



Counseling on Optimizing Knowledge Sharing at Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Sambal Ijo Bang Juna, Pematangsiantar City

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ABSTRAK

Knowledge sharing merupakan salah satu aspek penting dalam pengembangan usaha kecil menengah, khususnya dalam meningkatkan efisiensi dan produktivitas. Kegiatan pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan penyuluhan mengenai optimalisasi knowledge sharing pada MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna di Kota Pematangsiantar. Melalui kegiatan penyuluhan ini, diharapkan pemilik dan karyawan MSMEs dapat memahami cara berbagi pengetahuan yang efektif, sehingga dapat menciptakan inovasi dan meningkatkan daya saing produk. Metode yang digunakan dalam kegiatan ini adalah pendekatan partisipatif melalui diskusi, pelatihan, dan simulasi langsung. Sesuai dengan hasil wawancara setelah kegiatan pengabdian ini selesai, diketahui pemahaman pemilik usaha Sambal Ijo Bang Juna terkait knowledge sharing meningkat sebesar 90%. Kesimpulan setelah penyuluhan ini berfokus pada strategi berbagi pengetahuan, manajemen informasi, dan penerapan teknologi sederhana yang dapat mendukung proses knowledge sharing. Oleh karena itu, disarankan agar metode pendampingan kepada mitra yang berkelanjutan dapat digunakan sebagai solusi untuk melakukan inovasi yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: Berbagi Pengetahuan, Efisiensi, Produktivitas, UMKM

ABSTRACT

Knowledge sharing is an important aspect in developing small and medium enterprises, especially in increasing efficiency and productivity. This service activity aims to provide counseling regarding optimizing knowledge sharing at MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna in Pematangsiantar City. Through this outreach activity, it is hoped that MSMEs owners and employees can understand how to share knowledge effectively, so that they can create innovation and increase the competitiveness of products. The method used in this activity is a participatory approach through discussion, training and direct simulation. According to the results of the interview after this service activity was completed, it was discovered that the understanding of Sambal Ijo Bang Juna business owners regarding knowledge sharing increased by 90%. The conclusion after this counseling focuses on knowledge sharing strategies, information management, and the application of simple technology that can support the knowledge sharing process. Therefore, it is recommended that sustainable methods of mentoring partners can be used as a solution to carry out sustainable innovation.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Efficiency, Productivity, MSMEs

INTRODUCTION

Community service through outreach focusing on optimizing knowledge sharing at MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna in Pematangsiantar City is an important



initiative in helping the small and medium business sectors face competitive challenges in the digital era. MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna, as one of the growing MSMEs in Pematangsiantar, has great potential to increase its business scale. However, like many other MSMEs, the main obstacle is more access to relevant knowledge and the ability to share knowledge among team members. With the increasing need for innovation and utilization of technology, knowledge sharing is an important key to business continuity and growth.

At MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna, knowledge-sharing activities must still be more formal and structured. This impacts the need for more consistency in product development, marketing innovation, and customer service. Although workers and business owners have good knowledge about the products they produce, such as the distinctive sambal ijo, this knowledge needs to be better documented and optimally shared with the entire team. Structured knowledge sharing can improve operational efficiency and create more focused innovation. Another problem is the use of technology, which still needs to be improved (Idrees et al., 2018);(Sunarta et al., 2020). MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna has yet to fully utilize digital platforms to support knowledge sharing and knowledge management activities. Digital technology, such as collaboration applications and document-sharing platforms, can be beneficial in integrating knowledge between employees and facilitating the flow of information (Tjiptady et al., 2020).

Entrepreneurship has two main approaches, as explained by (Halim et al., 2021);(Hasan et al., 2021), macro and micro. The macro approach explains, in general, the factors that influence the sustainability of entrepreneurship. The macro approach generally emphasizes external factors that are beyond the control of the entrepreneur itself. Three schools of thought emerge in the macro approach, including the environmental school of thought, the financial school of thought, and the displacement school of thought. The macro approach related to the environment is closely related to the influence on the formation of the lifestyle of the environment itself. The financial approach includes capital or capital that can support the sustainability of the environment (Indrawan et al., 2020). At the same time, displacement thinking emphasizes the phenomenon of groups and obstacles that arise from these conditions that encourage individual changes to become entrepreneurs/entrepreneurs (Irwansyah et al., 2021);(Sherly et al., 2020).

