

International Social Sciences and Education Conference 2025
"Empowering Knowledge: Driving Change Through Social Science and Educational Research"
Virtual Conference
24-25 May 2025

Organised by: CLM PUBLISHING RESOURCES

**Effectiveness of Entrepreneur Course
for Terengganu Women Fishermen's Group (KUNITA)**

**Mohamad Sahizam Musa^{1*}, Ramlan Mustapha², Nur Adillah Ramly^{3,4},
Siti Nordarma Ab. Rahman^{5,6}, Tengku Nazatul Shima Tengku Paris⁷**

**Corresponding Author*

¹ Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang, Raub Campus, 27600 Raub, Pahang, Malaysia, ² Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang, Raub Campus, 27600 Raub, Pahang, Malaysia, ³ Bonda Learning Centre Sdn. Bhd, Malaysia, ⁴ National Child Development Research Centre, Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris, Malaysia, ⁵ School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, ⁶ Luminous Mind Centre, Jalan Dagangan 11, Bertam Perdana, Kepala Batas Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, ⁷ Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang, Raub Campus, 27600 Raub, Pahang, Malaysia

msahizam@uitm.edu.my, ramlan@uitm.edu.my, adillah.ramly@gmail.com, sitinordarma@gmail.com, tnshima@uitm.edu.my
Tel: 0194117601/093515644

Abstract

This article examines the effectiveness of the Entrepreneur Course offered by the Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM) to the Terengganu Women Fishermen's Group (KUNITA). The course's goal is to help members of the KUNITA become more knowledgeable and proficient. The courses were organised as an initiative to raise the standard of living for fishermen's communities by enhancing the capacity of women fishermen as economic actors who can provide additional income for their families. 114 KUNITA members participated in this study, which sought to determine the performance level of the entrepreneur course organised by LKIM.

Keywords: Effectiveness of Entrepreneur Course; Women Fishermen's Group (KUNITA); Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM); standard of living; additional income

eISSN: 2398-4287 © 2025. The Authors. Published for AMER by e-International Publishing House, Ltd., UK. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). Peer-review under responsibility of AMER (Association of Malaysian Environment-Behaviour Researchers)
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21834/e-bpj.v10iSI33.7074>

1.0 Introduction

Poverty is compared to an inherited legacy of the fishing community in this nation (Yahya, 2008). Fishing represents a sub-economic endeavour characterised by minimal returns despite fish being a primary protein source for the Malaysian populace. Based on weather-related downtimes, particularly during the monsoon season, significantly impact fishing operations in Peninsular Malaysia. It is estimated that approximately 75% of fishermen cannot venture to sea during this period (Nor Azlyn & Norizan, 2023). In challenging circumstances,

eISSN: 2398-4287 © 2025. The Authors. Published for AMER by e-International Publishing House, Ltd., UK. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). Peer-review under responsibility of AMER (Association of Malaysian Environment-Behaviour Researchers)
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21834/e-bpj.v10iSI33.7074>

fishermen's wives worked to support their husbands while also fulfilling their responsibilities as housewives (Widiastuti & Zulham, 2021).

The Malaysian Fisheries Development Board (LKIM) is a key organisation appointed by the government to facilitate entrepreneurship courses designed to enhance individuals' knowledge and technological skills within the fishing community. The LKIM courses are tailored for female fishermen, specifically targeting wives, children, and mothers from fishing families. This initiative optimises the group's energy use and fosters the community's development (LKIM Portal, 2024). Female fishermen are recognised as significant contributors to the economy, possessing the potential to enhance family income and alleviate the financial responsibilities typically shouldered by their husbands (Intan Hashimah et al., 2014). In considering this situation, assessing the performance level of the course organised by LKIM for the Women's Fishing Group Program (KUNITA) participants is essential. Terengganu was selected as the study location due to its fishing community facing the highest cost of living compared to fishing communities in other states (Norhaspida, 2014; Norizan & Dara Aisyah, 2016; Zuriyati, 2021). This scenario arises from the dynamics surrounding fishing villages, which were originally classified as rural. These communities have been adversely affected by the repercussions of an escalating cost of living, notably as various regions within the state underwent development, transforming into vibrant urban centres along the coast, each establishing its own economic identity (Norizan & Dara Aisyah, 2016; Mohd Hanafiah et al., 2022), exemplified by locales such as Kuala Terengganu, Kemaman, and Kerteh (Dara Aisyah et al., 2011; Economic Report, 2012/2013; Norhaspida, 18 January 2014). LKIM entrepreneur courses have inspired KUNITA members to engage in approximately 23 distinct economic activities. The most prevalent include cracker companies, sewing companies, fish processing companies, handicraft companies, seafood-based food companies, and modern and traditional confectionery companies (Noor Carmelita, 2015).

