

The Contribution of Kipang Home Industry to Household Economy in Panyabungan

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran industri rumah tangga kipang dalam meningkatkan pendapatan rumah tangga dan mendorong pemberdayaan masyarakat di Kecamatan Panyabungan, Kabupaten Mandailing Natal. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan lima pelaku usaha kipang sebagai responden utama. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan dianalisis secara tematik untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang komprehensif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa industri rumah tangga kipang berkontribusi signifikan dalam peningkatan pendapatan keluarga, penciptaan lapangan kerja informal, serta penguatan solidaritas sosial di lingkungan sekitar. Mayoritas pelaku usaha adalah perempuan, yang mencerminkan potensi pemberdayaan ekonomi perempuan. Selain itu, industri ini turut melestarikan tradisi kuliner lokal dan mendukung pertumbuhan Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM). Namun, masih terdapat tantangan seperti keterbatasan modal, akses pasar, dan keterampilan manajerial. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pelatihan usaha, legalitas usaha, dan transformasi digital sebagai upaya untuk meningkatkan keberlanjutan dan daya saing. Secara keseluruhan, industri rumah tangga kipang bukan hanya sumber ekonomi alternatif, tetapi juga katalisator bagi pembangunan lokal yang inklusif dan berkelanjutan.

Keyword: Kipang; Industri Rumah Tangga; UMKM; Ekonomi Lokal

ABSTRACT

This research explores the role of the kipang home industry in improving household income and promoting community empowerment in Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study involved five kipang entrepreneurs as primary respondents. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis was conducted to derive key insights. The findings reveal that the kipang home industry significantly contributes to increasing household income, creating informal employment, and strengthening social solidarity within the community. Most of the business actors are women, indicating the potential for women's economic empowerment. Furthermore, this industry plays a role in preserving local culinary traditions while supporting the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). However, challenges such as limited access to capital, market reach, and business management skills remain. The study suggests the need for training, legal business registration, and digital transformation to enhance sustainability and competitiveness. Ultimately, the kipang home industry serves not only as an alternative economic source but also as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable local development.

Keyword: Kipang; Home Industry; MSMEs; Local Economy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Home-based industries (HBIs) are an essential part of the informal economic sector, typically characterized by their small scale, low capital requirements, and reliance on family labor. These industries are

often operated within the confines of the home or its immediate surroundings, making them accessible to marginalized groups, particularly women and the elderly, who may face barriers to entering the formal workforce. HBIs are commonly found in both rural villages and urban fringe areas, where formal employment opportunities may be scarce (Rahma et al., 2024). Their informal nature, while sometimes viewed as a limitation, also allows for greater flexibility and adaptability in times of economic uncertainty. In the broader economic ecosystem, HBIs serve as incubators for microentrepreneurs and as a foundation for the growth of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which are recognized globally as key contributors to inclusive and sustainable economic development.

MSMEs play a vital role in generating employment and driving economic growth. The empowerment of MSMEs is recognized as a strategic means to enhance household income and promote inclusive economic development (Deryane et al., 2024). At the local level, home-based industries often reflect and sustain cultural identities. For example, Panyabungan—the capital of Mandailing Natal Regency—is widely known as the “City of Kipang.” Kipang, a traditional snack made from rice or glutinous rice and palm sugar, holds not only cultural value but also economic significance. It is a popular souvenir among returning travelers and seasonal migrants, signifying its deep integration in both cultural and economic life.

The kipang home industry exemplifies how cultural heritage can be transformed into an economic asset that supports community livelihoods. Kipang, a sweet snack made from glutinous rice and palm sugar, is not only a traditional food item but also a symbol of regional identity in Panyabungan. The snack is deeply embedded in local customs and is frequently purchased as a souvenir by travelers, especially during festive seasons or family visits. This strong cultural association has created a stable market demand, enabling kipang producers to maintain production continuity.

Furthermore, because the industry is labor-intensive rather than capital-intensive, it provides employment opportunities to low-income families and contributes to household income diversification. (Rahayu & Puteri, 2009; Sudrajat et al., 2025). Many of these producers are women, making the industry a valuable mechanism for promoting gender-inclusive economic participation. In essence, the kipang industry serves a dual purpose—preserving Mandailing culinary traditions while simultaneously advancing grassroots economic development through the home-based MSME sector.

