



IMPLEMENTATION OF PALEMBANG MALAY CULTURAL VALUES FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PALEMBANG PEMPEK BUSINESS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Atika Khairunnisa^{1*}, Yuhendri L.V²

^{1,2} Economic Education, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

Article's Information

DOI:

10.37253/jgbmr.v8i1.12411

e-ISSN:

2685-3426

EDITORIAL HISTORY:

SUBMISSION: 2026-05-25

ACCEPTED: 2026-07-27

CORRESPONDENCE*:

YuhendriLV@fe.unp.ac.id

AUTHOR'S ADDRESS:

Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka, Air Tawar,
Padang, Sumatera Barat 25173

ABSTRACT

Business sustainability is not solely determined by economic capability, but also by the cultural values embedded within society. In Palembang City, the pempek business represents a traditional culinary sector that continues to survive because of the strong influence of Palembang Malay culture in daily business activities. This research was conducted to explore the role of cultural values in preserving the continuity of pempek enterprises. This research employed a qualitative ethnographic approach. Data were gathered through field observations, comprehensive interviews, and documentation. Twelve informants participated in the study, including cultural leaders, business owners, workers, family members, and consumers from Pempek Sentosa, Pempek Koyek, and Pempek Minah. The analysis process involved reducing data, organizing information, and drawing conclusions interactively. The results reveal that several Palembang Malay values are strongly embedded in pempek businesses, such as honesty, friendliness, politeness, discipline, cleanliness, responsibility, cooperation, family solidarity, and religious commitment. These values are demonstrated through ethical customer service, transparent business transactions, teamwork among employees, family-based business management, and efforts to maintain product quality and halal standards. The presence of these cultural principles has proven beneficial for business continuity because they help establish consumer trust, strengthen customer loyalty, improve operational effectiveness, and preserve local cultural uniqueness. Therefore, Palembang Malay culture serves not only as a regional identity but also as a powerful social asset that reinforces the endurance of traditional culinary businesses.

Keywords: Palembang Malay Culture, Business Sustainability, Pempek Business, Ethnography, Social Capital

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's cultural diversity serves as a national identity and influences the social and economic life of its people. In the world of entrepreneurship, culture plays a fundamental role in shaping work ethics, social relationships, and business management, ensuring long-term sustainability. Therefore, culture can be viewed as social capital that supports business sustainability.

Recent studies published in the *Journal of Global Business and Management Review (JGBMR)* further emphasize that intangible organizational resources, including local values, organizational culture, and social relationships, significantly contribute to sustainable business performance and long-term competitiveness (Muchsinati et al., 2025; Wati et al., 2026). These findings reinforce the view that cultural values can function as strategic resources that strengthen business resilience, customer trust, and long-term business sustainability.

Palembang is a city with a strong entrepreneurial culture and tradition. As part of Malay culture, the people of Palembang uphold the values of honesty, mutual cooperation, courtesy, hard work, deliberation, and respect for religion and customs. These values are still applied in the community's economic activities today (Aliana, 1987; Rochmiatun, 2023).

One business closely linked to Palembang's Malay culture is the pempek (rice cake) business. Pempek is not only known as a regional specialty but also as a cultural symbol passed down through generations. The manufacturing process, ingredients, and even the distinctive flavor of cuko (rice cake) are part of a cultural heritage that entrepreneurs continue to preserve (Wargadalem, Wasino, & Yulifar, 2023).

The increasingly competitive culinary industry presents pempek entrepreneurs with various challenges, such as changing consumer preferences, competition, and the development of digital technology. These conditions require entrepreneurs to adapt without losing the cultural identity of their products. In this regard, Palembang Malay cultural values play a crucial role in maintaining product quality, building customer trust, and maintaining business sustainability.

