



The role of social entrepreneurship in alleviating economic problems in society: A literature study

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is a fundamental issue that attracts the attention of governments worldwide, including Indonesia, which still has a high poverty rate. This study aims to analyze the role of entrepreneurship as a strategy to address poverty, which is complex and multidimensional, through a comprehensive and integrated approach. The research employs a qualitative approach using a literature review from various national and international sources related to poverty, entrepreneurship, and poverty alleviation strategies. The results indicate that entrepreneurship is crucial in boosting income, enhancing economic empowerment, and generating employment opportunities. Additionally, entrepreneurship utilizes local potential to promote inclusive and sustainable development

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Poverty is a multidimensional problem that is still a major challenge in development in Indonesia (Hanandita & Tampubolon, 2016) Although data from the Central Statistics Agency shows a downward trend in the poverty rate from 1999 to 2010, the rate of decline tends to slow down, especially in urban areas (Aulia et al., 2024) Development inequality and ineffective governance are significant factors that contribute to the persistence of poverty in developing countries such as Indonesia (Nindien et al., 2024) In an effort to overcome this problem, the government has implemented various poverty alleviation programs that focus on increasing access to economic resources and meeting the basic needs of the community (Agustanta et al., 2024). The availability of accurate poverty data is a crucial component in formulating an effective poverty alleviation strategy, considering that poverty is defined as a person's inability to meet their basic needs due to limited access to economic resources (Adliana & Wahid, 2023).

The socio-economic inequality that occurs in Indonesia further exacerbates the existing problems of poverty and unemployment. This gap is not only reflected in income differences between community groups, but also in inequality in access to public services and public facilities (Romzi et al., 2024) This condition creates social injustice that has the potential to trigger social and political instability, given that a small part of society controls most of the wealth negara, sementara mayoritas hidup dalam keterbatasan ekonomi (Moh, 2021).

Another challenge faced by the Indonesian people is limited access to economic resources, especially in rural areas and remote areas. Difficulties in accessing capital, technology, markets, and information are barriers for people to improve their quality of life and actively participate in the broader economy (Hartojo et al., 2022). This condition further widens the gap between people in the center of the economy and those in the suburbs, creating an urgency to develop an integrated approach to addressing these various economic problems (Ningrum et al., 2024).

Economic problems in Indonesia have a very wide impact on social welfare and people's daily lives. The poverty that is still experienced by most of the population results in limited access to basic necessities, education, and health services, while the high unemployment rate, especially among higher education graduates, has the potential to create family economic instability and reduce people's purchasing power (Ginting & Rasbin, 2010). Increasingly sharp socioeconomic inequality, in which a small part of society controls most of the wealth, has exacerbated inequality and created potential social tensions that can disrupt social and political stability (Yulianita, 2024).

Given the large impact of economic problems on society, effective and sustainable solutions are needed to overcome them. Community empowerment through increased access to education, skills training, and economic resources can drive more inclusive economic growth and reduce dependence on social assistance (Azis et al., 2023). The development of social entrepreneurship is also a promising alternative solution because it can create independent employment while contributing to local economic development. The implementation of this holistic solution will not only improve social welfare, but also support the creation of more resilient sustainable development in the face of future economic challenges (Bolango & Gorontalo, 2024).

Social entrepreneurship is present as an innovative approach that combines economic goals with positive social impacts in overcoming various societal problems. This business model not only focuses on financial gains alone, but also provides sustainable solutions to social issues such as poverty, unemployment, and social inequality (Agustiana & Prasetyo, 2024). Through the creation of jobs that empower communities, especially for disadvantaged groups, social entrepreneurship has been proven to be effective in reducing unemployment while improving the economic well-being of communities (Zainea et al., 2020). Unlike traditional government assistance programs that may offer temporary relief, social entrepreneurship addresses systemic issues by creating opportunities for long-term economic independence and wealth generation, which can help reduce the wealth gap and promote more inclusive growth.

In Indonesia, the primary focus of social entrepreneurship is on fostering economic empowerment within marginalized communities. Various initiatives have been undertaken to provide opportunities for marginalized groups to acquire new skills, market access, and increased income (Dalimunthe et al., 2021). For example, some social organizations have successfully empowered women in remote villages through skills training programs, access to capital, and the development of local product marketing networks, which not only impact economic improvement but also strengthen their position in society (Rahmawati & Dasa Putri, 2022).

