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Mentoring of Small and Medium Micro Businesses Based on Local Wisdom in Balai Makam Village to Improve Community Economy

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Abstract
The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) mentoring program in Balai Makam Village aims to improve the skills and production capacity of the community in making traditional cakes such as steamed sponge cakes, layer cakes, and talam cakes in order to encourage local economic growth. The uniqueness (novelty) of this activity lies in the utilization of local potential and cultural heritage recipes developed with an innovative approach through digital marketing strategies and modern packaging. This mentoring uses the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) method which emphasizes the exploration of local assets, community empowerment, and collaboration between business actors. The results of the activity show an increase in technical skills, growing awareness of entrepreneurship among housewives, and the formation of independent business groups that are able to produce and market products consistently. This program has proven effective in encouraging economic independence and the preservation of traditional culinary based on local wisdom.
Keywords: *Mentoring, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Local Wisdom*

INTRODUCTION

Background Of The Study

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a strategic role in the Indonesian economy (Abdurohim 2023). As the backbone of the national economy, MSMEs not only make a significant contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but also absorb a large number of workers and encourage economic equality in various regions (Sunarsi 2020). Amidst global and local economic challenges, MSMEs demonstrate high resilience and flexibility, making them a vital sector in maintaining economic stability and growth. The role of MSMEs is increasingly prominent in the context of inclusive and sustainable development (Abid 2021). Micro, Small and



Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have a strategic role in national and regional economic development. As a sector that is able to absorb a large number of workers and contribute to increasing community income, MSMEs are one of the backbones of the economy, especially in rural areas. In the midst of the dynamics of development, the existence of MSMEs is also an important means of empowering communities and strengthening local-based economies (Harahap and Tambunan 2022). With its characteristics based on local potential and people's entrepreneurship, MSMEs are able to create business opportunities in various sectors, including agriculture, trade, crafts, culinary, and services. However, behind its great potential, MSMEs still face various structural obstacles, such as limited access to capital, technology, marketing, and low digital and managerial literacy in villages (Suci 2017).

Balai Makam Village, located in Bathin Solapan District, Bengkalis Regency, is one of the villages that has great potential in developing MSMEs (Sofyan 2017). Most of its people depend on the informal sector for their livelihoods, such as snack businesses, handicrafts, grocery stores, services, and agricultural trade. However, despite having sufficient resource potential, MSME actors in Balai Makam still face various challenges, such as limited access to capital, low digital literacy, and lack of managerial training (Evangeulista et al. 2023). Therefore, strengthening MSMEs in Balai Makam is very important in order to encourage inclusive and sustainable village economic growth. Through mentoring, training, and facilitation of market and technology access, MSMEs are expected to be able to increase their competitiveness and become the main driver of the local economy. This introduction will be the initial step to dig deeper into the conditions, potential, and strategies for empowering MSMEs in Balai Makam Village (Sarfiah, Atmaja, and Verawati 2019).

Based on field observations and informal data, the majority of MSMEs in Balai Makam are engaged in small trade, services, processed agriculture, and home businesses such as culinary and crafts. However, they still face various structural obstacles, such as limited access to capital, technology, and marketing (Husaini, Raudah, and ... 2023). On the other hand, the social role of MSMEs is very much felt because it is a forum for interaction, cooperation, and community solidarity. Many business actors support each other, for example in the form of joint marketing or sharing information on cheap raw materials. This reality shows that MSMEs in Balai Makam cannot only be understood from an economic perspective, but also as a social phenomenon that reflects patterns of relationships, dependencies, and the spirit of community collectivity. Therefore, understanding MSMEs as a social fact opens up a wider study space to see how social



structures influence the development of small businesses and how small businesses help shape the social structure of village communities (Hidayat, Lesmana, and Latifah 2022).

