



The Contribution Of Taro Chips Msmes To The Growth Of The Regional Creative Economy In Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan

Nur Fadilah¹, Heri Prasetyo²

^{1,2} Universitas Cokroaminoto Yogyakarta

Email: ¹⁾ fadilah130803@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Taro chips SMEs represent a form of local potential utilization that is capable of creating added value by transforming agricultural products into high-value economic goods. This study aims to analyze the contribution of taro chips Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to the growth of the regional creative economy in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan. This research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. The data sources consist of both primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis is conducted through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency function not merely as economic activities, but also as drivers of transformation toward an economy based on added value, creativity, and innovation. These enterprises connect the agricultural sector with household industries, increase income, generate employment opportunities, and strengthen the local economy as well as regional product identity. Despite facing limitations in capital, management, and market access, the potential for development remains significant through innovation, digitalization, and multi-stakeholder support, thereby positioning these MSMEs as a key pillar of an inclusive and sustainable creative economy .

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, regional economic development no longer relies solely on large-scale industries but increasingly depends on the role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as the primary drivers of the people's economy. Nationally, MSMEs contribute more than 60% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorb approximately 97% of the workforce, making them a crucial pillar of inclusive and sustainable economic development

(Awaludin, 2025). MSMEs have been proven to play a significant role in promoting economic growth, income distribution, and employment generation.

Mempawah Regency, as one of the regions in West Kalimantan, possesses abundant natural resources, particularly in the agricultural and horticultural sectors (Yuniarti, 2021). One of the local commodities with strong development potential is taro, which can be processed into various value-added products, one of which is taro chips (Maretik & Handayani Fitrianti, 2024). Processed products such as chips not only increase the selling value of raw materials but also extend shelf life and expand market reach.

The development of taro chips-based MSMEs is part of the creative economy sector, particularly within the culinary subsector. Through product innovation, packaging improvements, and marketing strategies, taro chips MSMEs can become a source of community income and create new employment opportunities (Rizki et al., 2024). Studies indicate that processing local commodities into products such as chips can enhance economic value and empower communities through production and marketing activities (Anwar et al., 2024), thereby supporting sustainable economic growth.

Preliminary observations conducted by the researcher on March 12, 2026, revealed that the success of local processed products from Mempawah Regency in penetrating international markets such as banana chips exported to Malaysia demonstrates that food-based MSMEs have substantial potential to enhance regional competitiveness and expand into global markets. This serves as an indicator that similar products, including taro chips, possess equal opportunities for further optimal development.

However, in practice, taro chips MSMEs still face several challenges, including limited product innovation, suboptimal packaging quality, and predominantly conventional marketing strategies (Tri Rahayuningsih & Rani Armalita, 2025). These issues contribute to the relatively low competitiveness of the products in an increasingly competitive market. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed to examine how taro chips MSMEs contribute to the growth of the regional creative economy, particularly in Mempawah Regency.

Previous studies on taro chips have been conducted by several researchers, such as Aplonia Mogi Wea, Sayful Amrin, and Maria Kristina Ota, who examined the Role of the Creative Economy in Increasing Community Income through Taro Chips Enterprises in Kelewae Village, Boawae District, Nagekeo Regency (2025). Their study found that the creative economy in the village has been effective in increasing community income, especially among housewives. It also highlighted the need for business actors to enhance innovation and digital marketing, supported by active involvement from the village government, as well as further studies on distribution and financial management aspects (Aplonia Mogi Wea & Sayful Amrin, 2025).

A similar study was conducted by Murhadi, Ade Kurniawan, et al. (2023), focusing on the Development of Taro Chips MSMEs in Pucang Agung Village to Face the Industrial Era 4.0. In Pucangagung Village, taro chips MSMEs are managed both collectively and individually using local raw materials, known as "Risma Taro Chips." Development efforts include improving packaging and labeling, providing production equipment such as sealers and scales, and utilizing digital marketing through Instagram to broaden market reach (Murhadi et al., 2023).