Previous research has shown that culture has a significant influence on entrepreneurial activity. Husni stated that culture shapes a person's mindset and behavior in running a business. Furthermore, (Hasbullah, H., & Jamaluddin, J., 2013) explained that Malays possess entrepreneurial traits such as the ability to build relationships, a passion for commerce, and adaptability. Junaidi also found that Malay culture instills values of optimism, tolerance, cooperation, and a democratic attitude that support business success.

In traditional Palembang cuisine, Efrianto, Zubir, and Maryetti noted that pempek (Indonesian traditional food) embodies cultural values of honesty and health. These values are evident in the use of quality ingredients, adherence to traditional recipes, and the use of natural, safe ingredients. Furthermore, Palembang Malay culture upholds the values of mutual cooperation, hospitality, and deliberation as social capital in building business relationships.

Business sustainability is the ability of a business to survive changes in the business environment. (Bolton, 2013) explained that business sustainability is influenced by product quality, customer loyalty, and good social relationships. In addition, (Widyananti et al., 2021) emphasized that sustainability can be achieved through maintaining customer trust and business identity.

However, although research on pempek and Malay culture is quite extensive, studies examining the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values in supporting the sustainability of pempek businesses remain limited. Most previous studies have focused on culinary aspects, marketing, and cultural identity rather than on the application of cultural values in everyday business practices.

Meanwhile, the continued growth of pempek businesses in Palembang reflects the enduring influence of local cultural values that have been preserved and transmitted across generations. These cultural values are believed to shape not only social interactions but also entrepreneurial practices and business sustainability. Therefore, understanding how Palembang Malay cultural values are maintained and implemented in pempek businesses is essential to explain their contribution to sustaining traditional culinary enterprises.

Based on this research gap and empirical phenomenon, this study aims to examine how Palembang Malay cultural values are practiced and implemented in pempek business activities. Specifically, the study explores the cultural values maintained by entrepreneurs, how these values are integrated into daily business operations, and their contribution to long-term business sustainability. Furthermore, to obtain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, the study employs an ethnographic approach by integrating the perspectives of Palembang Malay culture, Social Capital Theory, and the concept of business sustainability as the analytical framework for explaining the relationship between culture and local entrepreneurship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is a crucial part of any research because it serves as a theoretical foundation that supports the research process. Through a literature review, researchers can understand various concepts, theories, previous research results, and scientific findings relevant to the topic being studied. Furthermore, a literature review helps researchers identify research gaps, strengthen research arguments, and provide direction in developing a conceptual framework.

In this study, entitled "Implementation of Palembang Malay Cultural Values in the Sustainability of Palembang Pempek Businesses (An Ethnographic Study of Pempek Entrepreneurship in Palembang City)", the literature review focuses on the concept of Palembang Malay culture, entrepreneurial values that develop within Malay society, business sustainability, and the relationship between local culture and entrepreneurial practices.

Palembang Malay Culture

Culture can be understood as the entire system of values, norms, beliefs, customs, and behavioral patterns passed down from one generation to the next. In community life, culture serves as a guide for acting, thinking, and interacting with the social and economic environment. The Palembang Malay community is an ethnic group with a strong cultural identity, formed through a long history, from the Srivijaya Kingdom to the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate.

Palembang Malay culture has its historical roots in the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate, where Malay traditions and Islamic values developed through a long process of cultural interaction and acculturation. The culture is characterized by strong religious values, politeness, mutual cooperation,

respect for deliberation (*musyawarah*), and social harmony. These values are reflected not only in daily social life but also in economic activities and traditional culinary practices. Furthermore, the traditions, language, arts, and culinary heritage of Palembang represent the continuity of Malay culture that has been preserved and practiced across generations.

Entrepreneurial Values in Palembang Malay Culture

Palembang Malay culture encompasses various values that support the growth of entrepreneurial activity. These values include honesty, hard work, responsibility, mutual cooperation, trustworthiness, and a friendly attitude in interacting with others. Honesty is manifested through openness in conducting business and maintaining the quality of products marketed to consumers. Meanwhile, hard work and perseverance are important factors that contribute to the success of entrepreneurs in maintaining their businesses.

