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HOW BIG IS THE INFLUENCE OF E-MARKETING ON INDONESIAN TOFU ENTREPRENEURS?

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on MSMEs, MSMEs have difficulty in marketing their products due to the social distancing policy. This program aims to revitalize and assist tofu producers in Kampoeng Tahu, Tinalan Village, with regards to product marketing by implementing a marketing-system. This program is designed to increase the productivity and income of producers, who in this digital era no longer rely solely on offline marketing. Therefore, tofu producers require the highly effective marketing tool of e-marketing. Because in the present day, everyone from young people to their parents shop online using social media. The social media that are often used and applied in this work program are Instagram and Shopee. There were five tofu producers who were the primary targets of the implementation of e-marketing socialization and training.

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Introduction.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on various sectors, one of which is the economic sector (Sugianti & Anwar, 2021). A study stated that Indonesia experienced a decrease in the percentage of the economy by 0.1% (Nalini, 2021). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the pandemic has had a huge impact on the economy (OECD, 2020). This is marked by the cessation of production activities in various countries not only Indonesia, the decline in the level of public consumption, the loss of consumer confidence, and the fall of the stock market which ultimately leads to uncertainty. Whereas the economy is an important factor that is directly related to everyday life (Hanoatubun, 2020). The impact of the pandemic is felt from the macroeconomic context of a country to the rural layers. One of them is in *Kampoeng Tahu* (Tofu Village) that located in Tinalan Village, Kediri, East Java, which has experienced a significant impact. This is because the implementation of community social restrictions has caused a decline in the level of the economy in Kampung Tahu Tinalan Village as a result of declining buying and selling activities between consumers and traders.

Tinalan village is one of 15 villages of Pesantren Subdistrict in Kediri and. Besides, Tinalan village also serves as a Kampung Kreatif dan Independen (Keren) Prodamas which is one of the 10 flagship programs of Kediri Mayor. This program triggers the growth of creativity and independence of the community in Kediri City to bring out regional characteristics, uniqueness, culture, skills and increase economic potential of each village.

As one of 10 Creative and Independent Village (Kampung Kreatif dan Independen (Keren)) Prodamas Tinalan village was promoted by the Kediri Mayoral Government, which is precisely located in Tinalan Gang 4, Pesantren subdistrict, Kediri City (kedirikota.go.id, 2021). Along Gang 4 of Tinalan Village, there are approximately 34 producers of raw and processed tofu, thus it is no surprise that this

location is the center of the tofu-making sector in Kediri City. Since decades ago, this center for producing tofu has been passed down from generation to generation (kedirikota.go.id, 2021). Due to the popularity of vegetable tofu, and other processed tofu products, the sale of raw tofu and processed tofu products can generate significant economic value (Desita et al., 2020). This is supported by the increasingly creative tofu producers in *Kampoeng Tahu* in creating processed tofu into various snacks that are favored by all groups of people from children to the elderly.

However, it is unfortunate that sales in Tinalan as an industrial center as well as a supplier are actually far less than other souvenir centers in Kediri which have a strategic location. Especially since COVID-19 has spread throughout the world, causing all sectors of life to experience shocks, including the MSME economy (Farizki et al., 2020). The government's policy of implementing social distancing has made the economy decline (Arifqi & Junaedi, 2021). Because the implementation of this policy causes limited buying and selling activities between consumers and buyers. This causes quite a number of MSMEs to go out of business due to not being able to survive in the midst of economic conditions that continue to decline (Susanti, 2020). Therefore, MSMEs, which are one of the largest contributors to GDP and driving the wheels of the economy in Indonesia, require special attention (Awali, 2020).

Despite the threat posed by COVID-19, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) should neither slow their growth or abandon their efforts to promote their wares via the Internet. The process of generating, conveying, and delivering value to clients is referred to as "e-marketing," and it involves the use of information technology. In two distinct ways, traditional marketing has been significantly impacted by the rise of e-marketing. To begin, traditional marketing functions sometimes lack the level of efficiency that may be achieved through the use of e-marketing. E-marketing technology, on the other hand, enables significant innovation and shifts in a variety of marketing approaches (Frost & Strauss, 2016). During the pandemic, people are more likely to engage in online and online activities, thus the availability of e-marketing has unquestionably had a substantial impact on product sales. This is because activity limits have caused individuals to turn to the internet more frequently.

Unfortunately, the *Kampoeng Tahu* community has a limited awareness of digital media as a marketing tool. Most tofu producers in *Kampoeng Tahu* still rely on traditional methods of promotion. (Nasikhudin et al., 2021). As a result, product sales in Tinalan as an industrial center and a supplier are significantly reduced, especially during a pandemic. As a result, it is important to push the tofu producers of *Kampoeng Tahu* to become more digital savvy in light of these changes.

Method.

This research was conducted using qualitative methods with various stages of activities carried out. The implementation strategy applied in this e-marketing program is to approach tofu producers in Tinalan village through in-depth interviews and make further observations about e-marketing which has previously been implemented by tofu producers in Tinalan village. The steps taken in the emarketing program for tofu producers in Tinalan village are as follows:

- 1. Collecting data on tofu producers and processed snacks from the tofu association management in Tinalan village.
- 2. Conducting brief socialization of the e-marketing program to members of the Tofu Community and accommodate all inputs and wishes of Tinalan Tofu Community members.
- 3. Preparing the materials needed to run the e-marketing program which will then be used as training socialization materials, and
- 4. Conducting further socialization regarding the e-marketing program that will be implemented and collecting data on any producers who are ready and willing to participate in door-to-door training and mentoring of e-marketing programs.
- 5. Conducting e-marketing training to producers starting from the basics. This program is carried out door to door to ensure that producers really understand the e-marketing program that is carried out in depth.
- 6. Providing assistance and monitoring on a regular basis to see the progress of understanding producers and find out the obstacles experienced so that they can be immediately overcome.

