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Introduction of MSMEs' Marketplace in Lembang Marinding, Mengkendek Subdistrict, Tana Toraja Regency

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ABSTRACT

Lembang Marinding is a village in Mengkendek Subdistrict, Tana Toraja Regency with high potential of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The problem that emerges in MSMEs in Lembang Marinding is that product sales are still carried out conventionally. MSME actors in Lembang Marinding are not yet proficient in applying information technology (IT) in marketing. The community service team offers a solution by providing socialization and extension on the benefits of sell their products through digital marketing. The community service activities were carried out from October to November 2022. The target participants of these activities were the MSME actors in Lembang Marinding. The method used in overcoming problems in Lembang Marinding is mapped the MSME products in the area and provided technical training regarding how to partner with the marketplaces. One of the marketplaces chosen as partner in this training is Shopee by offering fairly easy access for beginner users to use the marketplace. The results show that the community service activities carried out by the team have successfully provided understanding, abilities, and skills to MSME actors in Lembang Marinding by introduce them to the marketplaces so that their products can be recognized by buyers outside of Tana Toraja and reach wider range of buyers. In addition, MSME actors in Lembang Marinding who participated in the training and socialization activities received modules as a guide to partner with the marketplace. The results of this activities show that MSME actors can apply technology in marketing their products, starting from how to join the marketplace to the benefits obtained.

1. Introduction

Lembang Marinding is a village located in Mengkendek Subdistrict, Tana Toraja Regency. The distance between the capital of Tana Toraja Regency and the capital of South Sulawesi Province reaches 329 km, which crosses Enrekang Regency, Sidrap Regency, Parepare City, Barru Regency, Pangkep Regency, and Maros Regency. Mengkendek Subdistrict has a population of 27,756 people. It is divided into 13 Lembang, one of which is Lembang Marinding.

One of the efforts to improve the development of the tourism sector in Tana Toraja, especially in Lembang Marinding, is that the micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) actors are expected to be capable to increase the sales and marketing of their products so that they are more widely recognized by tourists, both local and foreign tourists. Livelihood of the majority of Lembang Marinding's residents are farming and running the household businesses. Tana Toraja is known as one of the best coffee producers in the world, and some of the coffees come from Lembang Marinding. One kind of effort to develop the trade sector at the MSME level is by utilizing e-commerce.

E-commerce is a shopping application that makes it easy for buyers to buy certain goods according to their needs (Fauziah et al, 2020). According to As'ad et al (2012; 2022), e-commerce is electronic commerce, which is a marketing way of goods or services using an electronic system via the internet, where the content involves data, system, or management that run automatically. The trade industry through e-commerce involves various transactions, such as fund transfers, online marketing, buying and selling, and so on. According to Jamaludin (2015), e-commerce has the advantage in terms of easy access that is up to 24 hours, which allows consumers to shop and make purchases directly from home.

E-commerce exhibits several benefits, including being able to access international markets, not being limited by countries to conduct trade transactions, being cheaper in terms of marketing, faster and reducing the risk of trading errors, and reducing the use of paper in its various stages, namely from designing, manufacturing, shipping, distributing, to selling and marketing (Maulana et al., 2015). Online marketing is currently very helpful for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to market their products, both through social media, e-commerce, and in recent years through marketplace.

A marketplace is a trading platform managed by certain company as a third party to facilitate the online meeting of sellers and buyers. Marketplace has similarities with malls and traditional markets, in which there are shops or kiosks where sellers offer merchandise to potential buyers. In the marketplace, sellers sell their merchandise in a virtual store equipped with a storefront feature to display the photos of their products. Marketplace has a concept that is quite similar to traditional markets in general, namely there are many sellers who sell a variety of products in one market so that buyers who enter the market can find any items available in the marketplace as needed. Indirectly, the owner of the marketplace acts as a distributor or third party that unites buyers and sellers together online.

The introduction of the marketplace to MSME actors in Lembang Marinding is necessary so that they can promote and sell their products, both offline and online. By doing this, MSME actors will understand the benefits of online sales and marketing, how to partner with marketplace actors, also how to sell and market their products online. This is considered important because MSME actors in Lembang Marinding still sell their products offline and have not yet understood of what online sales is, and how to partner with marketplace actors. This is the problem that needs its own handling. Products that are still sold offline make the marketing range still revolve around Lembang Marinding so that it cannot reach more potential buyers. This causes the local community to be less productive because there is no success guarantee of marketing.