The aforementioned studies have addressed several aspects relevant to this research, such as regional community economics, taro chips management, and marketing patterns. However, they have not comprehensively explained the growth of the regional economy in depth. Therefore, this study aims to examine "The Contribution of Taro Chips MSMEs to the Growth of the Regional Creative Economy in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan."

LITERATURE REVIEW

Taro chips micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) represent a form of local food-based entrepreneurship that contributes to regional economic development through the processing of agricultural products into value-added goods. The creative economy emphasizes the creation of economic value through creativity, innovation, product differentiation, and the utilization of local resources. In this context, taro chips production can generate added value by transforming taro into processed food products with greater market appeal and commercial potential.

The development of these businesses may also support local employment, increase household income, strengthen entrepreneurial capacity, and expand market opportunities for local producers. Furthermore, product innovation, attractive packaging, consistent quality, and the preservation of local culinary characteristics can enhance the competitiveness of taro chips MSMEs. Therefore, the contribution of these enterprises to the regional creative economy can be understood not only in terms of sales and business growth but also through their ability to create economic value from local resources and develop sustainable business opportunities.

The contribution of taro chips MSMEs to the growth of the creative economy in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan, can also be examined through the relationship between entrepreneurship, local resource utilization, and market development. MSMEs often face challenges related to limited capital, production technology, product innovation, business management, market access, and digital marketing capabilities. Addressing these challenges is essential to improving productivity, expanding consumer reach, and strengthening the competitiveness of locally processed food products. Collaboration among entrepreneurs, local government, financial institutions, and marketing partners may further support business development through training, financing, product promotion, and access to wider distribution networks.

In this regard, the contribution of taro chips MSMEs should be assessed through several dimensions, including business performance, employment creation, income generation, product innovation, and the utilization of local resources. These dimensions provide a conceptual basis for understanding how taro chips MSMEs may support the development of a more dynamic and inclusive regional creative economy in Mempawah Regency.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. Qualitative research is an approach used to gain an in-depth understanding of social or human phenomena by emphasizing meaning, processes, and context rather than numerical or statistical data (Rashid, 2022).

This method focuses on how individuals or groups interpret their experiences, behaviors, and interactions in everyday life. Meanwhile, the case study approach is a research strategy within qualitative methods that aims to comprehensively understand a phenomenon, event, individual, group, or institution within its real-life context (Nazar, 2022). This approach emphasizes in-depth, holistic, and contextual data collection through various sources such as interviews, observations, and documentation.

The data sources in this study consist of primary data obtained directly from the field and secondary data derived from previous studies and field documents (Fiantika et al., 2022). Data collection techniques include participant observation, interviews, and documentation. Participant observation is a qualitative data collection technique in which the researcher is directly involved in the daily life or activities of the subjects being studied while observing behaviors, interactions, and situations as they occur (Syafri, 2022).

In this method, the researcher does not act merely as a passive observer but also actively participates in the respondents' daily activities to gain a deeper, contextual, and authentic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Furthermore, interviews are a data collection technique conducted through direct question-and-answer interactions between the researcher (interviewer) and respondents or informants to obtain in-depth, accurate, and relevant information aligned with the research objectives (Fadli, 2021). Documentation, on the other hand, is a data collection technique carried out by collecting, reviewing, and analyzing various documents relevant to the research object (Annita Sari et al., 2023). These documents may include written archives, reports, photographs, recordings, and other official data that provide factual information and support the validity of the research findings.

Data analysis is conducted through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation refers to the process of simplifying, focusing, and summarizing raw data obtained in the research particularly qualitative research by selecting, focusing, abstracting, and transforming the data so that it becomes more organized, meaningful, and easier to analyze (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, 2014). This process does not merely involve discarding data but rather selecting information relevant to the research objectives, enabling the researcher to identify patterns, themes, and core meanings from the collected data.