This study evaluates the effectiveness of LKIM's entrepreneurship course offered to KUNITA members in Terengganu. The primary objective is to identify the effectiveness level of this course. To achieve this aim, a survey using questionnaires will be conducted among eight Fishermen's Area Associations, known as Persatuan Nelayan Kawasan (PNK), with assistance from LKIM officers.

2.0 Literature review

The Women Fishermen's Group (Kumpulan Nelayan Wanita, KUNITA) seeks to empower women in fishing communities through entrepreneurship, and it was founded in 1983 by the Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM). The initiative has been executed in Terengganu for more than thirty years. A case study by Musa (2022) revealed that although government aid, including courses, equipment support, and advisory services, had a substantial link with program effectiveness, the overall impact was moderate. Identified challenges encompassed the cessation of grants since 2016, insufficient business capital, and concerns over participant motivation and officer credibility.

In addition to KUNITA, extensive research on entrepreneurial training for women has yielded favourable results. A review by Md Noor Aizuddin and Adam (2021) determined that entrepreneurship training markedly enhances entrepreneurs' abilities, business performance, and overall entrepreneurial success. As per the 10th and 11th Malaysia Plan, the government has outlined their focus on women's empowerment to improve economic contribution via entrepreneurship. The focus can be reflected by the projected rapid growth of women entrepreneurs becoming involved and succeeding in their respective businesses (Baharudin et al., 2021).

Research by Mohamad et al. (2023) on the Setiu fishing village in Terengganu emphasised the efficacy of knowledge transfer initiatives. The community engagement activities resulted in substantial enhancements in entrepreneurial skills, with participants indicating sales increases ranging from 4% to 240% during a Ramadan sales competition. The researchers determined that effectively organised knowledge transfer initiatives can enhance community resilience and competitiveness.

Based on existing research, recent studies underscore the need for customised empowerment approaches in entrepreneurship training programs for rural women. Mohamed Roseli et al. (2024) highlighted that rural women entrepreneurs encounter distinct hurdles, such as structural inequities, insufficient experience, and familial obligations that impede their involvement in entrepreneurial training programs. Their research promotes the creation of empowerment models that combine technical skills with psychological preparedness to improve the efficacy of these initiatives. Azis et al. (2023) identified obstacles like insufficient infrastructure, restricted market access, and socio-cultural prejudices that hinder the development of rural women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Confronting these barriers with specific initiatives, such as enhanced financial access and investments in rural infrastructure, is essential for empowering rural women and realising their entrepreneurial potential. These findings underscore the need to develop entrepreneurship training programs tailored to the specific location and address the distinct needs of rural women entrepreneurs.

Notwithstanding these favourable results, a deficiency exists in the literature concerning the enduring efficacy of entrepreneurial training programs such as KUNITA. It is necessary to conduct longitudinal research to evaluate the enduring effects of such programs on income levels, business viability, and community development. Rectifying these deficiencies will yield a more thorough comprehension of the program's efficacy and guide subsequent policy and program development.

3.0 Methodology

This study takes a quantitative approach, distributing surveys and analysing data using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). As Mohd Fadzil et al. (2017) suggested, the mean value data can be used to measure the level of performance, including the LKIM entrepreneur course. The fraction of high-level mean values is considered to identify which respondent groups are very committed.

