

The role of social media in improving business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of social media in enhancing business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations of interactions on social media. This study identifies communication strategies implemented by Muslim entrepreneurs, challenges faced, and the impact of social media use on relationships with customers and business partners. Data analysis was conducted using a thematic analysis approach, which allows researchers to identify patterns and themes that emerge from the data collected. The results of the study indicate that social media has a significant role in strengthening business communication, facilitating better interactions, and supporting Islamic values and principles in business practices. This study provides deeper insight into how Muslim entrepreneurs utilize social media and the ethical and social implications of such practices and recommends strategies to optimize the use of social media in business communication. Therefore, this study contributes to developing Islamic communication in business, where Islamic values are integrated with business communication through social media.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran media sosial dalam meningkatkan komunikasi bisnis di kalangan pengusaha Muslim di Denpasar Selatan. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi interaksi di media sosial. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi strategi komunikasi yang diterapkan oleh pengusaha Muslim, tantangan yang dihadapi, serta dampak penggunaan media sosial terhadap hubungan dengan pelanggan

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dan mitra bisnis. Analisis data dilakukan dengan pendekatan analisis tematik, yang memungkinkan peneliti untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan tema yang muncul dari data yang dikumpulkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media sosial memiliki peran signifikan dalam memperkuat komunikasi bisnis, memfasilitasi interaksi yang lebih baik, dan mendukung nilai-nilai serta prinsip-prinsip Islam dalam praktik bisnis. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang lebih mendalam tentang bagaimana pengusaha Muslim memanfaatkan media sosial dan implikasi etis serta sosial dari praktik tersebut, serta merekomendasikan strategi untuk mengoptimalkan penggunaan media sosial dalam komunikasi bisnis. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan komunikasi Islam dalam ranah bisnis di mana nilai-nilai Islam diintegrasikan dengan komunikasi bisnis yang dilakukan melalui media sosial.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, business communication has become one of the most important aspects of the success of an organization. As the global market becomes increasingly connected, companies no longer only operate within local geographic boundaries but must also be able to communicate effectively with various stakeholders around the world. This includes communicating with customers, business partners, and competitors from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The importance of business communication in a global context can be seen from several aspects. First, effective communication allows companies to establish strong relationships with international partners, which is essential for collaboration on cross-border projects that can improve innovation and operational efficiency (Teguh & Ciawati, 2020). In addition, understanding cultural differences is key in global business communication; companies that can adapt to local cultural norms and values will be more successful in building good business relationships (Morissan, 2015).

In a global context, companies also often face crises that require fast and effective communication; the ability to convey information clearly and in a timely manner can help minimize the negative impact on a company's reputation (Abdullah et al., 2024). Furthermore, an effective marketing strategy requires clear and engaging communication; by utilizing social media and other digital platforms, companies can reach a global audience and increase their brand visibility (Teguh & Ciawati, 2020). Thus, information and communication technology development has changed how companies interact. In contrast, digital communication tools allow companies to operate more efficiently and responsively to global market needs (Morissan, 2015).

The growth of social media usage among entrepreneurs has become a significant phenomenon in the last decade, along with the rapid development of information and communication technology. Social media is an important platform for entrepreneurs to interact with customers, promote products, and build brands. According to a report from We Are Social and Hootsuite (2021), the number of social media users worldwide has reached more than 4.2 billion, showing the great potential that entrepreneurs can utilize to reach a wider audience.

One of the main factors driving this growth is better accessibility to technology and the Internet. With the increasing number of mobile devices and fast internet connections, entrepreneurs can now connect with their customers anytime and anywhere. This allows them to market in real time and get direct feedback from consumers (Teguh & Ciawati, 2020).

In addition, social media offers lower marketing costs compared to traditional methods. Entrepreneurs, especially those from small and medium enterprises, can utilize platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to promote their products without spending a large budget. This allows them to compete with large companies in the same market (Morissan, 2015).

The direct interaction social media offers is also one of the main advantages. Entrepreneurs can communicate directly with customers, answer questions, and handle complaints quickly. This increases customer satisfaction and builds a stronger relationship between entrepreneurs and consumers (Noermalia & Irwansyah, 2020). Thus, active social media entrepreneurs can respond more to market needs and preferences.

Furthermore, social media serves as a tool to build business reputation and credibility. Entrepreneurs can demonstrate their expertise and attract potential customers through relevant content, customer testimonials, and positive interactions. (Teguh, A., & Ciawati, 2020). In this context, entrepreneurs need to understand effective communication strategies on social media to maximize this platform's potential.

