

Policy Paper

Identification of PEKKA Characteristics for the Women Empowerment Strategy in Sumedang Regency

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Abstract

Gender income disparity is one of the challenges in realizing community welfare in the Sumedang Regency. PEKKA worker is one of the vulnerable objects that need to be improved by the government of Sumedang Regency. This study aims to identify the individual characteristics of PEKKA to determine goals and priorities for women's empowerment strategies. This study's method is quantitative research in the form of a description with numbers or numerals (statistics). Reference studies that corroborate the analysis complement this study's method. The analysis describes the characteristics of female heads of household in Sumedang Regency. The results showed that PEKKA in Sumedang Regency dominates by middle-aged and older women. Their level of education and competence is low, so they commonly work in the informal sector as unassisted entrepreneurs and in the formal sector as laborers. These characteristics are factors that cause their common welfare. Therefore, the PEKKA Empowerment Program in Sumedang Regency needs to involve other regional government affairs, namely Education, Health, Social, Labor, Communication and Information, Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, Agriculture, and Fisheries. Through this strategy, the PEKKA Empowerment Program can be right on target to encourage the realization of the welfare of the people of Sumedang Regency.

Keywords: PEKKA, characteristics, welfare, empowerment strategy

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1. Introduction

National and regional development in Indonesia aims to prosper all communities regardless of gender status. Similarly, the Sumedang Regency's development includes welfare issues and gender equality in its development goals and objectives. Both of these issues are important because they are part of the Sustainable Development Goals that the Government (SDGs) of Indonesia needs to achieve by 2023.

One of the indicators used to measure welfare at the national level, including in the Sumedang Regency, is per capita expenditure. Using the composition of per capita expenditure can assess the economic well-being level of the population. If the food expenditure percentage to total home expenditure is lower, then the level of welfare better. Based on the processing of Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) data visualized in figure 1, it can be seen that there is an inequality in per capita expenditure between male and female residents in Sumedang Regency. This welfare disparity is a challenge to realizing welfare goals for all genders in Sumedang Regency.

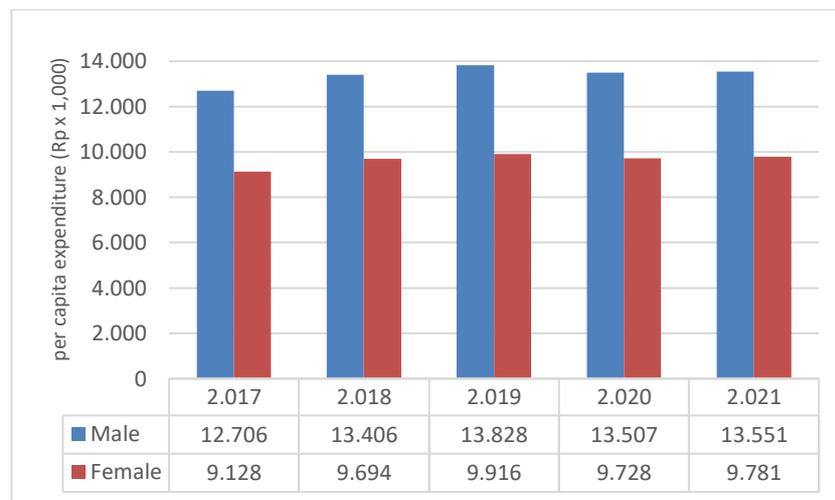


Figure 1. Comparison of expenditure per capita by sex in Sumedang Regency

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS)

The main factor influencing low household spending as a measure of well-being is the low income earned. On gender issues, women are vulnerable objects in income disparities so their level of welfare is generally lower than that of men. According to (Susanto et al., 2018), the measure of welfare is closely related to productive people who receive income to meet their daily needs. Gender is a barrier to increasing community productivity and the number of people working. Generally, women have limited access to jobs, and finding suitable employment is very difficult. According to the (World Bank, 2012), in various countries, including developed countries, gender disparities are still found. Compared to men, women are more likely to work as unpaid family workers or in the informal sector. The women farmers tend to cultivate smaller areas with the types of commodities that are less economically profitable. As for women who are entrepreneurs, they have smaller companies in low-profit sectors. As a result, the average income of women tends to be lower than that of men.

