

Sociopreneurship Exhibition: Driving Inclusivity & Empowering Social Entrepreneurs Through Events

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive and diverse communities are essential for sustainable progress. By supporting individuals with disabilities through community-based initiatives, we can create a more equitable society. Social entrepreneurship offers a powerful way to empower people with disabilities and raise awareness about social and economic diversity. The Sociopreneurship Exhibition at Taman Bungkul Surabaya was a successful example of this. It brought together people with disabilities, entrepreneurs, and the community to showcase inclusive business practices. The event raised awareness about social inclusion, connected people with disabilities and entrepreneurs, and encouraged public participation in inclusive economic activities. Through interactive activities, the exhibition helped the public understand the importance of inclusivity and encouraged collaboration between entrepreneurs and people with disabilities. This not only promoted businesses but also emphasized the significance of social inclusion in economic and social life. The exhibition's objective was to foster direct interaction between entrepreneurs and the community and to promote a deeper understanding of inclusivity and diversity.

Keywords: Sociopreneurship, Inclusivity, Event

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusivity and diversity in social environments are increasingly important issues, especially in the context of sustainable community development. Surabaya, as one of Indonesia's major cities, faces challenges in raising public awareness about inclusivity, particularly in providing space for marginalized groups such as people with disabilities. According to data from the East Java Province's E-Disability application, there are 17.401 people with disabilities in November 2023, with a significant portion residing in urban areas like Surabaya. Despite these numbers, their access to and involvement in economic and social activities remains relatively limited.

Lack of inclusivity in society can lead to various harmful social impacts, both for individuals and society. Individuals who are perceived as different or have disabilities often become targets of discrimination and stigma. This can lead to low self-esteem, social isolation, and psychological stress. Moreover, a lack of inclusivity widens the social gap between the majority and minority groups. Minority groups tend to have limited access to resources, opportunities, and participation in decision-making. The discrimination and injustice caused by a lack of inclusivity can trigger social conflict, both on a small and large scale. This conflict can damage relationships between groups and disrupt social stability.

The importance of empowering people with disabilities through various social initiatives has been recognized by many. One way to promote inclusivity is by providing media that allows them to participate directly in economic activities (Rahmawati et al., 2023). Social entrepreneurship can be an effective tool for empowering individuals with disabilities and raising public awareness about social and economic diversity. Social entrepreneurship events can create a positive attendee experience through various elements: Pre-event, in-event, and post-event factors contribute to overall satisfaction. At the event, entertainment, product variety, booth design, and staff interactions had a notable impact on attendees' emotional and cognitive responses (Evanthi & Azhar, 2023). The concept of social entrepreneurship, which is entrepreneurship focused on solving social problems, can be a strategic solution for increasing the participation of people with disabilities, especially in exhibitions that provide opportunities to introduce inclusive products and services. Social entrepreneurship exhibitions also serve as a means of raising public awareness of the importance of social and economic diversity (Azizah et al., 2020).

This community service activity was carried out through the organization of a social entrepreneurship exhibition at Taman Bungkul Surabaya, one of the city's central public spaces. The exhibition involved various social entrepreneurs, not only from the general community but also from people with disabilities and other marginalized groups. The aim of this activity was to foster direct interaction between entrepreneurs and the wider community, and to provide a deeper understanding of the importance of inclusivity and diversity in social and economic life.

METHOD

This community service activity utilized event marketing through the organization of a social entrepreneurship exhibition, designed as a strategy to raise public

awareness and strengthen inclusivity and diversity in Surabaya. This method combined the concept of social entrepreneurship as a platform that allows the public to interact with social entrepreneurs, thus fostering a broader understanding of the importance of the involvement of various social groups in the economy and social activities. In the context of this community service, the social entrepreneurship exhibition serves as a direct marketing medium to introduce the values of inclusivity and diversity through products, services, and interactions between exhibitors and the public.

This activity was conducted at Taman Bungkul, Surabaya, in collaboration with four partners: Kedaibilitas, Namira Ecoprint, Tiara Handycraft, and the Surabaya Kampung Kue Community. The four partners participating in this exhibition were chosen through a rigorous selection process involving a series of MBKM PMM activities at Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur. These partners were carefully selected based on their alignment with the Sociopreneurship theme, which emphasizes fostering a creative economy and promoting inclusivity within the community. In the other hand, the reason for choosing this location is that Taman Bungkul is a central area of Surabaya, which aligns with the service's objective of raising public awareness about inclusivity and diversity. This strategic location allows researchers to easily assess the success of the social entrepreneurship exhibition. To ensure the successful implementation of this community service activity, several steps were taken, including:

Table 1. Table of activities flow for the social entrepreneurship exhibition

No	Activities Flow	
	Flow Step	Explanation
1	Identification of Needs and Stakeholders	Formulating specific needs and collaboration opportunities to enhance inclusivity through exhibitions.
2	Social Entrepreneurship Exhibition Planning	At this stage, the event structure is meticulously planned, encompassing venue selection, activity flow, and the involvement of social entrepreneurs representing diverse social backgrounds.
3	Exhibition Implementation and Interactive Media	The exhibition serves as a direct platform for interaction between the public and social entrepreneurs who offer various inclusive products or services.
4	Community Participation and Impact Monitoring	The exhibition encourages active involvement from the public, inviting them to participate in a wide range of activities (Puspasari, 2023)
5	Program Evaluation and Improvement	This evaluation will not only focus on the technical success of the event but also on its social impact.

