contribute to family-level economic resilience.

Despite these positive outcomes, several limitations were identified. The program was conducted in a single day with a limited number of participants and without post-training mentoring, which constrained deeper skill development and long-term impact assessment. Based on these limitations, the following suggestions are proposed. First, future CSPs should be implemented through multi-session or modular training to allow more in-depth discussion of marketing, packaging, and digital business strategies. Second, follow-up mentoring and peer support groups should be established to support business continuity, strengthen networks, and address challenges during the early stages of business operation. Third, partnerships with local cooperatives, MSME support institutions, or microfinance providers should be developed to improve participants' access to capital and broader markets. Lastly, future programs should include longitudinal evaluation to assess business sustainability and changes in household economic conditions over time.

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