In the context of globalization and rapid economic development, Muslim entrepreneurs face unique challenges and opportunities related to ethical principles in business. As part of the global community, Muslim entrepreneurs are required not only to achieve financial success but also to carry out business practices that are by Islamic values. This includes aspects of honesty, justice, and social responsibility, which are the core of business ethics in Islam (Ali, 2016).

The growth in Muslim entrepreneurs in various economic sectors shows that they increasingly play an important role in the global economy. According to the Global Islamic

Economy Report (2020), the Islamic economic sector, including businesses run by Muslim entrepreneurs, is expected to grow, creating new opportunities for innovation and collaboration. However, in running a business, Muslim entrepreneurs must consider how Islamic ethical principles can be integrated into their business strategies.

One significant ethical consideration is how Muslim entrepreneurs can balance the goals of profitability and social responsibility. In Islam, business is seen as a way to make a profit and a means to benefit society (Hassan, R., & Harahap, 2019). Therefore, Muslim entrepreneurs are expected to contribute to social and environmental welfare and pay attention to the impact of their business decisions on the community.

In addition, Muslim entrepreneurs also have to face challenges in adapting to prevailing business practices in the global market, which are often not in line with Islamic values. For example, in marketing, Muslim entrepreneurs need to ensure that their strategies do not violate Islamic ethical principles, such as avoiding fraud and exploitation (Khan, 2017). This requires entrepreneurs to understand how to apply Islamic values in modern business. With this background, this study explores how social media affects business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in running their businesses.

Social media is vital in enhancing business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar by facilitating marketing, networking, and business development. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok enable entrepreneurs to effectively promote their products and services, bridging the gap between businesses and consumers. This is especially beneficial for small businesses and Muslim entrepreneurs, who can independently create and share commercial advertisements without relying on professional agencies, thereby reducing costs and increasing accessibility (Sa'diyah et al., 2021). Integrating social media into business activities is essential to maintain business sustainability, especially in the era of Society 5.0, where digital interaction is the norm. Social media, combined with fintech solutions such as M-Banking and E-Wallets, supports marketing, sales, and market analysis, thereby increasing business continuity (Nursyamsu et al., 2022).

In addition, digital marketing strategies through social media have been shown to significantly increase Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) revenue, as evidenced by research conducted in areas such as Gondanglegi, Malang (Butt et al., 2024). Training programs focusing on digital business communication and creative content creation have also proven effective in improving entrepreneurs' skills and knowledge, enabling them to better utilize social media for business growth (Wiwitan et al., 2023). Overall, social media serves as a powerful tool for Muslim entrepreneurs in South

Denpasar, offering a platform for effective communication, marketing, and business expansion at a cost-effective rate.

This study aims to analyze the role of social media in enhancing business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar. It offers significant new contributions to understanding the role of social media in business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar. First, this study highlights explicitly Muslim entrepreneurs, explaining the unique challenges and opportunities they face in utilizing digital platforms, which have not been widely discussed in previous studies. This study also complements the existing literature by showing the significant impact of digital marketing strategies through social media on MSME revenues, especially in the South Denpasar area. In addition, the importance of training programs focusing on digital business communication and creative content creation is revealed, highlighting the development of often overlooked entrepreneur skills.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore the role of social media in improving business communication among Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews with Muslim entrepreneurs who use social media in their businesses. These interviews are designed to obtain information about the communication strategies they implement, their challenges, and the impact of social media use on relationships with customers and business partners.

Data analysis will be conducted using a thematic analysis approach, namely researchers will identify patterns and themes that emerge from the data collected. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is an effective method for organizing and analyzing qualitative data, and allows researchers to draw relevant conclusions from the information obtained.

In this study, the target population is Muslim entrepreneurs who actively use social media as a communication and marketing tool in their business. This population covers industrial sectors, including trade, services, and manufacturing, operating locally and internationally. By focusing on Muslim entrepreneurs, this study aims to understand how Islamic values and principles influence their business communication practices on social media.

This study will use the purposive sampling method to take samples, where researchers select individuals who meet specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). The sample selection criteria include: 1) respondents must identify as Muslims and understand business principles in Islam; 2) respondents

must actively use social media platforms in their business activities, such as promotions, communication with customers, and interaction with business partners; respondents are expected to have a minimum of two years of experience in running a business to ensure a deep understanding of the practices and challenges faced. Through the purposive sampling approach, researchers obtained relevant data from respondents with direct social media experience, as many as 20 entrepreneurs in various fields.