Research on social entrepreneurship in alleviating social problems has been carried out a lot, but there are still some studies that have not discussed in depth economic issues, such as those that have been studied by Rudi Saprudin with the title "Social Entrepreneurship in Community Empowerment" and also by Willya Achmad with the title "Community Empowerment Through Social Entrepreneurship: Building Independence". where the research has a meaning where the role of Social entrepreneurship in reducing socio-economic inequality is increasingly significant through

an inclusive and sustainable business model. By prioritizing local labor and optimizing the use of local resources, social enterprises are able to create a broader positive impact on society. Innovations in the education and health sectors have also opened up wider access for underprivileged communities to access quality services, such as the development of technology-based education models and affordable health services in underserved areas (Macaulay et al., 2018)

Social entrepreneurship not only provides short-term solutions but also encourages sustainable development through environmentally friendly practices. The application of circular economy principles and efficient management of natural resources is an integral part of the social business model. More than that, social entrepreneurship has introduced a new paradigm in measuring business success, where the impact of social and community welfare are indicators as important as financial achievement, creating more sustainable systemic change in poverty alleviation and socio-economic development efforts (Masruroh & Fardian, 2022).

Based on the background that has been explained, the purpose of this study is to find out Identifying the Impact of Social Entrepreneurship on Unemployment Reduction and Identifying Innovations in Social Entrepreneurship to Overcome Social and Economic Inequality.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach, according to Sugiono (2015) qualitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research on the condition of natural objects (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, data sampling is carried out purposively and snowball (Ahyar et al., 2020). The collection technique with triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize the meaning of generalization. This type of research is a literature study where the researcher reviews previous research that provides benefits and the information obtained is relevant.

According to (Gunawan, 2021) there are three stages in qualitative research, namely (1) the description stage or orientation stage, at this stage the researcher describes what is seen, heard, and felt then records at a glance from the information obtained, (2) the reduction stage, in this stage the researcher reduces all the information obtained in the first stage to focus on a specific problem, and (3) the selection stage, this stage the researcher describes the focus that has been set in more detail, then conduct an analysis. Specifically, the three stages above can be described in 7 steps of qualitative research, namely: 1) Problem Identification, 2) Problem Limitation, 3) Establishing Research Focus, 4) Data Collection, 5) Data Processing and Meaning, 6) Emergence of Theories/Hypotheses, 7) Reporting/Research.

In this regard, qualitative research enables researchers to gain a comprehensive insight into the phenomenon under investigation. The sampling process is carried out selectively, allowing researchers to interpret the results personally and gain deeper insights. The data collection method is carried out through literature studies, mainly by searching, collecting, and processing documents from various sources of literature and previous researchers' scientific writings. The data used comes from secondary data obtained from various reliable books, scientific articles, and literature found in online media.

2.1 Research Sample

The research sample in this study is articles taken from national journals and books selected with various year publications, because it refers to the research issues and trends to be discussed. In

the selection of reference sources, a specific theme or category will be selected, which will help organize the information and provide structure to the research conducted.

The articles are selected based on specific themes or categories that align with the research focus. Each article is reviewed for its relevance to the central problem or research question. To ensure the representation of relevant sources, articles are categorized into groups based on their content, such as theoretical foundations, empirical studies, and practical applications of social entrepreneurship. This process ensures that only the most pertinent and credible sources are included in the research.

2.2 Data Collection Techniques

Data Collection The data collection techniques in this study are: 1) Library Research library research is carried out as an effort to obtain theoretical data as a comparison with the research data obtained. The data can be obtained from literature, lecture notes, books, and other reading sources. 2) Digital library. 3) Journal reviews or references from articles are carried out to obtain useful information in completing this research from several existing articles according to the topic being analyzed.

Furthermore, data obtained from qualitative research such as the results of observations, interviews, or document analysis are analyzed, and the results of the analysis are in the form of presentations about the situation being researched and presented in the form of narrative descriptions. The pressure on qualitative research is not on the results but on the process, data and information needed regarding the question of what, why and how to uncover the process is not the essence of an activity. In qualitative research, it does not start with a theory prepared in advance, but starts from the field based on the natural environment. Data and information obtained both from the field and document studies are drawn their meaning and concept through analytical descriptive presentation, without having to use numbers because they prioritize the process of an event occurring in a natural situation(Gunawan, 2021).

Articles for the literature review are selected based on their relevance to the research topic and categorized according to specific themes such as social entrepreneurship, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development. To ensure the representation of relevant sources, only credible and peer-reviewed articles from reliable journals, books, and academic writings are included in the data collection. These sources are then categorized into subgroups based on their content, ensuring that all critical aspects of the research question are thoroughly covered.