Among these groups of women, the most vulnerable in terms of welfare are female heads of household, also known in Indonesia as Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA). BPS defines PEKKA as the breadwinner in the family or someone who is considered the head of the family. PEKKA describes female heads of the household as women who carry out their roles and responsibilities as breadwinners, household managers, guardians of the continuity of family life, and decision-makers in their families(Pekka.or.id).

Estimated in 2021, around 7.41% of the total population who have been positioned as heads of families in Sumedang Regency were PEKKA. Based on figure 1 above, it can be assumed the burden of PEKKA's life is heavier than the status of other women's positions in the household because they carry a heavier double burden. They have to take responsibility as the head of the family, which should be carried culturally by men. On the other hand, they still play the role of a mother who takes care of domestic

affairs. Therefore, the PEKKA group in Sumedang Regency needs to occupy a prioritized position in the strategy of community welfare in the gender aspect.

Local Government Intervention in Women's Empowerment refers to the Regional Government from [Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23/2014](#). Implementation of policies by local governments to reduce gender inequality and welfare issues, including for PEKKA, includes (1) improving the quality of life for women and (2) improving the quality of families.

Empowerment of women is one of the efforts to improve women's welfare. [\(Hasanah, 2013\)](#) states that the main priority in women's empowerment is to realize independence. The meaning of this independence is the expectation of women as part of society states that the main priority in women's empowerment is to realize independence. So far, women are still forward-facing conditions of a lack of knowledge, skills, creative attitudes, and aspirations. As a result, many women live in poverty and are marginalized.

For PEKKA's empowerment policy to be more targeted, therefore must supporting with analysis and valid data. [\(Imelda Cahyaningrum, 2021\)](#) states that gender analysis forms the basis for planning and budgeting for empowerment programs. Top-down policies do not ensure that empowerment programs run on target with gender issues. As was in [\(Ir. Hendra Hamid, 2018\)](#) states that government officials need to hold several principles in community empowerment, which become a reference in implementation so that activities can run correctly and target-oriented, under the nature and concept of empowerment. Among these principles is the importance of identifying problems and noticing the target group's characteristics. Research by [\(Ristianasari et al., 2013; Septiani, 2019\)](#) shows a correlation between socio-demographic characteristics. [\(Nurwandi et al., 2018\)](#) stated that PEKKA's work program needs to be developed based on the context and needs of the community of female heads of households for poverty alleviation and leadership development.

Previous studies have identified the characteristics of female heads of households as the basis for determining strategies and targets for empowerment [\(Haryono et al., 2018\)](#). The recommendations for empowerment strategies from this study resulted from the characteristics identification of poverty, family, residential, and business of each head of the poor female household. Meanwhile, [\(Satriawan, 2021\)](#) identified the characteristics of the level of education, working hours, income, and age of the female head of the family in informal types of work to formulate empowerment strategies. Based on the previous description, to overcome the issue of gender welfare disparity in Sumedang Regency, the identification of PEKKA's characteristics as the basis for determining the priority of targets and strategies for women's empowerment is needed.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to identify the individual characteristics of PEKKA that can affect their income level. This characteristic identification can determine objects and priorities in women's empowerment strategies. This study can be used as a basis for policies to reduce welfare disparities in women, especially the PEKKA group in Sumedang Regency.

2. Research Method

The type of this study is policy research that supports the policymakers formulating fundamental policy from the information and recommendations in the paper. The method used in this study is quantitative with a library or secondary data analysis. This method is quantitative research in the form of a description with numbers or numerals (statistics). The analysis describes the characteristics of female heads of household who work in Sumedang Regency in terms of employment.

Descriptive quantitative analysis in this study uses data from the 2019-2021 National Labor Force Survey (Sakernas). Sakernas is a survey conducted by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) specifically designed to collect data that can describe the general state of employment between the enumeration periods. The data displayed is an estimated value and may be highly influenced by the number of samples surveyed in that year.

