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## Improving Product Quality and Marketing Strategies In The Rengkek Latukan (Korela) Community

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**Abstract:** A rengkek trader is a street vendor who sells his merchandise by going around to villages using a rengkek placed on the back of his motorcycle. The Latukan rengkek community is a traveling merchant that sells various types of food consisting of various fried foods, wet cakes, side dishes and pauk. The food sold by the rengkek community is produced by a group of mothers in Latukan village. This community service aims to help the Latukan rengkek community in improving the quality of the products sold and assisting in the field of marketing strategy so that the goods produced have many enthusiasts so that producers do not lose much. This community service activity is carried out using *Assed Based Community Development (ABCD)*. With the ABCD approach, it can prioritize the use of local village assets or potential. The ABCD method consists of five steps, namely discovery, dream, design, define, and destiny. With this community service program, it is hoped that it can contribute thoughts to the Latukan rengkek community in order to improve the quality of products starting from packaging, the taste of processed food so that it is delicious and in great demand by consumers and food does not spoil quickly. Apart from product quality, marketing strategies are also very important for Latukan rengkek traders.

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### Introduction

Latukan Village is one of the villages in Karanggeneng Lamongan sub-district. The majority of the residents of this village work as farmers because the land is very fertile so that farmers can grow various kinds of fruits and vegetables, although many Latukan villagers also work as traders, especially as cracker traders.

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community is a traveling merchant that sells various types of food consisting of various fried foods, wet cakes, side dishes and pauk. The food sold by the rengkek community is produced by a group of mothers in Latukan village.

Small industry is often interpreted as a business with relatively small capital, the equipment used is also very simple, they try to sell their products to meet consumer needs (Abas, 2016). In buying goods, most consumers also often consider the quality of the goods by looking at the shape of the product, product packaging and the taste of the product.

Small entrepreneurs, including small and mobile traders, are very vulnerable to competition for large industrial goods both in terms of quality and quantity, and are even faced with competition with the modern market. According to Sugianto in Sayid Abas, small entrepreneurs in Indonesia have the following profiles: 1) Business is more of a family company, the head of the family is usually the holder of business management, 2) Work and do business traditionally, namely by using simple technology and technology, 3) Financial management and administration are weak because there is no record of business activities and financial management between individuals and families has not been separated, 4) Consumptive in nature, namely most of the profits are consumed, 5) The collateral owned is insufficient, 6) Generally, the place of residence/business is an inheritance whose proof of ownership has not been certified and does not even have its own place of business, 7) Difficulty in marketing the products produced, 8) Difficult to identify problems so that they can be concluded with a lack of capital, 9) Small entrepreneurs are classified as late and backward in obtaining information (Abas, 2016).

Product quality is a specialty that a product has, both in the form of taste, excellence, convenience and durability. Product quality can also determine consumer satisfaction after making a purchase and experimenting with the product. Product quality will make the will and needs of consumers for a product can be met. In addition, product quality is also a factor that affects competitive advantage in addition to the price and circulation range of the goods.

In addition to product quality, the problem faced by the rengkek community is the opportunity to develop their business by expanding market access. Marketing is an activity carried out by every merchant aimed at providing high-quality products for

continuous consumption. Every producer will meet various problems in an effort to achieve its goals, therefore producers must be able to pay attention to the products produced by them and always improve the quality of the products so that consumers decide to continue buying the product(Sudiyanto, 2017).

The service was carried out by Lia Ika Kartikasari and Moh. Faizin (Kartikasari & Faizin, 2021) : The result of this service is that the hydroponic vegetable MSME assistance program in Blora district, Central Java, has been implemented with two indicators of change, namely packaging innovation and marketing expansion. Packaging innovation is to provide transparent and open plastic without being mentioned at the top and for marketing, namely online marketing carried out through social media such as FB, IG and WhatsApp to reach more and more buyers.

Community service carried out by Mustamin, Laila Fatikhatul Ula and Luky Widyastutik (Mustamim et al., 2020). This service was carried out in Sidodadi hamlet, Brangkal village. The goal of cooperation with 20 traders is to carry out socialization. The implementation of this activity was in October with training and discussion for two meetings. The methods taken are the method of approach, discussion, training and workshops. As a result, the community is able to make an innovative product and is able to add insight into product packaging innovations and the community also knows the official business licensing process.

