

Marketing Communication in Housewife Entrepreneurship

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Abstract—Housewives are currently required to have an entrepreneurial spirit to help improve the household economy while increasing their development of thought and quality of life, not just for themselves but for their families too. Some housewives choose to do home business in the informal sector to have the flexibility of time. This way they can arrange and adjust the working time, in which they can work before or after the household affairs finished. Communication skills can support the success of housewives in running their businesses. This ability can help them establish relationships well so that they can expand product marketing. This paper is based on the research on housewife entrepreneurship and formulating the problem of how marketing communication is carried out in housewives entrepreneurship. The research method used is qualitative with the ethnographic approach of communication. The research subjects are housewives who run home businesses. The result of research explains that marketing communication done by a housewife who runs the home industry business covers 3 points: how to identify the consumer, how to build relationships with consumer, and how the marketing method is conducted.

Keywords—marketing communication; entrepreneurship; housewife

I. INTRODUCTION

Some housewives choose to open small businesses at home to support their family needs or just to fill their spare time without having to leave their obligations to take care of households. A housewife who runs a business needs extra energy because she has to pay attention to her main tasks of managing the household, nurturing, educating and raising children but at the same time, she also has to concentrate on running her business. She and many other women entrepreneurs have to think about how they can market their products to develop their businesses, and they also have to think of communication strategies for marketing the products.

Running a business for housewives is not an easy thing to do, as it stated by Hamdan et al., that women entrepreneurs are not always in supportive conditions in operating their businesses. There are also times when they have to face and experience challenges and problems. This is in accordance with the opinion of the Head of the West Java Regional National Craft Council, Mrs. Netty Prasetyani Heryawan, who said that, "challenges that occurred include technology and marketing," [1]. Based on this statement, one of the problems faced by

housewives who run businesses is how to market the products so that their businesses can run and grow. Based on the experience of housewives in running businesses, after having products to sell, they sell it to a very limited market segment, namely close relatives, friends and neighbors, which will make the business stagnant. To develop the business, of course they have to expand their scope of marketing not only to their nearest environment. Housewives are required to build networks to widely expand their businesses, thus they must have the ability to build relationships which can be supported by good communication skills. As Siswanto stated that communications is a very important element in marketing since marketing is essentially the communication between producers and consumers [2].

Good communication skills can support the success of housewives' businesses because the ability to communicate would help establish better and broaden relationships in expanding product marketing. This paper explains qualitative experiment involving some housewives in Bandung who run home industry businesses which covers 3 main points of how they identify their consumers, how they build relationships with their consumer, and how marketing methods being carried out.

II. METHOD

This paper is based on the research on housewives entrepreneurship. The research uses qualitative method intends to understand holistically the phenomenon of what is experienced by the subjects of study, such as behavior, perception, motivational actions, etc. It does by means of descriptions in the form of words and languages in a special natural context, and by utilizing various natural methods [3]. The phenomenon studied is marketing communication conducted by housewives who run businesses.

Subjects in this research are housewives around Bandung who run business at home. They manage their households and do businesses at the same time by producing various products at home such as cakes, Muslim clothing, accessories, snack and dessert. We chose subject of housewives who have been done their businesses for more than 3 years and have a broad market share, so that we can explore their experience in carrying out marketing communication strategies for the businesses.

This research selected 10 housewives in Bandung (who do various kinds of businesses) to collect qualitative information about the communication they perform in running their businesses. The information includes how they identify their consumers, how they build relationship with consumer, and how marketing methods are being carried out.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Marketing is not just about developing a good product, setting attractive prices and making it affordable, but also having to communicate with various interested parties and public in general. Marketing communication according to Kotler & Keller is a means used by companies in an effort to inform, persuade, and remind consumers -directly or indirectly- about the products and brands they sell. In a certain sense, marketing communication describes the "voice" of a brand and a means that can be used to build dialogue and relationships with consumers [4]. Communication plays a major role in facilitating marketer relations with consumers.

A. Identifying Consumers and Potential Customers

Identifying consumers and potential customers is very important. This is where entrepreneurs can determine different strategies for different consumers because each consumer and potential consumer has different characters that require a different communication approach.