Research Gap

Mentoring for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has become a concern for many parties in various studies, especially in the context of strengthening the local economy and poverty alleviation. Various previous studies have reviewed the importance of the role of MSMEs in village economic development as well as mentoring strategies that include managerial training, access to capital, and business digitalization. However, most of these studies tend to use a generic and top-down approach, without integrating local values or local wisdom inherent in the local community (Zahra 2022). On the other hand, studies on local wisdom discuss many aspects of culture, tradition, and social, but not many have linked them directly to practical MSME mentoring strategies. Local wisdom as a social and cultural asset is still rarely used as a foundation in the process of community-based economic empowerment, especially in the form of business mentoring (Sudrartono et al. 2022).

Specifically, Balai Makam Village, which has a wealth of local values and unique natural and human resource potential, has not been widely covered in academic studies related to the integration of local wisdom in MSME mentoring strategies. There has been no research that comprehensively explains how local wisdom in this village can be used as a basis for a contextual, participatory, and sustainable mentoring approach in order to increase business capacity and community welfare. Therefore, this research is important to fill this gap by examining in depth the MSME mentoring model based on local wisdom in Balai Makam Village. This research will not only enrich the literature on village economic empowerment, but also contribute to formulating a mentoring approach that is more relevant and in line with the socio-cultural context of the local community (SUBAGYO and PURNOMO 2022).

Rationale Of The Study

Community economic assistance through the development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has become an important strategy in local economic development in Indonesia (Tambunan 2021). MSMEs have proven to be able to absorb labor, create economic independence, and reduce social inequality, especially in rural areas. However, many MSMEs in villages still face challenges in terms of business management, market access, and strengthening sustainable product identity. Balai Makam Village is one of the villages that has great potential in MSME development. This village is not only rich in natural resources, but also holds unique local



wisdom values, ranging from cultural traditions, local knowledge, to collective social relationship patterns. Unfortunately, this potential has not been fully utilized as a basis for developing community economic enterprises. Local products have not yet raised local cultural identity, and innovations based on local wisdom are still minimal (Amelia, Prasetyo, and Maharani 2017).

This study is based on the urgency to explore and integrate local wisdom values in the development of MSMEs in order to create an economic model that is not only profit-oriented, but also strengthens cultural identity and social sustainability. The local wisdom-based approach is considered relevant to create a more contextual business, accepted by the community, and able to increase the competitiveness of local products in a wider market. Thus, this study is important to formulate a local wisdom-based MSME empowerment strategy that is adaptive to the characteristics of Balai Makam Village (Dewi, Yovita, and Pandin 2022). The results of this study are expected to be a reference in designing village economic development programs that not only focus on growth, but also on preserving local cultural values and improving community welfare holistically.

Literature Review

In the last five years, academic studies on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) based on local wisdom have shown a significant increase (Sedyastuti 2018). Based on an analysis of 98 scientific articles published between 2020 and 2025, there is a tendency for researchers to link the strengthening of MSMEs with local potential, both in terms of culture, social, and natural resources. MSMEs based on local wisdom are considered an adaptive and sustainable strategy in facing the challenges of globalization, climate change, and economic crises. The majority of articles highlight the importance of preserving local values such as mutual cooperation, traditional work ethics, unique production techniques, and local raw materials as competitive advantages of MSMEs. In addition, many studies emphasize the role of indigenous communities, traditional institutions, and local figures in supporting the sustainability of MSMEs. Several articles also highlight the role of digital technology in transforming traditional MSMEs into more modern ones without abandoning their local roots. This literature analysis produced several main thematic clusters that represent the focus of the studies during this period. Each cluster describes a different approach in viewing the contribution of local wisdom to MSME development.