3. Results and Discussions

Among the efforts to improve people's welfare is encouraging people to be productive, which is indicated by an increase in the number of working people. People who labor and are productive will earn income to meet their daily needs. In 2019-2021, BPS mentioned that working people in the Sumedang Regency are increasing. Even in 2020, the number of unemployed is also mounting due to the impact of COVID-19. In 2021 the working population in Sumedang Regency will reach 639,687 people or 90.84% workforce from the total population.

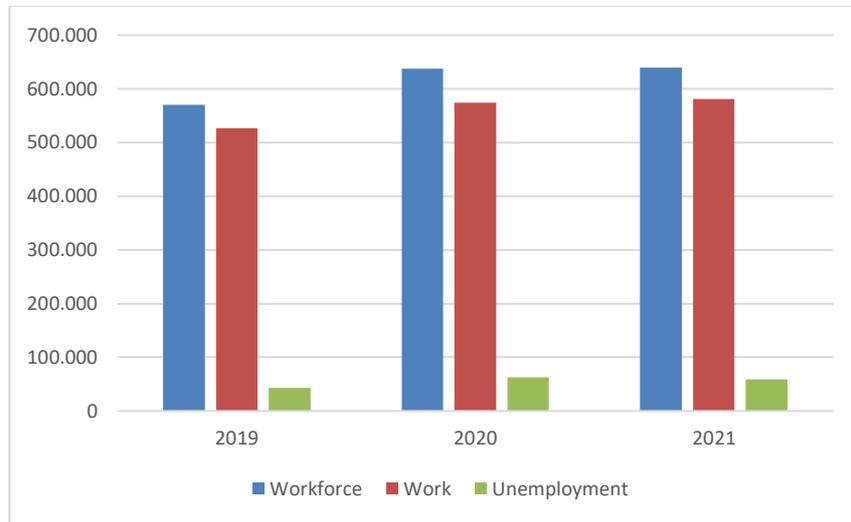


Figure 2. Population Aged 15 Years and Over by Type of Activity During the Previous Week and Sex in Sumedang Regency, 2021

Source: BPS-Statistics of Sumedang Regency (2022)

From the results of the disaggregation of Sumedang Regency employment data for 2019 to 2021, the increase in the proportion of working women is higher than the increase in the ratio of working men. In 2021 the proportion of working women had reached 41.68% of the total working population. The most significant increase occurred in 2020, 3.76% from the previous year. The COVID-19 pandemic forces women to be more productive to fulfill their household needs.

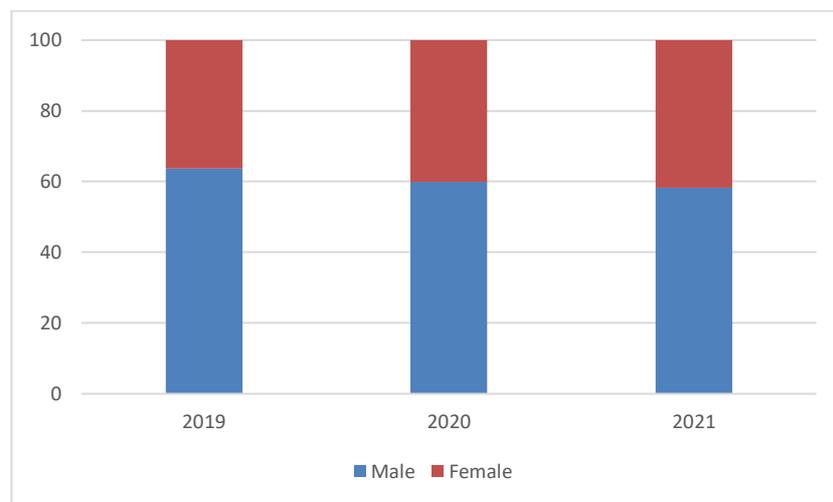


Figure 3. Percentage of the working population by gender

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019-2021

Women united as a wife are dominant in women worker groups. Of course, the increase in the number of women working is in line with the increasing opportunities and roles for women to develop their potential. The stereotype of women only doing domestic work began to fade along with the opportunity for women to be able to do work outside the home or in the public sphere. (Hidayati, 2015) states that the increasing number of working women is affected by various factors, including the higher education of women, the desire to increase self-existence, and the demands to meet household needs.