The second approach is the micro approach. The micro approach is closely related to various factors that specifically affect entrepreneurship. The main potential of entrepreneurship is the ability to control conditions in the internal scope where the perspective used is from the inside out (Sutadji & Tjiptady, 2020). The micro approach has three schools of thought that influence it: the entrepreneurial trait school, the business opportunity school of thought, and the strategic formulation school of thought. The entrepreneurial trait is related to creativity and high self-confidence and is the main capital for an entrepreneur's success. The business opportunity school of thought focuses on the aspect of opportunities to develop a business based on the accuracy of the target market, and the strategic formulation school of thought

emphasizes the planning process in developing a business based on the right formulation strategy consisting of products, resources, individuals (human resources) and markets.

One of the significant challenges MSMEs such as Sambal Ijo Bang Juna face is the need for more understanding on implementing knowledge sharing effectively. In addition, the culture of sharing knowledge among team members often needs to be better established (Li et al., 2019);(Julyanthry et al., 2021). Many may feel that their knowledge is a personal asset that must be protected, so an open attitude to sharing knowledge is not formed. This is undoubtedly an obstacle to creating an innovative and collaborative work climate. Community service focused on optimizing knowledge sharing aims to solve this problem. Through this counseling, MSME actors, including the owners and employees of Sambal Ijo Bang Juna, can understand the importance of sharing knowledge to encourage business growth. This counseling also includes training on using the right technology to support the process. This training is expected to change their views on the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing in achieving common goals.

One of the methods used in this counseling is the introduction of simple yet effective digital tools and platforms to facilitate knowledge sharing. For example, internal messaging applications can be used for communication between employees or cloud-based applications to store and share important documents about the production process. This step will increase employee involvement in sharing knowledge and create a more open and transparent communication flow. Another important aspect of this counseling is strengthening a work culture that supports knowledge sharing. Implementing a knowledge management strategy relies on technology and requires a change in organizational culture. Therefore, this counseling will focus on forming a collaborative mindset, where each team member feels motivated to share their ideas and knowledge for mutual progress.

This outreach's success will be evaluated by measuring how MSME actors can implement a knowledge-sharing system daily (Dewi et al., 2023). This will be seen in increased communication between employees, developing new product ideas, and increased efficiency in business operations (Kim et al., 2013);(Chai et al., 2011). This outreach will also provide further recommendations regarding implementing more sophisticated technology, if necessary, to further increase the effectiveness of knowledge sharing. Ultimately, the success of this service is expected to have a real positive impact on MSME Sambal Ijo Bang Juna. By optimizing knowledge sharing, this MSME is expected to strengthen its position in the local market and expand its business reach. Moreover, implementing good knowledge management will be an important capital for the growth of MSMEs in an increasingly tight global competition era. This service activity aims to provide counseling regarding optimizing knowledge sharing at MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna in Pematangsiantar City.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The implementation of community service for optimizing knowledge sharing at MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna in Pematangsiantar City will be carried out through several stages of structured methods. It will focus on the specific needs and conditions of the MSMEs. The flow of implementing this service activity begins with the Planning stage, where the team determines the main service objectives, the material to be delivered, and the goals to be achieved. After that, preparations are made to collect supporting materials, such as presentation tools and training materials, as well as determining the implementation location. The next stage is Initial Consultation with MSME owners, aimed at understanding the challenges and specific needs regarding knowledge and information sharing practices in their business environment.



Figure 1. Stages of Implementing PkM Activities

After consultation, activities continue to Training Implementation, where the team provides guidance in the form of interactive sessions. In this session, participants are trained to optimize the use of internal knowledge and share information effectively among employees and with business partners. After training, follow-up is carried out by collecting feedback from participants regarding training materials and methods, as well as providing additional guidance if necessary. Finally, the team conducted an evaluation to assess the success of the program, identify its impact on MSMEs, and formulate recommendations for improving training in the future. The distance to the partner's location, namely from the Sultan Agung School of Economics Campus, is around 0.8 km or takes about 10 minutes if the trip is taken using a four-wheeled vehicle and 5 minutes if taken using a two-wheeled vehicle.