Subsequently, data display is the process of presenting the condensed data in an organized and systematic form so that it can be easily understood, analyzed, and used to draw conclusions (Nilawati, 2023). Finally, conclusion drawing is the last stage in data analysis, aimed at identifying meanings, patterns, relationships, and the essence of the findings from data that have undergone condensation and display processes (Wada & Anna Pertiwi et al., 2024). At this stage, the researcher interprets the presented data to formulate research findings. The conclusions drawn are initially tentative and are continuously verified and tested for validity through rechecking field data or comparing multiple data sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The contribution of taro chip MSMEs in Mempawah Regency can be further understood by examining how this enterprise has developed not only as an economic activity but also as a process of social and cultural transformation within the community. The existence of these MSMEs has clearly encouraged a shift in the community's mindset from merely relying on the sale of raw agricultural products to becoming more oriented toward processing and value creation. This transformation reflects an increasing awareness of the importance of innovation and creativity in enhancing the competitiveness of local products.

This is reinforced by ST, the head of the MSME group, who stated: "The presence of this MSME has clearly encouraged a change in people's mindset. Previously, people relied solely on selling agricultural products in raw form; now they are beginning to focus on processing products to create added value." (W/KK/at residence/20/03/2026/16:00 WIB).

The taro chip MSMEs also demonstrate an integration between the agricultural sector and the home industry sector. Taro, which was previously sold in raw form at relatively low prices, is now processed into products with higher economic value (P/12/03/2026). This process not only increases farmers' income as suppliers of raw materials but also creates new business opportunities in production, packaging, and marketing (Liona Efrina. S et al., 2025). Thus, these MSMEs contribute to extending the local economic value chain. The forms of contribution of taro chips MSMEs to the growth of the regional creative economy in Mempawah Regency include:

The Role of MSMEs as Drivers of the Regional Economy

The role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as drivers of the regional economy has become increasingly evident in local development dynamics, particularly in Mempawah Regency. In this context, taro chip MSMEs serve as a concrete example of how a

creative economy sector based on local potential can make a significant contribution to regional economic growth.

This is in line with the statement of MS, a member of the MSME group in Mempawah: "This MSME contributes significantly by increasing community income, creating employment opportunities, and utilizing local potential, thereby supporting the growth of the regional creative economy." (W/MS/MSME member/at residence/12/03/2026/10:00 WIB).

The presence of taro chip MSMEs in Mempawah functions not only as business entities but also as engines of community economic development. This is evident in their ability to absorb local labor, particularly housewives and rural youth (P/17/03/2026). The relatively simple yet sustainable production process enables community members to actively participate in various stages, from raw material processing to product marketing. Consequently, these MSMEs contribute to reducing unemployment and directly increasing community income.

Furthermore, the contribution of taro chip MSMEs to the regional creative economy is reflected in the utilization of local potential, particularly taro plants widely produced by the community. The processing of taro into value-added products such as chips indicates a transformation from the primary sector to a more productive secondary sector (Solfiyeni, 2025). Innovations in flavor, packaging, and marketing strategies play a crucial role in enhancing product competitiveness in both local and external markets. This also strengthens the identity of regional specialty products that can serve as icons of Mempawah's creative economy.

This is emphasized by ST, the head of the MSME group: "We have developed various flavor variants such as original, balado, cheese, barbecue, and sweet spicy. The goal is to provide consumers with more choices and prevent boredom, thereby maintaining high purchasing interest." (W/ST/MSME head/processing site/17/03/2026/14:15 WIB).

Moreover, taro chip MSMEs play a role in fostering an inclusive creative economy ecosystem. The involvement of various stakeholders, including business actors, village governments, and supporting institutions, creates synergy in business development (Agustina et al., 2025). Support in the form of training, access to capital, and the utilization of digital technology in marketing has helped expand market reach and increase production capacity (Sinta Dwi Machfiroh, 2023). Through digitalization, taro chip products are not only recognized locally but also have the potential to penetrate wider markets.