The Malay community is also known for its strong trading traditions. Trading activities that have developed since ancient times have shaped entrepreneurial traits that are adaptive, communicative, and capable of building strong social relationships with customers and business partners. In the context of traditional culinary businesses, these cultural values serve as social capital, helping to build consumer trust and maintain business continuity.

Pempek Business as a Representation of Local Culture

Pempek is a traditional food originating from Palembang, South Sumatra, and has become an important cultural identity of the local community. Beyond its role as a culinary product, pempek represents the history, traditions, and local wisdom of the Palembang

people. Traditionally made from fish and sago flour and served with *cuko*, pempek reflects the utilization of local natural resources and has been recognized as part of Indonesia's Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.

The authenticity of the flavor, traditional processing techniques, and the use of recipes passed down through generations are factors that distinguish pempek from other culinary products. Therefore, the pempek business functions not only as an economic activity but also as a means of cultural preservation that introduces Palembang's identity to the wider community.

The Concept of Business Sustainability

Business sustainability refers to a business's ability to survive, grow, and adapt to changes in the business environment while maintaining long-term economic, social, and environmental performance (Bolton, 2013). Sustainable businesses not only focus on achieving economic profit but also on maintaining product quality, building customer relationships, managing resources effectively, and creating long-term value for stakeholders (Weidinger et al., 2013). These capabilities enable businesses to remain competitive and resilient in a dynamic business environment.

Several factors influence business sustainability, including entrepreneurial competence, innovation, managerial capability, social capital, and customer trust (Bolton, 2013; Barney, 1991; Weidinger et al., 2013). In traditional culinary businesses, business sustainability is strongly influenced by entrepreneurs' ability to maintain product quality, preserve product authenticity, adapt to changing consumer preferences, and build long-term relationships with customers and other stakeholders (Bolton, 2013; Rahayu et al., 2023).

In addition, previous studies published in JGBMR have demonstrated that sustainable business performance is influenced not only by financial capability but also by organizational culture, innovation, stakeholder relationships, and social capital. These findings support the argument that cultural values embedded in local communities may become strategic resources for maintaining competitive advantage and business sustainability. (Muchsinati et al., 2025; Wati et al., 2026).

Implementation of Palembang Malay Cultural Values in the Sustainability of the Pempek Business

The application of Palembang Malay cultural values in the pempek business can be seen in various aspects of business activities. The value of honesty is reflected in the use of quality raw materials and the presentation of product information that reflects actual conditions. The value of health is realized through maintaining a clean business premises, using safe ingredients, and hygienic production processes.

Furthermore, the values of friendliness and courtesy are evident in customer service, while the value of mutual cooperation is evident in the working relationships between business owners, employees, suppliers, and the surrounding community. The implementation of these values not only improves product and service quality but also strengthens consumer trust, thus supporting long-term business sustainability.

Relevant Previous Research

Various previous studies have examined pempek as a cultural identity of the Palembang community and as part of the local culinary heritage (Efrianto et al., 2014; Wargadalem et al., 2023). Other studies have discussed strategies for

developing traditional culinary businesses and highlighted the important relationship between culture, local wisdom, and economic activities in supporting the sustainability of local enterprises (Junaidi, 2016; Rahayu et al., 2023). However, most previous studies have focused on historical aspects, culinary tourism, marketing, product development, or cultural identity rather than examining how Palembang Malay cultural values are implemented in maintaining business sustainability. Studies that specifically investigate the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values in sustaining pempek businesses through an ethnographic approach remain limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this research gap by analyzing the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values in the sustainability of pempek businesses in Palembang.

Literature Management in Compiling a Literature Review

Compiling a literature review requires a systematic process of identifying, selecting, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant literature from credible scientific sources, including academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and other scholarly publications (Webster & Watson, 2002; Snyder, 2019). The collected literature should then be critically analyzed and synthesized to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and establish a strong theoretical foundation for the study.