2.3 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is an activity to organize, sort, group, code/mark and categorize it so that a finding is obtained based on the focus and problem to be answered. The literature search reveals how the implementation of social entrepreneurship will be able to solve social problems in society such as poverty, environmental problems and others. And how the community benefits from the activities carried out and sustainable. According to (Gunawan, 2021) there are three stages that must be done in conducting data analysis in qualitative research, namely: 1) Data reduction, 2) Data exposure, 3) Drawing conclusions and verifying Qualitative data analysis is carried out simultaneously with the continuous data collection process, and this activity is carried out during and after data collection.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Social Entrepreneurship Development

Entrepreneurship is beginning to develop in the world and also in Indonesia, and currently has a very important role in overcoming social problems in society such as environmental, health and poverty problems. Social entrepreneurship was first raised by Muhammad Yunus who developed *Grameen bank* with the activity of providing financial assistance to poor women who could not get formal financial assistance. And when women are given the trust to manage their finances and develop their businesses, the bank will continue to grow and then become an example in other developing countries. In social entrepreneurship change for the better is the main motivation and the main goal is not to make a profit (Nepal, 2023)

Social entrepreneurship is a concept that integrates four critical elements in sustainable value creation. According to Widiastuti (2011), this concept includes the formation of social values as the main goal, which is realized through the active involvement of the community environment in the collaborative process. Social innovation is a catalyst component that drives transformation and creative solutions to people's problems, while economic activities serve as a mechanism that ensures the sustainability of these initiatives. The dynamic interaction between these four elements – social values, the community environment, innovation, and economic activities creates an entrepreneurial model that is not only oriented towards financial gain, but also has a measurable and sustainable positive impact on society (Bansal et al., 2019).

Social entrepreneurship has a strategic role in creating social value that requires the collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, and academia. A social entrepreneur, who can be defined as an individual who understands social problems and applies entrepreneurial skills to drive social change, has a crucial position in addressing social issues that are often overlooked. Through a systematic and integrated approach, these social entrepreneurs strive to improve community welfare in various dimensions, including economic, educational, and health aspects. The significance of their role lies in the ability to identify social problems and implement innovative solutions that are sustainable, thereby creating a measurable positive impact on society at large (Montgomery et al., 2012).

The paradigm transformation of social entrepreneurship has gone beyond the conventional boundaries of traditional business, bringing about a systemic revolution that catalyzes fundamental changes in the social order that need support. The implementation of an entrepreneurial approach in the resolution of social problems has yielded very promising results through various transformative global initiatives. This success is reflected in various innovations that have proven effective, such as the Grameen Bank microfinance system initiated by Muhammad Yunus, the financial services innovation Aavishkaar in Singapore, the electrification initiative pioneered by Fabio Rosa in Brazil, the rural economic empowerment program developed by Paul Cohen in South Africa, and the farm funding scheme initiated by Madison Ayer in Kenya. This accumulation of success confirms that the social entrepreneurship model has the capability to be highly effective in building sustainable social welfare infrastructure, thereby creating a comprehensive and long-term positive impact on the target community (Jia & Desa, 2022)

Social entrepreneurship studies have been extensively conducted in analyzing social entrepreneurship practices, as previous researchers have done and social entrepreneurship practices on 35 social entrepreneurship ventures, and this is analyzed in four areas, namely organizational

vision, mission, and values, entrepreneurial opportunities and innovation, entrepreneurial models, and social outcomes and their impact on social well-being (Ramos Farroñán et al., 2024).

The development of social entrepreneurship at the higher education level is showing a positive trend, with various universities beginning to take an active role in shaping young entrepreneurs who have social sensitivity. In her research, Hasanah(2018) identified several initiatives that have been implemented by universities, such as the Eco Week program, business incubation, and the integration of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum, especially in the context of sharia entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the concept of social-based entrepreneurship has become an integral part of the dharma of higher education in the context of community service. This is realized through various sociopreneurship development programs, including the implementation of competitions such as the Social Project Competition. These initiatives are a strategic step in building student independence, especially in the midst of the challenges of increasingly fierce competition in the world of work (Boldureanu et al., 2020)

The growth of social entrepreneurship in Indonesia shows significant development, characterized by various strategic initiatives in various sectors. Seran (2019) noted several important indicators in this development, including the increasing frequency of social entrepreneurship seminars, the establishment of social entrepreneurship study centers in various universities, and the presence of supporting organizations such as Ashoka Indonesia. Another important momentum was the formation of the Indonesian Social Entrepreneurship Association (AKSI) on November 16, 2009. Furthermore, social entrepreneurship has developed into a creative solution that not only focuses on profit, but also on improving community welfare through optimizing village potential supported by village fund programs (Seran, 2020).

