

Social Media Utilization in the Yogyakarta Millennial Farmer Community

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ABSTRACT

Millennial farmers are an element supporting development. They use technology as a transformation source. Millennial farmers are identical as an informed community. They consider technology having strategic and economic values. Millennial farmers are used to using technology to search and distribute information effectively. A study on Yogyakarta millennial farmers is enticing, where the farmers develop information technology to improve agriculture, such as rice, corn, grape varieties, ornamental plants, cattle, goats, rabbits, agriculture, and animal husbandry. The Yogyakarta millennial farmer community is popular for the latest technology adoption. One of which is the implementation of new technology by millennial farmers, i.e., corn planting. Previously, farmers planted local corn with the productivity of two tons of corn per hectare. After implementing technology and using hybrid corn seed, they produce eight tons of hay per hectare. Millennial farmers use communication media to drive agriculture development. One of them is social media. Millennial farmers use social media to exchange information. This study observed how millennial farmers use social media to communicate to develop the Yogyakarta millennial farmer community. Data collection was performed by the ethnography method comprising observation, interview, documentation, and focus group discussion (FGD). The data analysis technique was carried out by qualitative description. The study results demonstrate that farmers use communication technology utilization in the form of social media by millennial farmers to search and distribute agricultural information to develop agriculture. It also acts as a means to build relationships among farmers in improving agricultural businesses.

Keywords: Millennial Farmers, Social Media, Yogyakarta

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology utilization to develop information societies is vital, particularly social media utilization. Social media can create information societies by exchanging information among users. The creation of information societies starts in rural areas, where millennials use their gadgets to acquire, produce, and distribute information via social media. Millennial farmers in Yogyakarta employ their social media to exchange information and create an information society. An information society is related to information. Stated that the information society term was coined in the 1980s following technological

advances[1]. Changing times are affected by technological advances. In modern societies, the information technology presence boosts productivity and stimulates its society's creativity. Millennials have a major role in creating an information society, where social media users in Indonesia in 2019, according to We Are Social, reached 150 million from 268.2 million people. Meanwhile, social media users via gadgets were 130 million or 48% of the population [2]. From this data, the number of social media users increased from 2018, where the users are generations Y and Z, with ages ranging from 18-19 years [2]. The Indonesian population in September 2020 was augmented by 32.56 million from ten years ago. The

Indonesian population is dominated by two generations, i.e., Z and millennial, amounting to 27.94% and 25.87%, respectively. Generation Z was born between 1997 and 2012, while millennials were born between 1981 and 1996 [3].

Information limitation obstructs farming activities. The Ministry of Agriculture (2018) data revealed that most Indonesian farmers have low education levels, reaching Elementary School (SD). A total of 37.53% of farmers were elementary school graduates, 24.23% did not graduate the elementary school, 16.83% were middle school graduates, 8.98% were high school graduates, 7.19 did not go to school, 3.78% were vocational high school graduates, and 1.47% were undergraduates. Low education levels lead to underdeveloped and monotonous agricultural processing knowledge. Farmers manage the farm as usual without inventing innovations to improve agricultural production. It also causes late agricultural technology adoption in farmers. Indonesian farmers highly require in-depth education or knowledge regarding agricultural activities.

Information media presence in an information society is crucial, where information access highly affects life. It also occurs in rural societies, particularly in the agricultural field. A farmer regeneration exists, performed by millennial farmers. They take over the agricultural field by utilizing information acquired from information media, especially social media. This agricultural regeneration is essential, given that Indonesia has a massive agricultural potential shall it is managed well. However, farmer regeneration decreases annually. According to data of 2021, the Statistic Central Bureau (BPS) asserts that agricultural workers decrease, where farmers only amount to 38.77 million people from 24.46 million in 2011, or only 29.59% of the Indonesian workforce working in the agricultural sector [4]. This decline is balanced with the work cabinet priority agenda of President Jokowi called Nawacita, leading to food sovereignty with agricultural growth. Hence, the nation can regulate and fulfill its population's food need sovereignly stated in the strategic plan of the Ministry of Agriculture [5]. In the strategic plan of the Ministry of Agriculture 2015-2019, food sovereignty has three definitions: fulfilling food needs from domestic production, regulating food policy

independently, and protect and prosper farmers as the main actor of agricultural businesses.

One of the agricultural regeneration methods is inviting millennials to participate and take part in the agricultural sector. The creation of millennial farmers brings a unique color, acknowledging that the young or millennial generation is an agent of change. Millennial farmers age between 19-39 years. The government leads the creation since millennial farmers are considered to have the ability to boost the national economy [6]. Millennial farmers are established aiming to develop entrepreneurship. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture targets one million millennial farmers joining 40 thousand groups in each region. The focus of millennial farmers' agricultural activities includes crops, horticulture, animal husbandry, and farming. Millennial farmers join particular groups consisting of 20 to 30 people.