In this study, the literature review focuses on Palembang Malay cultural values, culture-based entrepreneurship, business sustainability, and ethnographic studies. These bodies of literature were selected because they provide the conceptual basis for explaining the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values in sustaining pempek

businesses and for identifying the research gap addressed in this study.

Problems Often Faced by Novice Researchers in Compiling a Literature Review

In compiling a literature review, researchers often face several fundamental questions. First, they need to identify literature that is directly relevant to the research topic and originates from credible and reliable sources (Webster & Watson, 2002; Snyder, 2019). Second, although the number of references is important, the quality, relevance, and credibility of the selected literature are more critical in building a strong theoretical foundation (Snyder, 2019). Third, plagiarism can be avoided by thoroughly understanding the original source, paraphrasing it in the researcher's own words, and appropriately acknowledging the cited sources in accordance with academic writing standards (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020). Fourth, researchers should synthesize theories and findings from previous studies to develop a logical framework that supports the research objectives rather than merely summarizing existing literature (Webster & Watson, 2002). Therefore, the literature review serves not only as a collection of theories but also as a conceptual foundation for explaining the relationship between Palembang Malay culture, entrepreneurial values, and the sustainability of the pempek business.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using an ethnographic method to explore the social lives of pempek entrepreneurs in Palembang. Ethnography is appropriate for understanding the culture, beliefs, social interactions, and practices of a particular

community through direct observation and in-depth engagement with participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The ethnographic method was chosen because this study aims to understand how Palembang Malay cultural values are practiced and maintained in sustaining pempek businesses. Through this approach, researchers were able to observe directly the interaction patterns, business practices, cultural meanings, and social behaviors embedded in the daily activities of pempek entrepreneurs.

The research was conducted in Palembang City, South Sumatra, Indonesia, which is widely recognized as the birthplace of pempek and one of the centers of Palembang Malay culture. Informants were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed extensive knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values in managing their businesses with different business backgrounds, including business scale, economic conditions, and marketing strategies, to ensure a more diverse data collection.

The research utilized two types of data sources: primary and secondary. Primary data was collected directly through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and field documentation. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner using guidelines tailored to the research focus on the application of Palembang Malay cultural values, their implementation process, and their impact on business sustainability.

Furthermore, participant observation involved directly observing and following business activities, from production processes and customer service to interactions between business actors, and even cultural customs emerging within business activities.

Documentation was used to strengthen the data through photographs, business archives, and field notes. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from various sources, including books, journals, scientific articles, and other documents related to Palembang Malay culture and business sustainability.

To ensure the reliability of the data obtained, this study employed two lines of verification: source triangulation and method triangulation. Information from one source was compared with that from other sources to avoid data bias. Furthermore, interview results were compared with field observations and supporting documents to enhance the accuracy of the findings. Researchers also re-contacted informants through a member check process to ensure that the meaning and information interpreted were in accordance with the reality they conveyed.

Data processing was conducted dynamically from the beginning of the research until its completion. The analysis model employed was based on the interactive concept of (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J., 2014). The first stage involved sorting and simplifying relevant data to maintain the research's focus. Next, the data was organized into narrative stories, matrix mapping, and theme groupings to more clearly demonstrate the interconnectedness of the information. In the final stage, the researchers drew meaning from all field findings and connected them to Palembang Malay cultural values, community social capital, and the sustainability of the pempek business.

Through this process, this research is expected to demonstrate how local culture not only serves as the identity of the Palembang community but also serves as a force that maintains the

sustainability of businesses and the entrepreneurial spirit of its people.