From a regional development perspective, the contribution of these MSMEs also indirectly impacts the increase in local revenue (PAD) through continuously growing economic activities (Krisna, 2024). Economic circulation at the village level becomes more dynamic, creating multiplier effects for other sectors such as trade, transportation, and services (P/17/03/2026). This indicates that taro chip MSMEs play a strategic role in strengthening a people-based regional economic structure.

Taro chip MSMEs in Mempawah Regency function not only as productive enterprises but also as key pillars in the development of the regional creative economy. Their role as drivers of the local economy is reflected in their ability to create employment opportunities, increase the added value of local commodities, and promote innovation and economic independence within the community. Moving forward, strengthening MSME capacity through continuous innovation and appropriate policy support will further enhance their contribution to inclusive and sustainable regional economic growth.

This is in line with the statement of SB, a village government official in Mempawah: "Strengthening MSME capacity is essential because MSMEs are the backbone of the regional economy. With strong capacity, MSMEs can improve productivity, product quality, and competitiveness, thereby directly contributing to more equitable economic growth." (W/SB/at Village Hall/15/03/2026/09:30 WIB).

In conclusion, taro chip MSMEs in Mempawah Regency have demonstrated a strategic role as drivers of the regional economy through the creative and productive utilization of local potential. Their presence not only enhances community welfare but also strengthens a people-centered economic structure. With continued innovation and capacity building, these MSMEs have the potential to become key pillars in promoting sustainable regional creative economic growth.

Utilization of Local Potential through Taro Chips

The utilization of local potential through the processing of taro chips in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan, represents a concrete form of creative economy development based on regional resources. Taro, as an agricultural commodity that is easily found and cultivated by local communities, has relatively low economic value when sold in its raw form (P/12/03/2026). However, through the innovation and creativity of MSME actors, taro is processed into value-added products in the form of chips that are competitive in both local and regional markets.

This is reinforced by KK, a resident of Mempawah who cultivates taro, who stated: "MSME actors continue to enhance their innovation and creativity while receiving support from various parties, both government and private sectors. Therefore, taro chip products can continue to develop and contribute more significantly to the regional economy" (W/KK/at his residence/20/03/2026/16:00 WIB).

The utilization of this local potential does not only focus on production aspects but also includes the development of creativity in flavor variations, packaging, and marketing strategies. MSME actors producing taro chips in Mempawah are able to transform simple raw materials into attractive products with distinctive regional identities (P/17/03/2026). This demonstrates that the creative economy does not always depend on advanced technology but can grow through the optimization of local potential combined with innovation.

From an economic perspective, the presence of taro chip MSMEs provides a tangible contribution to increasing community income. Production activities involve various segments of society, ranging from farmers as raw material suppliers, labor involved in the production process, to distribution and marketing actors (Karenhapukh Purba & Rita Yunus, 2024). The resulting economic chain is capable of creating employment opportunities and reducing unemployment rates in the region. In addition, the circulation of the local economy becomes more dynamic due to continuous business activities.

Furthermore, taro chip MSMEs play a role in encouraging the growth of the regional creative economy through the creation of leading products based on local wisdom. Taro chips are not only a consumption commodity but can also be developed as regional souvenirs that strengthen the identity of Mempawah (P/17/03/2026). This has the potential to increase regional attractiveness, particularly when linked to the tourism sector and the promotion of local products.

However, the utilization of this local potential still faces several challenges, such as limited business capital, lack of access to more modern processing technology, and minimal digital marketing (P/12/03/2026). Therefore, support from the local government and related stakeholders is needed in the form of training, business mentoring, and facilitation of market access so that taro chip MSMEs can develop more optimally. The utilization of local potential through taro chips in Mempawah Regency demonstrates that MSMEs have a strategic role in driving the growth of the regional creative economy.

