

Increasing Quality of Crackers Productivity as a Food Commodity in Jember Regency

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted all sectors, including small and medium-sized businesses such as cracker producers and resellers. The problems faced in the midst of the pandemic include manual production processes, lack of management skills, monotonous and less innovative products, and difficulties in marketing. In this activity there are three partners, namely UD. Sumber Rejeki as a cracker producer and UD. Wahyu Jaya and UD. Barokah Abadi as a reseller who helps market the product. The targets of this activity are innovative products, market expansion and improving the quality of human resource management, procurement of dough mixer machines, trays, impulse sealers, nameplates, quality packaging, and SAK EMKM accounting books. The service method used is mentoring business activities in terms of production, marketing and business financial management. The outputs resulting from this community partnership program are in the form of improving the quality of production more effectively and efficiently and hygienically with a dough mixer machine, as well as the creation of a product's unique selling point in terms of shape. Other outputs resulting from this activity are the expertise of business partners in managing production management, digital marketing and the preparation of simple financial reports based on excel applications guided by SAK EMKM.

Keywords: Manufacturer, Reseller, Product Innovation, Crackers



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INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian economy is currently experiencing turmoil amid the presence of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). It takes a strong determination from the Indonesian government to build a more balanced economic structure. Especially development in the industrialization process so that industry in Indonesia can become the main driver in increasing economic growth, expanding job opportunities and equitable distribution of people's income. However, in reality, the performance of small enterprises is still far from expectations. The development of the industrial sector in Indonesia is still not balanced. Generally, the classic obstacle to the emergence of a solid small industry is the capital sector. In addition, weak managerial factors also often occur in small

enterprises in Indonesia. The typical issue for small entrepreneurs is the difficulty in increasing business efficiency and improving product results. This condition certainly encourages appropriate community empowerment, in particular training and assistance to increase its business value.

Understanding healthy business ethics among small industries is also a severe problem. Usually, there are indications that small industries in negotiating with foreign buyers are slashing prices with each other without paying attention to quality. Small industries exist to produce products and services as well as provide social responsibility to the community. The relationship issues between industry owners, managers and employees should be apparent. The employees' welfare, health, and safety need to be a serious concern because, in small industries, it is difficult to monitor what is happening.

Potentially, Jember Regency has a small industry that can be fostered and developed in Indonesia, ranging from agriculture-based to non-agricultural industries. A clear and precise information network is needed to develop this small industry, especially in establishing cooperation among small industries. It should be proactively strengthened and facilitated by local governments. This symbiotic condition of mutualism is expected to benefit all parties involved, both in terms of finance and business development.

The opportunities and potentials of small industries in Jember are still very open to being developed. The market is wide open, and the culinary sector is still quite promising. People's lifestyles in food consumption are increasingly diverse. The choice of the food menu is no longer a matter of taste but can also be obtained from an attractive appearance, unique packaging, and the halal and hygienic of the food. Literally, the staple food of Indonesian people is four healthy five perfect consisting of rice, side dishes, vegetables, fruit, and milk. Along with the era of civilization and the rapid development of industry, it is not uncommon for Indonesian people to add crackers as a complement to eating their daily food. Crackers can be used as food commodities, seen from the primary raw material used, namely tapioca flour.

Tapioca flour is starch from dried and mashed cassava tubers, which has an extensive market opportunity. Crackers with tapioca flour have various nutritional elements in 100 grams, namely 362 calories, 0.50 grams of protein, 0.30 grams of fat, 86.90 grams of carbohydrates, and 12.00 grams of water. Based on the main ingredients used in crackers, crackers are a food commodity that is very familiar to consumers' tongues.

