

# Empowering Women Aisyiyah Business Actors through Digital Marketing during the Pandemic

(Study at Aisyiyah Bandung City, Indonesia)

Tia Muthiah Umar\*, Dede Lilis Chaerowati, Yulianti Yulianti, Andalusia Neneng Permatasari, Kharisma Lutfiah Al Hanif, Iqbal Jamil, Nova Nurun Nadhifah, Mochamad Zulfikri Aditya Rinaldi

Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi  
Universitas Islam Bandung  
Bandung, Indonesia

\*tiamutiaumar@unisba.ac.id

**Abstract**—Aisyiyah, as one of the women's Islamic organizations in Indonesia, has also contributed to spreading the notion of progress for Indonesian women. The roles performed are mainly in the fields of education, health and the economy. Commitment in the economic field, especially has become an orientation for women's empowerment, as an effort to increase women's capacity as business actors, in order to improve family welfare. This role has become more tested during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The growing interest of women in entrepreneurial practices in this digital era, raises its own problems, namely how they are entrepreneurs by adapting to digital technology. Therefore, the empowerment of women by Aisyiyah is urgent to encourage capacity building of women as business actors in the context of empowering the people's economy with readiness to adapt to the social change and demands of the era, including adapting to the development of digital technology. This paper is based on the study of digital marketing. Using quantitative research methods with female respondents of business actors from representatives of the Aisyiyah Branch Managers throughout the city of Bandung. The aim is to describe the ability to use digital media, the ability to use a marketplace platform, an understanding of digital marketing, and an understanding of the benefits of digital media in marketing. Thus, it is hoped that Aisyiyah women who are entrepreneurs, can understand and carry out digital marketing in their entrepreneurial activities, so that they can reach a wider potential market and be able to develop their entrepreneurship as Muslim businesswomen.

**Keywords**—women empowerment, entrepreneurship, digital marketing, marketplace

## I. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic finally arrived in Indonesia, a worrisome arrival, not to be waited for, but as a cycle of life becoming a necessity. The current situation is the original life cycle [1].

The pandemic period has lasted more than a year in Indonesia, since the first case was discovered in March 2020 in the city of Depok. All groups, both individuals and groups, the

private sector as well as the government, are affected by this pandemic, especially those affected by the social aspect, namely the community's economy.

Termination of employment that afflicts the family breadwinners certainly poses a threat to the survival of the household, due to the cessation of income needed to meet the daily needs of the family. When husbands who are breadwinners are powerless, then women take part as solution makers by carrying out home-based economic efforts and marketing with social media.

Indonesia is a country with a majority Muslim population and includes the largest Muslim community in the world with moderate characteristics. Islamic values are indeed influential in life and provide equal opportunities for men and women to choose what they want in social life, including in the economic field.

In Indonesia there is a strong hope that women can work. However, working outside the home is often a challenge for Muslim women who still want to take on domestic roles, especially wives. The growing influence of women's Islamic groups in Indonesia reinforces conservative Islamic values to some extent. However, more and more Muslim women in Indonesia are working to earn an income to meet their household needs [2].

Aisyiyah is one of the Islamic women's movements that helps spread the notion of progress for Indonesian women to take part in the social life of society. The role of women is becoming more and more tested during the current pandemic. Therefore, women's empowerment by Aisyiyah is urgent to encourage capacity building of women as business actors in the context of improving the family economy and empowering the people's economy.

Aisyiyah's identity as a progressive women's movement is in line with the current culture of digital science and technology development. Member culture is influenced by organizational culture. Becoming a member of Aisyiyah means

being ready to become a woman who advances in all fields, who will be able to support the role of Aisiyyah's da'wah, including in following developments in the field of technology.

Aisiyyah conducted various analyzes on internal potential, external conditions, as well as internal and external institutional challenges. Aisiyyah as a praxis movement based on da'wah and renewal, strengthens its position as a civil society force that will continue to contribute to increasing the degree of family welfare, by encouraging a more optimal role for women through various empowerment programs.

