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Snack Tower as A Contemporary Business Opportunity to Increase Village Income



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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Training; Snack Tower; Community Service; Entrepreneurial Potential; Economic growth</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Statement: The author(s) declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. Copyright © 2024 ACSR. All rights reserved.</p>	<p>Purpose: The specific aim was to provide training in making Snack towers, gift items made from snacks shaped like tarts or birthday cakes. These towers serve as an alternative option for gifts during important occasions.</p> <p>Study design/methodology/approach: The community service activity involved conducting training sessions in Snack tower making for the residents of Julukanaya Village to equip the participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to create Snack towers. The production process was designed to be cost-effective, allowing for adjustments based on individual budget constraints. The affordability of Snack towers led to high demand among the public.</p> <p>Findings: The community service activity successfully trained the residents of Julukanaya Village, enabling them to acquire new skills. The interest and enthusiasm of the community members were encouraged through this program, with the potential to increase their economic income. The Snack Tower production was identified as a contemporary business opportunity, presenting a viable option for new entrepreneurs. The Snack Tower business can also create employment opportunities for the surrounding community.</p> <p>Originality/value: The affordability and popularity of Snack towers make them a valuable option for gifts and presents during important occasions. The collaboration between the community and the trainers in this program can unleash the entrepreneurial potential of the Julukanaya Village community and contribute to the region's economic growth.</p>

Introduction

Business development today is an interesting highlight in the context of globalization and rapid technological development. This phenomenon is inseparable from the emergence of several new entrepreneurs who further enliven the market with their innovation and creativity. The growing number of business owners also indicates that the level of competition in the market is increasing. However, behind the intense competition, there are exciting opportunities for those who can see and utilize them well. The relationship between the times and the business world is becoming increasingly close, where the market is becoming broader with opportunities spread across various sectors. However, the other side is the growing number of competitors in the same market, making competition

even more challenging. To survive and grow in this competitive business environment, entrepreneurs must create products or services with high selling points and can compete well in the market (Porter, 2008). In essence, the ability to see opportunities and take strategic steps to take advantage of them is the primary key to achieving success in entrepreneurship. Only some have the ability or courage to see and take these opportunities. This makes some people successful in business, while others continue to struggle or even fail. Some people may be more sensitive to business opportunities, while others may need more experience or knowledge to spot and capitalize on them.

One example of a product that has emerged in response to current market dynamics is the snack tower. Snack Tower is an exciting innovation, consisting of various snacks arranged in a way that resembles a tart or birthday cake. This product offers an attractive alternative for consumers to use as gifts or gifts in special moments (Peng & Nunes, 2020). The uniqueness of snack towers lies not only in their attractive appearance but also in their flexibility in terms of price and design. With relatively low production costs and the ability to be customized to suit various budgets, snack towers can reach a diverse range of people. This expands the potential market share of this product, making it one of the exciting business opportunities to be explored further.

The right marketing strategy is the key to success in developing a snack tower business. It is necessary to conduct an in-depth market analysis to understand the preferences and needs of potential consumers. In addition, cooperation with quality snack suppliers is also essential to ensure the quality of the products produced. In this case, a partnership strategy with various parties, such as local snack producers or large distributors, can effectively expand market reach and increase market penetration. Innovation is also essential in maintaining the competitiveness of Tower Snack products. Developing new product variants or adding interesting features can help maintain consumer interest and differentiate this product from its competitors. In addition, applying technology in the production and distribution process can also help improve operational efficiency and reduce production costs.

On a broader scale, the development of snack towers can also positively impact the local economy. By involving local snack producers as partners, this business can help increase the income and welfare of the surrounding community. In addition, by attracting consumer interest in local products, the business can also help promote local economic sustainability and support overall economic growth. The development of the snack tower is one example of how creativity and innovation can respond to market dynamics effectively. By capitalizing on existing opportunities and combining them with the right marketing strategies, the business has the potential to grow and contribute significantly to local and regional economic growth.

Several studies have highlighted the development of the snack food and street food industry, focusing on their potential to increase income in rural areas (Fellows, 2011). However, the economic sustainability of village shops, often including areas for selling snack foods, remains a serious concern (Küpper, 2013). The role of tourism in boosting local income has been emphasized (Leonandri, 2018), as well as the significance of local resources in modern village businesses (Lane & Kastenholz, 2018). Food micro-enterprises have been identified to enhance food security and income (Cress-Williams, 2001). The success of healthy snack vending initiatives in urban areas suggests the potential for similar initiatives in rural areas (Mason, 2014). The utilization of village cultural planning has also been proposed to increase income (Akipin, 2019), as well as the potential of mobile food vending to address food deserts in cities (Caramaschi, 2017). However, amidst the plethora of studies conducted, research gaps still require a more profound understanding. One intriguing phenomenon worthy of further investigation is the extent to which snack foods, and street foods can serve as primary drivers in increasing income in rural areas. Despite existing research highlighting this potential (Fellows, 2011), a more comprehensive analysis is needed to understand the factors influencing the success of snack food and street food businesses in rural contexts.

