

EMPOWERING MICRO-ENTERPRISES THROUGH STRENGTHENING THE PEXITA COMMUNITY IN BEKASI CITY

Nurfadhisa¹, Wa Ode Zusnita Muizu², Siti Chaerani Djen Amar³

^{1, 2, 3}Master of Integrated Microfinance Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD), Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

¹nurfadhisa11001@mail.unpad.ac.id, ²waode.zusnita@unpad.ac.id,
³siti.c.djenamar@gmail.com

Abstract

Micro-enterprises face structural challenges such as limited business legality, low managerial capacity, and restricted market access. These issues indicate the absence of community-based mechanisms that consistently strengthen micro-entrepreneurs' capabilities, particularly in urban settings. This study aims to examine the role of the Skilled and Trusted Entrepreneur Expo (PEXITA) community in empowering micro-entrepreneurs and to formulate strategic directions for strengthening the community using SWOT analysis. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed to explore the dynamics of social learning, network-based support, and experiential marketing practices within the community. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations during expo activities, and documentation analysis. The findings show that PEXITA functions as a learning ecosystem that enhances members' technical skills, confidence, and market connections through hands-on involvement in expo events. Managerial capacity and business legality remain substantial challenges, accompanied by the community's dependence on core leaders. The SWOT analysis identifies strategic directions related to administrative strengthening, utilization of external networks, and improvement of organizational governance. This study reinforces the strategic relevance of community-based initiatives for micro-enterprise empowerment and offers a conceptual foundation for developing sustainable community-strengthening models in urban contexts.

Keywords: Micro-Enterprise Empowerment, Community Development, Social Capital, PEXITA, SWOT

Abstrak

Usaha mikro menghadapi hambatan struktural seperti keterbatasan legalitas, kapasitas manajerial yang rendah, dan akses pasar yang terbatas. Kondisi tersebut memperlihatkan belum tersedianya mekanisme pemberdayaan berbasis komunitas yang mampu memperkuat kapasitas usaha secara konsisten, khususnya pada konteks perkotaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menjelaskan peran komunitas Pengusaha Expo Terampil dan Amanah (PEXITA) dalam proses pemberdayaan pelaku usaha mikro serta merumuskan strategi penguatan komunitas melalui analisis SWOT. Pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus digunakan untuk menelaah dinamika pembelajaran sosial, dukungan jejaring, dan praktik pemasaran berbasis pengalaman yang berkembang dalam komunitas. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi kegiatan expo, dan analisis dokumentasi komunitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa PEXITA berfungsi sebagai ekosistem pembelajaran yang memperkuat keterampilan teknis, kepercayaan diri, dan koneksi pasar anggota melalui praktik langsung di kegiatan expo. Kapasitas manajerial dan legalitas usaha tetap menjadi kendala utama, disertai ketergantungan komunitas pada pengurus inti. Analisis SWOT menghasilkan strategi penguatan yang mencakup peningkatan kapasitas administratif, pemanfaatan jejaring eksternal, dan penguatan tata kelola komunitas. Penelitian ini menegaskan peran strategis komunitas dalam pemberdayaan usaha mikro serta memberikan landasan untuk penyusunan model penguatan komunitas di wilayah.

Kata kunci: Pemberdayaan Usaha Mikro, Komunitas, Modal Sosial, PEXITA, SWOT



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INTRODUCTION

Micro-enterprises play a significant role in the Indonesian economy, absorbing a large workforce and supporting household economic activity. MSMEs contribute over 60 percent to Gross Domestic Product and employ over 97 percent of the national workforce, although most micro-enterprises still face legal barriers, low managerial capacity, and limited access to financing.¹ The use of aggregate MSME data remains relevant because micro-enterprises comprise approximately 98–99 percent of all MSME units in Indonesia.²

Bekasi City, as an urban area, is showing growth in the trade and services sectors, but micro-entrepreneurs still face challenges such as limited legal status, competition from home-made products, and stringent food safety standards. Research shows that micro-entrepreneurs in urban areas often struggle with marketing, managerial literacy, and access to sustainable development.³ Uneven institutional support means that many business actors are unable to optimally utilize local economic opportunities.⁴