Table 1: classification of articles from 2015 to 2025

No	Klaster	Number of Articles	Study Focus
1	**Local Wisdom Based Business Model**	22	A study on the design of MSME business models that integrate cultural values, traditional practices, and local resources.
2	**Local Community Empowerment**	19	Study on community participation, traditional leaders, and local institutions in supporting MSMEs.
3	**Product Innovation and Local Branding**	17	Focus on product innovation based on cultural heritage and branding strategies with local narratives.
4	**Digitalization of Traditional MSMEs**	14	Transforming local MSMEs through digital technologies such as e-commerce, social media, and digital marketing platforms.
5	**The Role of Government and Public Policy**	12	Analysis of government policies in supporting locality-based MSMEs, including regulations, incentives, and training.
6	**Local Value-Based MSME Resilience**	9	Study on the resilience of MSMEs to crises (e.g. pandemic) by utilizing local value systems.
7	**Ecotourism and Local SMEs**	5	Synergy between MSMEs and the tourism sector based on local culture and nature.

source: search from public or ferrish app from 2015 to 2025

From this review, it appears that local wisdom-based MSMEs are not only about maintaining cultural identity, but also an adaptive strategy to face contemporary challenges. The literature shows that the integration of local values with innovation and digital technology will be an important direction in the development of MSMEs in the future. The emerging clusters also



provide a basis for further research and policies to strengthen the people's economy based on local potential (Simangunsong 2022).

Novelty Of The Study

This study presents a novelty in the study of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with a local wisdom-based approach in Balai Makam Village, Bengkalis Regency. So far, MSME studies have generally focused solely on economic aspects, such as capital, marketing, and business management, without delving deeply into the cultural potential and local values that exist in rural communities. This study offers a more holistic approach by integrating local cultural values, mutual cooperation traditions, and production practices that have been passed down from generation to generation as a basis for strengthening MSME competitiveness. Another novelty lies in the mapping of social and cultural assets that have not been documented as part of the community's economic empowerment strategy (Farisi and Fasa 2022). This study develops a model for strengthening MSMEs that does not only rely on technical economic aspects, but also utilizes social capital, local knowledge, and the cultural identity of the Balai Makam Village community. Thus, this study provides a conceptual contribution to the development of an asset-based community development (ABCD) empowerment approach that is contextual and applicable, and can be replicated in other villages with similar cultural characteristics.

Purposes/Hypothesis Of The Study

This study aims to understand and analyze the role of local wisdom in developing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Balai Makam Village. Specifically, this study is intended to: 1) Identify forms of local wisdom that are the basis or influence in local community business practices. 2) Compile recommendations for MSME empowerment strategies based on local wisdom that are relevant to the socio-economic conditions of the Balai Makam Village community. With these objectives, this study is expected to be able to provide theoretical and practical contributions in the development of MSMEs that are not only oriented towards economic profit alone, but also uphold local values as the foundation for business sustainability. This study also becomes the basis for formulating a more contextual, participatory, and local cultural identity-based community assistance model.

METHODS

Research Design



This study uses a qualitative approach with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method to explore the potential and empowerment of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) based on local wisdom in Balai Makam Village. The ABCD approach was chosen because it emphasizes the strengths (assets) owned by the community, not merely on weaknesses or problems (Rohmatullah and Nurpratiwi 2024). Thus, this study is directed at identifying and mapping local potential that can support the sustainability and growth of MSMEs in the village. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with MSME actors, community leaders, village governments, and local facilitators. Researchers also used a community asset mapping instrument, which includes five main asset categories in the ABCD approach, namely: (1) individual assets (skills and knowledge of residents), (2) social assets (networks and relationships between residents), (3) institutional assets (religious institutions, education, cooperatives), (4) physical and environmental assets (strategic locations, local raw materials), and (5) economic assets (resident businesses, social capital, market access). Data analysis techniques are carried out thematically with stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Researchers analyze how these assets can be integrated to support the development of MSMEs that are in line with local values, culture, and village potential. The results of this study are expected to be a model for local economic empowerment based on the internal strength of the community, not external dependence.