Cherayi conducted a study which assumed that empowerment had a significant effect on increasing access to formal justice institutions such as courts, policies, local bodies and alternative traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. This assumption can certainly be relied upon to expand the influence of empowerment on increasing access to other formal and non-formal institutions such as economic institutions and entrepreneurship [3].

The importance of women having access to the economic sector and entrepreneurship because of the opportunity to participate in making a strong nation state. The movement to build entrepreneurship has been adopted by more than 140 countries in the world. This is clear evidence that entrepreneurship must be a mindset to build the nation. So far, many studies on women's entrepreneurship have been contextualized in various developed countries [4]. Therefore, it is necessary to study women's entrepreneurship in the context of developing countries, such as Indonesia, especially for Muslim women.

This is because social entrepreneurship has played an important role in economic development and poverty alleviation, especially in the context of developing countries. Women entrepreneurs play an important role in socio-economic development and poverty alleviation [5].

Developed and developing nations have come to understand that women's entrepreneurial activities contribute to socioeconomic growth and utilizing the full potential of all human resources is essential for sustainable development. Studies of the 21st century—as those of the late 20th century—continue to spotlight gender gaps in entrepreneurship as well as the sovalued career–family balance, while still arguing that further research is needed. They also agree that successful entrepreneurship requires digital skills along with the drive for innovation [6].

The study of Social Media Platforms and their impact in unlocking the financial success of the women entrepreneurs globally has been widely observed and quite vital to the new generation of gender based ventures that are digitally driven through the use of technology. This type of development through which women adapt and utilise Social Media platforms promotes the creation of a new revolution of modern digital entrepreneurial culture, by changing the female society from a technologically challenged to a technologically savvy one that changes their mind-set from the job seeking culture to embrace

a job creating one, through opportunities that are made available by the use of Social Media Platforms and the Internet. Both formal and informal women owned ventures have been observed to adopt social media platforms to grow their communities as a medium for keeping in touch and getting current and ground feedback on products or services from existing and prospective clients [7].

The growing interest of women in entrepreneurial practices, demands the digitalization dimension, including aspects that need to be empowered because marketing of entrepreneurial products based on digital media and social media is the key needed for entrepreneurial success in the 4.0 era. It is proven that the use of social media has boosted the success of entrepreneurs faster and at lower costs. This is in line with the Aisiyyah Organization's vision of a commitment to strengthening the people's economy, with readiness to adapt to the developments and demands of the . Therefore, the purpose of this study is to describe the ability to use digital media, the ability to use a marketplace platform, an understanding of digital marketing, and an understanding of the benefits of digital media in marketing for women Aisiyyah entrepreneurs.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses quantitative research methods. Quantitative analysis is used to describe the key attributes of the use of digital media and understanding of digital marketing in Aisiyyah women business actors.

Quantitative research usually involves systematic and empirical investigation of phenomena through statistics and mathematics and the processing of numerical data. Basic characteristics of quantitative research approaches related to specific research objectives are among others: (a) the association of research with experiments, (b) the investigation of phenomena; (c) the use of advanced tools of statistics, (d) the use of questionnaires (usually with closed questions), (e) the quantification of relations and features and (f) the collection, procession and presentation of quantitative data [8].

The type of quantitative research used is survey. Surveys are a method to collect self-reported data from respondents through a structured questionnaire with standardized questions [9].

The object of this research is the Regional Leadership of Aisiyyah City of Bandung with female respondents as business actors from representatives of the Aisiyyah Branch Managers throughout the city of Bandung totaling 25 people. The sampling technique used cluster random sampling technique, where women entrepreneurs were selected based on the Aisiyyah branch cluster in Bandung City.

Data collection techniques are carried out by: (1) distributing questionnaires to women entrepreneurs; (2) observation of digital marketing training activities conducted by e-commerce myukm as partners; and (3) literature study by collecting data from various sources such as the Aisiyyah website and Aisiyyah news coverage in online media. The data

analysis technique was carried out by performing mathematical operations through tabulating the questionnaire into a simple single frequency table. Henceforth, the table is analyzed in order to describe the conclusion.