This study's data collection tools are in-depth interviews and observations. Both methods were chosen to gain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and practices of Muslim entrepreneurs in using social media for business communication. Interviews were conducted sequentially, allowing researchers to explore specific topics while providing flexibility to ask additional questions based on participant responses. (Levstek et al., 2024). These interviews included questions about the use of social media in business communication strategies, the challenges faced by using social media, and the impact of social media use on relationships with customers and business partners.

Observations were made of the interactions of Muslim entrepreneurs on social media, including the content they share, how they interact with customers, and responses to feedback. These observations aimed to obtain contextual data that could complement the interview information (Creswell, 2014). The researcher noted communication patterns, the most effective content types, and how Islamic values were reflected in the interactions. In addition to interviews and observations, the researcher also collected related documentation, such as social media posts, customer comments, and marketing materials used by the entrepreneurs. This documentation will provide additional context and assist in data analysis (Bowen, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of social media in improving communication

Through in-depth interviews with 15 Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar who actively use various social media platforms, it was found that social media is an important tool in building business connectivity and networks. Respondents stated that platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn allow them to connect with business partners, customers, and the wider community, thus increasing opportunities for collaboration.

In addition, Muslim entrepreneurs in South Denpasar utilize social media as an effective promotional tool. Instagram and Facebook are the leading platforms that can reach a larger audience relatively cheaply. Direct interaction with customers is also made easier through the comments and direct message features, which help entrepreneurs understand market needs and preferences to provide better service.

In this context, this study focuses on how social media plays a role in improving connectivity and communication; based on the results of interviews, which were conducted, social media now functions as a bridge connecting individuals with friends and family, allowing closer interactions despite being separated by distance. Pramana, one of the sources in this study, revealed that through platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, these media can maintain relationships with consumers at a distance without significant obstacles. This shows how social media can improve connectivity, which was previously challenging to maintain in conventional ways.

Yoga explained, "Social media allows me to stay close to my consumers and business partners who live far away. Through video chat and instant messaging, we can coordinate and trade with each other every day." This statement shows that social media is important in maintaining relationships beyond physical boundaries.

In line with Yoga's view, Arif also stated that social media accelerates communication in personal and professional contexts. Arif believes that his professional communication has become more efficient and coordinated through platforms such as Facebook and TikTok. "In my job, information must move quickly. Social media is beneficial in accelerating the flow of communication and ensuring that no information is left behind," said Arif. This indicates the significant role of social media in increasing communication efficiency in the dynamic world of work.

However, despite the many benefits, entrepreneurs face challenges such as intense competition and reputational risks due to negative feedback on social media. This encourages them to be more careful in managing their business image online. In addition, social media serves as a source of information and learning, where entrepreneurs often follow accounts or groups that provide business tips and the latest news, helping them develop better strategies. The following table includes some of the social media platforms popular among Muslim entrepreneurs and their main functions:



Figure 1. Popular social media among Muslim entrepreneurs
Source: Researcher, (2024)

However, it is undeniable that social media also changes communication dynamics. The shift from face-to-face to digital interactions impacts the quality of individual relationships. Yudha, another source in this study, noted that digital interactions sometimes reduce the emotional depth usually present in face-to-face communication. "Often, the emotions and intonations that we show in direct conversations cannot be fully conveyed through text messages," he said. This is the challenge social media users face, namely how to maintain the quality of interactions in digital format.

Based on direct observations, this study shows that social media does increase connectivity in unprecedented ways but also presents new challenges that must be addressed. One of the main challenges is the potential for misinterpretation of messages. In the context of digital communication, nuances and intonations that are often lost in the text can lead to misunderstandings. The observed example shows how a conversation in an online forum led to conflict due to misunderstanding, emphasizing the importance of ethics and caution in communicating on digital platforms (Smith, 2020).

Therefore, users' perceptions of social media vary. Some individuals see social media as a valuable tool for expanding networks, sharing information, and communicating more efficiently. Meanwhile, others perceive disadvantages from excessive use, such as dependence, mental health disorders, and privacy risks (Brown &

Larson, 2020). This study shows that a wise usage strategy is essential to optimize the benefits of social media.

In conclusion, social media plays a significant role in enhancing communication by eliminating distance and time limitations. However, new challenges require users to be wise in managing their time and how they interact through social media. Thus, while its positive contributions are clear, a careful and planned approach to its use is needed to optimize its benefits without getting caught up in the negative impacts it can cause.