Community service by Sari Purnavita, Herman Yoseph Sriyana and Tantri Widiastuti (Purnavita et al., 2018). The result of his dedication is that in increasing sales turnover, product innovation and seasoning technology are improved, packaging technology by sowing spices, and expanding marketing networks with internet media. The packaging of emping products from Garut is interesting, innovations in various flavors, and marketing is carried out through internet media, namely with blogspots, so that it can penetrate marketing widely. In large stores, the selling price of Garut emping products increased by 50%, and the sales turnover also increased by 100%.

The purpose of this community service activity is to improve the quality of products starting from packaging, the taste of processed food so that it is delicious and in great demand by consumers and food does not spoil quickly and improve the marketing strategy of the Rengkek Latukan Community (Korela) so that MSME products from Korela

are easily available to consumers and the turnover of traders is increasing.

## Method

This community service activity is carried out using *Assesed Based Community Development* (ABCD). With the ABCD approach, it can prioritize the use of local village assets or potential. The ABCD method consists of five key steps that can be carried out in the mentoring research process. The following is a chart of the steps taken in community service activities: (Dureau, 2013)

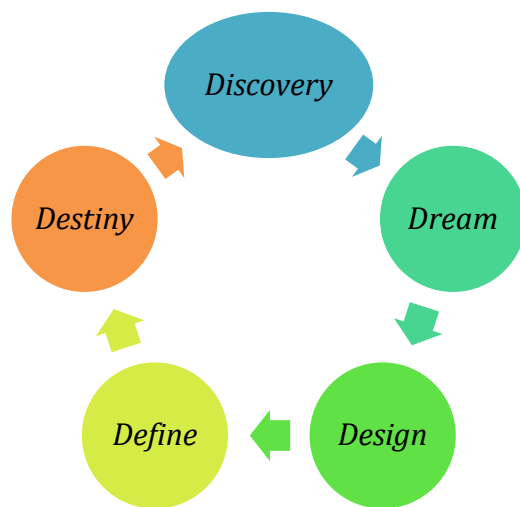


Figure 1. Mentoring research process flow chart

### 1. *Discovery*

This rediscovery can be done through a process of dialogue or interviews that are used as persona discovery about everything that is used as a contribution to an individual who can revive an activity or business. In the discovery stage, this begins with the transfer of responsibility for the individuals who are interested in becoming a change, namely local entities.

### 2. *Dreams*

In the dream stage, everyone can explore their hopes and dreams, for themselves or for the organization. A dream or vision that is shared with the future consists of actions, words, photos and pictures.

### 3. *Design* (Design)

The entire community or group can participate in the process of learning about their assets or strengths so that they can be used in a constructive, inclusive and collaborative way in achieving the goals and aspirations they have set.

#### 4. *Define*

The group leader determines the choice of positive topics that aim to find or describe the expected change. Companions with the community also participated in *Focus Group Discussions* (FGD) to determine the focus of the discussion.

#### 5. *Destiny* (Do)

Carrying out activities is the last step carried out based on the results of the agreement in achieving the community's dreams from the use of assets. Basically, theory is a *guide* in seeing the reality in society. Theory is used as a mindset in solving a problem in society.

This service activity is carried out by seeking MSME innovations in Latukan, Karanggeneng District, Lamongan Regency by implementing product quality improvements both in taste and packaging and building online-based product marketing through social media. The method of obtaining data sources in writing this scientific paper is by using the method of direct interviews with the Latukan rengkek community so that it seems objective and gets information directly related to the problems that are being faced by members of the Latukan rengkek community. Meanwhile, the use of secondary data is in the form of literature studies by searching and reading literature that supports the writing of this scientific paper.

## Result

Community service activities carried out in the Latukan rengkek community will be carried out in several stages, namely:

#### 1. Preparation stage

In this early stage, the author identifies partner problems and considerations in ensuring appropriate mentoring programs to be implemented and run by the Latukan rengkek community. The author made observations to partner locations and interviews with the head of the Latukan rengkek community. In this interview, the author explores information about the problems that occur in this community so that

the author can provide solutions to the problems encountered by the Latukan rengkek community.