Despite a growing body of literature on MSMEs and rural enterprise development, specific attention to local, culturally-rooted industries like kipang remains limited. Existing studies have focused largely on structural support mechanisms, such as training programs and the role of BUMDes (village-owned enterprises), in enhancing MSMEs capacity and post-pandemic economic recovery (Kurniawan et al., 2021; Ridloah et al., 2024). However, these studies often overlook the micro-level dynamics of traditional household enterprises that operate independently of formal institutional frameworks. This lack of focused academic inquiry into kipang production in Panyabungan presents a significant research gap. Understanding the economic contributions of this industry could offer valuable insights into how informal, culturally embedded enterprises contribute to household resilience and local economic sustainability. Therefore, this research seeks to address this gap by examining not only the economic output of kipang businesses but also their broader socio-cultural impact, entrepreneurial practices, and potential for integration into rural development strategies.

Indonesia's Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a pivotal role in fostering economic inclusivity and resilience, particularly at the regional and grassroots levels. These enterprises contribute not only to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but also serve as key drivers for employment creation, poverty reduction, and regional income distribution. The Indonesian government, recognizing this potential, has launched various strategic initiatives aimed at empowering MSMEs. These include the provision of low-interest business capital through financial institutions, capacity-building programs via vocational training, and digital transformation assistance to enhance market access (Sudrajat et al., 2025). Moreover, the focus has gradually shifted toward strengthening community-based enterprises that reflect local resources and culture. In this regard, traditional home industries such as kipang production can benefit significantly from such schemes. However, to fully realize their potential, these industries must be integrated into a broader ecosystem of support that includes access to infrastructure, product innovation, branding, and marketing channels. By doing so, MSMEs rooted in local identity—like kipang in Panyabungan—can be elevated from informal survival enterprises to competitive contributors in regional economic development and cultural preservation.

Despite significant progress in research on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and rural economic development, there remains a notable gap in the literature concerning specific local enterprises—particularly those that are deeply embedded in cultural traditions, such as the kipang industry in Panyabungan. While many studies have explored the general impact of MSMEs on economic growth and employment, very few have zoomed in on niche, culturally significant sectors like traditional snack production. To date, no academic study has explicitly assessed the economic contribution and socio-cultural relevance of kipang

production in this district, leaving a blind spot in our understanding of how such industries function within and benefit local economies.

Local enterprises such as the kipang home industry are often overlooked, yet they play a vital role in supporting household income, creating informal employment, and preserving traditional culinary heritage that forms part of the community's identity. These businesses often utilize local resources, depend on intergenerational knowledge, and contribute to the sustainability of rural livelihoods. Ignoring their potential means missing opportunities for promoting inclusive economic growth and protecting intangible cultural assets.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill that critical research gap by examining the role of the kipang home industry in the local economy of Panyabungan. It aims to understand not only its direct economic contributions—such as income generation and employment—but also its broader impact on community empowerment, social cohesion, and cultural preservation. The findings are expected to provide fresh insights into the development of culturally rooted MSMEs and to inform policies and strategies that support rural economic recovery through the revitalization and strengthening of traditional home-based industries. By shedding light on the kipang industry, this study contributes to a more nuanced and inclusive narrative of rural entrepreneurship in Indonesia.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In an effort to gain a deep understanding of the social and economic dynamics within the community, qualitative research serves as a highly relevant approach. Qualitative research is a series of data collection processes conducted in natural settings with the aim of uncovering the meaning behind certain events, which are then connected to problem-solving efforts, both theoretically and practically (Nawawi & Martini, 2020). This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to provide a detailed and comprehensive depiction of the phenomena observed in the field, particularly concerning the role of the kipang home industry in household income. This method allows the researcher to capture social realities as they truly are—without manipulation—and to deeply understand the local context. As emphasized by Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research focuses on the exploration and interpretation of phenomena within real-life contexts, making it especially suitable for investigating complex and socio-cultural issues (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, Moleong (2021) explains that qualitative research yields descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from the subjects being studied, with an emphasis on process and deep understanding rather than quantifiable results. In this context, the researcher acts as the main instrument in gathering information, conducting observations, and extracting meaning from the data obtained through direct interaction with respondents (Maleong, 2021).