Jember Regency is where many entrepreneurs produce and sell crackers such as *rambak* crackers, tofu crackers, sliced crackers, onion crackers, et cetera. The business partners in the Community Partnership Program (PKM) consist of three business partners, namely UD. Sumber Rejeki, a producer of onion crackers and resells them raw and cooked ready to eat, pioneered by Mr Sujiarto since 2010, located in Kemukuh Hamlet, RT. 01 RW. 20 Tembokrejo Village, Gumukmas District, Jember Regency, in terms of the production and marketing process of UD. Sumber Rejeki still uses conventional tools and systems due to limited capital and human resources. The following business partners are UD. Barokah Abadi and UD. Wahyu Jaya, both of them are resellers of raw crackers from UD. Sumber Rejeki has been resold in a mature state with ordinary plastic packaging, which is less attractive because it uses traditional adhesives. The two reseller partners have the same address because they are still in the same area, namely, in Purwosari RT. 01 RW. 12 Tanjungsari Village, Umbulsari District, Jember Regency have different marketing areas, where UD. Wahyu Jaya focuses on marketing its products in Umbulsari District while UD. Barokah Abadi markets its products in the Semboro District, Jember Regency. However, the marketing carried out by these three business partners is still relatively conventional and less attractive due to limited knowledge and marketing management, capital and human resources. The two reseller partners have the same address because they are still in the same area, namely, in Purwosari RT. 01 RW. 12 Tanjungsari Village, Umbulsari District, Jember Regency have different marketing areas, where UD. Wahyu Jaya focuses on marketing its products in Umbulsari District while UD.

Barokah Abadi markets its products in the Semboro District, Jember Regency. However, the marketing carried out by these three business partners is still relatively conventional and less attractive due to limited knowledge and marketing management, capital and human resources. The two reseller partners have the same address because they are still in the same area, namely, in Purwosari RT. 01 RW. 12 Tanjungsari Village, Umbulsari District, Jember Regency have different marketing areas, where UD. Wahyu Jaya focuses on marketing its products in Umbulsari District while UD. Barokah Abadi markets its products in the Semboro District, Jember Regency. However, the marketing carried out by these three business partners is still relatively conventional and less attractive due to limited knowledge and marketing management, capital and human resources. Wahyu Jaya focuses on marketing its products in Umbulsari District while UD. Barokah Abadi markets its products in the Semboro District, Jember Regency. However, the marketing carried out by these three business partners is still relatively conventional and less attractive due to limited knowledge and marketing management, capital and human resources. Wahyu Jaya focuses on marketing its products in Umbulsari District while UD. Barokah Abadi markets its products in the Semboro District, Jember Regency. However, the marketing carried out by these three business partners is still relatively conventional and less attractive due to limited knowledge and marketing management, capital and human resources.

From some of the explanations above, it can be concluded that the relationship between the three business partners is very close, where the first business partner is UD. Sumber Rejeki is a producer of crackers that turn into raw crackers, sold to the following two partners: UD. Eternal Barokah and UD. Wahyu Jaya, which was then carried out frying, packaging, and marketing, therefore these three partners have interdependence of business so that there is a need for coordination in various matters, including the availability of products produced by UD. Sumber Rejeki, which is then distributed to UD. Eternal Barokah and UD. Wahyu Jaya and also regarding determining the purchase price and selling price of products from producers to consumers.



Figure 1. Unhygienic Production Process



Figure 2. Unhygienic Drying Process

In this Community Partnership Program, business partners are MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) engaged in the food sector (crackers). The first business partner, namely UD. Sumber Rejeki and the following two partners are also in food (crackers), namely UD. Eternal Barokah and UD. Wahyu Jaya. Based on initial observations, several identifications of problems faced by the three business partners were obtained, including:

- a. The taste of processed crackers is not varied.
It is evidenced by the fact that only one type of flavor can be produced by partner one without having a variety of products with different flavors, thus making consumers tend to get bored if they are continuously consumed for a long time.
- b. The packaging is not attractive, so the selling value is still low.
Thin plastic with manual packaging methods makes this packaging unattractive and unsightly, mainly relying on paper as a label on product packaging.
- c. The product does not have a Unique Selling Point (USP), which is unique to other cracker entrepreneurs in processing, shape, type, and purchase promotions. It is proven only by the presence of one flavor variant produced by-products with less attractive packaging
- d. Market segmentation is not clear.
Unspecified market segmentation makes business actors only oriented to product sales without taking into account who will provide the products they produce
- e. No SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) can regulate production management properly and improve product quality. It makes business activities run with the flow and at will, without any main target or goal.
- f. Lack of adequate work tools to carry out operational activities.
It is proven by still using manual methods in the cracker production process, namely using hand power when mixing the dough, so it is less effective and efficient both in terms of time and energy required. Therefore there is a need for a breakthrough by using machines to be more effective and efficient.
- g. Standardized bookkeeping or accounting practices are absent.
These three diving partners do not carry out financial bookkeeping at all in running their business. Personal funds are often mixed with business results, resulting in not knowing the actual benefits of the business activities. Even the first partners only rely on analysis in the process of determining the selling price, without any detailed and detailed calculations regarding the overall costs incurred.
- h. Lack of promotion strategy
The three partners did not carry out these activities in conventional and digital forms in terms of promotion. They only marketed products directly to the market daily without making advertisements on paper or flyers in digital form in gadgets.

Based on the identification of the problems encountered, it can be understood that the problems faced by the three business partners are quite a lot. Therefore, it is necessary to justify the agreed priority issues to be resolved during the implementation of the PKM program. Several justifications for priority issues agreed upon between the proposing team and business partners include:

- a. The first issue scale has emphasized the limitations of working tools that can reduce overhead costs in the production process for the three business partners. The tools that are planned to be able to support business activities are dough mixer machines, trays, impulse sealers and digital scales
- b. The second priority scale is emphasized on revitalizing the Unique Selling Point of products and packaging and market segmentation and improving marketing strategies for the three business partners. With this problem, the implementation team took the initiative to provide management training in HR, Marketing and assistance in the production and packaging process using the tools to be assisted.
- c. The third priority scale is emphasized on the rehabilitation of accounting practices for the three business partners. Considering that there is still no good bookkeeping, the implementation team has become a priority problem because bookkeeping is the benchmark for the success of business activities between profit and loss.

Targets and Outcomes

The success measurement of the PKM program with the title of increasing quality of crackers productivity as a food commodity in Jember Regency is the achievement of the following targets:

1. Expansion of market
2. Quality improvement of human resource management
3. Procurement of dough kneading machine equipment
4. Procurement of equipment for trays, packaging, and impulse sealers
5. Procurement of business name boards, EMKM accounting support books, and digital scales
6. Quality improvement of innovative products, as well as product variants.

This community partnership program activity is expected to be able to provide outcomes for partners, as follows:

1. Cooperation in terms of market expansion for the three business partners
2. Carry out business management training activities which include: human resource management, marketing, and preparation of simple financial reports
3. Provision of a dough mixer machine, as a means of supporting the production of crackers with the following specifications:
 - a. Brand : HIFLOW Dough Expert
 - b. Type : Doughmaker Series
 - c. Power : 750 Watts / 220 Volts
 - d. Machine container capacity : 8 Kg
 - e. Engine rotation speed : 40 RPM
 - f. Material : Full Stainless Steel Container
 - g. Function : Mixing Various Types of Dough
4. Provision of several trays that can be used to dry the cracker dough
5. Provision of a business nameplate with the following specifications:
 - a. 3 Meters High
 - b. Iron and zinc base material
 - c. Nameplate size 60 cm x 60 cm
 - d. There is a sticker consisting of a business logo and business name
6. Giving impulse sealer as an adhesive media for packaging to make it more neat and attractive
7. Providing digital scales so that each package has the same contents, as well as EMKM accounting books to help record business finances
8. The addition of product variants in terms of taste where previously only had one flavour was now developed into various flavors

9. Providing better and more attractive packaging with thicker plastic and printing business names and logos.

METHOD

Stages in implementing the solution to the problem

The solutions offered are based on several issues that have been described in the previous chapter as follows:

1. The first stage is to survey each partner to coordinate and determine the priority scale of problems and the program's implementation.
2. The second stage is to improve the quality of human resource management, marketing, and finance through training held by inviting several presenters who have credibility in their fields.
3. In the third stage, assistance is provided in machine tools such as dough mixer machines, impulse sealers, digital scales, and other supporting tools for business activities such as drying trays and packaging.
4. The fourth stage is implementing production practices by using a dough machine to create creative and innovative products, both taste and packaging.
5. In the final stage, monitoring and evaluation are carried out on the three business partners part of this PKM program.

