



Social media use in promoting indonesia's traditional foods during covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal the use of social media in promoting traditional Indonesian cuisine in the East Priangan area during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is due to the large number of MSMEs affected by COVID-19. Government-imposed restrictions prohibit crowds and interactions, including face-to-face trading. This condition resulted in many sellers of goods and services whose turnover decreased drastically. Many of them gave up trying. However, social media helps small entrepreneurs to keep running their business. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore information about the use of social media in promoting traditional Indonesian culinary in the East Priangan area during the Covid 19 Pandemic. Primary data was collected through interviews with small and medium business actors and influencers/celebrities who helped promote the potential of Indonesian traditional culinary in the East Priangan area. Informants were selected purposively by using snowball sampling technique. Secondary data were collected through library sources and literature related to research. The results show that traditional culinary entrepreneurs in East Priangan use social media as promotional and marketing

tools, as well as communication media with employees. For influencers, social media is used as a tool to help small and medium businesses promote their business.

Keywords

media communication, social media, influencer, culinary promotion

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought considerable changes to the economic life of the world community, including in Indonesia. Indonesia's economic growth experienced a slowdown by 2.97% (year on year) in the first quarter of 2021 (Ningsih, 2021). Many small entrepreneurs have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though it is difficult, small entrepreneurs are still trying to maintain their business. Efforts made include using social media as a promotional tool and marketing products produced by small and medium business actors in Indonesia, including those in the East Priangan area, West Java, Indonesia.

The emergence of social media has brought a major change in human communication. Internet 2.0 technology allows the creation and exchange of user generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).. Information can be conveyed fast, easily, in real time, interactively, in large numbers, and wider reach. Social media as a means of communication plays a role in bringing users to participate actively, contributing to sharing information and delivering responses online in a fast time (Susanti et al., 2019).

Social media, as a marketing tool, has the potential to change the relationship between the internet and its users and open up opportunities for its users to join a wider community. Social media can increase the ability of users to share and collaborate among users to do not collectively outside the institutional and organizational framework (Nasrullah, 2015).

Social media makes it easier for individuals to communicate, because it does not need to take place face-to-face. The exchange and dissemination of information can be carried out without being limited by space and time, and delivered through very easy stages. This convenience makes social media increasingly in demand as a means of communication and promotion (Gohil, 2015). In addition, the use of social media can also be used to express experiences through photos and videos, which can be in the form of comments as a form of interaction not only with family but also with other people (Martínez et al., 2014)

In the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic, communication through social media is the most logical choice to do, both in sharing information, promotions, and for transactions. Including promoting traditional culinary communities in the East Priangan region, West Java, Indonesia. East Priangan, which consists of Tasikmalaya, Garut, and Ciamis, is an area with a variety of culinary delights known as the typical food of the area, although it has been widely spread in various other areas in West Java. Tasikmalaya, for example, is known for

its chicken porridge, rujak honje, nasi tutug oncom, Tasik noodles, and others. Ciamis has the typical food of Saroja and Galendo. This potential is a regional identity that must be maintained, and most of these culinary producers are in the category of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which are feeling the impact of COVID-19. The periode of adaptation for new normal, gives new hope for MSME entrepreneurs by allowing them return to business by implementing health protocols. However, business conditions that were uncertain during the outbreak of COVID-19 needed to be re-introduced. Social media has a role in this.

This condition is used by a number of culinary business entrepreneurs and culinary influencers in the East Priangan region to take advantage of social media as a promotion of typical culinary delights in the area. The purpose of this research is to reveal the use of social media in promoting the potential of regional culinary specialties in the East Priangan region, how the message is conveyed and how the impact of using social media on the culinary products promoted.

Literature review

Research on the use of social media as a promotional medium was carried out by Wenday Dwi Novi Kurniawati from the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta, with the title "Utilization of Instagram by the Grobogan Tourism Community in Promoting Regional Tourism Potential." The results showed that the successful promotion of regional tourism potential is supported by four components, namely the presence of communicators, messages, media and communicants. The use of Instagram provides many advantages for the Grobogan tourism community in promoting the tourism potential of the area, including making it easier to disseminate travel information and being able to attract the attention of users to access the Grobogan Tourism Community Instagram.