RESULTS

This research was conducted at three pempek businesses in Palembang: Pempek Sentosa, Pempek Koyek, and Pempek Minah. The informants included Palembang Malay traditional leaders, business owners, employees, family members of the owners, and customers. Data were obtained through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation conducted throughout the research process. Interview transcripts were imported into NVivo 12 software for coding and thematic analysis. The coding process followed the interactive analysis model of (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Based on the data collection, it was found that the sustainability of pempek businesses is influenced not only by economic factors, such as capital and marketing, but also by the application of Palembang Malay cultural values in daily business activities. These cultural values serve as guidelines for business management, customer service, work relationships, and efforts to maintain product quality.

Palembang Malay Cultural Values Found in Pempek Businesses

The research results indicate that several Palembang Malay cultural values are still practiced by pempek businesses. These values include honesty, politeness and hospitality, mutual cooperation, family, cleanliness, discipline and responsibility, and religiosity.

Table 1. Palembang Malay Cultural Values Found in Pempek Businesses

Cultural Values	Form of Implementation
Honesty	Transparency of raw material information, honesty in transactions, maintaining product quality
Politeness and Hospitality	Friendly service, use of polite language to customers
Mutual cooperation	Cooperation between employees and family members in production and service
Kinship	Harmonious relationship between business owners, workers and customers
Cleanliness	Maintaining hygiene of production processes and business environment
Discipline and Responsibility	Operational timeliness and service consistency
Religiosity	Maintaining product halalness and implementing Islamic work ethics

Source: (Research Data Processing Results, 2026)

According to interviews with all informants, honesty is the cultural value most frequently found in pempek businesses. Business owners emphasize the importance of using standard raw materials, accurate ingredient measurements, and ensuring prices are commensurate with the quality of the product offered. Customers stated that consistent quality and transparency are the primary reasons they continue to purchase from these businesses.

In addition to honesty, the values of politeness and hospitality are also evident in interactions between employees and customers. All businesses studied practice welcoming customers with a friendly attitude, using polite language, and providing good service. According to a traditional leader, this behavior reflects

Palembang Malay culture, which values respect for others.

The values of mutual cooperation and kinship are evident in the working relationships established in all three pempek businesses. Most of the production and service processes are carried out collaboratively, involving family members and employees. This creates harmonious working relationships and strengthens solidarity within the business environment.

Implementation of Palembang Malay Cultural Values in the Sustainability of the Pempek Business

Research findings indicate that Palembang Malay cultural values are implemented in various aspects of business management. In production, the business owner strives to maintain traditional recipes passed down through generations and maintain the quality of the raw materials used. The use of fresh fish, a clean production process, and consistent taste are key priorities in maintaining product quality.

In terms of service, the values of politeness and friendliness are demonstrated through the employees' attitudes toward customers. Customers are provided with fast, friendly, and respectful service. Several customers expressed that the comfortable service atmosphere is one of the reasons they continue to choose to purchase pempek from the establishment.

The value of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) is evident in the increase in the number of orders. Employees and family members help each other complete tasks without overly rigid division of labor. This cooperation makes the production process more effective and helps the business meet customer demand.

Furthermore, the values of discipline and responsibility are implemented through timely operations, consistent product quality, and a commitment to fulfilling customer orders. Meanwhile, religious values are realized through the use of halal ingredients, maintaining product cleanliness, and providing employees with the opportunity to perform religious services during working hours.

Benefits of Implementing Palembang Malay Cultural Values for the Sustainability of Pempek Businesses

Research results show that implementing Palembang Malay cultural values provides various benefits for the sustainability of pempek businesses. The most prominent benefit is increased customer trust. Values of honesty, guaranteed product quality, and good service make customers feel confident in the products they consume.

In addition to increasing customer trust, implementing cultural values also contributes to the development of a positive business image. Pempek Sentosa, for example, has been able to expand its business to several branches. Meanwhile, Pempek Koyek and Pempek Minah have remained resilient amidst the competitive culinary industry by relying on product quality, friendly service, and good customer relationships.