Research Target/Subject

This study focuses on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) based on local wisdom in Balai Makam Village, Bathin Solapan District, Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province. The subjects of the study included individuals and business groups that manage products or services that contain local values, such as traditional food, regional handicrafts, agricultural businesses, and services based on local culture. The main target of this study is MSME actors who have utilized local potential—either in the form of natural resources, cultural values, hereditary knowledge, or social traditions of the village community—as a basis for developing their businesses. The study also involved community leaders, village officials, and MSME assistants who play a role in encouraging local-based economic empowerment. Through this approach, it is hoped that a complete picture can be obtained of how MSMEs in Balai Makam Village develop within the framework of local wisdom, as well as the extent to which these values play a role in the



sustainability and competitiveness of businesses amidst the flow of modernization and digitalization of the economy.

Research Procedure

This study uses a qualitative approach with a participatory method based on the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) approach (Putro et al. 2022). This approach emphasizes the exploration and empowerment of local assets owned by the community as a basis for developing MSMEs. The research procedure is carried out in several stages as follows:

1. Discovery Stage (Asset Discovery):

   Researchers together with the community mapped local assets including individual assets, social assets, natural assets, economic assets, and cultural assets in Balai Makam Village. The techniques used include in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and participatory observation. In this stage, a number of local potentials were found, such as handicraft skills, typical agricultural products, and local culinary traditions that can be developed in the form of MSMEs.

2. Dream Stage (Designing Shared Hopes):

   Through community meetings, the community is invited to imagine the ideal future of their village in the context of MSME development. This stage prioritizes community participation to develop a shared vision regarding the form of local wisdom-based businesses that are expected to improve economic welfare.

3. Design Stage (Strategy Design):
   Together with community leaders, MSME actors, and village youth, an action plan for MSME empowerment is prepared. This plan includes the utilization of local assets, the formation of business groups, business management training, and strengthening marketing networks. The role of the facilitator in this stage is to mediate discussions and ensure that the strategy design is in accordance with the potential and local values of the village.

4. Destiny/Delivery Stage (Implementation and Evaluation):
   The agreed strategy is then implemented through real activities such as entrepreneurship training, local product development, and social media-based promotion. Researchers also facilitate participatory monitoring and evaluation to assess the sustainability and impact



of the developed business. Reflections are carried out periodically with residents to see progress and make adjustments to the strategy if necessary.

5. Documentation and Dissemination of Results Stage:

   The entire research process is documented in the form of narratives, videos, and infographics to be shared with the wider community and other stakeholders. The research results are also conveyed in the form of policy recommendations to the village government as part of advocacy for MSME development based on local potential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Local Wisdom in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Balai Makam Village.

Balai Makam Village, located in Bathin Solapan District, Bengkalis Regency, has quite promising economic potential, especially in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector.(Fachmi 2023) This potential lies not only in its natural resources, but also in the forms of local wisdom that have been passed down from generation to generation by the local community. This local wisdom is an important foundation in the sustainable management of MSMEs. One form of local wisdom that stands out is the spirit of mutual cooperation in business development. The residents of Balai Makam Village have a tradition of helping each other, especially in local food production activities, handicrafts, and small-scale agriculture. Mutual cooperation is not only carried out in the form of labor, but also in terms of product promotion and distribution through community social networks.

In addition, the use of local raw materials is also a real manifestation of the local wisdom of MSMEs in this village. Many MSME actors produce traditional snacks such as cassava crackers, sago plates, and coconut sweets by utilizing local agricultural products. This not only reduces dependence on raw materials from outside, but also increases the added value of local products. Other wisdom is seen in the practice of family-based business management (Saharuddin 2020). Many MSMEs are managed hereditarily, reflecting family values and business continuity. Children are involved in the production process from an early age, so that local skills are not lost over time. This also forms a strong entrepreneurial character among the younger generation of the village.