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results explain how Aisiyiah bussinesswomen take advantage of technological developments, especially digital media and also the internet, where they are accustomed to using cellphones or smartphones for daily media use. The rapid development of technology has made the community's need for media technology change too.

British media company We Are Social in collaboration with Hootsuite in its report entitled "Digital 2021: Indonesia" shows that as many as 202.6 million Indonesians have used the internet, an increase of 27 million people or 16% from January 2020. social media in January 2021 as many as 170 million people, an increase of 10 million people or 6.3% from January 2020. Indonesian people also use the internet for an average of 8 hours 52 minutes in one day [10].

**A. Ability to Use Digital Media**

In table 1, the majority of respondents claimed to be able to use digital media as shown by 17 respondents or 68% of the total respondents claiming to be able to use digital media easily. Even 3 respondents (12%) claimed to be very capable in this regard. Then we can see from the table data above that there is not a single respondent who claims to be very incapable of using digital media easily even though there is 1 person (4%) who admits that he is unable.

**TABLE I. ABILITY OF AISIYIAH BUSINESSWOMAN USING DIGITAL MEDIA**

No	Ability of Aisiyiah Businesswoman Using Digital Media		
	Choice	f	%
1	Very Capable	3	12
2	Able	17	68
3	Neutral	4	16
4	Disagree	1	4
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
Total		25	100

Sample n = 25

Based on data, the ability to use digital media for Aisiyiah bussinesswomen from twenty-five people is very diverse. The majority of the results show that respondents are able to use digital media. Although there are still some respondents who claim to be unable, even very incapable, but in very minimal numbers.

The inability of some respondents to use digital media is caused because respondents still do not know the strategic benefits of using digital media. One of the benefits that can be obtained from using digital media is that you can get the opportunity to open your own business and make it a profitable business field for yourself. Even Gurusurthy and Chami "Mastering social media technology provides women with an

opportunity to enter other channels of labor" [11]. According to him, mastering social media technology can give women the opportunity to get jobs and even get relationships. So that social media not only provides a place to open a business, but social media can also be used as a place to find relationships so that we can cooperate with our side and make our business more advanced.

**B. Ability to use Marketplace Platform**

In table II the majority of respondents as many as 16 people (64%) claimed to have been able to use the marketplace/ecommerce platform on the internet and there were also 2 people (8%) who claimed to be very capable of using it. While the second highest gain was 5 people (20%) who were neutral in using the marketplace/ecommerce platform on the internet. Although there are still very poor people in 2 people, it is only worth 8%.

**TABLE II. ABILITY OF AISIYIAH BUSINESSWOMAN USING MARKETPLACE PLATFORM**

No	Ability of aisiyiah businesswoman using marketplace platform		
	Choice	F	%
1	Very Capable	2	8
2	Able	16	64
3	Neutral	5	20
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly disagree	2	8
Total		25	100

Sample n = 25

The ability to use the marketplace platform for women Aisiyiah business actors is very important. The digital era, especially in the midst of a pandemic like today that limits social interaction, digital marketing through a marketplace platform really helps women entrepreneurs to maintain their business. This transformation to digital media in the world of marketing is not only carried out by small and medium entrepreneurs, even business companies have also used social media marketing as a marketing strategy. "Companies use numerous social media platforms for social media marketing, such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter etc. The choice of platforms depends on target consumers and marketing strategy" [12]. This means that nowadays companies use social media for marketing media and promote various things. The platform chosen also depends on the target consumer to be addressed and also the choice of this platform will also affect the strategy in marketing.

**C. Understanding of Digital Marketing**

Marketing plays an important role in a business, a product will sell well and be famous among the public by implementing the right marketing strategy. In the past, marketing was applied conventionally where marketing was done directly without going through intermediaries. However, along with the development of technology which is now completely digital in various sectors, people spend more time surfing the digital world to fulfill their needs. Communicating and seeking

information can also be done through digital media. No exception in the business sector that gave birth to the concept of digital marketing.

