

THE HIDDEN TREASURE OF WEDANG UWUH: AN ETHNIC TRADITIONAL DRINK FROM JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract.

The digital era has transformed the delivery of health information, creating opportunities to promote traditional herbal products such as Wedang Uwuh, a heritage drink from Yogyakarta. This study aims to explore the digital promotion strategies of Wedang Uwuh and evaluate their impact on community awareness and local economic empowerment. Using a qualitative descriptive approach with participatory methods, the research integrates community service and local MSME empowerment in product development and digital marketing. Data were collected through field observations, structured interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Content analysis was used for qualitative data, while descriptive analysis evaluated pre- and post-program knowledge changes.

The program, implemented in Pundung Hamlet, Imogiri, resulted in significant improvements. A formal production group was established, local producers received training in packaging innovation and digital marketing, and Wedang Uwuh was developed into a tea bag format with attractive packaging. These initiatives increased product value, consumer interest, and producers' income. Additionally, the program strengthened local cultural identity, improved health awareness, and supported sustainable community development. The findings highlight the effectiveness of a participatory approach combined with digital tools in enhancing the competitiveness of traditional herbal products. Further recommendations include product diversification, market access expansion, and institutional strengthening through collaboration with external stakeholders.

Keywords: Data mining; Design of experiments; Metaheuristics; Operations research; Simulation

I. INTRODUCTION

The digital era has brought significant changes to the delivery of health information, making it faster, more accessible, and efficient. Social media platforms, health applications, and websites have become primary channels for disseminating health information. Social media, in particular, enables healthcare providers to interact directly with the public, offer education, and share critical health updates in real time. Health campaigns on social media can also reach broader and more diverse product's popularity and consumption within the community. The aim is to explore the transformation of traditional health promotion in the digital era, using Wedang Uwuh as a case study. The findings expected to provide valuable insights into effective methods for promoting traditional health products via digital media audiences, thereby enhancing public health awareness and knowledge (Odongo, 2024).

The adoption of a healthy lifestyle, often encapsulated by the slogan "Back to Nature," has emerged as a global trend, driven by the perception that natural remedies are safer alternatives to synthetic drugs. Reflecting this trend, the demand for herbal medicines has been steadily increasing. In Indonesia, the use of herbal ingredients for medicinal purposes is deeply rooted in tradition, with such remedies being passed down through generations. One notable example is Wedang Uwuh, a traditional herbal drink known for its therapeutic properties (Hidayatulloh *et al.*, 2023).

Wedang Uwuh is a traditional beverage originating from Imogiri, Bantul, Yogyakarta. Traditional herbal remedies, including Wedang Uwuh, have long been integral to Indonesia's health culture, particularly in Yogyakarta. This herbal drink is believed to offer various health benefits, knowledge of which has been passed down through generations. However, despite its established reputation, the promotion of traditional herbal products like Wedang Uwuh in the digital era remains a challenge. Factors such as competition from modern health products and a lack of awareness among younger generations about the advantages of herbal remedies contribute to this issue. In Yogyakarta, efforts are being made to integrate digital technology with local traditions to promote health, including the use of Wedang Uwuh. Strategies involve leveraging social media platforms, creating educational videos, and utilizing e-commerce to reach a broader audience.

This study focuses on how Wedang Uwuh, as a traditional herbal product from Yogyakarta, is promoted through digital platforms. The analysis will identify effective promotional strategies, the challenges faced, and their impact on the and culturally relevant digital strategies in the Indonesian context.

II. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a participatory method, which combines community service activities and empowerment of local MSMEs in the production and promotion of wedang uwuh. This approach aims to address the challenge of low public awareness of the health benefits of wedang uwuh and increase local economic capacity through the active involvement of residents in all stages of activities

Data Collection Technique

1. Field Observation: Conducted to understand the initial conditions of the community related to the knowledge and consumption of wedang uwuh.
2. Structured Interviews: Conducted with community leaders, MSME actors, and residents to explore perceptions, challenges, and opportunities in the production and marketing of wedang uwuh.

