

**OVERCOMING POVERTY BY HOME
ECONOMICS EDUCATION**

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OVERCOMING POVERTY BY HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION^{*)}

Abstract

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Nowadays, Home Economics Education (Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga) grows as a branch of knowledge. This knowledge will explore family living, especially from the economic aspect. Exploring family from the economic aspect means that family is considered as a basic of economic growth which spread out into closest society and public in general. Since the family economic activities enter to the field of public economy, so it handles the development of public economy and the society.

Segments of family economy could be developed as the public economy. When the public use the family economic potential which changes into public economy, the public economic activities is expected will touch the poor. By mobilizing family economy segment becomes public economy segment, the economic activities are hoped could touch the poor.

The economic mobilization which oriented to the poor can decrease the poverty whether structural poverty or cultural poverty and it will become the economic mobilization based on chances. Thus, economic mission in Home Economics Education will be a trigger and stimulation of public economy in overcoming poverty simultaneously.

Keyword : Home Economics Education, Family Economy, Overcoming Poverty.

Introduction

The development of a country includes society among other things economy. Economic growth of a country and its society cover of economic field, such as food, clothing, and handicraft. This economic field could be expanded and developed as catering, garment, handicraft, and clothing company. Preparation of food and clothing is the field in Home Economics, as stated in International

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Dictionary Webster (1986 : 1191) :

Home Economics is a science and art dealing with home making and relation of home to the community, theory and practice concerning to the selection and preparation of food and clothing, condition of living, the use of income, the care and training children etc, also the study or teaching in Home Economics Department Concerned with this.

The fields that were covered in home economics, especially preparation food, clothing and handicraft can be activity for family economy. Food preparation, catering, clothing, and handicraft may be started as an enterprise on a small scale in order to increase family earning. If the families want to increase their earning, they can develop these enterprises into big scale and expand it variously.

Family economic activities in a moment will face another family economic activity. In this situation, family economic activities will complete to each other in order to avoid the differences of each activities. Naturally, these activities will increase into a market or a central activity which is formed by many family economic activities. Public activities are going to meet another activities and it will form economic sub-system which made from family economic activities.

In the situation of family economic growth or society of a country will trigger various activities. One of the kinds of entrepreneurship is enterprise in family economy. The education of family economy covers all family economic activities such as training on making cookies, pastry, catering, and preparation of clothing, making handicraft form textile, stones, and rummage. The activities in education of family economy increase the capacity of knowledge in Home Economics Education. The education of family economy which is included in Home Economics could be improved by government, Non-Government Organization (NGO), individual or groups.

A number of people in a society tend to appreciate the education of family economy and would be interested in it. There are a group of person among the people who were interested in education of family economy tries to spread their knowledge to the poor until they can begin their enterprise in family economic activities or join with the other family economic activities or applying as an

employee in family economic activities.

By occurring the family economic activities or family merger, we hope that it will create a new system of manpower and the prosperous can help the poor. For example a product of motor company or motorized vehicles is bought by catering or clothing company or vice versa, so there is a beneficial relationship which started by family economic activities like home industry. In that case, an economic system of a country will be found.

Description of Poor Society

A family in a poor society has a problem in starting a specific family economic activity. From a lot of families, usually there is a family which has initiative or creativity on doing entrepreneurship or economic activities. Because of the purchasing power of poor is low, so the economic activities are in a small scale. It is a reason that a poor family could not be able to release from poverty.

In the other hand, investigator of government, researcher from university and Non-Government Organization (NGO) can give training, motivation, how to start and manage the economic activities which could be done by the poor. The training is cheap, simple and has a big future chances or good prospect, such as, making cookies, pastry, preparation on clothing, and handicraft. All of them have done in order to strengthen entrepreneurship.

In a certain level, the enterprise of family economic activities can use bank and another monetary fund to increase their modal and production capacity. There are families from poor society in every country. The number of family from poor society in developing countries is very large. It could be seen from the data which presented income and purchasing power, for example Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia. In March 2006 the population of the poor society in Indonesia was 39.05 million (17.75 %) from the all population. The increasing of the poor in rural area is higher than in urban.