Individual consumers can be very potential for business. Although these individuals buy in small quantities, they will frequently buy when they like the products. Neighbors, friends, and people passing by our place of business can become potential consumers and customers.

Institutions or agencies are potential buyers because they usually buy in big quantities and bring a lot of profits. Prospective institutional consumer can be obtained, for example, from our previous workplace, the office of our friends, the workplace of our neighbors, and companies or institutions near our place of business.

If we do marketing through online media, it is not just company or people around us who become consumers or potential customers, but also expanding targets outside the region and even customers from abroad.

B. Building Relationships with Consumer

The purpose of communication built by housewives entrepreneurs is to convince buyers and prospective buyers and to retain the customers. They invite others to try and get to know the product by convincing those buyers or potential buyers that the products are good. This is the essence of marketing communication.

Service to consumers is something significant because good service can foster consumers' satisfaction. If consumers feel satisfied with the services provided, they will surely come back again and probably will tell their relatives or friends about it so that their friends or relatives would be interested in buying the products. Thus, the impact of good service will continue to expand.

An entrepreneur must have the principle of "the customer is king". This motto must be applied by fulfilling consumers' demands. For example, if a customer wants an additional type of snack that is not produced yet, in order to provide excellent service to customers, the entrepreneur should try to produce that snack. An entrepreneur must be happy to meet customer's wishes. The point is, an entrepreneur should understand consumers' desires by learning what they want and need, as stated by Lauterborn in Hardjana that we must study consumer wants and needs [5]. You can no longer sell whatever you can make. You can only sell what someone specifically wants to buy.

In addition to good service, continuous communication with customers can also maintain business relationship. Such communication can be conducted in the form of providing information about new products produced by the company and other information related to the product, giving information about the location of moving store, or information about opening a new branch and other information.

Providing Information can be done in various ways, for example, through direct communication of face to face or by telephone. Information about products can be delivered through print media such as catalogs, brochures, flyers and others. Not just that, along with the development of technology, we can also use social media to convey various information about the business being carried out.

Establishing good personal relationships can also be one of the ways to maintain business relationships. For example, the content of communication established is not only about business but also health, weather, family conditions, and children. Give your consumers a small but caring attention by saying happy birthday, for example, or congratulate them if they or their families have successfully achieve something.

Communication is a means to build and maintain social relationships. As an entrepreneur, it is good to join entrepreneurial organizations in the region since they can provide many benefits. In addition to business knowledge gained through exchanging information between members who have different types of businesses, another benefit is the establishment of new relationships.

New relationships can also be obtained through children's school environments. Usually, the activity of taking children to school in the morning can be a place to get to know other parents' students and opportunity to open new relationship as well. There is also parent association in school that can be used as a place to expand relations.

Besides having an impact on increasing the turnover, this new relationship helps overcome various obstacles emerged in business by exchanging ideas and experiences. In this part, communication built becomes really important. The ability to interact, being a good listener, and willing to empathize are some key factors to establish good communication. When people are comfortable, it will be easier to form relationships. Through communication, housewives who run home-based businesses can establish relationships with people around them and beyond to improve their businesses.

C. Marketing Method

Marketing of home industry products is done by personal selling. It is carried out face to face between the seller and the buyer, in which the seller can see the buyer's reaction directly. Personal selling entrepreneurs use persuasive communication skill to persuade consumers or potential consumers to buy their products.

In personal selling, the communication done is not fixed on one thing. Rangkuti stated that "communication in personal selling is carried out individually, so that it can be more flexible than other promotional tools" [6]. This is because the seller meets potential buyers directly which allow them to know the desire, motive, and behavior of the buyers. In addition, the seller can see consumers' reaction to the product offered.

Marketing methods can also be done by collaborating with other entrepreneurs to broaden the business scope. In addition to selling products through stores, marketing can also be done online by developing communication networks and utilizing friendships on social media. The development of communication technology provides many benefits for marketing world as stated by Suwatno that information technology revolution has changed the landscape of marketing world that was previously conventional is now integrated in the digital world [7]. Therefore, housewives who run businesses are required to follow the development of communication technology to advance their businesses.

Online marketing through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and etcetera has many advantages, one of which is able to send messages quickly in various forms of text, sound, images, and videos. Social media with all its conveniences is very suitable to be used as medium to convey information about products marketed.