Micro-entrepreneur communities have emerged as an alternative for capacity building through social learning spaces, experience exchange, and network expansion. Studies on community-based innovation confirm that organized communities can increase business resilience through collaboration, shared ownership, and distribution channels that are more adaptive to market dynamics.⁵ The Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) approach shows that the community acts as a center for learning and organizing the economic resources of its members.⁶

PEXITA is a micro-entrepreneur community in Bekasi City that focuses on organizing expos, providing legal assistance, and providing business training. The expo is a core activity, providing hands-on experience in product marketing, display design, and customer interaction.

¹ Indonesia Investments, “Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia: Backbone of the Economy,” 2023, <https://www.indonesia-investments.com>.

² Kementerian Koperasi dan UKM, *Statistik UMKM 2019* (Kemenkop UKM, 2020).

³ M. P. Kandis et al., “Community Empowerment of MSME Owners by the Office of Cooperatives and MSMEs in Palembang City,” *Journal La Bisecom* 5, no. 1 (2024): 1–10.

⁴ T. Suharyanto, “Optimizing the Role of MSMEs in Regional Economic Growth: Challenges and Opportunities,” *Journal of Economics, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainability Studies* 3, no. 2 (2024): 45–55.

⁵ N. Qosidah, “The Role of Community-Based Business Model Innovation in Strengthening Economic Resilience After Global Crises,” *Jurnal Manajemen Sosial Ekonomi (Dinamika)* 5, no. 2 (2025): 242–53.

⁶ H. Hafiluddin et al., “Community-Based Economic Development in Indonesia: A Model for Strengthening Local Enterprises,” *Journal of Development Practice* 9, no. 2 (2014): 77–89.

The administrators' network with shopping centers, training institutions, and other communities provides opportunities for members to increase their capacity.⁷

This research was conducted to address the limitations of studies that specifically examine the role of expo-based communities in empowering micro-entrepreneurs in urban areas. The research focused on explaining the empowerment mechanisms within the PEXITA community and formulating community strengthening strategies through a SWOT analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Micro Business Empowerment

Empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to manage their potential, make independent decisions, and sustainably improve well-being. Gunanjar explained that empowerment aims to raise awareness and internal strength in communities to make changes that benefit themselves and their environment.⁸ Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 7 of 2007 emphasizes that empowerment is a development strategy that encourages the realization of capabilities and independence through strengthening capacity, providing opportunities, and increasing participation.⁹ Chambers explains that empowerment includes strengthening the position of weak groups in the social structure, expanding access to resources, and reducing vulnerability.¹⁰ Suharto and Fahrudin emphasized that the empowerment process focuses on providing support, facilities, and participation space so that communities are able to determine the actions that best suit their own needs.¹¹

Micro-enterprises differ from larger businesses. Most micro-enterprises face limited capital, low administrative literacy, simple management, varying technical skills, and reliance on social networks. Imaniah and Inan describe how these limitations impact their competitiveness and adaptability to market changes.¹² Maksum, Rahayu, and Kusumawardhani emphasized that the empowerment process for micro-entrepreneurs requires a contextual approach, emphasizing improving production skills, marketing literacy, financial recording, and access to business legality.¹³ Afriansyah, Prasetyo, and Sari stated that empowerment is effective when business

⁷Primary data from PEXITA community research: expo observations, activity documentation, and interviews with administrators (Bekasi, 2024).

⁸ A. Gunanjar, *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Kerangka Konseptual Pembangunan Sosial* (LP3ES, 1996).

⁹Ministry of Home Affairs, Minister of Home Affairs Regulation no. 7 of 2007 concerning Community Empowerment Cadres.

¹⁰ R. Chambers, *Poverty and Livelihoods: Whose Reality Counts?* (IDS, 1995).

¹¹ E. Suharto, *Membangun Masyarakat Memberdayakan Rakyat* (Refika Aditama, 2005).

¹² N. Imaniah, "Pemberdayaan Perempuan Melalui Komunitas UMKM," *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Sosial* 7, no. 1 (2024): 66–78.