The sample in this study was determined using a quota-based multistage sampling technique, which involves selecting respondents through several stages with a predetermined number according to data needs (Sugiyono, 2022). This technique was chosen to ensure that the respondents truly represent the population of kipang entrepreneurs in Panyabungan District. Based on the selection results, four active kipang business owners were chosen as the primary respondents. They were selected due to their extensive experience and in-depth knowledge regarding the sustainability of the kipang industry and its impact on household income.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, allowing the researcher to explore information in a free yet structured manner based on a prepared interview guide. These interviews were aimed at gathering information related to entrepreneurial motivation, challenges faced, the business's contribution to household income, and its social impact on the surrounding community. The collected data were then analyzed thematically to draw comprehensive and meaningful conclusions. By using this approach, the study is able to present a realistic portrayal of the role of the kipang home industry—not only as an alternative source of income but also as a sustainable instrument for local economic empowerment.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

This study involved five kipang home industry entrepreneurs in Panyabungan District as the primary respondents. These five respondents are both the owners and managers of kipang businesses, each of whom independently operates their production activities from home. A brief profile of the respondents is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Profile of the respondents

No	Entrepreneur's Name	Business Name	Address
1	Rizky	Kipang Rizky	Jl. Syekh Abdul Kadir Mandili, Kel. Panyabungan 3, Panyabungan
2	Sera	Kipang Sisera	Jl. Syekh Abdul Kadir Mandili, Kel. Panyabungan 3, Panyabungan

(Nurintan Siregar)

No	Entrepreneur's Name	Business Name	Address
3	Rahmawati	Kipang Serupa Tapi Tak Sama	Jl. Syekh Abdul Kadir Mandili, Kel. Panyabungan 3, Panyabungan
4	Suryani	Kipang Suryani	Jl. Bukit Barisan, Panyabungan
5	Dian	Kipang Dian	Jl. William Iskandar, Panyabungan

The results of in-depth interviews with the respondents reveal that the kipang home industry has had a positive impact on various aspects of life, particularly in economic and social terms. The key findings from the interviews are as follows:

1) Increased Household Income

Rizky, the owner of Kipang Rizky, emphasized that the kipang business has evolved into the primary economic backbone of his household. The income generated from his home-based production has not only covered daily expenses but has also enabled him to fund his child's education at a prestigious state university in Java. This accomplishment underscores the business's strong economic potential and its ability to support long-term family goals. More broadly, it illustrates how a small-scale enterprise, when managed effectively, can become a sustainable source of financial security and upward social mobility.

In a similar vein, Rahmawati, who manages Kipang Serupa Tapi Tak Sama, shared that her home-based operation continues to attract a steady stream of customers. By producing and selling kipang directly from her home, she avoids the additional burden of renting a commercial space—an advantage that allows her to reallocate funds toward other essential household needs. To expand her market reach, she also distributes her products to local souvenir shops, which helps increase visibility and brand recognition. Thanks to a consistent income flow, she has not only stabilized her household economy but has also started saving for future needs, demonstrating a level of financial resilience and planning.

Together, their stories highlight how the kipang home industry is not merely a means of subsistence but a viable path toward economic empowerment and improved quality of life. These entrepreneurs serve as tangible examples of how traditional, small-scale businesses can thrive in local settings while contributing meaningfully to both household welfare and the broader community economy

2) Community Empowerment

Sera, the owner of Kipang Sisera, highlighted the dual impact of her business—both economically for her family and socially for her community. She explained that beyond serving as a reliable source of income for her household, the kipang business has enabled her to extend economic opportunities to others by employing neighbors who were previously without work. This community-based employment not only helps reduce local unemployment but also fosters a sense of solidarity and shared purpose among residents.

Sera expressed deep gratitude for being in a position to support those around her, seeing it as both a responsibility and a blessing. The income generated from her kipang production ranges from IDR 600,000 to IDR 1,000,000 per day—an impressive figure for a home-based enterprise. This consistent revenue stream reflects strong customer demand and underscores the business's scalability. Particularly promising is the fact that many customers are not individual consumers but resellers who purchase kipang in bulk, suggesting a growing distribution network and the potential for broader market penetration.