The use of local cultural symbols in product packaging is also an important form of wisdom. Several MSMEs have begun to use typical Malay names or local ornaments in their product packaging as a form of identity and differentiation. This strategy indirectly strengthens the image of Balai Makam Village products as authentic products with cultural value. Finally, decision-making through deliberation in business groups or cooperatives shows the values of local democracy that live in the community. Many MSME groups make joint decisions regarding prices, marketing, and product innovation, taking into account the aspirations of all members. By maintaining and developing these forms of local wisdom, MSMEs in Balai Makam Village are not only drivers of the village economy, but also preservers of cultural values that are the identity of the local community amidst the increasingly strong current of modernization.

This study found that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Balai Makam Village have quite a large potential in supporting the local economy, especially through an approach based on local wisdom. Based on the results of observations and interviews with MSME actors, it is known that most business units utilize local resources such as agricultural products, fisheries, and handicrafts based on local traditions (Azzahra 2022). Businesses such as making cassava chips, batik with regional motifs, processing smoked fish, and craftsmen of rumbia leaf weaving are concrete forms of utilizing local wisdom. Most of the MSME actors are housewives and village youth who have inherited skills, but not all of them have received formal training or business mentoring. In this case, local wisdom is not only reflected in the product, but also in values such as cooperation (mutual cooperation), honesty, and environmental sustainability that are upheld in the production process. Other findings show that MSMEs in this village still face challenges in terms of marketing, business legality, and access to capital. However, there are innovative practices from several business actors who have started to utilize social media to expand the market. In addition, support from the village government and local mentoring groups has begun to have a positive impact, both in terms of increasing business capacity and product distribution networks. Thus, MSMEs based on local wisdom in Balai Makam Village show a promising direction as a pillar of sustainable village economic development if supported by institutional strengthening, access to technology, and sustainable empowerment programs.

In an effort to improve the skills and economic independence of the community, a traditional cake making training activity has been held in Balai Makam Village. This activity is intended for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), especially housewives and village youth who want to develop local culinary businesses. The training lasted for two days and was

attended by 25 participants who were enthusiastic about learning to make various types of traditional cakes such as talam cake, lapis legit, onde-onde, and cup cakes. This activity not only focuses on ingredient processing techniques, but also on aspects of packaging and product marketing strategies through social media and local marketplaces. Through guidance from culinary practitioners from nearby cities, participants are equipped with applicable skills that are in accordance with the potential of local ingredients. It is hoped that this training can foster new businesses, increase family income, and preserve traditional culinary wisdom..

figure 1



Mentoring discussions 2025

figure 2



traditional cake products

The mentoring activity for making traditional cakes carried out in Balai Makam Village received a positive response from local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), especially housewives who have been producing various regional snacks from generation to generation. Based on an interview with Mrs. Siti Aminah, one of the MSMEs and the head of the cake business group in the village, this mentoring program not only increases technical insight, but also strengthens the confidence of business actors in developing local products.

> "In the past, we only made cakes based on old recipes from our parents, but with this training we now know how to measure the right ingredients, extend the shelf life, and make the appearance more attractive," said Mrs. Siti. She also revealed that this mentoring includes training in cleanliness, packaging, and simple marketing strategies through social media. The mentors, who come from a team of academics and MSME practitioners, provide direct examples and practice with residents."(interview with Mrs. Siti 2025)



In addition to technical training, an interview with Mr. Ramli, a local community leader, emphasized the importance of institutional support and program sustainability. He hopes that this activity will not stop at training, but will continue with access to capital, halal product certification, and opening up wider market access. "We want traditional cakes from Balai Makam to be known outside the region, and even enter souvenir shops or digital platforms," he said(interview with Mr. Ramli 2025).

From the results of the interview, it can be seen that mentoring is not only about transferring skills, but also the process of building collective spirit and local economic value. The participants felt real benefits, both in improving product quality and in expanding marketing networks. This activity reflects the synergy between the community, village government, and mentoring institutions in elevating local wisdom to become a competitive economic force.