Based on this problem, the lecturer team from Universitas Muslim Indonesia (UMI) in this community service activities offer a solution by conducting socialization and training to improve the understanding and ability of MSME actors to sell their products online through the marketplace. The ultimate goal of this community service is to provide the MSME actors with understanding and abilities on how to sell their products online through the marketplace so that it is hoped that MSME actors can market their products to wider range of potential buyers and increase their income.

2. Methods

The community service activities were carried out in Lembang Marinding, Mengkedek Subdistrict, Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi for two months, from October to November 2022. The target participants of these activities were the MSME actors in Lembang Marinding, Tana Toraja Regency. The method of implementing the community service activities is presented schematically in Figure 1.

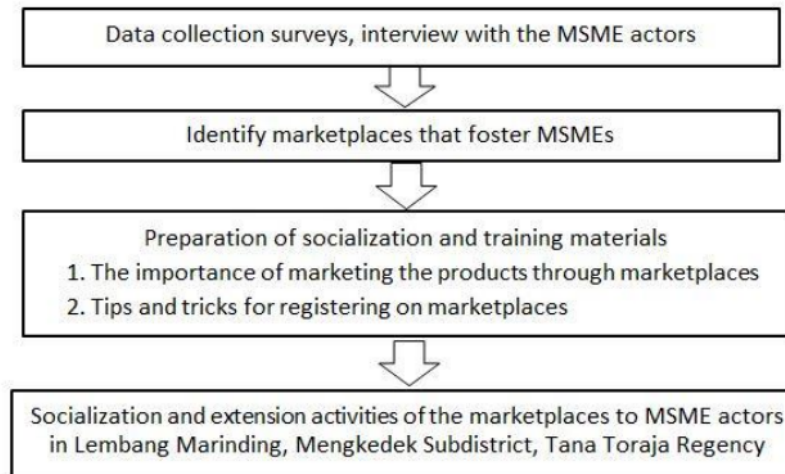


Figure 1. Schematic flowchart of community services.

Partners' participation in the implementation

The implementation of community service activities require participation from the partners. Partners' participation includes the following:

- a) Partners are willing to become participants in the socialization of marketplace introduction to MSME actors.
- b) Partners play an active role in socialization activities.
- c) Partners help provide a proper place for the implementation of activities.
- d) Partners make significant contributions, such as suggesting a continuance socialization in the future regarding the sustainable developments of marketplace.

For the sustainability of utilizing information technology (IT) and encouraging partners' independence in increasing product sales through the marketplace in Lembang Marinding, Mangkedek Subdistrict, Toraja Regency, the team actively conduct the following activities:

- a) Instilling the importance of improving MSME actors' ability to utilize information technology
- b) Instilling the view that MSME products can be marketed through the marketplace
- c) Providing the view that high-value products, if accompanied by the appropriate form of marketing, can increase sales
- d) Providing a view that information technology can be utilized to increase sales
- e) Providing direction so that participants always increase the capacity, creativity, and productivity of their MSMEs

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Data collection survey and interviews

Data collection surveys and interviews were conducted on October 10, 2022. The survey was conducted by listening to what problems and constraints related to the sale of MSME products, marketing methods, and the costs required in marketing the MSME products in Lembang Marinding. Respondents in the survey and interview activities were the Head of Lembang Marinding Village and several MSME actors. According to [Hariono et al. \(2021\)](#), data collection surveys aim to obtain an overview of the potential and existing conditions. The results are obtained by directly observing the village's condition.



Figure 2. Data collection survey and interview activities.

3.2 Identification of conditions and problems in Lembang Marinding

Identification activities were carried out at the service location for one week in early October 2022. The team identified the existing conditions and problems in Lembang Marinding. This activity aims to sort in detail the problems that exist in Lembang Marinding so that the team can figure out the appropriate solution according to existing conditions.



Figure 3. Documentation of the existing problems analysis.

The problem identification activity was attended by village officials, including the Village Head and the Head of the Development Section of Lembang Marinding Village and 10 MSME actors as representatives from local community in Lembang Marinding. The activity was carried out as a coordination effort before conducting socialization to the wider community. The identification results show that there has been no optimization of the use of local potential in empowering the community's economy, which is mainly not

supported by the community's ability to use information technology to access the market. According to [Purnawansyah et al. \(2021\)](#), one of the problems faced by the Lembang Marinding community is the lack of website optimization facilities or media that can introduce the wealth of local resources. This indicates that socialization activities related to the marketplace are needed in order to optimize their local resources to wider range of potential buyers.