Generally, poor society which spread in rural area and urban cannot meet their basic needs completely, even less secondary and tertiary needs. More over,

poor society in rural area is connected with the productivity they have, natural resources and human resources. With the narrow field, limited natural resources and the quality of human resources they cannot do anything which can help their family.

In Indonesia this poverty is categorized as *keluarga pra sejahtera* and *keluarga sejahtera I*. *Keluarga pra sejahtera* is a family which cannot meet their basic needs minimally, such as food, clothing, housing, health and spiritual. *Keluarga sejahtera I* is a family which has met their basic need, but has not fulfilled their social-psychological needs like education, health, family interaction, and interaction with their surrounding. Beside the two kind of family have been mentioned, there are *keluarga sejahtera II*, *keluarga sejahtera III*, and *keluarga sejahtera III plus*. The last three kind of this family are not categorized as poor society.

The condition of poor society was triggered by several factors, internal and external factor. Internal factor cover health, having fallen behind in education, lack of knowledge, skills and technology. External factor include social-economy, culture value which does not support improving quality and family, and lack access to the facility. Internal and external factor will cause individual, family, society, nation, were buried in poverty, and the largest number of poverty is in developing countries. As Gunnar Myrdal stated in his book "The Challenge of World Poverty" that all developing country, although has various level in weakness. He added that weak country has a lack of discipline. This condition can influence the mental and motivation to reach achievement in order to improve the quality of life, family, society, and his nation and country.

Poverty in developing countries will create world poverty. Overcoming the poor society in the world is a duty for prosperous country, international organization and monetary fund such as G9 with her members like United States, England, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and China. The poor societies are in developing countries such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, Sudan, Euthopia, Rwanda, Somalia, Congo, and Haiti should

be helped, motivated and guided be modern and grow as well as a prosperous country.

Many ways to overcome the poor society; supporting implementation of education of family economy was a way held in the developing countries. The cooperation between stakeholder, financial fund, and institution of education of family economy will create education project or entrepreneurship training in any countries. In the end, the efforts are expected can decrease and help the poor society to overcome poverty in developing countries.

Poverty in Developing Countries

Poverty in a country is a problem which is very complicated and gives difficulties things in solving it. This condition is caused by less of factor which can increase family economy such as knowledge, skills, financial, and many supported infrastructure. Generally, someone's knowledge is related to the educational background. In developing countries, there are many people who were elementary school graduates only or drop out. The skill they have was limited and cannot be a basic capital for helping their economic activities and makes worse the lack of financial capability.

The problem in preparing infrastructure and means of economic activities were difficult to solve, limited natural resources when they live, low fertility, and unavailable transportation make it is very hard to be reached. There is no access to Health Public Centre or lack of information media. If there is media like newspaper or bulletin, they are not interested in reading and satisfied with their condition. These conditions are centered in rural area, while in urban there is no problem with the infrastructure, but an imbalance occurs because the population in urban is not proportional.

Individual, family, and society who move to urban or doing urbanization were uneducated and have not any skills that can help in facing the challenge in urban. This unprepared condition caused their family living was buried. In general, the people who do the urbanization did not search information how to

live in urban, socially and physically. Psychologically, they were not preparing themselves in facing competition of applying job vacancy, not struggle, weak and have low motivation. Physically they do not prepare themselves with good educational background and have no skills which needed by company. Socially they cannot adjust to the urban life, so they are plunged into negative condition.

Beside that, there are many families in urban that are poor and the conditions are same as another poor society. Inability schooling their children into good high education or do a wrong choice in choosing education for their children considered as an usual problem, but in the other side they must get job immediately. To get job immediately they should take the vocational school or several courses with specific training. Many of them are consumptive, so they cannot meet their primary needs such as home or capital or their economic activities.

In that condition, the education of family economy motivate them to be enterprising, whether it come from government, university or high education, NGO or any other project of economic development expected can help them beginning their economic activities. The economic activities can be pastry, clothing, and handicraft. In another time, these activities will increase and they can apply for credit on bank or another financial company supports the capital and resources of productivity. The governments in the developing countries help the economic activities in their society by constructing economic infrastructure, production management and market.