Another benefit is seen in internal business relationships. The values of family and mutual cooperation create a harmonious work environment and strengthen solidarity among employees. This helps reduce workplace conflict and increase operational effectiveness.

Furthermore, the implementation of cultural values also plays a role in maintaining the sustainability of Palembang's culinary heritage. Efforts to maintain traditional recipes, authentic flavors, and service ethics consistent with

Palembang Malay culture make the pempek business not only a business activity but also a means of preserving local culture.

Overall, the research results indicate that Palembang Malay cultural values contribute significantly to the sustainability of the pempek business. Cultural values not only serve as behavioral guidelines for running the business but also serve as social capital that strengthens competitiveness, increases customer loyalty, and supports long-term business sustainability.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study indicate that the sustainability of pempek businesses in Palembang City is not only determined by economic aspects such as capital, marketing, and production capacity, but is also influenced by the application of Palembang Malay cultural values in daily business activities. This finding demonstrates that local culture serves as social capital, helping businesses maintain their existence amidst increasingly fierce culinary business competition.

Honesty as Social Capital in Business Sustainability

The study found that honesty is the most dominant cultural value applied in Pempek Sentosa, Pempek Koyek, and Pempek Minah. This value is realized through the use of quality raw materials, transparency of product information, accurate weighing, and the appropriateness of price and quality offered to consumers. These practices demonstrate that honesty is not only a cultural norm but also a business strategy capable of building customer trust.

This finding aligns with research by (Efrianto, Zubir, & Maryetti, 2014), which states that the value of honesty is an important element in the culinary culture of the Palembang Malay community. Furthermore, (Coleman's, 1988) social capital theory explains that trust formed through social interactions can be a valuable resource for both individuals and organizations. In the context of the pempek business, honesty contributes to customer loyalty and long-term relationships that support business sustainability.

Mutual Cooperation and Family as Strengtheners of Business Performance

Research findings indicate that the values of mutual cooperation and family remain key characteristics in pempek business management. The working relationships between business owners, family members, and employees are based on cooperation, mutual assistance, and a sense of ownership in the business they run together. These values are evident when all team members work collectively to complete the production process and serve customers, especially during times of increased demand.

These findings support (Putnam's, 2000) social capital theory, which asserts that social networks, shared norms, and cooperation can increase organizational effectiveness. A work environment built on a sense of family creates strong solidarity, which can increase productivity and strengthen the business's resilience in facing various challenges. Thus, mutual cooperation not only functions as a cultural value but also as a social mechanism that strengthens business sustainability.

Politeness and Hospitality as a Cultural Identity of Palembang Malays

The study also showed that customers place great importance on the friendly and courteous attitudes displayed by

business owners. In the three businesses studied, service was provided with polite language, respect for customers, and warm communication. These conditions created a positive experience for customers and encouraged repeat purchases.

This finding reinforces the view that Palembang Malay culture is reflected not only in the culinary products produced, but also in the way business owners interact with the community. The values of politeness and hospitality are part of the cultural identity that distinguishes Palembang pempek businesses from other culinary businesses. From a relationship marketing perspective, high-quality interactions can increase customer satisfaction and strengthen loyalty to the business.

Contribution of Cultural Values to Business Sustainability

Overall, the study shows that Palembang Malay cultural values significantly contribute to the sustainability of pempek businesses. Honesty strengthens customer trust, mutual cooperation increases work effectiveness, kinship fosters harmonious working relationships, and politeness and hospitality enhance customer satisfaction. Furthermore, religious and clean values also strengthen the business's image through product quality assurance and halal certification.

This finding can be explained through the Resource-Based View (RBV) proposed by (Barney, J., 1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99–120. According to this theory, sustainable competitive advantage can be achieved through valuable, unique, difficult-to-imitate, and well-organized resources. In this study, Palembang Malay cultural values are an intangible asset that differentiates pempek

businesses from their competitors. Therefore, local culture can be viewed as a strategic resource contributing to long-term business sustainability.