The results of the observations and interviews show that the processed food from MSMEs sold by Korela is not always sold out. Some foods are not sold for several reasons. The types of food and the reasons for not selling out are detailed in the following table:

Table 1. Food that often doesn't sell out

Not	Type of Food	Information
1	Pancake	Easily stale
2	Klepon	Easily stale
3	Rolled omelette	Coconut Easily Goes Stale
4	Lemper	Easily spoils and packaging is impractical
5	Nagasari	Easily stale and no model variants
6	Sayur Lodeh	Easily spoils and packaging is impractical
7	Sambal Goreng Ati	Easily stale

## 2. Implementation stage

At this stage of implementation, the author together with partners innovated in making the quality of products sold by the Latukan rengkek community even better and developed a marketing strategy to be able to reach a wider audience. The Author and the Team provide training and assistance to the Latukan rengkek community and it is hoped that after receiving this training and assistance, the members can improve the quality of the products made and be able to market their products in a wider range so that the benefits obtained from these MSMEs are even more.

### Day One: Product Quality Improvement

#### 1. Opening Session

- a. Remarks from the committee and introductions of participants.
- b. Explanation of training objectives and agendas.

#### 2. Workshop: Wet Cake Production Techniques

- a. Introduction of quality raw materials.
- b. Demonstration of long-lasting wet cake making techniques.

- c. Hands-on practice of making several types of wet cakes (klepon, rolled omelet, nagasari, etc.).

### 3. Workshop: Side Dish Production Techniques

- a. Selection of fresh and quality raw materials.
- b. The right cooking technique for side dishes to make them last longer.
- c. Direct practice of cooking several types of side dishes (vegetable lodeh, sambel goreng ati, etc.).

## Day Two: Product Innovation Development

### 1. Creative Idea Session

- a. Brainstorming together for the development of wet cake variants and side dishes.
- b. A successful case study of product innovation in the culinary field.

### 2. Workshop: Experiment and Innovation

- a. The practice of creating new variants based on ideas that have been developed.
- b. Evaluation and assessment of experimental results by other participants and mentors.

## Day Three: Effective Marketing Strategies

### 1. Digital Marketing Introductory Session

- a. Introduction to the concept of digital marketing.
- b. The importance of branding and storytelling in marketing products.

### 2. Workshop: Marketing on Social Media

- a. Food photography techniques for social media.
- b. Crafting engaging content and posting strategies on Instagram, Facebook, and other platforms.

### 3. Workshop: E-Commerce and Online Platforms

- a. Introduction of relevant e-commerce platforms.
- b. How to create and manage an online store.
- c. Sales increase strategy through promotions and discounts.

## Day Four: Improving Management Skills

### 1. Business Management Session

- a. Introduction to the basics of small business management.

- b. Simple financial management for MSMEs.

## 2. Quality Control Session

- a. Quality control techniques in production.
- b. The implementation of the quality management system is simple.

## 3. Evaluation

The evaluation stage is the final stage carried out in this activity in order to measure the success of the programs carried out. Evaluation is an indicator of the success or failure of the activities that have been carried out. Improving product quality in terms of taste and packaging is a form of effort carried out in order to expand marketing. From this, the author will evaluate whether the level of sales is increasing or the same as before the assistance to the Latukan rengkek community. The following are the results of the evaluation after the training on improving product quality and marketing strategies:

### 1) Product Quality

- a. Quality Improvement: 90% of participants reported a significant improvement in the quality of their wet cake products and side dishes. They stated that the new techniques learned helped improve the taste, texture and durability of the product.
- b. Product Innovation: 75% of participants succeeded in developing new product variants that are more innovative and in demand by the market. This new product includes wet cakes with different flavor variants and side dishes with new recipes.

### 2) Marketing Strategy

- a. Improved Branding: Participants showed a better understanding of the importance of branding and have begun to implement a more consistent branding strategy across their social media and product packaging.
- b. Social Media Use: 80% of participants reported improved skills in marketing products through social media. They began to regularly post interesting content and take advantage of promotional features on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.



c. Online Sales: Most of the participants have started using e-commerce platforms to sell their products. They state that online sales help them reach more customers.

### 3) Increased Sales

a. Increased Sales: Data shows an average 30% increase in sales after training. Some MSMEs even reported an increase of up to 50% due to product innovation and better marketing strategies.

b. Customer Feedback: Many participants received positive feedback from their customers regarding quality improvements and new product variants. This helps increase customer loyalty.

### 4) Business Management

Better Management: Participants reported that business management training helped them better manage their finances and day-to-day operations. Stock management and bookkeeping have become more organized.