¹³ I. R. Maksum et al., "UMKM Dan Pengembangan Komunitas," *Jurnal Inovasi Ekonomi* 5, no. 1 (2020).

actors obtain increased individual capacity and social environmental support that facilitates a continuous learning process.¹⁴

Thus, micro-enterprise empowerment is identified as a systematic process to increase the technical, managerial, and adaptive capacity of business actors through the provision of training, mentoring, access to information, and strengthening networks. This process enables micro-enterprises to play a more competitive role, enhance business sustainability, and strengthen their economic position in an increasingly dynamic environment.

Community-Based Economic Development(CBED)

The CBED approach positions communities as key actors in the process of strengthening economic capacity. Hafiluddin, Suryadi, and Saleh explain that CBED focuses on leveraging local potential, strengthening participation, and collaborating among members to collectively improve economic well-being.¹⁵ This approach sees the community not only as a beneficiary, but as the main driver in identifying needs, formulating strategies, and solving problems together.

CBED emphasizes three main components: first, increasing individual capacity through training and social learning; second, strengthening community institutions to manage resources, facilitate coordination, and ensure the sustainability of activities; and third, leveraging external networks to gain market access, technical support, and additional resources. These three components form a framework that enables communities to function as relevant learning spaces and collaborative platforms for micro-entrepreneurs.

In its implementation, CBED emphasizes a participatory approach that provides space for members to be involved in the planning and implementation of activities. This approach facilitates knowledge transfer, strengthens social relations, and increases adaptability to market dynamics. The CBED model also aligns with the characteristics of micro-enterprises, which rely on informal networks, practical experience, and social support from the surrounding environment. Research shows that community-based empowerment is more effective when the community has a responsive structure, open leadership, and mechanisms that enable members to learn from collective experiences.¹⁶

The relevance of CBED in the context of micro-entrepreneurs lies in its ability to integrate individual potential and community capacity within a mutually reinforcing system. Entrepreneurs involved in CBED-based communities generally experience improved business understanding,

¹⁴ E. Afriansyah et al., *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Komunitas* (Kencana, 2023).

¹⁵ Hafiluddin et al., "Community-Based Economic Development in Indonesia: A Model for Strengthening Local Enterprises."

¹⁶ M. W. Fortunato and T. Alter, "Community Entrepreneurship Development: An Introductory Framework," *Journal of the Community Development Society* 46, no. 5 (2015).

broader market access, and social support that strengthens their resilience. This approach provides an important foundation for analyzing empowerment within the PEXITA community, which develops through informal learning, member solidarity, and self-help marketing networks.

The Role of Communities in Strengthening Business Capacity

Communities play a crucial role in strengthening the capacity of micro-entrepreneurs because they can provide social support, learning spaces, and networks not always available through formal institutions. Susanti emphasized that communities serve as a forum for interaction, enabling the exchange of experiences, learning, and collaboration among members.¹⁷In the context of micro-enterprises facing limitations in capital, market access, and managerial capabilities, the existence of a community is a supporting factor in increasing the courage and adaptability of business actors.¹⁸

The role of communities can be understood through several key dimensions. First, the learning dynamic, which is the process of sharing information, skills, and experiences that occurs informally and through routine community activities. Susanti explained that this collective learning accelerates the development of technical skills and marketing insights for micro-entrepreneurs.¹⁹Second, relational structure, namely relationships based on trust and solidarity between members that form moral support, situational assistance, and access to business opportunities.²⁰

Third, innovative interaction, which is the community's ability to encourage members to generate new ideas, adapt products, or modify marketing strategies. This process often arises from informal discussions, customer observations, or collaboration between business actors.²¹Fourth, a shared goal, namely the collective orientation of members to increase business capacity and maintain community sustainability. This shared goal strengthens members' commitment to participation and resource sharing.²²

Fifth, development accelerators, which provide access to training, legal assistance, market information, and referrals to business opportunities. This support is crucial for micro-entrepreneurs who need administrative assistance and managerial capacity building.²³Sixth, expanding market access, particularly through expos, bazaars, and partnerships with various

¹⁷ A. Susanti, "Peran Komunitas Dalam Pemberdayaan UMKM" (Universitas Padjadjaran, 2018).