Result and Discussion.

The The current state of the pandemic has had a significant impact on the economy throughout the world, one of which is Indonesia. One of those affected is the MSME economic sector. This is due

to restrictions on social activities, causing buying and selling activities between consumers and traders to decrease. Based on previous research that the increase in turnover of MSME actors is strongly influenced by product branding and the efforts made to make it more attractive and increase consumer demand (Dewi et al., 2021). Therefore, to increase sales of Tofu Village Products, Tinalan Village, Training and E-Marketing Assistance for Tofu Producers are carried out.

The implementation of the "E-marketing Training and Assistance for Tofu Producers" work program in Tinalan Village, Pesantren District, Kediri City has been going well. The objectives of the implementation of this work program have been achieved, both general objectives and specific objectives. The implementation of this e-marketing work program begins with collecting data on tofu producers and processed snacks from tofu in Tinalan Village which are obtained from the association's management.

After the data is collected, then a brief socialization of the e-marketing program will be carried out in Tinalan Village. This outreach was held at the residence of Mr. Mujais, a member of the tofu community in Tinalan Village. This forum is a forum for tofu producers to channel their aspirations and hopes for the future e-marketing program that will be implemented.



Fig. 1: Socialization with Tofu Producer Community

The results of discussions that have been carried out together with members of the Tofu Community (Tahu Producer community) are used as consideration for compiling materials that will be used to run the e-marketing program, starting from what digital media will be used and deemed appropriate for producers based on various considerations that have been made previously, how the e-marketing system will be used, as well as how the system of implementing training and assistance for e-marketing programs can run effectively and efficiently so that the objectives of this program can be achieved with maximum results.

Based on the results of the considerations that have been made, it was decided that in this emarketing, 2 platforms that are deemed most appropriate, namely the Instagram and Shopee applications will be used. The Instagram application with the username *Kampoeng Tahu Tinalan* will be used as a marketing medium that will accommodate the production of all tofu producers (raw) and processed tofu (dry). Meanwhile, the Shopee application is specifically for producers who sell processed dried tofu. The Instagram application includes photos of the store and the products that will be marketed by each manufacturer. In addition, for each product uploaded to Instagram, information about other digital marketing platforms owned by each producer as well as the contact of the manufacturer concerned is also included to make it easier for consumers to place orders for products.

After the e-marketing system design is carefully structured, then a re-socialization of the e-marketing program training and assistance will be carried out to all producers on a door-to-door basis. In this socialization, documentation of the front of the store (outlet) as well as the products that will be marketed by the manufacturer is carried out, besides that, contact information for each manufacturer is also collected which will later be included in each product upload on Instagram. Through this socialization, data collection on producers who are willing to take part in training and assistance in the use of e-marketing, namely the Shoppe application, is also carried out in marketing their products.

After all the required data is collected, then door to door e-marketing training is conducted for producers who are willing to take part in the training. This training and mentoring are carried out door to door to adjust the free time owned by the producers because it will be very difficult if the training is carried out together at one time considering that there are other activities carried out by each producer. In addition, door-to-door training is considered more effective because the training can run more intensively than if it is carried out together in a forum.



Fig. 2: Door-to-door Assistance

This training is carried out in detail, starting from the account registration process, product uploads, detailed product settings, registration of features that will help increase store ratings and sales to how to handle orders from the start. After the training is completed, then periodic assistance is carried out to monitor whether there are problems when using e-marketing, as well as to ensure that producers really understand the use of e-marketing media in detail. For the branding platform used to market the product, a sticker is affixed to each storefront owned by tofu producers and their processed products that includes the e-marketing platform account of each producer.



Fig. 3: Giving e-marketing account stickers to MSME actors

It is hoped that with this e-marketing training and assistance, tofu producers and their processed products in *Kampoeng Tahu* Tinalan, Kediri City, can attract more buyers from various regions, not only buyers from the surrounding community but also in various parts of Indonesia and even internationally. Overall, this service activity has been running smoothly, producers of tofu and its processed products in Tinalan Village are very enthusiastic in participating in this e-marketing training and mentoring program. The enthusiasm of the producers can be seen from the many questions and discussions submitted by the producers regarding e-marketing during socialization as well as during outreach and door-to-door assistance. The producers have a strong enough interest in implementing the e-marketing training and assistance that has been carried out.

There are several inhibiting factors in the implementation of this e-marketing program. Inhibiting factors in the implementation of this program include the lack of knowledge of producers about digital marketing, especially for elderly producers. However, this can be overcome by providing this e-marketing training to the younger generation/successors who are perceived as more knowledgeable about technology and will continue the efforts of these producers.

Conclusions.

Based on the results of the e-marketing training and mentoring program in Kampong Tahu, Tinalan Village, it can be concluded that this program can increase the knowledge of MSME actors about e-marketing, even now they have been able to market products and use the features found on the platform that is used as one of the media to market the product. The MSME actors as well as the management of the Kampung Tahu community were very enthused about getting a knowledge of the e-marketing program that was being conducted. They feel greatly benefited by this training and are more eager about marketing their leading products.

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