

MARKETING INNOVATION OF LONTAR LEAF WEAVING HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS BY MSME "BERKAH LONTAR"

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the innovation carried out by Berkah Lontar's woven palm leaf products UMKM located in Lawanganagung Village, Sugio District, Lamongan Regency using descriptive qualitative method which attempts to reveal factual cases that have occurred in Berkah Lontar UMKM. This research uses the theory put forward by Avianti Fontana (2011) which includes aspects of innovation in packaging and appearance, innovation in product size, innovation in production process efficiency and simplification of distribution. The results of this research indicate that Berkah Lontar UMKM has implemented various innovations such as adding creativity to product decoration, providing more varied sizes and simplifying the production process by cutting down on the provision of simpler, faster and cheaper raw materials, as well as expanding the distribution process from physical stores to larger online stores. The conclusion drawn from this research is that the application of innovation to Berkah Lontar UMKM products has a positive impact on increased orders and provides simple and fast efficiency. In essence, innovation in companies provides opportunities for better services and increased customers for the company.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The public's interest in buying handicraft products in Indonesia has its own market, which can be said to be smaller than other products [1]. The relatively high selling price of handicraft products is one of the reasons for the small market, and the lack of understanding of art also contributes to the small market for handicraft products. Natural woven crafts that have functions as storage or packaging products do have their own appeal, but the difficulty in making natural materials and their low durability are being replaced by factory-made products with lower prices and greater durability. However, environmental conservation and pollution are major issues for these products. Leaf weaving is a form of handicraft that has existed since ancient times, and in terms of design, it may lose to factory-made products available today [2]. The marketing needs innovation in order to preserve and increase the sales of these traditional handicraft products and support the surviving traditional craftsmen [3]. Berkah Lontar, one of the businesses in Lawanganagung Village, Sugio District, Lamongan Regency, which has the largest number of leaf weaving craftsmen, is the only business that promotes leaf weaving products that are increasingly abandoned due to lack of sales. Berkah Lontar was established in 2019 as a support for craftsmen who lost their income due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Over time, this business as a middleman for woven products has grown and has met demand from various regions in Indonesia [4]. The large demand in the first year decreased in the second year due to the monotonous appearance of traditional woven products. As a middleman for UMKM, Berkah Lontar also acts as a patron for craftsmen who are given tasks on the number and shape of products to be made after being ordered by customers from Berkah Lontar. Sales and promotions by Berkah Lontar use marketplaces as a sales platform, so sometimes the consumer demand does not match the shape and size that is the standard for leaf weaving crafts. The ability and willingness of craftsmen to always learn how to make shapes according to demand is a challenge for this business activity [5].

The innovation of products in the development of lontar leaf craft aims to increase consumer interest in getting to know and buying lontar leaf products, as well as to introduce new advantages and creativity that can increase the income of lontar leaf weavers [6]. Defines product innovation as an activity of introducing new products and systems that can influence the economic success of companies as well as the social aspect for consumers and the broad scope of the environment and communities involved [7]. Define innovation as the process of a company adapting to a dynamic environment, and therefore, companies are

required to have creative thinking as a process of creating a new idea or developing existing products to adapt and survive in an ever-changing environment. In her book she mentions that product innovation involves changes in [8]:

1. Product packaging, including building and improving the packaging and appearance of a product to make it more innovative.
2. Product size, including innovative choices and variations in product size.
3. Process innovation, including changing or improving the production process to make it more efficient.
4. Distribution system innovation, simplifying the distribution process.

2. METHOD

This research uses the Descriptive Qualitative method because it aims to reveal facts about existing problems and conditions through research to obtain research results and data [9]. Qualitative research is considered to originate from social or human problems, and this research attempts to collect data with specific procedures from participants, analyze data inductively from specific to general themes, and interpret the meaning of data. The end of this research report has a flexible structure [10].

The scope of this research includes the location, object, and time of research. The research location is in Kumisik Hamlet, Lawanganagung Village, Sugio District, Lamongan Regency, East Java. The location is used to produce woven palm leaf craft products and also serves as a shop for woven palm leaf crafts. The research object in this study is the innovation carried out on Berkah Lontar products. This research was conducted from February to April 2023.