3.1 Scale

The survey questions are arranged on a six-point Likert scale and consist of 19 questions and five sections. The scale measures the respondents' level of agreement from one to six. The subsequent technique outlines the calculation of the range, the propensity value of the level within that range, and the score distribution table for each level.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The range for each class interval is} &= \\ (6 - 1) / 3 &= 1.66 \end{aligned}$$

Table 1 shows the interpretation of the effectiveness level of the LKIM Entrepreneur Course based on the mean score. 1.00-2.66 shows a low level of effectiveness, and 2.67-4.33 indicates a moderate level of effectiveness. Meanwhile, the high level of effectiveness has a mean score of 4.34-6.00.

Mean Score	Level
1.00-2.66	Low
2.67-4.33	Moderate
4.34-6.00	High

(Source: Mohamad Sahizam 2012)

3.2 Sample and Respondent

The quantitative study in this research was carried out in eight Fishermen's Area Associations, called *Persatuan Nelayan Kawasan* (PNK), in Terengganu and included 114 KUNITA members chosen through multistage random sampling. All the PNKs were selected based on their activeness in KUNITA activities; meanwhile, the non-active PNKs were excluded. In term of limitations, this study only been conducted in Terengganu, among Malays and Muslims women fishermen as respondents.

PNK	n	Percentage (%)
Kuala Terengganu Utara	19	17.00
Setiu	19	17.00
Kijal	13	11.00
Kemaman	4	4.00
Kemasik	15	13.00
Paka	13	11.00
Dungun	16	14.00
Marang	15	13.00

4.0 Finding and Discussion

Table 2 presents the mean value used to assess the performance level of the Entrepreneur Course organised by LKIM for KUNITA members.

Table 3. The performance level of the entrepreneur courses organised by LKIM (n=114)

Questions	Mean Value	Level of Mean Value
Circumstances Prior to Members Participating in the Course	3.92	Moderate
1. I am pleased with the training conducted by LKIM for KUNITA participants.		
2. I am content with LKIM's selection process for lower-level course enrollees.		
3. I am also at ease communicating with the organiser should I wish to attend the course.		
The Circumstance In Which The Participant Is Engaged In The Course	4.01	Moderate
4. The organisers administer the course exceptionally.		
5. The knowledge provided during the training effectively addresses the current requirements of KUNITA members.		
6. The course officers on duty are focused on assisting participants in comprehending the content conveyed during the session.		
Management Course Performance	4.02	Moderate
7. I comprehend the lecture presented by the speaker.		
8. I am consistently satisfied with the facilities provided during the management course.		
9. I am content with the course schedule program.		
10. I am content with the length of the course.		
Skill Course Performance	4.02	Moderate
11. I am content with the instructional personnel provided by LKIM.		
12. I readily comprehend all types of skills imparted to me.		
13. I am content with the availability of the necessary instruments for the skill course participants.		
Impact of Attending the Course	4.14	Moderate
14. I found that my knowledge increased after attending the courses.		
15. I found that my skills improved after attending the courses.		
16. I believe the more courses I participate in, the more successful my participation in the KUNITA economic program will be.		
17. I am more motivated to continue participating in KUNITA after attending the course.		

Questions	Mean Value	Level of Mean Value
18. Each time I participate in the course, my awareness of augmenting the family's income intensifies.		
19. I can apply the knowledge and skills acquired from my classes.		
Entrepreneur Course (Overall)	4.02	Moderate

According to Table 2, the analysis results indicate that the assessment of the circumstances prior to members participating in the course achieved a mean score of 3.92, showing the level of mean value is moderate. KUNITA members, as participants, respond moderately in terms of satisfaction with how the training has been conducted, the selection process for course enrollees, and the two-way communication with the organiser. The findings enrich the study by Idrus et al. (2014) about entrepreneur training and Mohamad et al. (2023) on communication or knowledge transfer. Meanwhile, the issue of course enrollees also emerged from this analysis.

