

Enhancing Brown Sugar Potential as Homemade Product Through Brand Image Enhancement Strategy

¹MN Jamalita*, ²Dahlia, ³Muh. Sofyan Sauri, ⁴Nadila Mursalin, ⁵Muhammad Fuad Syuhri, ⁶Muh. Juhadi Saini, ⁷Hesti Pujiastuti

¹Hukum Tata Negara, Institut Agama Islam DDI, Sidenreng Rappang, Indonesia

^{2,3,4}Hukum Keluarga Islam, Institut Agama Islam DDI, Sidenreng Rappang, Indonesia

^{5,6}Pendidikan Agama Islam, Institut Agama Islam DDI, Sidenreng Rappang, Indonesia

⁷Ekonomi Syariah, Institut Agama Islam DDI, Sidenreng Rappang, Indonesia

Email Corresponding: jamaliamursal@gmail.com*

INFORMASI ARTIKEL

ABSTRACT

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This paper will provide an analysis of a workshop held in the Village of Maddenra with the intention of enhancing brown sugar farmers' marketing skills. The purpose of the workshop was to enhance the marketing skills of brown sugar farmers. The workshop was organized with the intention of holding it in the Maddenra Village in the future. As part of an effort to provide community service, the training focused on the utilization of technology in marketing endeavors and the demand for aesthetically appealing product packaging. In an endeavor to provide community service, this action was taken. This was accomplished as part of an initiative to conduct community service. As part of an initiative to contribute back to the community by performing volunteer work, training was provided. The program was greeted with enthusiasm, particularly from more experienced participants who were aware of social media's potential to enhance their level of commercial performance. This response was particularly favorable to the program being presented. The workshop also emphasized the importance of implementing marketing strategies that make use of social media and actively participating in community-beneficial activities in order to gain an advantage over one's competitors, the workshop serve its purpose as a solution to increase the number of buyer for this specific product. This was brought up as a means of gaining a competitive advantage. The results of this paper indicate that the use of technology and the possession of digital literacy skills are crucial for the growth and development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

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I. INTRODUCTION

The commodity known as brown sugar is characterized by high levels of both demand and economic value. Brown sugar is produced from concentrated coconut sap by boiling the sap water for many hours, which causes the sap water to turn brown, the brown sugar to attain a low water content, and the brown sugar to provide a distinct aroma. Brown sugar is a product of concentrated coconut sap. According to the Philippine Food and Nutrition Research Institute, brown sugar has a glycemic index of less than 55, whereas refined sugar has a glycemic index that is greater than 70. Therefore, diabetics and other individuals who place a high priority on the upkeep of their health can benefit from consuming brown sugar (Dewi et al., 2014).

The commodity of brown sugar makes a number of contributions to the local economy. These include: (1) Production and sales: Making brown sugar can give farmers, laborers, and people who work in the sugar industry jobs and money. Brown sugar needs people to grow, harvest, process, and package it, which creates jobs and income. (2) Trade and export: Brown sugar can be traded both domestically and internationally, which helps the economies of countries that produce and export it. Exporting brown sugar can bring in foreign currency and help a country's economy grow overall. (3) Small businesses: Brown sugar can be used as an ingredient in many food products, like baked goods, candies, and drinks. Small businesses like bakeries, cafes, and food manufacturers can use brown sugar in their products to attract customers and make money. (4) Local markets: Brown sugar is often used in the home to cook and bake. Brown sugar is an important part of many recipes, so it is in high demand at local markets and grocery stores. Brown sugar sales in these markets bring

in money for retailers and suppliers. Overall, the production, trade, and use of brown sugar can have a positive effect on the economy by creating jobs, bringing in money, and helping out different food-related businesses (Joris & Fredriksz, 2019).