The research subjects are the owner of Berkah Lontar business, weavers, and consumers of Berkah Lontar. Data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, observations, and literature studies. Data analysis is done by collecting the required data, then interpreting the data obtained from the research location and subjects to obtain information and facts. The data analysis technique used in this research is qualitative descriptive analysis. This is done to describe the data obtained during data collection.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Lontar Leaf Weaving

The products of lontar leaf weaving have a typical box shape that functions as a rice serving container [11]. In addition to the box shape, this weaving also has a bag shape that is used to carry chicken. This product is made from natural materials taken from the lontar tree or siwalan tree, which in other areas is usually taken for its fruit as siwalan fruit or for its sap to make arak or in other areas, it is also used to make palm sugar. In the Lawanganagung community, the leaves of this tree are taken as a material for weaving crafts, which then become products sold by the UMKM Berkah Lontar.

Product innovation plays an important role in the company's economic activities, making most producers compete to improve appropriate innovations to increase product sales that can balance the environment and adapt to change [12]. The innovation carried out by the UMKM Berkah Lontar covers several aspects that immediately follow some aspects in the book stating that product innovation covers changes in [13]:

1. Product packaging, including building, improving packaging and appearance of a product so that the product looks more innovative.

The innovation carried out by Berkah Lontar in improving its products in terms of appearance by always creating new shapes and models and developing existing shapes, such as on their basket products. The initial form of the basket only served as a box for rice and side dishes, but following demand and seeing opportunities for innovation, Berkah Lontar combined it with several manufacturer products that could support the beauty of the basket's appearance, including adding ribbons and cutting paper. Innovation is also carried out on the weaving product that functions as a container for chicken, which is transformed in shape and size into a product that has a greater function as a bag that is not only popular in the chicken container segment but also as a supporting product for the basket. In terms of appearance, innovation by the UMKM Berkah Lontar is also carried out on the simplification of tube shapes that can function as packaging for textile clothes and others. The effort to increase innovation in the appearance of weaving products by the UMKM Berkah Lontar is in line with the desires of consumers to help the innovation creativity carried out by the team in this UMKM [14].

2. Product size, including options and innovative product size diversity.

Weaving products made from lontar leaves are generally limited to one shape and size, as they are only made to serve a specific shape and size [15]. However, the high consumer interest in this craft

understands that the product can be used for various purposes and requires size adjustment in each field to support its use. For example, for consumers interested in using this craft as a place to sell serabi, the size is adjusted to be smaller to match the size of the serabi. Similarly, for consumers who want to use it for packaging tape, Berkah Lontar adjusts the presentation size of the tape according to the weight of the tape.

3. Process innovation, including changing and building production processes to be more efficient.

The high consumer demand for weaving products with a large quantity requires Berkah Lontar to find a fast and accurate way of production, not only in the crafts sector but also in the provision of materials. The provision of materials that used to rely on supplies purchased from suppliers has now developed by employing freelancers as lontar tree climbers who are already owned by this UMKM. Efficiency is created by meeting the necessary material requirements and relying more on the purchase price of materials as they can pay freelance workers without buying expensive materials from suppliers. The crafts sector can be overcome by setting a target number of weavings to be made by weavers, so that the larger the market for products, the larger the weaving capacity of the weavers. In the drying process, which originally relied on sunlight as the main drying factor, it can now be improved by creating a concrete field with a top-down drying function for lontar leaves so that there are no problems when it is cloudy, rainy or facing material shortages.

4. Distribution system innovation, simplifying the distribution process.

The use of delivery services available in Indonesia helps to accelerate and improve the accuracy of the distribution of Berkah Lontar products. However, with the development of the sales environment into large orders and to reduce the value of distribution expenditure, independent transportation modes are also carried out by Berkah Lontar. Distribution coverage is not only limited to the delivery of goods but also in the sales process, besides using offline stores available in the Lawanganagung village, following the digital economic pattern, the use of various market platform places becomes another store to simplify the sale of these weaving products.

4. CONCLUSION

Through the previous discussion and research results, it can be concluded that in general, the woven palm leaf craft from Berkah Lontar UMKM has implemented innovation. All four elements of innovation have been implemented by Berkah Lontar UMKM as a whole, but in some areas, further improvement is needed, such as in the packaging and appearance of additional accessories that should be added to products that are also created or produced independently to increase the overall production of the UMKM. In addition, in the process element, in addition to adding artisans, training and education for artisans is needed to increase their knowledge and skills in various weaving techniques. To support the innovation process, scheduling for creating new products should be done every semester to maintain consumer interest in the woven palm leaf craft products.

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