¹⁸ Imaniah, "Pemberdayaan Perempuan Melalui Komunitas UMKM."

¹⁹ Susanti, "Peran Komunitas Dalam Pemberdayaan UMKM."

²⁰ Imaniah, "Pemberdayaan Perempuan Melalui Komunitas UMKM."

²¹ Susanti, "Peran Komunitas Dalam Pemberdayaan UMKM."

²² Susanti, "Peran Komunitas Dalam Pemberdayaan UMKM."

²³ U. M. S. Maksum, *Bimbingan Lengkap Haji Dan Umrah* (Media Pressindo, 2013); Afriansyah et al., *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Komunitas*.

institutions. Community networks have been proven to increase business visibility and expand marketing reach.²⁴

Through these six dimensions, communities make a significant contribution to strengthening the capacity of micro-entrepreneurs across technical, managerial, and psychosocial aspects. Communities serve as a constantly evolving learning space, a platform for collaboration, and a mechanism for strengthening networks, helping entrepreneurs navigate increasingly competitive market dynamics.²⁵

Muamalah Values and Business Ethics

Muamalah in Islamic economics refers to the rules governing interpersonal relationships in social and economic activities, including the procedures for acquiring, managing, and developing wealth. Utami and Nofrianto explain that muamalah encompasses the principles of honesty, willingness, justice, and prohibitions against practices that harm others, such as usury and gharar.²⁶ These principles form an ethical framework for transactions that demands the realization of mutually beneficial agreements, transparency of information, and a balance of rights and obligations of the parties.

The scope of muamalah also encompasses the requirements for a valid contract, transparency, the absence of coercion, and clarity of the object of the transaction. This ethical aspect places economic activity within a moral responsibility, ensuring that business actors are oriented not only toward financial gain but also toward justice and social welfare. Fiqh muamalah literature emphasizes that the principles of openness, trustworthiness, and prudence are fundamental to creating healthy and sustainable economic relationships.²⁷

SWOT Analysis in Community Empowerment

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis is used to identify internal and external factors that influence a group or organization's strategic position. Benzaghta et al. explain that SWOT is an analytical tool that helps organize qualitative information into four main categories, facilitating strategy development.²⁸ This approach is widely used in management, education, marketing, and the social sector, including micro-enterprise and community development.

²⁴ Susanti, "Peran Komunitas Dalam Pemberdayaan UMKM."

²⁵ Hafiluddin et al., "Community-Based Economic Development in Indonesia: A Model for Strengthening Local Enterprises."

²⁶ S. A. Utami and N. Nofrianto, *Pengantar Ekonomi Islam* (Bank Indonesia & KNEKS, 2020).

²⁷ Utami and Nofrianto, *Pengantar Ekonomi Islam*.

²⁸ M. A. Benzaghta et al., "SWOT Analysis Applications: An Integrative Literature Review," *Journal of Global Business Insights* 6, no. 1 (2021): 55–73.

In the context of community empowerment, a SWOT analysis serves to map a community's internal capacity and assess opportunities and threats from the external environment. Namugenyi, Nimmagadda, and Reiners emphasize that SWOT is relevant for community-based organizations because it can systematically combine primary and secondary data to formulate realistic and locally contextualized strategies.²⁹ This instrument helps communities understand strengths that can be optimized, weaknesses that need to be improved, opportunities that can be exploited, and threats that need to be anticipated.

Karadzhov added that modern SWOT does not only stop at identifying the four components, but also needs to be followed by the preparation of a TOWS strategy to produce more operational alternative actions.³⁰ This approach allows communities to formulate SO, WO, ST, and WT strategies in a more targeted manner. Strengthening the analysis through qualitative weighting and participatory validation can improve the accuracy of the findings, especially in small communities with informal structures.