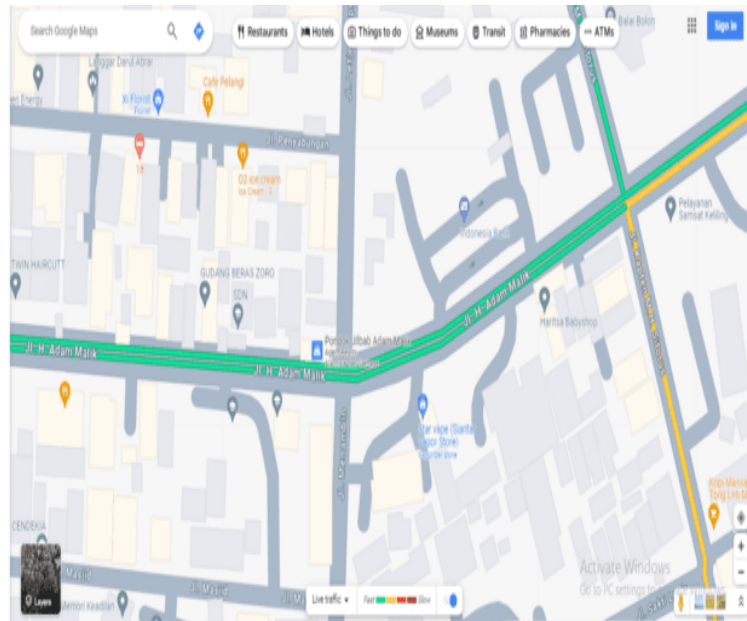


Figure 2. Location map of Bang Juna's Sambal Ijo stall

RESULTS OF ACTIVITIES

This community service activity was held on Saturday 27 July 2024 with 8 participants consisting of 1 business owner, 1 cashier and 6 employees. Every time an entrepreneur is faced with an uncertain situation. With the uncertainty in the future, an entrepreneur needs to prepare himself from the start of starting a business (Muniarty et al., 2021). In today's digital era, changes in various aspects, such as socio-economic changes, needs, lifestyles, and others, are challenging for entrepreneurs. The difficulty in getting a job after completing education has made more and more generations try to become entrepreneurs. Millennials choose to be entrepreneurs rather than looking for work because of freedom (time and work rules), developing creativity, liking challenges, technological support, and other factors (Sudirman et al., 2021). Likewise, there have been changes in the attitudes of parents who support their children in becoming entrepreneurs. Various factors that encourage someone to become an entrepreneur, both external and internal, determine the success of becoming an entrepreneur.

Motivation is needed to become a successful entrepreneur, and it functions as a driving force. According to the great dictionary of the Indonesian language, motivation is an urge that arises in a person consciously or unconsciously to act with a particular purpose. According to (Hasan et al., 2021), motivation is a process of influencing or encouraging from outside a person or workgroup so that they are willing to carry out something that has been determined. Motivation is also interpreted as a drive (driving force) intended as an urge experienced to satisfy and maintain life. Motivation is a drive that arises within a person due to internal or external factors to achieve his goals (Purboyo et al., 2021). When connected to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial motivation can be interpreted as a drive that arises within a person,

either due to internal or external factors, to work through innovation and creativity to improve his living standard (Wardhana et al., 2022).



Figure 3. Documentation of service activities

The community service activity of optimizing knowledge-sharing counseling at MSMES Sambal Ijo Bang Juna in Pematangsiantar City has shown several positive results. One of the main results observed is the increasing awareness of business actors, both owners and employees, about the importance of sharing knowledge to support business development. Before this counseling was carried out, knowledge sharing within MSMES was still carried out sporadically and informally. However, after the counseling, MSMES actors began to realize that sharing information in a structured manner can help improve operational efficiency and facilitate product innovation.

In addition, the counseling results also show that MSMEs have begun to implement the use of technology in sharing knowledge. Employees and management now use digital communication applications, such as cloud-based platforms and internal messaging applications, to facilitate the flow of information between teams. This technology was limited before the community service activities, and employees relied more on direct communication without clear documentation. With the technology training during the counseling, this MSME can now more effectively store and share important documents, such as recipes, marketing strategies, and production records.