These developments point to the kipang business's capacity not only to lift individual households economically but also to act as a catalyst for community development. Sera's experience illustrates how small-scale, grassroots entrepreneurship can evolve into a microeconomic engine—driving local growth, alleviating poverty, and encouraging a cooperative spirit among neighbors.

3) Contribution to the Local Economy

In an additional statement, Rahmawati expressed a powerful conviction regarding the broader potential of home-based businesses. She believes that if every household engaged in a productive economic activity such as kipang-making, it would lead to a significant reduction in poverty and hunger within the community. From her perspective, home industries offer more than just personal financial stability—they serve as practical and scalable solutions to widespread socio-economic challenges.

Rahmawati emphasized that entrepreneurship, when rooted in discipline and perseverance, can transform household economies by creating steady income streams and fostering financial independence. According to her, this transformation does not require large-scale capital or formal business infrastructure. Rather, it begins with initiative, creativity, and the willingness to work hard using available local resources.

She further argued that the cumulative effect of many households becoming economically self-reliant could catalyze broader economic progress at the regional and even national level. In her view, such grassroots economic empowerment can reduce dependency on external aid, increase domestic productivity, and contribute to a more resilient and inclusive economy. Her insights highlight how small, community-based enterprises—

like the kipang business—can play a pivotal role in achieving sustainable development by addressing poverty from the ground up.

B. Discussion

The results of the study clearly illustrate that the kipang home industry in Panyabungan District plays a vital role in enhancing family income and overall household welfare. Entrepreneurs such as Rizky and Rahmawati have leveraged this traditional business as their primary source of economic support, successfully financing significant family needs, including the education of their children up to the university level. This achievement highlights the industry's potential as a foundational pillar for microeconomic resilience (Rahma et al., 2024), especially within rural and semi-urban settings where formal employment opportunities are limited. The ability of these entrepreneurs to sustain and grow their businesses from their homes demonstrates how small-scale, culturally embedded enterprises can provide financial stability and improve living standards at the grassroots level.

Moreover, the impact of the kipang industry extends far beyond mere economic gains. As articulated by Sera, the kipang business serves as a catalyst for social development by generating informal employment opportunities within the local community, particularly for neighbors who were previously unemployed or underemployed. This creates a positive ripple effect, fostering social solidarity and mutual cooperation among community members. The industry thus functions as a crucial social safety net that not only supports individual families but also strengthens community bonds and collective resilience in times of economic uncertainty.

Drawing from the data collected, it is evident that the kipang home industry contributes significantly to both economic and social dimensions of community life. The increased household income directly improves the material well-being of families, while the creation of local jobs and enhancement of social cohesion positively affect community dynamics. Additionally, the industry is predominantly operated by women, many of whom are housewives, underscoring its role as an empowering platform for female entrepreneurs. Through their engagement in kipang production, these women gain financial independence and active participation in local economic activities, which in turn contributes to gender equity and the upliftment of family welfare.

Beyond its economic and social roles, the kipang industry also serves as a vehicle for cultural preservation. As a traditional culinary product deeply rooted in the local heritage of Panyabungan, kipang production helps maintain and promote regional identity. This blending of economic activity with cultural values not only sustains local traditions but also adds unique value to the product, potentially enhancing its appeal in wider markets.

In summary, the kipang home industry exemplifies how small-scale, home-based enterprises can function as multifaceted engines of community development. They provide critical income, foster social inclusion, empower women, and preserve cultural heritage — all of which are essential components for sustainable and inclusive rural development.

Furthermore, the kipang home industry embodies local cultural values through its traditional Mandailing culinary products. In this regard, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play a dual role: preserving cultural heritage and strengthening regional economies. This aligns with broader research highlighting the need to support SME growth through business management training, financial literacy education, and digitalization (Ahada et al., 2024). Such initiatives are crucial to address major challenges faced by rural SMEs, including limited capital, narrow market access, and a lack of managerial skills.