In empowering micro-entrepreneurs, SWOT analysis serves as a tool to understand the extent to which a community is able to support its members' capacity building. Hafiluddin, Suryadi, and Saleh explain that community-based empowerment requires mapping organizational strengths, leadership effectiveness, collaboration capabilities, and network quality.³¹ A SWOT analysis helps communities systematically evaluate these factors so that strengthening strategies can be formulated based on actual conditions. This approach is relevant for assessing a community's readiness to provide mentoring, market access, and training for micro-entrepreneurs.

Thus, a SWOT analysis is a crucial tool in supporting the community strengthening process because it bridges field findings with strategic planning. Member involvement in the SWOT assessment process also strengthens a sense of community ownership and improves the quality of collective decisions.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study employed a qualitative, descriptive approach to understand the experiences of micro-entrepreneurs within the PEXITA community in depth. This approach allows for exploration of the meanings, interactions, and social dynamics that emerge during the empowerment process, particularly regarding the patterns of support and learning that occur among its members. A case study design was applied to examine PEXITA as a social unit with

²⁹ C. Namugenyi et al., "Design of a SWOT Analysis Model and Its Integration with a Decision-Making Process," 159 (2019): 1145–54.

³⁰ D. Karadzhov, "Modernizing SWOT for Organizational Strategy: A Contemporary Review," *Strategic Management Journal* 46, no. 1 (2025): 88–104.

³¹ Hafiluddin et al., "Community-Based Economic Development in Indonesia: A Model for Strengthening Local Enterprises."

routine activities, informal structures, and collaborative practices that develop based on the collective experiences of its members.

The research was conducted in Bekasi City during expo activities, training, and community member meetings. Data collection took place from January to November 2024 and included a series of informant identification, in-depth interviews, and participant observation. Eight informants were purposively selected, consisting of community members and administrators who actively participated in the expo, legal assistance, and training activities.

Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore members' experiences regarding the learning process, forms of community support, and business obstacles they faced. Direct observations were conducted during the expo to examine booth layout, collaboration patterns among members, and member responses to field dynamics. Documentation studies included training materials, community communication archives, activity posters, and PEXITA social media posts, which provided information on the activity structure, mentoring programs, and the community's history of activities.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic coding, which included data reduction, category grouping, and the development of themes representing empowerment patterns within the community. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, comparison of information between informants, and cross-checking interpretations with key informants to ensure the appropriateness of meaning and consistency of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Learning Dynamics within the Community

Research findings indicate that the learning process within PEXITA occurs through direct interaction at expos, member meetings, and informal communication within community groups. Learning occurs through observing other members' practices, spontaneous discussions, and direct experience when dealing with customers. One informant said, "At expos, I learn a lot from watching my friends. From the way they chat with customers to the way they organize their merchandise."

Experiential learning is the primary mechanism because most members lack access to formal training. Members emulate their peers' marketing strategies, try more attractive product display techniques, and adapt their communication methods with customers based on direct feedback from the expo environment. Another informant explained, "Usually, if I'm confused about a display, I ask a friend who has attended several expos."

Learning also increases the courage to interact. Members who were initially hesitant to offer products began to gain confidence after attending several expos. One respondent stated, "At first I felt self-conscious, but over time I gained the courage to speak up and offer products." This finding demonstrates that capacity building is not only technical but also related to the courage to make decisions.

Peer learning mechanisms are dominant. Information on raw material prices, menu variations, quick-selling strategies, and packaging options is frequently shared through community communication groups. This pattern aligns with the concept of communities of practice, which views learning as a participatory, multi-layered, and iterative process.

Relational Support and Collective Trust

Findings show that PEXITA serves as a social support space that strengthens members' psychological resilience and adaptability. Relationships between members are built on trust and solidarity, reflected in their willingness to provide assistance when facing business challenges. One informant stated, "If I'm confused about pricing or have a problem with a customer, I usually ask a friend first and get a solution."

Emotional support emerges through brief discussions during expo preparations or sales evaluations. Members motivate each other, especially when facing low sales or customer pressure. Findings indicate that some members feel more confident running their businesses after joining the community because it provides a place to ask questions and share experiences. Social capital in the form of trust, mutual support, and a sense of security strengthens members' ability to adapt to market dynamics and business risks.