Brown sugar's capacity to separate from refined white sugar is its potential. Ginger and pandan leaf extracts enhance the flavour and aroma of brown sugar, especially sugarcane-made brown sugar. This change masks the sugarcane smell and makes the product more palatable. Herbal extracts reduce sugarcane scent, improving brown sugar quality. This fragrance boost encourages customers to pick brown sugar over other sugars. Skilled partners can transform sugarcane into liquid and single-use sugar. The production capacity is 20 liters of water and 4 kilograms of sugarcane. Brown sugar's high-value products demonstrate its success. The program has addressed sugarcane brown sugar price and aroma, allowing partners to develop high-value products. Brown sugar's unique flavour and aroma and economic viability make it promise. Partners can make high-quality brown sugar goods for consumers using herbal extracts and correct production methods (Yasser et al., 2020). Brown sugar has enormous potential due to domestic and worldwide demand. Brown sugar—especially palm sugar—is a profitable export. Industry jobs strengthen communities. Rural brown sugar farmers make it their livelihood. Coconut sap brown sugar helps local businesses. Coconut sap brown sugar manufacturing can boost communities during COVID-19 pandemics. Brown sugar is marketable domestically and internationally. Brown sugar, especially palm sugar, is preferred to refined sugar because it has fewer calories and tastes better. Industrial coconut blooms and seeds are ideal. Coconut sap yields sugar, flour, syrup, shell, and whole sugar. Compared to sugarcane (20%) and beet sugar, palm sugar from coconut sap contains 84% sucrose (17 percent). Protein, fat, potassium, and phosphorus outweigh sugarcane and beet sugar. Coconut sap is sweeter (Putri & Wardo, 2021).

Palm tree, which the people of Maddenra Village, Kulo District, Sidenreng Rappang Regency refer to as a kolang kaling tree, is one among the things that is owned by the community. Brown sugar is produced in this region by its inhabitants, who utilize the many palm trees as a supply of the raw ingredients necessary for the process. Craftsmen who work with brown sugar can produce 10 kg of brown sugar in a single day, but they can produce between 50 and 70 kg, or even more, in a single week depending on the number of palm trees they utilize. In addition to their use in the production of brown sugar, some residents of Maddenra Village also fashion broomsticks from sugar palm sticks. These broomsticks are then put up for sale at various stalls in the village. The majority of the population in Maddenra Village, which is located in the Kulo District of the Sidenreng Rappang Regency, are farmers and brown sugar producers. According to the findings of the survey, there were approximately 30 people in the region who worked as brown sugar craftsmen. The revenue and economics of the community are able to support day-to-day activities thanks to the money generated through the sale of brown sugar.

Manufacturers who work with brown sugar in Maddenra Village are considered traditional craftsmen since they employ straightforward tools in their work and do not yet rely on more advanced forms of technology. The marketing that is being done is still being done utilizing the same old conventional or traditional approaches. When performing the process of tapping, the employment of traditional methods typically results in the collection of a quantity of sap that is insufficient to fulfill product orders. These factors have an effect on both the level of production and the competitiveness of the product. The purpose of this research is to investigate the potential for community empowerment in Maddenra Village, which is located in Kulo District, Sidenreng Rappang Regency, by utilizing the potential of a local commodity, specifically brown sugar made from coconut sap. The usage of natural resources of kolang kaling trees or palm trees, the level of productivity, and the income from the sale of brown sugar made from coconut sap will be the primary topics of discussion throughout this study project.

II. PROBLEMS

Shifts in the weather or climate conditions are one of the numerous challenges that are frequently encountered by farmers engaged in the business of processing palm sugar. This challenge manifests itself during the process of collecting the sap from the palm tree. Alterations in the weather can have an impact on both the quality and quantity of the sap water that is generated. The condition of the sap tree, which is to be wet and slippery after it has rained, is another difficulty that is frequently encountered in the process of collecting sap. When it rains, the sap tree can become an impediment because of its condition. But there are

still many challenges and difficulties that farmers must overcome. Some of these include the fact that palm flower stalks do not produce sap even after being tapped, the fact that there is not as much sap tapping as there used to be, the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult for farmers to obtain firewood to cook sap, which will then produce palm sugar, and the fact that farmers do not have access to market information, particularly regarding prices. According to the findings of interviews conducted with members of the community, they have admitted that the palm sugar processing business in which they are participating gives them cause for concern. People who make their living in these ways have aged throughout the course of time and are beginning to age at a slower rate now than they formerly did. They began working in the palm sugar processing industry when they were young, and now they are at the point in their lives when they are prepared to teach the next generation of young people in their village the skills and knowledge that have been passed down to them. But in point of fact, managers have a hard time recruiting young people who are interested in working in this industry. Young people's attention is increasingly focused on technology, which is seeing tremendous expansion at the moment because of the increasing sophistication of the times.