Online communication must be well managed to attract consumers' attention and interest in the products and feel satisfied when buying them. However, direct marketing apparently still remains the main marketing method for housewives. Direct marketing and meeting consumers requires effective communication skills, especially in serving, offering, and explaining the products.

All entrepreneurs agree that providing the best service for customers, prospective customers, suppliers, and business relations is something necessary to do. The important part of service is communication because it will give a positive impression if it is done effectively. Furthermore, it will foster consumers' satisfaction. Consumers who feel satisfied will tell their friends and other people about products/services they bought/used and this is where the power of word of mouth plays a role in enhancing a business. Good stories or impressions from friends to friends or someone to others will greatly help in growing trust and developing the businesses.

The description above can be illustrated by the following chart :

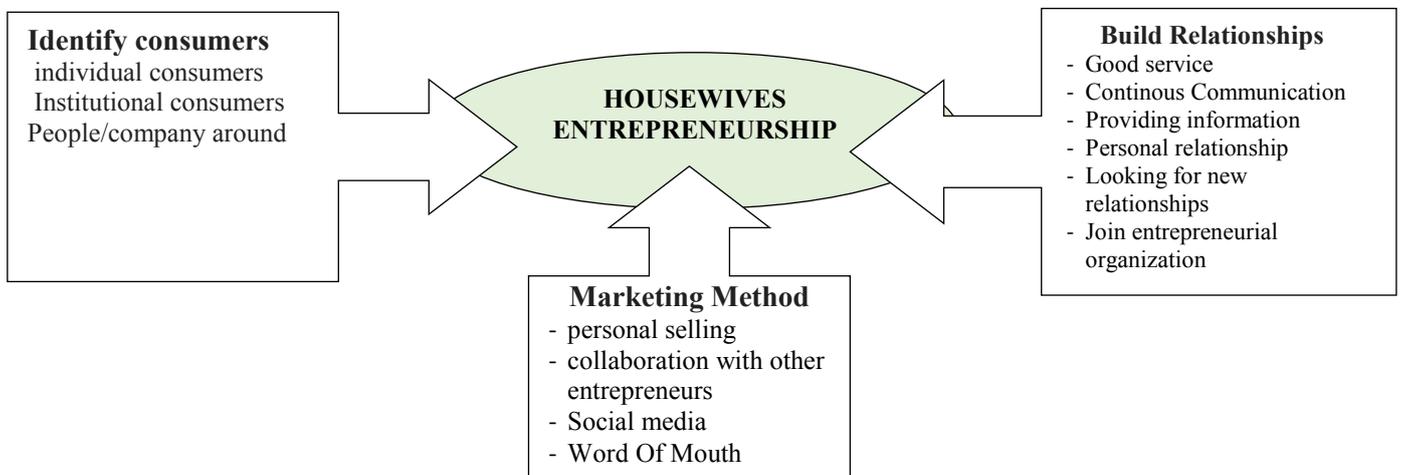


Fig. 1. Chart of housewives entrepreneurship.

The results of study found that marketing communications conducted by housewives entrepreneurs emphasize the service to consumers in order to gain customers' satisfaction. To provide good service, an entrepreneur should always understand consumers' wishes, as it stated by Ayob, Daud and Hassan that the entrepreneur needs to always be sensitive to the needs and desires of customers and utilize this situation to make the business more successful and competitive [8].

In addition to good service, the research findings are also emphasized on marketing strategies through online media or social media. Housewives entrepreneurs need to use online media as marketing communication tool because it is now

believed to have the power to attract consumers' attention through its traits of attractive, easy to access, and inexpensive. Social media is currently becoming a medium of popular marketing. As it stated by Bashar, Ahmad and Wasiq that social media marketing is the hottest new marketing concept [9]. Online marketing makes it easier for housewives to run their businesses since it can be done only by clicking their fingers anytime and anywhere.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Housewives as entrepreneurs need to pay special attention to marketing communication. Providing maximum service to

consumers is a good marketing communication strategy. Satisfying consumers' desires, fulfilling consumers' wants/demands, making them interested in products sold are implementation of strategies that must be maintained and developed to achieve successful business. Although marketing with personal selling is the easiest approach to do, it is good to use the technology of online marketing to expand the market.

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