

Conference Paper

## Improving Business Capacity for Online Sales: Product Photos Training for SMSEs

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### ABSTRACT

Selling a product through an online platform has become a necessity for micro and small businesses as a strategy to respond to social distancing policy in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Good product photos are one of the key successes of those activities. The needs analysis of the "Kartini" business group found that a poor photo technique is a major obstacle as well as a lack of equipment. Empowerment through participation with a peer teaching approach is used as a strategy to overcome those obstacles. The increase in knowledge and skill may lead "Kartini" more confidence to sell their product through an online platform.

*Keywords: Online selling, product photos, empowerment through participation, peer teaching*

### Introduction

2020 was a challenging year that transformed the dynamics of the global economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced governments around the world to take drastic procedures to break the spread of the virus by imposing varying degrees of lockdown. As a result, a new norm was established with protection and social distancing actions in conducting economic activities. The COVID-19 pandemic has also drastically affected the Indonesian economy. Sectors requiring direct interactions have been the hardest hit, such as tourism, transportation, and logistics, as well as the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises.

According to UNDP (2020), the most common action taken by MSMEs to cope the pandemic situation is selling their products through online marketing. The marketing channel most commonly chosen by MSMEs is free advertising on social media. Also, MSMEs distribute and promote their products by joining the online marketplace. The advantage of using social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Line, and Twitter, for example, provides MSMEs with real-time access to billions of customers, collaborators, suppliers, and other service providers (Capri, 2019).

"Kartini", women's MSMEs group, is one of the million MSMEs affected by the pandemic outbreak and has been struggling to save their business and sustain income. The group consists of women-owned food and snack micro-scale producer. In a recent situation, "Kartini" has decided starting sells its product through an online channel using social media. During the process, they have realized that good product photos are one of the key successes for those activities and found the problem that they remain have a poor photo technique as a major constraint as well as a lack of adequate photo equipment. Those problems may lead lack of confidence, losing motivation, and potentially failure to sustain their business and income.

The underlying cause of "Kartini" problem is the absence of knowledge on how to produce good photo products using simple equipment such as smartphones and create low-cost

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accessories stuff to decorate the photo object. A similar problem is also faced by many MSMEs which are relatively low-quality human resources and lack science and technology (Arfah & Samiha, 2020). Therefore, providing knowledge and practicing in class is an essential step to solving the problem. Besides that, enhancing the role and participation of each group member through community empowerment would fasten the learning process.

### **Material and Methods**

The knowledge material of photoproduct was formulated as a module that was designed as a self-learning module and tailored for the group members' needs. The module provides step-by-step to produce good photos using an only smartphone. In brief, the module consists of how to prepare simple equipment such as a mini studio and accessories, also, as types of photos technique and editing.

The training was conducted particularly to explain the technical aspect and also to motivate the group member about the importance of participating in the group to empower each other. During the learning process, benchmarking other photos on social media is a significant phase to measure knowledge and ability. Simple analytics through discussion with group members become exciting proses by comparing their photos with benchmark photos and then make lessons learn to do better.

### **Results and Discussion**

The increase in knowledge and ability may lead "Kartini" more confidence to sell their product through an online platform. Their confidence would become an essential attitude and new spirit to adapt to a new norm following the pandemic situation. Working together and empowering each other as a group also has significant results to secure their outcome. This phenomenon is also captured by Baldacchino (2001) who states that by working together the community would catch several success to change their mindset to become productive and creative and also increase confidence in doing something.

### **Conclusion**

The activities carried out have become a trigger for MSMEs to keep moving and being creative. The simple techniques introduced in this outreach training can be easily passed on and replicated. To maintain the spirit of MSMEs outside the schedule of the program, the peer teaching model can be one of the learning methods in membership where each member shares his experiences. In addition, members can also support each other by providing input for online marketing activities.

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