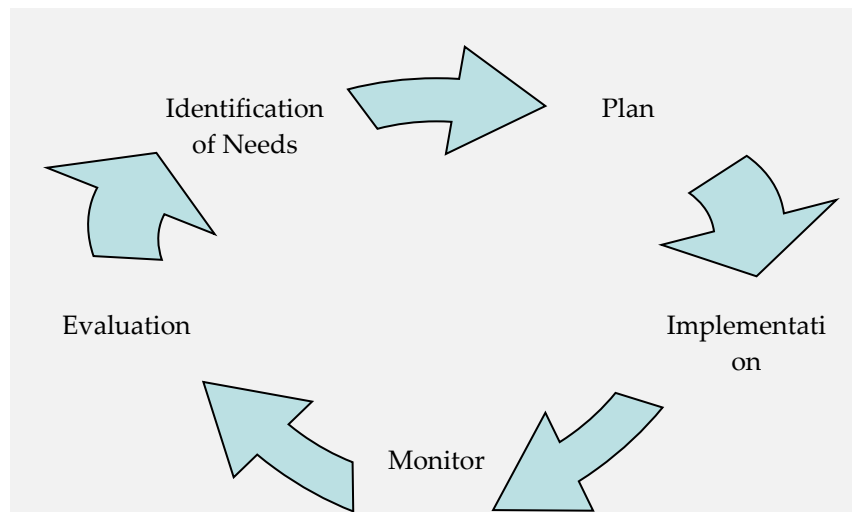


Figure 1. Activity Flow Diagram - Social Entrepreneurship Exhibition

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service program is implemented through a sociopreneurship exhibition at Taman Bungkul, Surabaya with the aim of raising public awareness about inclusivity and diversity in Surabaya. The flow of activities for this exhibition is as follows:

1. Need Identification

Before the exhibition, the initial step was to find partners to join the event (Pudjowati et al., 2022). At this stage, we also formulated the specific needs required by partners to achieve better inclusivity. In this phase, the sociopreneurship exhibition serves as a platform to provide a space for interaction between the public, people with disabilities, and entrepreneurs. One important initial step was to identify the needs of participants, such as businesses that require facilities and infrastructure to introduce their products and services (Astuti, 2022). By designing this collaboration, not only will the exhibition's success in terms of inclusivity be increased, but it will also strengthen the relationship between businesses and the community and promote public awareness of the importance of social inclusion in economic and social activities.



Figure 2. Exhibition Preparation Activity

2. Social Entrepreneurship Exhibition Planning

At this stage, the focus is on developing a well-structured and comprehensive event structure. This process begins with selecting a strategic and accessible location for all, including people with disabilities. The exhibition venue should consider factors such as access to public transportation, disability-friendly facilities like dedicated pathways, and spaces that facilitate interaction between businesses and visitors. Additionally, the chosen location should reflect the spirit of inclusivity by providing open spaces for various activities involving social diversity.

The chosen location is Taman Bungkul, Surabaya. This is because it strongly supports the designed event flow, considering the inclusive interaction between social entrepreneurs and visitors. Starting from the opening session involving partners in the field of social inclusion, to the exhibition and product sales interaction sessions, all activities are systematically arranged.



Figure 3. Exhibition Partner Tenant

The involvement of social entrepreneurs representing social diversity is the core of this exhibition program design. The invited social entrepreneurs reflect inclusivity with diverse backgrounds. Their involvement, not only as exhibitors but also as speakers or main characters, will add a unique color to this event. Thus, the exhibition will not only serve as a means of business promotion but also as a forum for sharing experiences, knowledge, and inspiration in addressing social challenges in Surabaya.

3. Exhibition Implementation and Interactive Media

This becomes a key moment where direct interaction between the public and social entrepreneurs occurs. This exhibition serves as a platform/medium to bring together entrepreneurs who prioritize inclusivity values with various community groups, including people with disabilities, the public, and small businesses. Social entrepreneurs will bring products and services that not only have economic value but also social value that promotes equality and diversity. These products, for example, could be handicrafts made in collaboration with people with disabilities, or services that support the empowerment of other communities.



