

Empowerment of Leather Bag Craftsmen MSMEs in Tanggulangin Based on Digital Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to analyze the empowerment of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) leather bag craftsmen in Kludan Village through the implementation of Digital Marketing strategies. **Method:** A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. **Results:** The findings reveal that the Kludan Village government has provided structured training and mentoring programs on Digital Marketing to enhance the online marketing capacity of MSMEs and broaden their market reach. Despite these efforts, MSMEs face challenges such as low digital literacy and limited access to technology, particularly among elderly entrepreneurs. To address these barriers, the government has offered continuous mentoring, equipment support, and facilitated the creation of Business Identification Numbers (NIB). **Novelty:** This study highlights Digital Marketing as a strategic and sustainable solution for strengthening local economies in rural areas, emphasizing the critical role of government-led interventions in bridging the digital divide and enabling MSMEs to adapt effectively to the demands of the digital era.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era like today, digitalization has a very important role, especially for MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises). In accordance with Law no. 20 of 2008 concerning Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, MSMEs have a very important role and potential in the economy. Many MSMEs utilize digital marketing to market and increase sales of their products, because they have a very wide market reach. At this time, MSMEs are forced to be able to master technology in order to develop their businesses. MSMEs are always seen as having and making good contributions to the entire community who want to start a business for the sake of their survival, this of course also affects the economy in Indonesia in general [1]. The growth of MSMEs is greatly influenced by their ability to adapt to technological changes and market dynamics [2]. MSMEs also face many problems, namely limited working capital, low human resources, and lack of mastery of science and technology [3]. In the digital era, the success of MSMEs lies in how they use technology as a marketing or sales tool in reaching a wider market.

Digital Marketing itself means a marketing tool and product sales online or utilizing technology through e-commerce. Digital marketing is a form of marketing strategy that is carried out to promote a product so that it can reach consumers quickly and on time. In today's era, sales through digital marketing are very influential, especially for MSMEs. At this time, not many MSMEs in Indonesia use digital marketing as a marketing medium [4].

Tanggulangin is one of the sub-districts in Sidoarjo Regency which is famous for its leather crafts. Until now, the area still relies on most of its product sales, 60% from sales of women's bags, and the rest are other necessities ranging from travel bags, wallets, belts, and leather shoes [5]. Leather crafts produced by MSMEs in Tanggulangin District have very high value because they require skills and tenacity from the craftsmen, especially crafts made from genuine animal skin. Until now, the crafts produced by MSMEs in Tanggulangin District still exist, especially since MSMEs can now market or sell their products digitally or online. However, there are also MSMEs that can be said to have not perfectly utilized technology to develop their businesses. MSME actors are also required to be able to communicate products intensively by marketing products using digital marketing and utilizing social media to be able to reach consumers directly and can reduce promotion costs [4]. Therefore, this research is important to try to utilize digital marketing as a marketing tool and also product sales, especially for MSMEs in Tanggulangin District.

The empowerment strategy for these MSMEs is very important because it influences the progress and development of MSMEs in Tanggulangin District. In this context, MSME empowerment can be carried out through various strategies, such as utilizing social media (Wibowo et al., 2022), developing digital-based businesses (Febianti et al., 2022), digitalizing technology and integrating access to capital (Astuti et al., 2020), and training and mentoring in creating online stores (Suciati et al., 2021) [6]. This empowerment strategy requires superior human resources who also have progress in mastering technology. Empowering MSMEs through digital marketing has an important role in improving performance, high competitiveness, and sustainability of MSMEs in the digital era like today. According to (Widjajanti 2011) Community independence can certainly be achieved by requiring a learning process [4]. Communities that follow a good learning process will gradually gain power, strength or abilities that are useful in the process of making decisions independently. Therefore, community empowerment which is characterized by independence can be achieved through the community empowerment process [2].