The rapid growth of e-commerce has also become a major catalyst for the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. Digital platforms enable businesses like kipang producers to expand their market reach and operate more efficiently (Aisha et al., 2024). As a result, MSMEs are able to build strong brand identities and compete in broader markets. Thus, digital transformation and technology adoption are essential strategies for maintaining business sustainability and competitiveness.

Nevertheless, to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, the legitimacy of these businesses must be ensured. Legal registration not only ensures compliance with regulations but also builds consumer trust in the quality and safety of the products (Ahada et al., 2024). Trust is a critical variable in business relationships and financial transactions, especially within digital ecosystems (Syanova & Fajar, 2024).

Moreover, creativity and innovation are indispensable elements for business sustainability. Creativity enables entrepreneurs to continuously add value through product design, packaging, or marketing strategies (Agustina et al., 2024). Brand awareness is also a key factor in establishing long-term customer relationships, particularly in increasingly competitive markets (Sutisna et al., 2023).

Despite these positive developments, observations of MSMEs reveal ongoing issues, such as a narrow focus on production output without adequate attention to financial management or long-term business development (Rosari et al., 2023). Therefore, capacity-building programs in business planning, marketing, and digital skills must be strengthened through collaborations with local stakeholders (Yasin et al., 2023), including government and private sector partners.

Regarding the general problems faced by MSMEs, the Central Statistics Agency identified the following issues: (1) Lack of capital, (2) Difficulties in marketing, (3) Intense business competition, (4) Challenges in obtaining raw materials, (5) Lack of production technical skills and expertise, (6) Insufficient managerial skills, and (7) Poor financial management. A small business is a productive economic enterprise that operates independently, conducted by an individual or a business entity that is not a subsidiary or branch of another company, nor controlled or part—directly or indirectly—of a medium or large business. It meets the criteria of a small business as defined in Law No. 20 and Law No. 21 of 2008 (Statistik UMKM Nasional 2021, 2021).

On a broader scale, small and medium industries (SMIs) and home-based industries (HBIs) serve as crucial pillars in strengthening Indonesia's economic resilience. By leveraging locally available resources and engaging actively in domestic supply chains, these industries foster economic self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on imports. Industries that are primarily concentrated in the food and beverage sector—such as the kipang home industry—are particularly vital, as they not only meet everyday consumer needs but also stimulate the development of complementary sectors including tourism, hospitality, and retail trade. These intersectoral linkages generate multiplier effects that enhance regional economic vitality and job creation.

Furthermore, the kipang home industry represents more than just a source of livelihood; it exemplifies how micro-enterprises can contribute to broader socio-economic goals. Through low-barrier entrepreneurship, it opens opportunities for marginalized groups—especially women and informal workers—to participate in economic activities. It also promotes the use and transmission of traditional knowledge and cultural heritage, as seen in the locally rooted production methods and flavors that reflect community identity.

In conclusion, the kipang home industry is not only a viable source of family income, but also a key player in fostering an inclusive and sustainable local economic ecosystem. It addresses grassroots economic challenges while simultaneously promoting community empowerment, cultural preservation, and bottom-up economic transformation. As such, its development should be prioritized within regional economic planning and policy frameworks aimed at supporting MSMEs and advancing sustainable rural development.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the kipang home industry in Panyabungan District plays a strategic role in increasing household income, generating informal employment, and fostering social solidarity within the community. This industry provides a direct economic impact on family livelihoods, particularly for housewives who are the primary business actors. Moreover, kipang as a local product contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage and has strong potential to grow as a vital part of the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector.

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that local governments and relevant agencies pay greater attention to the development of the kipang home industry through various training and mentoring programs. These programs should include business management, financial literacy, digital marketing, and product quality improvement to enhance the competitiveness of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, access to business capital and legal registration processes should be facilitated to ensure the sustainable growth and formal recognition of kipang businesses. Support for building market networks—both through partnerships with local souvenir shops and the use of e-commerce platforms—is also essential to expand market reach. Given that most kipang entrepreneurs are women, gender-based economic empowerment should be an integral part of local economic development programs. Through this integrated approach, the kipang home industry is expected to serve not only as an economic driver but also as a vehicle for preserving sustainable local culture.

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