Innovation and Market Access Expansion

The expo serves as a space for innovation, allowing members to directly understand consumer needs. Customer feedback regarding product taste, packaging, color, and price informs members' modifications. One member said, "After attending two expos, I changed the packaging because many said it wasn't attractive enough."

Community networks with shopping centers provide marketing access that individual members wouldn't have. Opportunities to occupy booths in strategic locations enable members to reach a wider consumer segment. Findings also indicate that some members were able to expand their market through post-expo orders, both via WhatsApp and social media.

Innovations also emerged in the form of bundling, product variants, and stock adjustments based on mall traffic patterns. Members who previously only sold one type of product began experimenting with multiple variants after observing their peers' sales patterns.

Enhancement of Technical Capacity of Micro-Entrepreneurs

Members' technical skills improved in booth layout, customer service, and inventory management. Experience setting up displays, trying out hands-on promotional techniques, and calculating daily inventory requirements helped members understand sales patterns realistically. One informant said, "After a few expos, I know how much to bring and how to organize my stand."

The Expo provided a hands-on environment that accelerated the process of developing skills that typically require formal training. Members improved how they greeted customers, conducted product demonstrations, and structured service flows to avoid long lines. These skill changes were particularly significant for new members who had never previously participated in direct marketing activities.

Managerial and Administrative Challenges

Business owners still face managerial challenges. Financial record-keeping isn't consistent, and some members don't even have basic reports on capital and profits. One informant stated, "There's no record of incoming and outgoing funds, so I don't know for sure whether I'm making a profit or a loss."

Business planning is also unstructured. Decisions regarding production, raw material procurement, and pricing are often based on intuition. This situation hinders members' ability to analyze costs and develop long-term business development strategies.

Business legality is a major challenge. Many members lack a Business License (NIB), Business License (PIRT), or halal certification. Informants reported that the legality process is confusing and requires technical assistance. Community support for legal aspects has not been established through a standard mechanism, so some members have not received the guidance they need.

Institutional Capacity and Governance Issues

PEXITA has a core structure responsible for coordinating expos and member communications. The continuity of community activities is highly dependent on the core administrators, which can lead to disruptions when the administrators have limited time. One informant explained, "If the administrators are busy, activities often stop."

Dependence on specific individuals indicates the need for strengthened organizational governance. Task allocation, activity documentation, and monitoring mechanisms are not functioning optimally. This situation hinders program sustainability, especially when the community wants to expand activities or increase its membership.

PEXITA serves as a social learning space, marketing network, and source of emotional support, strengthening the resilience of its members' businesses. The dynamic interactions within the expo, community meetings, and informal communication create a learning environment that allows members to develop technical skills through hands-on practice. Display arrangements, customer service, promotional strategies, and inventory management develop through collective learning and mentoring among members. Skill improvements emerge gradually as members gain repeated experience and observe more experienced colleagues. Technical capacity is the aspect that experiences the most significant improvement due to the expo's direct exposure to consumer behavior and sales dynamics.

Managerial capacity and business legality remain major obstacles for most members. Financial record-keeping is inconsistent, cost analysis is not systematic, and business planning is still intuitive. The need for administrative assistance is evident when members face legal requirements such as NIB (National Business License), PIRT (Food Product Registration Certificate), and food certification, particularly as the processes are considered complex and require technical guidance. These limitations reflect the gap between rapidly developing technical skills and stagnant managerial capacity, thus hindering business sustainability.

PEXITA's institutional structure demonstrates the crucial role of core administrators as the primary drivers of community programs. Dependence on specific individuals creates vulnerabilities, as activities can be halted when administrators have limited time or resources. Coordination mechanisms, task allocation, and program documentation have not been systematically established, leaving the community without a strong institutional foundation for sustainable program implementation. This situation demonstrates the urgent need to strengthen organizational governance to ensure stable community development and independence from specific figures.