The research that will be conducted related to the empowerment of MSME bag craftsmen in Tanggulangin District is based on several previous studies: first, on research conducted by Muhammad Euro Ivani and Isa Anshori entitled "Digital Transformation of Tanggulangin Bag Craftsmen: E-Business in the Market Era". This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, this study results in the era of globalization, MSMEs are required to adapt quickly in order to remain competitive in the global market. However, knowledge about the development of information technology among MSMEs is still relatively minimal, which results in difficulties in running their businesses. There are still many bag craftsmen or MSMEs in Tanggulangin District who have not utilized technology optimally, although some have tried to use the internet as a means to generate income and market their products through social media.

Second, research conducted by Stephanny, Kartini Dwi, Yuliana, and Raden Adi entitled "Digital Marketing Assistance for Empowering MSMEs". This research uses a

participatory method in the form of community service. This study states that the lack of knowledge and use of appropriate digital marketing in MSMEs, the marketing area is still limited. The Bekasi City Government conducts Digital Marketing Strategy training for MSMEs, to accelerate the pace of digital transformation.

Third, research conducted by Sukmana, Rodiyah, and Mursyidah (2022) entitled "Implementation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Policies during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Sidoarjo". This study uses a literature study method by examining 25 previous studies regarding the implementation of policies to strengthen Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study resulted in the Covid-19 pandemic having an impact on all sectors of the Indonesian economy, including MSMEs. One of the impacts felt by MSMEs was a decrease in income from their sales because at that time people preferred to shop through e-commerce. MSMEs are required to learn about the use of digital platforms, but many MSME actors are still unable to adapt to digital technology. Limited knowledge about technology is also a factor in decreasing income so that it does not have an impact on their business. The similarity between previous research and the research to be conducted lies in the main focus on empowering MSMEs through the use of digital technology, especially digital marketing. Both studies examine how digitalization can be a strategic solution for the development of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to increase competitiveness in the modern era.

The similarity between previous research and the research to be conducted lies in the main focus on empowering MSMEs through the use of digital technology, especially digital marketing. All three studies examine how digitalization can be a strategic solution for the development of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to increase competitiveness in the modern era. The problems faced are also similar, namely the lack of knowledge and skills of MSME actors in utilizing information technology optimally, as well as limited access to digital marketing training. Then the difference from this study is that the research conducted by Muhammad Euro Ivani and Isa Anshori in an article entitled "Digital Transformation of Tanggulangin Bag Craftsmen: E-Business in the Market Era", focuses on the analysis of digital transformation in general for bag craftsmen in Tanggulangin without discussing specific empowerment strategies based on digital marketing. The research conducted by Stephanny, Kartini Dwi, Yuliana, and Raden Adi entitled "Digital Marketing Assistance for MSME Empowerment", uses a participatory approach by providing direct training on digital marketing to MSMEs in Bekasi City. Meanwhile, research by Sukmana, Rodiyah, and Mursyidah in the article "Implementation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Policies during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Sidoarjo", focuses more on government policies in protecting MSMEs during the pandemic, not on specific empowerment strategy aspects such as digital marketing.

One of the main problems is the low digital literacy among business actors, which causes a lack of understanding of how to optimally utilize digital-based marketing technology. In addition, limited access to training and mentoring related to digital marketing is also an inhibiting factor in the development of digital-based businesses. Other obstacles are competition with large industrial products and changes in consumer

behavior who prefer to shop through established e-commerce platforms, so that local MSMEs have difficulty attracting the attention of a wider market. Therefore, a more structured and sustainable empowerment strategy is needed through digital marketing training and intensive mentoring.

In the context of this research, the empowerment theory used is the theory of Soeharto (2011: 50). According to Soeharto (2011: 50), empowerment means providing encouragement, motivation, guidance, and support to increase the independence of individuals or communities [7]. While the indicators of this theory have at least 4 things, namely: 1. Planned and collective activities, 2. Improving community life, 3. Priority for weak or disadvantaged groups, and 4. Carried out through capacity building programs. Based on the presentation carried out by previous research, a problem formulation can be formulated about "How to empower MSMEs in Kludan Village, Tanggulangin District in optimizing digital-based marketing, as well as increasing public awareness and understanding of digital technology".