TABLE III. UNDERSTANDING OF DIGITAL MARKETING

No	Understanding of Digital Marketing		
	Choice	F	%
1	Very understand	0	0
2	Understand	21	84
3	Neutral	0	0
4	Do not understand	3	12
5	Very do not understand	1	4
Total		25	100

Sample n = 25

Table III shows that most Aisiyiah businesswoman have understood digital marketing, both the meaning of digital marketing or the process in digital marketing. Of the total 25 respondents, 21 people or 84% answered very well with the understanding and process in digital marketing. Meanwhile, 3 people or 12% answered that they did not understand and 1 person or 4% answered that they did not understand.

Today's media has become a reliable tool in helping the marketing process, whether marketing a product or service. Currently, various media can be used to support marketing activities, especially digital-based media. The higher the use of technology, digitalization in various aspects will occur, including marketing or marketing. Therefore, the term digital marketing is known.

*Digital marketing is one of the efforts to promote a product or service by utilizing social media as a promotional medium. Social media can be used by many people in various parts of the world without being limited by space and time. With its nature that can reach a wide audience, social media is considered to have advantages that make marketing can be executed better because it can help companies to expand their market reach.*

In addition, social media also has several other advantages, *Social media enables companies to connect with their customers, improve awareness of their brands, influence consumer's attitudes, receive feedback, help to improve current products and services and increase sales (Algharabat et al., 2018; Kapoor et al., 2018; Kaur et al., 2018, Lal et al., 2020).* The use of social media in digital marketing is not only a tool to promote a product, but also as a company media to be more connected with consumers because consumers can provide direct feedback. According to Ajina, digital marketing is currently one of the most frequently used strategies by companies to reach market goals [13].

Lin illustrates on institutional theory, that mimetic, coercive, and normative pressures persuade organizations to improve marketing performance. This is also evidenced by the results of his research that coercive pressure and mimesis play an important role in motivating organizations to use social media and the use of social media improves marketing performance [14].

The use of social media as a medium in doing digital marketing can not only be used by large companies that already have regular customers, business entrepreneurs who are still in the pioneering stage or just starting their business can apply this digital marketing technique. Quoting from the journal entitled *Directions of Digitalization of Small Business*, the writer explained "It must be accentuated that the fact that many digital tools are free-of-charge in the business promotion sphere and the high profitability of internet advertising let companies develop faster. Algorithms are always changing in the economic marketing sphere. Nevertheless, digital marketing is more effective and much cheaper than TV advertising, which Small Business Subjects can afford." [15]. With so many free tools to promote in digital media, small companies can grow rapidly without having to spend so much money like advertising on television. Digital marketing has proven to be a more effective and affordable promotional technique for small businesses. In addition to advertising directly on social media, the presence of many large marketplaces can also help small businesses to develop because the marketplace provides a place for small business entrepreneurs to sell goods and promote them with certain conditions.

Therefore, it is important for Aisiyiah women business actors to understand digital marketing techniques so that business actors can design and choose which marketing strategies are suitable for the business they are starting. This understanding of digital marketing also helps women Aisiyiah business actors to be able to more easily see opportunities in developing their businesses by utilizing digital marketing.

**D. Understanding of the Benefits of Digital Media in Marketing**

There are various ways to utilize digital marketing by producers, one of which is using social media. Social media as a place where people interact in cyberspace, can be used as a channel to market products and services that have been made by producers. The large number of social media users, allows high marketing activities carried out by consumers.

TABLE IV. UNDERSTANDING OF THE BENEFITS OF DIGITAL MEDIA IN MARKETING

No	Understanding of the Benefits of Digital Media in Marketing		
	Choice	F	%
1	Very understand	0	0
2	Understand	24	96
3	Neutral	0	0
4	Do not understand	1	4
5	Very do not understand	0	0
Total		25	100

Sample n = 25

In table IV of a total of 25 respondents, 24 people or 96% answered that they understood the benefits of digital media in marketing, namely to reach a wider target market, while 1 person or 4% answered that they did not understand.