This is further emphasized by SB, a village government representative in Mempawah, who stated: "Taro chips can become one of the region's signature products that reflects the local identity of Mempawah Regency. If developed consistently, this product can gain wider recognition and become a source of regional pride" (W/SB/at the Village Hall/15/03/2026/09:30 WIB).

The utilization of taro as a local potential processed into chips proves that regional economic strength can grow from simple resources when managed creatively and sustainably. Taro chip MSMEs function not only as business units but also as drivers of economic transformation toward an independent creative economy. With support in the form of innovation, collaboration, and capacity building for business actors, this local potential has significant opportunities to continue developing, expand market reach, and contribute meaningfully to the economic resilience and independence of Mempawah Regency.

Increasing Community Income and Welfare

The increase in community income and welfare is a crucial indicator in assessing the contribution of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), including taro chips MSMEs, to the growth of the regional creative economy in Mempawah Regency. The presence of taro chips MSMEs functions not merely as a conventional economic activity but also as a driving force capable of generating added value from local potential, particularly the abundant taro commodity in rural areas.

This is reinforced by KK, a resident of Mempawah who cultivates taro, who stated: "The presence of taro chips MSMEs is not merely an ordinary economic activity but also serves as a driving force for the local economy. These MSMEs are able to process abundant taro commodities into value-added products with higher market value" (W/KK/at his residence/20/03/2026/16:00 WIB).

Taro chips MSMEs have a direct impact on increasing community income. Individuals who previously relied solely on raw agricultural outputs now have opportunities to enhance product value through processing into chips with higher competitiveness (P/12/03/2026). This production process involves multiple stages, including raw material procurement, processing, packaging, and marketing, all of which collectively create employment opportunities for local communities. As a result, there is a shift from a subsistence economy toward a more productive, market-oriented economy.

Furthermore, the involvement of community members particularly housewives and small business groups in taro chip production strengthens household economies. The additional income generated helps meet essential needs such as education, healthcare, and daily consumption (Agus & Sholahudin, 2025). In the long term, this contributes to an overall improvement in living standards. Moreover, the sustainability of these businesses fosters local economic independence, reducing reliance on limited formal employment opportunities.

From a social welfare perspective, taro chips MSMEs also play a role in strengthening social cohesion and community empowerment. Group-based business activities encourage cooperation, solidarity, and the enhancement of human resource capacity through collective learning processes (Astrid Liani Kamal & Budiaman, 2025). Communities become more creative and innovative in developing products, both in terms of taste, packaging, and marketing strategies, including the utilization of digital media. This aligns with the concept of the creative economy, which emphasizes ideas, creativity, and innovation as key drivers of economic value.

The increase in income generated by taro chips MSMEs also produces a multiplier effect on the regional economy (P/17/03/2026). The circulation of money at the local level becomes more dynamic, ultimately stimulating other economic activities such as trade, distribution services, and supporting sectors. Taro chips MSMEs contribute not only to individual business actors but also to broader regional creative economic growth, particularly in Mempawah Regency.

This is in line with a statement from SB, a village government representative in Mempawah: "Taro chips MSMEs not only provide economic benefits to individual business actors but also have a broader impact on regional creative economic growth. Production and marketing activities stimulate various supporting sectors, such as distribution, trade, and services" (W/SB/at the Village Hall/15/03/2026/09:30 WIB).

However, ensuring the sustainability of increased income and community welfare requires support from various stakeholders, including local governments, financial institutions, and the private sector (Rusdiani, 2026). Such support may include training programs, access to capital, business assistance, and the expansion of marketing networks. With strong synergy, taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency can continue to grow and make more significant contributions to improving community welfare and strengthening the regional creative economy.

The existence of taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency not only introduces new economic activities but also serves as a strategic instrument for sustainably improving community welfare (P/12/03/2026). The transformation of taro from a raw commodity into a value-added processed product has created a more stable and scalable source of income, thereby strengthening household economic structures.