Approach Methods offered

The approach method offered to solve partner problems consists of several steps, including:

1. Survey
This survey was conducted on three partners at once, partner one, partner two, and partner three, to coordinate issues that have been prioritized and discuss the implementation of community partnership program activities.
2. Human Resource Management, Marketing and Finance Training
This Management Training consists of several subjects. The first is related to human resources, and this is so that business actors can maximize their human resources and grow abilities that have not previously appeared. The second training is marketing management, which aims to add insight into marketing strategies in the midst of a pandemic. Finally, financial management aims to create transparent financial reports, at least knowing the procedures for financial management and knowing for sure about the benefits obtained each period.
3. Submission of Tools
The handover of this tool was carried out by the proposing team together with the Higher Education LPPM. The assistance provided was in the form of a dough mixer machine, trays, nameplates, impulse sealers, and packaging, as well as digital scales, which were considered priority tools so that they could support business activities.
4. Assistance in Production Practices and Use of Tools
This assistance is carried out to help the use of tools that have been previously submitted in the hope of being able to make the production process effective and efficient, both in terms of time and quality product results.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation
Monitoring and evaluation activities are carried out periodically to help problems that arise in the middle of the road and ensure that everything planned and implemented goes well, including producing innovative products and running their business sustainably without encountering significant obstacles.

Partner Participation in Program Implementation

The participation of the three partners in the community partnership program activities is very much needed for reciprocity, and the achievement of program objectives, the forms of participation include:

1. Discuss with the implementing team to find various problems and determine priority problems to be solved and determine problem solutions and activity output targets
2. Provide input on each activity both in terms of management training and in innovation in terms of design, determination of tools, product packaging and product variants
3. Provide a place for management training and practice the use of tools that the implementing team has provided in supporting business activities and program activities
4. Ensuring human resources in terms of participating in management training which experts will train in their fields in terms of HR management, marketing and finance
5. Carry out sustainable business activities to create effective, innovative, and competitive products with other markets.
6. Participate and play an active role in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation by the PKM implementation team. It is intended that all activities that have been carried out can bring better changes for the three partners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Activity Implementation

Based on the background and priority issues discussed in the previous chapter, the community partnership program activities in 2021 do the following:

1. The first stage

This initial stage is the beginning of the activity by carrying out a survey, and this survey was carried out for the first time during the preparation of the proposal in order to identify various problems that arise in the three partners, starting from UD Sumber Rejeki, Barokah Abadi and Wahyu Jaya. The second survey was carried out shortly after receiving the funding proposal on 10 April 2021, attended by the implementing team and the three partners. Several important points were obtained from this activity, namely focusing on the main problems in implementing activities such as training in human resource management, marketing and finance, and procurement of dough mixer machines, drying trays, packaging, and other supporting tools.

2. Second Stage

At this stage, coordination activities are carried out within the team and cooperation partners in the implementation of business management training activities, as well as determining the parties involved, such as:

- a. Determining the presenters in business management training
- b. Prepare all machines and business aids to support the implementation of activities
- c. Finalize the preparation of activities in management training, procurement of tools, preparation of production practices and other administration under applicable regulations.

3. Third phase

The implementation of business management training in the third stage is divided into several days and sessions, where there are four themes given regarding this training, namely:

- a. Human Resource Management training was held virtually using Microsoft teams on 12 June 2021 by presenting experts in their fields, namely Mr Imam Abrori, S.E., M.M., in the first session.
- b. Marketing Management Training was also conducted virtually using Microsoft on 12 June 2021 by presenting experts in their fields, Mrs Nur Latifa Isnaini Putri, S.E., M.M., who was in the second session on the same day as the previous training.
- c. The third training was MSME Financial Management, held on 19 June 2021 in the first session by presenting speaker Mrs Dyah Ayu Perwitasari, S.Ab., M. Account. This material aims to assist business actors in managing finances, especially during the pandemic.
- d. While the fourth is the Financial Report Preparation training in the second session on 19 June 2021 by presenting the speaker, Mrs Dr. Lia Rachmawati, S.E., M.Ak., who helped the three partners compile simple financial statements, especially in knowing the profit and loss obtained.