The influence of social media on customer and supplier relationships

The study results show that social media strengthens customer and supplier relationships. The increase in fast and effective communication through social media creates a more efficient interaction channel, which aligns with the interactive communication theory. More frequent and responsive interactions can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, a crucial aspect of relationship marketing. (Gummesson, 2022).

Trust built through transparency is also an important factor. In a business context, trust is a key element that influences purchasing decisions and long-term partnerships. (Denker et al., 2018). With open interactions and direct information sharing, customers feel more confident in their suppliers, which in turn can increase customer retention.

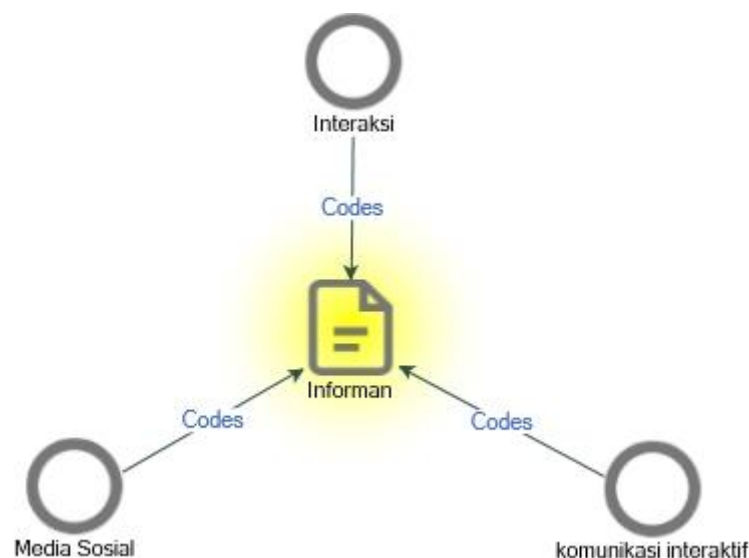


Figure 2. NVivo processing results
Source: Researcher Processing (2024)

The results of the NVivo calculation show a significant relationship between social media, interaction, and interactive communication in the context of this study. The diagram illustrates that social media is the leading platform facilitating interaction between informants, where interactive communication occurs. Social media increases interaction frequency and enriches ongoing communication content, allowing users to share information more effectively (Huang, 2020).

Previous research by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) also suggested that social media allows users to engage in more dynamic two-way communication, compared to traditional communication, which is more one-way. They noted that interactions on social media can create stronger relationships between users, increasing engagement and satisfaction in communication. This is in line with the results of NVivo calculations, which show that interactive communication is one of the key aspects of utilizing social media.

Thus, the results of NVivo calculations confirm the importance of social media in forming richer and more communicative interactions and support the findings of previous research, which show that social media can change how people communicate and interact with each other (Papacharissi, 2015).

Real-time feedback obtained from social media provides a competitive advantage for suppliers. Respondents stated that direct feedback helps them quickly adapt to customer needs and expectations. Research by Lemon and Verhoef (2016) showed that direct interaction with customers through social media allows companies to gain better insight into consumer preferences and behavior. Furthermore, research by Chaffey (2015) emphasized that the ability to respond to customer feedback in real-time can strengthen the relationship between the company and its customers. This reflects the importance of a customer-based approach in marketing strategy (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

However, the challenges in managing relationships show that social media also carries risks. Misunderstandings that can occur due to written communication and the challenges in handling public complaints require effective crisis management strategies. Entrepreneurs must be trained to respond quickly and constructively to criticism so that the relationships built are not disturbed (Morissan, 2015).

Challenges faced

The study's results indicate that several significant barriers affect Muslim entrepreneurs' use of social media. Limited technological knowledge is the main barrier. This is in line with previous findings that show that a lack of digital skills often hinders the adoption of new technologies in business (Hsu & Chiu, 2015). To overcome this

problem, training and education on social media must be provided to entrepreneurs to make optimal use of this tool.



Figure 3. Challenges faced
Source: Researcher processing (2024)

Resource constraints are also a significant challenge. In many cases, small business owners have limited resources and often have to divide their time between different aspects of the business. Research by Taiminen & Karjaluo (2017) shows that small business owners often struggle to allocate the time and effort needed for an effective marketing strategy. Therefore, business owners need to consider using social media automation tools or hiring experts to manage their accounts.

Concerns about harmful content indicate that Muslim entrepreneurs are very aware of their reputation in cyberspace. This reflects the importance of reputation management in the context of social media. According to Morissan (2015), responding quickly to negative feedback, and actively engaging with customers can help reduce the impact of criticism.