Based on a study by Hery Wibowo (2015), the development of social entrepreneurship shows an increasingly progressive trend with the manifestation of various empowerment programs that have been implemented in various sectors such as: (a) Poverty reduction through empowerment, for example the microfinance movement. (b) The provision of health services, ranging from small-scale support for the mentally ill to the community-scale. (c) Education and training, such as efforts to expand participation and democratize knowledge transfer. (d) Environmental preservation and sustainable development, such as green energy projects. (e) Community housing regeneration, such as associations (f) Welfare projects, such as job openings for the unemployed or homeless and alcohol and drug handling projects.

The dynamics of social entrepreneurship, which initially grew out of individual initiatives, have undergone significant developments in terms of scope and complexity. Along with its rapid growth, there is a need for a more formal and organized organizational structure, which then gives birth to the concept of social enterprise as an institutional forum that oversees various social entrepreneurship activities (Teasdale et al., 2023)(Dionisio, 2019). This transformation from individual movements to structured institutions reflects a natural evolution in an effort to optimize the resulting social impact (Sahasranamam & Nandakumar, 2020).

3.2 Elements of Entrepreneurship

Based on research by Viona Viska (2020), the social entrepreneurship ecosystem is supported by several key elements, where four elements have shown positive developments, namely financial aspects, multi-stakeholder support, market conditions, and geographical position. However, the study also revealed that there are three components of the ecosystem that still need significant

strengthening: policy elements that are not comprehensive, cultural aspects that are not yet fully supportive, and human capital or human capital development that still needs quality improvement (Ekonomi et al., 2020). a.) Cultural Elements. Cultural elements have not shown understanding or recognition of social entrepreneurship in the community, this is because people value professions such as engineers, doctors, civil servants, and others. The culture of facing risks in Indonesia is quite good, this can be seen from Indonesia's ranking of facing risks which is ranked 30th out of 141 countries in the world. b) Human capital (HR) element. In this case, the self-potential of the Indonesian people is still relatively low because the workforce over 15 years old is still dominated by elementary school education and below, besides that Indonesia still prioritizes character education rather than developing human resources.

The analysis of market conditions in the context of social entrepreneurship shows interesting dynamics. Several social entrepreneurs have managed to penetrate the market and market their products effectively (Pinheiro, 2021). Meanwhile, geographical factors play an important role in the development of social entrepreneurship, where there are clear characteristic differences between urban and rural areas in terms of the potential for social development that can be harnessed (Mayer et al., 2016). From a financial perspective, the growth of social entrepreneurship in Indonesia exhibits a range of dynamic trends.. Although there has been access to investment and venture capital from the private sector, financing support from the government is still limited. The government's financing program currently still focuses on MSMEs in general, there is no special scheme for social enterprises (Heriyati & Madzik, 2024). In terms of social support, the role of parents and the environment has been proven to have a positive influence in fostering motivation and entrepreneurial spirit in the younger generation (Adi, 2021). However, infrastructure challenges are still a significant obstacle in business development in Indonesia, with inadequate conditions in various regions (Syafiatul Kiromah. Nuryami, 2024). On the other hand, the support from the education sector shows positive development, where various universities have actively organized programs and competitions that focus on social entrepreneurship.

Terrinippi (2019) provides a comprehensive definition of social entrepreneurship, where one of the main elements is Social Value. This element is the most basic characteristic and distinguishes social entrepreneurship from other forms of entrepreneurship, because it focuses on creating real and measurable social value or benefits for the community and the surrounding environment. Social Value is the main foundation that directs every activity and decision in social entrepreneurship to produce a sustainable positive impact on the target community (Tenrinippi, 1980). Social entrepreneurship is more comprehensive, namely *social entrepreneurship*, consisting of four main elements, namely: (a) *Social Value*. This is the most distinctive element of social entrepreneurship, which is to create real social benefits for the community and the surrounding environment. (b) *Civil Society*. *Social entrepreneurship* in general comes from the initiative and participation of civil society by optimizing the social capital in the community. (c) *Inn Social entrepreneurship* solves social problems in innovative ways, among others, by combining local wisdom and social innovation. (d) *Economic Activity*. *Social Entrepreneurship* is successful in general by balancing social activities and business activities.

