

## CASCARA PRODUCTIONS AS A MODEL OF BRAND ACTIVISM FOR COFFEE FARMER GROUP IN MOUNT PUNTANG, WEST JAVA INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

Cascara is considered a healthy drink and one way to encourage sustainable coffee production by-products. Cascara production activities by the Rumah Kopi Palalangon can be categorized as brand activism, namely a brand that uses activist strategies with the desire to improve the quality of life of the community. The essence of brand activism is action that involves all stakeholders to make changes in social, economic, political and environmental quality. This research aims to develop a basic training plan for empowering farmers who are members of the rumah Kopi Palalangon (PRK) led by Ayi Suteja, in Mount Puntang, Bandung Regency, West Java. This research focuses on the identification of the training need in promoting cascara and the benefit of the production to environment quality. CBR approach usages to identify the partner's need and follow with ABCD approach to capture the potential social capital that exist in the community. The result shows that the members of PRK need to increase their knowledge and skill in promoting cascara product as a model of brand activism. The training is expected could be motivated the customer and/or follower to participates in the movement of consume sustainable coffee product only.

**Keywords:** Cascara; Sustainable Coffee; Brand Activism; CBR Approach, ABCD Approach

### A. INTRODUCTION (Times New Roman 12, Bold, Uppercase, spacing after 12 pt)

Coffee is a product that has been in great demand in recent years, consumption continues to increase from year to year, as does the waste produced. Coffee waste generation occurs from the

harvesting process, production to consumption. One of the wastes produced in production process is coffee pulp, which in recent years has become known as a raw material for making nutritional drinks namely, Cascara. This drink has been consumed traditionally for a long time by people in Ethiopia, Yemen and Bolivia as an herbal drink or tea (Cantergiani, 2023). Attention in managing coffee waste, to cascara, has attracted the attention of not only coffee producers, sellers and connoisseurs, but also researchers. Cascara is considered as one way to encourage sustainable coffee production by-products (Iriundo-DeHond & Castillo, 2023). Some research found that cascara contain a lot of nutrients and bioactive compound promote health benefit and could be consume by human.

Research on cascara from various countries, including Indonesia, focuses on the production process, nutritional content, types of coffee that produce the best cascara products and other aspects related to the physical nature of cascara. There are still few who research or observe cascara production from a social perspective. Cascara production by producer of coffee can be categorize as brand activism that promote a reform in social or environmental problem affected by the coffe production processes. Sakar and Kotler (2020) define the brand activism as an activist strategy with desire to make improvement on society (Sarkar & Kotler, 2020).

The concept of brand activism is still become a controversy, especially related to positive and negative opinions from customers (Mukherjee & N.I., 2020). Brand activism is different from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or cause-related-marketing (CRM) which targeted to alleviate the negatives responses from consumers (Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, & Schwarz, 2006), while the brand activism is aligns messaging with business activities, that can augment brand equity and the capacity for social change (Vredenburg, Kapitan, Spry, & Kemper, 2020). Brand activism help the company or organization to gain favorable impact on profit, customer loyalty, and connect with people who share common values and belief (Eyada, 2020).

Implementing a brand activism strategy to promote the cascara can beneficial not only for the farmer, but also the social, political, economic, workplace, environment and legal aspect of cascara.

To boost the capacity of coffee farmers as cascara producers, they need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to plan and carry out brand activism strategies. The activism should be start from the purpose then transform to action that fostering the movement. The heart of brand activism is an action (Sarkar & Kotler, 2020). Consequently, the organizations that concerning to implementing a brand activism strategy must understand the messages that can convey all business stakeholders to participate in the targeted social change movement.

Rumah Kopi Palalangon (RKP) initiate by Ayi Sutedja who was awarded as the best coffee taste in the world from Speciality Coffee Association of America (SCAA) in 2016, using an activist strategy in creating a sustainable coffe plantation. He encourage the farmer whose join in RKP to use an organic fertilizer from coffe waste and avoid using chemical fertilizer. As a leader, Ayi always promoting environmental preservation and labeled his coffee plantation activity as “*murbeng Puntang*” the sundanes philosophy of taking care of Mount Puntang from the environmental damages. Through the cascara promotion, it is hoped that more and more coffee connoisseurs will be motivated to only consume coffee grown with a sustainable concept.