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method. Denzin and Lincoln stated that qualitative research is research that uses a natural background, with the intention of interpreting the phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various methods in qualitative research. The methods usually used are interviews, observations, and document utilization [8]. Qualitative research is a research technique that uses narratives or words to explain and describe the meaning of each phenomenon, symptom, and certain social situation. In qualitative research, researchers are key instruments for interpreting and interpreting each phenomenon, symptom, and certain social situation [9]. This qualitative method was chosen so that researchers can dig up in-depth information related to digital marketing problems experienced by MSME actors. The location of this research is in Kludan Village, Tanggulangin District, Sidoarjo Regency. This location was chosen because some of the people have businesses engaged in leather bag crafts. This study focuses on how empowerment in Tanggulangin District for MSMEs regarding digital marketing. This study uses a purposive sampling technique to determine its informants from the local village head and also several existing MSME actors. Some of the data collected are primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques in this study are in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. In qualitative research methods, data is usually collected with several qualitative data collection techniques, namely; interviews, observations, documentation, and focused discussions (Focus Group Discussion) [10]. The data collection stage is divided into 3, namely 1) Data reduction by simplifying, focusing, and selecting data that is in accordance with the research objectives. 2) Data presentation by compiling and displaying the results systematically so that they are easy to understand in the form of tables, graphs, or narratives. 3) Drawing conclusions by creating descriptive narratives that describe the results of data analysis in detail and logically from the results of observations, interviews, and documentation [11].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Suharto stated that community empowerment is also interpreted as a process of a series of activities to strengthen weak groups in society, including individuals who experience poverty problems. And as a goal, empowerment refers to the state that is desired to be achieved by a social change, namely a society that is empowered, has power or knowledge and ability to fulfill its life needs, both physical, economic and social, such as self-confidence, conveying aspirations, having a livelihood, participating in social activities, and being independent in carrying out its life tasks [12] with the following indicators.:

1. Planned and Collective Activities

Empowerment related to planned and collective activities is the basis of the empowerment program that is made. Of course, in terms of implementing the empowerment program, it starts from a mature plan and is discussed in the village development planning meeting (musrenbang-Desa) and the Village meeting (musdes). In making a collective plan, it involves the role of village actors, both LPM Desa, Village Head, Community Leaders and elements in the community. Of course, in this case, it involves the participation of the village community. [13] From the indicators of village community empowerment related to these planned and collective activities, that planning activities in the village are strengthened by village musrenbang activities, the results of which are determining development priorities in the village.

Digital marketing is a challenge for MSMEs in Kludan village to be able to develop or continue their business so as not to be left behind by the times. According to information from the results of an interview with the head of Kludan village, training was carried out for MSMEs in 2024. The training provided for MSMEs, the first was to inform about graphic design and the second was about digital marketing. In this case, the Kludan village government collaborated with one of the lecturers at the Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo. MSME actors were given training on how to package products and market them through digital marketing. In the training provided by the Kludan village government, it was not only for leather bag MSMEs. All actors in Kludan village were also involved in this training, such as fashion, shoe, wallet craftsmen, and even suitcase craftsmen.

In addition to the Kludan village government, the Sidoarjo district government also provides facilities to MSMEs. One of which was just implemented at the beginning of this year is the "Tanggulangin Fair". The Tanggulangin Fair is a facility provided by the district government in the form of an exhibition held at the Pasar Wisata shophouse in Tanggulangin sub-district. In this activity, the main participants are MSMEs located in the villages of Kludan and Kedensari. Where in both villages the most MSMEs are engaged in leather crafts. This effort was made by the district government to revive the economy of MSMEs and also to market their products.