These findings are also consistent with previous studies published in the *Journal of Global Business and Management Review* (JGBMR), which demonstrate that intangible resources, organizational capabilities, and local knowledge play significant roles in enhancing business sustainability and competitive performance (Muchsinati et al., 2025; Wati et al., 2026). In line with these studies, the present research suggests that Palembang Malay cultural values constitute valuable intangible organizational resources that can strengthen sustainable competitive advantage while preserving the unique cultural identity of traditional culinary businesses.

Practically, the research results illustrate that preserving local cultural values is not only crucial for maintaining community identity but can also be a business development strategy relevant to modern business needs. Therefore, the success of pempek businesses in Palembang City is determined not only by product quality but also by the ability of entrepreneurs to internalize and apply Palembang Malay cultural values in daily business activities.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that Palembang Malay cultural values are still actively implemented in the management of pempek businesses in Palembang City. These values include honesty, politeness and hospitality, mutual cooperation, family spirit, cleanliness, discipline, responsibility, and religiosity. All of these values not only serve as cultural identity but also serve as guidelines for conducting business activities.

The implementation of cultural values is evident in various aspects of the business, from raw material selection, product quality maintenance, customer service, working relationships between employees, to the application of halal and hygiene principles in the production process. Businesses consistently integrate cultural values into business practices, creating a harmonious, productive, and customer-satisfaction-oriented business environment.

The results also demonstrate that the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values positively contributes to the sustainability of pempek businesses. Honesty plays a role in building customer trust, mutual cooperation increases work effectiveness, family spirit strengthens internal business solidarity, and hospitality and politeness increase customer loyalty. Thus, local culture serves as both social capital and a strategic resource that supports long-term competitiveness and business sustainability.

This study has limitations because it was conducted on only three pempek businesses in Palembang City, so the findings cannot fully describe the characteristics of pempek businesses in the region. Furthermore, the study used a qualitative ethnographic approach that focuses on an in-depth understanding of cultural phenomena, so the results are not intended for statistical generalization. Nevertheless, this approach enabled researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Palembang Malay cultural values and the sustainability of pempek businesses.

Based on the study findings, it is recommended that traditional culinary businesses continue to maintain and develop local cultural values as part of their business strategy. Future research could expand the research locations, involve more businesses, or combine

qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a broader picture of the influence of culture on business sustainability.

LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations that must be considered in understanding and interpreting the results. First, the study was conducted only on three pempek businesses in Palembang City: Pempek Sentosa, Pempek Koyek, and Pempek Minah. These locations were selected purposively because they were considered representative of pempek businesses that still uphold Palembang Malay cultural values. However, the characteristics of pempek businesses in other locations may have different social, cultural, and management strategies, so the results of this study cannot be generalized to all pempek businesses in Palembang City or other regions.

Second, the study used a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods that emphasize an in-depth understanding of the meanings, experiences, and cultural practices of the informants. This approach allows for rich and comprehensive data collection, but has limitations in producing quantitative measures of the influence of each cultural value on business sustainability.

Third, the research data was primarily obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, which depended on the informants' openness in sharing their experiences and perspectives. Although the researcher has applied triangulation techniques of sources and methods to increase the validity of the data, the possibility of differences in perceptions or subjectivity among informants cannot be completely avoided.

Fourth, this study focuses more on the implementation of Palembang Malay cultural values in the sustainability of pempek businesses. Therefore, other

factors that could potentially influence business sustainability, such as market conditions, technological developments, business competition, digital marketing strategies, and changes in consumer behavior, have not been discussed in depth in this study.

Despite several limitations, this study still provides a relevant overview of the role of Palembang Malay cultural values in supporting the sustainability of pempek businesses. These limitations do not diminish the validity of the study's main findings, but rather indicate opportunities for further research with a broader scope, a more diverse number of informants, and the use of research approaches that combine qualitative and quantitative methods.