Meanwhile, the analysis results also indicate that the assessment of the circumstance in which the participant is engaged in the course achieved a mean score of 4.01, showing the level of mean value is moderate. Referring to the result, participants gave a moderate response in terms of satisfaction with the organiser's administration, the knowledge provided during training, and the assistance given by officers to help them comprehend the course contents. Mohamad et al. (2023) found the same thing regarding the knowledge provided during training and discussed it as a topic of knowledge transfer. Meanwhile, the satisfaction of the organiser, administrator and officer assistant is becoming a new finding in this discussion.

The analysis results indicate that the performance category for the management course achieved a mean score of 4.02, reflecting a moderate performance level. This score shows that the course meets some participants' expectations, but there is room for improvement. Future training sessions could address the areas identified for enhancement, ensuring a more robust and practical learning experience for all involved. Participants responded moderately regarding their comprehension of the lecture, satisfaction with the provided facilities, the course schedule, and the course duration. This finding enriches the findings from the study made by Mohamad et al. (2023) regarding knowledge transfer and Azis et al. (2023) concerning the obstacles of insufficient infrastructure. This study also introduces the course schedule and duration as new topics for discussion.

Skill course performance also achieved a mean score of 4.02, which means the level of the mean value is moderate. As participants, KUNITA members evaluate themselves as moderate regarding their experience with the instructional personnel provided by LKIM, practising skills imparted by LKIM, and the availability of instruments during the skill course. Although the result is moderate, this finding enriches the study made by Md Noor Aizuddin and Adam (2021), Mohamad et al. (2023), and Mohamed Roseli et al. (2024) discussing the entrepreneurs' abilities, technical skills, business performance, and overall entrepreneurial success.

The impact of attending the course received the highest rating among the components (mean value = 4.14), underscoring the course's efficacy in producing significant results but still at a moderate level. Even though the effectiveness level is moderate, participants show positive progress regarding improving knowledge and skills and can also apply it to their economic activities. They believe the more entrepreneur courses attended, the more chance for them to be a successful entrepreneur. After attending this course, KUNITA members seem motivated and aware of their role in generating more income for their families. This finding aligns with Idrus et al. (2014) and Mohamad et al. (2023); the efficacy of knowledge transfer will result in an income increase and job creation.

Ultimately, the entrepreneur course demonstrates an analysis indicating a mainly positive reaction from participants, with all assessed elements attaining moderate performance levels, reflected in a mean score of 4.02. This result reflects the overall effectiveness of the entrepreneurial course offered by LKIM for KUNITA members and also answers the main objective of this study, which is to identify the effectiveness level of this course.

This study has considered implications beyond its immediate scope. These findings elucidate the specific context under examination and provide insights that can assist LKIM and the Department of Fisheries in enhancing the oversight of entrepreneurial courses, refining course content, developing policies for fishermen, and planning the future trajectory of fishing families for subsequent generations.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, this study identified the effectiveness level of the entrepreneur course as moderate. Besides the result, positive progress has been seen, especially regarding impact, after the KUNITA members attended the entrepreneur course provided by LKIM. With this statement, KUNITA members are becoming more motivated and successful due to the number of courses they attend. This study was conducted through the limitation of respondents, times, and sources of references.

To improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the entrepreneur course, this study recommends categorising the type of entrepreneur course; LKIM needs to collaborate with other agencies, encourage the short-term entrepreneur courses, improve and update the contents of the entrepreneur course, identify potential participants, and conduct pre- and post-entrepreneur course assessments. The involvement of stakeholders LKIM, PNK, and KUNITA is needed to ensure successful entrepreneurial course improvement efforts.

As for future study, many new directions can be explored by researchers, such as the evaluation of the effectiveness level of entrepreneur courses provided by LKIM in other states besides Terengganu and the use of mixed methods; quantitative and qualitative will be a great approach in terms of gaining valuable findings. This study has limitations, as this study had been conducted only in Terengganu.