3.3 Social entrepreneurship in solving social problems

The implementation of social entrepreneurship is seen as one of the solutions to overcome various economic problems in Indonesia gradually (Seran, 2019). This approach involves the direct

participation of the community as business people, where the profits obtained will be returned and developed for the benefit of the community itself. Furthermore, social entrepreneurship has a long-term goal of building people's economic independence, reducing dependence on government policies such as subsidies and direct cash assistance. The success of this approach has been proven in various countries, one of the most prominent examples being Muhammad Yunus, the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who was successful in establishing a microfinance initiative aimed at supporting the disadvantaged communities in Bangladesh. Although Yunus has now left the business he built from scratch, his social entrepreneurship spirit remains an exemplary inspiration (Setiawan et al., 2023)

The proper and correct use of village potential through existing village fund programs will have a very good impact on the growth of the community in the village which will have an impact on the country's economic growth which will become stable without having to think much about the fate of the village with all the existing crises. By applying entrepreneurial theory, which can transform something of no value into something with economic worth, it can inspire village leaders to play a pivotal role in effectively and appropriately utilizing the potential of each village (Fazri et al., 2022)

Social entrepreneurship has proven its role as an important breakthrough in poverty reduction efforts, where the manifestation of social business further strengthens its position as an economic lever for the community in increasing income and improving the economy (Rhena J et al., 2024) Although its reach is still limited, this approach contributes significantly to long-term economic development and poverty alleviation agendas. The success of social entrepreneurship lies in the merging of social and business concepts, which are characterized by innovative ideas and the courage to take risks in seizing entrepreneurial opportunities to solve social problems (Zhang et al., 2022) In this case, community empowerment is a fundamental value, with the creation of social value as the main goal integrated with innovative activities.

The emergence of social entrepreneurship in response to government failures indicates the need for a more tangible role of the government in poverty reduction efforts, where social entrepreneurship practitioners can become strategic partners of the government in future economic development. As an agent of *change*, social entrepreneurship has the potential to change and improve social values and gain opportunities for improvement, a role that can be played by every individual in society. (Majeed et al., 2024). In its development, social entrepreneurship, which is rooted in the broader field of entrepreneurship and has been developed using empirical data from the business world, shows the evolution of this concept in the context of modern economic development as follows: (a) What is social entrepreneurship is a new breakthrough as a business activity in overcoming social problems that involves the innovative use of all resources to accelerate social change in meeting the social needs of the community. (b) Why social entrepreneurship is considered important: The application of social entrepreneurship is considered important, because it has characteristics that are new breakthroughs in solving social phenomena through approaches that are not only profit-seeking, but also creating social value, especially for the poor.

Social entrepreneurship is present as an effective community empowerment instrument, providing opportunities for people to develop and achieve financial independence through innovative business activities (Hidayat & Putra, 2020). This approach encourages people to develop creativity and innovate in doing business, while solving existing social problems. Through social

entrepreneurship, people are given a forum to realize their ideas and hone their hidden abilities in each individual, thereby creating sustainability in their economic activities (Wang, 2022).

As one of the approaches in tackling poverty and other social problems, community empowerment focuses on aspects of awareness and capacity building owned by the community. Social entrepreneurship is a tangible manifestation of this empowerment, where people are empowered to actively participate in improving the quality of their lives. The implementation of this empowerment requires an organization that is able to manage and maximize the potential that exists in society, both existing and newly grown in the community (Armoyu, 2013).

In contrast to traditional entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship emphasizes achieving social objectives rather than focusing primarily on financial profit. Social entrepreneurs carry out business activities as instruments to support larger social causes. This model allows people to seek solutions to the problems they face firsthand, providing a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the issues at hand.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the review provide a strong foundation for public policy decision-making in formulating community-based poverty alleviation strategies, particularly in the context of social entrepreneurship and social innovation. Insights gathered from the literature emphasize the role of social entrepreneurship as an effective approach to addressing social problems that cannot be resolved solely by traditional market mechanisms or government intervention. By focusing not only on profit but also on creating social value, particularly in improving the welfare of low-income communities and the poor, social entrepreneurship aligns closely with the goals of poverty alleviation. Moreover, the community-based nature of social entrepreneurship, as highlighted in the review, demonstrates its great potential to empower local communities and improve their economic and social conditions through self-sustained initiatives. This can serve as a basis for public policies aimed at directly involving communities in poverty reduction efforts, fostering local ownership, and sustainable development. Furthermore, the connection between social innovation and social entrepreneurship shows how innovative solutions can be applied across various sectors (non-profit, public, and private) to address complex challenges such as poverty, environmental sustainability, and health. The broad application of social innovation allows public policies to integrate innovative solutions across sectors to address poverty and inequality holistically. Thus, the findings from this review suggest that public policy decisions can leverage social entrepreneurship and social innovation as tools to design community-based strategies that tackle poverty in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Policies that encourage and support social entrepreneurship can create an environment where local communities are empowered to drive their own development, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of poverty alleviation strategies.

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