The role of tourism in increasing local income is another compelling topic for further research. While there has been emphasis on the importance of tourism in stimulating local economies (Leonandri, 2018), there are still unanswered questions regarding the most effective strategies for harnessing the potential of tourism to boost income in villages. Moreover, the role of local resources in driving modern village businesses is another area that warrants further investigation. Previous research has underscored the importance of local resources (X et al., 2023). However, a deeper

understanding of strategies that can be employed to optimize the utilization of these local resources in the development of village businesses is needed. Meanwhile, the potential of food micro-enterprises to enhance food security and income is also worthy of further study. Previous research has highlighted the significant role of food micro-enterprises (Cress-Williams, 2001), yet further analysis is required to understand the factors influencing the success of food micro-enterprises in enhancing food security and income at the local level.

The success of healthy food vending initiatives in urban areas presents opportunities for similar initiatives in rural areas (Mason, 2014). However, questions remain regarding the effectiveness of such initiatives in rural areas and the factors that may influence the success of these initiatives in rural contexts. The potential use of village cultural planning is another intriguing topic for further investigation. Previous research has suggested using village cultural planning to increase income (Akipin, 2019). However, further analysis is needed to understand the most effective strategies for optimizing the use of village cultural planning in increasing income in villages. The potential use of mobile food vending to address food deserts in cities is also worthy of further study (Caramaschi, 2017). However, further analysis is needed to understand the effectiveness of mobile food vending in addressing food deserts in cities and the factors that may influence the success of mobile food vending in urban contexts.

Several research gaps require a more profound understanding. The further research is needed to comprehensively understand the factors influencing the success of snack food and street food businesses in rural areas, the most effective strategies for harnessing the potential of tourism to increase income in villages, the role of local resources in driving modern village businesses, the factors influencing the success of food micro-enterprises in enhancing food security and income at the local level, the effectiveness of healthy food vending initiatives in rural areas, the most effective strategies for utilizing village cultural planning to increase income in villages, and the effectiveness of mobile food vending in addressing food deserts in cities. Consequently, further research in this field is expected to contribute meaningfully to developing policies and strategies to increase income in rural and urban areas.

Amid the economic challenges faced, the community in Julukanaya Village, Palangga District, and Gowa Regency is still constrained by several fundamental problems that must be solved immediately. One of these is the community's need for more interest in entrepreneurship. Many of them are afraid of failure and are limited by capital constraints. In addition, some people still want to be entrepreneurs but must understand the business opportunities worth running. The role of homemakers as partners must also be improved, especially in supporting the family economy. They must be encouraged to develop their abilities and skills in identifying business opportunities relevant to current market needs. Concrete solutions that can be applied effectively are needed to overcome these problems. One of them is through implementing a community service program that focuses on applying science and technology for the community (IbM). This program must be designed comprehensively and become a priority to advance the community's economy. Some of the steps that can be taken include motivating partners to build an entrepreneurial spirit, educating them about business opportunities relevant to the current market, and providing guidance on product marketing through social media platforms. The main target of this program is the people of Julukanaya Village, especially homemakers who dominate the village population. With the right approach and adequate support, it is hoped that the community can increase its interest and ability in entrepreneurship to significantly contribute to developing the local economy and improving overall family welfare.

Research Design and Methodology

The method used in implementing this Community Service (PKM) activity program is providing material and education directly to partners. The partners will be given training that includes theory and practical assistance in making snack towers. The approach used is the individual training method, where the service team will train each partner-participant directly. This program is divided into several stages agreed upon with the partners. The first stage is an introduction, where the basics of making snack towers, tools, materials, and tips and tricks will be introduced to the participants using supporting media such as PowerPoint presentations. Furthermore, the learning stage is carried out

through demonstration by watching a short video about the process of making a snack tower. After that, the participants will directly practice together with guidance from the service team. The discussion was held after the entire process of making the snack tower was completed, where participants were invited to share their feelings and hopes regarding this training activity. The last stage is evaluation, where the success of the training is assessed, and feedback is given for future improvement.

The design of the activity implementation has also been carefully prepared. Preparations were made by socializing the program with partners, determining the field coordinator, and preparing all the necessary equipment. The training was carried out with mentoring and counseling agreed upon with partners, followed by an evaluation of the entire activity. It is expected that with this program, the participants will be able to master the skills of making snack towers independently to increase their future economic potential.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

This community service activity was attended by 32 residents of Julukanya Village, most of whom work as housewives. This activity begins by motivating residents of Julukanaya Village to foster an entrepreneurial spirit in residents so that they are expected to become entrepreneurs. Furthermore, training was given on making a snack tower as an idea for a contemporary business opportunity with minimal capital but a good market share.



Figure 1. Community Service Team Provides Training to Julukanaya Village Residents

To make a snack tower, we can use tools and materials that are readily available and can be adjusted to the budget. The materials and tools prepared are cardboard, scissors, double tip, plaster, metallic paper, and various types of snacks as desired. Then, the used cardboard is cut out according to the desired pattern and arranged to resemble a tart/tower. Furthermore, after the desired pattern is made, then we need to paste the snacks that have been provided following the shape of the pattern that has been made. The final stage of making a snack tower is to attach decorations made according to our creativity to the snack tower.