Local Wisdom-Based MSME Empowerment Strategy in Balai Makam Village

Empowerment of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Balai Makam Village requires a contextual approach, rooted in local cultural values and the socio-economic conditions of the community, most of whom work as farmers, daily laborers, and home business actors (Fitri and Ibrahim 2023). The empowerment strategy designed must be based on local wisdom so that it is more down to earth, sustainable, and widely accepted by the community. The following are strategic steps that can be taken:

1) Identifying Local Potential. The initial step is to map the local economic and cultural potential of the village, such as skills in making traditional cakes, weaving, or local agricultural products. Through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and participatory observations, the types of products that are most in demand, the availability of raw materials, and uniqueness that can be used as selling points can be identified.
2) Strengthening the Capacity of MSME Actors. After the potential is identified, technical and managerial skills training is carried out. In Balai Makam Village, training such as processing traditional cakes, attractive packaging, and simple financial management are the main needs. Mentoring is carried out directly and is practice-based so that it is easily understood by people with diverse educational backgrounds.
3) Revitalization of Local Wisdom Values. The products developed need to depict local cultural identity, such as the use of village specialty cake names, local-style packaging



designs, and product historical narratives. This strengthens the emotional bond between the product and consumers and differentiates it from foreign products.

4) Network Development and Market Access. The next strategy is to open market access through collaboration with village cooperatives, BUMDes, and local digital platforms. Balai Makam Village MSMEs are encouraged to market products not only offline, but also through social media and marketplaces, with the help of assistants for content creation and promotion.
5) Institutional Strengthening and Collaboration. A joint business group (KUB) or cooperative is formed that can bring together MSME actors to have collective strength in production, distribution, and marketing. The village government acts as a facilitator and provider of regulatory and budget support, including accessing CSR programs and government assistance.
6) Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation. The entire empowerment process is complemented by periodic evaluations involving the community. This is important so that the program remains relevant to the needs of residents and can be adapted to the developing socio-economic dynamics of the village (Afika 2024).

Through this strategy rooted in local wisdom, empowering MSMEs in Balai Makam Village not only creates increased income, but also maintains cultural identity and strengthens social solidarity amidst changing times. Balai Makam Village is one of the villages in Bengkalis Regency that has quite strong human resource and local cultural potential. Most of its people depend on agriculture, fisheries, and small businesses for their livelihoods, including the production of traditional foods such as cakes, chips, and Malay market snacks. The socio-economic conditions of the community, which are still classified as lower middle class, make strengthening the MSME sector a strategic choice to improve welfare.

Empowerment of local wisdom-based MSMEs in Balai Makam Village is carried out with an approach that is integrated with the daily lives of the community. Training programs, such as making and packaging traditional cakes, not only teach technical skills but also instill a spirit of cultural preservation. One of the local strengths utilized is the traditional recipes and cooking techniques that are characteristic of this village's MSME products. Through interviews and field observations, it was discovered that the most effective strategy was a community-based participatory approach. The village government together with assistants from universities and non-governmental institutions facilitated training that actively involved residents, strengthened



business group institutions, and opened access to financing and digital marketing. This process shows the transformation from informal businesses to more organized and market-oriented economic units.

Discussion

Local wisdom-based UMKM mentoring in Balai Makam Village shows how local potential can be optimized through a participatory and contextual approach (Maulida 2024). This activity not only facilitates the improvement of technical production skills, but also strengthens local cultural identity as a foundation for the development of the village's creative economy. Making traditional cakes that have been passed down from generation to generation by the community is the main focus, because they have historical value and quite promising market potential (As'ad, Zaini, and Badruddin 2020). Discussions with UMKM actors and community leaders showed that local wisdom that has so far only been considered a daily practice, actually has high economic value if packaged with the right strategy. The tradition of making cakes such as bangkit cake, talam cake, and wajik cake, which used to only be present at certain moments, is now starting to be designed into ready-to-sell products with attractive packaging and adequate hygiene standards (Abid 2021).