Home Economics Education as a Knowledge and Program

In the developing knowledge there was a Home Economics (Ilmu Kesejahteraan Keluarga), now is known as Home Economics Education (Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga). The Knowledge related to home and family has been noticed by Mrs. Richard in New York since 1899, she begun by holding a professional conference on home economics. Home Economics was simple and comprehensive that covered "... sanitation, cookery, and kindred household arts

and instruction in the art or science of living from kindergarten to college” (Frances J. Parker, 1990 : 25). Since Home Economics as knowledge and conference in 1899, this conference associated to *American Home Economics Association* (AHEA) which focuses on that knowledge in 1908. This association elected Elen H. Richard as the first president of AHEA.

From observing the philosophies and the goals of AHEA, Home Economics could be defined :

Home Economics as a field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life ... are engaged in :

- educating the individual for family living and improving the services and good used by families;
- conducting research to discover the changing needs of individuals and families and the means of satisfying these needs;
- and in furthering community, national, and world conditions favorable to family living. (Frances, J. Parker, 1990 : 15)

The quotation stated that home economics as knowledge and its service primarily to strengthen the family life. Serve family members, the family must be powerful in economic aspect and material, powerful defined as having positive human relation. Thus, we need education for every individual serve, strengthen family life, and meet the family needs, because the family living will influence the community, nation, and world conditions. When we notice the aspects in family living or Home Economics which concerned on food, clothing, handicraft, family relationship and children development, we agree with Francis J. Parker (1990 : 16) who said several things in Home Economics such as :

- family relationships and child development
- consumption and other economic aspects of personal and family living
- nutritional needs in the selection, preservation, preparation, and use of foods
- design, selection, construction and care of clothing and its psychological and social significance
- textiles for clothing and for the home
- housing for the family, and equipment and furnishings for the household
- art as an integral part of everyday life
- management in the use of resources so that values and goals of the individual and family or of society may be attained

All the field that covered in Home Economics, primarily food, clothing, handicraft can be family economic activities. Home Economics Education which developed as programs of home economics construction are expected could help

individuals to increase the economy and make a better family living. This statement is supported by Martha Lee Blankenship and Barbara Dommert Moerchen (1979 : 17) stated "Home Economics bring together knowledge from many fields to help individuals and families. There is a need for grater participation by home economist in the formation or public policy".

Home Economics Education might be applied at University or high education, school, and society. At the university this knowledge can be developed in the implementation of curriculum in Home Economics Education program. Lecturers in the university can develop it into public service, such as training or guidance related to knowledge and skills of family economic activity. The training like pastry, catering, clothing (baby fashion, kid, man or woman clothes), handicraft from any material, can be enterprise for overcoming poverty.

The application of Home Economics could be family economy program and its training. In Indonesia there is a program which known as 10 programs of PKK or society development program. The collaboration of public service in university and the program of government may create a program and the have to support all efforts in overcoming poverty. These programs are family economy education project, building market place, and access to financial support or banking.

Problem Solving of Poverty by Home Economics Education

Home Economics Education can motivate the growth of family economy because it covers food, clothing, and handicraft. Fields of knowledge and skills could be educational program and training overcome poverty. Field of knowledge and skills in food, clothing, and handicraft are assumed as a familiar field related to family and society, even though in poor society. Government institutions, private institutions, non-government organization, or any one who has knowledge and skills in food, clothing, and handicraft is expected can help government in overcoming poverty.

In many countries, Home Economics has been a program, department,

faculty, more over, university. The application of Home Economics might be realized by public service, formally by vocational school and all school as a choice able program of the curriculum in each level. This knowledge can be realized by non formal education also. It may be training, guidance, course in food preparation, clothing, and handicraft which motivate people to be entrepreneur. It might be held by certain family which has potential in building centre of education, training, and guidance for family in poor society as a solution of overcoming poverty.

Closing

Observe the potential of PKK (*Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*, Home Economics Education), government program, non-government organization program, and prosperous country program; to overcome poverty is not very hard. In this paper and seminar, the writer expects that all of us would be interested in holding program related to family economic activities as a real support for overcoming poverty in the developing countries.

Thus, in the end, problem of world poverty could be overcome right away by taking notice of countries document, local, and international organization report. They have to cooperate with each other in controlling world population, environmental conservation, economizing on energy, and to cope with global economy.

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