REFERENCE

- Aliana. (1987). History and Culture of the Palembang Malays. Department of Education and Culture.
- Amrullah, F. (2025). Economic Transformation of the Palembang Malay Community. *Jurnal Iqtishaduna*, 7(1), 44–59. *Jurnal Iqtishaduna*
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.
- Antoni, A., Sua'idi, R., Amin, M., Aryati, A., & Yanuarti, E. (2023). Perspectives of Islamic and Malay Education on Work Ethics in the Songket Palembang Business Case. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(3), 3404–3409. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan*
- Barney, J. B. (1991). Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage. *Journal of*

- Management, 17(1), 99–120.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108>
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.
- Bolton, B. (2013). *Entrepreneurs: Talent, Temperament and Opportunity* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Briando, A., & Ali, S. (2019). Malay culture and Islamic identity in Palembang. *Sociocultural Journal*, 19(2), 98–104.
<https://doi.org/10.24014/sb.v19i2.19338>
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(Supplement), S95–S120.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/228943>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan. (2014). *Pempek. Warisan Budaya Takbenda Indonesia*.
<https://budaya.data.kemdikbud.go.id/wbth/objek/AA000023>
- Effendy, T. (2006). *Tunjuk ajar Melayu* (3rd ed.). Center for the Study and Development of Malay Culture & Adicita.
- Efrianto, A., Zubir, Z., & Maryetti. (2014). *Pempek Palembang: Traditional Food from Palembang City*. Center for the Preservation of Padang Cultural Values.
- Fahmi, A., & Ali, S. (2023). Akulturasi Islam dan Budaya Melayu Palembang dalam Tradisi Kematian. *Yonetim: Journal of Public Administration and Policy*, 7(1), 45–58. *Yonetim: Journal of Public Administration and Policy*.
- Fetterman, D. M. (2009). *Ethnography: Step-by-step* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984040>.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. Basic Books.
- Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(3), 481–510.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/228311>
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2019). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Harsanto, B., Farras, J. I., Firmansyah, E. A., Pradana, M., & Apriliadi, A. (2024). Digital technology 4.0 on halal supply chain: A systematic review. *Logistics*, 8(1), 21.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/logistics8010021>
- Junaidi, H. (2016). Budaya kerja Melayu dalam pengembangan kewirausahaan mahasiswa di perguruan tinggi di Palembang. *Intizar*, 22(1), 45–58. *Intizar*
- Koentjaraningrat. (2009). *Introduction to Anthropology*. Rineka Cipta.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications
- Muchsinati, E. S., Dulf, S., & Sentosa, A. (2025). The impact of green human resource management on

- environmental performance among employees of environmentally friendly companies in Batam. *Journal of Global Business and Management Review*, 7(1), 40–55.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Rahayu, W. P., et al. (2023). Inculcating entrepreneurial values in creating business sustainability through business independence in batik craftsmen. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsc.2023.1091368>
- Rochmiatun. (2023). Palembang Malay Culture and Local Community Identity.
- Spradley, J. P. (2006). *Ethnographic Methods*. Tiara Wacana.
- Sutrisno. (2024). *Culture and Social Life of the Community*.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333–339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>
- Wargadalem, F., Wasino, & Yulifar, L. (2023). Pempek as a Cultural Marker of Palembang Society.
- Wati, E., Septiany, S., Ivone, & Lim, V. F. (2026). Green strategies and competitive advantage: The moderating role of entrepreneurial orientation. *Journal of Global Business and Management Review*, 8(1), 1–21.
- Webster, J., & Watson, R. T. (2002). Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: Writing a literature review. *MIS Quarterly*, 26(2), xiii–xxiii.
- Weidinger, C., Fischler, F., & Schmidpeter, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Sustainable Entrepreneurship: Business Success through Sustainability*. Springer.