This counseling also changed the work culture at MSMES Sambal Ijo Bang Juna. Through the formation of a knowledge-sharing working group and various discussion sessions held during the activity, there was an increase in openness among team members. Employees who were previously less involved in decision-making are now

more active in voicing their ideas. This shows a change in mindset from working individually to being more collaborative, where sharing knowledge is considered an important part of shared success. In terms of operations, implementing knowledge sharing has also increased efficiency in the production and distribution process. MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna now has clear standard operational guidelines through the documentation system developed during the counseling program. As a result, the green chili production process, which was previously sometimes inconsistent, is now more structured and controlled. This documentation system also facilitates knowledge transfer between new and old employees, so training new employees can be carried out more quickly and effectively.

This outreach activity also has an impact on product innovation. With better information flow, ideas for developing new chili sauce variants can be more easily identified and executed. Previously, obstacles in sharing knowledge caused limitations in exploring product innovation. However, with smoother communication between employees and management, MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna has now begun to develop several new products that have the potential to expand their market. Regarding marketing, the outreach results showed increased use of social media and digital marketing strategies. Knowledge about how to utilize digital platforms to promote products was shared in a more structured manner among the marketing team. Previously, marketing strategies were more traditional and limited, but after the outreach, using technology to share information about marketing strategies increased customer engagement online. This can be seen from the increase in interaction on the MSMEs's social media.

The evaluation after the training also showed increased employee skills in using technology to share knowledge. Several employees who were previously less familiar with digital technology now feel more confident using cloud-based applications and other collaboration tools. The training provided has proven effective in improving their technological skills, which ultimately helps speed up workflow and collaboration within the team. In addition, a significant result of this training is forming a better knowledge management system. This system includes documentation of knowledge about the production process, inventory management, and customer service guides. With this system, MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna is better prepared to face growth challenges because critical knowledge about business operations has been well documented and can be accessed at any time by all employees.

Strengthening the culture of knowledge sharing also results in increased trust between employees. Various group activities and knowledge-sharing simulations strengthen the sense of togetherness and solidarity within the team. This impacts improving performance and creates a more positive and harmonious work environment. Employees feel more appreciated and encouraged to contribute to business development. This community service activity has brought many positive changes to MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna. In addition to increasing technology and operational efficiency, this program has also succeeded in building a more collaborative and open work culture. The results of this counseling are expected to

continue to develop and provide a long-term impact on the growth of MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna, as well as being a model for other MSMEs in the Pematangsiantar area who want to improve their knowledge sharing.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The conclusion of the community service activity of optimizing knowledge sharing at MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna in Pematangsiantar City shows that this effort has positively impacted business development and growth. One of the main conclusions is the increasing awareness of owners and employees of the importance of sharing knowledge to improve operational efficiency and product innovation. Through this counseling, MSMEs actors began to understand that structured knowledge sharing can be the key to business success, especially in the digital era's challenges. This counseling also proved that technology is important in supporting the knowledge-sharing process. After the training provided, MSMEs began to adopt simple digital technology, such as cloud-based applications and internal communication tools, to support collaboration and information flow between employees. Implementing this technology has been proven to increase efficiency in terms of documentation and access to information, which were previously obstacles in daily operations. According to the results of the interview after this service activity was completed, it was discovered that the understanding of Sambal Ijo Bang Juna business owners regarding knowledge sharing increased by 90%.

Based on the results obtained, the main suggestion for MSMEs Sambal Ijo Bang Juna is to continue utilizing technology to manage and distribute knowledge. Using a cloud-based platform for storing important documents and structured digital communication applications will significantly help maintain the smooth flow of information. In addition, efforts are needed to develop employees' technological skills to become more accustomed to and comfortable using digital tools. Another suggestion is the importance of forming a work culture that supports continuous knowledge sharing. MSMEs must routinely hold discussion sessions, workshops, or informal meetings where employees can share their ideas and knowledge. This will strengthen the sense of togetherness and encourage more creative innovation while maintaining the spirit of collaboration formed during community service activities. In addition, MSMEs need to create a continuous evaluation mechanism for implementing knowledge sharing. This evaluation can be carried out through routine monitoring of the effectiveness of the documentation system, information flow, and employee involvement in the knowledge-sharing process. By conducting regular evaluations, MSMEs can identify areas that need improvement and ensure that the knowledge-sharing process runs optimally.

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