These results indicate that the majority of Aisiyah businesswomen have understood the benefits of digital media in marketing. Aisiyah businesswoman's understanding of the benefits of digital media, because digital marketing activities can be carried out by everyone in everyday life using digital media, for example, social media. The benefits of digital marketing via social media, namely increasing the ability of producers to engage consumers by reaching them through social media, both from sales and services.

*Digital marketing* producers can optimize in finding the right markets for their products or services. The convenience obtained from marketing via digital media can be felt by both parties, namely producers and consumers. Manufacturers today, can involve consumers more with marketing via this digital media.

Digital marketing via social and mobile media has rapidly become part of the daily life of millions of people, expanding into common social media activities, and often leading to the creation of customer relationships [16].

Social engagement, diffusion, and interaction are keys to the digital marketing evolution, and have enhanced firms' ability to engage customers by reaching out, informing them about products and services, and ultimately selling these products and services to customers [17-19].

Digital Marketing through social media and mobile phones is rapidly becoming a part of the daily lives of millions of people, extending to the same social media activities, and often leading to the formation of customer relationships. Social engagement, diffusion, and interaction are key to the evolution of digital marketing and have increased the ability of companies to engage customers by reaching out, informing them about products and services, and ultimately selling these products and services to customers.

Aisiyah's understanding of the benefits of digital media is in accordance with the quote above, because digital marketing activities can be carried out by everyone in everyday life using digital media, for example, social media.

The benefits of digital marketing via social media, namely increasing the ability of producers to engage consumers by reaching them through social media, both from sales and services.

Manufacturers can use digital marketing as a channel to find out potential markets. Producers can also interact further with consumers, by using digital media in marketing activities. Quoted from the same journal, the author cites the statement that, "*Digital marketing has evolved from marketing specific products and services to using digital channels for activities, institutions, and processes facilitated by digital technologies. Digital marketing refers to an adaptive, technology-enabled process by which firms collaborate with customers and partners to create, communicate, deliver, and sustain value for all stakeholders jointly* [20,21]". That is, Digital Marketing has evolved from marketing specific products and services to using Digital channels for activities, institutions and processes

facilitated by Digital technology. Digital Marketing refers to the adaptable and technology-enabled process through which firms work with customers and partners to create, communicate, deliver and maintain shared value for all stakeholders.

The quote above is related to Aisiyah's understanding of the actions of producers/sellers in utilizing digital marketing. As a producer, of course, one of the things that must be done is to find ways for marketing activities to be carried out properly. Digital marketing carried out by producers should be as in the quote above, which has value, can be used for activities that support the search for the right channel/platform for producers, can have good relations with consumers, and create good communication with consumers.

The successful entrepreneur, or to use a term and concept coined by Elias G. Carayannis and McDonald R. Stewart [22], the "distinguished entrepreneur" regardless of gender, is an innovator; a visionary; a person who predicts and shapes the future; takes initiatives; accepts change, risk and failure; learns from it; and sees what others do not see, among other things. Accordingly, this study presents snapshots of lives changed and empowered. It includes the work and narratives of "distinguished": women entrepreneurs who have made a difference [23].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Aisiyah's identity as a progressive women's movement is in line with the current culture of digital science and technology development. The growing interest of women in entrepreneurial practices, demands the digitalization dimension, including aspects that need to be empowered because marketing of entrepreneurial products based on digital media and social media is the key needed for entrepreneurial success in the 4.0 era.

The results of the study show that the majority of women Aisiyah business actors have understood how to use digital media and marketplace platforms, as well as understand digital media and the benefits of digital media in marketing.

Thus, Aisiyah has succeeded in empowering female cadres of business actors to adapt and utilize digital media for business development. This is in line with Aisiyah's vision, which is committed to strengthening the people's economy with readiness to adapt to the developments and demands of the times.

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