The main obstacle faced by MSMEs in digital marketing is the difficulty in using technology. Given that the average age of MSME actors is no longer young. MSMEs in

Kludan Village also have difficulty in understanding and operating digital marketing, managing online inventory, optimizing product images, or carrying out digital marketing activities. This lack of knowledge and skills can be an obstacle to empowering MSME bags in Kludan Village [5]. Therefore, after the training, the Kludan village government also provided assistance or supervision. To overcome these obstacles, the village government also implemented collaboration between MSME actors in developing digital marketing. Many MSME actors have worked together to market their products.

Based on the analysis results, MSME Empowerment in Kludan Village is carried out in a planned and collective manner through village deliberations and digital marketing and graphic design training which will be held in 2024. The village government collaborates with academics to equip MSME actors—such as bag, shoe, clothing, and suitcase craftsmen with digital marketing skills. However, the main challenge still arises from the low digital literacy, especially among older business actors. To overcome this, the village government provides assistance and encourages collaboration between MSME actors. In addition, support from the Sidoarjo district government through activities such as leather craft exhibitions also opens up wider access to promotion. This effort reflects empowerment based on participation and adaptation to the development of the times.

When associated with Soeharto's empowerment theory, within the framework of this theory, empowerment is not only seen as providing assistance, but more as a process of increasing community capacity to be independent and competitive. This is evident from the digital marketing training provided to MSME actors, which clearly aims to increase their ability to access markets more widely through digital media. The Kludan Village Government not only increases the capacity of MSMEs, but also provides assistance, especially for elderly actors. This is in line with Soeharto's theory which emphasizes psychological and social empowerment. Collaboration between MSMEs and government support through exhibitions demonstrates a participatory business ecosystem. Overall, this empowerment is not only focused on the economy, but also builds independence and social sustainability, and has the potential to become a model for MSME empowerment in the digital era.

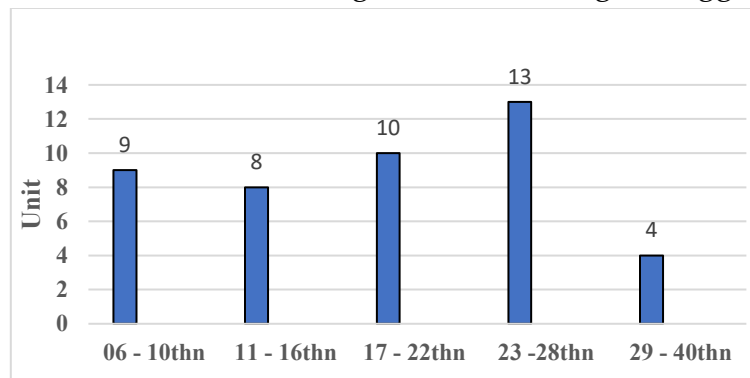
This is in line with previous research showing that through training and mentoring, it is hoped that MSMEs can overcome technological constraints and lack of knowledge in designing and implementing effective digital marketing strategies. Mastery of these skills is expected to open up new opportunities, increase market access, and in turn, support local economic growth [14]. Empowerment that is participatory and involves local elements, such as MSME actors, community leaders, and village governments, can increase the competitiveness of local products in the digital market. The active involvement of village governments in building digital literacy and providing technical assistance can increase the empowerment of micro-entrepreneurs in rural areas.

2. Improve Community Life

Improving community life is something that requires continuous assistance that can change community behavior patterns for the better. Community empowerment can be provided in the form of education and training that can provide knowledge to individuals or community groups. Guidance or assistance to increase individual or community independence. This effort is a stage of empowerment in changing behavior, changing old habits into new, better behavior, improving quality of life and welfare [15]. In its implementation, empowerment has the meaning of providing encouragement or motivation, guidance or assistance in improving the ability of individuals or communities to be independent.

The existence of digital marketing is also very helpful in restoring the economy for MSMEs in Kludan Village, although it is still far from expectations. According to the Head of Kludan Village, the existence of digital marketing is very helpful for MSMEs, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, sales of goods were very low, so many MSMEs tried to market their products digitally. The Village Government and Regency Government also provide instructions or directions to MSMEs to use digital marketing in running their businesses. Although it helps MSMEs a little to improve their economy, it is very difficult to return to the way it was before, said the Head of Kludan Village.