Another research regarding the use of social media as a means of promotion is Twitter as a Tourism Promotion Media for the City of Semarang, which was conducted by Iva Anjar Pawestri. Pawestri's research shows that the Twitter account @wisatasemarang is an alternative media for the survival of Semarang tourism promotion to make it easier to recognize and make it easier for followers to access information about Semarang tourism (Pawestri, 2014).

The difference with the two previous studies lies in the focus of the research. The first and second studies focus on tourism as a whole, while the research that will be conducted will focus more specifically on culinary. In addition, the media used as a means of promotion can be more than one, not only Instagram or Twitter .

Theoretical Studies

The theory used in this research is Social Action Theory which was coined by Max Weber, a sociologist from Germany. For Weber, social action is all individual

behavior that has a subjective meaning for himself and is directed to the actions of others. It can be said that social action is a meaningful human action.

According to Weber, action is socially meaningful insofar as based on its subjective meaning given by the individual or individuals, the action considers the behavior of others and is therefore oriented in its appearance. For Weber, every human behavior is carried out based on certain motives that he wants to achieve, both towards the interlocutor and for himself, according to the purpose of his communication.

Related to this research, the activity of using social media in promoting culinary potential in the Priangan area is a form of social action that has its own meaning for them and is aimed at other people or parties involved in these activities to be interpreted. The communication that is established is expected to foster action or action based on the understanding that occurs.

Conceptual Study

Social Media

The widespread use of the internet by the public in various countries in 1996 became a growing phenomenon and was followed by the emergence of various digital content in it (Grant & Meadows, 2010). Social media is one of the developments of communication facilities based on internet technology. Communication can be done through electronic devices or gadgets, such as tablets, laptops or smartphones .

Social media is an online medium . Its internet-based presence shows that there has been a shift in the direction of the use of communication media, which was originally classical (electronic and print media) to new internet-based media which became access channels in various fields, namely education, culture, social, economics, law. , also politics. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and which enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social media allows users to connect with other people, through personal and non-personal information in the form of photos or writing. Social media makes it easy for its users to participate, share information and communicate, through blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and other virtual worlds. Blogs, social networks and wikis are probably the most common forms of social media used by people around the world (Ardianto, 2011: 165).

Now, to access Facebook or Twitter, for example, it can be done anywhere and anytime just by using a cellular phone. How quickly people can access social media, has resulted in a major phenomenon in the flow of information, not only in developed countries, but also in developing countries such as Indonesia. Social media or social networking that are commonly known and used include Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Youtube, Email, Path and so on.

If traditional media uses print media and broadcast media, then social media uses the internet. Thus, social media as a means of communication has a role in bringing people (users) to participate actively by contributing and giving feedback openly, both to share information and to respond online in a fast time.

Mediated Communication

Mediated communication is communication that uses channels or means to forward a message to communicants who are far away and many in number. One part of mediated communication is computer mediated communication (CMC), which is defined as human communication that occurs through the use of two or more devices (McQuail, 2005). The most frequently used form of CMC is communication in social media. The internet has a big role in the process of communication with social media, because this communication can only occur if it is in an internet network.

Communication on the internet in addition to having the context of mass communication, also forms personal communication in large numbers, namely internet users in communicating with other users in large numbers, each of which acts as a communicator and communicant. Thus, the nature of communication in social media takes place interactively (Effendi, 2010). In this study, the media communication studied was the use of internet-based media for the purpose of promoting traditional culinary products in the East Priangan region, West Java, Indonesia.

Based on the descriptions and concepts previously presented, this research is formulated into a main question, namely "How is social media used in promoting traditional Indonesian culinary delights in the East Priangan area, West Java? The objects of this research are:

1. The background of using social media to promote the potential of traditional culinary in the East Priangan region
2. Media used to promote the potential of traditional culinary in the East Priangan region
3. The impact of using social media on promoted culinary products.

Research methods

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. According to Mulyana, a case study is a comprehensive description and explanation of various aspects of an individual, a group, an organization (community), a program, or a social situation. The case study researcher attempts to examine as much data as possible about the subject being studied. By studying as much as possible an individual, a group, or an event, the researcher aims to provide a complete and in-depth view of an object under study (Mulyana, 2010: 201).