Unfortunately, RKP often changes the packaging of the product and its brand, from the beginning until this research was carried out, it was identified that there were five changes in the brand of coffee and cascara offered. This condition is certainly difficult for people considering the products offered by RKP, because in the Mount Puntang area there are many coffee farmers and coffee shops or cafes and offer Puntang coffee with various brands. Therefore, the RKP member need to have a knowledge and skill in branding activity and branding activitism. Since the RKP leader actively uses Instagram social media under the name *murbeng\_puntang*, this research is aimed at developing a training design on brand making and digital media campaigns. This includes creating social media content, websites and guidance in managing digital marketing. The objective of this service activity is to enhance cascara digital marketing through promoting brand activism, with aims to increasing

audience participation in promoting social movement in fostering sustainable coffee plantation, thereby improving farmers welfare.

Act is the key point in brand activism, therefore the organization or company should consider the five ways in building a movement such as: begin by creating a noble mission that based on common good; image what movement should be achieve and how; create a message and/or activities that people willing to participate in the movement; mobilize committed participant, and finally coordinate joint action to make a difference (Sarkar & Kotler, 2020). Furthermore, messages play an important role in creating a audience movement, so increasing skill in creating a clear and effective messages is a key in brand activism, since it can be a tools in encouraging stakeholder participation.

The academic output of this activity is that students can apply the knowledge acquired in lectures to implement it with partners in community service initiatives. Students acquire practical experience through collaboration with community service partners. This initiative enables lecturers to share their research finding for the benefit of the community. By participating, organization partner will gain essential insight to digital brand activism, enabling them to produce the meaningful and clear message to share with audiences towards massive social change in cascara industry and consumption. Therefore, through the community service program, The Community Partnership Program scheme (PKM) is essential to carried out in aligned with the reach of sustainable development goals and UN Global compact based on the Ten Principles of human right, especially on the environmental category that including: (1) business should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges; (2) undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and (3) encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technology.

## **B. IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS**

The method used in thin PKM is a Community Based Research (CBR) and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). CBR is a research-based service method that relies on the

community and based on social change perspective. This concept provides the new ways of thinking of contextual factors and how the community more involve in the research (Jason & Glenwick, 2016). CBR teaches servants to involve the community from the beginning of service planning and emphasises the importance of community-based in all steps and processes of research-based service. The data collection of this approach using a community narrative which useful in helping the researcher together with other stakeholder in completing and examining the more implicit dimensions of research goals, identity or the culture of the community. Additionally, this approach will lead the researcher to more comprehensive information of strength and potentials assets that belong to the community. Therefore, this study also supporting by The Assets Based Community Development (ABCD), the approach that founded on the principles that the recognition strength, ability, talents, and assets of individual and community will motivate positive action to social change than exclusive to problem solving (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Following up the work of Mathie & Cunningham (2003) there are number of steps to facilitate the process to capture the storytelling in ABCD early phases: (1) collecting story about community successes and identifying the capacities of communities that cotributed to success; (2) organizing partner to carry the process forward; (3) Mapping completely the capacities and assests of individual, and association; (4) Building relationships among local assets for mutually beneficial problem-solving within community; (5) Mobilizing the community's assets fully for economis development and information sharing purposes; (6) Convening a broadly representative groups as possible for the purposes of building community vision and plan, and (7) leveraging activities, investment and resources from outside the community to support assetbase, locally definde development. In a short, ABCD approach concerned with how to link micro-assets to macro-assets (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Partner of study, leader and members of Palalangon Coffee House are participating in every step of study from planning to evaluation stage. Partner participation include mapping the strenght and

opportunity of the cascara production; identified the main burden in cascara production, identified training objectives based on their limitation on digital media usage; participate in collecting data dan training preparation and evaluation.

### C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since its inception, the Palalangon Coffee House has had a vision of planting coffee to preserve the environment of Mount Puntang, so that every production process from planting to processing into ready-to-consume coffee always pays attention to its impact on the environment. Since the beginning, the farmers who are members of the group have been taught to always use organic fertilizers derived from coffee husk waste. The farmer who usage a chemical fertilizer was labeled as “*nakal*” or “naughty”.

Along with the development of the group's interaction with many coffee researchers from various countries, they begun to use cascara as a tea as sugest by Cantergiani (2023). The processing of cascara as a by-product with economic value, is based on the awareness of these coffee farmers of the importance of a sustainable production process, as always promoted by the head of the group. The practice is in line with the brand activism concept offered by Sakar & Kotler (2020).

Considering the economic value of the cascara and the benefit in reducing ecosystem degradation (Iriondo-DeHond & Castillo, 2023), promotion of this product can encourage the participation of coffee lovers and new consumers in supporting sustainable coffee production. According to Sakar & Kotler (2020) this activity can be categorized as an effort to introduce the concept of consumer brand activism, where consumers will only consume sustainable coffee.