Figure 1. Community Service Locations

III. METHODOLOGY

This program is a form of community service, as a part of community service program of DDI Islamic Institute of Sidenreng Rappang, this program was conducted during the community service program, in which align with the objective and the theme of the program. After performing observation, this program was considered suitable for the village development program, in which the village contains sources of brown sugar material. During the observation, the research team were identified the potential to improve brown sugar production using excessive natural resources, the observation also takes notes, that one of suitable strategy to improve this potential is to enhance the brand image, which the residents weren't yet able to do, thus, making brown sugar look dull and very traditional, therefore, this program are considered suitable to accommodate these potential of brown sugar product in the Village of Maddenra.

This program has total of 45 participants, comes from both producer and local residents, the program was open publicly, to maximize the expanding potential of brown sugar producer, this program serves the purpose to enhance the capabilities of brown sugar producers and local residents to improve brand image of their products, in which can increase the potential number of sales. Other than that, this program will also demonstrate the use of technology in digital marketing, which serves the purpose of expanding the marketplace of brown sugar products in the Village of Maddenra.

There are few step in this program, as a part of the community service program the mechanism of this program was quite simple, in which the event will start with the presentation about the brown sugar potential, this part will discuss the potential on brown sugar, but not limited only to its production, it will also serve the learning material about digital marketing, and technology usage on gaining more consumer and buyer. The second part of the event will be a question and asking session, in which the participants are allowed to ask, and

the speaker will provide suitable answer that the participants require. The final part of this event will be the demonstration part, in this session, the presenter will demonstrate how to use technology to the brown sugar producer advantage in order to gain more costumer and buyer, further, the final part will also provide assistance, especially to those that are new to the technology. To wrap up this program, there will be documentation, as prove of this program has been successfully conducted.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Community empowerments were including five aspects, these aspects have important role and form of implementation, this aspect including enabling, empowering, protecting, supporting and fostering, in order to achieve best results in community empowerment program these aspects are important, the definitions of this aspect can be explained as follows:

1. Enabling. Enabling can be defined as creating an atmosphere or climate that allows the potential of the community to develop optimally. enabling can be done by helping the community to change community attitude towards the environment, helping to develop the ability to organize, communicate, and master the physical environment. Thus, enabling aims to increase community access to achieve better social, economic, and quality of life conditions compared to previous activities (Soeprodjo et al., 2020).
2. Empowering. Empowering refers to the process of enabling individuals or communities to take control of their own lives and make decisions that affect them. It involves providing them with the necessary resources, skills, and knowledge to improve their economic, social, and political status. The concept of empowering is people-centered, participatory, and sustainable, which means that it prioritizes the needs and aspirations of the people, involves their active participation, and aims to create long-term positive changes (Habib, 2021).
3. Protecting. Protecting refers to the process of preventing the weak from becoming weaker due to their lack of ability to face the strong. In the context of community empowerment, protecting involves providing planned, directed, and sustainable protection and empowerment to locals, with the goals to improve the welfare of the people, including the communities of locals that are the subject of community empowerment program (Putra & Rahaju, 2022).
4. Supporting. Supporting refers to factors or elements that contribute positively to the implementation of community empowerment through the corporate social responsibility program, in which act as facilitators to assist the community to achieve its goals. Some of supporting examples is to provide training as a seed to improve community capabilities (Pujayanti & Mashur, 2021).
5. Fostering. Fostering refers to the act of promoting or encouraging the development of certain aspects or activities within the community. In general, fostering means to illustrate intentional and strategic support of certain aspects or activities that are deemed important for community empowerment (Ishak & Hasan, 2020).

This paper contains all of this aspect in its community empowerment implementation, the community empowerment program is done in two main sections, the first section is to observe the existing process of brown sugar production, which the first step is the process of extracting the main ingredients to produce brown sugar. This are seen as the perfect program for Village of Maddenra, as the empirical evidence shows the increasing demand of brown sugar. The product demands also affected by the shift in self-awareness of the consumer on brown sugar nutritional value comparing to the white sugar. Also, brown sugar are now become one of the main ingredient of many modern drinks, therefore increasing the potential of brown sugar marketplace will provide the welfare of its producers (Arianti & Waluyati, 2019). After performing the observation, to improve the potential of brown sugar marketplace and production, form of community service program is in form of workshop, which include the learning material of marketing, and brand image enhancement.