3.3 Socialization of marketplace introduction in Lembang Marinding Village

The socialization stage was carried out by conveying the benefits of joining the marketplace to the MSME actors. A total of 10 participants attended the extension and socialization of marketplace introduction to increase MSME sales in Lembang Marinding, Mangkedek Subdistrict. The socialization participants were the MSME actors in Lembang Marinding. Lembang Marinding Village has a lot of potential from the agricultural sector, such as bananas, taro, coffee, cocoa, and cloves. In addition, more specifically, Toraja Regency is known as a cultural tourism area for domestic and foreign residents.



Figure 4. Socialization of marketplace introduction in Lembang Marinding.

In the implementation of community service activities, partners participated in conveying the problems and obstacles faced, where one of the existing problems in their MSMEs is that they still sell products conventionally and have not yet utilized technology. This is mainly caused by a lack of knowledge on information technology that actually can be used to market their products. As a solution, the community service team provides socialization and training on how to market the bodo shirt products through online media, especially by joining a marketplace that fosters MSMEs. Therefore, MSME partners strongly agreed and helped provide a place to conduct socialization and training for MSME actors and the surrounding community. Partners also helped in inviting the surrounding community to attend the activities. A total number of 10 participants attended the opening, socialization, and training activities. During the training, partners actively participated in listening to the material. This can be seen from the partners' ability to operate the marketplace application used. Before attending this training and socialization, all partners had never used a marketplace application to sell their products so that this socialization activity for beginner users could be considered successful. Particularly, partners were able to upload products for sale and receive orders. Furthermore, assistance is needed in terms of shipping the products until the products are received by the buyers.

The fundamental contribution of the implementation of community services to MSME actors is to provide socialization about the importance of marketing their products through online media and how to join marketplaces that foster MSMEs. The implementation of community services has achieved the following results: partners are able to utilize technology to join the marketplace, partners have skills and creativity in determining the marketplace that suits the conditions of the partners, and partners have the skills to market their products more widely. This was shown by partners' ability to operate the marketplace

application introduced in the socialization activity.

To sustain the utilization of IT and encourage partners' independence in increasing sales, the team will actively and sustainably foster the MSMEs in the following ways:

- a. Instilling the importance of improving the MSME actors' ability to market their products.
- b. Providing direction for MSME actors to utilize IT to make it easier for them to market the products.
- c. Providing a view that IT can be utilized to increase the creativity of sellers in marketing their business products.
- d. Providing direction to continuously improve the capacity, creativity, and productivity of MSMEs.

The community service carried out meets the predetermined achievement indicators and evaluations that can improve the ability of participants to sell their products online. The expected impact is to increase the marketing reach of potential village products to wider range of buyers (Hariono et al., 2021).

A number of benefits are obtained by MSMEs from this community service, namely MSME actors can understand and recognize the types of marketplaces that foster MSMEs, then MSME actors can register to become fostered participants from the two marketplaces that have been fostering MSMEs, namely the website owned by the South Sulawesi Regional Government (<https://bajubodo.sulselprov.go.id>) and the Shopee website.



Figure 5. The process of opening the marketplace of bodo shirts and Shopee.

Evaluation stage of the community service activities of UMI lecturers regarding the importance of understanding several marketing media, especially marketplaces for MSME products in Lembang Marinding, Mangkedek Subdistrict, Tana Toraja has resulted in the following findings:

- a. Partners have received socialization on the importance of marketing the products online, especially by joining the marketplace.
- b. Partners have received training on the application of technology in marketing the products, ranging from how to join the marketplace to the benefits obtained.

Based on the observations made, it was found that the obstacles faced by MSME actors to realize the continuation of the activities included the following:

- a. There is still a lack of supporting facilities in marketing the products online.
- b. The internet network is still not optimally helpful.
- c. There is still a lack of understanding and creativity to market the products widely.
- d. There is still a lack of information technology (IT)-based facilities or media to market the end-products.

4 Conclusions

Based on community service activities from UMI lecturers on extension and socialization to MSME actors in Lembang Marinding Village, Mangkedek Subdistrict, Tana Toraja, it was concluded that the activities were successfully carried out in accordance with the goals, objectives, and activity plans. The activities received support and participation from MSME actors and the surrounding community. MSME actors obtained material about online marketing through the marketplace. The implementation of these community service activities has resulted in the following achievements: partners have the skills to utilize technology to join the marketplace, partners have the skills and creativity to determine the marketplace that suits the specific conditions of the partners, and partners have the skills to market their products to wider range of potential buyers.

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