Table 1. Old Data on MSMEs Running in Kludan Village, Tanggulangin District



Researcher's Processed Results Source, 2025

This leather bag UMKM in Kludan Village can be the main income for residents who have businesses in the leather bag sector. On average, these business owners have been running their businesses for years. Although currently there are not as many UMKMs that are still operating as before, leather bag crafts in Tanggulangin District, especially in Kludan Village, are still popular among the community. One of the reasons for the decline in leather bag UMKMs is due to natural disasters. The Lapindo mudflow in Sidoarjo District caused the income of UMKMs to decrease so that many UMKMs could not continue their businesses, besides the Covid-19 pandemic also caused UMKMs to become quiet and eventually go bankrupt. Apart from being caused by natural disasters, the lack of interest in people's purchasing power also causes UMKMs to have

difficulty in making sales so that many UMKMs sell their products digitally to reach a wider market.

Digital marketing has provided many benefits to MSMEs to run their businesses. Because with digital marketing training, MSMEs understand more about online sales. Considering that currently many people prefer to buy goods online, because it may be considered more time-saving because they no longer need to come to offline stores. Online sales can reach a wider market and can also introduce people who do not understand about this leather bag product. With this digital marketing, people understand that the leather bag MSME in Tanggulangin District is still running and exists.

Based on the analysis that has been carried out, empowering MSMEs in Kludan Village through digital marketing education and training is a strategic step taken by the village government to increase the independence of MSME actors, especially in the leather bag craft sector. Assistance provided by the village and district governments plays an important role in changing people's behavior patterns from conventional to digital marketing methods. Digital marketing training has helped MSME actors understand how to market products online, reach a wider market, and adapt to people's shopping trends who now prefer digital platforms. Although not yet fully recovered from the impact of the Lapindo mud disaster and the Covid-19 pandemic, this digitalization effort provides new hope for the sustainability of leather bag MSMEs which are the local economic icon of Kludan Village. This shows that empowerment based on ongoing training and assistance is able to maintain the sustainability of local businesses and is the first step towards a more inclusive and adaptive village economic recovery in the digital era.

This is in line with the concept of empowerment according to Soeharto, namely as a process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to be able to improve the quality of their lives independently. As explained by Soeharto (2011:50), namely as an effort to enable individuals or communities to gain strength, access to resources, and the ability to improve their standard of living and welfare independently. This process reflects the principle of empowerment in Soeharto's theory, namely increasing the capacity and strength of the community so that they can control their own lives. The formation of collaboration between MSME actors and their ability to reach a wider market through digital marketing is also an indicator that empowerment is not only carried out individually, but also collectively. Thus, the implementation of empowerment in Kludan Village has been in line with Soeharto's empowerment principles which emphasize increasing access, control, participation, and community independence in a sustainable manner.

The findings of this are also in line with previous research to reach a wide market, of course, MSMEs also need to be creative and innovative in their products. The government is also trying to provide facilities in the form of training for MSME actors so that they can gain more knowledge and be able to apply it to their own businesses [16]. Training and facilitation are important factors in maintaining the sustainability of local

MSMEs amidst changes in community consumption patterns. Not only that, empowerment based on collaboration and participation can form an adaptive and innovative MSME ecosystem in the digital era. Therefore, empowerment in Kludan Village not only improves technical skills, but also strengthens the independence and active participation of the community in local-based economic development.

3. Priority for Weak and Disadvantaged Groups

Empowerment program is an activity carried out to help or empower weak or disadvantaged groups [17]. The priority for weak or disadvantaged groups is to prioritize weak or disadvantaged groups in community empowerment. The empowerment target is aimed at individuals or community groups who are still weak or less empowered with economic conditions, education, health and so on [13]. This is done to reduce social inequality and ensure that all levels of society have the same opportunity to develop.