The resulting income growth generates broader impacts on quality of life, including improved access to education, healthcare, and the enhancement of individual capacities in business management. In this context, taro chips MSMEs function as a space for empowerment, fostering economic independence while cultivating a productive and innovative mindset within the community.

This is emphasized by ST, the head of an MSME group: "The presence of taro chips MSMEs has helped shape a more productive and innovative mindset within the community. People are becoming more accustomed to identifying business opportunities, thinking creatively in product development, and taking initiative in economic activities" (W/ST/Head of MSME Group/at the taro processing site/17/03/2026/14:15 WIB).

Ultimately, the contribution of taro chips MSMEs demonstrates that strengthening the regional creative economy does not solely depend on large-scale industries but can also emerge from optimally managed local potential. Therefore, the sustainability of these enterprises must be maintained through consistent collaboration among business actors, government, and other stakeholders, ensuring that the economic and social benefits continue to expand and serve as a foundation for inclusive and competitive regional development.

Contribution to Strengthening the Local Economy

The contribution of taro chips MSMEs to strengthening the local economy in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan, can be understood as an integrative process between the utilization of local resource potential and the enhancement of community economic capacity. The existence of taro chips enterprises functions not merely as a production activity, but also as a strategic instrument in driving sustainable rural economic development (P/17/03/2026).

The use of taro as the primary raw material, sourced from local farmers, reflects a strong linkage between the agricultural sector and the home-based industry sector (Handoko, 2023). This creates added value to taro commodities that were previously sold in raw form at relatively low prices. Through processing into chips, the economic value of the product increases significantly, thereby directly contributing to higher incomes for farmers and MSME actors in Mempawah Regency.

This is in line with a statement from MS, a member of an MSME in Mempawah: "The increase in demand for taro as a raw material for chips has directly impacted farmers' income. The selling price of taro has become more stable and even tends to increase due to the continuous demand from MSME actors" (W/MS/As MSME Member/at residence/12/03/2026/10:00 WIB).

Taro chips MSMEs also contribute to job creation, particularly for rural communities such as housewives and youth (P/17/03/2026). Their involvement in production, packaging, and marketing processes reflects a more equitable distribution of economic opportunities. These MSMEs play a role in reducing unemployment and improving local welfare. From a creative economy perspective, taro chips MSMEs encourage innovation in flavor variations, packaging design, and more modern marketing strategies, including the use of digital media (Jupri et al.,

2021). These innovations not only enhance product competitiveness in local markets but also open opportunities for expansion into wider regional and national markets.

Taro chips MSMEs serve as key drivers within the regional creative economy ecosystem. The strengthening of the local economy is also reflected in the circulation of economic activities within the area. Profits earned by business actors tend to be reinvested locally, generating a multiplier effect on other economic sectors such as trade, transportation, and services (P/17/03/2026). This demonstrates that taro chips MSMEs provide not only individual benefits but also collective impacts on regional economic growth.

The contribution of taro chips MSMEs to strengthening the local economy in Mempawah Regency extends beyond income generation to include the development of local potential, job creation, and the reinforcement of a community-based economic structure. The sustainability of these enterprises is crucial in promoting inclusive and competitive creative economic growth at the regional level.

This is supported by a statement from SB, a village government representative in Mempawah: "Sustainability enables MSMEs to continuously innovate and adapt to market developments. This fosters creative economic growth that is not only temporary but also stable and sustainable at the regional level" (W/SB/at Village Hall/15/03/2026/09:30 WIB).

The existence of taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency is not merely a small-scale economic activity, but has evolved into a fundamental pillar in strengthening a local economic structure based on regional potential (P/12/03/2026). The transformation of taro from a raw commodity into a value-added product reflects a process of economic empowerment that not only increases selling value but also expands community participation in productive activities.

Taro chips MSMEs are capable of building an interconnected economic ecosystem from upstream to downstream, ranging from farmers as raw material suppliers to business actors managing production and marketing (Helmayuni et al., 2022). This interconnectedness creates stronger local economic stability, as the circulation of economic value remains within the community. As a result, community economic resilience is better maintained, particularly in facing uncertain economic dynamics (Widiarsih et al., 2025).