According to Yin, in general, case studies are a more suitable strategy when the research questions are related to the why or how questions, when the

researcher has little opportunity to control the events to be investigated, and when the focus of the research lies on contemporary phenomena (Yin, 2011:1). Case studies can add value to our unique knowledge of individual, organizational and political phenomena, case studies enable researchers to maintain the holistic and meaningful character of real life events, such as a person's life cycle, organizational and managerial processes, environmental changes. social relations, international relations to industrial maturity (Yin, 2011: 4). This study uses literature and documents related to the problem under study. Data was collected through online interviews with purposively selected informants through the snowball sampling technique according to the research objectives (Bungin, 2011: 107), as well as literature study. The data sources of this research are culinary MSME business actors, influencers/celebrities in the Priangan area, who have social media accounts that promote culinary potential in their area.

Results

This research was conducted in two areas included in the East Priangan area, namely Tasikmalaya (City and Regency) and Ciamis. The subjects of this research are individual SMEs in the field of regional culinary specialties and food influencers/ reviewers in the two regions. Both are interconnected in promoting regional specialties in the East Priangan area.

Traditional Culinary Potential of East Priangan Region

East Priangan, which includes Tasikmalaya, Garut, and Ciamis, is an area known for its distinctive culinary variety produced by the local community. Tasikmalaya, for example, is known for its chicken porridge, rujak honje, nasi tutug oncom, Tasik noodles, and others. Ciamis has the typical food of Seroja and Galendo . This special food is part of the identity of the region that produced it for the first time. According Wurianto (2008: 3) identification and clarification of traditional cuisine can be seen from one type of food, drinks, and snacks. Just by seeing or hearing about the food, for example, people can immediately remember where the food came from. This potential is a regional identity that must be maintained.

Traditional regional food, most of the categories are micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The process of forming their business is very diverse. There are those that were founded out of concern for the condition of traditional foods that are no longer familiar to the people of origin, especially by the younger generation, there are those that come from the legacy of their parents, some are formed because of the situation.

Vita Widya, 38 years old, a Seroja culinary entrepreneur from Ciamis, started his business because he saw that culinary development in Ciamis runs slowly. Moreover, he saw the typical Ciamis food, Seroja, starting to dim in popularity. Previously, it did not occur to Vita to run a culinary business in her

hometown, Ciamis. Previously, Vita lived in Bandung. The return of Vita to Ciamis, originally to accompany her mother. However, after her father died, Vita thought about continuing her family's business in the culinary field, especially seroja, a snack made of rice flour that was fried dry until crispy.

Vita's interest in Seroja is because the food, according to the stories she heard, is a typical food of the Galuh Kingdom, which is made on holidays or big days. The shape of the saroja in the form of flowers is a symbol of prosperity for the people.

The business, which was started in 2016, is managed by Vita with a more contemporary look, by adding toppings, so that young people today like it. Thanks to his perseverance, the food, which was named Seroja Teteh, was well known to the public, and even Vita was eyed by Bank Indonesia to become its fostered MSME.

Her business then developed into a banana sale, which was managed by her husband. His banana sale business also developed in tandem with the Seroja Teteh he managed.

Unlike Vita, the business managed by Novi Mustika Dewi, 39, is a family heritage business. Novi, continues the jerky business that was initiated by her grandmother in 1968, which was passed down to her parents. Novi began to fully manage the business since the 2000s.

The culinary business, managed by Novi, initially consisted of shredded beef, beef jerky, and mustofa potatoes. Over time, the products made by Novi also increased with the addition of shredded chicken and shredded fish. Likewise, the outlet where he sells is finally added, in Kawa, the Banjar area, for buyers who bring large cars who cannot enter Novi's shop now.

The condition of the Covid-19 pandemic, which made most people slumped in an economic condition that was completely deprived, turned out to be a blessing in itself for Ari Rudiansyah Sandi, 38, who lives in the City of Tasikmalaya. The need to survive and support his family, pushes Ari and his wife Viny to think creatively to do something that can bring financial benefits. After trying several types of culinary, finally, Ari and Viny make food that can last a long time, so that they can be taken out of town. They also chose cassava and cilok chips business. The difference is that cassava chips are produced for availability, while cilok is produced only when there is an order.

The cassava chips they produce are named Krekeuuus , which means crunchy. Ari explained, although crispy, the way to produce the chips is different from what other MSMEs usually do that produce cassava chips. The process is long. After being peeled and cut into pieces, the cassava is not fried immediately, but steamed first. This is done so that the level of crispness can last a long time.

Media Used to Promote Culinary Potential in the East Priangan Region

Marketing of a product, initially done through direct sales or through exhibitions. The development of information technology that produces the internet

and its derivative media, makes marketing and promotion patterns can be done online, without having to meet face-to-face between sellers and buyers.