Marketing and Brand Image Enhancement Workshop

Brown sugar has been one of the many homes industry product, namely in the Village of Maddenra, the locals have been producing brown sugar in a traditional form using dry leaf as its wrap, nowadays, there are many form of product, in which allowing many competition to occur in the market, either in the local market, national and international market, therefore in order to enhance its brand image and expand marketplace,

workshop on this topic are conducted. The workshop started with the learning material of marketing strategy, which is specify in digital and social marketing. This method of marketing are very effective especially in the modern era, industrial revolution 4.0 explain how human are manage to maximize its performance using technology, in which the locals in village of Maddenra are still lack. Empirical studies on social media marketing explains that, the potential of product to enter marketplace is in competitive state, but due to some doesn't have intense marketing frequency and still on traditional methods of offline marketing, therefore, one of the important things to implement is social media marketing, due to the high number of social media usage nowadays, however, this method need further attention due to the fact that some of the business owner have a very large technological gap, making them unable to use technology goodly (Oktavianty & Alamsyah, 2023).



Figure 2. Community Service Workshop

Social media marketing learning material were accepted goodly, the participant was very active during the question and asking session. Social media marketing is considered to be effective, according to few empirical evidence, social media marketing is a form of modern-day marketing technique, moreover, this method very effective in gaining costumer, due to the condition on nowadays interaction are mostly using social media. Social media marketing can be an effective tool for businesses to enhance consumers' product/brand awareness, build brand value, and positively influence their purchasing behaviors (Mason et al., 2021). The effectiveness of using social media as a marketing tool is determined by the level of ease-of-use (Syaifullah et al., 2021). Social media shape costumer behavior through several ways, which is (1) it allows businesses to create content or messages that can influence customer behavior and lead to marketing objectives; (2) social media marketing can help businesses build relationships with customers by creating direct interactions and two-way communication; (3) social media marketing can increase brand awareness and reach a wider marketplace; (4) social media marketing can generate word-of-mouth effects, as customers are more likely to share information they see on social media with others; and (5) social media marketing can provide businesses with valuable insights into customer preferences and behavior, which can inform future marketing strategies (Wibowo et al., 2021).

This workshop are meant to eliminate the limitations of locals in term of using technology on their marketing activities, this paper identifies that brown sugar demand is high in the market, but the problem is located on its image and its marketing area, with only using traditional method, the furthest marketplace the

product reach is local market, while there is so much potential, a training is needed, this workshop are well received, the participants have interest in using technology, especially the elders, they believe that without social media, their product will sell well, but now they discover this method, they believe in its potential to increase their sales performance. The next important things after marketing, is to make the product well-received and have its own attraction point, in this case, the brown sugar product was only wrap in dry leaf, and has no other attraction point other than its inner value of more healthy ingredients. The explanation for dry leaf wrap is to ensure its nutritional value, however, by using more creative and attractive forms of wrap, will surely increase its demand. Therefore, this workshop also provides learning materials on this matter.

The effectiveness of packaging was analyzed before in empirical research, which explains that packaging is one of the important aspects affecting the purchasing intention of customer. Packaging is known as one of the main tools in influencing consumers' purchase intention, attractive and unique design can enable competitors to compete among themselves at the point of purchase, further, packaging can bring an impact even after the purchase, as it can transfer valuable information on the product and differentiate it from other competitor's products (Rajendran et al., 2019). Explaining the importance of packaging, empirical research stated that shape and color of packaging play a fundamental role, as consumers spot the products at a given distance and start processing the more conspicuous visual elements well before being captured by minor details or semantic information (Sousa et al., 2020). The worries about packaging bring image toward the product, in which it may affect the product chance of being sold, this are aligned with empirical evidence, stated, consumers have expressed concerns about excessive packaging, especially plastic packaging, and have shown a preference for more sustainable packaging options. Producers should consider sustainable packaging options and ensure that the amount of packaging used is commensurate with the product they contain (Oloyede & Lignou, 2021). Reflecting on this, it indicates the importance of packaging, and highlights its ability to attract and gain costumer. Further, it will enhance brand image, which can influence consumer purchasing intention and behaviors.

After delivering both of learning material, the participants are assisted to use their smartphone to implement social marketing methods, the result showed how much the participants interested in this method, also in order to develop personal skills, the university involved in this process of community service, are following up this workshop and assist the participants further on how to use technology to their advantage, also the student itself, are involved in the process of brown sugar production, learning and discover future potential, as for the participants, other than discovering method that potentially increase their sales rate, they also discover a way to improver brand image through packaging.