Market access has shown positive developments through expos and administrators' networking with shopping centers. Members gain marketing opportunities unattainable individually, while also gaining firsthand insight into consumer preferences and purchasing patterns. This market expansion plays a significant role in increasing the visibility of members' products and driving innovation in packaging, product variety, and communication strategies. However, these opportunities are also accompanied by external barriers such as high expos costs, competition from large-scale home-made products, and increasingly stringent food safety standards, making the community's capacity to adapt a key factor in sustainability.

The overall findings demonstrate that PEXITA has strong potential as a platform for empowering micro-enterprises, particularly through experiential learning and social support generated through interactions among its members. While technical capacity has developed

significantly, managerial and legal capacity still require systematic intervention. Community institutions require strengthening to ensure consistent and adaptive empowerment programs address external dynamics. These findings form the basis for developing a strengthening strategy through a SWOT analysis that integrates internal strengths and external opportunities while simultaneously addressing the weaknesses and threats facing the community.

SWOT Analysis in Community Empowerment

A SWOT analysis was used to map the strategic conditions of the PEXITA community by identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the micro-enterprise empowerment process. This mapping was based on field findings regarding social learning dynamics, technical capacity, managerial challenges, institutional support, and market conditions faced by members. This analysis allows for an assessment of the community's internal structure and its alignment with external opportunities available in the urban micro-enterprise environment.

The community's strength stems from member solidarity, intensive experiential learning, and marketing networks through expos, which provide strategic advantages for increasing technical capacity. Key weaknesses include financial record-keeping, business legality, and an unsystematic institutional structure. External opportunities, such as support from training institutions, government programs, and increasing market demand, provide opportunities for members to expand their marketing access. Threats stem from high expos costs, strict food regulations, and broader competition from home-made products.

A SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the extent to which community strengths can be mobilized to capitalize on opportunities, how weaknesses can be minimized, and what strategies are needed to anticipate external threats. This approach is relevant to the CBED perspective, which emphasizes the importance of community collaboration, strengthening individual capacity, and leveraging external networks as a basis for strategic decision-making. The following matrix summarizes the SWOT factors for the PEXITA community.

	<i>Strengths(S)</i> S1. High solidarity and trust between members. S2. Regular Expo as a learning and marketing tool. S3. Informal support in the form of technical guidance and promotion. S4. Networking of administrators with various external institutions.	<i>Weaknesses(W)</i> W1. High dependence on core management. W2. Managerial capacity and financial recording are still low. W3. Legal support is not yet systematic. W4. Product quality is not yet even.
<i>Opportunities(O)</i> O1. Collaboration with shopping centers. O2. Access to MSME training from external institutions. O3. The trend of demand for home products is increasing. O4. Government support for MSMEs.	SO Strategy (Maximizing strengths to take advantage of opportunities) SO1. Increase member participation in the expo to leverage marketing networks. SO2. Strengthen partnerships with shopping centers, training institutions, and other business communities.	WO Strategy (Reducing weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities) WO1. Organize structured training on legality, financial record keeping, and business management through external collaboration. WO2. Optimize access to free or subsidized training programs from the government/MSME support institutions.
<i>Threats(T)</i> T1. Expo costs are high and fluctuating. T2. Large-scale home product competition. T3. Food safety regulations are becoming stricter. T4. Market uncertainty and consumer purchasing power.	ST Strategy (Using strengths to overcome threats) ST1. Improve product quality through collaborative mentoring and sharing of good practices. ST2. Develop a mechanism for sharing raw materials/equipment to reduce production costs.	WT Strategy (Minimizing weaknesses and avoiding threats) WT1. Develop a more systematic institutional structure to reduce dependence on core management. WT2. Encourage marketing diversification (online, WhatsApp business, community catalogs) to reduce reliance on high-cost expos.

Research findings show that the learning dynamics in PEXITA occur through social mechanisms consistent with the concept of communities of practice. The community serves as an arena for exchanging experiences, developing competencies, and practicing learning, which emerges through routine interactions at the expo and through daily communication among its members. Social capital, in the form of trust, solidarity, and a willingness to share experiences, serves as the foundation that enables this process to run effectively. This condition aligns with literature confirming that communities can accelerate knowledge transfer, especially when learning takes place in an experiential context and with strong social relationships.