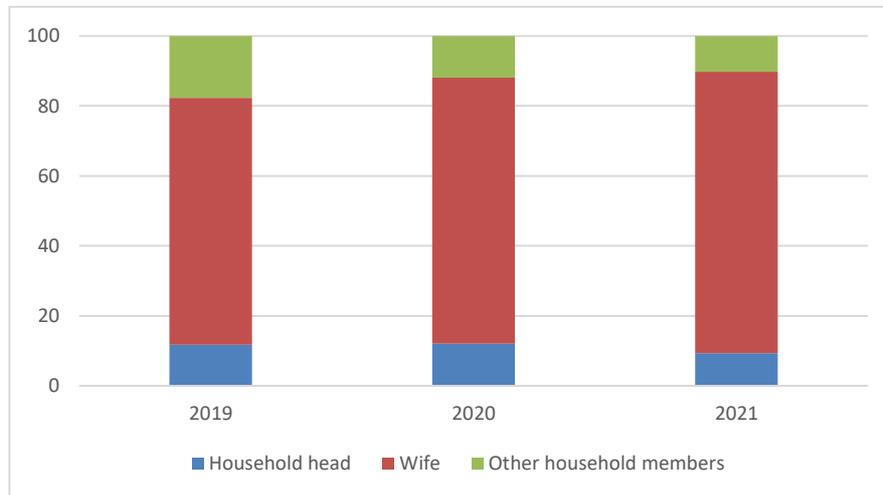


Figure 4. Percentage of working women based on their position in the household

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

(Dilawati et al., 2021) showed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, women had a double burden. Women play a role in domestic affairs and efforts to meet household economic needs. There are three types of women working during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The first type is working women who surrender to circumstances due to limited abilities and hope for government assistance. Second, women can adapt in times of crisis, are dexterous, and can coordinate well with their husbands. Third, women are forced to work due to domestic violence and forced to work due to divorce.

Although the percentage is the lowest, women working in Sumedang Regency who are the head of the household (PEKKA) are the objects most vulnerable to facing threats and disturbances in meeting their household needs. Like other women, in 2020, the percentage of PEKKA working increased due to the demands of the household economy. According to the Co-Director of Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga Foundation, 95% of female heads of households in Indonesia work in the informal sector, such as traders, laborers, farmers, or farm laborers. Almost half of them earn less than IDR 500,000 per month. Meanwhile, 32.6% of their income is only up to IDR 1 million per month. Only 18.3% whose income is more than IDR 1 million. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused PEKKA to be increasingly less prosperous, where previously they were in the underprivileged community group (Sindonews.com, n.d.).

As stated in the introduction of this paper, the disparity in welfare based on gender is a development challenge in Sumedang Regency. The indicator is inequality in the amount of per capita expenditure between women and men. The low women's per capita expenditure is caused by the low income they earn. Of course, PEKKA is a group that is included in this problem.

The low income of PEKKA in Sumedang Regency can be seen from the results of Sakernas data processing in 2021. 74.4% of PEKKA earn below average wages from all working PEKKA individuals. Meanwhile, the average value of PEKKA wages is Rp 1,467,200. When compared with the value of GRDP per capita for the population of Sumedang Regency in 2021, there is 88.82% of PEKKA earn wages below IDR 2,677,500. Compared with the 2021 poverty line in Sumedang Regency, 30.77% of PEKKA earn wages below IDR 360,054. Ironically, 5.22% of PEKKA do not pay for their work.