The mentoring carried out is more than just skills training, but also includes strengthening entrepreneurial mentality, simple financial management, and the use of digital media for marketing. This is in accordance with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which places local strengths and potential as the starting point for empowerment. In the context of Balai Makam Village, local wisdom in the form of family recipes, mutual cooperation values, and a sense of togetherness are important assets that are strengthened in the mentoring process. However, the discussion also revealed several challenges. One of them is limited access to capital and low digital literacy among MSME actors. Therefore, the sustainability of mentoring is very much needed, not only from a technical perspective, but also from a policy perspective and institutional support (Harahap and Tambunan 2022). Collaboration between the village government, educational institutions, and business partners is an important key to ensuring that this program has a long-term impact. In other words, mentoring MSMEs in Balai Makam Village proves that empowerment based on local wisdom is not just a romantic discourse, but a concrete strategy to create economic independence rooted in the culture and identity of the



community itself. This process transforms potential into strength, and makes local heritage a foothold towards a more prosperous future.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The local wisdom-based UMKM mentoring activity in Balai Makam Village shows that the economic potential of the community can be developed through strengthening skills, utilizing local traditions, and cross-sector collaboration. Mentoring traditional cake making is an effective entry point to increase the capacity of business actors, especially women and housewives, in terms of product innovation, hygienic production techniques, and packaging and marketing. The success of this activity lies not only in the technical aspects, but also in the growth of collective awareness of the importance of maintaining and elevating local cultural values as the village's economic identity. This activity also succeeded in encouraging the transformation of the community's mindset from household-scale production to businesses that are oriented towards quality and a wider market. Active participation of residents, support from community leaders, and the involvement of professional mentors are key factors in achieving the expected results.

Suggestions

To support the sustainability of this program, several important things need to be considered, including:

1) Strengthening Local Institutions: It is necessary to establish cooperatives or joint business groups as a legal forum for MSME actors to access advanced training, capital, and product certification.
2) Sustainable Assistance: This activity should not be a one-time activity, but should be followed by routine monitoring, digital marketing assistance, and simple business management coaching.
3) Market Access and Promotion: The village government and related partners are advised to open access to promotion through local culinary festivals, MSME exhibitions, and collaboration with souvenir shops and online platforms.
4) Integration with Village Programs: MSME activities based on local wisdom should be included in the Village Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes) so that they become part of the village's economic development priorities.



With the right strategy and cross-sector support, the Balai Makam Village MSME has a great opportunity to grow as a pillar of the culture-based economy, which is competitive but remains firmly rooted in local values.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In the implementation of the local wisdom-based MSME mentoring program in Balai Makam Village, there were indications of conflict of interest that needed to be seriously examined so as not to hinder the main objective of community empowerment. This conflict of interest emerged in several aspects, both in the participant selection process, fund management, and strategic decision-making. One form of conflict identified was the dominance of certain groups in determining training and mentoring participants. Based on the results of observations and interviews, a number of MSME actors complained that several activities only involved relatives or people close to village officials or group administrators, so that other business actors who also had great potential did not get the same opportunity. This gave rise to a sense of injustice and weakened the collective spirit in building businesses based on local wisdom.

In addition, there is a potential conflict of interest in appointing mentoring partners or training material providers. Several sources stated that the selection of third parties in the procurement of training materials was not carried out transparently and tended to benefit certain parties who had personal relationships or political affiliations with the program managers. As a result, the quality of the materials and the effectiveness of the training were less than optimal. Conflicts of interest were also seen in the management of joint venture results. Several group members felt they were not involved in decision-making about selling prices, profit sharing, or product development plans. This caused internal tensions and had the potential to damage the sustainability of the program.

To overcome various forms of conflict of interest, a participatory monitoring mechanism, transparency in program management, and commitment from all parties to place common interests above personal or group interests are needed. With fair and open governance, mentoring of local wisdom-based MSMEs in Balai Makam Village can be a means of empowerment that is truly inclusive and sustainable.



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