The SWOT mapping shows that technical capacity and social support are relatively strong, while managerial capacity and business legality remain major constraints. Members'

difficulties in financial record-keeping, stock management, and understanding legal requirements underscore the need for more structured administrative intervention. Literature on micro-enterprise empowerment in urban contexts places managerial capacity as a crucial prerequisite for business sustainability and competitiveness, thus strengthening the argument that empowerment requires not only improved technical skills but also strengthened administration and regulations. The legality gap indicates that the empowerment process has not reached members equally.

Expo activities significantly contribute to improving members' marketing capabilities. Direct exposure to customers provides members with a platform to learn product design, communication, and promotional strategies in real-world settings. The expo's role aligns with the CBED approach, which emphasizes strengthening individual capacity through shared experiences, collaboration, and external networking. Experiential learning enhances members' creativity, adaptability, and courage in taking business risks.

Mapping external factors shows that the community faces pressures such as high expo costs, strict food safety regulations, and broader competition from home-made products. These pressures require the community to develop adaptive strategies to ensure the sustainability of its activities. Dependence on core management reinforces the urgency of institutional strengthening. A more systematic organizational structure is needed to support equal roles, program sustainability, and optimize community resources.

The SWOT analysis yielded relevant strategies for community empowerment, ranging from increasing administrative capacity, leveraging external networks, to diversifying marketing channels to reduce dependence on expos. These strategies demonstrate that the empowerment process has been ongoing, but still requires organizational strengthening and individual capacity building to make the community more resilient to market dynamics. This discussion confirms that PEXITA has great potential as a community-based empowerment model in an urban context, especially when institutional and administrative systems are systematically strengthened.

CONCLUSION

Research shows that PEXITA functions as a learning ecosystem that strengthens the technical skills, marketing networks, and self-confidence of micro-entrepreneurs. Expo activities provide hands-on experience in product marketing, booth design, and customer service, while interactions among members foster emotional support that enhances their ability to navigate business risks. Social capital, in the form of trust, solidarity, and a willingness to share experiences, serves as a key foundation for empowerment within the community.

The community's weaknesses are evident in its business legality and its members' low managerial capacity. Business owners require administrative assistance regarding financial record-

keeping, business planning, and compliance with food safety standards. The institutional structure, which still relies on core management, requires organizational strengthening to ensure more systematic and sustainable community programs. A SWOT analysis identified the need for a strengthening strategy that includes increasing member capacity, leveraging external networks, and improving community governance.

The research conclusions emphasize the strategic role of communities as learning and collaboration spaces for micro-entrepreneurs. These findings further strengthen our understanding of community-based empowerment from a CBED perspective. The research provides a conceptual and empirical basis for developing community empowerment models in urban areas facing increasingly complex market dynamics and regulatory demands.

Research Implications

The research provides practical implications for the PEXITA community in strengthening the capacity of micro-entrepreneurs through administrative enhancement, managerial skills, and utilization of external networks. Assistance with business legality, product quality enhancement, and improved community governance emerged as strategic needs for more structured and sustainable empowerment activities. The theoretical implications of the research emphasize the role of social capital as a primary foundation for community empowerment and confirm the relevance of the CBED approach in the context of urban micro-enterprises, particularly through experiential learning mechanisms within the expo.

Limitations

The research is limited by its scope, covering only one community, so the findings do not represent the diversity of micro-enterprise empowerment practices in other regions. The variety of community activities outside the expo has not been fully documented, so detailed learning dynamics in non-expo activities are limited.

Suggestion

PEXITA needs to strengthen its institutional structure, improve legal assistance, and expand members' access to managerial and marketing training to ensure a more consistent empowerment process. Developing alternative marketing channels outside the expo is also necessary to reduce reliance on high participation fees. Future research is recommended to expand the community coverage, extend the observation period, and consider quantitative or mixed-methods approaches to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the community's influence on micro-enterprise empowerment.

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