According to the Head of Kludan Village, to access this Digital Marketing training, MSMEs must use a laptop, or at least have an Android cellphone. The Head of Kludan Village also said that currently there are very few people who do not have a cellphone. With the training on digital marketing carried out by the Kludan Village government, it has also helped MSMEs who have limited access to technology. For MSMEs who have limited access to the use of technology, they are also assisted until they can and get assistance from the Village Government. The Village Government also provides training in the form of skills, such as providing examples of products that are popular with the community or young people today.

MSMEs also face challenges regarding product licensing, especially for small MSMEs. The Business Identification Number (NIB) has become a challenge for small MSMEs that run the Digital Marketing system. The Business Identification Number (NIB) is a business actor's identity number in the context of carrying out business activities according to their business field. Government Regulation Number 24 of 2018 Article 25 paragraph (1) states that the NIB or Business Identification Number is a business identity number used by business actors to obtain business permits and commercial or operational permits[18]. However, the Village Government also supports by making it easier for MSMEs to manage this Business Identification Number (NIB).

Some MSMEs have also received assistance through the Cooperatives Office. The assistance is in the form of funds amounting to Rp. 1,500,000, - which is used as business capital. In addition, some MSMEs have also received assistance in the form of production equipment, such as sewing machines. The assistance is intended for MSMEs that really need it, which have been selected by the village government. Of course, this assistance is used to improve the welfare of weak and disadvantaged MSMEs.

Based on the analysis conducted, it shows that the MSME empowerment program in Kludan Village has been implemented with an inclusive and socially just approach. This is reflected in the priority given to weak or disadvantaged community groups, both in terms of economy, limited access to technology, and business licensing. This interpretation confirms that empowerment in Kludan Village is not just general training, but is directed at overcoming the real obstacles faced by small MSME actors so that they

are able to develop independently. In addition to training, the village government also provides solutions to administrative obstacles such as processing a Business Identification Number (NIB), which is an important legal requirement for digital business actors. This effort reflects empowerment in the form of institutional and administrative assistance that is greatly needed by small MSMEs. This is in line with the principle of empowerment according to Soeharto (2011), namely providing equal opportunities and access to marginalized groups so that they can be independent and empowered socially and economically. The Kludan Village Government has initiated digital marketing training as a means to improve the capabilities of MSME actors, by not only targeting those who already have access to technology, but also assisting small business actors who have limitations in using digital devices.

On the other hand, other forms of intervention such as providing financial assistance and production equipment from the Cooperatives Office are also part of the affirmative strategy to strengthen the most vulnerable business groups. Capital assistance of IDR 1,500,000 and production equipment such as sewing machines are provided selectively to MSMEs that are considered to be in real need, with the aim of encouraging productivity and improving their economic welfare. This not only narrows the social gap, but also opens up space for more equitable and inclusive local economic growth. The village government plays an active role not only as a facilitator, but also as a companion who ensures that every MSME, especially those that are weak in terms of access and economy, still has the opportunity to grow and compete amidst the challenges of digitalization.

This is in line with previous research on empowerment, not just giving authority or power to the weak. Empowerment contains the meaning of the educational process in improving the quality of individuals, groups, or communities so that they are empowered, competitive, and able to live independently [19]. In addition, the active role of the village government in facilitating access to technology and information also encourages the creation of economic independence for MSME actors at the local level. This is evident in the context of Kludan Village, where the village government not only provides training, but also helps people who have limited digital devices so that they can still participate in training optimally and the empowerment approach that is based on collaboration and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups is able to create a resilient and adaptive micro-business ecosystem.