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the ABCD approach was applied. Starting with conducts an interview with the farmer and than following up with mapping the existing potential source to support the promotion activites. The results of the interview show that cascara is a relatively newly produced product, previously as stated by J, the farmer:

“Previously, we only used the coffee husk for a compost material which was used for fertilizer both in coffee gardens and other food crops in farmers' homes. But after getting information about the cascara, the RKP members began to try to make the cascara for household consumption”

The interview also found that members of RKP actively using a social media but limited to the personal purposes. Additionally, result of CBR showed that partner social media content in promoting cascara is limited, only one posted as shows on figure 1 that inform the cascara volume production. The first step in planned the training, start from identified the existing problem in content creation to promote the brand activism. The identification of the training need and strategy conducted online and onsite as can see on figure 1

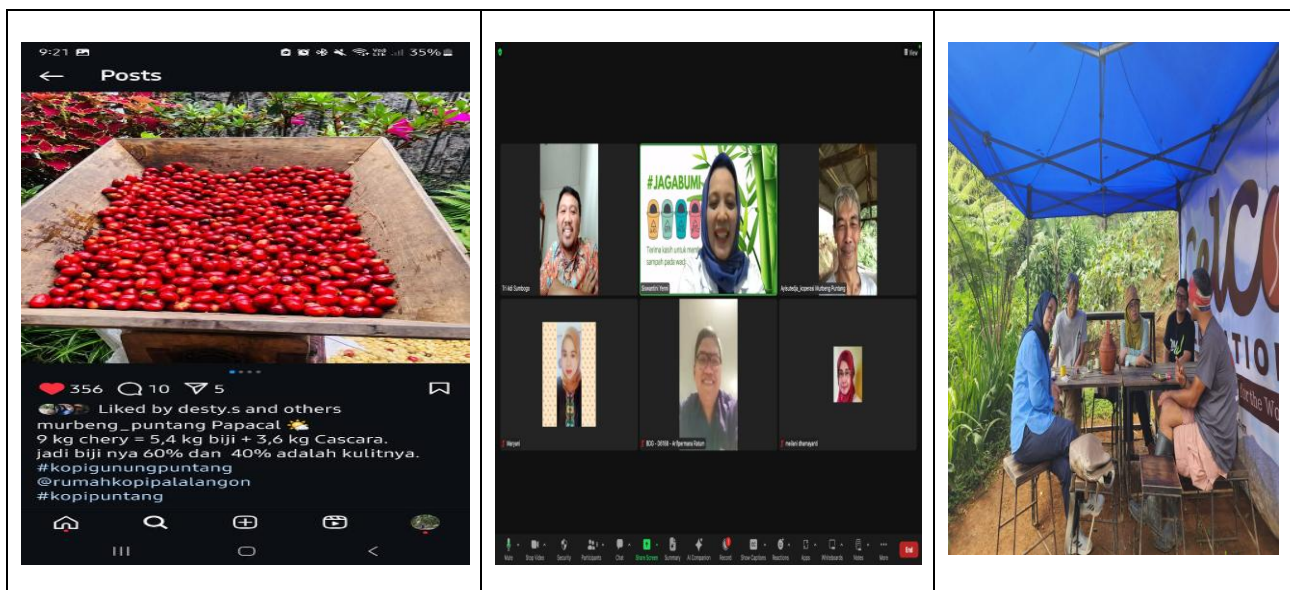


Figure 1: Identified process of partner problem

The interview with the farmer found that digital technology supports them in promoting their activities; however, they still lack knowledge in creating the clear message of what they want to share with the public. Referring to the results of discussions with partners, a training plan was then developed on message psychology and strengthening brand activism.

The key to brand activism is an action (Sarkar & Kotler, 2020), in this study an expected action is the support to cascara production and consumption by reposted the content of RKP members of cascara include the process, the product the brand and the benefit of cascara consumption.. The

education of sustainable coffee plantation also planned to be included in the training. They believe that the benefits of this movement will not only for the farmers, but also for various parties who care about environmental and social issues (Eyada, 2020), in coffee production and trade.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Training on branding and brand activism for PRK member farmers will provide added value to the cascara products they produce. Focusing on the promotion of cascara production makes campaigns about the use of coffee waste into products with more diverse economic value and can provide insight to the audience. The deployment of social media as an asset that is already available in the community makes the training program easier to implement, because it is in accordance with the available potential.

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