One of the technologies that are currently capable of being qualified is social media. Philip Kotler and Kevin Keller define social media as a means to share text, image, video and audio information between individuals, with companies and vice versa. Social media can function as a medium used to promote processed food products that are used by business actors and are promotional tools because they have direct responses with users.

Social media now has an important role in marketing strategies for small and large businesses. Now sharing information with visitors or followers is not the only advantage of using social media for a business.

One of the keys to success for any business is getting to know its customers better. Social media makes this recognition process easier than ever before. With existing supporting tools, business actors can easily find out in detail consumer data, the language they use, age range, and even gender. This information can help the process of branding and promotion to the right target consumers. Seeing the increasing number of users, social media can be a land to increase profits and expand business wings.

The first social media used by Novi were Whatsapp and Instagram. Whatsapp is mostly used to communicate directly with Abon Rajawali customers, most of whom (60%) are women aged 40 to 60 years. When the pandemic broke out, sales through social media were more intensified so that previously sales were more face-to-face, now on the contrary, are more online, which is 70% online , 30% offline .

"Before the pandemic it was face to face. Initially, sales of bade saum tea increased, pas saum, mendak boboran kanggo by souvenirs, bade hajian terrace. Ari pandemic yesterday, the first year immediately heup wae digiatkeun in medsos. Nu was 70% face to face 30% online ayeuna back. There is a blessing in this pandemic, Alhamdulillah, my servant went up and I needed ready-to-eat food at home, so there was an increase in orders" (Novi, interview, 2 June 2021)

Apart from Instagram and Whatsapp, Novi also markets their products through the marketplace. Four of Novi's marketplace accounts were created and managed by her husband. The results from the marketplace according to Novi are quite a lot. The buyers of the products offered in the marketplace are young mothers. They are generally customers who have previously shopped at Abon Rajawali in Ciamis.

Vita also uses social media to promote and market the products she produces Saroja Teteh and Sale Akang. He also penetrated into the marketplace.

"Since 2018 we have been with blibli.com. At the end of 2019, training from Bank Indonesia provided accounts were created at Shopee. It's just because our products are fragile, there are rarely order via marketplace. We boost the marketing using Whatsapp, Instagram and Facebook. Customers call us in private. We sell in package, not individually, with 10 pieces of minimum purchase.

The impact of social media use on promoted culinary products

Promotions carried out by influencers on traditional culinary products for the residents of East Priangan, have an impact that is not always the same. Uyung Aria, an influencer for the City of Tasikmalaya, said that what he did through social media when promoting traditional Tasikmalaya cuisine did not always have a significant impact. However, he mentioned that one of the things that he found memorable when promoting Tasikmalaya specialties was Mi Ayam Pak Asan. Uyung managed to attract the attention of his followers to buy Pa Asan's Chicken Noodles via Whatsapp which was forwarded to Mr. Asan's family so that they could be made and sent the next day. This method finally succeeded in changing Pak Asan's trading pattern from being peddled around to finally settling from home and fulfilling customer messages.

Bobby Firdaus, an influencer in Garut, said that his postings on Instagram social media are not only a means of promoting culinary products, but also as a means of branding himself. After the culinary promotion, Bobby explained, the products he reviews usually get the trust of his followers that the product is a good product and worthy of consumption.

Aditya says the same thing. The post he uploaded on Instagram is not a certainty for the product he is reviewing to immediately become a lot of buyers. He completely leaves the decision-making to his followers to buy the culinary he is reviewing.

Conclusion

Social media will provide benefits if used for positive things. The ability of social media to achieve many goals allows it to be used as a promotional tool for traditional culinary products in the East Priangan area, West Java Province, Indonesia.

The existence of social media is very helpful for small and medium businesses and influencers to promote traditional culinary in the East Priangan area. Social media is used because apart from being cheap, it is also easy to reach a wider target market if only by selling offline.

Instagram and Whatapp are social media platforms that are more widely used as promotional media. The reason is, because Instagram is able to combine text, images and videos, making it easier for people to capture the message conveyed. While Whatsapp is a messaging platform that is easy to use, the application is light and the communication is able to reach a wide range.

The impact that social media has on the products being promoted does not immediately sell. It must be realized that the use of social media in promoting traditional food products in the Priangan region is an effort to introduce. The final purchase decision is entirely in the hands of the buyer.

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