Figure 4. Exhibition Banner for Partner



Figure 5. Exhibition Partner

This exhibition is designed to facilitate inclusive and in-depth interaction between visitors and entrepreneurs. Various activities such as live product demonstrations, makeup tutorials, and Q&A sessions are essential in creating an interactive and educational experience. Interactive exhibition booths, business discussions, and open discussion spaces allow the public to not only observe but also actively participate in this exhibition, ask questions, and engage in conversations about the importance of inclusivity. This Social Entrepreneurship Exhibition at Taman Bungkul was attended by over 200 of Surabaya's citizens, who mingled with people with disabilities and social entrepreneurs. This exhibition successfully serves as a place to showcase products, but also as a space for dialogue and understanding of social challenges and the inclusive solutions offered by social entrepreneurship. Through this interaction, the public can better understand the values upheld by social entrepreneurs and how their products and services can have a positive social impact. In addition, this interaction will also open opportunities for new collaborations between entrepreneurs, the public, and other communities, to strengthen inclusivity in Surabaya.

4. Community Participation

During the exhibition, the community plays an active role as both visitors and participants in various exhibition activities. Through this, the community not only

serves as spectators but also as an integral part of the entire event. Participant's feedback is gathered by committee with the result as follows:

- "The exhibition was incredibly inspiring" - David (20 years old)
- "It was great to share ideas and experiences" – Andi (40 years old)
- "The overall atmosphere was positive and supportive"- Hasna (19 years old)

This active participation can encourage deeper engagement between the community and social entrepreneurs, leading to a continuous process of information and inspiration exchange. Community involvement also includes participation in various interactive activities, such as dancing together, playing interactive games, and live demonstrations from entrepreneurs. Thus, the community not only gets to know the products or services offered but also understands the inclusive values underlying each of these businesses.



Figure 6. Community Participation

Additionally, this exhibition is held to provide a space for the public to express their opinions on inclusivity issues. This active participation is expected to generate new ideas that can be considered for the development of future programs. Moreover, through this participation, the public can directly experience the impact of sociopreneurship (Niken Pratiwi & Handayani, 2023), which is not only oriented towards economic gain but also brings about positive social change. This will eventually increase the collective awareness of the public regarding the importance of inclusivity in all aspects of life, including economic and business activities.

5. Program Evaluation

The exhibition ran smoothly and as expected, although there were some unintended obstacles in the design and implementation (Zahid Zufar At Thaariq et al., 2024). The evaluation of this exhibition is more than just a technical assessment; it also focuses on the social impact generated by the exhibition. The exhibition successfully created new collaborations between social entrepreneurs and the public, and it demonstrated that empowering social entrepreneurs, such as people with disabilities, is possible. Therefore, this exhibition can be a reference for improving similar programs, so that in the next implementation, the exhibition will not only be technically sound but also be able to have a broader and deeper social impact.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the social entrepreneurship exhibition program held at Taman Bungkul, Surabaya, it can be concluded that this activity has successfully achieved its main objectives, namely increasing public awareness of social inclusion and diversity, especially among entrepreneurs and the public. Through direct interaction between the public and social entrepreneurs, this exhibition was able to bring together various social groups and provide a space for the public to actively participate in the inclusive economic process. Public involvement in various interactive activities not only increased their understanding of the importance of inclusivity but also opened opportunities for broader collaboration between entrepreneurs and people with disabilities.

In addition, the results of this community service activity also show that the exhibition has successfully created a significant social impact, especially in empowering social entrepreneurs from among people with disabilities and other members of the community. By facilitating inclusive and collaborative interactions, this exhibition has not only served as a platform for business promotion but also to strengthen the collective awareness of society regarding the importance of social inclusion in economic and social contexts.

This sociopreneurship exhibition serves as an effort in developing social sustainability and economic sustainability as follows (1) **Social Sustainability** – (a) Community engagement: Involving local communities in the planning and execution of the exhibition (b) Accessibility: Ensuring the exhibition is accessible to people with disabilities (c) Ethical practices: Promoting ethical sourcing and fair-trade practices among participating social enterprises (d) Social impact: Measuring and highlighting the positive social impact of the participating enterprises and (2) **Economic Sustainability** – (a) Local economic benefits: Supporting local businesses and suppliers (b) Long-term impact: Considering the long-term economic benefits of the exhibition for the community and region (c) The successful exhibition has shown that inclusive marketing events can have a powerful positive impact on society.

Future events of this kind can be expanded by fostering more collaborations with social entrepreneurs from various industries outside of Surabaya to broaden their reach and establish social entrepreneurship as a key pillar of inclusive economic development in Surabaya. Besides that, exploring partnerships with outside entities can enhance the creative economic aspects of future sociopreneurship exhibitions.

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