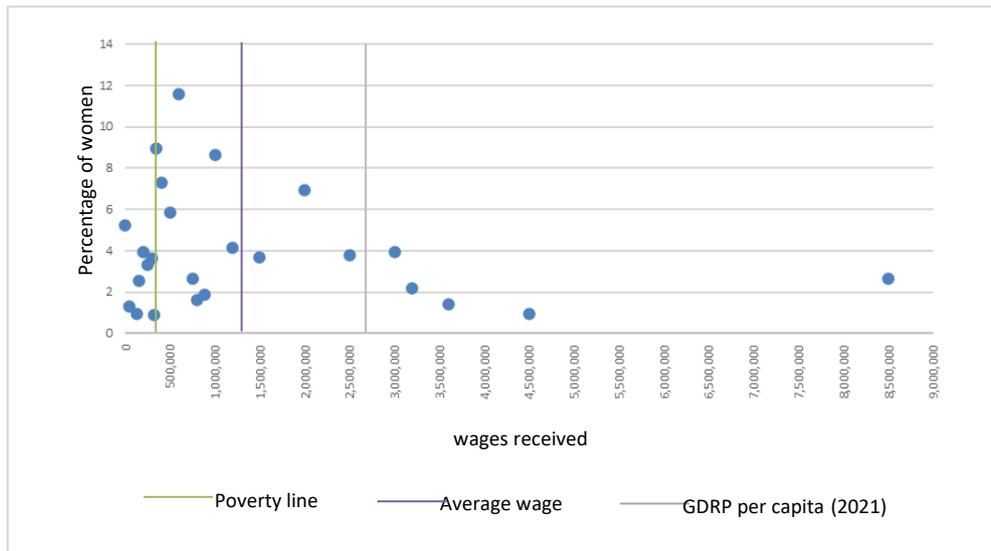


Figure 5. Comparison between the wages earned by women workers, GRDP per capita, and the poverty line.

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

From the discussion above, it is clear that PEKKA in Sumedang Regency is a vulnerable object in the economy and the community's welfare. In addition to the limited access to work and appropriate types of employment, several factors cause the low income of PEKKA working in the Sumedang Regency.

a. Age Characteristic

In terms of age characteristics, PEKKA in Sumedang Regency is dominated by women aged over 54 years. Even the increase in PEKKA work in 2020 during the COVID-19 Pandemic era was dominated by PEKKA aged over 64. PEKKA's age, dominated by women older than middle age, indicates the causes of low productivity, resulting in low wages or income. The analysis results from the research by (Amnesi, 2013), (Pasaribu, 2018), and (Orlian & Ratna, 2020) show that age is very influential on women's pay. The older the woman, the lower her productivity, and the weaker her physical condition makes her unable to contribute income to the family.

(Sali, 2020) stated that as someone grows older, his physical or mental abilities will slowly decline. In old age, muscle tissue will wither and be replaced by connective tissue. Muscle shrinkage causes the elasticity of the muscles to decrease. The process of getting old is due to the lack of workability due to changes in the body's apparatus, the cardiovascular system, and hormonal. The optimal muscle strength for women is at 20–39 years.

Table 1: Percentage of age characteristics of Sumedang Regency PEKKA workers

Age	2019	2020	2021
15-24	4.78	2.35	2.11
25-34	6.33	0	0
35-44	17.48	6.73	2.81
45-54	22.95	19.32	22.91
55-64	27.38	30.62	37.60
>64	21.08	40.98	34.57

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

b. Education Level

The quality of human resources is the most significant aspect of economic activity. The quality of products or services is strongly affected by the level of education of all components of human resources in the production process. The higher the quality of human resources, the more efficient the productivity of a country will increase (Atmanti, 2005). Qualified human resources can be measured by the quality of education, both formally and non-formally.

Based on table 2, working PEKKA in Sumedang Regency is dominated by women who have completed their last education up to Elementary School (SD) or equivalent. The low level of education certainly affects low competence, resulting in low productivity and income. (Wahyuni & Monika, 2017) and (Dewi et al., 2017) stated in their research that the level of education has a positive and significant effect on women's productivity and income. Meanwhile, (Yuniati, 2019) revealed that most of the female workforce is in the informal sector, and a low level of education causes them to get underpaid.

