



## MODERNITY AND RESISTANCE OF LOCAL KEPISANG WISDOM ON THE ECONOMIC EXISTENCE OF RUSABA COMMUNITIES IN LAMPUNG

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### **Abstract**

The realities of modernity tend to degrade the local wisdom of indigenous communities who utilize natural resources as an economic livelihood, such as the kepisang tradition in Rusaba Village, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province. The banana tradition is a community culture that uses bananas as a source of community income. This research aims to analyze the phenomena and factors that influence the durability of Rusaba people's traditional products with other products which are increasingly heterogeneous today. This research uses a qualitative phenomenological approach with data collection methods, through observation and interviews and sample selection using a purposive sampling technique of ten people including traditional leaders, village heads, village secretaries, members of the Dharma Wanita and several planters and traders. The results of the research reveal that the existence of local kepisang wisdom as a source of income for the Rusaba community is starting to be eroded by foreign products due to low product quality, uncompetitive prices, lack of understanding of market share, poor brand image perception, low use of technology, and lack of protectionism from local government. To increase the competitiveness of local products, governments and local producers can work together to address these issues through investment in innovation, infrastructure improvements, regulatory reform, and other efforts.

**Keywords:** *Local Wisdom, Modernity, Product Competition, Income*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The contemporary era, which includes the present, is characterized by rapid changes in various aspects of human life. Technological developments, urbanization, globalization, and social change have shaped our world in unprecedented ways. In the midst of the turmoil of modernity, there is conflict and tension between the rapidly developing modern lifestyle and local wisdom that has become deeply rooted in various cultures and communities throughout the world. (Meliani et al., 2020).

Local wisdom includes traditions, values, knowledge and practices that have been passed on from generation to generation. It is a cultural heritage that is an integral part of a people's identity (Jubaedah & Fajarianto, 2021). However, with the arrival of modernity, many local wisdoms are faced with existential challenges. Technology, economic changes and global cultural influences often have a negative impact on the continuity of local wisdom.

Local wisdom is one of the invaluable cultural assets possessed by various communities throughout the world. It includes traditions, values, knowledge, practices and worldviews that have been acquired and passed down from generation to generation (Nur et al., 2023). Local wisdom forms the core of a community's cultural identity and often forms the foundation for various aspects of daily life, including agriculture, traditional medicine, art, culinary arts and social values.

However, in the midst of rapidly developing modernity, many traditional communities and indigenous peoples face significant pressure on their local wisdom. Globalization, urbanization, economic change, and technology have influenced the way society thinks, lives, and works (Tanu, 2018). Some of them feel the need to adapt or integrate modern elements in their lives, while others try to maintain their local wisdom as an integral part of their cultural identity and continuity.

One prominent example is the traditional "Kepisang" culture in Rusaba Village, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province. This local wisdom has been an integral part of the lives of the Rusaba people for centuries, with bananas as their main source of income. Kepisang is a custom where people in the village bring bananas to give to the host who wants to make a celebration. This activity has been carried out by the community for generations.

One of the interesting things about bananas is that the people in this village have abundant banana gardens. This makes the community create this tradition. If a house wants to hold a celebration or thanksgiving, then a few days before the celebration or thanksgiving is held, people bring bananas to make very delicious preparations. This is actually very beneficial for the host who is holding a celebration or thanksgiving.

Actually, there is something interesting about the abundance of bananas in the village. With abundant natural resources in a village, there are many things that can be done to process these natural resources to make the village prosperous. (Ramadan, 2023). For example, there is a village that has abundant natural resources such as marine animals, this village can process these marine animals in various ways.

As time progresses, increasingly advanced technology changes the way people in this village view how they use natural resources. This makes the Rusaba community face several pressures. The pressures faced are as follows: (1) Low product quality; (2) Price competition; (3) Lack of understanding regarding price shares; (4) Poor brand image; (5) Low use of technology; and (6) Lack of local government support.

The existence of several pressures like this causes a negative impact on the income of the people in Rusaba village. So it is feared that the village's economy will also be increasingly threatened. This requires a solution and collaboration between the community, the government and mobilizers in the form of young people to revive the economy in Rusaba village. There is a need for collaboration between local Kepisan traditional wisdom and economic needs in the modern era.

The need for the role of many people, including the government, in developing the village is contained in Law Number 20 of 2008 concerning Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, namely that the environmentally sound principle is the principle of empowering Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises which is carried out while still paying attention to and prioritizing protection and environmental maintenance.

With this law, the government is obliged to supervise and facilitate businesses in Rusaba village, from micro businesses to large businesses. The solutions and collaboration planned for the government, community and young people regarding banana innovation are expected to improve the economy of the Rusaba community so



that the village is far from poverty and can improve the welfare of the people in Rusaba village (Zakaria et al., 2023).

From the description above, researchers need research by searching for information contained in the research subject to obtain information and ways to find a solution to this problem. With this research, it is hoped that we can find solutions to improve the welfare of the people of Rusaba Village.