On the other hand, the development of these MSMEs demonstrates that the creative economy at the regional level holds significant potential for growth when supported by innovation, collaboration, and market adaptability. Taro chips are no longer perceived merely as traditional products but have transformed into part of a competitive local economic identity.

As stated by ST, the head of an MSME group: "Branding is very important in building product image. With a strong brand, attractive packaging design, and a compelling story about the product's origin, taro chips can more easily attract consumers' attention and increase market trust" (W/ST/As MSME Head/at Taro Processing Site/17/03/2026/14:15 WIB).

Strengthening taro chips MSMEs represents a strategic step in promoting inclusive, sustainable, and locally rooted regional economic development. The sustainability of this contribution largely depends on synergy among business actors, the community, and supportive policies, ensuring that MSMEs not only survive but also become key pillars in the growth of the creative economy in Mempawah Regency.

Challenges and Development Efforts

The development of taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan, cannot be separated from various structural and cultural constraints faced by business actors. One of the primary challenges lies in limited access to capital, which hinders MSMEs from expanding their production capacity and undertaking product innovation (P/12/03/2026). Limited capital also affects the use of relatively simple production equipment, resulting in suboptimal efficiency and product quality.

In addition, the predominantly traditional nature of business management constitutes another barrier, particularly in terms of financial record-keeping, business planning, and the lack of well-structured marketing strategies.

This is reinforced by MS, a member of an MSME in Mempawah, who stated: "Support is needed in the form of business management training, access to capital, and assistance in the use of production technology and digital marketing. In this way, MSME actors can improve the efficiency and competitiveness of their products" (W/MS/MSME Member/at residence/12/03/2026/10:00 WIB).

On the other hand, challenges also arise from the marketing aspect, which remains largely confined to local markets. Taro chips products generally lack strong competitiveness in broader markets due to weak branding, less attractive packaging design, and minimal utilization of digital technology (P/17/03/2026). In the context of the creative economy, however, the ability to enhance aesthetic value and product identity is a crucial factor in increasing consumer appeal. Furthermore, fluctuations in the availability of raw taro materials due to seasonal factors and suboptimal agricultural management pose additional challenges in maintaining production continuity.

Nevertheless, various development efforts have been undertaken to address these challenges. One strategic approach involves enhancing the capacity of MSME human resources through entrepreneurship training, business management, and innovation-based product processing (Agus Nursalim, 2023). Such training is expected to encourage business actors to become more adaptive to market changes and capable of creating high value-added products.

In addition, support from local governments and relevant stakeholders plays a vital role in the development of taro chips MSMEs (Azim & Kurniawati, 2024). Facilitating access to capital through business assistance programs, providing guidance on business legality, and obtaining product certifications such as PIRT and halal certification represent concrete steps toward improving product competitiveness. Another effort includes promoting the digitalization of marketing through the use of social media and e-commerce platforms, enabling taro chips products to reach wider markets, even at the national level (Ilyas et al., 2024).

Institutional strengthening of MSMEs is also an essential component of the development strategy. Through the establishment of business groups or cooperatives, MSME actors can share resources, strengthen distribution networks, and improve their bargaining position in the market. In addition, integration between the agricultural sector and the processing industry must be continuously enhanced to ensure a sustainable supply of raw taro materials.

This aligns with the statement of ST, the head of an MSME group, who noted: "Integration is still not optimal. The relationship between farmers and MSME actors tends to be informal and not well-structured, resulting in inconsistent raw material supply" (W/ST/Head of MSME Group/at taro processing site/17/03/2026/14:15 WIB).

With these various efforts, taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency have significant potential to continue growing and to contribute more substantially to the development of the regional creative economy. Despite facing numerous challenges, synergy among business actors, government, and the community remains the key to creating a sustainable and competitive creative economic ecosystem.