One of the regions captivating to examine how millennial farmers develop their entrepreneurship is Yogyakarta. The regional government of Yogyakarta is consistent in creating a millennial farmer group. The regional government targets to create 4,000 millennial farmers. This year's recorded number of millennial farmers is 641, who will be selected [7]. Several Yogyakarta regions also uphold a high commitment to creating millennial farmers, such as Kulonprogo Regency. On 3-4 February 2021, the millennial farmer communication forum was established due to Kulonprogo Regency farmers' initiation. Millennial farmers must have a solid will to realize developed, independent, and modern agriculture since they are expected to be reliable and competent entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector [8]. Sleman Regency also commits by creating millennial farmers. The Head of the Agriculture, Food, and Fishery Office (DP3) states that Sleman Regency targets 1,000 millennial farmers in 2024 [9]. The millennial farmer management in the Yogyakarta regional government comes from various regencies, i.e., Kulonprogo, Sleman, Bantul, Gunung kidul, and Yogyakarta. The role of millennial farmers in improving agriculture is highly emphasized in Yogyakarta. It is evident from a new technology implementation by millennial farmers in planting corn, where previous productivity was two tons per hectare. After implementing technology and using hybrid corn seed, they

produce eight tons of hay per hectare. Technology implementation allows millennial farmers to hold during the pandemic and even growing well, where they can understand the weather; thus, producing crops with a high selling value [10][10]. In this study, the researchers observed how millennial farmers utilize information technology, primarily social media, to search, produce, and distribute information related to agriculture.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Technology Utilization by Millennial Farmers

Information and communication technology utilization has a vital role in social life and empowerment, especially in the information society. According to Rosengren (1974), as cited by [11], media utilization comprises the time used to access various media, media content consumed, and the overall media. Classifies technology utilization into utilization with one-factor estimation and utilization with two-factor estimation (usefulness and effectiveness) [12]. The first utilization is fruitful to improve one's working performance. The second utilization aims to increase productivity, e.g., using the internet to search for information can improve the user's performance.

Millennial farmers age between 19-39 years, where they can generate entrepreneurs and jobs with innovations in society. The agricultural sector under millennial farmers is expected to adapt to the technology and information sector since these farmers are the initiator of future agricultural businesses [13]. The young or millennial generation has the potential and role to produce agricultural products via technology use. They also act to drive changes between millennials and local farmers, e.g., using a partnership system and online marketing [14]. Millennial farmers use information technology to learn the appropriate agricultural techniques, agricultural crop distribution methods, and marketing measures using information networks, particularly utilizing social media.

2.2 Social Media and Information Societies

Social media can affect the behavior of information societies in receiving or producing information since social media have several characters. Argued social media characters as

follows: 1. A network consists of technology devices where social media users connect although they have not met or do not know each other, 2. Information, the core of the communication process, is used to interact between social media users when messages are sent, 3. Archive, where social media users save messages and view or retract the messages sent, 4. Interaction, where social media users interact using available services in such social media, and 5. Social simulation, where social media is considered a reflection of real life, or the interaction resembles what occurs in real life, 6. Content, where a new media user can create content or send messages, not only as connoisseurs of information, 7. Information dissemination using devices allows users to see each other's activities [15].

Information dissemination that has been posted on social media can be seen through supporting features, letting users know how many people have read the message, and knowing where the message has been shared [16]. The sophistication of social media makes it easy for users to create certain groups and can communicate with each other and exchange ideas. The users who are members of the group can comment about the information shared. Written comments can build assumptions, emotions, and mutual trust and show the thinking patterns of social media users [17].

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Ethnographic methods were used to see how the millennial farmer community in Yogyakarta utilized social media and how did they use it? Researchers wanted to examine their experiences in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, related to social media utilization in accessing, producing, and sending information. The informants in the research were members of the Yogyakarta millennial farmer community aged 19 to 39 years. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, focus group discussions, and interviews. In this study, the researchers interviewed 23 millennial farmer informants in Yogyakarta.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The use of Social Media to form an information society

Information is the content of messages that are conveyed and received by communicators

and communicants so that a relationship is established [18]. Social media users utilized information technology as the formation of an information society. Social media account owners easily get the information they want. It is also done by millennial farmers. Using social media was not only for entertainment but also for getting information that help him in the field of agricultural business. One of the social media based on instant messaging was used to share information, i.e., WhatsApp. Some farmers used WhatsApp by forming groups and having discussions with other millennial farmers.