## RESEARCH METHODS

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative phenomenological approach. This approach is an approach in which researchers dig up as much information as possible to get information about events and human interactions in certain situations (Novitasari, 2014). The data collection methods used in this research were observation and interviews. The aim of researchers using this method is so that researchers can be more accurate in obtaining information about natural resources in the form of bananas and kepisangs in Rusaba Village.

The researcher carried out this research by going directly to the research location, describing and illustrating the existing reality and approaching the source of information, so that it is hoped that the information obtained will be optimal and in accordance with the phenomena experienced by the sources. The location of the research carried out was in Rusaba Village, Punduh Pedada District, Pesawaran Regency, which was carried out for 40 days starting from mid-July to the end of August 2023.

The samples taken in this research were taken from the population using purposive sampling techniques. Purposive sampling is a sampling method that is included in the non-random sampling category. In this method, researchers deliberately select samples from the population using their personal judgment. Samples are selected based on criteria that are relevant to the research topic, so that they reflect the desired characteristics (Gazali & Ilhamiyah, 2023). The sample required is 10 people consisting of traditional leaders, village heads, village secretaries, Dharma Wanita members, several planters and several traders.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Rusaba Village is one of the villages in Punduh District, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province. This village is an abundant banana producing area. Many people make their living as banana farmers, so the bananas produced in the area are very abundant. Of the many people who make their living as banana farmers, there are many things that people in the village can do.

However, what is very unfortunate about this community is the lack of processing of the banana products. People only know a few ways of processing bananas, one of which is the banana tradition. Bananas are a tradition in the village. Kebanang is a tradition in the form of people bringing bananas home to make a celebration of giving the bananas to the host. This tradition is a tradition that has been around for generations until now.

After the bananas arrive to the host, the bananas are processed into very delicious dishes. This is a tradition that has been carried out by the people of Rusaba village for generations until now. From the traditions that have been carried out from

the past until now, indirectly over time they will be lost to technological advances and developments in increasingly modern times.

Technological advances and the development of the times are continuously getting more advanced, causing innovation to enter countries, regions and even villages so that if a village is found to still use old traditions and reject the modern era, then that village will become a village left behind. Researchers do not accuse Rusaba village of being a disadvantaged village. However, many will consider the village to be a village left behind if the village does not accept the development of the times.

One thing that can be said to be left behind is the abundant natural resources in the village. Rusaba Village has abundant natural resources, namely bananas. However, it is very unfortunate that the management of natural resources in this village can still be said to be lacking. The people in this village only know about bananas in the village. In fact, many innovations can be made from bananas to improve people's welfare.

According to planters, traders and the community there, they do not know what innovations can be made with bananas. Research conducted in Rusaba village has mixed answers. This is because researchers used interviews and observations to get answers to the questions for this research. In this research, several steps were found, namely case facts, product durability facts and efforts or solutions that researchers offered to the Rusaba Village community.

They said that they only knew about the banana tradition in processing bananas into delicious preparations. So they just make the same thing. Things like this make the immigrant community or the local community might become bored or bored so that their economy becomes threatened. In the facts of the case, it was found that the existence of local banana wisdom as a source of income for the people in Rusaba Village was starting to be eroded by products from outside the region due to the resilience of local products in the face of competitors.

Many competing products are starting to enter the village so that the people feel confused and their economy is threatened, even though bananas are a source of income for the people in the village. After researchers researched the village, it turned out that the quality of the products they offered was still categorized as low. That is what causes many competitors to enter the village and the prices they offer are also not competitive.

This is as said by the traditional leader that "We here and the community only know about this banana preparation from bananas, nothing more." From the words of the traditional leader, it can be concluded that there is a lack of education regarding innovations that can be created from natural resources in the form of bananas. The traditional leader said something like that, perhaps the community also said the same thing.

This is also the cause of a lack of product resilience, namely a lack of understanding of market share. Market share is the part of the overall market controlled by a particular product, service or company in a particular industry or sector (Budhijana, 2022). The meaning of market share is the percentage of total sales or income in an industry or market segment owned by a particular company or



product. The community in Rusaba Village has very little education regarding this market share, so they don't know anything about this market share.

Next is the perception of a bad brand image. In Rusaba village, after researching, it turns out that they still don't know how to give a good brand and maintain the brand they already have. This also means that many of the products in Rusaba village are being penetrated by external competitors so that they cannot maintain their own brand. Traders also said "Yes, to maintain the brand we have, we don't really know how to do it".

There are two more points regarding the product resilience factor in Rusaba Village, namely the low use of technology and the lack of support from the local government. The low use of technology in this village can be said to be worrying. This is because people rarely use Android gadgets and the location of the village is very far from an internet signal, causing people not to have Android gadgets. If there are no Android gadgets in society then people will not be able to explore things that can improve their economy.