The development of taro chips MSMEs in Mempawah Regency depends not only on the abundance of local resources but also on the ability to manage challenges in an adaptive and sustainable manner (P/17/2026). The obstacles encountered such as limited capital, low managerial capacity, and restricted market access are, in essence, common dynamics in the growth process of MSMEs. However, behind these challenges lie significant opportunities for transformation toward more innovative and competitive enterprises.

The sustainability of taro chips MSMEs also requires strong synergy between the agricultural sector as the provider of raw materials and the creative industry as the processor of economic value. This integration forms a crucial foundation for establishing a robust value chain,

ensuring production stability while simultaneously enhancing community welfare collectively. Taro chips MSMEs play a strategic role as drivers of the regional creative economy, contributing not only to economic growth but also to strengthening local economic independence. If existing challenges can be addressed through innovation, collaboration, and sustained support, these MSMEs have the potential to become a leading sector capable of driving regional economic transformation toward a more inclusive, productive, and highly competitive direction.

The presence of taro chip MSMEs in Mempawah Regency does not merely represent small-scale economic activities, but has transformed into a strategic instrument in building a locally based creative economy. The process of processing taro into high-value products reflects a shift from a resource-based economy toward one driven by value addition and creativity (P/12/03/2026). This transformation underscores that local potential, when managed innovatively, can become a competitive economic force.

The contribution of these MSMEs is also evident in the formation of an inclusive economic ecosystem, in which the community participates not only as producers but also as part of the distribution and marketing chain. The involvement of various social groups, including women and home-based entrepreneurs, reflects a more equitable distribution of economic opportunities, which in turn contributes to collective welfare improvement. Furthermore, the dynamics of taro chip MSMEs strengthen regional economic identity through the creation of distinctive products that embody local wisdom.

This aspect is particularly important within the context of the creative economy, as the uniqueness of products rooted in culture and local resources serves as a key differentiating factor that enhances competitiveness in broader markets. Taro chip MSMEs therefore play a multidimensional role not only as economic drivers, but also as catalysts for innovation, community empowerment, and the reinforcement of regional identity. The sustainability of these contributions largely depends on the synergy between business actors, government support, and technological advancement, enabling MSMEs to develop adaptively and sustainably amid increasingly dynamic economic changes

CONCLUSION

Taro chip MSMEs in Mempawah Regency function not only as economic enterprises but also as agents of transformation that encourage a shift in societal mindsets toward a value-added, creativity-driven, and innovation-based economy. Their presence is able to integrate the agricultural sector with home-based industries, thereby increasing income, generating employment opportunities, and strengthening the local economic structure. Beyond their economic impact, these MSMEs also contribute to social empowerment through broad community involvement, while simultaneously fostering a distinctive and competitive regional product identity.

Although they continue to face challenges such as limited capital, managerial capacity, and market access, the opportunities for development remain substantial through innovation, digitalization, and support from various stakeholders. Therefore, taro chip MSMEs represent a crucial pillar in promoting inclusive, self-reliant, and sustainable creative economic growth in Mempawah Regency

SUGGESTION

The development of taro chips Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan, requires continuous support from various stakeholders to maximize their contribution to regional creative economic growth. MSME owners are encouraged to improve product quality, develop innovative flavors and packaging, strengthen branding, and utilize digital marketing platforms to expand market reach and increase

competitiveness. In addition, improving financial management, production efficiency, and business planning is essential to ensuring business sustainability and increasing income.

The local government is expected to provide ongoing support through business training, access to financing, marketing facilitation, and assistance in obtaining product certifications and business permits. Collaboration among MSME owners, local communities, financial institutions, and other relevant stakeholders should also be strengthened to promote the effective utilization of local resources and create employment opportunities.

Through these efforts, taro chips MSMEs are expected to become more competitive and sustainable, contribute to local income generation, and support the inclusive growth of the creative economy in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan.

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