The low level of PEKKA's working education is in line with the achievement of the macro indicator Average length of schooling (RLS) for women in the Sumedang District. In 2021 the female RLS in Sumedang Regency reached 8.34 years. Meanwhile, the male RLS had reached 8.70 years.

Table 2: Percentage of PEKKA worker's age characteristics

Education Level	2019	2020	2021
Not finished elementary school (SD)	15.99	5.87	12.29
Sekolah Dasar (SD) or equivalent	44.28	69.16	63.41
Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) or equivalent	10.73	5.70	8.28
Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA)/Madrasah Aliyah (MA)	14.26	13.35	7.59
Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK)/Madrasah Aliyah Kejuruan (MAK)	4.74	2.80	2.35
College	10.01	3.12	6.09

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

c. Training for PEKKA who did not finish elementary school

Training can improve productivity by enhancing the skills and the ability to work. Training should be an intermediary to increase PEKKA's work productivity. Research conducted by (Dadang Yunus Lutfiansyah, 2009) and (Weddiawati & Setiawati, 2015) shows an increase in income and productivity for working PEKKA. Meanwhile, (Owners et al., 2013) mention that a training or course specifically designed for small businesses showed that roles played by women significantly improved small business owner's knowledge.

However, ironically, most PEKKA workers who did not complete elementary education have never attended training to increase their capacity and ability. Based on the graph in Figure 6, during 2019-2021, only around 4-12% of the PEKKA group of workers who did not complete the elementary school level had attended the training. In general, the low wage income of women in Indonesia is due to a lack of education and skills. Thus, the level of inter-gender wages increases every year (Hermawan et al., 2022).

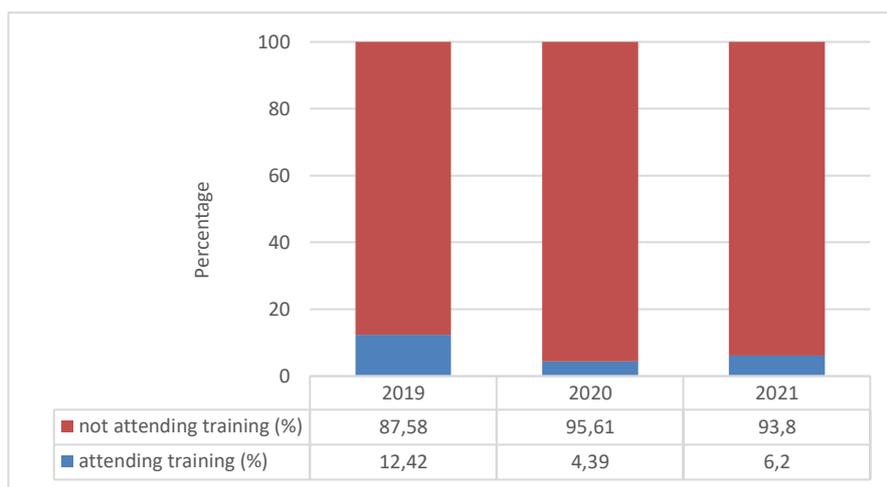


Figure 6. Percentage of PEKKA workers (not completing elementary school) who did not attend training

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

d. Work status/position

Several previous studies have revealed the phenomenon of low education among women who are responsible for their family's livelihood. Therefore, they work in the informal sector and have one source of income; the income earned is also low. This issue becomes a barrier to these working women's ability to improve their standard of living and meet their daily needs (Falah & Syafiq, 2014).

In the formal sector, because of women's more dexterous and obedient nature, women are the preferred choice for employment as labor; it rarely demands high wages. Thus, they can be paid cheaply. The phenomenon is named "feminization," which shows how women are particularly vulnerable to labor market policy. Generally, their salaries are lower than those of male workers, but sometimes they have longer working hours (Asrani & Amalia, 2016).

