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EMPOWERMENT OF THE CIDAHU VILLAGE COMMUNITY THROUGH RE-BRANDING OF OPAK MSMES AS OVOP PRODUCTS AND THE CREATION OF STREET GANG SIGNS IN KKN-T ACTIVITIES OF GUNUNG JATI INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY

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Abstract:

Background. The Thematic Real Work Lecture (KKN-T) of Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati is an implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, which focuses on community service. This activity was conducted in Cidahu Village, Cidahu District, Kuningan Regency, in response to the need to enhance the identity of local products and improve the village environment.

Methods. The main goal of the program is to empower the community through the rebranding of Opak MSMEs as a village flagship product (One Village One Product / OVOP) and the installation of street signs to improve order and accessibility of the area.

Methods. The methods used include field observation, questionnaire distribution, and participatory discussion.



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Result. The results of the activity show that there is an improvement in the image of MSME products through the creation of logos, and new packaging designs. The installation of street alley signs facilitates the mobility of residents, provides clarity of direction, strengthens village identity, and improves traffic safety.

Conclusion. In conclusion, KKN-T activities not only contribute to local economic development but also improve environmental governance based on community participation.

Implication. The implication of this activity is the need for continuous support and assistance from various parties so that the benefits produced can continue to grow and have a long-term impact on the welfare of the people of Cidahu Village.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, Cidahu Village, KKN-T, OVOP, Re-branding, Street Sign, Opak MSMEs

INTRODUCTION

The Thematic Real Work Lecture (KKN-T) is a real implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, especially in community service. This activity is designed so that students not only apply academic knowledge, but also become agents of social and economic change through community empowerment. Cidahu Village, Cidahu District, Kuningan Regency, has local potential that can be developed through the *One Village One Product* (OVOP) approach. The concept of OVOP, which has been successfully implemented in Japan and later adapted in Indonesia, emphasizes the importance of local products as a village identity as well as a driving force for the community's potential-based economy (Widiyanti, 2018)

However, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in this village still face various obstacles, especially related to branding, packaging innovation, and marketing strategies. Studies show that a strong brand identity can increase consumer attractiveness while strengthening the product's position in the local and global markets (Kotler & Keller, 2016), (Rafdinal et al., 2020) Therefore, the re-branding program of opak cassava MSMEs through KKN-T is a strategic step to strengthen the village economy by making the product the *OVOP of Cidahu Village*. In addition to the economic aspect, Cidahu Village also faces social and infrastructure problems. The lack of road signs in each alley hinders the mobility of residents and reduces the regularity of the village spatial layout.

The development of simple infrastructure, such as road signs is part of the mandate (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6, 2014), which emphasizes the importance of community-based development. The basic infrastructure not only functions practically, but also strengthens village identity and supports community accessibility (Elvandari et al., 2025) (Ramadona & Ajidin, 2024)

From the social side, the issue of character education is also a concern, especially related to the rampant cases of bullying in elementary schools. Bullying has a negative impact on children's psychological and social development, and can even hinder academic achievement. Recent research confirms that bullying prevention requires a comprehensive strategy based on character education, teacher and parent involvement, and a firm anti-bullying policy (Safira & Suriani, 2025) Therefore, the KKN-T program in Cidahu Village also involves anti-bullying education in schools as a form of social literacy from an early age.

In addition, KKN-T activities also support increasing health awareness through collaboration with posyandu cadres. This program is in line with the Ministry of Health's strategy, which emphasizes the importance of empowering village communities in the field of preventive and promotive health. (Indonesia, 2021). Thus, posyandu activities in KKN-T are not only routine, but also strengthen community participation in maintaining community health independently.

Based on these conditions, the KKN-T program of Swadaya Gunung Jati University in Cidahu Village is designed to answer three primary needs: (1) economic strengthening through rebranding of MSMEs as OVOP products, (2) environmental arrangement and accessibility through the creation of road signs, and (3) social and health literacy through anti-bullying education in schools and posyandu assistance.

METHOD

Needs Identification Stage

The initial stage of KKN-T activities was carried out by the process of identifying the needs of the people of Cidahu Village. The student team conducted a field survey to observe the potential and problems of the village, especially in the MSME and simple infrastructure sectors. The survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires, interviews with village officials, and group discussions with the community.

The identification results show that Cidahu Village has superior potential in local food products, namely Opak Cassava and Rengginang, but still faces obstacles in terms of branding, packaging, and marketing strategies. In addition, another problem that arises is the absence of road signs in village alleys, which makes it difficult for residents and guests from outside the village to move. These findings were then used as the basis for the preparation of the KKN-T program.