4. Carried out through a Capacity Building Program

Community empowerment needs to be balanced with a capacity building program because empowerment requires mentoring or socialization to the community [20]. The community empowerment process is carried out by increasing the ability, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and access of the community to various resources, so that they have sufficient capacity to be independent, make decisions, and improve their own lives. In this case, empowerment actors are needed who are able to encourage and create individuals and communities to make behavioral changes towards independence (empowerment). Empowerment in order to increase the capacity of empowered

individuals and communities is carried out gradually, continuously and continuously. Therefore, empowerment requires patience and perseverance from empowerment actors or agents in guiding or facilitating the process of changing people's lives towards a better direction [13].

To improve their skills in Digital Marketing, MSMEs are also given special training by the Kludan Village Government. MSMEs are forced to know about the current hobbies of the community, especially young people. In addition, MSMEs are also told about how to sell goods online attractively, so that they can attract the attention of consumers. MSMEs are also taught to make advertisements about their products so that they can be known by the wider community. This is done by the village government to maintain or boost the economy for MSMEs.

MSMEs are given training on how to produce attractive goods so that they attract consumers to buy them. Then MSMEs are also taught how to sell goods online, so that it can make it easier for consumers not to come directly to offline stores. After the training, the village government also provides assistance and continues to monitor MSMEs so that they do not have difficulty in this Digital Marketing. The village government strongly agrees with the existence of this Digital Marketing, because it can improve the lives of MSME actors who were almost bankrupt due to the lack of buyers.

Based on the results of the analysis conducted, the Kludan Village Government provides digital marketing training to MSMEs that reflects a real form of community empowerment process that is directed at increasing the capacity of individuals or groups in a sustainable manner. The village government acts as an empowering agent that not only provides training materials, but also provides intensive assistance after training. MSMEs are trained to package products attractively, market through digital platforms, and create simple advertisements that can increase consumer appeal. Ongoing assistance after training shows that empowerment is seen as a long-term process that requires commitment, patience, and the active presence of empowering agents. MSME actors who initially had difficulty facing declining sales are now beginning to understand digital strategies to maintain and even improve the sustainability of their businesses. Thus, this program not only has an impact on increasing income, but also contributes to the transformation of MSME actors' behavior from passive to more active, creative, and resilient in facing market dynamics.

Discussion

In terms of empowerment theory according to Soeharto (2011), it emphasizes the importance of developing the potential and capacity of individuals and groups through improving skills, knowledge and access to information. Soeharto also emphasized that empowerment must be carried out consciously, planned and continuously. This is reflected in the village government's approach which does not stop at training, but also provides continuous assistance and monitoring to MSME actors. This process aims for the community to be truly independent, dare to make their own decisions, and run their businesses with confidence and have higher competitiveness.

This finding is also in line with previous research which shows that Community Empowerment Through Community Capacity Building is planned which is expected to be able to improve community welfare. The program compiled in the Village RPJM book is expected to be a strategy for the village government to be able to implement Community Empowerment properly [21]. The training and mentoring provided not only improve technical skills in digital marketing, but also encourage changes in attitudes and mindsets of MSME actors to be more adaptive to market developments. In this case, the success of empowerment is highly dependent on training that is integrated with active mentoring, the role of the village government in facilitating, and a participatory approach that encourages the community to be directly involved.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This study concludes that digital marketing empowerment has become a strategic approach for MSMEs in Kludan Village to strengthen business sustainability, with structured training and mentoring shown to improve digital literacy and marketing capacity despite challenges such as limited technological mastery among elderly entrepreneurs and lack of Business Identification Numbers (NIB). **Implication :** The findings imply that government-led empowerment programs aligned with Soeharto's theory of independence, access, and capacity building are crucial in enabling MSMEs to adapt to digital transformation, thereby enhancing competitiveness and expanding market access in rural economies. **Limitation :** However, the study is limited by its qualitative scope, focusing only on a single village context, which restricts the generalizability of results to other regions with differing socio-economic conditions. **Future Research :** Further studies should adopt comparative or mixed-method approaches across multiple regions to evaluate the broader effectiveness of digital marketing empowerment, while also exploring innovative strategies for overcoming age-related digital literacy gaps and improving technological access for MSMEs.

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