Based on Sakernas data processing for 2019-2021, it is known that around 38.93-42.57% of PEKKA do work with their business status in the informal sector, such as selling food or other businesses, without anyone's help. The COVID-19 pandemic has also transformed some PEKKA who work in the formal sector such as laborers/employees/employees into PEKKA who work with assistance or involve other people. Since 2020-2021, there has been an increase of around 19-20% of PEKKA seeking help from temporary workers/family workers/unpaid workers. On the other hand, the number of PEKKA workers/employees/employees has decreased by around 20-21% since 2020.

Table 3: Percentage of PEKKA workers by employment status

Work status	2019	2020	2021
Unassisted Entrepreneur	38.93	39.43	42.57
Entrepreneurs who are assisted by temporary workers/family workers/unpaid workers	11.43	31.31	30.68
Entrepreneurs who are assisted by permanent and paid workers	2.61	3.51	0
Labor/employee/staff	37.96	15.52	14.53
Farming Freelance	5.88	2.31	5.34
Non-Farming Freelance	1.63	1.69	2.61
Family worker/unpaid	1.55	6.23	4.27

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

e. Business sector and type of work

Based on the type of business field based on the Indonesian Standard Classification of Business Fields (KBLI), most PEKKA work in the wholesale and retail trade; Repairing and Maintenance of Cars and Motorcycles in the amount of 33.25% - 35.58%. Other business fields that PEKKA is mostly engaged in are the Processing Industry as well as Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries.

Table 4: PEKKA worker field (based on KBLI)

Business sector	2019	2020	2021
Wholesales, Retail, Car and Motor Repair	33.25	34.65	35.58
Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fishery	14.84	28.71	25.16
Manufacturing Industry	21.97	20.07	16.9
Accommodation and Food and Beverage	9.79	12.23	15.31
Educational Services	11.83	3.12	3.44
Other Sectors	8.33	1.22	3.62

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

Regarding the Indonesian Standard Classification of Occupations (KBJI), PEKKA in Sumedang Regency is dominated by those who work as service business personnel and sales personnel, with many between 11,668 – 15,452 people from 2019 to 2021.

These findings are similar to the pattern of female labor in developing countries working in the informal sector such as the agricultural and trade sectors. (International Labour Organization, 2003) conducted a study on eight cities in the third world. The results of the study suggest that those involved in the informal sector are generally poor, mostly of primary productive age, poorly educated, wages received below the minimum wage, and low business capital and the sector provides possibilities for vertical mobility.

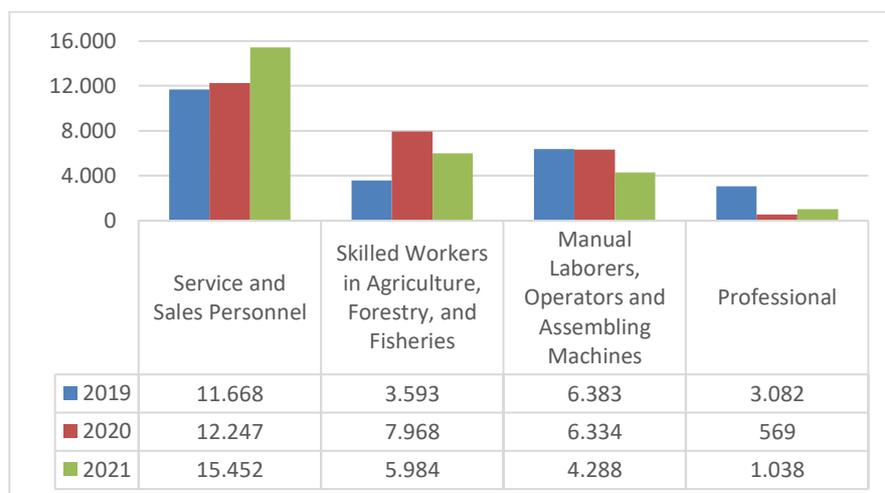


Figure 7. PEKKA type of work (based on KBJI)

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

f. The use of Information and Communication Technology

PEKKA in Sumedang Regency, amounting to more than 25,000 people. In 2019 only about 21% used the internet in their work. This number will decrease further in 2020 and 2021. with a percentage of around 15-16%. Most of the working PEKKA associations use the internet and information as communication tools only. Only about 30% of information technology users use it for income-generating activities. The low utilization of technology by PEKKA causes them to be one step behind in the speed of productivity.

