

Improving Marketing Skills Through Marketplace Platform Training for the Sunday Pahing Women's Group of Wotawati Village, Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta

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Submitted: August 08th 2023; Revised: March 23rd 2024; Accepted: April 18th 2024

Keywords:

Marketplace
Training
Women empowerment

Abstract In this evolving digitalization era, people are required to continue learning and be able to adapt to new environmental conditions, including business actors. The current digital era does not only touch education and communication, but also has a significant influence on product introduction and sales with fast and pragmatic approaches. MSME business actors in villages, for example, women's groups play an important role in the growth process of all sectors, one of which is the economic sector. To ensure the sustainability of MSMEs' potential to engage in the digitalization era, it is essential to offer support that enables women's groups to enhance their skills and self-reliance. The material presented to the target group covered the introduction of various marketplace platforms, product branding, and the use of one of the online marketplace *Shopee*. The activity was maximized by continuous assistance for women's groups to further explore the use of the marketplace *Shopee*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Using the internet as a sales medium, MSMEs have a considerable opportunity to contribute to the global economy. Products can be sold faster through social media. This situation requires people to continue to learn and be able to adapt to the new environment, including businesspeople. The current digital era does not only touch education and communication, but also has a significant influence on product introduction and sales with fast and pragmatic approaches. With the use of the internet as a sales medium, MSMEs have a significant opportunity to contribute to the global economy, products can be sold more quickly with social media. Business actors using digital media to market their products can reduce operational costs, including distribution costs, which are considered quite high. However, it is necessary to realize that in addition to practical and fast social media, there are challenges that must be faced by MSME business actors, namely the low ability of human resources (HR). Some people around us still use conventional methods to promote and sell their products.

Padukuhan Wotawati, Girisubo Subdistrict, Gunungkidul has a superior product produced by the Sunday Pahing MSME group, namely cassava chips. There are two types of cassava chip products: original and balado. Human resources don't understand the digital marketing system, so the process of marketing MSME products seems sluggish. Since the world has entered the all-digital era, production speed and quality are not the main measures to boost sales. This is because consumers currently prefer shopping in online marketplaces to going to traditional markets or shopping malls.

The findings of the 2022 E-commerce Statistics research reveal that 74.5% of respondents express a preference for online shopping. This means that the use of the marketplace platforms is currently quite popular with the public. Even the use of the internet from year to year has increased significantly, namely 30.1% in 2022 from 2021. Research conducted by Ludwianto (2020) found that 59% of internet users by Indonesians were used to accessing social media. There is public interest in the use of social

ISSN 2460-9447 (print), ISSN 2541-5883 (online)

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media, so MSME players in Padukuhan Wotawati must have the courage to change digital-based marketing. One of them is utilizing the marketplace platform. By uploading photos and describing products supported by recent updates, advertisements will appear, and the availability of contact link and the availability of quality control over product offering advertisements and many others (Rahmidani, 2015).

Through the marketplace platforms, marketing and sales can be done all over the world without time restrictions, and costs are very low compared to conventional promotions. The marketplace platform can also create new business opportunities as long as not many business actors have done it, such as selling products all over the world without having to have a product or shop first according to Khasanah et al. (2020). The purpose of this marketplace platform is to sell MSME products in the village to increase sales turnover. The problem faced by the Sunday Pahing Group of MSMEs is the use of conventional methods so that the profits obtained aren't as large as from online stores. Through this client business training, it is hoped that it can help improve skills in using social media and raising MSME products for the Sunday Pahing Group, namely cassava chips, through the *Shopee* application. In addition, it can help increase sales results and profits while selling conventionally.

2. METHOD

The Sunday Pahing Group utilized the participatory learning action (PLA) method. This approach, derived from a community empowerment model previously known as "learning by doing" (Silmi, 2017), fosters participatory learning and practical engagement. According to Darmawan et al. (2020), this method combines activity-based learning with participatory techniques to facilitate community-based learning, including needs assessment, program planning, and evaluation. The aim of PLA is to enable women's groups to explore and share knowledge, empowering them to make informed decisions, plan effectively, and implement actions that positively impact and enhance human resource quality.

The activity was carried out at the house of the head of the hamlet of Padukuhan Wotawati, Giri Subo District, Gunungkidul. The participants who took part in the training were 20 participants who were managers of Wotawati cassava chips MSMEs. The implementation of marketplace platform training activities consists of four stages, namely: 1) identification of needs; 2) training program planning; 3) implementation (knowledge sharing and training); and 4) evaluation.

During the needs identification stage, sessions are conducted twice a month, while the program planning process with the Wotawati Sunday Pahing MSME group spans one month. The implementation stage was carried out in the following four meetings: 1) the first meeting in September, held a meeting with a group of 40 women and discussed the training activities that would be carried out to obtain an agreement on the training

date; 2) the second meeting was held in September, week three, conducted knowledge sharing about the marketplace platform to the core members of 10 women's groups; 3) the third meeting in October, week two, carried out training on making an account on one of the marketplace platforms, namely *Shopee*. Activities were carried out up to the stage of opening an online store and explaining how to advertise products with keywords (free) and paid advertisements; 4) the fourth meeting, then evaluating training activities between training program managers and training participants together. Training activities look like in Figure 1 (a) and Figure 1 (b). The evaluation was carried out using non-test techniques, namely systematic observation (observation), interviews, and case studies.