Figure 2. Tools and Materials for making snack towers.

After providing training to the residents on how to make snack towers, the team then gave several representatives of the residents the opportunity to practice directly by making snack towers according to their creativity.



Figure 3. Residents practice directly the process of making snack towers

This community service activity fosters Julukanaya villagers' creativity in making unique gifts that can be mixed and matched with various kinds of snacks. Residents' creativity is tested with various models of snack shapes arranged to make them more elegant and have high selling value. With this training, the residents can make this snack tower product into a product worth selling with high value to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit of the residents of Julukanaya Village. This snack tower can be a gift offered to anyone and sold through simple marketing. A simple marketing model, such as selling the product to your closest friends and relatives, can be used. If you want to be even better, sales can be promoted through social media such as Instagram and Facebook or marketed by selling them directly, such as participating in exhibition stands, graduations, or other events.

From this service activity, several difficulties were experienced, such as the need for more creativity of residents in arranging the shape of snacks into designs. This is due to the various forms of snack sizes that must be modified. The interest in entrepreneurship is also minimal because many residents are afraid of failing in entrepreneurship, lack of capital to start opening a business, and the inability of residents to see current business opportunities. With the implementation of this activity, it is hoped that it will provide ideas for business opportunities that are suitable for running at this time to increase the income of the Julukanaya Village community.

Discussion

Community service is an endeavor that seeks to offer advantages and constructive contributions to society across all aspects of life. One type of community service involves offering training and motivation to help individuals develop skills to enhance their quality of life and create new business prospects. The Julukanaya Village Community Service Team exemplifies community service activities through their initiatives. Julukanaya Village is a village consisting of 32 members, predominantly homemakers. The Julukanaya Village Community Service Team believes there is significant potential to enhance the community's quality of life through offering entrepreneurial training and inspiration. This team aims to motivate and equip locals with entrepreneurial skills through community service activities in which 32 residents from Julukanaya Village participated.

The program commenced by inspiring the inhabitants of Julukanaya Village to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. They were provided insight into the significance of possessing entrepreneurial abilities and the opportunity for growth within this field. The next stage is to offer training on creating a snack tower as a modern business opportunity with low capital but a promising market share. This course provides residents with the materials and tools to create a snack tower. They began with recycled cardboard, scissors, double-sided tape, plaster, metallic paper, and various foods based on individual preferences. They learned to create a design using recycled cardboard and then assemble it to mimic a tart or tower. They were then instructed to adhere to the refreshments provided according to the predetermined pattern. Finally, decorate the snack tower according to your creativity.

The service team allowed multiple residents' representatives to practice creating snack towers using their ingenuity. This seeks to improve their talents in creating things with high aesthetic appeal and inspire students to identify new business prospects through the products they make. This community service initiative aims to enhance the technical skills in creating snack towers and cultivate the creativity and entrepreneurial mindset of the Julukanaya Village population. Residents are encouraged to creatively arrange food into distinctive and attractive shapes and combine different types of snacks to enhance their market value. This seminar aims to help locals see the economic opportunities the snack tower product presents and inspire them to establish their businesses. Furthermore, the support team offered insights into basic yet impactful marketing tactics. Residents were instructed to market their items through established networks, such as their own social circle or social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook. They were provided details on engaging in exhibitions, graduations, or other events to promote their products directly to consumers.

Despite the numerous benefits of this community service activity, it is accompanied by several barriers. A significant challenge is the need for creativity in arranging food shapes into designs. This is because snacks come in different forms and sizes that must be adjusted to fit the intended design. Furthermore, the lack of enthusiasm for entrepreneurship persists because inhabitants fear failure, lack the necessary funds to start a business, and need help identifying existing business prospects. This service activity is anticipated to offer solutions and innovative ideas for the residents of Julukanaya Village. Using current commercial prospects and technical expertise in producing snack tower products, the goal is to help locals boost their income and enhance their quality of life. With the assistance and direction from the service team, the Julukanaya Village community aims to surmount current challenges and achieve greater economic self-sufficiency.

Conclusion

From the results of community service activities carried out by the Julukanaya Village Community Service Team, training and motivation in entrepreneurship have great potential to increase the creativity and entrepreneurial skills of the community. With a focus on making snack towers as an example of business products, residents are given technical skills and an understanding of simple but effective marketing strategies. The practical implication is the increased income potential and welfare of the Julukanaya Village community through small businesses they can run. Theoretically, this research shows that a community service approach can effectively increase community participation in local economic development. Skills training and understanding local business opportunities encourage increased economic independence and poverty alleviation.

A suggestion for future research is to monitor the development of small businesses started by the community after the training. This will provide a deeper understanding of the long-term impact of community service activities on local communities' economic improvement and welfare. In addition, further research can also be conducted to identify the inhibiting and supporting factors in developing small businesses at the local level, as well as effective strategies in increasing the interest in entrepreneurship among the community.

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