3. Questionnaire: Designed to measure changes in people's knowledge and attitudes before and after the intervention. The validity of the instrument is tested through a content validity test by an expert, and reliability is tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient.
4. Documentation: Includes photos of activities, daily notes, and socialization materials as supporting data.



Gambar 1. Kegiatan yang berada di lokasi wedang uwuh

Data Analysis Techniques

Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis techniques to identify the main themes of interviews and observations. Quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed descriptively to see changes in people's knowledge and attitudes. The analysis was carried out in a triangulated manner to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

Community Participation and Interaction

The community is actively involved in every stage of activities, from planning, implementation, to evaluation. Training activities on making wedang uwuh and digital marketing strategies were carried out collaboratively by involving PKK mothers groups and local MSME actors. This approach aims to increase a sense of ownership and Sustainability of the program.

Initial Conditions and Expected Results

Before the implementation of the program, the community had limited knowledge about the benefits of wedang uwuh and had not utilized it optimally as an economic product. Through this activity, it is hoped that there will be an increase in public knowledge about the health benefits of wedang uwuh, an increase in skills in production, and a strengthening of the capacity of local MSMEs in product marketing, both conventionally and digitally.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION



Gambar 2. Bahan bahan wedang uwuh

Result

The community empowerment program in Pundung Hamlet, Wukirsari Village, Imogiri District, Bantul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta, is focused on the development of wedang uwuh products through packaging innovation and production capacity building. Before the implementation of the program, wedang uwuh artisans in this region faced several challenges, including the absence of an official business group, the absence of a P-IRT permit, and product packaging that was still simple.

After the implementation of the program, there were several significant changes:

1. Establishment of Business Groups: The formation of a competent wedang uwuh tea bag production group, allows for more efficient coordination and distribution of products.
2. Knowledge and Skills Improvement: Through training and mentoring, people gain knowledge and skills in raw material processing, packaging techniques, and product marketing strategies.
3. Product Innovation: Development of wedang uwuh products in the form of tea bags with more attractive packaging, increasing consumer attractiveness and product selling value.
4. Improvement of Welfare: With innovation and increased production capacity, there has been an increase in income for wedang uwuh artisans, which has an impact on improving the welfare of the local community.

Discussion

The transformation that has occurred in Pundung Hamlet shows that a participatory approach in community empowerment can produce significant changes.

Prior to the program, wedang uwuh artisans faced limitations in terms of knowledge, skills, and market access. Through training and mentoring, they not only increase production capacity but also understand the importance of innovation and quality in their products.

IV. CONCLUSION



Gambar 3. Kemasan produk wedang uwuh

The community empowerment program in Pundung Hamlet, Wukirsari, Imogiri, Bantul, through the innovation of wedang uwuh dip products has succeeded in increasing the production capacity, skills, and welfare of the entire community. Through training and mentoring, the community develops wedang uwuh products in the form of tea bags with attractive packaging, as well as forming competent business groups. This not only increases the income of the artisans, but also strengthens the local cultural identity and opens up wider market opportunities. This program has a significant positive impact, including improving economic welfare, knowledge and skills, preserving local culture, and improving public health. To strengthen and expand the positive impact, it is recommended to diversify products, increase market access, strengthen institutions, and collaborate with external parties. The new findings from this activity show that a participatory approach that actively involves the community in every stage of the program is very effective in increasing program success. In addition, product innovation that is tailored to market needs and preferences, as well as the use of digital technology in marketing, is a key factor in increasing the competitiveness of wedang uwuh products

V. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgments

The author expresses his deepest appreciation and gratitude to all lecturers of the ICS committee. Gratitude was also addressed to the tourism management of Wukirsari Village for their cooperation and active participation in community empowerment activities that are the focus of this research. In particular, the author would like to thank Dr. Sigit Handoko for his guidance and contribution in the process of writing this article.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors state that there are no financial, commercial, legal, or professional conflicts of interest with other organizations or individuals involved in this study.

Funding Statement

The study did not receive specific grants from funding institutions in the public, commercial, or nonprofit sectors.

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