4. Fourth Stage

The delivery of machines and other supporting tools is included in the fourth stage, which will be held on 20 June 2021, while the machines provided in this PKM activity include

- a. A dough kneading machine aims to ease the work during the production process and make time more effective and efficient.
- b. Trays used to dry crackers resulting from production can also be used as a medium for drying crackers before frying for partners 2 and 3.
- c. Product packaging or packaging that is more elegant because it uses PP plastic with a qualified thickness and screen printing according to the business name of each partner, no longer using ordinary plastic with paper labels
- d. Digital scales can be used by partners in the packaging process so that each product has the same weight, not based on the number of items in the cracker itself but based on weight.
- e. Impulse sealer as a packaging adhesive after filling the product in the package, so it looks nicer and neater.
- f. The business nameplate is given as a conventional promotional media to know that the business is in the right place with the address listed.
- g. The EMKM accounting book is given as a reference in preparing financial reports for small and medium-sized business actors. Even though it is in the form of a simple report, it is still in the regulations that the authorities have regulated.

5. Fifth Stage

This fifth stage is the process of assisting the practice of operating machines and tools provided, which was carried out on 27 June 2021. This assistance starts from the production process, drying, packaging, and preparing simple financial reports for the three partners to provide convenience in carrying out business activities.

6. Sixth Stage

Monitoring and evaluation is the sixth stage which is the spearhead of business success. From this monitoring and evaluation, the implementing team can determine the success of the community partnership program activities to provide breakthrough suggestions and innovative solutions. In addition, the implementation team can check whether the three partners are still experiencing difficulties in carrying out their business activities from the monitoring and evaluation. Given the training results that have been carried out, the three business partners are still experiencing difficulties in determining and compiling financial reports, especially in separating personal funds from business results. Therefore, there is still a need for continuous mentoring and assistance regarding the financial management process and the preparation of MSME financial reports.

Outcomes achieved

This community partnership program activity also produces outputs following the expectations and objectives of the proposed proposal, which are as follows:

1. The establishment of solid cooperation between partners in carrying out business activities
The first outcome is creating a more solid collaboration between the first partners as a producer and the second and third partners as resellers, considering that this collaboration can be the key to success in building cooperation between the three partners—both in determining the purchase price and selling price in the market.
2. Resources who are skilled and qualified in their fields
It is realized by the availability of a clear division of tasks for each activity, so no longer one person concurrently does various work activities simultaneously.
3. Availability of reliable and helpful business support equipment
This equipment results from the procurement of goods from the PKM implementation team in the form of a dough mixer, drying trays, nameplates, impulse sealers, digital scales and product packaging, and EMKM accounting handbooks.

4. The ability of partners to innovate more attractive products is proven by creating more variety of cracker flavors produced by partner one, thus making buyers able to taste products with various flavors and not get bored quickly.

CONCLUSION

Some things that we can conclude from the implementation of the community partnership program with the title of increasing quality of crackers productivity as a food commodity in Jember Regency are as follows:

1. The three community partnership program partners share a strong ambition to develop their businesses. It is evident from their willingness to innovate both in terms of product and marketing.
2. The management training has brought positive changes for the three business partners, especially changes in carrying out their operational activities in a sustainable manner. In particular, the training covered topics on human resource management, marketing strategy, business, and financial management.
3. The achievement of the activity target in the form of procuring production support equipment such as dough mixer machines, trays, business nameplates, impulse sealers, packaging, digital scales, and EMKM accounting handbooks can achieve success in increasing market expansion as well as improving product quality and variants.
4. This PKM activity also involves several students and can provide benefits for these students. The benefits obtained by these students are related to hands-on experience in the business world. Through this activity, students can identify the problems faced in the business world. In addition, they will also learn how to find the right solution to overcome these problems. Eventually, they not only get the theory but also get the actual practice in the business world.

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