The influence of technology and information on productivity has been revealed in research conducted by (Sri & Margareta, 2020). Meanwhile, research conducted by (Fourqoniah & Aransyah, 2021) shows that the use of information technology, especially on social media, is very helpful for women who are entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, PEKKA's low use of information technology needs to be a concern for the government and other businesses. In general, women should better understand the importance of information technology and entrepreneurship, especially in this era of disruption.

Table 5: The Use of Information and Communication Technology by PEKKA Worker

The Use of Information and Communication Technology	2019	2020	2021
Number of PEKKA employed	26,049	27,752	30,173
Internet user	5,381	4,062	4,812
Using Information Technology for Communication	5,381	3,214	4,812
Using Information and Communication Technology for Promotion	1,469	4,062	1,570
Using Information Technology for Sales through social media	2,120	1,089	1,822

Source: National Labor Force Survey 2019–2021

Conclusions

The role of women in public work is increasing, especially in households whose economy is getting squeezed. Women who act as heads of families are vulnerable during their activities to fulfill their household needs. However, the female head of household (PEKKA) is a strong figure. The characteristics of PEKKA in Sumedang Regency show that they continue to struggle amidst their limitations and weaknesses.

Based on the analysis results, the factors of PEKKA's low-income level in Sumedang Regency come from their characteristics. This issue is part of the problem of income inequality between men and women and leads to gender disparities in welfare.

PEKKA workers in Sumedang District are dominated by middle-aged and old-age women, with the last education at the elementary level. Ironically, the majority of PEKKA with low education generally do not receive skills training and are unable to utilize information technology to increase their productivity. PEKKA mainly works in the informal sector as entrepreneurs on a micro-scale, casual workers in the informal sector, and workers in the formal sector.

Considering its characteristics, the Women's Empowerment Program for PEKKA in Sumedang Regency needs to involve government affairs in Education, Health, Social Affairs, Manpower, Communication and Information, Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, and Agriculture and Fisheries. Through this strategy, the Women's Empowerment Program can contribute to achieving the regional head's vision, particularly the community's welfare.

Recommendation

Clearly, from the description of the characteristics above, the Women's Empowerment Program, including PEKKA, is not only intervened by the Women's Empowerment Affairs as stipulated in Law 23 of 2014. Strategies to increase income or reduce PEKKA's welfare inequality also need to involve other matters. In other words, the Women's Empowerment Program for PEKKA is cross-sectoral. The following matrix describes the mapping strategy of local government affairs to strengthen the Women's Empowerment Program in Sumedang Regency:

Table 6: PEKKA Empowerment Strategy in Sumedang Regency

Local Government Affairs	Strategies
Education	Capture PEKKA dropouts to participate in Non-Formal Education and obtain an equivalency diploma
Health	Provide health insurance for PEKKA, especially for the elderly
Social	Providing social assistance to PEKKA workers who are elderly
Labor	Competency improvement training tailored to the characteristics of PEKKA workers
Communication and Information	Provide facilities and training in the use of communication and information technology. Especially for PEKKA who are elderly, they need assistance in the use of information and communication technology
Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises	Empowering PEKKA with micro-scale businesses through data collection, partnership, licensing facilities, institutional strengthening
Agriculture and Fisheries	Assistance for production facilities and product processing facilities for PEKKA whose main focus is on the agricultural and fishery sectors

Intensive communication between Regional Apparatuses in the Women's Empowerment Program for PEKKA is required. A valid database is needed to make the program objectives effective. The Integrated Data on Social Welfare (DTKS) can use to implement this program. In addition, this program needs to be supported by religious and cultural leaders to build PEKKA's character by the religious and cultural norms adopted by the Sumedang community.

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