Figure 1. (a) The first meeting: Introduction of packaging styles for online marketplace presentation; (b) The second meeting: Sharing knowledge about online marketplace platforms

After the training, the Sunday Pahing women's group did not immediately implement the acquired skills. Instead, there was a monitoring stage involving direct assistance for three months, from November to February. This monitoring occurred twice a week, every Friday and Saturday, with sessions lasting one to two hours per day. In addition to direct assistance, the facilitator or implementer of the training program creates a *WhatsApp* group to facilitate communication if the Sunday Pahing women's group experiences obstacles. The conclusions drawn from the activity results served as the foundation for generating reports and references to guide the development of future community assistance initiatives.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The community service program of the Lentera Desa Community with postgraduate students of Out-of-School Education of Yogyakarta State University was held from August 2022 to March 2023 in Padukuhan Wotawati Giri Subo, Gunungkidul Regency. The implementation of the *Shopee* marketplace platform training was carried out at the Wotawati Hamlet Head's house. The needs of the Pahing Week MSME group were identified through interviews and information extraction from key informants, including the Head of Wotawati Padukuhan and the UMKM Management of the Pahing Week. Subsequently, the key

Table 1 . Interview results identify training needs

Head of the Hamlet	MSME Management	MSME Members
“There has been no initiative for skill development among mothers, as MSME products are typically sold using traditional methods. Products are often only sold at stalls located in distant areas, or merely consigned to the nearby village stall.”	“So far, our activities have been limited to selling products without any additional efforts, such as educating on the use of platforms like <i>Shopee</i> or <i>Facebook</i> . We lack understanding of how these platforms operate. Additionally, our sales are restricted to this area. However, during Eid, many nomads return home, presenting an opportunity for sales. In such cases, we sell our products by the kilo, using makeshift plastic packaging.”	"I lack understanding of the internet, although I am aware that platforms like <i>Shopee</i> or <i>Facebook</i> can be used for selling purposes. However, I am unfamiliar with how to effectively utilize these platforms for management. Previously, there was also no training provided, resulting in our marketing efforts being confined to this area. Our buyers primarily consist of local residents."

consisted of members of the UMKM Pahing Week. Interview data revealed that the needs identification process focused on training aimed at enhancing the marketing of village MSME products.



Figure 2 . Knowledge sharing about the marketplace platform

In previous interviews, it was identified that there had been no knowledge sharing, training, or assistance regarding the development of MSMEs using the marketplace platform where MSME activities are really carried out conventionally, and buyers of MSME products were only the community itself. Based on the Table 1 conclusion, an agreement was reached for training. The next step is for the facilitator to hold a meeting with the group on Sunday Pahing, accompanied by the Head of Padukuhan Wotawati to convey the intention of conducting knowledge sharing and training. The activity began with knowledge sharing about marketplace platforms such as *Shopee*, *Facebook*, *WhatsApp*, and *Instagram* as shown in Figure 2. It was then continued with creating one of the accounts on the platform, namely *Shopee*.

The intended marketplace platform training is more focused on *Shopee* because it is Indonesia’s largest and

most frequently used online shopping center. MSME players can easily promote, buy, and sell their products to potential customers. Products promoted through the *Shopee* platform can be ordered automatically and respond to messages quickly because of the message menu with potential buyers. *Shopee* also has a menu that can explain product descriptions and product prices to categorize incoming orders. This can organize the interaction between MSME players and consumers.

The material presentation was carried out using the concept of knowledge sharing, using the lecture method. During this session, various existing marketplace platforms, such as *Facebook*, *Shopee*, *WhatsApp*, and others, were explained. Essentially, marketplace activities in marketing covered product branding due to online-based media.

The participants’ enthusiasm was demonstrated by several questions regarding the use of marketplace media. They inquired about the strategies that small and medium MSME players could employ to compete in the online world. The key concepts shared by the facilitator with the students were aimed at fostering competitiveness in the marketplace world, focusing on how MSME business owners could position their products effectively for consumers.

This included aspects such as product branding and creating consumer appeal. The activity continued with the creation of a *Shopee* account. The youngest Sunday Pahing Group members would manage the *Shopee* account. This was done because they could quickly understand the use of *Shopee* marketplace media compared to older age. The majority of those who own digital devices such as mobile phones are young women. As shown in Figure 3 (a), the facilitator explained in detail the use of the account, how to manage it, how to upload product images, and how to get free shipping for purchasing products on the marketplace account.