Empowerment Stage (Program Implementation)

Based on the results of the identification, the KKN-T team compiled and implemented various programs that involved active community participation. The main programs carried out are:

1. **Re-branding of Opak Cassava MSMEs:** Students assist MSME actors (Mrs. Nining) by creating new logos, stickers and modern packaging. The goal is to make opak products more attractive, easy to recognize, and have higher competitiveness.
2. **Making and Installing Road Signs:** Together with residents, the KKN team made and installed 34 road signs throughout the hamlets in Cidahu Village. These signs help organize the environment, facilitate community mobility, and improve traffic safety in accident-prone areas.
3. **Anti-Bullying Education in Schools:** The education program is carried out at SDN 2 Cidahu involving students in grades 4, 5 and 6. Materials are provided through interactive presentations, discussions, and educational games so that students understand the negative impact of bullying and the importance of mutual respect.
4. **Chili Seeding:** The activity was carried out with elementary school students with the aim of providing simple education about agriculture, as well as fostering awareness of the importance of farming from an early age.
5. **Health Program (Posyandu):** The student team collaborates with posyandu cadres in routine check-ups of toddlers, pregnant women, and the elderly. Students help in data collection, nutrition counseling, and vitamin distribution.

All of these programs are carried out in a mutual cooperation manner by involving the community, village officials, teachers, and posyandu cadres so that it reflects the value of togetherness.

Implementation Stage

After the program is implemented, an evaluation is carried out with village officials and the community to assess the effectiveness of the activities. The results of the evaluation show that the re-branding program has a positive impact on improving the image of Opak's products. Therefore, Opak Cassava products are officially designated as One Village One Product (OVOP) of Cidahu Village, so that they have strong identity values and economic potential. In the field of infrastructure, road signs that are permanently installed throughout the hamlet received a positive response from the community because they help navigation and add to the neatness of the village. In addition, the team also made MSME promotional banners that were installed in strategic locations to expand the reach of local product promotion.

Sustainability Stage

To ensure the sustainability of the program after KKN-T students have completed it, several strategic steps are taken:

1. Handover of Program Results: Logo designs, packaging, and digital files are given to MSME actors so that they can be used sustainably.
2. The Village Government is committed to continuing to give numbers to every house in all Villages, so that the arrangement of the Village area is clearer and more detailed.
3. Opak Singkong MSMEs are encouraged to be independent in product marketing, both offline and online, while still using the new branding that has been made.
4. The Village Community is the main owner of the program, so that the results of KKN-T do not stop when students return to campus, but continue to develop according to the needs of the village.

Thus, this sustainability stage is a tangible form of the principle of community empowerment, where the results of KKN are not only temporary, but can have a long-term impact on Cidahu Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Educational Programs

Anti-bullying education activities were carried out at SDN 1 and SDN 2 Cidahu Village involving 5th and 6th grade students. The results of the evaluation through the questionnaire showed that 92% of students understood the negative impact of bullying and stated that they would avoid the behavior.



Figure 1. Anti-bullying education at SDN 1 Cidahu with interactive methods

Analysis: The results of the anti-bullying education program are in line with the findings (Safira & Suriani, 2025) that bullying prevention is effective through character education based on empathy and tolerance. Interactive student engagement helps internalize social values so that schools can become inclusive safe spaces. Thus, the program not only raises awareness, but also supports a long-term prevention strategy based on collaboration between schools, teachers, and students.

Health Programs

Posyandu activities for toddlers, pregnant women, and the elderly are carried out with village cadres. Students help in data collection, nutrition counseling, and vitamin distribution. The results of observations show an increase in community participation, especially in the elderly posyandu which reaches more than 80% attendance.



Gambar 2. Kegiatan pos bindu or posyandu lansia with village dan KKN-T team

Analysis: Posyandu activities support policies (Indonesia, 2021) on community empowerment in basic health services. The collaboration of posyandu students and cadres reflects the *community-based health promotion model*, where the active participation of the community improves the sustainability of services. The high participation rate of the elderly (more than 80%) is an indicator of increasing health awareness in line with the national strategy for family- and community-based health development.

Economic Program (MSMEs Opak Cassava)

One of the main focuses of KKN-T is the empowerment of MSMEs through the rebranding of Mrs. Nining's Cassava Opak products. The program includes creating new logo

designs, modern packaging, and simple digital marketing training. The results of the questionnaire showed that 88% of respondents found the new logo attractive and easy to recognize, while 76% of respondents stated that they were more interested in buying products after the new packaging. With these results, Opak Cassava products are designated as *One Village One Product (OVOP)* of Cidahu Village, as they are considered to have a distinctive village identity and the potential to strengthen the local economy.



Figure 3. The Process of Making Cassava Opak Products with Mrs. Nining and the KKN-T Team

Analysis: The results of the rebranding of opak cassava MSMEs are consistent with the concept of OVOP which emphasizes the importance of local products as village identity (Widiyanti, 2018). Strengthening product identity through a new logo and packaging design strengthens the positioning of cassava opak as an icon of Cidahu Village. Thus, the program not only increases consumer attractiveness (as reflected by 76% of respondents who are more interested in buying), but also supports the economic development agenda based on local potential.