This is the key to whether a village is developed or not, namely government support. Rusaba Village is a village that lacks support from the government, especially the local government. This is based on the results of the researcher's interviews with traders there, who basically said "We need an active role and support from the government to improve the economy in Rusaba Village". "The government is the key to a region, so whether the region is developed or not depends on how the region is managed," was one of the words of the traditional leader in the village.

So it can be concluded that the product durability factors found in Rusaba village are: (1) low product quality; (2) uncompetitive prices; (3) lack of public understanding regarding market share; (4) poor brand image perception; (5) people's low level of use of technology; and (6) lack of support from local government. These points must be improved to boost the economy of the people in Rusaba Village.

Efforts that should be made for this village are: (1) Collaboration between the government and local producers; (2) Investment in innovation; (3) Infrastructure improvements; (4) Regulatory reform in the form of banana customs being innovated in accordance with current developments so that people's income is prosperous. This is done to maintain the products in the village in accordance with what Stanton said that product durability is a collection of real and intangible attributes, including packaging, color, price, quality and brand plus service and sales reputation. .

Furthermore, what has been written previously is according to Law Number 20 of 2008 concerning Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. And further according to Kotler and Keller who said that digital marketing is a promotional activity carried out for a brand or product using electronic (digital) media. This is why there must be defense of a region for the products it owns.

To overcome the problems that occurred in the village, the researchers made a breakthrough, namely by holding an activity entitled "Ecoprint Innovation Product Breakthrough and Banana Stem Chips Using Local Natural Resources" in the village together with friends of the Serumpun Posko 58 Melayu KKN. This activity aims to create solutions to the problems that exist in Rusaba village. This breakthrough refers



to one part of the banana, namely the banana stem, as a material aimed at improving the economy in this village.



**Figure 1.** Researcher's Breakthrough Slayer for Rusaba Village

Above is a slayer that is used to create an activity that is very useful for the community in Rusaba Village. Researchers want to provide education about natural resources in the form of bananas by introducing ecoprints and chips made from banana stems. From this activity, it is hoped that the community will increase their education regarding the management of banana natural resources and can also improve the economy in the village.

Ecoprint is a natural printing technique used to transfer colors and patterns from natural materials such as leaves, flowers, leather, or stones onto fabric or other media.(Saraswati et al., 2019). This technique is frequently used in textile arts and crafts and is often used to create unique and organic designs on fabric. Rusaba Village produces a lot of bananas, of course the banana trees there are also abundant. So banana stems are easy to get there.

The banana stems that are taken are used to make ecoprints so that motifs can be made from the banana stems for the clothes that will be made. For example, t-shirts, shirts and so on. By using banana stems as an ecoprint, you can of course create various motifs, especially if the village has a distinctive emblem or symbol, it can be used as an ecoprint for clothing and then for sale to immigrants so that it can attract the attention of immigrants and tourists.

This ecoprint can be made by children to adults, depending on how creative the ecoprint can be. Then, ecoprint is an environmentally friendly technique because ecoprint uses natural materials and does not require harsh chemicals, so it is safe to use. That way, people who use banana stems for ecoprint crafts are not dangerous and safe for the people and consumers who use them.

Furthermore, from the abundant banana stems in the village, they can be processed into banana stem chips. This is an innovation that has also gone viral in



recent years. This is proven by the writings of (Sagajoka et al., 2021), (Hasanah Al et al., 2022), (Hiden & Ningsih, 2021) and there are many more articles that discuss banana stem chips which are made into various kinds of chips. Researchers have taken the initiative to create these banana stem chips to provide education to the people in Rusaba Village.

Banana stem chips are a product that is safe to consume so there is no prohibition against consuming this product. The people in Rusaba Village don't need to worry because the banana stem chips are safe for consumption, so the people can sell them to consumers and newcomers who come to their village. In other words, from these bananas we can find many ideas for processing bananas, from the tree to the fruit.

After the researchers provided education about processed bananas that could be made, it depended on cooperation between the local government and the people there. After carrying out this activity, the government was very enthusiastic about participating in the event so that it could increase education about bananas. The government's job is only to find investors to invest capital in local communities to process bananas better.

After processing it to make it better, then market the processed product to immigrants or tourists who come. However, the people there must have good communication skills or skilled digital marketing skills so that the role of young people in the village is very influential on the people in the village to offer preparations that have been made by the people in Rusaba Village.

There needs to be cooperation between traditional heads, village heads, village officials, young people, traders and the community in the village to jointly improve the economy of Rusaba village. It is hoped that the solution that researchers provide to the community will be able to open up the community's insight into processed bananas and can be put into practice for development and sale so that it can improve the welfare of the people in the village.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research shows that modernity and increasingly heterogeneous product competition have put pressure on local wisdom and tradition-based economies such as the kepisang custom. However, with joint efforts between government, local producers and communities, there is potential to maintain and increase the resilience of these traditional products through investment in innovation and appropriate support. This is important to ensure the continuity of culture and livelihoods of the people in Rusaba Village.

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