Figure 3 (b) shows the result of the *Shopee* marketplace training activity. After the training activity, we did not let them manage the account by themselves. The activity organizer continued to assist the Sunday Pahing Group in branding products. If the *Shopee* account managers experienced any problems, they could ask the training

facilitator. After creating a *Shopee* account, several obstacles were encountered. These included challenges such as reading incoming orders on the marketplace, understanding signals, dealing with the high costs of products ordered by consumers, and a lack of understanding of the tools available on *Shopee*.



Figure 3. (a) Facilitator's presentation; (b) A *Shopee* account

Assistance continued until they fully understood how to operate their *Shopee* account. After understanding how to operate the *Shopee* account, sales were made regularly. The community service team and UNY students promoted the *Shopee* account to several friends to try ordering through the marketplace. The Sunday evening group members periodically took turns to take orders from consumers who buy from *Shopee* accounts. The assistance provided after sales using the *Shopee* marketplace led to an increase in product sales. Now, 30 pieces of cassava chips are sold daily. Previously, sales were conducted conventionally, with the chips packaged in small plastic bags priced at 1000 rupiah each and sold in shops around the neighborhood. The Sunday Pahing group sold their products at stalls in the Wotawati Padukuhan neighborhood, and some members of the community had already purchased the local products.

Overall, the training session had a significant impact on the participants, directly or indirectly. They joined the training because they recognized its relevance to the overall success of Padukuhan MSMEs, which requires expertise in product sales. Additionally, participants found the training results enlightening, especially in understanding the branding process for online shop sales, such as on *Shopee*.

Women are the most important actors in the process of village development to become independent. Women's empowerment through home industry development is part of the integrity of the current government. Home industries enable women to work from home, reducing the need to leave their houses for employment and providing opportunities for local labor participation. MSMEs play a crucial role in empowering women and boosting both individual and village economies.

Prijono in Marthalina (2018) elaborates that empowerment enables individuals to feel empowered and

motivated, giving them the ability to make their own life choices. Empowerment initiatives should target groups or segments of society facing disadvantages. According to Elizabeth (2007), women's empowerment can lead to motivated women who are aware of their potential, thereby increasing access to opportunities and empowering them to resist exploitation.

MSMEs represent a form of entrepreneurial activity that can be pursued collectively. Entrepreneurship, as defined by Kasmir (2007), entails individuals who possess the courage to take risks and seize business opportunities without hesitation. Small and Medium Enterprises play a crucial role in village economies, serving as a cornerstone sector for expansion and development in various economic sectors, as highlighted by Primiana (2009). Women can be empowered through the establishment of small and medium businesses and the enhancement of their digital skills, as emphasized by Miranti et al. (2022).

In Padukuhan Wotawati, Girisubo, Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, this community empowerment project has provided information regarding the utilization of the marketplace, specifically *Shopee*, for online sales of cassava chips. The Sunday Pahing Group already had a cassava chips business, but the packaging and product sales promotion were inefficient. With the knowledge shared about the marketplace platform, the Sunday Pahing Group was able to capitalize on these opportunities effectively, leading to the full development of the village's economic sector. However, further development of understanding regarding the marketplace platform was still needed. Continuous assistance was expected to enhance understanding, as noted by Widiastuti (2022). Although the Sunday Pahing Group has started using the *Shopee* marketplace platform, its potential has not been fully realized, prompting ongoing assistance to deepen understanding.

4. CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this community service demonstrate that community assistance is a beneficial program for empowering the community to become more self-reliant. Continuous assistance from organizers is crucial to achieving community empowerment. The assistance persists because the underlying issues have not been adequately addressed. For instance, empowering the community with knowledge of digital platforms beyond *Shopee* is necessary for business development, particularly for current MSME operations. Moreover, fostering women's participation and motivation to expand their businesses is essential for further growth. Enhancing marketing skills through training on marketplace platforms, such as *Shopee*, has had a notable impact on participants, specifically the Sunday Pahing Group of Wotawati hamlet. Participants have come to realize that utilizing the marketplace for product marketing significantly boosts sales. Previously, sales were conducted through conventional methods, resulting in minimal profits. However, with an understanding of marketplace utilization,

sales have increased substantially and can now be marketed more extensively.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to thank Yogyakarta State University and the lecture of the Program Inovation course, Mrs. Dr. Puji Yanti, M.Pd, who has given us the opportunity to practice directly in the community, namely the Community Service program. We would also like to express our thanks to Lentera Desa Indonesia, which has accepted and helped us contribute and introduce Padukuhan Wotawati as a course practice. Last but not least, we would like to express our to Head of Padukuhan Wotawati, Sunday Pahing Group who has actively participated in this activity. Hopefully what we organized can enrich the knowledge of the Sunday Pahing Group regarding the marketing management of Padukuhan local products on the marketplace platform.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

We declare that there is not conflict of interest in either the community service program or the results of writing the article. As for the author as student who is doing field practice and has a good relationship with the Padukuhan that has become a research site, this did not affect the author's findings or interpretation of the program that has been implemented.

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