## 4. Reporting

At this stage, the author will report on the entire series of activities that have been carried out. MSMEs in the culinary sector, especially those that produce wet cakes and side dishes, often face challenges in maintaining product quality and marketing their products widely. Therefore, this training is designed to help MSME actors overcome these challenges by providing practical knowledge and necessary skills. With this report, it is hoped that similar training can continue to be carried out to support MSMEs in improving the quality and competitiveness of their products in an increasingly competitive market.

## Discussion

A product is a set of physical attributes that are related to an identifiable form. According to Kotler in Etta Mamang Sangadji, product quality is a dynamic condition that has to do with services, products, people and processes as well as the environment that has been fulfilled and has more expectations (Sangadji & Sopiah, 2014).

Meanwhile, according to Amstrong and Kotler, product quality is a means that is the main position of the market. Product quality has a direct impact on the performance of products or services, so quality is very closely related to customer value. In other words, quality can be defined free from damage (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

The conclusion of some of the theories above is that customer satisfaction can be determined by product satisfaction which is related to customer expectations for the quality of the products they buy. And product quality is a challenge for companies to compete and is a factor that drives economic growth in the global market.

Quality products will be more attractive to consumers so that sales volume can be increased. The following will explain some of the aspects that must be owned so that the product can be of high quality, namely:

- a) Consumers who usually use products based on quality generally have loyalty compared to large products compared to consumers who use a product based on price orientation. Consumers with criteria that are more concerned with their quality will always buy the product until the product makes them dissatisfied because there are other similar and better quality products. In contrast to consumers who prioritize price, they are more looking for products that are relatively cheap, with any brand. So it can be concluded that the latter consumer does not have loyalty to the product.
- b) It is contradictory, namely with the traditional way of thinking about business, producing goods that have high quality is no more expensive than producing low quality products. Many manufacturers find that the production of high-quality products does not have to be priced more expensive.
- c) Selling goods of poor or poor quality, the producer must be ready to receive complaints from consumers and possibly the goods will be returned. From here, it will cost more to repair, in addition to getting a bad image from the community. Such consumers will demand compensation through the court because they feel aggrieved. So, if referring to these three reasons, high-quality products must be produced more and producers will benefit, when compared to manufacturers who make low-quality products (Prawirosentono, 2002).

Marketing strategy according to M.Taufiq Amir in "Strategic Management of a Concept and Application": is a strategy aimed at improving performance by using sub-strategies such as targeting, positioning, segmentation, and improving after-sales service, developing new market segments, and designing special deliverables (Amir, 2012).

Marketing strategy is the key to success for MSMEs in reaching a wider market and increasing sales. In today's digital era, utilizing social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok is one of the effective steps. By creating engaging and interactive content, MSMEs can build closer relationships with customers.

Additionally, optimizing the use of e-commerce platforms helps to expand the reach of the market geographically without physical restrictions. Strong branding, with an attractive and consistent packaging design, also plays an important role in creating a positive first impression. In addition, participation in various local exhibitions and bazaars can increase the visibility of products offline. Providing responsive and quality customer service and implementing promotional strategies such as discounts, bundling packages, or loyalty programs will increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. With a combination of digital and traditional marketing strategies, MSMEs can be more effective in building brands and increasing sales.

## Conclusion

The community service program with the title "Improving Product Quality and Marketing Strategy in the Rengkek Latukan Community (KORELA)" has succeeded in achieving its goals well. Through a series of intensive and participatory trainings, KORELA community members now have a deeper understanding of the production techniques of high-quality and durable wet cakes and side dishes. Product innovation has also been implemented, resulting in new variations that suit market tastes.

In the field of marketing, the KORELA community has acquired the necessary skills to effectively utilize social media and e-commerce platforms, increasing the visibility and sales of their products. Consistent and engaging branding and targeted promotional strategies have helped the community expand its market reach and increase customer loyalty. Overall, the program not only provides new knowledge and skills for the KORELA community, but also encourages a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. It is hoped

that with improved product quality and more effective marketing strategies, the KORELA community can continue to grow and contribute significantly to the local economy.

This training succeeded in achieving its goal of improving product quality and marketing skills of participants. For the next training, it is recommended:

1. Provide advanced mentoring sessions to help participants overcome post-training challenges.
2. Increasing focus on the use of more advanced digital technologies and e-commerce.
3. Forming a network between participants to share experiences and support each other.

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