Developing relevant and engaging content is an important strategy. Content relevant to the audience's interests attracts attention and increases the likelihood of being shared, which can expand the brand's reach (Harrison, 2016). Entrepreneurs must understand their audience and create content that meets their needs and expectations.

The opportunities that exist

The use of visuals and multimedia in social media strategies is a key factor in increasing the effectiveness of marketing communications. Research by (Wang & Li, 2019) shows that visual content, such as images, videos, and infographics, tends to attract more audience attention and is easier to understand than plain text content. Visual appeal increases user engagement, as they are more likely to interact with visually appealing content.

Further research by Chaffey (2015) emphasized that using multiple multimedia formats allows for the customization of content for different social media platforms, reaching a wider audience. Therefore, entrepreneurs who want to maximize the impact of their social media strategy should consider integrating more visual and multimedia elements into their content. Active interaction with customers is an important element in building strong relationships.

Two-way communication strengthens loyalty and allows entrepreneurs to gain valuable customer feedback. (Laroche et.a., 2013). Quick responses to questions and comments show that entrepreneurs care about customers, which can improve brand image.

Implications for business practice

Building a strong brand identity is an important first step. A consistent brand identity helps differentiate the product from competitors and creates customer trust. Research by (Kaye et al., 2020) shows that a strong brand identity contributes to higher customer loyalty. Recent analysis by Keller (2022) confirms that brands with a clear and consistent identity can increase brand recognition and preference in a competitive market. Keller notes that consistency in brand elements, such as logos, colors, and messages, is essential for building emotional connections with customers, which in turn can increase loyalty.

In addition, research by Smith and Jones (2023) shows that a strong brand identity also plays a role in creating a positive customer experience. They found that customers who feel connected to a brand identity are more satisfied and more likely to recommend the product to others. This shows that building a strong brand identity impacts customer loyalty and the growth and sustainability of the business as a whole. Thus, entrepreneurs must develop a consistent and relevant brand identity to achieve a competitive advantage in the market.

The study's implications for a strong brand identity for Islamic business communication are significant. *First*, in the context of Islamic business, a consistent brand

identity can create higher trust among Muslim customers; a consistent brand identity that is aligned with Sharia values increases customer trust, as Muslim consumers prioritize ethical considerations in their purchasing decisions (Chairiawaty & Zakiah, 2020). Companies can build stronger emotional connections with customers by integrating elements that reflect authenticity and integrity, such as logos that reflect Islamic values or messages that emphasize social responsibility. This strengthens customer loyalty and expands market reach by attracting ethically minded consumers, thereby increasing market share (Aman, 2019) by attracting consumers who care about ethics in doing business.

Second, positive customer experiences resulting from a clear and consistent brand identity are highly relevant in Islamic business communication. Customers who feel connected to a brand tend to be more satisfied and will recommend the product to others, which can increase the brand's reputation and appeal in the Muslim community. For example, a study by Alserhan et al. (2015) showed that a consistent brand identity that reflects Islamic values can increase customer loyalty and strengthen the relationship between the brand and Muslim consumers. This aligns with the concept that customers who feel connected to a brand tend to be more satisfied and more willing to recommend the product to others. In addition, research conducted by Jamal et al. (2018) showed that Muslim entrepreneurs who apply the principles of Islamic business ethics in their brand development tend to be more successful in building long-term relationships with customers. Therefore, Muslim entrepreneurs need to focus on developing a brand identity that meets general business standards and reflects Islamic values in every aspect of communication and interaction with customers. This will help build a competitive advantage and ensure long-term business sustainability and growth.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the significant role of social media in business communication, especially among Muslim entrepreneurs. The main findings of this study indicate that social media has increased engagement between entrepreneurs and customers, allowing for more direct and responsive interactions, which in turn creates stronger relationships and increases customer loyalty. In addition, using social media as a marketing tool has proven effective, with the ability to reach a wider audience at a lower cost than traditional methods; interesting and relevant content can attract attention and strengthen brand image. Social media also provides a platform for entrepreneurs to convey Islamic business values and principles, strengthen brand identity, and create emotional connections with customers. However, although social media offers many benefits, there

are challenges, such as reputation management and responding to criticism, so entrepreneurs must be prepared to face these challenges to maintain a positive brand image. Entrepreneurs should develop a clear strategy to utilize social media effectively, including creating relevant content, active customer interaction, and using analytics for performance evaluation. Overall, social media is a powerful tool in business communication. With the right approach, Muslim entrepreneurs can optimize their use to achieve business goals and build deeper customer relationships.

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