Acknowledgements

The authors express their sincere appreciation to the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang, Raub Campus, Raub, Pahang, Malaysia, Bonda Learning Centre Sdn. Bhd, and Luminous Mind Centre, Bertam Perdana, Kepala Batas Pulau Pinang, for their valuable assistance and support. They would also want to thank their family and colleagues who were engaged in the celebration.

Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

The authors declare no conflicts of interest to report regarding the present study.

References

- Ahmad, Z., Azlan, N. N. A., Razak, W. M. W. A., Zahari, A. S. M., Rahman, B. A., & Tinik, R. I. (2021). Coastal Fishermen's Quality of Life in Kuala Dungun: A Study of Income and Household Expenditure. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(18), 191–201.
- Azis, R. A., Mohamed, N. A., Naseri, R. N. N., Ahmad, N. Z. A., Abas, N. M., & Ahmad, F. H. M. (2023). Rural women entrepreneurship in Malaysia: Issues and challenges. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(9), 1990–1999. <https://hrmars.com/index.php/IJARBSS/article/view/18643>.
- Md Noor Aizzuddin, M. F., & Adam, S. N. S. (2021). A review on impact of entrepreneurship training program towards entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial performance. *International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences*, 10(3), 109–119. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJAREMS/v10-i3/9732>
- Mohamad, S., Salim, J., & Ahmad, M. (2023). Empowering the fishing community in Setiu Terengganu through knowledge transfer programme. *Journal of Sustainability Science and Management*, 18(5), 56–65. <https://doi.org/10.46754/jssm.2023.05.006>
- Mohamed Roseli, N. R., SY Sheikh, S. S., & Jamaludin, A. (2024). Developing an empowerment model for entrepreneurial training targeting rural women. *International Journal of Socio-Economy Planning*, 1(1). <https://journal.uptm.edu.my/index.php/ijsep/article/view/338>
- Mohd Fazil Mohd Rosdi, Suhaida Abdul Kadir, Mohd Ibrahim Nazri (2017). The Level of Critical Thinking Skill and Disposition Of Form Two Students in Integrated Living Skill Subject In Kedah and Its Relationship. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education*, Vol. 32, 45–60.
- Mohd Hanapiah, T., Samsudin, N. A., & Farid, M. (2022). Impacts Of Integrated Rural Development (Ird) Towards Traditional Village Economy In Ketengah, Terengganu, Malaysia. *PLANNING MALAYSIA*, 20(23). <https://doi.org/10.21837/pm.v20i23.1162>
- Musa, M. (2022). Keberkesanan Pelaksanaan Program Kumpulan Nelayan Wanita (KUNITA): Satu kajian kes di Terengganu. *Proceedings of the National Seminar on Social Development*, 1(1), 70–85. <https://www.academia.edu/89073540>
- Norizan, Abdul Ghani and Dara Aisyah H.M, Ali Puteh (2016) *Socioeconomic Profile Of Coastal Fishing Communities: A Case Study On Fishermen - Participants From Azam Tani Programme And Social Welfare Development Scheme (SPKR), In Terengganu, Malaysia*. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 53 (1). pp. 91-100. ISSN 1450-2267
- Nor Azlyn Ezura Hasminand Norizan Mohamed (2023). Forecasting Monthly Fish Landing In East Coast Peninsular Malaysia Using Sarima-Artificial Neural Network. *Journal Of Mathematical Sciences And Informatics*, Volume 3 Number 2, December 2023, 10-23
- Widiastuti, R. ., & Zulham, A. (2021). The Role of Fishermen's Wife in Improving Family Welfare (Case Study in Majapahit Village, South Buton Regency). *Journal of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy*, 5(2), 19–23. <https://doi.org/10.11113/jostip.v5n2.43>
- Baharudin, M. H., Rusok, N. H. M., Sapiai, N. S., Ghazali, S. A. M., & Salleh, M. S. (2021). Entrepreneurial Competencies and Business Success Among Women Entrepreneurs. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(2), 302–310.