"I used WhatsApp Group to communicate with other farmers." (Informant 1)

Informants 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 also answered using the WhatsApp group to discuss problems. Many other members immediately responded and helped them to overcome their problems. Such as problems, agriculture, and animal husbandry experienced by millennial farmers. To obtain information on both agriculture, and animal husbandry, farmers usually asked their colleagues as follows:

"Things related to chicken diseases." (Informant 1)

"Things related to the type of medicine for chickens." (Informant 2)

"Asked how to get rid of caterpillars or how to make shallots thrive." (Informant 4)

"What was a good agricultural fertilizer?" (Informant 5)

"How to get good chicks." (Informant 8)

"Solutions and selling prices of livestock products." (Informant 9)

"Asked about the best seeds and fertilizers for agriculture." (Informant 11)

"Discussed the fluctuations in the price of eggs and feed ingredients for laying hens. Diseases that often attack chickens and how to overcome them." (Informant 11)

Millennial farmers discussed all the problems that occurred with fellow millennial farmers or seniors who were more experienced by using WhatsApp groups from issues of how to select seeds, care, and even marketing of agricultural and livestock products. Social media users in rural communities had new

relationships and dynamics, where through exchanging information they influenced or were influenced. Users or recipients of messages were aware of the presence of technology, especially its benefits, and the existence of technological discourse on users and society was also dominant [19]. The use of technology obtained information, as well as solutions to his problems. To produce information or messages, they also used social media, not a WhatsApp group. They often uploaded the livestock using WhatsApp status or Facebook so that people were interested in buying products.

"Yes, I sold the livestock yield using the internet, commonly I made a status or posted it on Facebook." (Informant 3)

"In my livestock marketing, I always prioritized livestock quality testing. Thus, quality is guaranteed from seed selection, use of feed, good care, I usually posted to convince buyers." (Informant 8)

"Yes, I often sold my agricultural products on Facebook and WA media." (Informant 13)

The information society is a society that can use technology well to get the benefits it needs. Just as these millennial farmers used social media to market their products, both crops, and livestock, they posted them on social media to let people know they have these products. There were even farmers who had a strategy to post their activities in raising livestock, from choosing seeds, good care, using the quality feed, to convincing buyers that their livestock products were of good quality.

4.2 Millennial Farmers Communication Patterns

The progress of the information society made them quickly get the information they wanted and needed. It also happened in the lives of farmers, where previously farmers relied on agricultural and livestock information through agricultural extension workers. Nowadays, they can easily find information by opening the internet to search it. However, the presence of the internet did not completely eliminate the need for farmers to have agricultural extension workers. Information on the internet still needed to be filtered and sorted out, which information was true, false, applicable, and not applicable.

"I did not practice what was on the internet because I thought it was too expensive to practice in the field by the way of husbandry that I saw on the internet." (Informant 2)

"When I saw it on the internet, it looked easy but it was not."

(Informant 10)

"There were many methods of raising livestock on the Internet. Sometimes it was true or not. Must be able to choose one or a combination that can be applied." (Informant 17)

"According to my experience, the internet implementation was

difficult because the breeder system was different from the CH broiler." (Informant 20)

Many millennial farmers understood that information on the internet needed to be filtered and selected which was correct and could be applied. Farmer preferred to exchange information with other farmers. The communication pattern of millennial farmers was more intensive with people who knew and could solve their problems. The pattern of communication was a pattern of relationships between two or more people for the process of sending and receiving correctly so that the message was easy to understand [20]. . Technological advances did not eliminate the role of agricultural instructors, where farmers still hoped for training or provided information related to agriculture and animal husbandry from the instructor. It was expressed by several informants:

"It was significant to provide training. I had received information how to keep the cage clean." (Informant 1)

"Education from the instructors was essential because it could exchange nsights, especially the animal husbandry such as giving the right medicine for livestock." (Informant 10)

"It was significant information to add insight, how to take care the livestock, stable prices, feed ingredients, and sales." (Informant 13)

"Education, how chickens gain weight by consuming less or more efficient feed." (Informant 18)

"Planting a tree correctly requires information from the extension worker." (Informant 21)

Based on the answers of these millennial farmers, a good communication pattern done by millennial farmers with the agricultural instructors was still the same. They were still the source of information that millennial farmers had been waiting for. However, technological advances helped farmers to exchange information and found other sources of information easier, i.e., exchanging information with other farmers through instant messages in their groups. Millennial farmers used information sources, both from agricultural instructors and millennial farmers to get information or solve problems related to food crops, horticulture, animal husbandry, and plantations.

5. CONCLUSION

Millennial farmers are agents of change for rural communities. They formed an information society. Millennial farmers get and disseminate information related to food crops, horticulture, livestock, and plantations by using social media, either the groups or their posts. Thus, they got answers related to their problems with other members. The times have not changed the role of agricultural extension workers where they are still needed by millennial farmers as a source of information. In the information society, millennial farmers use various sources of information to get better agricultural products or solve their agricultural problems. This study has explored that the millennial farmer community in Yogyakarta are people with the technology literate and can use various social media platforms, such as WhatsApp and Facebook. WhatsApp groups are used as a medium of communication and information dissemination between one farmer community and another. However, the role of agricultural extension workers is still needed as a source of information, especially top-down information, i.e., institutional information (Sourced from the Department of Agriculture) to be disseminated to the farming community.

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