Figure 3. The Brown Sugar Production Process

Brown sugar production were a part of this community service program, in which this process are what given the main idea of what to improve in the village of Maddenra, one of this process is the extraction of Nira, the quality of brown sugar are located in its ingredients, which is Nira, in term of economic benefits, Nira, can

both directly consume, or used as brown sugar ingredients (Ledheng & Naisumu, 2020). Nira are produced into more than brown sugar, palm sugar, and palm wine, which all this product are well-received, however its traditional form of packaging, making them aren't very attractive in the modern market. The benefits of Nira as the main ingredient of brown sugar serve as sources of mineral, sources of energy, sources of antioxidant, ensure healthy digestion, and ensuring healthy skins. These benefits are what made Nira important as ingredients (Simatupang et al., 2023). Knowing this to be a very nice value of potential, this workshop as its driver of improvements. By the end of the workshop, from there, participants are expected to maximize the use of technology, and improve the packaging in order to obtain attraction value of the brown sugar product in the Village of Maddenra.



Figure 4. The Closing of Workshop

Workshop focuses on increasing and developing capacities are done in order to provide short training, and workshop, in which many people haven't had the luxury of going into formal education institution, the role of academicians, government, and many other skilled person, is to provide informal form of education, the impact of this form of education will enhance the productivity, which enhance the creative economy and local economy, in which will contribute toward the development of economy in general, further, it can also contribute toward the development of skilled labor, that will affect the future generations ahead. The focus of this paper is to highlight the importance of social media marketing and packaging advantage in the form of community service. There are several evidence align with this importance, the importance of social media marketing were meant to enhance the society of what social media are capable of, social media have many features including its function to promote and enhance business performance, social media can also be used to improve brand image, it depends on how the individual control and set creativity toward their product promotion, from this point, it can be assume that, with the right strategy and correct method, social media is capable of bringing certain products or services into the national or even international markets (Novianti & Alamsyah, 2023). Another example of social media importance on building brand image and improving sales rate potential explained, that, social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, play a crucial role in online marketing, including effective branding and promotion. During the Covivirus-19 pandemic, the use of the internet, particularly social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, has increased dramatically. This has enabled businesses to optimize their online presence and increase their sales. Moreover, social media platforms enable users to create business and personal profiles, as

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well as social connections in the virtual world. Utilizing the cost-effective and easily accessible features and benefits of social media, SMBs can establish brand image and customer satisfaction that will result in customer loyalty (Fantini et al., 2021). Finally, technology have given us the visualization of how easy human can improve their potential, this explains the importance of academicians, and many other practitioners to participate in giving training, workshops, and seminars, in order to improve the ability to use technology, and digital literacy, in order to achieve the full potential of business, especially SMEs (Agit et al., 2023).

V. CONCLUSION

Integration of technology and digital literacy is essential for the growth and development of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The workshop sought to improve the use of technology in marketing activities, specifically in the brown sugar industry, and was well received by the attendees. In addition, the workshop highlighted the significance of product packaging in attracting customers and enhancing brand image. The community service program, which included this workshop, was an integral component of the village development program and was considered suitable for enhancing the marketability of the brown sugar product in the Village of Maddenra. The program also emphasized the significance of social media marketing and community service as a competitive advantage. Therefore, academicians, government officials, and other skilled individuals must play a crucial role in providing informal education through such programs in order to increase productivity, contribute to the local economy, and develop skilled labor for the future.

There are a number of potential enhancements to consider. First, the paper could benefit from a deeper examination of the workshop's long-term effect on the business performance of its participants. This could include a follow-up study to assess the long-term effects of the training on the participants' technology use, marketing strategies, and sales performance. The paper could also provide more specific examples or case studies of the successful implementation of the strategies discussed in the workshop. This would provide readers with a clearer comprehension of how these strategies can be implemented in actual situations. Thirdly, the paper could include additional direct quotations or testimonials from workshop attendees. This would lend a personal touch and make the impact of the workshop more tangible to the readers. Lastly, the paper could delve deeper into the obstacles encountered by participants when implementing the strategies learned during the workshop and how these obstacles were overcome. This would provide a more impartial view of the process and could be beneficial to readers considering similar initiatives.

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