Infrastructure Program (Road Signs)

The KKN team made and installed 34 road signs in all hamlets in Cidahu Village. The results of the questionnaire showed that 92% of respondents considered road signs to be very helpful in making village access and navigation easier. In addition, the signs also beautify the environment and add to the identity of the region.



Figure 4. Installation of road signs in all hamlets with Puhun Village Youth

Analysis: The results of the infrastructure program are in accordance with the principle of participatory village development in (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6, 2014), which emphasizes the role of the community in the provision of public facilities. Residents' participation in making signs shows that simple infrastructure development can be a medium to strengthen regional identity while strengthening social capital through mutual cooperation.

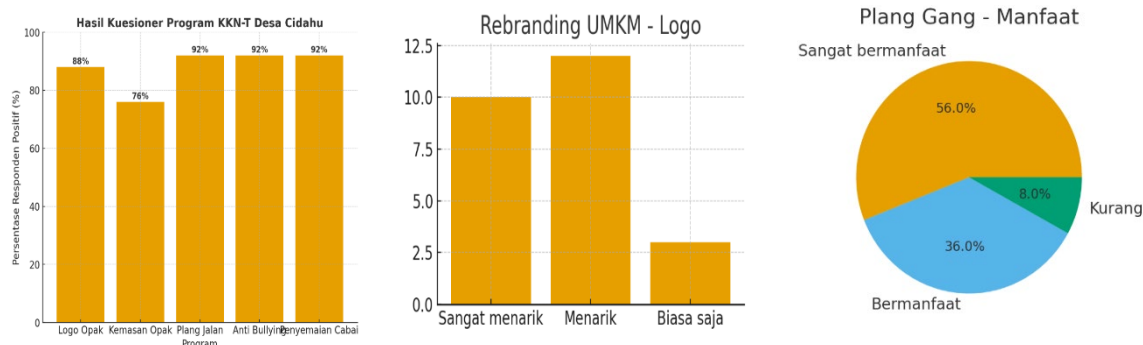
Evaluation and Constraints

The implementation of the KKN-T program also faces several obstacles, including:

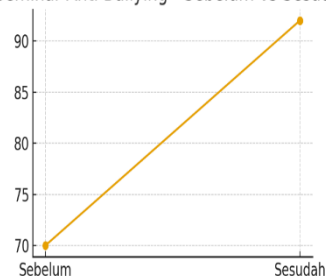
1. Time constraints (the program lasts only 1 month).
2. The limitations of digital literacy of MSME actors, so online marketing training can only be provided in a simple form.
3. The solution is to submit the digital design of logos and packaging to MSMEs

KKN-T activities in Cidahu Village have a real impact on three main aspects. First, the economic aspect through the re-branding of Opak Cassava MSMEs which succeeded in increasing the identity of local products and was designated as a village OVOP. Second, the social aspect with the installation of 34 road signs that facilitate accessibility and organize the village environment. Third, education and health aspects through anti-bullying literacy programs and posyandu assistance that increase public awareness.

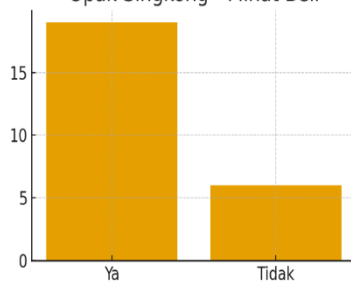
Despite time and funding limitations, this program shows that community empowerment can be effective with a participatory approach. In the future, the sustainability of the program is expected to be continued by the village government and MSME actors so that the benefits continue to be felt.



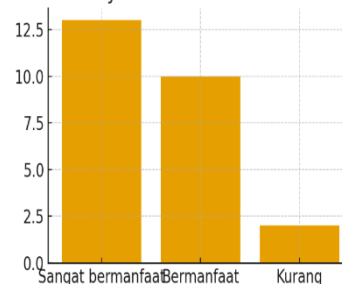
Seminar Anti Bullying - Sebelum vs Sesudah



Opak Singkong - Minat Beli



Penyemaian Cabai - Manfaat



CONCLUSION

The results of this study have implications on several levels. For the **academic world**, KKN-T activities are a real model for the application of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education that integrates theory with practice, while enriching the study of cross-disciplinary community empowerment. For **the community**, this program proves that a participatory approach can increase economic independence, health, and social awareness. At the **national and state** level, KKN-T supports the village development agenda as mandated in Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, namely, development based on local needs and potential. As for the **international community**, the success of the rebranding of Opak MSMEs as OVOP products shows that the global concept can be adapted locally to strengthen the identity and competitiveness of village products. Thus, the main implication of this study is the importance of the sustainability of mentoring and multi-stakeholder synergy so that program results continue to have a positive impact sustainably.

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